

Developing a Framework to Shape the Strategic Management of Social Media Activities for an Online Magazine

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor of Business Administration

by

Giovanni Calise

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Abstract

A common problem amongst non-profit organizations is a lack of procedures guiding social media activities, often resulting in underperforming engagement level. Developing procedures to guide social media actions to overcome low engagement is a managerial problem that needs to be addressed by marketing managers and CMO's. This thesis applies the action research approach to develop a framework for a non-profit online magazine to shape the strategic management of the organization's volunteers through the actions of content creation and promotion on social media; resulting in the desired level of engagements. The resulting framework, the Social Media Conversation framework (SMC) which is applicable to the platforms of Twitter and Instagram, can be utilized to alleviate a managerial problem of CMO's who are failing to obtain adequate social media engagements by providing recommendations that will be useful to making optimal decisions and procedures in respect to digital marketing campaigns based on the analysis of actual data.

The SMC has three parts based upon diffusion theories. The first part guides content creators through the content creation process through the stages of topic selection, social monitoring, content style, and content format. The second part of the SMC provides a guide to maximize the social media platform while publishing a post through the use of text, hashtags, content, and self-promotion. The third part of the SMC provides an effective option for marketing managers to advertise Twitter posts through the use of keyword targeting promoted tweets. The actionable knowledge developed from this study was utilized by the magazine to establish procedures to manage the organization's social media activities.

Declaration of Own Work

I declare that this thesis has been composed by myself and that the work is my own. The work has not been submitted for any other degree or professional qualification. All quoted sources have been acknowledged.

Giovanni Calise

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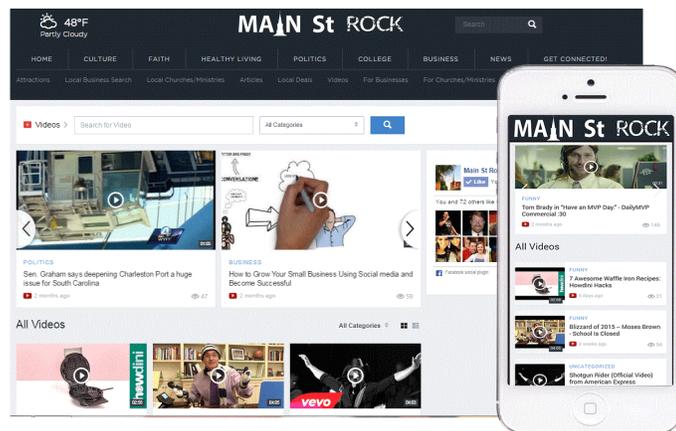
1. Introduction

1.1 Background: Main St Rock

Main St Rock is a U.S.-based nonprofit online magazine geared towards young professionals aged 22-39 years, male and female. The purpose is to provide aspiring bloggers and content creators a collective platform to share their work, express their passions, and build a following; with a mission to inform, connect, and empower in a way that respects women, life, and faith. The magazine covers a broad spectrum of articles, including business, culture, sports, health, faith, relationships, local news, fashion, and how-to guides. The magazine is solely available online, with both a desktop and a mobile version.

The magazine's corporate structure is that of a nonprofit organization with a Board of Directors advising the operations in the state of South Carolina, USA. The Executive Director, who is the researcher for this project, manages operations with the assistance of a Magazine Manager. The magazine has 3–5 volunteer interns, assisting in content creation and marketing operations. Interns serve for a one semester duration and are overseen by the Executive Director. As a nonprofit, all individuals operate on a volunteer basis. Figure 1 displays an image of the website.

Figure 1: Main St Rock Website

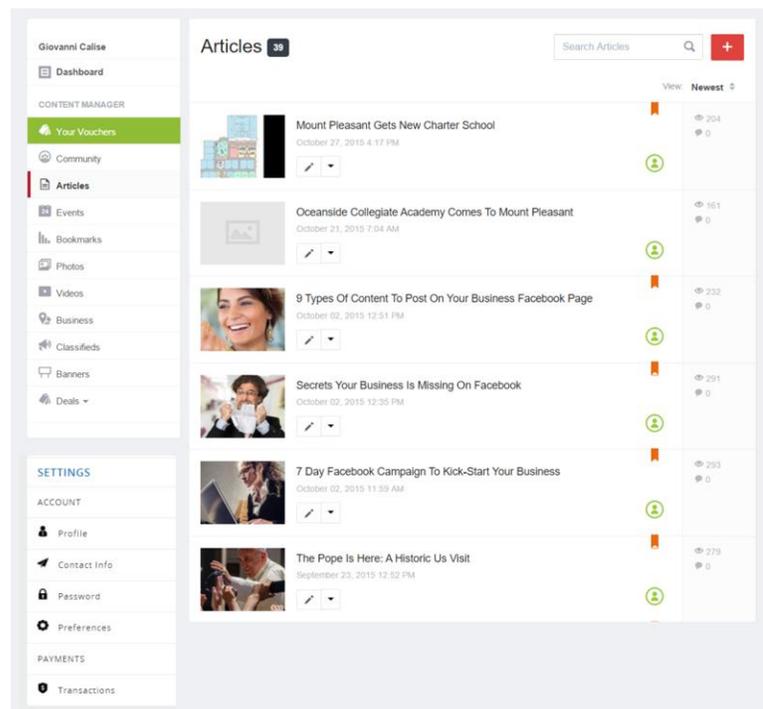


1.2 Content Creation and Promotional Strategy

The magazine's content strategy is in line with the Four Gears Model (Moore, 2014), the concept is to attract as many visitors to an entity's digital properties as possible, using a broad targeting strategy. In its attempt to attract this large volume of visitors, Main St Rock has a vast assortment of articles spanning nine different sections. To support content for these sections, the magazine has over 20 revolving volunteer content creators, consisting primarily of up-and-coming writers, college students, and local business owners; referred to as "contributors". All groups are willing to contribute complimentary

content in exchange for the exposure the magazine provides. As this is a voluntary relationship, contributors flow in and out regularly. Newer authors and students contribute as they seek to build a resumé of work and develop a following on third-party sites. Local business owners are willing to contribute articles that position them as local experts in their field of work and obtain extra exposure for their business. No formal framework is in place to

Figure 2: Author Portal



guide the creation of content; instead, contributors provide content to the magazine at will, on topics they deem appropriate. The infrastructure of the online magazine contains a back-end author portal accessed through the admin login at mainstrock.com/admin, which allows authors to create an account, log in, submit content at will, revise articles, and view performance metrics for the content, such as number of page views. Once submitted, a volunteer editor reviews content and decides if they are worthy of publication, need editing, or will be rejected. On

average, the magazine published 4–7 new articles weekly in 2015. The Executive Producer oversees the content-creation process. Figure 2 displays the author portal.

The promotional strategy of Main St Rock is to maximize engagement capability on social media to expand brand awareness. Social media provides vast outreach to participants through organic posts (free posts one publishes on a social-media page for followers to view). This is attractive for a nonprofit with limited financial resources, according to Alalwan *et al.* (2017), the use of social media applications are observed as one of the most influential and efficient vehicles to engage individuals. Kim *et al.* (2015) found that social media platforms can increase a firm's value.

All published articles are shared on Twitter and Facebook for users to read. The intent is that as individuals engage with the articles on social media, these engagements will then be rebroadcast to readers' followers, increasing brand awareness. The volunteer who posts content on social media for the magazine is referred to as the "publisher". This action is the responsibility of the Executive Producer (in most sections), with the assistance of the volunteer interns. In the Sports and News sections, the Magazine Manager has the responsibility of posting on social media. These social-media posts include a descriptive text, content (either an image, or article link), and in some cases, hashtags.

Content is posted on both Twitter and Facebook (as well as Instagram in the second half of 2018); however increasing Twitter activity has become a strategic emphasis. This is due to Twitter evolving into the platform to post public information and commentary on real-time happenings (Waterloo *et al.*, 2018). Twitter's niche in the social media realm is publishing content consisting of breaking news, blogs, GIFs, and curated content (Lua, 2018); this content is more in line with the nature of the magazine. Though the magazine does publish to Facebook and Instagram, Facebook's niche is trending to personal content to share with family and friends (Waterloo *et al.*, 2018), curated content, and video (Lua, 2018); and Instagram focuses on images (Lua, 2018). In addition, the public nature of Twitter and its open Application Programming Interface (API) provides access to greater performance analytics and social monitoring that other platforms do not have (discussed in greater detail in later chapters).

The first part of management's promotional strategy focuses on posting all articles on Twitter organically, with the objective of obtaining a tweet engagement rate of 0.33%, which is in line with a high Twitter rate according to Mee (2018). A tweet organic engagement rate is calculated by dividing the average engagements per tweet (likes, replies, retweets, clicks) by the total number of followers. Once the magazine has displayed the ability to engage Twitter users with its content, the second part of the strategy is to advertise the magazine's articles on Twitter in the form of promoted tweets. As the online magazine is funded primarily by management, proving that the magazine's content has the ability to attract engagements organically would be desirable business intelligence before investing in advertising its content.

1.3 Focus on Content Engagements

As a nonprofit online magazine, the current focus of Main St Rock is not revenue. Operating a nonprofit online magazine run by volunteers has a low overhead, and expenses are donated by management. Instead, the primary objective of the magazine is to obtain social media engagements in a brand awareness strategy to promote the contributor's content. The magazine places a higher value on social media engagements than actual website views, this is because social media platforms provide more capabilities for users to interact with content and engage the brand. As social media continues to evolve, it is becoming a primary platform to gather news and content (Cha *et al.*, 2010 and Ma *et al.*, 2014); in addition, it has a significant positive effect on brand awareness, reaching new customers (in this instance viewers), and brand image building (Godey *et al.*, 2016). Social media engagement also shapes the attitude consumers have of an organization (Leung *et al.*, 2015). This focus on engagements has great precedent in practice, as creating a brand presence on social media is considered a "must-do" activity for marketers (Kwon *et al.*, 2014). In a 2015 study, 64% of marketers stated one of the most important elements of a social media campaign was to increase user engagements; 35% stated driving website traffic was an important objective (eMarketer, 2015).

1.4 Results of Past Twitter Activity

Throughout 2015, 1,092 tweets were posted on Twitter to promote the magazine's content. This resulted in a total of 202,706 impressions (i.e., number of users who viewed the tweet), with a mean impressions per post of 185.46, and a median of 96. This generated a total of 3,594 engagements, with a mean engagement per tweet of 3.28 and a median of 1. The number of followers were 3,761, with a mean engagement rate per tweet was 0.087% (engagements per tweet divided by number of followers), and a median of 0.06%. Total retweets (i.e., total number of times a user shared the tweet on their profile) were 221.68, with a mean retweets per tweet of 0.203, and a median of 0. Total replies were 21, with a mean reply per tweet of 0.019 and a median of 0. Total likes were 499, with a mean likes per tweet of 0.457 and a median of 0. Total URL clicks (i.e., users who click on the URL link in the tweet and visit the website) were 885, with a mean URL clicks per tweet of 0.818 and a median of 0. Based on this data, Main St Rock did not garner its desired level of activity on Twitter.

The magazine's engagement rate of 0.087% underperformed the average high engagement for an organic tweet of 0.33% (Mee, 2018). The online-magazine industry relies on digital consumer engagements; thus, this represents a serious problem for Main St Rock if the organization cannot generate those engagements. The low engagement rate negatively impacted on the magazine's contributors heading into 2016. Authors contribute to the magazine to build a following or to position their businesses as local experts; however, as content engagement failed to generate the desired results, authors began to lose interest in contributing to the magazine. This resulted in a rapid decline in articles submitted. In 2015, the magazine received on average 4–7 article submissions per week. In 2016, this number decreased to 3–5 article submissions received per quarter. Due to this, towards the end of 2016 heading into 2017, the magazine experienced a period of being dormant, with a lack of activity both in article generation and social media publishing. Likewise, the number of Twitter followers declined from 3,761 followers in 2015, to 1,986 in April 2018, to 1038 in December 2018.

1.5 Problem Identification

Analyzing the magazine's underperformance, i.e., generating a Twitter engagement rate of 0.087% in 2015 opposed to the desired 0.33%, the surface level problem is the failure of the magazine to engage the target audience with its content on Twitter. This is critically problematic for an online magazine, whose primary objective is to obtain social media engagements, yet cannot obtain them. The inadequate social media engagement level created a negative impact on brand awareness and WOM activities (Hutter *et al.*, 2013), which effected viewer acquisition and brand image building (Godey *et al.*, 2016). This problem of a lack of engagements is consistent with nonprofit organizations; who in general have a lack of understanding on how to obtain adequate engagements on social media (Creedon, 2014). This is in line with Lovejoy & Saxton (2012) who claim a large portion of nonprofits are unaware of how to utilize social media effectively.

This lack of engagement directly impacted volunteers who contribute to the magazine seeking a sense of accomplishment (Starnes and Wymer, 2001) in sharing their work. When the volunteers failed to receive the proper level of engagements on social media, they began to lose interest in the magazine as the gain they were seeking of added exposure did not manifest (Shye, 2010). Thus, resulting in the declined of content submissions from 4–7 submissions per week in 2015, to 3–5 per quarter in 2016, to periods of being dormant in 2017.

Observing the problem from an organizational management perspective, the magazine does not have a procedure in place to help guide contributors in producing engaging content; in addition, it does not have a framework to guide volunteers in effectively promoting the content on social media, organically or otherwise. In its current state, the magazine's content is simply created at will within a broad scope of topics. One of the reasons volunteers discontinue service is due to unclear roles and inadequate guidance (Starnes and Wymer, 2001). This lack of guidance impacted volunteer motivation and resulted in content neither geared toward the target audience nor designed in a manner to increase engagement; as signified by the low engagement rate. This

is the organizational issue that needs to change. The problem of a lack of social media framework or policy is also consistent with nonprofits; in which 75% do not have an articulable policy in place (De Vivo, 2016). Currently, a comprehensive framework to guide content creation and promotion does not exist in the literature. Alalwan *et al.*, (2017) claims further exploration is needed in the areas of factors motivating customers to engage in content on social media. Though magazine activity has fallen drastically to sporadic-to-nonexistent levels, management does not want to close the magazine, believing it can be revitalized and provide value to its target audience.

Developing procedures to guide volunteer actions on social media in overcoming low engagement is a managerial problem that needs to be addressed by marketing managers and CMO's. Overcoming this issue calls for a scholarly approach that discovers how the magazine can increase engagements on social media, and applying evidence-based insights to establish a guide to manage volunteer actions in this realm. The organizational change this research seeks to implement is to develop a framework to shape the strategic management of volunteers, guiding them through the actions of content creation and promotion; that will result in the desired level of social media engagements.

This thesis will create actionable knowledge to help alleviate a managerial problem of the organization failing to obtain adequate social media engagements by providing recommendations that will be useful to managers making optimal decisions and designing procedures in respect to digital marketing campaigns based on the analysis of actual data. It will also provide a contribution to literature and general knowledge as a large portion of non-profits do not obtain an understanding on how to effectively utilize social media, nor do they have policies or frameworks in place to guide such actions. This thesis provides a framework guide and list of best practices for non-profit CMO's and marketing managers to implement in attempting to solve a similar problem of inadequate Twitter engagement; though geared towards non-profits, it can also serve to benefit for-profit organizations as well.

1.6 Action Research Approach

This study applies the action research approach in an actual working environment to understand how the magazine can increase engagements on Twitter. Action research is “an emergent inquiry process in which applied behavioural science knowledge is integrated with existing organizational knowledge and applied to solve real organizational problems” (Shani and Pasmore, 2010). It is a method of “action in research, rather than research about action,” (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014); a scientific approach with two primary goals: to resolve organizational problems in real time and to contribute to the body of academic literature. It aims at both taking action and creating knowledge or theory about that action (Argyris *et al.*, 1985; Coghlan and Brannick, 2014; Perry and Gummesson, 2004).

A key focus of action research is implementing change in the midst of real problems through live intervention, demonstrating why the science of action research refers to “a science of practice” (Argyris *et al.*, 1985). The organizational change this research seeks to establish is to draw upon literary insights to develop a framework to guide the volunteer actions of content creation and promotion in a manner that increases engagements on Twitter.

This is an inductive approach that begins with a topic, in this case increasing engagements on Twitter, and develops empirical insights based on learning from experience as the research evolves (Dudovskiy, 2018). According to Coghlan and Brannick (2014), this empirical process begins by “asking a fuzzy question to get a fuzzy answer to ask a less fuzzy question. Through this cyclic process of asking general and then progressively more focused questions, the researchers start to identify some crucial relationships. It is possible then, through this inductive process, to develop a grounded theory.” Through this epistemological approach, the aim of this research is to understand and explain the situation at hand, but to also to change it through intervention (Reason and Torbert, 2001).

Central to the action-research process are the iterative cycles of constructing (issue identification), planning, acting, and evaluating (Argyris et al., 1985, Coghlan and Brannick, 2014; Lewin, 1997). In the constructing phase, this thesis will draw upon literary insights to develop a framework guiding the actions of content creation and promotion. In the planning stage, a methodology will be presented to test if the developed framework will result in the desired level of social media engagements. In the acting phase, the action of implementing will take place. In the evaluation stage, the results of the implemented framework will be analyzed. This core action is consciously and deliberately repeated until an acceptable resolution is adopted. Rigor in action research is manifest through this cyclical process (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014).

Unlike traditional research approaches in which the researcher is a neutral, outside actor, the role of the researcher for this action research project is that of an inside, native actor of the subject organization who is close to the problem under study (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). This inside researcher engages in a dual role: that of inside participant, a member of the subject organization actively engaged with the problem; and that of researcher, a “critical and analytical observer” (Riordan, 1995). Because the insider researcher is native to the problem, he or she obtains insights, access, experiences, and tacit knowledge that is not easily transferrable to an outside researcher (Argyris *et al.*, 1985; Coghlan and Brannick, 2014; Perry and Gummesson, 2004; and Reason and Bradbury, 2008).

The researcher of this project is the Executive Director of Main St Rock Magazine; thus providing inside experience and tacit knowledge of the daily operations of the organization. With 18 years of experience working in the marketing field, the researcher has organized, planned and monitored the development of various social media campaigns from conception to launch. The researcher has worked with international billion dollar enterprises, national franchises, non-profit charities, local small businesses, and is an Instructor of Marketing for Anderson University; this experience will enable him to handle the challenges of this thesis and overcome any possible problems during its lifetime. The researcher possesses influence and authority to study this area, create and execute changes across the online organization. The organizational skills of the

researcher are sufficient for the proper finalization of this research study in the creation of actionable knowledge in a real working environment.

1.7 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of Main St Rock Magazine, including the magazine's target market, content creation, promotional strategy, as well as the results from previous Twitter engagements. In 2015, the magazine had a Twitter engagement rate of 0.087%, well below the desired level of 0.33%. This signifies the critical issue of the target audience not engaging with the magazine's content on Twitter. It is problematic when an online magazine, whose primary objective is to obtain social-media engagements, is unable to obtain sufficient social media engagements; as this impacts brand awareness, reaching new viewers, and brand image building (Godey *et al.*, 2016). This lack of user engagement has affected other areas of the organization. Because the magazine's authors were not gaining the exposure for which they had hoped, the magazine went from receiving 4–7 submitted articles per week in 2015, to only receiving 3–5 article submissions per quarter in 2016.

A key driver in the underperforming engagements is the lack of awareness of how to utilize social media effectively, a consistent trend of nonprofits (Creedon, 2014 and Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). From an organizational management perspective, the magazine has no framework in place to help guide contributors in producing engaging content, nor to guide volunteers in effectively promoting the content on social media, either organically or as paid content. The organizational change this thesis seeks to implement is developing a framework to shape the strategic management of volunteers to guide them through the actions of content creation and promotion on social media; resulting in the desired level of engagements.

To overcome this problem, this paper will enact a scholarly approach applying action research through the iterative cycles of constructing (issue identification), planning, acting, and evaluating

(Argyris *et al.*, 1985, Coghlan and Brannick, 2014; Lewin, 1997). The resulting framework will satisfy two strategic managerial goals. First, it will provide a guide for contributors in creating content relevant to the target market that will be more likely to result in higher levels of engagement. It will seek to discover what motivations drive social-media consumption, with the intent to build content around these motivations. Second, it will provide an effective, cost-efficient manner to promote the content on social media (Twitter in particular), both through paid advertising and organic posting. These two goals will serve as the scope of this research.

This thesis is a C1 Phase of Inquiry project (UOL, 2017), which will evaluate the success of the initiative; it not only discusses if the developed framework was able to provide the desired change, but why the change occurred and if it is sustainable. The first iteration of action will test if the created framework to guide content creation and promotion will generate the desired level of engagements through Twitter advertising. The issues identified through the construction stage of action research with supporting literature will be presented in Chapter 2, and the methodology to test the effectiveness of the framework will be presented in Chapter 3. The results of this iteration will be presented in Chapter 4, along with the reflection and evaluation of these findings. The framework will be revised based upon these reflections, and retested. The stories and results of this iteration is also found in Chapter 4. A discussion of the overall findings will be presented in Chapter 5, and Chapter 6 will conclude the thesis. The action in this iteration will be conducted by the volunteers, as well as the Executive Director and Magazine Manager.

Solving this problem will serve as actionable knowledge to help alleviate a managerial problem faced by the organization in failing to obtain adequate social media engagements by providing recommendations useful to managers in making optimal decisions and procedures in respect to digital marketing campaigns based on the analysis of actual data. It will also serve as a great contribution to literature and general knowledge providing a framework guide and list of best practices for non-profit CMO's and marketing managers to implement in attempting to solve a similar problem of inadequate Twitter engagement; as 75% of nonprofits do not have an active social media policy or framework in place (DeVivo, 2016). The end result would be a unified framework in which nonprofit managers could implement in their organizations.

Finally, this project will provide personal growth and learning opportunities for the researcher. The researcher is from a practical background as an online marketer for 18 years working with both international organizations as well as local nonprofits; this project will provide an opportunity to apply the action research approach to a live problem while enhancing skills as an academic researcher. Though the researcher does have a background in online marketing, the lack of engagements in the online magazine is puzzling to him. This research will provide the opportunity to explore various theories on content creation and social media motivation, and allow for the testing of various Twitter advertising capabilities to determine cost effective methods for nonprofits. It will also provide the researcher with the ability to transform tacit knowledge acquired during his 17 year career, into explicit knowledge through the action research process.

2. The Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The construction stage of action research identifies the leading issues of the designated problem; resolving these issues then serves as the foundation of the action to be taken (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). In reflecting upon this desired framework, the first issue is to gain an understanding on theories explaining how content spreads through social media, to conceptualize the different elements in this process, and to use these elements as the foundation of the action. This issue seeks to follow a similar precedent by Rogers (2010), who conducted research on the spread of innovation through the masses. The second issue is to discover what motivations drive social media consumption, with the intent to build content around these motivations. Creating content congruent with underlying motivations driving online behavior can increase engagement (Zhang et al., 2017), leading to a consumer-oriented content-creation process (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). These first two issues will serve as the foundation of a framework to guide content creation.

The third issue is to describe the mechanisms of the Twitter platform, in an attempt to learn how to maximize the operation of these mechanisms to increase engagements. According to Semiz and Berger (2017), there are functions within a tweet and the Twitter platform that can increase engagement, gaining an understanding of these functions can improve the results of the desired framework. The fourth issue is to analyze the targeting options provided by Twitter ads to define a cost-effective manner of promoting its content on Twitter. Nguyen *et al.* (2017) argue targeting the right audience can increase engagement; this issue will explore different targeting options within the Twitter platform that are effective and feasible for Main St Rock Magazine. Issue 3 and 4 will serve as the foundation of the framework to guide content promotion.

This chapter will explore relevant literature on the issues described above, with the intent of drawing insights into how Main St Rock management can develop the desired framework in managing volunteer actions. The resulting synthesis should yield a comprehensive framework for the magazine to implement that will guide volunteers effectively through the content creation and promotional process to maximize its use of Twitter. Once created, the framework will undergo analytical testing to determine its effectiveness.

2.2 Content Diffusion Theories

The objective of this section is to gain an understanding of the essential elements of the spread of content through social media; then, to take each elements as a basis for developing a framework to guide volunteers of an online magazine in content creation and promotion that will increase Twitter engagement. This section explores word of mouth (WOM) theories, primarily the Two-Step Flow model (Katz, 1957); as well as the advanced WOM capabilities that online platforms provide, known as e-WOM (Ho and Dempsey, 2010).

2.2.1 Two-Step Flow Process

The concept of social media engagement can be traced to the Two-Step Flow model, a word of mouth (WOM) marketing theory that explains how ideas flow from one individual to another, and eventually to the masses (Katz, 1957). In the first step of this theory, a brand releases a specifically designed message through media outlets. In the second step, recipients receive the message and then engage with it as it is dispersed directly to the network of individuals with whom they are associated, in the form of WOM communications. In this model, the recipients behave as conduits of information to the mass population. As recipients engage with the message and share it with others, they will often personalize it, providing their unique interpretation and evaluation of the content (Koeck and Marshall, 2015). The concept of an idea spreading from person to person is comparable to the outbreak and spread of a virus—thus, the term “viral”

marketing. This process acts as the basis of word-of-mouth advertising, in which the recipient becomes an intermediary for transmitting the brand's mass-media message (or a news story) to their local society (Katz, 1957).

WOM marketing has the ability to reach vast populations with the spread of information (Bakshy *et al.*, 2011), due primarily to the trust factor. Gladwell (2006) claims individuals on average possess a greater amount of trust of messages received through personal WOM interactions than messages received through media advertisements. This notion is pervasive in the literature. Individuals not only invest greater trust in WOM, but also seek the advice of others in their social network, in the form of WOM, when making a purchase (Hill *et al.*, 2006; Schmitt *et al.*, 2011; Iyengar *et al.*, 2013; Verbraken *et al.*, 2014; Sadovykh *et al.*, 2015).

As a result, many researchers agree that word of mouth marketing can prove to be more effective than traditional advertising alone. Katz and Lazarsfeld (1955) describe the power in the spread of information through an organic flow of communication generated from personal interactions. They argue that the spread of information through these personal interactions can work more effectively for a marketer than mass media. Trusov *et al.* (2010) also agree that WOM marketing is more effective than mass media, claiming WOM has an elasticity of 20-30 times that of traditional media outlets. Brands use WOM to adopt new products and innovations (Rogers, 2010), expand brand awareness (Keller and Berry, 2003), influence public opinion (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1995), and increase market share (Bass, 1969).

2.2.2 E-WOM

Though the literature presents great benefits of the Two-Step Flow communication model, in its original form it does have some disadvantages. First, it is a linear occurrence in which a brand promotes a message through mass media to recipients, who then disperse the message to their social network. This flow is unidimensional, meaning the brand can release a message to the recipient, but the recipient cannot directly communicate with the brand utilizing the same channel (Katz and Lazarsfeld, 1955). For example, if a recipient hears a radio commercial, the

recipient is unable to use that same platform of the radio to communicate back to the brand. In addition, time and space restrain the original Two-Step Flow (Boyd *et al.*, 2010). For example, before the advent of the internet, though possible, it would have been difficult for an individual in Hong Kong to forward a brand message to an individual in New York City.

However, the expansion of the Internet has transformed interpersonal communications, as well as the way people operate on a daily basis (Rainie, 2005). News is increasingly read online as opposed to in a physical newspaper, bill payments are processed online, and even travel arrangements are completed online. This shift in daily activity has altered channels available for WOM. In the recent decade, a new term has emerged in literature: e-WOM, the act of forwarding content and information through electronic and digital platforms (Ho and Dempsey, 2010). This content forwarding can be in the form of email, mobile applications, or social media engagements. E-WOM also refers to the “the positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company, which is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the Internet” (Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2004).

E-WOM properties assist in overcoming deficiencies originally faced by the original Two-Step Flow and WOM communications—specifically, those of time, geographic limitations, and mass information forwarding (Boyd *et al.*, 2010; Wolny and Mueller, 2013, Alalwan *et al.*, 2017). With e-WOM capabilities, one can send an email or a social media post instantly to anyone in the world who has internet access. Although the platforms of WOM (personal interactions) differ from the platforms of e-WOM (digital/electronic interactions), the nature of the actual WOM communications and the principles guiding WOM remain the same (Thurau *et al.*, 2004; Trusov *et al.*, 2009; Wolny and Mueller, 2013).

What makes the advent of eWOM so interesting is its transformation of the linear flow of the original Two-Step process into a multi-directional form of communication. With online properties, brands now have the ability to utilize a mass-media platform to engage in a multi-directional conversation with clients. Now a brand can send a mass email, YouTube video, or social media post in a manner such that the recipient can not only receive the message, but also

use the same platform to communicate back to the brand by replying to the email or social media post (Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez, 2016).

2.2.3 Message Diffusion on Social Media and Twitter

Social media magnifies the ability of a marketer to diffuse a message through e-WOM platforms that transcend time and space. The properties of social media expand recipients' ability to engage and rebroadcast a brand's message, because as conversations on social media emerge, "they are often experienced by broader audiences than just the interlocutors" (Boyd *et al.*, 2010). On the Twitter platform, users have the ability to subscribe to an individual's or a brand's account, known as a "follow" (Twitter, 2017). When a marketer posts content on its Twitter page (known as a "tweet," expressed in the form of images, texts, links, photos, videos, or GIFs), this tweet not only appears on the brand's profile page but is also rebroadcast on the home timeline page of all its followers. A Twitter home timeline page displays a stream of Tweets from accounts the user has chosen to follow on Twitter in reverse chronological order. When a Twitter user views a tweet that is of interest, the user has a multitude of possibilities for engaging and rebroadcasting the message, in the form of a reply, a retweet, a like, a mention, a direct message, a link click, a profile click, and a tweet click. Whereas traditional WOM activities include rebroadcasting the message to direct interlocutors, each form of post engagement on social media results in its own element of rebroadcasting to an additional audience.

A reply occurs when a user (the replier) leaves a comment on another user's—the tweeter's—tweet. The reply will appear on the replier's profile page in the "Tweets and Replies" tab. The reply will appear on the tweeter's notification page, as well as under the tweet on their profile page. In addition, any user who is following the replier and the tweeter will have the reply appear on the follower's home timeline (Twitter, 2018b).

A retweet occurs when a user reposts to their profile page the tweet of another user. This is a useful mechanism for a user to share content of interest with followers. When a user retweets a post, this retweet will appear on the profile page of the retweeter, as well as in the home timeline

of all of the retweeter's followers. Finally, the retweet will also appear in the notification tab of the original poster of the tweet (Twitter, 2018c).

On each tweet, a little heart-shaped symbol appears below the message. If a user sees a tweet and likes it, clicking on the heart icon will turn the heart from white to red as a display of appreciation. The original poster of the tweet will receive a notification of the like. In addition, every "like" a user has posted on a public tweet appears on the liker's profile page in the "Likes" tab (Twitter, 2018d).

A mention is a form of tweet in which the "@" symbol is used within the tweet immediately followed by a Twitter user's username. When this occurs, the tweet will appear on the tweeter's profile page. For the recipient, the one whose user name was mentioned, the mention will appear on the recipient's notification page. In addition, any users following the tweeter of the mention will have the mention appear on their home timeline (Twitter, 2018b).

When a user types the hashtag "#" symbol in a tweet immediately followed by a relevant keyword or phrase without spaces in between—for example, #january or #snowdays—a user who clicks on a hashtag in a tweet or conducts a search for a hashtag sees all public tweets that contain the hashtag appear on the search page (Twitter, 2018e).

Direct messages "are private messages sent from one Twitter account to another account(s)" (Twitter, 2018a). These messages can only be seen by users between whom the messages are sent. A link click directs the user's website browser to open the webpage of the clicked-upon link. A tweet click will enlarge the tweet. A profile click by a user who clicks within the tweet on the profile of the tweeter redirects the user to that profile page. Link clicks, tweet clicks, and profile clicks are not rebroadcast to other users.

The previous paragraphs illustrate Twitter's capabilities for rebroadcasting brand messages beyond interlocutors and out to larger audiences (Boyd *et al.*, 2010). Other social networks, such as Facebook and Instagram, operate in similar fashion.

2.2.4 3 Elements of Social Media Engagement

The managers of Main St Rock Magazine must understand the mechanisms of social media engagement if they desire to develop a framework for volunteers to guide content creation and promotion that will increase Twitter engagements. The Two-Step Flow model describes the flow of a brand's message as WOM activities diffuse it through the population. Though effective, time and space restraints limit traditional WOM activities (Boyd *et al.*, 2010). E-WOM communications, a modernized version of the Two-Step Flow and WOM, can eliminate these barriers through online capabilities that allow instant communication with anyone throughout the world who has online access. In addition, the capabilities of social media networks, such as Twitter, enable rebroadcast of a message to an audience larger than direct interlocutors, with the extended rebroadcasting capabilities of engagements such as retweets, likes, and replies.

Reflecting upon these theories leads to the conclusion that the desired framework will need three key elements to guide volunteers: content, context/platform, and recipient/target (Rogers, 2010; Kaplan and Haenli, 2011; Ma *et al.*, 2014; Zhang *et al.*, 2017). The first element is the message itself—in this case, the magazine content. The framework will need to incorporate an element of content creation that concerns designing content in a manner that encourages recipients to engage with it. The second element is the channel that distributes the message. The framework needs to incorporate the various capabilities available on the Twitter platform to enhance rebroadcasting. The third element is the recipient, or the target audience who will receive the promoted content on Twitter and (the sender hopes) engage with it. The framework must provide a strategic guide on how to target individuals who are most likely to engage. The following sections of this chapter will explore the literature for each element, as an online magazine strives to develop a framework to guide content creation and promotion that will increase engagements on Twitter.

2.3 Content Creation

The first element of social media engagement is creating the actual content (Kaplan and Haenlien, 2011; Ma *et al.*, 2014; Zhang *et al.*, 2017). Having individuals engage with articles from an online magazine on Twitter is an effective means of diffusing a brand's content. However, just as important to the diffusion process is the structure and content of the shared message (Bakshy *et al.*, 2011). As an online magazine strives to create a framework to guide its volunteers through the content-creation process, an understanding of the underlying motives that influence online consumption would be helpful. Once these motives have been incorporated into the framework, gaining an understanding of the type of content with which one's target audience is currently engaged would enable its use as a benchmark for content creation. Finally, this section will examine a framework known as STEPPS, produced by Wharton School of Business Associate Professor Jonah Berger (2013) to aid in developing these insights into tangible, engaging content.

2.3.1 Motivational Needs that Drive Online Consumer Behavior

An online magazine seeking to develop a framework to guide content creation, with the objective of increasing Twitter engagements, requires an understanding of the theories that drive online consumer behavior. Psychological states of needs, wants, desires, and drives play a key role in internal information analysis and decision-making (MacInnis *et al.*, 1991; Wu & Lin, 2012). Marketing managers and content producers can increase the dissemination of communications on social media by understanding these drivers (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). Their application will lead to a consumer-oriented process (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010) that increases the likelihood of the target audience engaging with the content.

Drivers of Online Activity

Rodgers and Sheldon (2002) identify four different motivations driving individual online activity: Communications, Shopping, Researching, and Surfing. As described in the section on e-WOM, the ability of the Internet to eliminate geographical barriers provides a channel to increase interpersonal communication and an individual's motive to communicate with others, through tools such as email and social media. The elimination of geographic barriers has also enhanced an individual's ability to fulfill the desire to shop. A consumer in New York can easily make a purchase from a merchant in London, simply by utilizing the merchant's website. Individual motives for research stem from multiple underlying drives, such as seeking information to make an educated purchase, or the desire to satisfy pure curiosity. Finally, the motive to utilize the Internet for surfing fulfills one's desire for entertainment. One can easily go online to listen to music or even watch television shows. The ease with which an individual can fulfill these motives increases the desire for consumption of online content.

Though social media is a platform within the online realm, it does have distinctly unique characteristics. Through the lens of the social media context, Hoffman and Fodor (2010) identify four motivations that drive social media behavior, which they describe as the 4 Cs: connections, creation, consumption, and control. The motives of connections and consumption align with Rodgers and Sheldon's (2002) motives of communication and surfing respectively, reinforcing common agreement in literature. This then leaves the questions of why Hoffman and Fodor (2010) exclude the online motives of shopping and researching, and what dynamic of social media encouraged them to include the motivations of control and creation? To answer the first part of the question, we can assume Hoffman and Fodor's research predated the advancement of social media business pages and shopping carts. Today, individuals will often visit a brand's social media page for research before making a purchase (Berger, 2013). In addition, the advancement of social media shopping carts, such as that on Facebook, increases the ease of making a purchase during one's social media engagements. Thus, as of the date of this paper, social media platforms now have the same capabilities as online media in general to warrant including shopping and research among motivations for social media use. Though the extent to

which shopping and research motivate one to utilize social media is unclear, literature still supports including them in the list of motivations within the scope of this paper.

Hoffman and Fodor (2010) argue that the ability to control whom to follow on social media, what pages to visit, and what content to publish motivates individuals. Social media, they continue, is consumer controlled, not marketer controlled, and the consumer is in full control of their experiences throughout social media. This aligns with Schutz (1966), who proposes that the need for control correlates with feelings of achievement, competence, accomplishment, and influence. The motivation of control drives individuals to desire to make a difference in the social network with which they are involved and, more importantly, to have a decisive impact on how that is accomplished.

The motive of creation reinforces the Network Co-Production Model (Kozinets *et al.*, 2010). Through the organic nature of social media, WOM communications are not unidirectional messages created by marketers, but messages that are coproduced by the network itself. This element of co-creation provides the user with an element of ownership in the message, thus increasing emotional connection with the brand. As the user co-produces a message with a brand, it provides an outlet for the user to utilize the brand as a tool of self-expression (covered in more detail in a later section).

A synthesis of these theories would result in six primary motivations that drive individuals to engage in online behavior: Researching, Shopping, Surfing/Consuming, Communicating/Connecting, Control, and Creation. However, after reflecting upon these motivations, one may come to conclude they appear superficial and do not provide answers to the true underlying motives for online consumption. For example, why do people surf or consume on social media, and what exactly do they surf and consume? This list of motivations does not satisfy the desired deeper level of questioning. Thus, there must be another layer of explanation to reveal the true inner motivations that drive individuals to consume content on social media.

4 Motivational Needs

To gain a deeper understanding of the underlying drivers that motivate individuals to engage with content on social media, three works in the literature can assist: Oh and Syn's (2015) ten motivations of online sharing, an application of Schutz's (1966) Fundamental Interpersonal Relations Orientation (FIRO) theory to online activity by Ho and Dempsey (2010), and Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of human needs.

Ho and Dempsey (2010) applied the FIRO framework to online content engagement and tested the motivations of belonging, individualistic, altruism, and personal growth. Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs obviously predates online engagement, however, it provides helpful insight into what motivates human behavior. After satisfying one's physiological and safety needs, the emotional needs of belonging, esteem, and self-actualization drive human behavior. Oh and Syn (2015) present 10 motivations driving social media engagement derived from the works of Herzberg's two factor theory (Herzberg, 1987; Herzberg et al., 1993), the Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivation Model (Deci & Ryan, 1985), and Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs. These motivations are enjoyment, self-efficacy, learning, personal gain, altruism, empathy, community interest, social engagement, reputation, and reciprocity. Synthesizing the motivations of these three studies are explored in detail below.

The need to belong

According to Maslow (1970), the desire for human interaction and community is a driving motivation behind human behavior. This need to belong is also reinforced in the belongingness hypothesis, in which individuals obtain "a need to form and maintain at least a minimum quantity of interpersonal relationships" (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). This is consistent with Schultz's (1966) motivation of inclusion. Maslow (1970) argues that this motivation can include the desire to belong to small intimate groups such as family, friends, intimate relationships, or small social groups. It can also include the desire to be part of something bigger than one's self, such as religious groups, social movements, professional organizations, sports-team associations,

or political affiliations. The overarching theme is the desire for human interaction (Phelps *et al.*, 2004; Lin, Lu, and Wu, 2012; Wolny and Mueller, 2013).

Although a study conducted by Ho and Dempsey (2010) did not support the need to belong as one that drives online engagement, the literature provides overwhelming precedent to support it. Oh and Syn (2015) present the motivations of social engagement and community interest to reinforce this desire of individuals engaging on social media for human interaction. Phelps *et al.* (2010) conducted a study that determined the desire to share information and interact with others was the motivation that most commonly influenced individuals to share an email. A study of Twitter influencers by Lin, Lu, and Wu (2012) suggests that a key driving force motivating a social media user to share content—in particular, content released by a brand—is the desire and hope that others will interact with the post. The underlying assumption is that sharing content released by a brand provides the user an opportunity to invite others to interact and engage with the post, deepening interpersonal connections within their social network, with the possibility of expanding their network to new, like-minded individuals. This is reinforced by Wolny and Mueller (2013), who apply this concept to e-WOM frequency, concluding a direct correlation with the desire for interpersonal interactions. “Users appreciate the social benefits that occur when writing comments or ‘sharing’ a brand-related post with a friend” (Wolny and Mueller, 2013). Research also illustrates that individuals will seek human interaction to generate support during difficult times (Rimé, 2009).

The need to be Individualistic

Maslow (1970) argues that individuals have a human need for esteem and being a unique individual—being accomplished, developing a positive reputation, enhancing one’s prestige, and being individualistic. This is consistent with Ho and Dempsey’s (2010) motivational need to be different and an individualistic member of a group, derived from the FIRO framework (Schutz, 1966). Maslow (1970) identifies two subsets of this need: the desire for esteem and respect from others, and the need for self-respect.

The desire for respect from others resonates with impression management (Berger, 2014) in which individuals present themselves in a particular manner to obtain a desired reputation or self-image. This consists of three elements: identity signaling, self-enhancement, and seeking recognition. Identity signaling is the desire to have others perceive you in line with your self-image (Escalas and Bettman, 2003; Berger and Heath, 2007; Ho and Dempsey, 2010; Berger, 2014). Individuals will talk about particular topics with others or share distinct content on social media to signal particular characteristics of the desired self-image they would like to portray (Chung and Darke, 2006; Packard and Wooten, 2013, Berger, 2014). These actions are designed to obtain a desired reputation from others (Maslow, 1970), in line with Oh and Syn's (2015) motivation of reputation. In the context of Twitter engagement, individuals will use social media as a tool of self-expression to signal to others their interests and who they are as unique individuals. Likewise, research shows that individuals are more likely to engage in WOM activities for content in line with their self-image (Chung and Darke, 2006; Ho and Dempsey, 2010; Berger, 2014).

Individuals have not only a desire to express their self-image, but also a human motivation to enhance their self-image in the eyes of others, known as self-enhancement (Berger, 2014); the desire to increase one's status or prestige (Maslow, 1970a; Sundaram, Mitra and Webster, 1998; Rimé, 2009; Berger, 2014). For example, individuals may share content from Lamborghini out of a desire to associate their personality with the perception of luxury associated with Lamborghini. Individuals desire others to perceive them positively, and this motivation will influence them to present themselves in ways that attract such impressions (Berger, 2014). In the context of Twitter, this signifies that individuals will more likely engage with content that will generate a positive impression instead of a negative one.

The third element of impression management is the desire to seek validation. Individuals desire others to recognize and appreciate their beliefs, accomplishments, experiences, and hardships (Maslow, 1970 and Dichter, 1966). Cheung and Thadani (2010) argue that WOM activity will increase if a brand has the ability to validate the beliefs and experiences of its target audience.

In addition to impression management, the motivational need to be individualistic consists of the desire for self-respect (Maslow, 1970). This is the “desire for strength, for achievement, for adequacy, for confidence in the face of the world, and for independence and freedom” (Maslow, 1943). According to Maslow (1970) and Oh and Syn (2015), individuals have a desire to be accomplished, to achieve, and obtain personal gain. This achievement and accomplishment leads to a spirit of self-efficacy (Oh and Syn, 2015). Second, individuals have a desire to feel confident and adequate their personal preferences, opinions (Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez, 2016), and elements of enjoyment (Oh and Syn, 2015). At the core of this desire is the motivation to be free to participate in the experience’s one desires, an element of independence. Individuals have an emotional connection to past experiences that helped form the individual they are. Reliving these experiences provides sentimental and nostalgic value (Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2004; Rimé, 2009; and Berger, 2014).

A framework to guide content creation and promotion that will increase Twitter engagements should incorporate designing content that will satisfy the need to be individualistic as a second motivation.

Altruism / Affection

According to Ho and Dempsey (2010), the need to be altruistic causes an individual to engage in actions that are selfless, out of charity and love. Oh and Syn (2015) claim altruism and reciprocity both resemble providing something to individuals without expectation, while individuals are drawn to utilize social media to provide social and emotional support for those in need in acts of empathy. A sense of pleasure arises when individuals engage in acts of charity toward others (Feick, and Price, 1987; Sundaram *et al.*, 1998; Phelps *et al.*, 2004; and Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2004). Research has shown that individuals feel they have an obligation to share information to help others (e.g., Clark and Goldsmith, 2005; Vazifehdoost, Akbari, and Charsted, 2012). Altruistic motives often drive consumers in both online (Phelps *et al.*, 2004) and offline environments (Sundaram *et al.*, 1998; Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2004). This is consistent with Zhang *et al.*, (2017) and Heath *et al.*, (2001), who also conclude that emotional content that can be considered altruistic will have an increased probability of being shared on social media.

Maslow released a revised conceptualization of human motivation in his later years, which he called self-transcendence, the motivational need of transcending one's self (Maslow, 1970b). This need to achieve self-transcendence aligns with the altruistic motivation in which one reaches the fullness of satisfaction by going beyond one's self in altruistic acts of charity for others, and can also include the pursuit of spirituality to reach a higher purpose (Maslow, 1970b).

A framework to guide content creation and promotion that will increase Twitter engagements should also incorporate the third motivation, the need to be altruistic.

Curiosity

According to Maslow (1970), individuals are greatly motivated to pursue the element of curiosity and the desire to obtain facts. This pursuit can be out of human necessity, such as obtaining facts essential to keep one alive; or out of a pure thirst of knowledge. Though not part of his essential hierarchy of needs, Maslow included the element of curiosity, knowledge, and understanding in a revised hierarchy (Maslow, 1970) as cognitive needs. Curiosity is the gap between what one knows and what one desires to know. This gap creates a sense of dissonance that human nature strives to resolve (Digital Spark Marketing, 2016). Thus, humans will take action to satisfy their curiosity so as to eliminate the dissonance in an act of learning (Oh and Syn, 2015), especially on a topic of interest to them.

The motivational need of satisfying curiosity is the fourth motivation that should be incorporated into the framework to guide content creation and promotion that will increase Twitter engagements.

Four Motivational Needs

Content dissemination on social media increases if marketers can create content that is in line with the underlying motivations driving online behavior (Zhang *et al.*, 2017), leading to a consumer-oriented content-creation process (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). Content creation in line

with these motivations increases message diffusion as it reinforces the perception of congruence between the individual and the brand (Lis, 2014). This level of congruence will result in greater engagement on social media than occurs with messages not in line with user interests (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). A review of the relevant literature yields four emerging motivational needs to serve as a foundation for content creation: belonging, individualism, altruism, and curiosity.

Management should be mindful of these motivations as they seek to develop a framework for volunteers to follow to guide content creation and promotion that will increase engagements on Twitter. The incorporations of these motivations can serve as a foundation in selecting topics congruent and enthusiastic with the target audience.

2.3.2 Social Listening/Monitoring

Once a marketer applies the four motivational needs to determining a topic of interest, another facet that would be beneficial is obtaining an understanding of the conversations the target audience is actively engaging with surrounding that topic, and using those insights as a benchmark to assist in the creation of engaging content (Zhang and Vos, 2014). This can be accomplished through social monitoring, which is “monitoring digital conversations to determine what consumers are saying online about a brand, company and industry,” (Steimer, 2017). Social monitoring is also referred to as social listening in industry.

By detecting the content that a target market is posting on Twitter and the social media conversations in which those users engage, a brand can create posts or ads based on this content and join the conversation (Zhang and Moe, 2016). Brands are consistently monitoring social media to analyze the conversations of various homogeneous groups (Billington and Billington, 2012; Zhang and Vos, 2014), providing an opportunity to discover the groups’ interests, passions, and emerging trends within their conversations in real time (Chen, 2010). This ability to develop relevant and timely content is a strategy for capturing the participating individuals’ attention, resulting in increased engagements and effective message diffusion (Zhang and Moe, 2016). Zhang and Vos (2014) recommend it as an effective process for a marketer to listen to the

social media conversations taking place within its desired target market, interact with the conversation by providing content congruent with the conversations, influence the conversation with relevant content, and then reflect on the social media interaction.

To conduct social-monitoring activities on Twitter, a marketer will utilize a software program (Bouman *et al.*, 2012) that will gain access to public tweets through the Twitter Application Programming Interface (API). An API is a “set of functions, protocols and tools that are used to build an application, or to facilitate the communication with services” (Riquelme and González-Cantergiani, 2016). Twitter’s API provides open access to Tweet data metrics in real time (Bakshy *et al.*, 2011; Riquelme and González-Cantergiani, 2016; Zhang *et al.*, 2017). Twitter is a public social media site, meaning individuals post on Twitter with the desire for their tweets to be viewed by the general public; thus all public tweets published to Twitter, with their corresponding data, are free in the public domain. It is to be noted however, individuals have the ability to mark tweets and profiles as “private” which will prevent this information from being open to the public domain. As social-monitoring software accesses the Twitter API, it gains access to every public tweet posted on Twitter (API programs will not have access to data from tweets marked as private). This data includes the date and time the tweet was posted, the source of the tweet (e.g., desktop, mobile platform), language and location of the tweet, the user who posted the tweet, and the numbers of user follows and followers (Riquelme and González-Cantergiani, 2016). Thus, through the use of social-monitoring software, a marketer can monitor and analyze all public tweets pertaining to a specific topic, keyword, or hashtag. Social-monitoring platforms can also gain access to public posts on Facebook pages (but not personal profiles) and public Instagram accounts (private accounts and posts are not available).

Utilizing software to analyze social media conversations is becoming a key element in the marketing mix to track emerging topics of interest (NZ Marketing Magazine, 2012). For example, a magazine contributor can utilize a social monitoring platform, enter a desired topic they wish to create content on, and the software can identify trending key words and phrases that are actively being used with the inserted topic in real time. The contributor can then apply these trending keywords and phrases in the article. This practice is becoming more prevalent in practice. According to Sarah Patrick (2017), 25% of businesses surveyed use social monitoring

as a means to improve products, 24% to attract new customers, and 21% to provide better customer service. This signifies the benefit of social monitoring for understanding conversations in which different groups are engaging on social media. Zailskaite-Jakste and Kuvykaite (2012) utilized social monitoring to analyze social media context in real time. Pehlivan *et al.* (2011) utilized SAS Enterprise Text Miner and NVivo to analyze frequency of words and phrases in online content.

This then begs the question on what exact actions should a marketer partake in to engage in social monitoring? Zhang and Vos (2014) analyzed 25 research articles focused on social monitoring which can be applied as a guide for such actions; which include keyword/topic search, analysis of spread patterns (trending keywords and hashtags), and thematic and sentiment analysis. Social monitoring platforms provide the convenient features to assist in all of these actions.

In this manner, marketers use social monitoring as a benchmark for content creation, whereby they can gauge the type of content in the designated topic that is gaining higher rates of engagements. NZ Marketing Magazine (2012) applied this method to comparing online conversations revolving around the Samsung Galaxy Tab and the iPad2, utilizing a software solution to analyze social media content, blog posts, and comment reviews, to determine the sentiment around the iPad and Galaxy Tab.

As an online magazine seeks to develop a framework for volunteers to guide content creation and promotion to increase Twitter engagements, it would be beneficial for the framework to include social monitoring to ensure that content is congruent with social media trends.

2.3.3 STEPPS Framework for Content Style

The next question is how management of an online magazine can strategically apply these insights obtained through the four motivational needs and social monitoring to the actual tangible creation of the content that will attract engagement. There are specific styles of content that will

increase the likelihood of generating online engagements (Berger, 2014). Wharton School of Business Associate Professor Jonah Berger (2013) created a framework that synthesizes these theories, as a guide to producing content designed for diffusion through a population. This framework describes six elements scientifically proven to increase content engagements and summarized by the acronym STEPPS: Social Currency, Triggers, Emotion, Public, Practical, and Stories.

Social Currency

According to Berger (2013), people will engage with content that makes them look good and increases their social status. For example, individuals may share an image of a Lamborghini on a social media page to associate themselves with luxury and status. They will engage with content to reinforce their desired self-image (Sundaram *et al.*, 1998) and will also share knowledge they have in a designated area of interest as an element of “currency in social exchanges where they want to fit in and gain the esteem of their social groups” (Goldsmith, *et al.*, 2012). Desire for that social currency will motivate sharing information online (Ghosh *et al.*, 2012).

Management can increase the possibility of social media engagement on Twitter by providing content that makes the target audience look favorably on their social network. Berger (2013) proposes sharing content in three ways that accomplish this: namely, content that the user finds remarkable, that leverages internal competitiveness with game mechanics, and that makes an individual feel like an insider. For remarkability, content creators will release content that is in line with their target audience’s desired self-image. This is a form of impression management, discussed as part of the individualistic motivational need. Content creators can also publish content that is unusual, extraordinary, or simply interesting in the eyes of their target market. To leverage the competitive nature of individuals with game mechanics, Berger (2013) suggests creating contests, reward cards, and interactive content in which users can engage. Successful examples of game mechanics include NFL Fantasy Football and Angry Birds. Finally, making an individual feel like an insider will increase content engagement. Berger (2013) suggests accomplishing this through scarcity and exclusivity. Scarcity in this context refers to providing insider information to which the general public does not have access, such as news before it

breaks or behind-the-scenes information. Exclusivity refers to not only providing inside information, but also making those with access feel like insiders, using devices such as members-only or VIP areas.

Triggers

Associating a message with a topic that is top of mind helps to sustain high levels of message diffusion (Berger, 2013). For example, when one thinks “peanut butter,” “jelly” often follows. Some thoughts are always top of mind, regardless of time, such as environmental triggers (e.g., aromas, sounds, sights), recurring triggers (e.g., snow with every Christmas, eating chicken soup when sick), nostalgia (e.g., family holidays); while some are time-sensitive cultural fads such as current events in the news or latest fashion trends. If a brand can effectively associate its message with a top-of-mind trigger, a consumer will think of the brand when encountering the trigger.

An example of a successfully applied use of triggers was the Kit Kat candy bar brand, during a 2007 campaign that associated Kit Kat with coffee. Assuming that a large portion of adults drink coffee while working, and many businesses have a coffee break built into the daily schedule, the intent was to influence consumers to think of having a Kit Kat during their coffee break, and whenever the thought of coffee came to mind, they would associate it with a Kit Kat. This trigger-based campaign proved successful (Berger, 2013). In applying this strategy to an online magazine, one style of content creation could be to design trigger elements that are top of mind for the target audience.

Emotion

Individuals share with others emotional experiences they encounter (Mesquita, 1993; Vergara, 1993; Anderson, 1998), to connect with individual commonalities and similar expressions. Individuals can encounter different experiences yet feel the same emotion. This creates a bond of congruence that resonates among them, strengthening their relationship (Berger 2013). Individuals will often share their emotions to help reflect upon and understand their experiences,

as well as to engage in deeper social interaction (Festinger, Riecken, and Schachter, 1956; Peters and Kashima, 2007). As a result, social media content on an emotional level elicits more engagement than non-emotional content (Heath *et al.*, 2001; Berger, 2013).

The literature conflicts as to whether positive or negative content receives greater levels of engagement. Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez (2016) conducted a study to determine if the sentiment of a post altered the effective likelihood of its being assimilated. The results show that a Twitter user increases social influence with the posting of tweets displaying a positive sentiment. These results are consistent with a study conducted by Bae and Lee (2012), who observe that a Twitter user is more apt to respond to a tweet with a positive retweet if the original tweet in itself was positive. Ironically, the study recorded a lack of empirical evidence when observing the results of tweets with a negative sentiment. The authors conclude that brand loyalty outweighs sentiment. If influencers are loyal to a brand, they will interact with a post regardless of its sentiment.

However, Berger and Milkman (2012) argue that the arousal level of the content is a more effective measure than its valence in determining social transmission. Arousal is a state of activation ready to take action (Berger, 2013; Heilman, 1997). For example, anger is a negative emotion; however, according to the author's research, content containing anger frequently goes viral. Emotions containing a high level of arousal-causing emotions, such as awe, anxiety, or anger, are positively related to increased virality of content, even though these emotions are either positive or negative.

Engaging content online requires taking action. Thus, content that evokes emotional arousal prompting action will enjoy greater social transmission (Berger, 2013). One emotion that exemplifies this is awe, an emotion of surprise, mystery, and admiration—more specifically, awe at being in the presence of something greater than oneself (Keltner and Haidt 2003). This emotion promotes action by opening the mind to new possibilities that were once unconsidered, thus encouraging one to engage and diffuse (Berger and Milkman 2012).

Just as high arousal content encourages virality, emotional content with low arousal, specifically the emotion of contentment, will discourage virality (Berger, & Milkman 2012). As individuals enter a state of contentment, their heart rate slows and they relax, eliminating the desire for action. Consistent with the literature, content with low emotional arousal will have a lower virality rate (Berger and Milkman 2012; Berger, 2013). Thus, the greater the intensity of the emotion and the higher the arousal level, the more likely sharing online becomes.

Applying this to the online magazine, one style of content the magazine could publish is articles that focus on emotions with high arousal value to the target audience. One way to accomplish this is to discover what makes a target group feel passionate (either negatively or positively) and generate articles revolving around this passion (Berger, 2013). Another way to accomplish this is through memorable experiences (Sung-Joon, 2012). Mavinello (2014) claims that feelings, and not reason, motivate individuals. He concludes that personal experiences create and reinforce these feelings, not scientific investigation. Thus, to increase the productivity of a social media campaign, a brand should aim to identify the current beliefs of its target market, create messaging that delivers the perception of congruence between these beliefs and the brand, and ensure the brand promotes engagement with these messages that instills a memorable experience.

Public

When a multitude of individuals publicly consumes content or an innovation, engagement increases (Berger, 2013). Social influence theory explains this by the two elements that compose it: subjective norms, the perception of expectations from others in a social network (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1977); and descriptive norms, the perception of behaviors or attitudes possessed by others in the social network (Rivis and Sheeran, 2003). This concept can apply to the context of social media, in which an overflow of information is available to users on a regular basis. To reduce the cognitive effort needed to organize this vast amount of information, individuals naturally evaluate content based upon the choices and engagements of others (Bonabeau, 2004). For example, an individual on Twitter may be more apt to interact with an online magazine article posted in a tweet if other members of the individual's social network have already interacted with it. Elek *et al.* (2006) claim that individuals are more apt to believe references to a

particular action, such as interacting with an online article posted on Twitter, if they observe others engaging in that same activity. This is known as the psychology of imitation (Berger, 2013).

Not only can social influence motivate behavior; it can also affect the perception of quality (Salganik *et al.*, 2006; Wang and Chuan-Chuan Lin, 2011). If an action, event, or social media post appears to be popular, an individual may perceive this as an indication of higher quality than less popular action, events, or social media posts might offer. Chen (2008) studied this notion in the purchasing of books online and observed that an individual's online purchase of a book could be facilitated by the number of engagements (e.g., comments, recommendations, likes) associated with that book. If an online magazine can attract popularity to its articles on Twitter, it creates a perception that the magazine produces high-quality articles.

An online magazine could avail itself of three ways available on Twitter to increase the public perception of content: hashtags, user-generated content, and social proof. Inserting hashtags in tweets increases public awareness of the content, which will improve content discovery (Huang, Thornton, and Efthimiadis, 2010), increase retweets (Suh *et al.*, 2010; Burton and Soboleva, 2011) and increase content engagements (Jenders, Kasneci, and Naumann, 2013). This is a form of social proof, the second style to create a public effect, which can also include testimonials, reviews, and proof of use. The concept of social proof asserts that individuals will often follow the directions of others in areas of uncertainty (Cialdini, 2007).

Finally, user-generated content (UGC) appears when consumers themselves post content that incorporates the brand on their social media pages. Social media users in this sense are not only assimilators, but "co-producers" of content. The Network Co-Production Model (Kozinets *et al.*, 2010), in which brands encourage social media users to post content featuring elements of the brand, explains this means of creating a public effect. For example, in Coca-Cola's "Share a Coke" campaign, consumers are encouraged to share images on social media of themselves holding a Coca-Cola bottle with their name on it.

Practical Value

Content that clearly illustrates practical application will result in greater engagement and virality (Gladwell, 2000). Even if the content includes information that is current knowledge, such as a small map in the corner of an ad for a restaurant that an individual has attended multiple times, the act of seeing the practicality creates a subconscious effect to take action. In addition, users will not only apply the practical content for themselves, but also be more apt to share the content with their social network if it is of value (Berger, 2013). This fulfills the internal motivation to be altruistic (Berger and Milkman 2012). For example, a user may share an article on fitness to help friends obtain the same results, or share a coupon to help friends save money.

To apply this to the online magazine, articles should be designed to provide practical value that the readers can easily apply to their lives. Berger (2013) also suggests that content should be narrowly targeted. For example, promote an article on cardio tips to a health-conscious target, or promote an article on the latest summer trends to a fashion-conscious target. Another tool to increase the virality of a practical article is to share scarce content, such as time-sensitive news or limited coupons.

Stories

Individuals do not process information in terms of facts, but through narratives (Berger, 2013), because narratives have a beginning, middle, and end that intrigue human curiosity, engaging them continuously to conclusion. In addition, narratives increase congruence, as individuals can relate more effectively to personal experiences presented in narrative form than to corporate advertising or facts (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011).

Through a narrative, an individual can better comprehend and make sense of the surrounding world, because the narrative format can increase learning ability and information processing (Berger, 2013). Storytelling utilizes the power of analogy. As individuals share an experience, “it’s hard to disagree with a specific thing that happened to a specific person. Second, we’re so caught up in the drama of what happened to so-and-so that we don’t have the cognitive resources to disagree” (Berger, 2013).

Developing a narrative requires strategically crafting the details of the story. Berger (2013) claims that 70% of story details are lost or altered within the first five to six levels of transmission, while the remaining 30% sharpen and remain, standing the test of time. Thus, it is important for a brand to identify the key driving issues of the narrative, and formulate the details around these issues. To do this, Berger (2013) suggests creating key issues around the desired benefits to the reader, then tying these benefits to the brand. Once this is outlined, all supporting details can revolve around these key issues in developing the narrative. These details should contain a mix of positive and negative emotions, such as humor, suspense, awe, and uncertainty. The key issues throughout the narrative always referring back to the brand is essential; thus, whenever the story is retold, the brand will remain as the centerpiece.

As management develops a framework to guide volunteers through content creation and promotion to increase Twitter engagement, Berger's (2013) STEPPS can be an effective guide to producing content designed for diffusion through a population. This section concludes the content creation process.

2.4 Context of the Twitter Platform

The previous section discussed how content contributors can create content in a manner to increase engagements. This section explores literature on how managers can utilize platform mechanics on Twitter to increase engagement. This coincides with the second level of engagement, that of platform (Rogers, 2010; Kaplan and Haenli, 2011; Ma *et al.*, 2014; Zhang *et al.*, 2017).

2.4.1 Characteristics of a Tweet

Once content is created, it needs to be published on Twitter in the form of a tweet. A tweet contains 280 characters, which can include text, hashtags, mentions, links, images, retweeted tweets, and videos (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017). Based upon this, in constructing the tweet, the framework incorporates three parts of the tweet: the text, the hashtags, and the content (links, images, video, or retweets).

Text

The text of the tweet should be congruent with the target audience to increase engagement (Lis, 2014; Zhang and Moa, 2016; Zhang and Vos, 2014). This can be accomplished through the assistance of social monitoring, as mentioned in the previous section. In conducting a social monitoring analysis, trending words surrounding a given topic will be discovered. These words serve as a real time benchmark of congruent conversations actively being discussed on social media. These insights can assist in ensuring the text of the tweet is congruent with the target audience. Note that these keywords are a benchmark to guide the text, not a mandate for use in the text.

Hashtag

A hashtag is a word or phrase (if a phrase, there are no spaces between the words) with the “#” symbol in front of it, used to help social media users easily identify posts within the same topic. For example, if a Twitter user were to search #fitness, all posts with #fitness attached to them would appear. The literature illustrates the use of hashtags in a social media post increases user engagement, maximizes the chance of greater diffusion (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017; Enge, 2014; Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez, 2016) and can improve content discovery (Huang *et al.*, 2010).

In the past, Main St Rock has been inconsistent in the use of hashtags; the present framework should include the use of hashtags in publication. In the social-monitoring portion of the

framework, trending hashtags are discovered in conjunction with their use in the selected topic. This framework will guide those who will be publishing the content on Twitter to use these hashtags as a benchmark for the words to use in the text of the tweet. Note that these hashtags are a benchmark to guide the text, not a mandate to use in the text.

Content

The final portion of constructing the tweet is attaching the content, which can include a URL link (Zarella, 2009; Suh *et al.*, 2010; and Liu *et al.*, 2012), image (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017 and Boyd *et al.*, 2010), retweet (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017), or video (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017 and Deng *et al.*, 2015).

Mentions

Mentions in Twitter are writing a Twitter user's name with "@" in front of it. A Twitter user may use a mention to source the author of a tweet, or create a tweet geared toward a specific Twitter user. If a tweet mentions a Twitter user, that user receives a notification of the mention. The literature also includes studies of the effect of mentions, concluding that just like hashtags, mentions increase engagement as well as diffusion (Enge, 2014; Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez, 2016). However, Soboleva *et al.* (2017) claim the mentions are only beneficial in particular situations, and in others could result in a negative result. From an ethical perspective, the use of mentions could be problematic in this research. To mention another user in a tweet would involve in exposing that user's twitter handle, in which the data source would no longer be an aggregated data set. For this reason, mentions will not be part of this study.

2.4.2 Advertising content on Twitter

Once a tweet is published on Twitter, there is the opportunity to advertise the tweet. If management were to enact an advertising strategy, this section explores the Twitter platform to examine such possibilities. The major forms of advertising are traditional media and digital media (Zhang and Moe, 2016). "Traditional media" refers to any form of mass communication

available before the adoption of the Internet. This includes radio, television, billboards, magazines, and newspapers. For the most part, traditional media is one dimensional, meaning the channel of use can broadcast a message, but cannot receive a message. This concept of one-dimensional messaging was covered in an earlier section.

“Digital media” refers to media that utilize the Internet for mass communication. Unlike traditional media, digital media are two dimensional, allowing viewers to not only receive a message, but to interact with the sender and other receivers of the message. For example, if a brand sends a mass email, receivers of that email can easily reply back to the email and instantly communicate with the brand. Likewise, if a brand were to post content on social media, the viewer can instantly comment, like, or share the content based on the social media platform.

The dynamic nature of each form of media will alter the perception of advertising on that particular medium (Zhang and Moa, 2016). This is known as advertising intrusiveness, meaning the degree to which a viewer feels that programming is being interrupted by advertising. Edwards, Li, and Lee (2002) describe advertising intrusiveness as “a psychological reaction to ads that interfere with a consumer’s ongoing cognitive processes”. The intrusiveness of an advertisement can alter the effectiveness of the ad as well as the overall perception of the brand who releases the ad (Edwards, Li, and Lee, 2002; McCoy *et al.*, 2008).

For example, in traditional media (e.g., television, print, radio), the intrusion factor is relatively low. Viewers fully understand their programming will be disrupted by advertisements in return for the ability to view free or inexpensive programming (Gordon and Lima-Turner, 1997). Though advertisements on these channels are not longed for, they are expected. The intrusiveness factor is much higher for display ads on social media (Zhang and Moa, 2016). Individuals utilize social media to interact with their friends and brands of choice, considering display advertisements to be annoying and disruptive (Zhang and Moa, 2016).

Psychological reactance theory helps to put into perspective the impact of the intrusion factor on the effectiveness of an advertisement (Lee and Hong, 2016). This theory states that individuals who feel their freedom of behavior is threatened will evaluate and perceive the threat as negative

(Brehm and Brehm, 1981). In the context of advertising, viewers exercise their freedom of behavior to utilize social media to interact with their friends. However, if this freedom is altered by a display advertisement preventing the instant use of the social media platform, the viewer would perceive the ad, and even the brand that produced the ad, as a threat (Edwards *et al.*, 2002; Lee and Hong, 2016).

A type of advertising that would decrease the intrusion factor is called native advertising—ads that resemble native content of the media platform (Tutaj & van Reijmersdal, 2012). Matteo and Zotto (2015) describe native advertising as content released by a brand that strategically integrates with the media platform and user engagement. Wojdowski and Evans (2016) call native advertising “any paid advertising that takes the specific form and appearance of editorial content from the publisher itself”. Examples of native advertising can be a radio commercial in the form of a song, a television ad that appears to be a talk show, or a print ad in the form of an article. Because such an ad is congruent with the medium format, it will blend with the user’s content consumption, limiting the intrusiveness (Lee and Hong, 2016).

Even though native advertising can prove beneficial to a brand (Tutaj and van Reijmersdal, 2012), literature also suggests that this form of advertising can prove a double-edged sword if a brand does not execute the delivery properly (van Reijmersdal, Neijens, and Smit, 2005; Truong, McColl, and Kitchen, 2010; eMarketer, 2013). This is due in part to what Campbell (1995) calls ad manipulateness—“consumer inferences that the advertiser is attempting to persuade by inappropriate, unfair, or manipulative means”. The objective of native advertising is to create an ad that blends with the format of the medium. However, the effectiveness of this style of advertising depends upon the content of the ad providing value to the viewer. The viewer who does not find value in the advertisement is likely to feel manipulated. This perceived manipulation can result in a negative attitude toward the brand (Campbell, 1995; Lunardo and Mbengue, 2013).

Ham *et al.*, (2015) call this persuasion knowledge, meaning that the viewer can identify when persuasion is attempted. Persuasion knowledge and ad skepticism can be explained by the persuasion knowledge model (PKM). This model states that a consumer increases ability to

identify and detect an advertising persuasion technique as exposure continues and increases. When a consumer can detect and identify a persuasion technique, an element of skepticism develops, which can then give rise to a negative attitude toward the brand. The literature does illustrate that a negative response toward a brand will not always result from persuasion knowledge (Ham *et al.*, 2015); however it can have an adverse effect on overall brand perception (Campbell, 1995; Nelson and Ham, 2012). Individuals with a lower level of persuasion knowledge will be more easily persuaded than those with a higher level of persuasion knowledge (Aguirre-Rodriguez, 2013) because they are not accustomed to these persuasion techniques.

To prevent ad manipulateness, Murillo *et al.* (2016) recommend that brands increase the perceived value of the advertisement by ensuring that the ad contains information and entertainment value. Scholars and practitioners agree that the fundamental objective of advertising is to relate information to the target market. As mentioned previously, social media users have an interest in receiving information that can aid them in a decision-making process. If a marketer can structure an ad in a manner that provides information a user finds valuable, the user in return will view the ad as a benefit instead of as an intrusion. The key is to ensure that the value of the ad is perceived from the standpoint of the user, as opposed to benefitting the brand (Lee and Hong, 2016). This perceived value increases when a user is utilizing social media to seek information (Tsai and Men, 2013; Luchman *et al.*, 2014), illustrating the importance of utilizing social monitoring to determine what information users are seeking.

Due to the effectiveness of native advertising, many social media sites have developed advertising displays that congruently and seamlessly integrate with the flow of the platform. Twitter has incorporated this concept of native advertising through the use of promoted Tweets; which are regular tweets produced by a brand, in which the brand pays to be displayed in the homepage newsfeeds and search results of a selected target audience. When a user views a promoted tweet, it has the same layout and visual components as any other tweet. The only difference is the promoted tweet has the actual word “promoted” displayed in small font on the edge of the tweet. Viewers are forced to view the promoted tweets, unable to opt out. Twitter utilizes a proprietary algorithm based on the desired criteria selected by the brand to determine what users view each promoted tweet, and when (Murillo *et al.*, 2016). Dacres *et al.* (2013)

conducted a study to determine the effectiveness of promoted tweets. According to their findings, promoted tweets increase both user engagement with the post and brand mentions. For an online magazine, this signifies that advertising articles in the form of promoted tweets will increase readership of the magazine.

2.5 Congruent Audiences to Increase Engagement

To this point, this paper has explored literature on how an online magazine can develop a framework that would guide volunteers through the process of content creation in line with human motivational needs, to increase the likelihood of engagement. Then, it explored how the framework could guide maximizing the context of the Twitter platform to increase engagement. At this point, the content is ready to be advertised through Twitter promoted tweets. This section will discuss the final element of content engagement, the recipient who will receive the content. A content creation and promotion framework must provide a guide to help managers strategically target individuals who are more apt to engage with their message on Twitter. When the magazine publishes content on social media organically, the recipient will be the followers, who will view the content in their feeds. However, there will be times in which the magazine will want to advertise through promoted tweets. This section will analyze the various arguments for the proper audience to target in paid advertising, as well as the metrics to use to identify such individuals. Critical analysis of such methods will enable establishing an effective and efficient process for an online magazine to utilize in identifying individuals on Twitter as advertising targets.

2.5.1 Centrality and Followers/Follows

One option is to target a desired audience is through centrality. Researchers attempt to predict the likelihood of Twitter engagement based on the size of an individual's Twitter following, utilizing the metrics of followers and follows. This connects to the concept of centrality, which refers to

an individual in a social network who is connected to a large number of other individuals (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978). Pfeffer and Salancik (1978) claim that centrality “refers to the extent to which some resources are controlled by an actor as a result of his or her network ties”. Some researchers argue there is a benefit for marketers to identify individuals with a high degree of centrality, meaning those connected to a large group of other individuals (Sun and Tang, 2011). Twitter connects individuals by either their following other users or being followed by other users. Thus, a Twitter user’s centrality will affect the likelihood of engagement, meaning that users with a greater number of followers and/or follows are more likely to contribute engagements to a tweet.

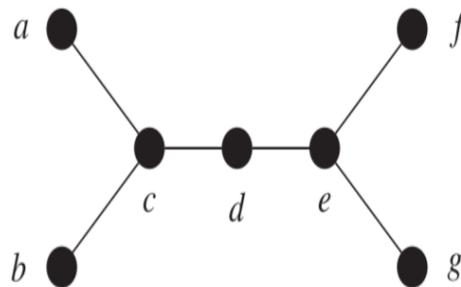
Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez (2016) state the number of Twitter users an individual is following can indicate their ability to diffuse a message. The notion behind this concept is when Twitter users follow other users, it strengthens ties and links to the social network (Okazaki *et al.*, 2014). This could eventually lead to an increase of users “returning the favor” and following the individual back. Though in theory it may appear that engagement can be detected on Twitter based on the number of users and individual followers, the literature is not conclusive on that point. To the surprise of Bakshy *et al.* (2011), their research did not empirically support this notion, because an individual can engage on Twitter without having to follow many users. This is due to the passive nature of the follow; for example, just because person #1 follows person #2, person #2 is not guaranteed to follow person #1 (Bakshy *et al.*, 2011). In addition, just because an individual follows another, engaging with that user’s tweets is also not guaranteed.

This same argument applies to the metric of Twitter followers. Jin and Phua (2014) claim that a Twitter user with more followers will relate to more tweet engagements. The notion is that the more Twitter users follow an individual, the more people will see that individual’s tweet, thus increasing the probability of engagement. Just as with the metric of follows, Bakshy *et al.* (2011) argue that utilizing the metric of followers exclusively is also inconclusive, lacking empirical evidence.

Freeman (1979) may be able to explain why the metrics of Twitter followers and follows are unable to exclusively identify influencers on Twitter. According to Freeman (1979), the two

most common metrics to measure centrality are degree and closeness. Degree refers to the number of direct connections an individual has, and closeness refers to the strength of those connections. The diagram below by Riquelme and González-Cantergiani (2016) helps to illustrate this concept. Nodes C and E have the strongest measure of degree, in that they are directly connected to the largest number of other nodes (i.e., C is connected to nodes A, B, and D; and E is connected to nodes D, F, and G). The Twitter metrics of follows and followers measure the degree of centrality, meaning the number of other individuals to whom they are connected. However, due to the nature of these metrics exclusively, it is impossible for them to account for the second measure of centrality, that of closeness. Although nodes C and E in the diagram below have the greatest measure of degree, node D has the greatest measure of closeness because the connecting nodes of D are “closer” on average than the connections of the other nodes.

Figure 3: Degree of Closeness



The literature consistently reinforces this concept. Steffes and Burgee (2009) use the term “tie strength” to describe the closeness factor of centrality, the intensity level of the relationship between two members of a social network. Individuals who share emotional connections, increasing their strength of relationship, are more likely to share each other’s information in an act of mutually reciprocity (Reagans and McEvily, 2003). This strength of relationship makes individuals feel more comfortable with each other, and as the closeness increases, the free exchange of information between members increases, referred to as “strong tie bias” (Stephen and Lehmann, 2009). Ma *et al.* (2014) argue that the strength of the social connection between members of a social network will increase the likelihood of content being shared with other members in the group. In the context of the diffusion of online magazine articles, Chu (2009)

argues tie strength is a leading driver of e-WOM. Thus, for a metric to successfully identify a targeted group of engagers on Twitter, it must measure both degree and closeness. For this reason, this study will not use followers and following as a standalone metric for target identification to increase engagement.

2.5.2 Klout Score

One calculation that attempts to incorporate measurements of degree and closeness in identifying engagement is the Klout score. Klout derives data of social media engagements (i.e., posts/tweets, comments/mentions, likes/favorites, friends/followers) from leading social platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Bing, Foursquare, LinkedIn, Google plus, YouTube, Twitter, and Wikipedia (Klout, 2016). Klout then awards each individual a score between 1 and 100, based on these engagements, and the higher the score, the higher the signified influence on social networks. However, this metric also receives much criticism. Because a Klout score is measured by combining social engagement across various platforms, it is impossible to identify a user's influence on a single platform. For example, if a marketer is only concerned with an individual's engagement on Facebook and Instagram, this score will prove ineffective because the score will incorporate social media engagements from platforms in which the marketer is not interested in (Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez, 2016). For this reason, less than 3% of marketing professionals view a Klout score as a reliable metric to identify social influence (Augure, 2014).

2.5.3 Metrics of Diffusion

Other researchers have approached the likelihood of engagement on Twitter in a holistic manner. Bakshy *et al.* (2011) criticize previous approaches to identifying individuals most likely to contribute to tweet engagement because the networks in which the diffusion occurs lack “ground truth” data. The authors argue that although the assumptions of these methods are plausible, they lack empirical evidence to prove their claims.

To overcome these challenges, Bakshy *et al.* (2011) recommend that assessing engagement of the targeted audience on Twitter should incorporate “the size of the entire diffusion tree associated with each event.” Identifying a target audience on Twitter based on diffusion is becoming more accepted in recent literature. The trend in the literature to answer this question is to holistically incorporate the various Twitter metrics, instead of viewing them exclusively. Recent authors consider Twitter engagement as relating more substantively to the diffusion and repercussions of tweets than to an exclusive, individual metric (Cha *et al.*, 2010; Messias *et al.*, 2013). It appears that trending literature is traveling in the direction of targeting individuals based on engagement ability. This then begs the question of how to identify these individuals—once again, literature is contradictory on the algorithms to identify them.

This problem is known in literature as the influence-maximization problem, first introduced by Kempe *et al.* (2003). The goal of influencer maximization is to identify individuals in a social network who are expected to provide the greatest impact on engagement. Though the literature has proposed various methods, a lack of a unified consensus in the metrics needed for proper targeting continues (Neves *et al.*, 2015; Riquelme and González-Cantergiani, 2016). Cha *et al.* (2010) developed a score of influence that incorporates the number of retweets, followers and mentions of each Twitter account. Bakshy *et al.* (2011) utilized a methodology to identify engaged audiences on Twitter based upon the diffusion of URL links.

One of the most popular diffusion models in the context of social media is the Independent Cascade Model (IC) (Kempe *et al.*, 2003). In this model, one individual infuses a seed, or innovation, into a network. This is similar to a brand advertising a message to an individual, who in turn shares the message with his or her social network. An individual becomes activated once exposed to the seed. At each step, recently activated individuals will then in turn activate neighboring individuals in the network.

Kempe *et al.* (2003) applied the influencer-maximization problem to the IC model to develop a greedy algorithm that is NP hard. Though this method has generated positive results, it is expensive to calculate and is not effectively scalable for large datasets such as tweets on Twitter (Mei, Zhao, and Yang 2017). Another issue that complicates the problem is that the strength of

links between different groups of individuals within a social network varies, thus impacting the outcome (Mei, Zhao, and Yang 2017). This simply means that the probability of one individual influencing another in the social network will vary depending on the strength of the network tie (similar to the concept of centrality). To overcome this, Chen *et al.* (2009) applied three arbitrary values (0.01, 0.02 and 0.05) to depict different levels of influence probabilities, and Saito *et al.* (2008) and Goyal *et al.* (2010) utilized historical data to apply influence probabilities. However, these modifications still lack real-time validation in the context of Twitter social networks for identification of engagement potential.

One of the issues with some of the diffusion models in the literature is that they are not capable of scaling a dataset as large as the mass volume of tweets on Twitter. To overcome this challenge, Nguyen, Thai, and Dinh (2017) designed an algorithm capable of scaling to a billion-point dataset such as Twitter. In this experiment, they selected six datasets, each of which ranged from a couple of thousand points to datasets with millions of points. Each set contained tweets around various disciplines: NetHEPT, NetPHY, DBLP are citation networks, Email-Enron is a communication network, Twitter and Epinions are online social networks. A Linux machine with a 2.2Ghz Xeon 8 core processor and 64GB of RAM was used to extract the tweets, using the Twitter API, and to apply them and identify influencers utilizing their BTC algorithm.

Analyzing the various diffusion-based algorithms gave rise to two reemerging elements that appear to be problematic in the context of Main St Rock. First, the observed studies only contained results from data simulations or analysis of past tweets. No study was found that provided results of algorithms applied to situations in real time. This appears to be a gap in the literature to explore. Second, it is assumed that the means of executing these various algorithms may not be feasible for Main St Rock Magazine, due to the cost of the machinery and the time needed to process the data. This research seeks a framework that is not only effective in advertising on Twitter to increase engagement, but one that is convenient and accessible for Main St Rock Magazine. Though the literature provides abundant precedent for accessing the Twitter API to analyze social conversations, the references cited used expensive computer hardware to access the API, and then applied complicated methodologies to analyze the data. This research assumes that the tools and hardware used to access the API may not be accessible

to a local nonprofit magazine. Thus, a goal of this research was to discover a platform that was convenient and cost effective for a nonprofit online magazine to apply. Rappaport (2010) states a social media strategy needs to be in line with an organization's resources, budget, and objectives. Therefore, though it appears that a metric of diffusion could be advantageous to targeting individuals on Twitter to increase engagement, accessing it is likely to be highly problematic.

2.5.4 Congruent Users

The previous options explored targeting individuals based on metrics of centrality or of diffusion. In reflecting upon these possibilities, instead of targeting individuals based on overall metrics, it could be plausible to strategically target a segment subset whose interests and previous Twitter engagements are congruent with the nature of the content. Congruence in simplistic terms means agreement; in this context it signifies promoting messages to individuals who are in agreement with the content subject matter. According to Lis (2014), when viewers obtain a perception of congruence between a message and themselves, message population increases. This is because viewers are more apt to share content they feel is congruent with their personality (Zhang and Vos, 2014; Zhang and Moe, 2016).

This targeting strategy goes beyond basic demographic targeting in advertising. Zhang *et al.* (2017) argue that online engagement increases by custom tailoring messages to homogeneous users; however, this concept requires a deeper application. Once content has been created in line with a homogeneous audience, the concept here is to target Twitter advertising to individuals who have specifically engaged with content on Twitter that is in direct line the target audience. For example, a sports magazine is writing an article on the New England Patriots football team. Instead of targeting the content to a specific demographic, this concept suggests targeting individuals who have recently engaged with content on Twitter focused on the New England Patriots. This act of identifying relevancy would increase engagement.

Whereas applying metrics of diffusion to an advertising campaign may be problematic for managers of small businesses, the Twitter platform makes targeting congruent users an easy

process. Embedded in Twitter Ads are two options by which a manager can target content to congruent users. These options are interest targeting and keyword targeting.

When a manager seeks to target a congruent audience through the means of Twitter interest targeting, advertisers have the ability to select from a list of 375 topics and subtopics (Funk, 2013). The Twitter Ad platform analyzes these metrics and determines what users are most apt to be congruent with the chosen interest. These interests are determined algorithmically, using the metrics of one's tweets, retweets, and follows. Ads are then served to these users.

Dzurovski and Janeska-Sarkanjac (2017) conducted a study evaluating the effectiveness of interest targeting on Google Ads. In this study, a traditional nontargeted campaign garnered a click-through rate of 0.2% (meaning 0.2% of users who viewed an ad clicked on it) while an interest-targeted campaign resulted in a 0.98% click-through rate. This signifies that using interest targeting can benefit an online magazine attempting to increase Twitter engagements. However, interest targeting has some issues, and though effective, there are some associated flaws. First, a manager may desire to target an interest not listed among the limited number of interest categories (MacMillan, 2013). In addition, follows represent a passive metric of intent. For example, an individual may follow a celebrity who actively promotes a vegan lifestyle, but this does not necessarily mean that the user has an interest in vegan topics.

The other mechanism to identify congruent users in Twitter ads is keyword targeting. The power of keyword targeting is that it targets congruent users based on recency (Lambrecht, et al., 2015). In keyword targeting, the manager inserts a keyword(s) or phrase into a campaign. Twitter then serves ads only to individuals who posted a tweet containing the selected keyword within the last 24 hours. Reid (2013) states, "Now, a brand can serve Twitter ads into the timelines of people chatting about matters relevant to their business." According to a multitude of practitioners, keyword targeting provides a game changing platform for managers to implement (MacMillan, 2013; O'Reilly, 2013). Keyword targeting allows managers to "serve users promoted tweets based on their intent as it looks to more ways to maximize revenue from its free-to-use service" (O'Reilly, 2013). This allows managers to deliver content to users that is more relevant and congruent, enhancing engagement experience. Twitter does not disclose the identity or details of

users to whom the ads are served, to ensure this is a safe and ethical manner to advertise (Lambrecht *et al.*, 2015). Brands that have used keyword targeting include EE, Microsoft Japan, and Walgreens; GoPro utilized keyword targeting that resulted in an 11% engagement rate, higher than the average 1% to 3% rate (O'Reilly, 2013).

Among the various ways to target a potential audience, the use of congruent users appears as the most beneficial for management implementing an advertising campaign on Twitter. There is precedent for the use of both keyword targeting and interest targeting by managers advertising to congruent users. However, there is a gap in academic research studying the effects of such platforms. This presents an opportunity for this research to study the effects of advertising to congruent users, and to differentiate among the obtained engagements between interest targeting and keyword targeting.

2.6 Literature Review Conclusion

Main St Rock Magazine has been unable to generate adequate engagement with its content on Twitter, yielding a 0.087% engagement rate that compares poorly to the desired 0.33% high average. A major underlying issue is that most nonprofits are unaware of how to utilize social media effectively (Creedon, 2014). The problem from a managerial perspective is that the magazine does not have a framework in place to help guide volunteers in this area. The organizational change this thesis seeks to implement is to develop a framework to guide volunteers through the process of content creation and promotion in a manner to increase engagements on Twitter.

This chapter explores the literature relevant to four key issues:

1. Understand exactly how content diffuses through social media, and to identify each element of this diffusion process.

2. Discover what motivations drive social media consumption, with the intent to build a content creation process around these motivations.
3. Explore the mechanisms of the Twitter platform, in an attempt to learn how to maximize the operation of these mechanisms to increase engagements.
4. Analyse the targeting options provided by Twitter ads to define a cost-effective manner of promoting its content on Twitter.

Management of Main St Rock Magazine must understand the elements of social-media engagement if it desires to develop a framework for volunteers to guide content creation and promotion that will increase Twitter engagements. The Two-Step Flow model describes the flow of a brand's message as it diffuses through the population with WOM activities. Though effective, time and space restraints limit traditional WOM activities (Boyd *et al.*, 2010). EWOM communications, a modernized version of the Two-Step Flow and WOM, can eliminate these barriers through online capabilities that allow one to communicate instantly with anyone throughout the world with online access. In addition, the capabilities of social-media networks, such as Twitter, provide the ability to rebroadcast a message to an audience larger than direct interlocutors, due to the extended rebroadcasting capabilities of engagements such as retweets, likes, and replies.

Reflection on these theories leads to the conclusion that this desired framework will need three key elements to guide volunteers: content, context/platform, and target/recipient (Kaplan and Haenli, 2011; Zhang *et al.*, 2017; Rogers, 2010; Ma *et al.*, 2014). The first element is the message itself—in this case, the magazine content. The framework will need to incorporate an element of content creation in content design encourages recipients to engage with it. The second element is the channel by which the message is distributed. The framework needs to incorporate the various capabilities available on the Twitter platform to enhance rebroadcasting. The third element is the recipient, or the target audience that will receive the promoted content on Twitter and engage with it.

This section will provide the concluding analysis of these three elements, through the use of the relevant literature, in the development of a framework to guide volunteers through the process of content creation and promotion that will increase engagements on Twitter.

2.6.1 Developing a Framework to Guide Content Creation

Four Motivational Needs

Understanding the internal human motivation that drives social-media engagement can increase the dissemination of communications (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). The application of these drives and motivations will lead to a consumer-oriented process (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010) designed to increase the likelihood of the target audience engaging with the content. By applying validated theories from the literature, this study appropriates the four motivations that entice individuals to share content online: belonging (Maslow, 1970; Shultz, 1966), individualism (Maslow, 1970; Shultz, 1966; Ho and Dempsey, 2010), altruism (Maslow, 1970b; Shultz, 1966; Ho and Dempsey, 2010; Oh and Syn, 2015), and curiosity (Maslow, 1970; Oh and Syn, 2015). Creating content in line with these motivations is very likely to increase content engagement. Individuals who create content for an online magazine should be mindful of these needs and incorporate them into magazine content, as it will create a unique bond with users that is congruent with their interests and increases engagement (Zhang *et al.*, 2017).

The need to belong is the desire for human interaction and community (Maslow, 1943; Phelps *et al.*, 2004; Wolny and Mueller, 2013; Lin, Lu, and Wu, 2012). It is consistent with Schultz's (1966) motivation of inclusion (Ho and Dempsey, 2010) and reinforced in the belongingness hypothesis (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). Maslow (1943) describes two elements of this need: the desire to belong to small intimate groups (such as family, friends, intimate relationships, or small social groups) and the desire to be part of something bigger than one's self (such as religious groups, social movements, professional organizations, sports team associations, or political affiliations).

Individualism is the need of esteem built upon being a unique individual (Maslow, 1943; Ho and Dempsey, 2010; Schutz, 1966). The two elements of this need are the desire for respect from others (Maslow, 1943) and self-respect (Maslow, 1943). Respect from others is in line with impression management (Berger, 2014) and includes identity signaling (Berger, 2014; Ho and Dempsey, 2010; Berger and Heath, 2007; and Escalas and Bettman, 2003), self-enhancement (Maslow, 1943; Sundaram, Mitra, and Webster, 1998; Rimé, 2009; Berger, 2014) and seeking recognition (Maslow, 1943; Cheung and Thadani, 2010; Dichter, 1966). The desire for self-respect includes personal achievement (Maslow, 1943; Ho and Dempsey, 2010; Schutz, 1966), personal preference (Lis, 2014), and the essence of one's past experiences (Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2004; Rimé, 2009; Berger, 2014).

The need to be altruistic is the desire help others in selfless acts of charity and love (Ho and Dempsey, 2010). A sense of pleasure arises when individuals engage in acts of charity toward others (Feick, and Price, 1987; Phelps *et al.*, 2004; Sundaram *et al.*, 1998; and Hennig-Thurau *et al.*, 2004). This is in line with Maslow's revised human motivation, self-transcendence, which includes two elements: altruistic acts of charity for others and the pursuit of spirituality to reach a higher purpose (Maslow, 1970b).

Curiosity is the desire to obtain facts, knowledge, and understanding. This need is included in a revised hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970). Curiosity is the gap between what one knows and what one desires to know. This gap creates a sense of dissonance that human nature strives to resolve (Digital Spark Marketing, 2016), which activates the desire to learn (Oh and Syn, 2015). Thus, humans will take action to satisfy their curiosity and eliminate that dissonance, especially if it relates to a topic of interest to them.

A contributor for the magazine beginning to create content should be mindful of these four motivations. With the target market in mind, the content contributor should select a topic that is in line with these four motivations.

Social Monitoring

Once a content contributor applies the four motivational needs to discover a topic on which to create content, gaining a deeper understanding of trending conversations revolving around this topic in real time on social media would be beneficial, as a useful benchmark for deciding what content to produce (Billington and Billington, 2012). Volunteer contributors can create posts or ads based on this content and join the conversation (Zhang and Moe, 2016). Social monitoring is a tool with great precedent in practice: 25% of businesses surveyed use social monitoring as a means to improve products, 24% use it to attract new customers, and 21% use it to provide better customer service (Patrick, 2017). Individuals post public tweets on Twitter with the intention of having other individuals view and engage with the tweet. When a public tweet is posted, the data of the tweet (such as text, hashtags, mentions, links, engagements) are stored in the Twitter database of public tweets, accessible through the Twitter API (Bakshy *et al.*, 2011; Riquelme and González-Cantergiani, 2016; Zhang *et al.*, 2017). Marketers have the ability to access this API to analyze what contexts, hashtags, and keywords are trending on Twitter around a topic of interest. However, accessing this database can be daunting, due to its size and complexity. Social-monitoring software solutions provide an easy means of accessing the Twitter API to search the database for tweets containing designated terms or keywords. The software will then generate a list of topics, keywords, and sentiments most commonly associated with the topic of interest (Brand 24, 2018). The magazine can then view these trending terms and decide whether they are worthy to incorporate into an article, so as to “join the conversation”. Thus, it would be advantageous for an online magazine to utilize a software solution to analyze trending topics in which identified influencers are engaging. Various software solutions could make this process convenient and streamlined for a local nonprofit magazine.

To conduct a social monitoring analysis into a content-creation framework for volunteers, the online magazine can model the actions to take on the work conducted by Zhang and Vos (2014): topic/keyword search, analysis of spread of patterns, thematic and sentiment analysis, and reflection on results. First, select a topic the contributor would like to create content on, selected by applying the four motivational needs, and then conduct a search of that topic on a social monitoring platform. Second is to analysis of spread patterns; this can be accomplished by

identifying keywords people on social media are using in conjunction with the selected topic (Brand 24, 2018). This is extremely helpful for providing the context of current conversations around the keyword. A content contributor can use these insights as a benchmark and brainstorming tool when creating content. Third, is to conduct a thematic and sentiment analysis; which can be achieved through the use of filters to improve the context of the results (Brand 24, 2018). The fourth stage is to reflect upon the discovered trends, by analyzing them and deciding on a topic worthy of content creation, or revising the search criteria to produce more desirable results.

STEPPS

Once a content contributor has solidified a topic by applying the four motivational needs and social monitoring, this topic can then be developed into content. A guide is needed for this transposition, to ensure the creation of content in a manner that will motivate engagement. The STEPPS (Berger, 2013) framework includes six different content styles with themes that have proved effective in increasing virality: **S**ocial currency, **T**riggers, **E**motions, **P**ublic, **P**ractical, and **S**ories.

“Social currency” is content that makes a social network look favorably upon users if they share it. Berger (2013) offers three ways to accomplish this. They involve sharing content that the user finds remarkable, that leverages internal competitiveness with game mechanics, and that makes an individual feel like an insider. “Triggers” refers to a format in which created content is associated with topics, trends, or phrases that are commonly top-of-mind in the target audience. “Emotions” signifies creating content that evokes high emotional arousal (Berger, 2013). The “Public” format is designed to gain social currency by having the content, or products, be heavily consumed in the public eye (Berger, 2013) through user-generated content (UGC), hashtags, or social proof (the impulse to copy an influencer). The second “P” in STEPPS refers to “Practical value.” Content that clearly illustrates practical application will result in greater engagement and virality (Gladwell, 2000). The final style of content format is “Stories.” Humans process information in the form of narratives, with a beginning, a middle, and an end. This creates intrigue and curiosity that continue engagement until the conclusion (Berger, 2013). Narratives

also possess the ability to increase congruence, as individuals relate more effectively to personal experiences presented in narrative form than they do to corporate advertising or facts (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2011).

In this stage of the framework, the content contributor will select one or more styles of STEPPS for the content. At this point, the framework for the content has been established, and the content can be physically produced.

2.6.2 Developing a Framework to Guide Content Promotion

Once content is created, the next element of the framework needs to guide publishing the content on Twitter in the form of a tweet. A tweet contains 280 characters and can include text, links, hashtags, mentions, images, and videos. In constructing the tweet, the framework incorporates three elements of the tweet: the text, the hashtags, and the content (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017).

The text of the tweet must be congruent with the target audience in order to increase engagement (Lis, 2014; Zhang and Moad, 2016; Zhang and Vos, 2014). A hashtag is a word or phrase (if a phrase, there are no spaces between the words) with the “#” symbol in front of it, used to help social-media users easily identify posts within the same topic. The use of hashtags in a social-media post increases user engagement and maximizes the chance of greater diffusion (Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez, 2016; Enge, 2014). In the past, Main St Rock has been inconsistent in the use of hashtags; the present framework should include the use of hashtags in publication. In the social-monitoring portion of the framework, trending hashtags are discovered in conjunction with their use in the selected topic. This framework will guide those who will be publishing the content on Twitter to use these hashtags and keywords discovered in social monitoring as a benchmark for words to use in the text of the tweet. Note that these are a benchmark to guide the text, not a mandate to use in the text. The final portion of constructing the tweet is attaching the content (i.e., URL link, image, retweet or video) to the tweet (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017). The content can also be a retweet from another individual’s Twitter page. With this section of the framework, the content is now published organically on Twitter.

Targeted Recipient

If management desires additional engagement for the tweet, the next portion of the framework should cover paid advertising in the form of promoted tweets. Promoted tweets have the same layout and visual component as any other tweet, with the exception of the word “promoted” displayed in small font on the edge (Murillo *et al.*, 2016). This is a form of native advertising, designed to decrease the intrusive factor (Tutaj and van Reijmersdal, 2012) by taking the “specific form and appearance of editorial content from the publisher itself” (Wojdyski and Evans, 2016). Promoted tweets increase both user engagement with the post and brand mentions (Dacres *et al.*, 2013).

As an online magazine seeks to develop a framework to guide content creation and promotion to increase Twitter engagements, the final element is to establish a guide to help management to advertise to individuals who are most apt to engage with the content. However, identifying exactly what individuals will generate the greatest number of engagements on Twitter is problematic, reflected in the fact that the literature provides various arguments for different types of people to target. Researchers do not agree on a single metric to identify engagement probability on Twitter (Riquelme and González-Cantergiani, 2016; Neves *et al.*, 2015).

Some researchers claim targeting individuals with a high degree of centrality will increase engagement (Sun and Tang, 2011; Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez, 2016; Okazaki *et al.*, 2014). However, using the metrics of Twitter followers and follows to target an audience with the aim of increasing engagement requires caution. According to Freeman (1979), the two most common metrics to measure centrality are degree and closeness. Ma *et al.* (2014) state that the strength of the social connection between members of a social network will increase the likelihood of content being shared with other members in the group. In the context of diffusion of online magazine articles, Chu (2009) proposes that the strength of ties between members is a leading driver of eWOM. Thus, for a metric to successfully identify a targeted group of engagers on Twitter, it must utilize measures of both degree and closeness. For this reason, this study will not use followers and follows as a standalone metric for engagement identification.

A trending idea in the literature is that pursuing a holistic approach to identifying probability of engagement, one that utilizes a combination of metrics such as mentions, number of interactions, and social reach (Cha *et al.*, 2010; Messias *et al.*, 2013). Bakshy *et al.* (2011) suggests that a measure of engagement on Twitter should incorporate “the size of the entire diffusion tree associated with each event.” As this chapter illustrates, great precedent exists for researchers accessing the Twitter API to apply algorithms of diffusion to identify engagement probability for a given topic (Cha *et al.*, 2010; Pal and Counts, 2011; Bakshy *et al.*, 2011; Mei, Zhao, and Yang, 2017). Unfortunately, as a practical matter, several issues would prevent a nonprofit magazine from applying this metric. No unified consensus exists around the metrics needed for proper targeting (Neves *et al.*, 2015; Riquelme and González-Cantergiani, 2016). It is difficult to scale a dataset as large as the mass volume of tweets on Twitter (Nguyen, Thai, and Dinh, 2017). The researchers that are able to scale the datasets use hardware and apply complex formulas not feasible for a nonprofit magazine to access. Therefore, a metric of diffusion is not a practical means for a small business or nonprofit to implement in its targeting strategy.

Instead of targeting individuals based on overall metrics, strategically targeting a segment subset, whose interests and previous Twitter engagements are congruent with the nature of the content, would be plausible. In this approach, the marketer is targeting a segment based not simply on demographics, but rather on Twitter engagements. The concept is to provide Twitter users with content that is in line with previous content with which the user has recently engaged. Message engagement increases when viewers perceive congruence between a message and themselves (Lis, 2014). Zhang *et al.* (2017) assert that online engagement increases by custom tailoring messages to homogenous users; however, this concept requires a deeper application. Once content has been created in line with a homogenous audience, the concept here is to target Twitter advertising to individuals who have specifically engaged with content on Twitter that is in direct line with the target audience. Not only is targeting congruent users supported by the literature; the Twitter Ads platform provides an easy mechanism for managers to target congruent users with their advertising. Twitter ads provide two options for managers to target congruent users: interest targeting and keyword targeting.

Interest targeting allows marketers to target their advertising at Twitter users whose previous engagements coincide with a possible list of 375 topics and subtopics (Funk, 2013). Dzurovski and Janeska-Sarkanjac (2017) conducted a study on Google Ads to prove the effectiveness of interest targeting; however, the literature lacks research on Twitter in particular. Criticisms of interest targeting primarily focus on its being a passive metric of intent, and the limited number of interest categories available (MacMillan, 2013).

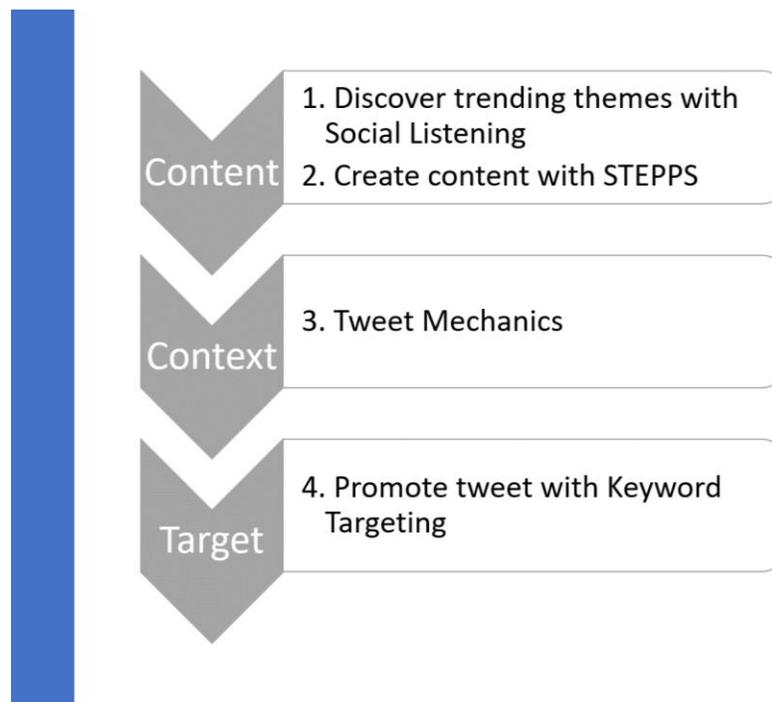
The power of keyword targeting is its ability to target congruent users based on recency (Lambrecht, *et al.*, 2015). In this form of advertising, a marketer selects keyword(s), phrase(s), or hashtag(s), and Twitter then serves ads only to individuals who have posted a tweet containing the inserted items within the last 24 hours. Due to the dynamic nature of this form of targeting, various practitioners claim that keyword targeting provides a game-changing platform for managers to implement (MacMillan, 2013; Reid, 2013; O'Reilly, 2013). Twitter does not disclose the identity or details of users to whom the ads are served, to ensure that this is a safe and ethical manner to advertise (Lambrecht *et al.*, 2015). Brands that have used keyword targeting include EE, Microsoft Japan, and Walgreens; GoPro utilized keyword targeting that resulted in an 11% engagement rate, higher than the average 1% to 3% rate (O'Reilly, 2013).

After analyzing various targeting methods to increase engagement of individuals with an ad on Twitter, this paper takes the position that targeting congruent users will be most valuable for Main St Rock Magazine to implement; thus, that method will appear in the final portion of the framework. This poses the question of whether this developed framework to guide content promotion should incorporate interest targeting or keyword targeting. Though these methods have been applied in practice, literature lacks academic testing. That provides this research with the opportunity to scientifically test the effects of keyword and interest targeting, with the objective of developing a framework for marketing managers to implement when developing an advertising strategy on Twitter.

2.6.3 The SMC Framework

Through the detailed analysis of the literature, this study has developed a framework to be utilized by management to implement towards guiding the actions of volunteers through the actions of content creation and promotion. This framework revolves around the three elements of social-media engagement (content, platform, recipient) and has four stages. The framework is called the Social Media Conversation framework (SMC) because its purpose is to guide managers in joining congruent conversations occurring among participants in their target market in real time. The SMC is presented below in Figure 4:

Figure 4: SMC Framework



The first two stages of the SMC pertain to creating intriguing content to engage congruent users on Twitter; the use of social monitoring/monitoring to identify emerging trends of social media (Chen, 2010; Billington and Billington, 2012; Zhang and Vos, 2014) and applying the STEPPS framework to create intriguing content (Berger, 2013). The third stage is to utilize the Tweet mechanics, by applying hashtags and links to posts. The final stage of the SMC is to promote the tweet to congruent users to increase engagements.

In past Twitter posts, Main St Rock's management did not take full advantage of the stages of the SMC framework. Management did not utilize social monitoring to discover trending themes, did not apply the STEPPS framework in creating content, did not consistently use hashtags nor take advantage of keyword or interest targeting. This helps to explain why previous social-media campaigns have not generated the desired results.

The next chapter will describe the methodology to scientifically test the effectiveness of the SMC.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The organizational change this thesis seeks to establish is developing a framework to shape the strategic management of magazine volunteers through the actions of content creation and promotion on social media; resulting in the desired level of engagements. This is to alleviate the managerial problem of the organization failing to obtain adequate social media engagements. To fulfill this objective, this research enacted a scholarly approach applying action research through the iterative cycles of constructing (issue identification), planning, acting, and evaluating (Argyris *et al.*, 1985, Coghlan and Brannick, 2014; Lewin, 1999). The previous chapter presented the construction phase, in which literature was explored to draw upon academic insights in guiding the creation of the desired framework. The result was the creation of the Social Media Conversation (SMC) framework, which has four stages: 1) Discover Trending Topics with Social Monitoring; 2) Creating content with the STEPPS Framework; 3) Publishing the content on Twitter through the use of tweet mechanics; and 4) Promoting tweets to a congruent audience. As a C1 Phase of Inquiry thesis (UOL, 2017), the aim of this project is to evaluate the success of the initiative in obtaining the desired change. This chapter will present a detailed explanation of the exact action that was taken to test the effectiveness of the framework.

The SMC endured two separate iterations of academic testing, with each iteration following the four phases of action research mentioned above. It is through these cycles of action that rigor emerged (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). The first iteration observed the effectiveness of the SMC in guiding the actions of content creation and promotion through the form of Twitter advertising; and tested two primary elements. First, it tested if the SMC generated the designated baseline of Twitter engagements through promoted Tweets. Second, tested if the SMC with the use of interest targeting or keyword targeting is more effective in obtaining engagements in a

Twitter advertising campaign. The action of this iteration was completed by the Executive Director, Magazine Manager, and select volunteers. Volunteer activity during the first iteration was sparse, and volunteer motivation was low due to the limited level of engagement with the magazine resulting in an inability to satisfy volunteer needs for exposure (Clary *et al.*, 1998). As time and resources were limited to an unmotivated and inactive volunteer base (Rehberg, 2005), it was decided for the Executive Director to engage in the majority of the action for the first iteration, with the expectation to release the framework to the volunteer base at large in the second iteration, after the framework was refined. The results of the first iteration were analyzed and reflected upon, to gain insights to improve the framework. This concluded the first iteration.

These insights were then applied to a second iteration, which refined the framework, expanded the platforms to include Twitter and Instagram, and tested the effectiveness on paid advertising as well as organic posts. The second iteration also followed the four phases of action research, and the action was conducted by members of the entire organization. This iteration tested the effectiveness of the revised framework in two primary areas. First, it tested if the revised SMC generated the designated baseline of Twitter engagements through keyword targeting promoted tweets. Second, it tested if the revised SMC generated the designated baseline of engagements through simply organic posts; both on Twitter and Instagram.

This chapter will discuss the methodology utilized in this testing. Section 3.2 will discuss the guided approach taken across both iterations to execute the research as well as the research design. Section 3.3 will discuss the exact action taken, and section 3.4 will discuss the data collection and analysis methods applied. Table 1 below summarizes the actions taken in both iterations by date.

Table 1: Methodology Action by Date

Iteration #1	
Elements Tested	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If the SMC generated the designated baseline of Twitter engagements through promoted Tweets. 2. If the SMC with the use of interest targeting or keyword targeting is more effective in obtaining engagements in a Twitter advertising campaign.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Completed By</i>
February- August 2017	Constructing Phase, Literature Review	Executive Director
January 2018 – February 2018	Planning Stage	Executive Director, Magazine Manager
March 2018	Social Monitoring to Discover Trending Topics and Keywords	Executive Director, 2 Volunteers Contributors
March 2018	Applying STEPPS to Create Viral Content	Executive Director, 2 Volunteers Contributors
April 2018	Tweet Mechanics	Executive Director
April 2018	Promote Tweet with Keyword and Interest Targeting	Executive Director
May 2018	Analyze Results and Reflection	Executive Director, Magazine Manager, Select Volunteers
June-September 2018	Magazine Rebranding	Executive Director, Magazine Manager, Select Volunteers
Iteration #2		
Elements Tested	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. If the revised SMC generated the designated baseline of Twitter engagements through keyword targeting promoted Tweets. 2. If the revised SMC generated the designated baseline of engagements through simply organic posts; both on Twitter and Instagram. 	
August 2018	Constructing Phase, Supplemental Literature Review	Executive Director
August 2018	Planning Stage	Executive Director, Magazine Manager
September 2018	Train Volunteers on SMC Framework	Executive Director
September 2018	Content Creation <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply 4 Motivations 2. Social Listening 3. STEPPS 4. Content Format Selection 	Executive Director, Magazine Manager, 4 Volunteer Contributors
October 2018	Publish Content on Twitter using Tweet Mechanics	Executive Director, Magazine Manager, 4 Volunteer Contributors
October 2018	Promote Content with Keyword Targeting	Executive Director, Magazine Manager, 4 Volunteer Contributors

December 2018	Create Organic Content on Twitter and Instagram for 1 month <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Apply 4 Motivations 2. Social Listening 3. STEPPS 4. Content Format Selection 	Entire Organization
December 2018	Publish Organic Content on Twitter and Instagram for 1 month utilizing the context of each platform appropriately: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Text 2. Content 3. Hashtags 4. Retweet (Twitter Only) 	Entire Organization
January 2019 – February 2019	Analyze Results and Reflection	Executive Director, Magazine Manager, Select Volunteers

3.2 Research Approach

3.2.1 Method Selection

In evaluating the most appropriate methods to apply to this thesis for testing, various options were analyzed. The first option was conducting a quantitative survey of the target audience, to explore online motives and activity. Zhang and Mao (2016) conducted an online survey of 613 social-media users on consumer online motivations, and Ho and Dempsey (2009) conducted a survey of 582 subjects to test Internet users' motivations to pass along online content. Thus, this method has precedent in the literature. However, this method in the context of the current research did not seem to achieve the desired objective. In selecting methods for an action research project, Coghlan and Brannick (2014) advise focusing on the scope of the project, and then ask what data is needed to fulfill that scope. The scope of this project is to create a framework to guide volunteers, with a primary goal of increasing engagements. To accomplish

this, data is needed to illustrate the magazine's social media engagements will increase by following the stages of the SMC, and in a way of which the volunteers can understand and apply. Thus, conducting surveys of the target audience did not seem most suitable.

A second option explored was to implement the framework with the volunteers, and then conduct qualitative interviews or quantitative surveys based upon their experience. However, this option also did not seem suitable to obtain the desired data. Volunteer survey/interview results may prove the framework is viewed positively, yet could fail to attract the desired engagements; thus not capturing the aim of the research. In addition, volunteers are sporadic. Some contributors volunteer multiple times a year, others only contribute once, and interns only serve for one semester. Such an approach may not result in an accurate conclusion because volunteers make only a temporary time investment, and the ones participating in the research may never actually apply the framework in the future. Finally, at the time of this research, volunteer commitment was very low and stagnant; adding an additional burden at this period of time may cause the volunteers to lose interest in the organization (Starnes and Wymer, 2001). Research methods need to be designed to fit both the setting of the organization as well as the purpose of the research (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). For these reasons, qualitative interviews or quantitative surveys were not the most viable option.

Another option was the use of digital methods. Rogers (2015) states, "Digital methods as a research practice is part of the computational turn in the humanities and social sciences." These metrics include engagements/clicks on content (e.g., likes, replies, retweets, links clicked) and public social media posts. In this method, the steps of the SMC would be applied to the organization to guide content creation and promotion. The metrics generated from the framework content on social media (example: likes, comments, shares, clicks) would then be analyzed to determine effectiveness. Ruppert (2013), Savage and Burrows (2009), and Lambrecht *et al.* (2015) have all applied digital collection methods to research, thus providing additional precedent in the literature. In terms of scope and project objective, the use of digital methods provided the data needed in line with the overall objective of this thesis to increase Twitter engagements through the developed framework, thus the viable option.

A research project conducted by Kennedy *et al.* (2015) was used as precedent of for the use of digital methods. The author's define digital methods as metrics captured through individual's online interactions on social media and web properties. In this study, the authors applied digital methods to an action research project to provide recommendations to help nonprofits create policies and procedures for their staff. This provided a number of parallels to the desired project. First both projects are action research based following similar approaches. Second, both projects focused on nonprofits with limited resources. Third, both projects desired to analyze social media engagements with an intent to use data to inform policy and procedure creation. Thus the study conducted by Kennedy *et al.* (2015) was used to help guide the design of this current research.

The next section will explain the approach taken to execute the application of digital methods to this project.

3.2.2 Digital Method Checklist

The Digital Methods Checklist, by Venturini *et al.* (2018), was applied to guide the approach taken across both iterations in executing the research. This checklist has eight guided questions to ensure digital methods was utilized properly throughout the project. This section will describe the application of the approach.

1. How much of your study object occurs in the medium that you are studying?

Here the authors use the term adequacy, which can be defined as “the extent to which the observed phenomenon takes place within the medium that is repurposed to examine (Venturini *et al.*, 2018).” In essence, this guide is to ensure the objective studied exists within the realm of the medium of which the digital methods are applied. For example, let's say the objective of research was to determine the gender breakdown in a particular city. One could use the Twitter platform to analyze how many male users vs female users exist in a given city. However, this would not provide the best method option, as there may be a number of individuals in the city

who may not have a Twitter account. Thus the phenomenon studied (gender difference in a city) lies outside of the selected medium (Twitter demographics).

In the case of this research, the objective is to create a framework to guide volunteers through the process of creating content, and then publishing the content on social media. Individuals then interact with the content directly within the social media platforms, of which the direct result is social media engagements (likes, clicks, replies, etc). In this case, the element phenomenon studied (engagements) does exist within the selected medium (Twitter and Instagram), thus validating digital methods would be a proper application. The study of resulting engagements generated from the SMC was analyzed in both iterations.

2. Are you studying media traces for themselves or as proxies?

This guide is to ensure the nature of the actions constitute the objective of the research, and to be mindful they are not indirect traces of action (Venturini *et al.*, 2018). For example, a researcher studying online mobilization decides to observe social media interaction and engagement. Social media interaction and engagement is a direct action of online mobilization, thus this would be an appropriate application. However, if the researcher were to observe the physical actions of a street protest (walking, standing, etc.), these actions may be indirectly influenced by online mobilization, but they are not the direct action within the context of online mobilization.

In application to this research, the engagements are the direct action resulting from viewers interacting with the magazine's content on social media. Thus, the actions observed (engagements) are directly in line the objective of the study. Section 3.4.1 discusses the exact engagement data metrics observed for promoted tweets (first and second iteration), and section 4.6.2 discusses the engagement data metrics observed for organic posts (second iteration).

3. Is your operationalisation attuned to the formats of the medium?

According to Venturini *et al.* (2018), 'operationalisation' is "the way in which the entities that you wish to observe are defined through the traces at your disposal." For example, through the

platform of Twitter, one can easily see all of the conversations that occur using the same hashtag. This feature is a function, or operation, of Twitter. However, Twitter does not have an operation to directly view posts by gender; as this feature does not exist. Now, there are third party applications which can accomplish this, however it is not a function within the Twitter interface. This guide is to ensure the selected platforms have the features and capability to accomplish the desired outcome.

In the application of this research, three key elements apply. First, the main object of study are the engagements resulting from individuals interacting with content on social media. Functions such as a like, reply, retweet, and click are all features provided by the Twitter interface, thus it passes the guide. The second element is social monitoring, a key component of the SMC. Twitter does not have direct capability of social monitoring in its platform. However, this function is capable through the use of a third party platform. This is explained in greater detail in section 3.3.1. The third element is expanding the framework to other platforms. The first iteration will test the framework on Twitter, the second iteration will test the framework on Twitter and Instagram. This is unique as Instagram does not have the capability to post links, however it does have the capability to post images and videos. The management of this operationalization is detailed in section 4.4.2.

4. Is your operationalisation attuned to the practices of the medium users?

Not only do the practices employed need to be in line with the functionality, or operationalisation, of the selected platform, but it also needs to be in line with the practice of the platform users (Venturini *et al.*, 2018). For example, LinkedIn is a social media platform that caters to business professionals. If a researcher were to observe the actions of social media users who were not business professionals, LinkedIn would not be an appropriate platform as it would not be in line with the practices of the medium users. Another example would be if a researcher exploring the use of social media amongst senior citizens decided to examine Instagram stories. First, the researcher would need to ensure this target group does indeed utilize the Instagram story feature.

In the case of this research, the target audience of the magazine is young professionals, who do actively engage with content through the actions of liking, commenting, and replying on both the platforms of Twitter (first and second iteration) and Instagram (second iteration). Thus the elements studied are in line with the use of the users, as detailed throughout the previous chapter.

5. Does the phenomenon that you are studying spill across several media?

The goal of this guide is to determine if the studied phenomenon exists on one digital platform, or on a multitude of platforms (Venturini *et al.*, 2018). There are two key elements here. First is operationalisation, discussed above, to determine what platforms have the features needed in addition to being in line with user practices of the object studied. The second is the management of the resources allocated to the project. For example, an object studied could apply to 5 different digital platforms, however, does the researcher have the resources to deploy the study on 5 different platforms? According to Coghlan and Brannick (2014), a main responsibility of a researcher is to conduct a project within the resources and time constraints allocated.

In application of this project, the SMC could be applied to a multitude of social media platforms, however, a researcher must be mindful of the resources available and organizational capability. The man power of Main St Rock Magazine during the time of this study is limited, thus the platforms selected must be strategic. It was decided to test the SMC on Twitter in the first iteration due to its niche of content consisting of breaking news and curated content (Lua, 2018), being the platform used to post public information and commentary on real-time happenings (Waterloo *et al.*, 2018), as well as its open Application Programming Interface (API) which provides access to greater performance analytics and social monitoring. Once the application of the SMC on Twitter has properly been analyzed, the second iteration will feature the platforms of Twitter and Instagram. Instagram was selected due to it being the fastest growing network and the network individuals spend the most amount of time on (Sheldon and Bryant, 2016). In addition, Instagram also has a robust API. Other social media platforms could have been explored, such as Facebook and LinkedIn, however the capability to explore additional platforms would supersede the resources allocated for this project.

6. Have you different but comparable operationalisations, for the different media?

This guide entails additional difficulties due to the different functions of various digital platforms, and managing the multiple operations as they pertain to the research (Venturini *et al.* (2018). The management of the research needs to account for these platform differences and be attuned to the specific medium utilized. The selected platforms for this research are Twitter and Instagram, however both of these platforms have different functionalities. Twitter is a platform used for breaking news, curated content (Lua, 2018), and real-time commentary (Waterloo *et al.*, 2018) while Instagram is a platform in which only images and videos can be posted (Liu and Suh, 2017). Thus the management of the SMC needed to account for these difference. In the first iteration, the development of the SMC was structured upon the Twitter platform, as this was the sole focus. In the second iteration, the SMC accounts for the functionality of Twitter and Instagram. Section 4.4.2 discusses the SMC evolved through the iterations to encompass both platforms.

7. What does your corpus represent?

According to Venturini *et al.* (2018), a corpus is “an ensemble of inscriptions or traces that have undergone the process of selection... for scientific analysis.” There are two primary ways this applies to the research at hand. First is the target audience selected for promoted tweets (first and second iteration) of which the resulting engagements will be analyzed. Second is the audience who receive the content through unpaid methods such as organic posting and hashtags (second iteration), of which the resulting engagements will be analyzed. According to the authors, the best way to ensure validity in the use of digital methods is to explicitly note “various operations of selection and transformation that connects the original traces to the final corpus and reflect on their analytical consequences.”

For promoted tweets, there were two operations of selection on the Twitter interface applied, keyword targeting and interest targeting. The question that lays ahead is the query application for the target selection in both operations. Under this guide, the authors advise to construct queries in line with words utilized by the target audience in the desired context; yet they also advise not

to be too extensive as the extension of coverage can increase noise. The method applied to accomplish the discovery of such words was social monitoring. The execution on the use of social monitoring is described in detail in section 3.3.1. Query development through social monitoring was then applied to guide the keyword or interest targeting setup, of which the execution of such is described in section 3.3.4.

This application is more simplistic for organic posts. The corpus (organic post engagements) represents individuals who interacted with the magazine's content (which was created and published following the SMC), through the organic means of page posting and hashtags. There is no selection process on the part of the researcher as posts are displayed internally through the social platform functionality. There is however, a selection of the hashtags utilized in the social post. As with above, the method applied to accomplish the discovery of such hashtags was social monitoring. The execution on the use of social monitoring for hashtags is described in section 3.3.3.

8. Are you accounting for the ways in which data are 'given' by the media?

Once data points are selected and defined, this guide asks how the data will be extracted from the digital platform (Venturini *et al.*, 2018). Will the engagements for each post be documented manually, is there a third party API that needs to be applied to extract the data, or can the data be extracted from the platform itself? Fortunately, digital media has the capability to record, measure, as well as analyze engagements. The question here is if the platform has the capability to extract the desired data points. For example, on Twitter, one can easily apply a third party API to obtain data points (tweet engagements) that occur on posts from various individuals (as long as the account is not set to the private setting). However, this capability does not exist on Facebook, as their API does not provide access data points (engagements) of personal accounts, regardless if they are private or not. This alters the ability to gain access to the desired platform. This was one of the deciding factors not to incorporate Facebook into this research.

In the application of this research, both Twitter and Instagram provide easy access to the desired data points (post engagement metrics), both through internal mechanism and 3rd party

applications through a robust API. Section 3.4.3 will discuss how data is recorded and extracted for promoted tweets (first and second iterations) and section 4.6.2 will discuss how data is recorded and extracted for organic posts on Twitter and Instagram (second iteration).

This section outlined the approach taken to apply digital methods to this research based on the checklist provided by Venturini *et al.*, (2018). The rest of this chapter will describe how the research action was executed in line with this approach.

3.3 Research Action – 1st Iteration

In the first iteration, the SMC was applied to guide the actions of developing six pieces of content for Main St Rock Magazine. Each piece of content was independently created and then promoted on Twitter; thus, each article yielded its own dataset of results. The decision to select six datasets is because it mirrored precedent in the literature; both Zhang *et al.*, (2017) and Nguyen *et al.* (2017) utilized six data/topic sets in their research on Twitter engagement. In addition to precedent, this was a manageable number of datasets to develop with the magazine's resources. Content was created in line with the magazine's five sections, providing an adequate distribution of the magazine's content. One piece of content was created for the magazine sections on Career, Health, Relationships, and Faith. Two articles were created for the section on What's Trending, as it is a broader section.

In this iteration, the Executive Director undertook the primary action of creating three of the six pieces of content; as well as publishing and initiating the promoted tweet mechanisms for all content. At the time of this iteration, volunteer activity was sparse; the limited level of engagement with the magazine had resulted in an inability to satisfy volunteer needs for exposure; thus, motivation to volunteer was low (Clary *et al.*,1998). In addition, because time and resources were limited to an unmotivated and inactive volunteer base (Rehberg, 2005), it

was decided for the Executive Director to engage in the majority of the action for the first iteration, with the expectation that after the framework was refined, it would be released to the volunteer base. Though the Executive Director engaged in the majority of the action, minor volunteer involvement was present; two volunteers created two separate articles, in addition, reflection sessions were conducted regularly with the Magazine Manager.

This section describes in detail the action that was taken to apply the stages of the SMC to each data set.

3.3.1 Stage 1: Social Monitoring to Discover Trending Topics and Keywords

In the first stage of the SMC contributors solidified a topic to create content on, then utilized social monitoring to discover trending themes pertaining to this topic on social media in real time. One topic was selected for each of the magazine sections of Career, Health, Relationships, and Faith; and two topics were selected for the section on What's Trending. The action of social monitoring included the four steps of topic search, identifying trending keywords, using filters to improve context, and analyze and repeat. These steps are modeled on the work of Zhang and Vos (2014) who studied social monitoring methods on twenty-five pieces of research. The Executive Director conducted all of the action in this stage, with the exception of selecting a topic for faith and relationships, for which volunteer contributors conducted the action.

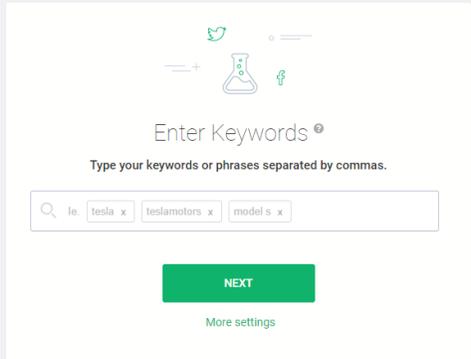
1. Topic Search

Contributors applied the four motivational needs to select a topic for the content to be created. Creating content through the application of these drives and motivations leads to a consumer-oriented process (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010) and increases the likelihood of the target audience engaging with the content (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). In this step, the contributors reflected the four motivational needs of belonging (Maslow, 1970; Shultz, 1966), individualism (Maslow, 1970; Shultz, 1966; Ho and Dempsey, 2010), altruism (Maslow, 1970b; Shultz, 1966; Ho and

Dempsey, 2010; Oh and Syn, 2015), and curiosity (Maslow, 1970; Oh and Syn, 2015). In reflecting upon these motivational needs, the content creator was mindful of the target audience and selected a topic in line with these motivations to develop congruent content.

Having selected the topic, the contributor inserted the topic into a social-monitoring software solution to determine trending keywords and phrases pertaining to the designated topic on social media in real time (Byrne, 2014; Zhang and Vos, 2014; NZ Marketing Magazine, 2012). Social monitoring software then accesses digital API's to obtain public social media data metrics; which has precedent in practice and literature (Thurau *et al.*, 2014; Zhang *et al.*, 2017). This study explored three platforms with potential to conduct social-monitoring activities: Brandwatch, Brand 24, and Traackr. All of these solutions provide a convenient platform to access the Twitter API (as well as other digital APIs), enabling users to engage in social monitoring. Brandwatch and Traackr, though effective platforms, cost in access of US\$2,000 on a monthly basis. Unfortunately, this price point was not in the budget for the online magazine. Brand 24 provides similar features to Brandwatch and Traackr, but access costs US\$99 on a monthly basis, with a 50% discount for nonprofits. This price point is more feasible for a local nonprofit magazine. No entity associated with this research has any financial or business connections with Brand 24, and although this research utilized a specific platform, any social monitoring platform could have been utilized to test this framework. The Brand 24 keyword insertion page is seen below:

Figure 5: Keyword Entry

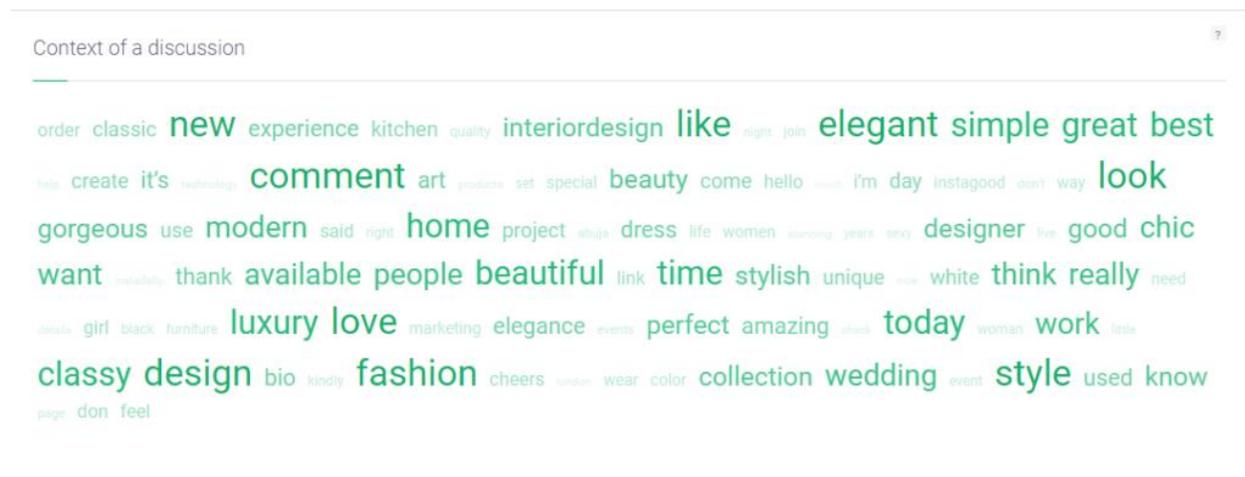


The screenshot shows a web interface for entering keywords. At the top, there are icons for social media and search. Below the icons, the text reads "Enter Keywords®" and "Type your keywords or phrases separated by commas." A search bar contains the text "le. tesla x teslamotors x model s x". Below the search bar, there is a green "NEXT" button and a link for "More settings".

2. Identifying Keywords in the Context of Discussion

Once a selected topic is inserted into a social-monitoring platform, the next action was identifying trending keywords to be utilized as benchmark and brainstorming tool when creating content (Zhang and Vos, 2014; NZ Marketing Magazine, 2012). When a keyword is inserted into a social monitoring platform, it produces a context of discussion displaying the most frequently used words people on social media in conjunction with the inserted topic or phrase (Brand 24, 2018). An example of the context of discussion is seen in Figure 6 for the topic “sophisticated”. The bigger the word, the more frequently it is used in conjunction with the inserted topic on social media public posts.

Figure 6: Context of Discussion



Contributors then used these words as a guide to create content, develop content titles, text and hashtags to use in Twitter posts, as well as identify keywords to utilize in keyword targeting promoted tweets. This was to increase increase the virality of content by detecting key topics the target segment is engaging on social media, then creating content based on these social conversations (Zhang and Moa, 2016, Billington and Billington, 2012; Zhang and Vos, 2014).

3. Using Filters to Improve Context

In the third step, contributors utilized filters within the social monitoring platform when the context of discussion did not result in trends that are not the desired context. For example, a clothing store that sells sophisticated fashions might use the keyword “sophisticated”; yet, the context of discussion would yield words such as “interior design” and “kitchen.” Though these words can be used with “sophisticated,” that is not the desired theme.

Social monitoring platforms have a filter capability to exclude posts that contain words with no importance to the desired context; resulting in a search more focused on a desirable context for content creation (Brand 24, 2018). Social monitoring platforms also provide the option to add include keywords, see Figure 7 below. With the same example, the clothing store owner may want to analyze trends that contain both “sophisticated” and “fashion.” In this case, inserting the word “fashion” to include it as a keyword would garner more precise results.

Figure 7: Include/Exclude Keywords

The screenshot displays a user interface for configuring search filters. It is divided into three main sections: **Keyword** (marked as NECESSARY), **Required keywords** (marked as OPTION), and **Excluded keywords** (marked as OPTION). The **Keyword** section contains a text input field with the word "Sophisticated" and a note "Not case sensitive". The **Required keywords** section has an empty text input field with a note "separate keywords with a comma". The **Excluded keywords** section also has an empty text input field with a note "separate keywords with a comma" and a close button (X). Below these sections is a green button labeled "+ add next keyword". At the bottom, there is a "Language:" dropdown menu currently set to "English" and a descriptive note: "You can narrow down results to mentions written in a chosen language. If you choose Any, then the system will collect mentions in any language."

Other popular filters include sentiment, language, country, and source. Filters were optional for use in acquiring a better context at the social monitoring stage. For each dataset, social monitoring settings were set to detect English only, which is the native language of the magazine. In addition, the settings were set to only analyze Twitter feeds for all datasets. Since

the advertising will only be conducted on Twitter, this study attempted to view only Twitter trends. This will aid in the thematic and sentiment observations (Zhang and Vos, 2014).

4. Analyze and Repeat

In the final step of this stage, contributors reflected upon the identified trends (Zhang and Vos, 2014), to decide on a topic worthy of content creation, or to revise the search criteria to produce more desirable results. Each repetition of the process improved the understanding of real-time online conversations; and repetition continued until the contributor was satisfied with the results.

At the conclusion of this first stage, contributors solidified a topic on which to create content for each of the six datasets, as well as the identified trending words associated with the topic in real time on social media to be used in the creation and promotional process.

3.3.2 Stage 2: Applying STEPPS to Create Viral Content

Once a topic for content was solidified and trending keywords surrounding the topic identified, contributors applied these insights to the STEPPS framework for the tangible creation of the content. STEPPS is created by Wharton School of Business professor Jonah Berger (2013); who analyzed past studies, as well as conducted research of his own, to develop a framework for guiding the creation of content designed specifically to motivate online sharing. This framework provides six different styles of content that were proven to increase chances of virality: Social Currency, Triggers, Emotion, Public, Practical, and Stories. With the target market and selected topic in mind, the contributors for each dataset selected one or more content styles for each section topic identified in the previous step.

Social Currency

Social-media users desire to share content that makes their social network regard them favorably (Ghosh *et al.*, 2012). Berger (2013) proposes that a brand can provide social currency for its

audience to share by producing content that the user finds remarkable, that leverages internal competitiveness with game mechanics, or that makes an individual feel like an insider.

Triggers

“Triggers” refers to associating messages with topics that are top-of-mind to sustain high levels of diffusion (Berger, 2013).

Emotion

Individuals share emotional experiences they encounter (Anderson, 1998) to connect with commonalities and similar expressions of others, creating a bond of congruence that resonates among them and strengthening their relationship (Berger, 2013; Festinger, Riecken, and Schachter, 1956; Peters and Kashima, 2007).

Public

An individual observing others engaging in the same action will assume this action is beneficial, and as a result may imitate the action (Berger, 2013).

Practical Value

Content that clearly illustrates practical application will result in greater engagement and virality (Gladwell, 2000).

Stories

Individuals do not process information in terms of facts; they do so through narratives (Berger, 2013).

Once the contributors selected a topic by utilizing the four motivational needs, applied the topic to social-monitoring mechanisms, and applied one or a multitude of content styles of STEPPS (Berger, 2013), the framework for content creation concluded, and the content was created.

3.3.3 Stage 3: Tweet Mechanics

In the third stage of the SMC, the created content for each of the six datasets were publish on Twitter individually in the form of a tweet. A tweet can include 280 characters of text, links, hashtags, mentions, images, retweets and videos (Soboleva et al., 2017); thus the three elements of a tweet are text, hashtags, and content. The Executive Director published all six pieces of content on Twitter.

To create the text of each tweet, the trending keywords discovered in the social monitoring stage were utilized as a benchmark in deciding what words to use; this helped ensure the text of the tweet was congruent with the target audience to increase engagement (Lis, 2014; Zhang and Moa, 2016; Zhang and Vos, 2014). Likewise, the keywords discovered in the social monitoring stage were utilized as a benchmark in the selection of the hashtags for the tweet. The use of hashtags in a social-media post increases user engagement and maximizes the chance of greater diffusion (Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez, 2016; Enge, 2014). Finally the content was attached to the tweet and the post was published on Twitter. Completing this portion of the framework resulted in the organic publication of the content on Twitter. In tis iteration, content was published on Twitter in April 2018.

3.3.4 STAGE 4: Promote Tweet with Keyword and Interest Targeting

In this stage, each of the six pieces of content were advertised on Twitter through promoted tweets; a form of native advertising, promoted tweets are designed to decrease the intrusive factor (Tutaj and van Reijmersdal, 2012). Promoted tweets have the same layout and visual component as any other tweet, with the exception of the word “promoted” displayed in small font on the edge (Murillo *et al.* 2016), designed to increases both user engagement and brand mentions (Dacres *et al.*, 2013).

The target recipient was Twitter users whose interests and Tweet activity were congruent with the nature of each piece of content; congruence increases engagement (Lis, 2014; Zhang *et al.*, 2017). Twitter ads provide two options for managers to target congruent users: interest targeting and keyword targeting. Interest targeting allows marketers to target their advertising to users whose previous engagements coincide with a selected category of possible interests (Dzurovski and Janeska-Sarkanjac, 2017). Twitter provides a possible list of 375 interests (Funk, 2013). Keyword targeting is powerful due to its ability to target congruent users based on recency (Lambrecht, et al., 2015); various practitioners claim keyword targeting provides a game-changing platform for managers to implement (MacMillan, 2013; Reid, 2013; O'Reilly, 2013).

Both interest targeting and keyword targeting are prevalent in practice; however, the literature lacks studies that compare the effectiveness of the two. This iteration tested if the SMC would be more effective incorporated keyword targeting or interest targeting in the framework. This was to provide an effective guide to managers in making optimal decisions in conduction social media advertising campaigns. To accomplish this, each of the six pieces of content were promoted in two separate Twitter advertising campaigns simultaneously. One campaign followed the SMC using keyword targeting and the other used interest targeting. Each content in each campaign had a daily budget of \$10 to control consistency. This daily budget is in line with business best practices, but the literature also supports it (Hotkar and Garg, 2017). Each article was promoted for a total of four days, also a common time frame in practice and in the literature (Lambrecht *et al.* 2015). The daily budget and amount of days for each campaign will serve as the independent variables.

For interest targeting, the Executive Director selected the most appropriate interest selection for each of the advertised data sets. For keyword targeting, the Executive Director inserted keyword(s), phrase(s), or hashtag(s) congruent to each piece of content into the Twitter Ads platform, and Twitter then served the ads only to individuals who within the last 24 hours have posted a tweet containing the chosen keywords. The action of initiating the promoted tweets took place in April 2018.

Creating a promoted tweet requires identifying a campaign objective. The primary list of objective choices that Twitter provides are Awareness, Followers, Promoted Video views, Website clicks or conversions, and Tweet engagements. Since this research is studying the increase of engagements, “Tweet engagements” was the chosen objective.

This section described in detail the action taken in the first iteration, along with the parties who executed such action. The next section will discuss the data collection methods applied.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

3.4.1 Data Metrics

Jaakonmäki *et al.* (2017) mention social media effectiveness is measured in proxies, such as engagements, opposed to monetary values. In measuring the effectiveness of social media advertising campaigns, two commonly used metrics are that of engagement rate and cost per engagement (CPE). Engagement rate represents the relevance of the content to the audience that views it, to determine if the individuals are interested in it. A high engagement rate signifies the audience has an interest in the content; a low rate signifies the audience is not interested in it. Engagement rate for promoted tweets is calculated by dividing the number of engagements by the number of impressions (Twitter, 2018g). Cowie and Gurney (2018) utilized the metric of engagement rate in their study to determine the effectiveness of social media advertising campaigns. Wadhwa *et al.* (2017), Lambrecht *et al.* (2015), and Funk (2013) also used the engagement rate metric in their research.

CPE is the total budget that was spent on a tweet divided by the total number of engagements (Twitter, 2018g). The cost of an engagement will vary based on the campaign objective (which Twitter calls “billable actions”) and the demand for the audience at which the ad is targeted

(referred to as auctions) (Twitter, 2018h). An effective campaign will strategically utilize the concepts of actions and auctions to generate the lowest possible CPE geared toward the target audience. Cowie and Gurney (2018), Lambrecht *et al.* (2015), and Dacres *et al.* (2013) also used the CPE metric in their research. Engagement rate and CPE will serve as the dependent variable for this study.

3.4.2 Methods of Data Analysis and Establishing Baselines

Summaries of location (mode, median, and mean) were reflected upon for use as the method of data analysis. The mode is the value in the dataset that occurs the most frequently and is used to estimate what constitutes “the typical” (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012). However, in this instance, it was assumed that engagement values would be unique and a reoccurring value would not be evident.

The median is the middle point of a dataset after all entries are listed from lowest value to highest value. The median is advantageous in that every data point is attributed; and the impact of extreme outliers is limited (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012). However, in an action-research project of this nature, specific to a small nonprofit with a limited budget, this may not seem the most advantageous form of analysis. Due to the limited number of data points, each entry must be of significant value; in utilizing the median, the value of the points loses its significance to value ranking.

The mean was a viable option, as it incorporates all value points significantly, being calculated by adding up all values, then dividing the sum by the number of data points (Easterby-Smith *et al.*, 2012). This summary of location is in line with business best practices, but also utilized in literature. Cowie and Gurney (2018) utilized mean as their primary method of analysis. Lambrecht *et al.* (2015), Wadhwa *et al.* (2017), and Kinney and Ireland (2015) are other examples of studies which incorporated the mean as an analysis for social media metrics. Thus, the mean was the measure of analysis utilized in this research.

Baseline Establishment

According to Rogers (2015), one of the main questions with utilizing digital methods is the establishment of baseline metrics. The next challenge was to identify a baseline metric of comparison for this research as Main St Rock did not advertise previously, thus a past baseline did not exist. In addition, engagements will vary based on the type of organization clientele base; thus, finding an average engagement rate for promoted tweets is difficult. In their research, Lambrecht *et al.* (2015) attained an engagement rate of 0.92% for promoted tweets. O'Reilly (2013) claims the national average for an engagement rate is 1%–3%. However these rates were specific to the context of that particular research, and did not represent the demographic of this thesis.

A unique baseline is one produced by AdStage, a social-media advertising platform that releases a quarterly report of the aggregated social-media advertising metrics of individuals on their platform. In a 2018 report, which is the same time frame in which the first set of Main St Rock ads was to go live, AdStage analyzed over 300 million Twitter advertising impressions and over 8 million clicks across various industries. The median click-through rate (CTR) of this dataset was 1.51%, and the cost per click (CPC) was \$0.38 (Rodriguez, 2018). Two elements are significant here. First, an email was sent to AdStage to clarify what constituted a “click,” and the response confirmed that their terminology “click” is the same terminology Twitter refers to as an “engagement.” Thus AdStage’s CTR is the same metric as Twitter’s engagement rate, and CPC is the same as CPE. Second, AdStage measures the median rather than the mean. Campaign results that AdStage collects will vary depending on company, campaign budget, campaign objective, and target clientele; so reporting the median can effectively limit the impact that outliers have on the data.

It should be noted that the baseline metrics from AdStage is a median, but the selected location for analysis in this research applied the mean. There was great reflection and discussion between the researcher and primary advisor on this point, the reply was the proposed method was adequate. This is justified by the size of data points. AdStage has a large enough scale to justify using the median, but using the mean better suits this specifically applied action-research model.

In addition, the metric CPE is a mean measure. For this research, it was decided to use AdStage's engagement rate of 1.51% and the CPE of \$0.38 as the promoted tweet baseline, due to the diversity and range of the data collected.

Thus far, this section has established baseline metrics as measures of comparison for promoted tweets. Another objective of this research is not only to test the effectiveness of the SMC model with paid content, but also to determine the effect of the framework on organic activity of the tweets that were posted. As the metric of CPE does not apply to organic activity as there is no paid advertising, the metric used to measure will be engagement rate. Unlike paid advertising, Main St Rock does have a past baseline of previous organic activity; that of a 0.087% engagement rate. Twitter does not offer a target engagement rate for organizations to seek, as this rate will vary based on industry and account. However, Mee (2018) calls 0.33% a high engagement rate between. Because the magazine desires to not only improve its previous status, but to reach a high engagement rate, it was decided to use Mee's (2018) 0.33% engagement rate for the organic posting baseline. It is important to note that organic engagement rate is calculated differently than promoted-tweet calculations. In essence, engagement rate is calculated by dividing the average engagements per post by the total number of page followers (Peñaflor, 2018)—a different metric than for Twitter ads, for which measures of effectiveness are calculated by dividing the total engagements by total of impressions. During the action of this first iteration, Main St Rock had 1,986 followers.

3.4.3 Metric-Recording Methods

The Twitter Campaign Dashboard was identified as the vehicle for recording the metric results of each campaign. This is an internal dashboard within the Twitter platform, which provides a wealth of metrics, including impressions, engagements, engagement rates, campaign objectives, cost per engagement, demographic breakdowns, and day-by-day breakdowns (Twitter, 2018i). Likewise, the Twitter Analytics dashboard captured the organic-tweet activity. The dashboard displays metrics for every Tweet posted on the account, including impressions and engagement breakdowns (Twitter, 2018h). Because these two dashboards are native to the Twitter platform,

they provide a convenient method of recording and displaying data from both promoted and organic tweets. The action of retrieving the data was conducted by the Executive Director.

A key element in action research is iterative cycles of reflection. Thus, in addition to capturing tweet performance metrics, a method must also be in place to capture reflection notes. The method of journaling is often used in action research (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014), where observations and experiences are recorded for reflection. Schein (2013) developed an empirical method of journaling called the ORJI model. First, one notes what was observed (O); next is reacting (R) to what was observed in an emotional context; then, the observation is analyzed to make educated judgments (J) on what is presented; and finally, there is a plan to take action by intervening (I). Organization is an important element of journaling to compile the lists of notes and reflections. An effective tool to assist in the journaling process is OneNote by Microsoft. Tam (2017) utilized OneNote for journaling to capture and reflect on field experiences. Following this precedent, this research utilized OneNote for journaling and reflection.

Throughout the research, the Executive Director applied these journaling techniques for observation recording and reflection. These insights were then pondered upon in reflection meetings with the Magazine Manager and select volunteers.

3.4.4 Rigor and Quality

With this type of a research project, rigor and quality are not judged against a positivist standard, but against an action-research standard that emerges through a cyclical process (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). Reason (2006) provides a five-point guide to ensuring quality in action research:

1. How well does the action research reflect the cooperation between the action researcher and the members of the organization?

2. Is action research guided by a reflexive concern for practical outcomes? Is the action project governed by constant and iterative reflection as part of the process of organizational change or improvement?
3. Does action research include a plurality of knowing which ensures conceptual-theoretical integrity, extends our ways of knowing and has a methodological appropriateness?
4. Does action research engage in significant work?
5. Does sustainable change come out of the project?

These questions were reflected upon frequently to ensure the quality of the project. Coghlan and Brannick (2014) reference Reason (2006) to note that not all points rate equally highly in a research project, as each project is a unique entity, and some points will be more prominent than others. As an action-research project begins, the questions and initial stages are often blurred and fuzzy. Yet, through this guide and quality, and the spiral cyclical actions of action research, the “fuzzy” becomes clearer as the project evolves toward resolution; and it is through these spiral cycles that rigor emerges (Perry and Gummesson, 2004). Rigor in action research is manifest through this cyclical process (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014).

3.5 Action Research and Iterative Cycles

The first cycle of publication action began in April 2018 and followed the process presented in section 3.3. In the beginning of the month, all six elements of content were established following the SMC framework. On April 16, the first tweet in the study was published on Twitter. Each content was promoted in two separate campaigns, one focusing on keyword targeting and the other utilizing interest targeting. Each campaign lasted four days with a budget of \$10/day each. For each sequential day, a new element of content was published and promoted, until all six blogs had been published. On April 24, all campaigns had concluded.

Once the action concluded, the results were evaluated and analyzed by the Executive Director, Magazine Manager, and select volunteers; this was the final stage of the action-research approach (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). This is a stage of reflection, stepping back to ponder the actions, experiences, and results (Raelin, 2001). It is a process of making sense of the events that occurred, known as sense making (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014); and is instrumental to the study, as action without reflection and reframing can damage an organization's success (Bolman and Deal, 1997).

In this stage, Raelin's (2001) five skills of reflection was applied. The first is "being," experiences one encounters, both in the action itself as well as through the reflection process. Next is "speaking," in which the aim is to characterize the collective voice of the organization and to articulate the current and desired state. The third skill is "disclosing," in which individuals share their personal passions about their experience, as well as any doubts they are feeling. The fourth skill is "testing," which is a reflection on what new possible solutions can emerge. The final skill is "probing," in which each new possibility is scrutinized to identify possible assumptions, facts, consequences, and reasons. These five skills were applied first by the Executive Director through personal reflection, and then collectively with the Magazine Manager and select volunteers.

Throughout this action and stages of reflection, original assumptions are challenged (Humphrey, 2007); however, and new issues emerged (Dutton et al., 1983). In addition, outside forces and organizational changes in real time impact the project; which causes the researcher to adjust accordingly and launch a new action research cycle (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). This iterative cycle is central to the action-research process (Argyris et al., 1985; Lewin, 1997), as it is "through this cyclic process of asking general and then progressively more focused questions, the researchers start to identify some crucial relationships" (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). The sense making insights that emerged through this process are presented in section 4.3.

At the conclusion of this reflection, the first iteration completed and a second iteration began. A new construction stage was initiated as additional issues became presented in the first iteration; the SMC framework was revised based on these insights and reflections. This is detailed in

section 4.4. The second iteration tested two main elements. First, if the revised SMC generated the designated baseline of Twitter engagements through keyword targeting promoted Tweets. Second, if the revised SMC generated the designated baseline of engagements through simply organic posts; both on Twitter and Instagram. The exact action taken to test these elements is found in section 4.6. The final reflection and discussion of the findings is provided in Chapter 5.

3.6 Chapter Conclusion

This chapter outlined the methodology of testing the effectiveness of the SMC to guide the actions of content creation and promotion in a manner that will increase Twitter engagement utilizing the action research approach. The steps of SMC are: Discover Trending Topics with Social Monitoring, Apply STEPPS to Create Content, Tweet Mechanics, and Promote Tweet through Congruent Targeting.

Social monitoring was utilized to discover trending topics that are emerging in online conversations in real time (Zhang and Vos, 2014, Chen, 2010, and Billington and Billington, 2012). These topics were then applied to the STEPPS framework to create intriguing content to increase diffusion and engagement (Berger, 2013). The created content was then published to Twitter enhancing the platform elements of text, hashtags, and content (Soboleva et al., 2017). Finally, tweets were advertised through the use of promoted tweets targeting a congruent audience. Diffusion increases when individuals perceive congruence between the brand and themselves (Lis, 2014); congruent messages targeted at key individuals is one of the leading drivers of message diffusion and rebroadcasting in the proper environment (Zhang *et al.*, 2017).

The first iteration tested for two primary elements: the ability of the developed SMC framework to generate the desired level of Twitter engagement, and to determine if interest targeting or keyword targeting was more effective in obtaining engagements in a Twitter advertising

campaign. Six pieces of content were created and published on Twitter in the form of a tweet through the application of the framework; one for each of the magazine sections of Health and Fitness, Career, Faith, and Relationships and two pieces of content for the section of Trending. Each of the six pieces of content were then advertised in two separate campaigns simultaneously. The first campaign using keyword targeting; and the second campaign used interest targeting. Each article in each campaign had a daily budget of \$10 per day to run for 4 days. The metric of measure were engagement rate and cost per engagement. These metrics were analyzed to determine the effectiveness of the SMC, as well as the best method to target congruent users to increase Twitter engagement. By the end of the campaigns, a stage of reflection and evaluation occurred analyze the results, construct new issues that emerged, and plan for additional iteration.

The next chapter will present the stories of the iterative cycles of the research. This will include the results, sense making, and the action of the second iteration.

4. Story of Cycles of Action, Reflection, and Sense-making

4.1 Introduction

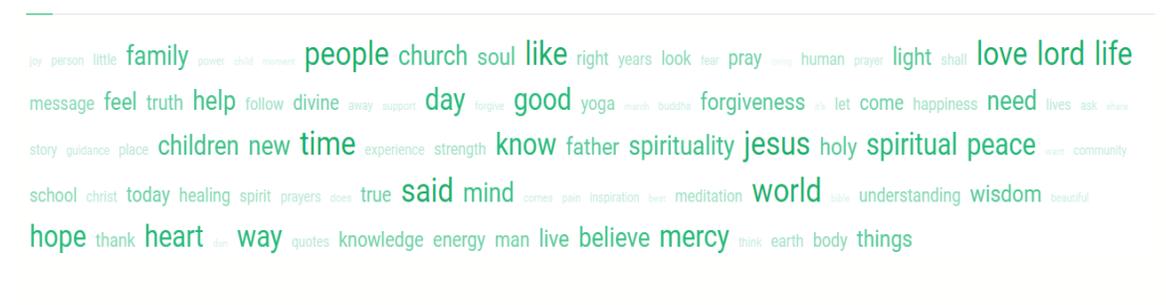
In action research, the researcher is continuously and consciously planning, taking action, and evaluating the action (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). Rigor and quality are derived from the spiral action of the research cycles (Perry and Gummesson, 2004). This chapter explains the application of this iterative process to this project. It begins by evaluating the results of the action described in the previous chapter, from which a new path of action emerged. Finally, the results of the second iteration of action are presented. The first iteration of this study tested the SMC on six separate datasets. Each dataset represented a piece of content in a different section in the Main St Rock Magazine (Health and Fitness, Career, Faith, and Relationships), with two datasets focusing on Trending due to the broad characteristics of that section. Each dataset followed the four steps of the SMC and were promoted in two separate Twitter advertising campaigns simultaneously. One campaign used keyword targeting and the other used interest targeting. This section presents the results of the first iteration.

4.2 Action Results of Iteration #1

4.2.1 Content #1: Faith

On the subject of faith, the topic of compassion to encourage charity toward one’s neighbor was selected. The selected topic for this blog were “God” and “compassion”. Compassion is the subject of the article, and “God” was added to target faith-based content, in line with that section of the magazine. By conducting a social-monitoring analysis on Brand 24, the resulting context of discussion was as follows:

Figure 8: Social Monitoring Context of Discussion for Compassion Article



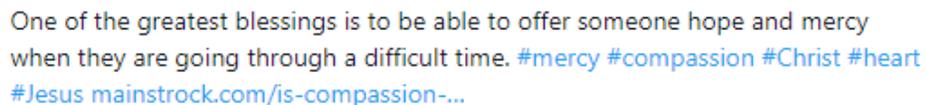
Based on this context, trending conversations revolving around the keywords “compassion” and “God” contain the words “love,” “mercy,” “heart,” “Jesus,” “life,” and “hope.”

In applying the STEPPS (Berger, 2013) framework to the article-creation process to attempt to increase Twitter engagements, the desire was to create a piece to provide easy suggestions on how one can offer compassion to others. Thus, the element of STEPPS applied would be the second “P”—being practical. Gladwell (2000) states that engagement will increase with content that provides a practical application. One of the reasons for this is that individuals are more apt to share practical content, due to the motivation to be altruistic, with the understanding that sharing practical information will help others in need (Berger and Milkman, 2012). After applying social

monitoring and the STEPPS framework, the article created in the section on Faith was entitled, “Is Compassion in Fashion?” The link to the article is <https://www.sophisticatedprofessional.com/self-improvement/is-compassion-in-fashion/>. Readers of this article will see that it incorporates the themes discovered through social monitoring, while providing a practical guide on some simple ideas of offering acts of compassion to others.

In posting the article to Twitter, the text selected for the tweet is as follows: *One of the greatest blessings is to be able to offer someone hope and mercy when they are going through a difficult time. #mercy #compassion #Christ #heart #Jesus.* In analyzing this text, the application of the themes discovered through social monitoring have been applied (mercy, hope, time, Christ, heart, Jesus). In addition, the text includes the main keyword of the topic, compassion. Hashtags increase Twitter engagements (Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez, 2016; Enge, 2014; Jackson, 2017). The hashtags used in this tweet were #mercy #compassion #Christ #heart #Jesus, all words discovered through social monitoring.

Figure 9: Compassion Tweet



One of the greatest blessings is to be able to offer someone hope and mercy when they are going through a difficult time. #mercy #compassion #Christ #heart #Jesus mainstrock.com/is-compassion-...

This tweet was promoted through the Twitter Ads platform channels for both keyword (selected were “compassion” and “God”) and interest-targeting (interest selected was “Christian and Gospel”).

4.2.2 Content #2: Career

On the subject of career, the magazine focused the content for this section on a trending theme in digital marketing, inbound marketing. In particular, a new Inbound Marketing Certification provided by HubSpot. The selected topic keywords for this blog were “HubSpot certification,”

“HubSpot certified,” and “HubSpot certificate.” The social monitoring analysis yielded the context of discussion as follows:

Figure 10: Social Monitoring Context of Discussion for Inbound Article



Based on this context, trending conversions revolving around the keywords contain the words marketing, inbound, digital, content, and business.

Applying the STEPPS (Berger, 2013) framework to the content-creation process to increase Twitter engagements, the aim was to create a piece that would provide an easy guide to how inbound marketing is changing the digital landscape, while presenting the advantages of an inbound marketing certification. As with the previous article, the element of STEPPS applied would be the second “P,” being practical. After applying social monitoring and the STEPPS framework, the article created in the Career section was entitled, “4 Ways Inbound Marketing Can Help Your Career.” The link to the article is <https://www.sophisticatedprofessional.com/success/4-ways-inbound-marketing-can-help-your-career/>. Reading this article, one sees that it incorporates the themes discovered through social monitoring, while providing practical information relating to inbound marketing and the accompanying certification.

In posting the article to Twitter, the text selected for the tweet was as follows: *You are a new marketing professional, so how can Inbound help you make a name for yourself? @hubspot #InboundMarketing #hubspot*. Analyzing this text, the themes discovered through social monitoring have been applied (inbound, inbound marketing, and marketing). In addition, the text includes the main keyword of the topic, HubSpot.

Figure 11: Inbound Tweet

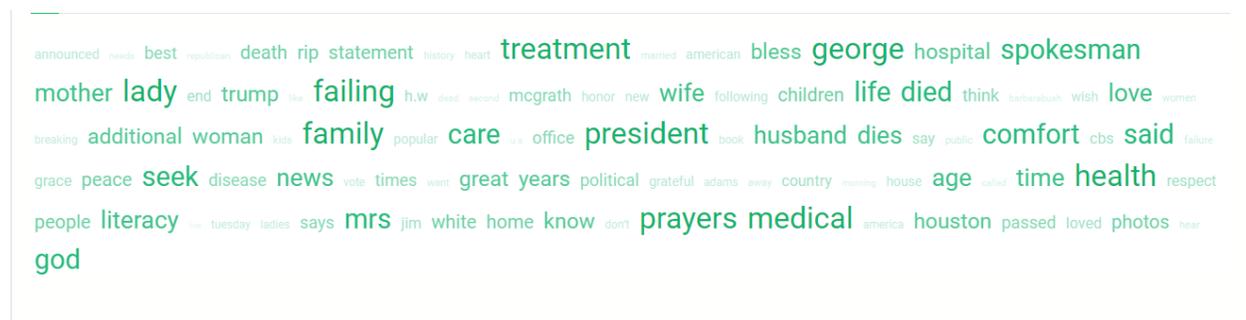
You are a new marketing professional, so how can Inbound help you make a name for yourself? @hubspot #InboundMarketing #hubsot mainstrock.com/4-ways-inbound...

This tweet was promoted through the Twitter Ads platform channels of both keyword targeting (selected keywords were “inbound marketing,” “online marketing,” “hubspot,” #marketing, @hubspot, #hubspot, “marketing career,” #marketingcareer, and #marketingtechniques) and interest-targeting (interest selected was “Marketing”).

4.2.3 Content #3: Trending

On the subject of trending, the selected article was a tribute to Former USA First Lady Barbara Bush. The topic keyword was “Barbara Bush”. The data collection coincided with her passing. By conducting a social monitoring analysis on Brand 24, the resulting context of discussion was obtained:

Figure 12: Social Monitoring Context of Discussion for Bush Article



Based on this context, trending conversions revolving around the keywords contain the words “lady,” “literacy,” and “George.” Based on this, it was decided to share a tribute video from the Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation highlighting her advocacy for child literacy.

Obviously, when the First Lady of a country passes, it is an emotional event. The nature of tribute videos in general can be emotional. In applying the STEPPS (Berger, 2013) framework to the article-creation process to increase Twitter engagements, the element to focus on was “E”—emotions. In addition, this was a trending topic top of mind, thus also account for “T”- triggers. According to the literature, one of the methods individuals use to reflect upon their understanding of various experiences is to share their emotions, to seek out social interaction (Festinger, Riecken, and Schachter, 1956; Peters and Kashima, 2007). Though the majority of individuals may never have met Barbara Bush, celebrating one’s life after a passing is a common emotion. After applying social monitoring and the STEPPS framework, the article created in the section of Career was entitled, “A Tribute to Barbara Bush, and Her Fight for Literacy.” The link to the article is <https://www.sophisticatedprofessional.com/uncategorized/tribute-barbara-bush-literacy-legacy/>. This article incorporates the themes discovered through social monitoring, while sharing a tribute video provided by the Barbara Bush Houston Foundation.

Posting the article to Twitter, the text selected for the tweet was: *As the nation mourns the passing of Barbara Bush, here is a tribute to one of her greatest accomplishments. Her fight for children literacy will always be remembered. #barbarabush #barbara.*” The focus of the text is remembering Barbara Bush’s child-literacy advocacy.

Figure 13: Bush Tweet

As the nation mourns the passing of Barbara Bush, here is a tribute to one of her greatest accomplishments. Her fight for children literacy will always be remembered. #barbarabush #barbara [mainstrook.com/tribute-barbar...](https://www.sophisticatedprofessional.com/uncategorized/tribute-barbara-bush-literacy-legacy/)

For the keyword-targeting campaign, the keywords selected were “Barbara Bush,” #barbarabush, #RIPBarbaraBush, @georgebush, “George Bush,” and #GeorgeBush. For the interest-targeting campaign, the interest selected was “Politics.”

4.2.4 Content #4: Health

The contributor wanted to create content based on nutrition to grab the attention of individuals starting a diet for the summer, but did not know the best direction to take. First, a social-monitoring analysis was conducted on the term “summer diet.” Through this analysis, a trending theme that emerged was “vegan.” To gain a deeper understanding of the vegan theme, the contributor then conducted a second social-monitoring analysis, this time on the word “vegan.”

Figure 14: Social Monitoring Context of Discussion for Vegan Article



This secondary analysis discovered a deeper trending theme—“recipes.” This analysis signified to the contributor one way to join the active “vegan” conversation was to create content based on “recipes.” It was decided to create a blog focused on a YouTube video of easy vegan recipes for meal prep. In line with Zhang *et al.* (2017), social monitoring was able to help the magazine identify a trending theme to target a homogenous market. This also utilized the practical style of STEPPS. The link to the article is

<https://www.sophisticatedprofessional.com/healthfitness/vegan-meal-prep-thats-easy-full-protein/>

Figure 15: Vegan Tweet

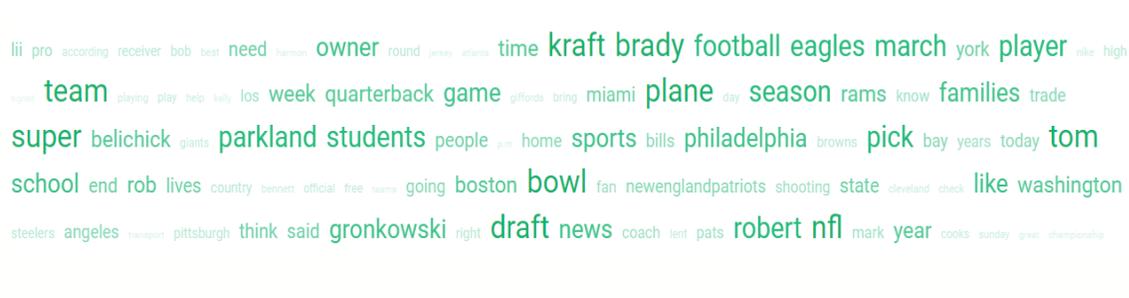
Looking vegan recipes for a healthy, easy meal prep? We have have you covered just in time for that summer diet! #vegan #recipes #healthy
mainstrock.com/vegan-meal-pre...

The keyword targeting campaign utilized the keywords of “vegan”, “vegan recipe”, “vegan diet”, “vegan meal prep”, and “vegan healthy”. The interest of “vegan” was selected for the interest-targeting campaign.

4.2.5 Content #5: Trending

On the subject of trending, the second article in this section focused on the release of the NFL 2018 schedule, with a particular focus on the New England Patriots. This team was chosen because it is often in the headlines, having appeared in three Super Bowls in four years. The selected keyword for this blog was “New England Patriots.” The resulting context of discussion from the social-monitoring analysis was as follows:

Figure 16: Social Monitoring Context of Discussion for Patriots Article



Based on this context, trending conversions revolving around the keywords contain the words Kraft (Bob, owner), Tom (Brady, quarterback), and Gronkowski (Rob, tight end).

In applying the STEPPS (Berger, 2013) framework to the article-creation process to increase Twitter engagements, the contributor selected the first “S,” social currency, and in particular, inside information. On the date of the blog publication, the NFL schedule had just been made public. National NFL insider, Mike Reiss from ESPN, immediately presented his predictions for the 2018 season. After applying social monitoring and the STEPPS framework, the second article created in the section on Trending was a tweeted article from ESPN’s Mike Reiss entitled, “2018 New England Patriots game-by-game predictions.”

The text selected for the tweet was as follows: *ESPN's @MikeReiss predicts the @Patriots will go 11-5, starting the season 0-2. What's your prediction? #patriots #NEPatriots #TomBrady #Gronk.* Analyzing this text, the themes discovered through social monitoring were applied, including “Tom Brady” and “Gronk” (nickname for Rob Gronkowski). In addition, the text included the main keyword of the topic, “New England Patriots” (with multiple variations).

Figure 17: Patriots Tweet

ESPN's @MikeReiss predicts the @Patriots will go 11-5, starting the season 0-2. What's your prediction? #patriots #NEPatriots #TomBrady #Gronk



2018 New England Patriots game-by-game predictions

Looking at the road the Patriots' opponents travel before these games provide some neat insights that could come in handy down the line.

espn.com

For the keyword-targeting campaign, the keywords selected were “New England Patriots,” “Patriots,” #Patriots, @Patriots, “Tom Brady,” “Rob Gronkowski,” and “Bob Kraft.” For the interest-targeting campaign, the interests selected were “NFL Football” and “College Football,” as these were the only football-related interest choices.

4.2.6 Content #6: Relationships

On the subject of relationships, the contributor utilized social monitoring to determine trending topics, the resulting context of discussion was:

Figure 18: Social Monitoring Context of Discussion for Relationship Article

advice year i've real **can't** work see really you're relationships social shit say don foundation
healthy single new trust let lot **pro** status i'm broke start couple thing **people** wrong fully
way quote better today y'all person happy best toxic says **sen** does quote partner friends
business getting women **don't** good friend like wants talk tell life think understand look trying
going hate **love** want sex right years **break** things stop cause lol feel day **it's** dating
family **know** got need having end looking long come bad money friendship great media
trump god **libra** time said that's kind man girl

Based on this context, trending conversations revolving around the keywords in the desired application contained the words “love,” “want,” “looking,” and “break,” enabling the author of the article to incorporate these words as the foundation of the article.

Applying the STEPPS (Berger, 2013) framework to the article-creation process to increase Twitter engagements, relationships are an emotional element of human nature; thus, this blog focused on “E,” emotions. In addition, the blog also tells a narrative applying the second “S” – stories. In evaluating the resulting context of discussion, one element that stood out was the words “break” and “can’t”. This expresses a negative sentiment around relationship posts. Therefore, the contributor desired an article that acknowledged this trend, yet, at the same time, provided uplifting hope. After applying social monitoring and the STEPPS framework, the contributor produced an article created for the section on Relationship, entitled, “Wanted: Drama-Free Relationship.” The link to the article is <https://www.sophisticatedprofessional.com/relationships/wanted-drama-free-relationship1/>

In posting the article to Twitter, the text selected for the tweet was: *Take a break from the drama! Here's how you can look for a long-lasting relationship that is filled with real love. #relationship #love #DramaAlert.* Analyzing this text, the application of the themes discovered through social monitoring were applied (love, want, look, long, break). In addition, the text includes the main keyword of the topic, “relationship.”

Figure 19: Relationship Tweet

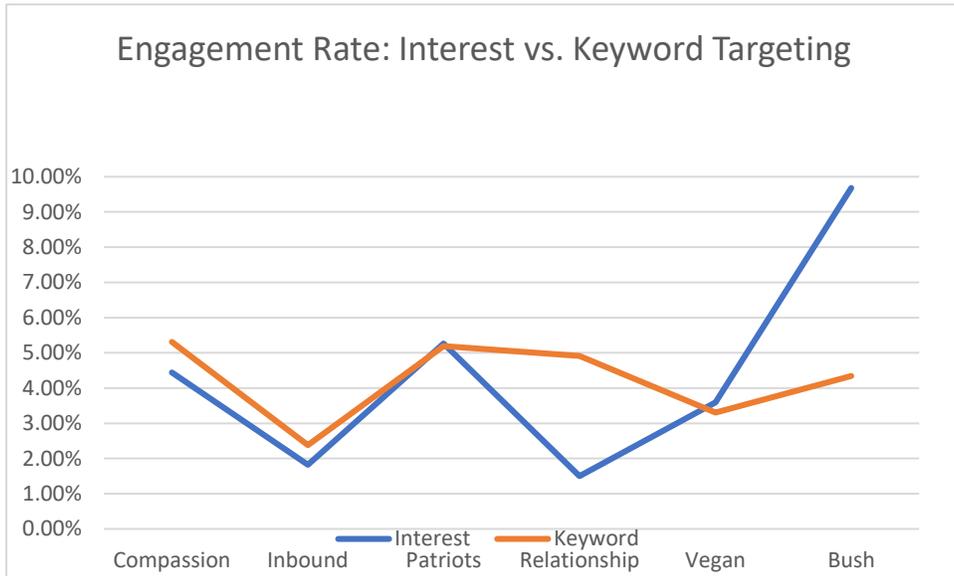
Take a break from the drama! Here's how you can look for a long-lasting relationship that is filled with real love. #relationship #love #DramaAlert mainstrock.com/wanted-drama-f...

For the keyword-targeting campaign, the keywords selected were “romance,” “relationship want,” “dating,” “relationship happy,” and “relationship love.” For the interest-targeting campaign, the interest selected was “dating”.

4.2.7 Campaign Results

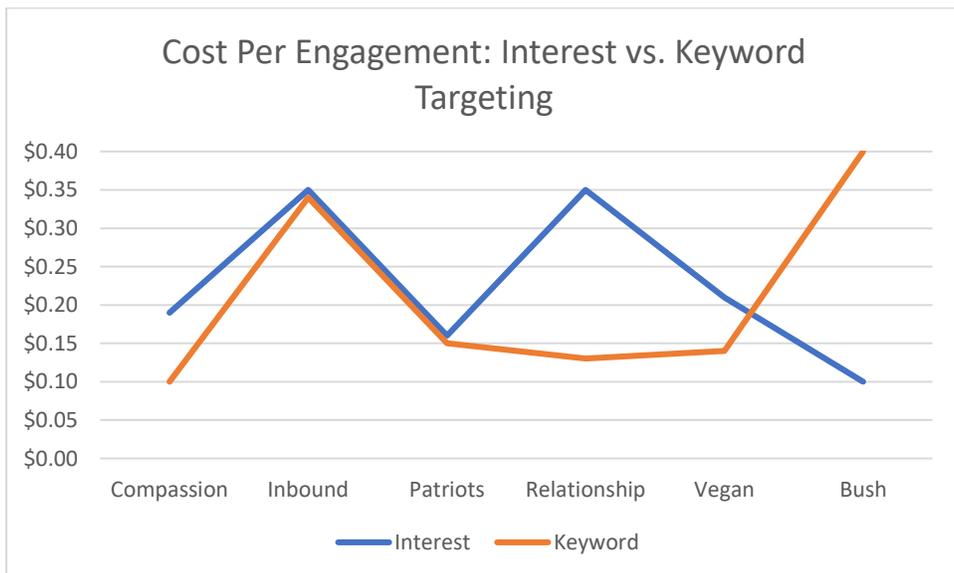
Table 2 presents the results of each of the six campaigns, Appendix 1 displays the results of each keyword for the keyword targeting campaigns. At the conclusion of this iteration, the overall mean was 5,649.24 impressions, 230.25 engagements per tweet, 4.31% engagement rate, and a \$0.22 CPE. These results drastically overachieves Main St Rock Magazine’s objective of an engagement rate of 1.51% and a CPE of \$0.38 confirming the effectiveness of the framework. In the metric of engagement rate, ads utilizing interest targeting have a mean of 4.38%, with ads utilizing keyword targeting have a mean of 4.24%; a 3.38% difference. Figure 20 presents the engagement rate breakdown for each campaign type by content. In observing this figure, keyword targeting appears to be better performing, however the tweet on Barbara Bush is an outlier that impacts the mean.

Figure 20: Engagement Rate: Interest vs Keyword Targeting



In the metric of CPE, ads utilizing interest targeting have a mean of \$0.23, with ads utilizing keyword targeting have a mean of \$0.21; a 6.97% difference. Figure 21 presents the cost per engagement breakdown for each campaign type by content. In observing this figure, keyword targeting outperforms interest targeting in every dataset, with the tweet on Barbara Bush once again being the outlier.

Figure 21: Cost Per Engagement: Interest vs Keyword Targeting



Campaign ads utilizing interest targeting generated a total of 33,022 impressions with 1,294 total engagements. This averages 5,504 impressions and 216 engagements per tweet. Ads utilizing the keyword-targeting generated 34,771 impressions with 1,469 total engagements. This averages 5,795 impressions and 244.86 total engagements per tweet. Figure 22 presents the engagement breakdown for each campaign type by content. In observing this figure, keyword targeting outperforms interest targeting in every dataset, with the tweet on Barbara Bush once again being the outlier.

Figure 22: Total Engagements: Interest vs Keyword Targeting

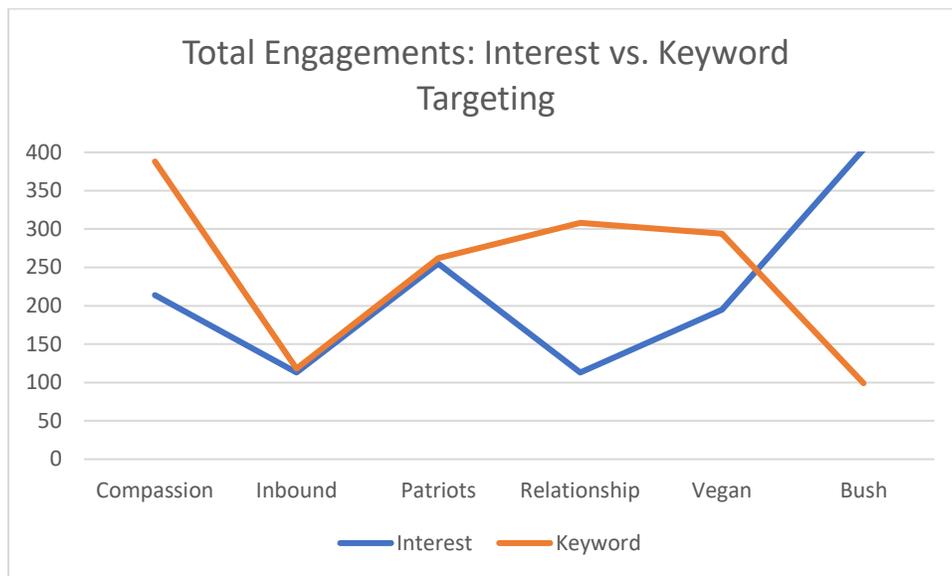


Table 2: Campaign Results for Iteration #1

Campaign name	Impressions	Spend	Tweet engagements	Engagement rate	Cost per engagement	Clicks	Likes	Retweets	Replies	Follows
Vegan - Interest	5,437	\$40.00	195	3.59%	0.21	130.00	51.00	12.00		2.00
Vegan - Keyword	8,902	\$40.00	294	3.30%	0.14	248.00	33.00	8.00	2.00	3.00
Relationship - Interest	7,552	\$40.00	113	1.50%	0.35	108.00	3.00	2.00		0
Relationship - Keyword	6,270	\$40.00	308	4.91%	0.13	271.00	28.00	5.00	1.00	3.00
Patriots - Interests	4,846	\$40.00	255	5.26%	0.16	230.00	14.00	7.00	4.00	0
Patriots - Keyword	5,044	\$40.00	262	5.19%	0.15	235.00	17.00	4.00	5.00	1.00
Bush - Interest	4172.00	40.00	404.00	9.68%	0.10	144.00	193	66.00	1.00	
Bush - Keyword	2279.00	40.00	99.00	4.34%	0.40	48.00	42	8.00		1.00
Inbound Interest	6,200	\$40.00	113	1.82%	0.35	100.00	13.00			0
Inbound Keyword	4,965	\$39.64	118	2.38%	0.34	100.00	16.00	2.00		0
Compassion - Interest	4,815	\$40.00	214	4.44%	0.19	144.00	50.00	16.00	1.00	3.00
Compassion - Keyword	7,311	\$39.87	388	5.31%	0.10	324.00	49.00	9.00	1.00	5.00
Total/Average	Paid Impressions		Tweet Paid Engagements	Engagement Rate	Cost per Engagement	Clicks	Likes	Retweets	Replies	Follows
Both Campaigns Total	67,793	\$479.52	2,763			2,082	509	139	15	18
Both Campaigns Average	5,649.42	\$39.96	230.25	4.31%	\$0.22	173.50	42.42	12.64	2.14	1.64
Keyword Total	34,771	\$239.52	1,469			1,226	185	36	9	13
Keyword Average	5,795.17	\$39.92	244.83	4.24%	\$0.21	204.33	30.83	6.00	2.25	2.17
Interest Total	33,022	\$240.00	1,294			856	324	103	6	5
Interest Average	5,503.67	\$40.00	215.67	4.38%	\$0.23	142.67	54.00	20.60	2.00	1.00
Percentage of Difference	5.30%		13.52%	3.38%	6.97%	43.22%	42.90%	70.87%	11.11%	116.67%

An interesting observation while conducting this study arose from the campaign focusing on Barbara Bush. This campaign serves as an outlier, as it is the only campaign in which interest targeting outperformed keyword targeting in a whole. This was a surprising finding, considering Barbara Bush was a key trending term on Twitter while this campaign was active. In examining this further, and to add to the intrigue, the keyword “Barbara Bush” never served in the campaign. This means the researcher inserted “Barbara Bush” as a keyword for the keyword targeting campaign to target, yet Twitter did not serve any ads to individuals who have tweets containing this keyword. The only keywords to populate results were “#RIPBarbaraBush” and “GeorgeBush.” The former generated 82 engagements with a \$0.35 cost per click, while the latter generated 16 engagements with a \$0.66 cost per engagement.

According to Lambrecht, *et al.* (2015), it may take time for newly trending keywords to properly populate, meaning that if a manager were to run an ad using a keyword that is newly relevant, this keyword would not populate, which was the case in the Barbara Bush campaign. Because the desired keyword did not populate in this campaign, it can be argued that this article, both for interest targeting and keyword targeting, should be taken out of this study.

If this campaign is excluded from the study, interest targeting would then generate a total of 28,850 impressions with 890 total engagements. This is a mean of 5,770 impressions, 178 engagements per tweet, a CPE of \$0.25, and an engagement rate of 3.32%. The SMC campaign using keyword targeting would yield 32,492 impressions with 1,370 engagements. This is a mean of 6,498 impressions, 274 total engagements per tweet, a CPE of \$0.17, and an engagement rate of 4.22%. With these results, the SMC outperforms interest targeting by 53.93% in total engagements, 26.97% in engagement rate, and 31.79% in CPE.

Table 3: Campaign Results for Iteration #1 Excluding Bush Campaign

Campaign name	Impressions	Spend	Tweet engagements	Engagement rate	Cost per engagement	Clicks	Likes	Retweets	Replies	Follows
Vegan - Interest	5,437	\$40.00	195	3.59%	0.21	130.00	51.00	12.00		2.00
Vegan - Keyword	8,902	\$40.00	294	3.30%	0.14	248.00	33.00	8.00	2.00	3.00
Relationship - Interest	7,552	\$40.00	113	1.50%	0.35	108.00	3.00	2.00		0
Relationship - Keyword	6,270	\$40.00	308	4.91%	0.13	271.00	28.00	5.00	1.00	3.00
Patriots - Interests	4,846	\$40.00	255	5.26%	0.16	230.00	14.00	7.00	4.00	0
Patriots - Keyword	5,044	\$40.00	262	5.19%	0.15	235.00	17.00	4.00	5.00	1.00
Inbound Interest	6,200	\$40.00	113	1.82%	0.35	100.00	13.00			0
Inbound Keyword	4,965	\$39.64	118	2.38%	0.34	100.00	16.00	2.00		0
Compassion - Interest	4,815	\$40.00	214	4.44%	0.19	144.00	50.00	16.00	1.00	3.00
Compassion - Keyword	7,311	\$39.87	388	5.31%	0.10	324.00	49.00	9.00	1.00	5.00
Total/Average	Paid Impressions		Tweet Paid Engagements	Engagement Rate	Cost per Engagement	Clicks	Likes	Retweets	Replies	Follows
Both Campaigns Total	61,342	\$399.52	2,260			1,890	274	65	14	17
Both Campaigns Average	6,134.20	\$39.95	226.00	3.77%	\$0.21	189.00	27.40	7.22	2.33	1.70
Keyword Total	32,492	\$199.52	1,370			1,178	143	28	9	12
Keyword Average	6,498.40	\$39.90	274.00	4.22%	\$0.17	235.60	28.60	5.60	2.25	2.40
Interest Total	28,850	\$200.00	890			712	131	37	5	5
Interest Average	5,770.00	\$40.00	178.00	3.32%	\$0.25	142.40	26.20	9.25	2.50	1.00
Percentage of Difference	12.62%		53.93%	26.97%	31.79%	65.45%	9.16%	39.46%	10.00%	140.00%

4.3 First Iteration Sense Making

Sense making is the process of reflecting upon the action that was experienced in an attempt to gain understanding of the events that have occurred, to judge the outcomes by weighing the evidence, and to deliberate in order to make informed decisions on future action (Coghlan & Brannick, 2005). In this process, Raelin's (2001) five skills of reflection was applied first by the Executive Director through personal reflection, and then collectively with the Magazine Manager

and select volunteers. These skills are being, speaking, disclosing, testing, and probing. Details of each skill were explained in the methodology chapter. The results of this evaluation and sense making process is detailed in this section.

4.3.1 The Use of Names in Keyword Targeting

In five of the six datasets, keyword targeting outperformed interest targeting in Twitter promoted tweets; the outlier was the tribute to Barbara Bush with an astronomical margin. In this instance, interest targeting achieved 404 engagements to keyword targeting's 99. Upon further observation, the primary keyword in the keyword targeting campaign, "Barbara Bush," was never populated; this signifies ad impressions were not served to individuals who used the designated term in their tweet. This explains why the engagements were so low; as individuals are unable to engage with an ad they were not exposed to. An inquiry has been placed with Twitter to discover the purpose behind the error. Their reply was:

It seems that you did not target the exact keyword "Barbara Bush". The closest keyword "#RIPBarbaraBush" seems to have served the best among those 4 targeted keywords. You can see this data by clicking "Audience". Keyword targeting optimises for best/better serving keywords. If those Twitter users targeted by "Barbara Bush" cause less result/spend than those users targeted by "George Bush", the system optimises towards the keyword "George Bush".

To test this, an additional campaign was released under the same premise of \$10/day for 4 days, but this time, the only keyword was "Barbara Bush" as Twitter suggested. Interestingly, this campaign did not serve at all; it generated \$0.00 spend, yielding no engagements. This test campaign is in direct contradiction to Twitter's support reply. Surprisingly, the use of names as keywords also did not populate adequately in the NE Patriots tweet. The keyword "Rob Gronkowski" generated only 84 impressions and received 4 tweet engagements at \$0.10 per engagement. This compares to the keyword "patriots," which received 4,713 impressions with 254 tweet engagements at \$0.15 per engagement. Seeing how "Rob Gronkowski" had a more attractive CPE and engagement rate, it is surprising to see it was not populated in greater quantity.

Lambrecht, *et al.* (2015) also experienced similar issues with the volume of time-sensitive keywords populating. Though this may apply to the data set on “Barbara Bush”, the name “Rob Gronkowski” is not a time-sensitive occurrence as he is a veteran player actively in the news. A more realistic observation is keyword targeting underperforms in the use of names. This has implications of which marketers should be aware. In keyword targeting, the use of names should be avoided. If this is not possible, then the marketer should entertain the use of interest targeting.

4.3.2 Keyword Targeting Outperforms Interest Targeting

This research studied the effects of the SMC using keyword targeting, as opposed to campaigns that use interest targeting. In five out of the six datasets that included various topic matters, the campaigns that applied keyword targeting outperformed the campaigns using interest targeting. Out of 6 campaigns, interest targeting obtained a total of 1,294 tweet engagements, while the keyword targeting achieved a total of 1,469 Tweet engagements. This is a 13.52% increase. Further, if one were to exclude the Barbara Bush campaign as an outlier, for reasons described earlier, the numbers are more convincing. Viewed in this manner, interest targeting obtained 890 tweet engagements, while keyword targeting received 1,370 tweet engagements. This is a 53.93% increase. Keyword targeting also generated 26.97% higher engagement rate, and a 31.79% lower CPE. This proves overwhelmingly that keyword targeting is an effective guide for marketers to utilize to increase Twitter engagements.

These findings are in line with O'Reilly (2013) and MacMillan (2013), who claim that keyword targeting is a “game changer” in digital marketing. What makes keyword targeting so effective is recency. According to Lambrecht, *et al.* (2015), the use of keyword targeting will promote a tweet to individuals who have used the selected keyword or phrase within the last 24 hours. This provides users with content in which they are interested, when they are interested in it. Due to these elements of congruence (Lis, 2014) and recency (Lambrecht, *et al.*, 2015), keyword targeting is effective. This has great implementations for marketing managers engaging in a Twitter advertising campaign, the use of keyword targeting provides the opportunity to promote content to congruent individuals who are actively participating in social conversations around the

selected keywords. This is in line with Zhang *et al.* (2017), who stress the effectiveness of customized, congruent messaging that provides individuals with content that is relevant and of interest to them, increasing engagement (MacMillan, 2013).

This study observed that interest targeting was not as effective as the keyword targeting, due to two primary flaws. First, the categories are limited, as Twitter only has a list of 375 possible topics and subtopics that organizations can use in interest targeting. For example, in the article “Is Compassion in Fashion,” an ideal interest would be faith oriented. Unfortunately, the only faith-based interest category available was “Christian and Gospel music”. This is not as effective as if an individual were actively tweeting about the topic focus of compassion and faith, as the results show: Keyword targeting generated 293 engagements, while interest targeting only generated 169 engagements. A second flaw in interest targeting is that it does not capture real-time activity. A user’s interests are determined by an algorithm that encompasses tweets, retweets, follows, and likes (MacMillan, 2013). For example, in the section on Relationships, an individual may passively follow individuals attached to the interest of dating but have no desire to actively engage in social conversations on the topic; thus, the promoted content in this interest may be of little value.

As exemplified in this study, the challenge in keyword targeting is identifying keywords that coincide with the conversations the target market is engaging, and not keywords that describe the target market. For example, the target market for the article on inbound marketing is young professional males and females in their 20s. It would be ineffective to use keywords such as “female”, “20s”, and “young professionals”, because though these keywords identify the desired target market, it does not signify the target market is engagement with posts that contain these specific keywords. Instead, the marketer needs to identify the themes of the conversations in which the target market is engaged. Social monitoring is very effective in this process. For the article on inbound marketing, the keywords selected were “inbound marketing” and “HubSpot,” which resemble themes with which the target audience is actively engaging.

4.3.3 SMC Effect on Organic Activity

As a marketer promotes a message, the objective is not simply personal consumption of the brand, but also dissemination (Shoemaker, 2006). As discussed earlier, the SMC provides an effective means for marketers to increase Twitter engagements through content creation and promotion. However, due to the nature of social media, the SMC also has an impact on organic activity; which means in addition to the engagements of the promoted tweet that were paid for, that same tweet will also encounter organic engagements that were not paid for as individuals interact with the post. Organically, the 5 tweets published in iteration #1 (excluding the Barbara Bush tweet for reasons mentioned above) generated a mean per tweet of 3,519 impressions, 11 engagements, and an engagement rate of 0.559% (In this calculation, $N=10$; 5 pieces of content advertised in 2 separate campaigns for a total of 10). Compared to the 2015 Twitter mean per tweet of 185.46 impressions, 3.28 engagements, and an engagement rate of 0.087%, this is a positive improvement. As users interact with the promoted tweets, their network of followers becomes exposed to the message. This creates an organic flow that originated from personal interaction with the advertised message. The ability of the SMC to provide relevant content to congruent users increased personal engagement, which compounded organic diffusion (Zhang and Moa, 2016). The organic results in completion are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Organic Results Iteration #1

Campaign name	Campaign name	Organic Engagement Rate	Organic Impressions	Organic Engagements	Organic Detail Expands	Organic Link Clicks	Organic Profile Clicks	Organic Likes	Organic Retweets	Organic Replies	Organic Hashtag Clicks
Vegan - Interest	Vegan - Interest										
Vegan - Keyword	Vegan - Keyword	0.856%	6,660	17	4.00	8.00	4.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1.00
Relationship - Interest	Relationship - Interest										
Relationship - Keyword	Relationship - Keyword	0.705%	4,705	14	1.00	5.00	5.00	0.00	0.00	2.00	1.00
Patriots - Interests	Patriots - Interests										
Patriots - Keyword	Patriots - Keyword	1.007%	2,382	20	2.00	9.00	5.00	0.00	0.00	4.00	0.00
Inbound Interest	Inbound Interest										
Inbound Keyword	Inbound Keyword	0.114%	6,529	22	4	6	9	0	0	3	0
Compassion - Interest	Compassion - Interest										
Compassion - Keyword	Compassion - Keyword	2.417%	14,918	48	13.00	7.00	26.00	0.00	0.00	1.00	1.00
Total/Average	Total/Average	Organic Engagement Rate	Total Organic Impressions	Organic Engagements	Organic Detail Expands	Organic Link Clicks	Organic Profile Clicks	Organic Likes	Organic Retweets	Organic Replies	Organic Hashtag Clicks
Both Campaigns Total	Both Campaigns Total		35,194	111	24	35	49	0	0	10	3
Both Campaigns Average	Both Campaigns Average	0.559%	3,519.40	11.10	2.40	3.50	4.90	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.30

4.3.4 Social Monitoring to Discover Trending Topics

This study applied the practice of social monitoring to the content creation process of the six datasets through the SMC, which provided magazine contributors a convenient vehicle for discovering real-time trends and interests surrounding a given topic on social media, in line with Chen (2010).

One example of that effectiveness was the creation of content for the article in the Health section. The contributor wanted to create content based on nutrition, to grab the attention of individuals starting a diet for the summer, but did not know the best direction to take. First, a social-monitoring analysis of “summer diet” revealed trending themes in the context of discussion, including “vegan.” To gain a deeper understanding of the vegan theme, the contributor then conducted a second social monitoring analysis, this time on the word “vegan.” This secondary analysis discovered a deeper trending theme, “recipes”. This analysis provides insights to the contributor that a trending theme in this topic of nutrition that social media users are actively conversing on is “vegan.” Then, taking the analysis a level deeper, one way to join the active “vegan” conversation is to create content based on “recipes.” Through social monitoring, the contributor now has a clear direction for the type of relevant content to create that is in demand on real-time social media. It was then decided to create a blog that focused on a YouTube video of easy vegan recipes for meal prep. In line with Zhang *et al.* (2017), social monitoring helped the magazine identify a trending theme to target a homogenous market. This example displays the importance of the final step in the social monitoring portion of the SMC: to reflect on and revise the search as needed until satisfactory results are garnered.

Another discovery was social monitoring also assisted in identifying themes not to include in content creation. Under the section on Relationships, the magazine was seeking key themes to use as hashtags and promoted tweet keywords for the article “Wanted: Drama Free Relationship.” The focus of this article was on single individuals seeking a relationship; thus, an assumed keyword theme would be “single.” However, by conducting a social-monitoring analysis, different connotations of the word “single” appeared. This study coincided with the start of the Major League Baseball season in the USA; therefore, the word “single” was often

used on Twitter to depict the baseball term for a hitter advancing to first base. If the marketer used the word “single” in a hashtag or as a promoted keyword, it would have attracted a different audience than expected, one that would not be congruent with the content of the article. This displays the importance of the filter step of applying words to exclude, to generate more accurate results. Thus, marketers can use this information in applying social monitoring to ensure that the themes and keywords utilized in a campaign are attracting the proper audiences. This supports literature in which marketers routinely monitor social media to discover topics trending within their target market (Billington and Billington, 2012; Zhang and Vos, 2014).

A final observation on the results of this testing is that professional subjectivity must be applied in the use of social monitoring. For instance, some themes that appeared in a social-monitoring analysis of Barbara Bush were “treatment, failing, and Trump.” Treatment and failing are themes that coincide with Mrs. Bush’s health conditions, and Trump most likely became implicated in conversations discussing whether it would be proper for the current USA president to attend the funeral. Though all of these words were trending on the topic of Barbara Bush, neither were appropriate highlights in the desired context. This practice is in line with Zhang and Vos (2014) when they suggest properly reflecting on a social monitoring analysis to decide what trending themes are most appropriate for the desired context. Another example of this is the article on the New England Patriots. Social monitoring themes that emerged with this topic included Super Bowl and Eagles, which referred to the previous Super Bowl. Since the context of the tweet was the future NFL schedule and not the past Super Bowl, these themes were not applicable in this context.

During the conclusion of the first round of campaigns and the writing of this reflection, a new feature had begun to emerge on social-monitoring platforms, that of trending hashtags. This feature identifies leading hashtags associated with a given topic on social media in real time. The use of hashtags has proved to significantly increase tweet engagements (Huang, Thornton, and Efthimiadis, 2010; Burton and Soboleva, 2011; Suh *et al.*, 2010). This is a powerful feature that provides marketers with valuable data to make informed decisions on hashtags to utilize in tweets. After reflecting upon this feature, the Executive Director and the Magazine Manager

concluded that it would be advantageous to include trending hashtags in the social-monitoring section of the SMC for the second iteration.

These insights provide a valuable contribution in managing content contributors, as it assists in the development of custom content that is relevant to topics in which their target audience is currently engaging, to increase the diffusion of the content throughout social media (Zhang and Moe, 2016; Zhang and Vos, 2014). This is referred to in practice by the term “joining the conversation” to increase social-media engagement (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). Managers for Main St Rock Magazine will implement social monitoring by following the process presented by this framework to increase success, in line with the precedent of social monitoring in practice and literature (NZ Marketing Magazine, 2012; Zailskaite-Jakste and Kuvykaite, 2012; Pehlivan *et al.*, 2011).

4.3.5 STEPPS for Content Creation

The second stage of the SMC utilizes the STEPPS framework (Berger, 2013) to guide managers and content creators in developing engaging content based on the trends analyzed through social monitoring. STEPPS addresses and describes six different styles of content: Social Currency, Triggers, Emotion, Public, Practical, and Stories.

Social currency plays on the inner desire to share content that makes people appear favorably to their social network (Ghosh *et al.*, 2012). The article on the New England Patriots was social currency, providing insider information and analysis on the upcoming NFL schedule before it was officially released. Triggers associating messages with topics that are top-of-mind sustain high levels of diffusion (Berger, 2013). This applied to the video on Barbara Bush, as her passing was a topic that was top-of-mind in the news. The “E” in STEPPS refers to emotional content, as individuals share emotional experiences they encounter (Anderson, 1998) to connect with others through commonalities and similar expressions, creating a bond of congruence that resonates among them, strengthening their relationship (Berger, 2013). The articles on relationship and compassion are both based on human emotion. Content that is public is observed as a multitude

of individuals engaging in the same action, and observers will assume the action is beneficial and may even imitate it (Berger, 2013). Every article used the Twitter mechanism of hashtags to help each post go public. Content that delivers practical value and clearly illustrates a practical application will result in greater engagement and virality (Gladwell, 2000). The articles on inbound marketing and vegan recipes both provide practical information. The final style of content in STEPPS is Stories. Individuals do not process information in terms of facts; they do so through narratives (Berger, 2013). The video on Barbara Bush provided a narrative on her work to support child literacy.

4.3.6 Content Creation Model Enhancement

During the thesis review period, this project's second advisor questioned the topic-selection process for the created content, asking the question, "Why were these topics selected?" This question generated great reflection, as the current model did not encompass this. Through the concept of the model, the intent was for topic selection to be derived from the four motivational needs discussed in the literature-review chapter. It was then assumed that these needs would be applied through the application of social monitoring and STEPPS. The current model was then challenged through reflection between the Executive Director and the Magazine Manager in which concerns and doubts were disclosed; following the reflection process provided by Raelin (2001). It becomes clear that the application of the motivational needs, as well as focus on the target audience, is lost in the current model. This is problematic, as a key issue identified in solving the problem of this project is for the framework to incorporate a guide for content creators to follow in selecting topics that the target audience would find intriguing. Such an important element of a framework cannot be assumed, as it is important for organizations to properly communicate processes with volunteers to ensure success (Starnes and Wymer, 2001); thus, inquiry into new ways to present the model was needed in order to incorporate the four motivational needs.

To accomplish this through an element of probing, each motivational need was listed in a column, for a total of four columns. Then, each part of the motivational need were listed in the corresponding column (derived from the literature review). The result is seen in Figure 23 shows.

Figure 23: 4 Motivational Needs

Belong	Individualistic	Altruistic	Curiosity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be part of an intimate group • Be a part of Something Bigger than yourself • Connect with Others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity signaling • Self enhancement • Seek recognition • Personal achievement • Personal preferences • Past experiences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acts of charity • Affection for others • Spirituality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown knowledge • Fascinating knowledge

The next challenge was how to incorporate these details into a revised model, and how to present this to magazine contributors in an easy to follow format? It was decided to create brainstorming questions, one question to represent each part of every need, to form a guide for content selection. The use of such questions as a guide is prevalent in the literature, with some examples of use by Reason (2006) and Raelin (2001). As a contributor begins selecting a topic to create engaging content on, they simply need to review the brainstorming questions, and select the one(s) that are best in line with the vision of the content with the focus of the target audience in mind. As these questions are derived from the four motivations, it will ensure they are incorporated into the content creation process. The application of these drives and motivations will lead to a consumer-oriented process (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010) in which topic selection is focused through the lens of the target audience, thus increasing likelihood of engagement. The resulting brainstorming questions appear below:

Figure 24: 4 Motivational Needs Brainstorming Questions

<p>Belonging</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Is there a particular community your target is longing to be a part of (family, friends, social group, professional group, sports team, ect)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o What type of content can you share to make them feel as if they are a part of this group? o Or, how can your brand actually help them be a part of this group? 2. How can my brand make people feel they are a part of something bigger than themselves? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Is there a movement you can associate your brand with (Political, Social, Charitable, Religious, ect) that is popular with your target market? What type of content can your brand share that revolves around these movements? o What is your target passionate about? Is there a movement your brand can create around this passion? o What are your target's interests? Can you make your target feel they are a part of a special group that connects these interests with your brand? 3. How can my brand connect and bring people together? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o What type of experiences can you create as people engage your brand with others? o How can your brand foster Group Communications? o How can your brand share content that portrays people coming together? o Can your brand create a live event? 	<p>Unique / Esteem</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can your brand be a tool of self-expression? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o What self-image is your target seeking to portray? What content can you post to help your target portray this image? o What is your target audience passionate about that they would like to portray to others, how can you create content around this? 2. How can your brand help enhance the image and status of your target audience? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o What content can your brand provide to help enhance the status or prestige of your target? 3. What recognition or validation is your target seeking? How can you give them this validation? 4. What does your target audience truly want to achieve? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o How can your brand actually help your target accomplish something they desire to do? o How can your brand help your target obtain something they truly want? o What problems are they facing? How can you resonate with these problems? How can you help them overcome these problems? 5. What is your target truly interested in? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o What content can you create that are in line with your target's interests and hobbies? o What form of entertainment does your target audience enjoy, what type of entertaining content can you create? o What does your target have strong opinions on? What type of content can you create that is in line with these opinions? 6. What moments, events, or memories are important to your target? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o How can you help your target relive memorable experiences and events? o How can you help your audience relive nostalgic experiences?
<p>Altruistic</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What causes or charities is your target market compassionate about? What acts of charity can your brand engage in with your target market to help these groups? 2. How can your brand inspire compassion and display a concern for others? 3. What element of spirituality or purpose in life is your target seeking? How can your brand help them reach this element of spirituality? 	<p>Curiosity</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does your target need to know in order to accomplish their goals, but do not know? 2. What is your target audience fascinating about? What type of information can you provide around this fascination?

Through the process of critiquing the current framework, it became apparent another element was missing, namely, a guide to different formats of content. The Twitter mechanism allows a tweet to contain text, images (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017; Rogers, 2014), links (Boyd *et al.*, 2010; Enge, 2014; Suh *et al.*, 2010), and videos (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017; Rogers, 2014). Content that can be uploaded with the link capability includes blogs, webpages, webinars, podcasts, and landing pages. As social media emerges, so does a multitude of content formats to engage audiences, and a successful strategy should incorporate these different formats (Rogers, 2014; Klingman, 2016; Sprout Social, 2018). It is important for this framework to go beyond the creation of blogs and incorporate other formats.

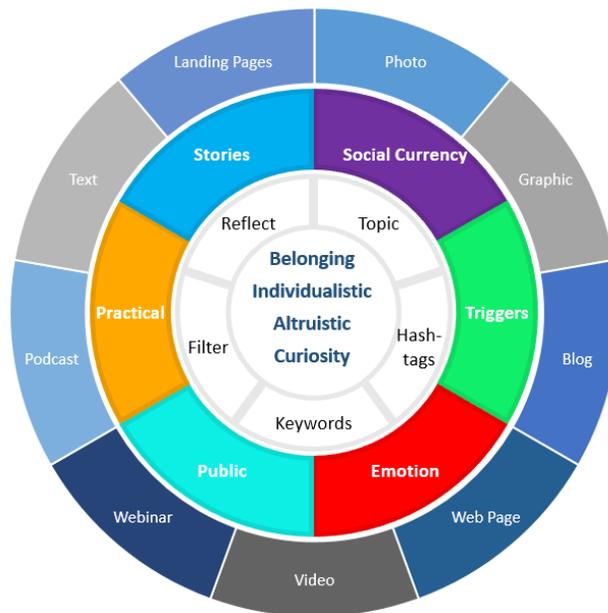
The content-creation portion of the previous framework incorporated two parts: social monitoring and STEPPS. Following the reflection, the new framework will have four sections: four motivational needs, social monitoring, STEPPS, and formats of content. To incorporate

these modifications, the revised content framework will be present in the form of a wheel with four layers, called the Content Wheel, seen below in Figure 25.

In applying this to the content creation process, a contributor applies this framework by first selecting one or more brainstorming questions to incorporate the four motivational needs, at the core of the wheel. The selected topic will be applied to the second stage of the wheel, social monitoring, in which the topic should be solidified, along with identifying trending hashtags and keywords. Next, the content creator will select one or more formats in the STEPPS framework that will best apply to the content, the third layer. The final layer is selecting the format of content to produce.

It is important to note that although most content-creation processes will begin in the center and work their way out, this is simply a guide, and the order in which the layers are applied can vary, as long as all are applied. For example, a content creator may be instructed to create a video, and in such an instance, obviously the outer layer will be initiated first.

Figure 25: Content Wheel



4.3.7 Emerging Issue to Address In Iteration #2

Thus far, this section has discussed the benefits of the SMC framework to guide content creation and promotion to increase engagements. It compared the effects of promoted tweets utilizing keyword targeting versus interest targeting; in which keyword targeting generated 12.6% more impressions, 53.93% more engagements, 26.97% higher engagement rate, and a 31.79% lower CPE. This far exceeded the targeted baseline of an engagement rate of 1.51% by 179.38%, and the targeted CPE of \$0.38 by 54.88%. This attractive outcome can attribute to the congruence (Lis, 2014) and recency (Lambrecht, et al., 2015) of keyword targeting; but also the impact of applying social monitoring to discover trending themes in real time to “join the conversation” on social media (Zhang *et al.*, 2017) and using the STEPPS format to guide the style of content in a way that increases engagement. This section also described revisions to the content creation portion of the framework that emerged through reflection and challenging prior assumptions, to include the four motivational needs and content formats. Through this reflection stage, however, new issues have emerged to be addressed in iteration #2.

Implementing SMC among Volunteers

In the first iteration, the Executive Director initiated most of the action, with the exception of two articles created by volunteer contributors, and reflection sessions with the Magazine Manager and close volunteers. However, the organizational change this thesis seeks to establish is implementing the framework to guide the actions of volunteers. In the next iteration, the SMC will be implemented to manage the actions of the volunteers. Not only is the content of the SMC framework important; how the framework is presented to the volunteers to implement is equally important. In the second iteration, literature will be explored on how to implement the knowledge of the framework, and the action will include efforts from the volunteers.

Impact on Organic Tweets

This iteration studied the impact of the SMC applying promoted tweets, as well as the organic impact of those same tweets that were promoted tweets. However this iteration did not test the

impact of the SMC on solely organic tweets without the use of any paid advertising. Obtaining a brand presence on social media is considered a “must-do” activity (Kwon et al., 2014); which includes organic posts. In addition, from a managerial standpoint, though it can on occasion, Main St Rock Magazine needs to ensure engagements are being generated at times when it is not conducting a paid campaign. Thus it is beneficial for the second iteration to test the effects of the SMC solely on the basis on content creation and publishing, without the use of paid advertising.

Lack of New Followers

One metric that was surprising was the lack of new followers. It was assumed that this advertising activity would generate an attractive number of new followers. However, the total of all campaigns in the advertising generated only 19 new followers. Twitter releases monthly metrics on overall performance. The screenshot of the April performance can be viewed in Figure 26. As noted, April generated 10 new followers, 9 less than the number generated from the paid advertising. Some individuals who followed the magazine due to the promoted tweets eventually unfollowed the page within the same month. This provides an issue to probe in the next iteration—how to increase and how to maintain followers.

Figure 26: April Twitter Metrics



These emerging issues will be explained in greater detail in the next section.

4.4 Iteration #2 Issue Construction and Supplemental Literature Review

The last section provided an overview of the reflection process succeeding the first iterative cycle of action. Though the results of the first iteration deemed successful, new issues did emerge. First, the study needs to test the effects of the SMC in solely organic posting for times when the magazine is not advertising. Next, the magazine needs to test the effectiveness of the SMC with greater volunteer involvement; which means it must discover a method to transfer the information of the framework to volunteers in a manner in which they understand and can implement. Finally, the strange lack of followers must be investigated and a resolution sought. A supplemental literature review was conducted to gain insights on these newly emerging issues; which will be described in this section.

4.4.1 Implementing the Framework among Volunteers

Involvement in Main St Rock is unpaid, and the volunteers are either full-time students or employed with other priorities they must manage. In this sense, volunteering is a leisure activity (Parker, 1997), engaged in as leisurely pastimes and not as full-time work. The deployment of the new framework must utilize a method that is easy and does not require much time to understand. If the deployment of the new framework is too time consuming, it may result in an adverse reaction, causing volunteers to lose interest (Rehberg, 2005) in the magazine and forfeit their involvement. The method deployed to teach the new framework must be one that respects the time constraints of the volunteers, but effective enough to provide a keen understanding of the material. With respect to distance, even though interns are local, a number of contributors live in different states. Preferably, the magazine will have a base format in which all volunteers of the organization can engage. Starnes and Wymer (2001) state that individuals will continue to volunteer for organizations if their experience is positive.

Options to train employees or volunteers on new policies, frameworks, or practices can include live seminars, classes, or peer mentoring (Brock and Herndon, 2017). Claxton-Oldfield (2015) studied the effectiveness of volunteer programs of Hospice Palliative Care in Canada; in which training sessions consisted of group discussions, lectures, videos/DVDs and readings in a 30-hour training program. After analyzing these methods, a training session that encompasses as such would be an effective means to teach the framework to the volunteers. After reflecting the framework with the Magazine Manager, it was decided a total of 2.5 hours of training would suffice.

One issue that remains, however, is volunteers will need a reference guide to follow the action of the framework as they are applying it in real time; in addition, this reference guide needs to be effective enough to guide contributors who are unable to attend a live session due to geographical reasons. An option that can satisfy these concerns is online training (also referred to as e-learning), training conducted through online properties such as webpages, podcasts, and webinars (Hein *et al.*, 2016; Robinson *et al.*, 2019; and Effendi, 2014). E-learning is gaining in popularity in both practice and academia; 80% of U.S. firms employ some form of e-learning in their operations (Montgomerie, *et al.*, 2016). E-learning is an effective method for organizations who have individuals dispersed across various geographical locations (Bandy, 2010). Business Wire (2013) published a case study on the application of the e-learning capabilities of the platform Yardi, a management system designed for builders, contractors, and real estate professionals. The case study states that e-learning was not only effective in training individuals in remote locations, but also cost-efficient with a high return on investment.

Due to the evolving dynamics of organizations, conventional face-to-face programs are becoming harder to arrange (Montgomerie *et al.*, 2016). Coordinating various individuals in timeframes convenient for all parties is often difficult. This is especially true for a nonprofit organization that runs on volunteers who all have full-time responsibilities. One of the main benefits of e-learning solutions is the materials are available on demand, allowing individuals to view them online at a convenient time, with access by computer, smart phone, or tablet (Business Wire, 2013). The online nature of the platform also allows participants to view the material at their own pace and review the material as often as they wish.

Though e-learning provides great benefits, there are also some drawbacks. One of the main criticisms of e-learning is that lack of in-depth personal interaction may affect the quality of learning (Robinson *et al.*, 2019 and Montgomerie, *et al.*, 2016). In addition, the benefit of flexibility may also double serve as a drawback for individuals who lack the motivation of self-learning to take the time to review and properly reflect upon the material (Cook and Dupras, 2004). Organizations should compensate for these shortfalls by providing a support outlet for individuals who engage in e-learning to easily receive guidance when needed (Effendi, 2014). This support can be in the form of email, chat rooms, online white boards, or teleconferences (Cook and Dupras, 2004).

Upon analyzing these options, a beneficial method to introduce the new designed framework to the magazine's volunteers would be utilizing training sessions of two and a half hours, while reinforcing the information with e-learning in the form of webpages. This is a non-intrusive form of training that will respect the geographical and time constraints of the volunteers (Rehberg, 2005). It is a convenient method by which volunteers can access the material on demand through the convenience of their smart phone, tablet, or laptop (Business Wire, 2013; Montgomerie, *et al.*, 2016). One of the most advantageous benefits in the context of the magazine is that volunteers can access the information at their own pace (Montgomerie, *et al.*, 2016). In addition, they can reference the material as often as they need to, as they engage in the iterative process of content creation and promotion.

Creating a webpage to present the new framework to the magazine volunteers requires webpages designed in a manner that is easy to use, draws the viewer in, and portrays the information in an understandable way. Buchanan (2017) claims the majority of individuals do not read webpages word for word; instead, they skim the page for content, only focusing on its key portions. Thus, the readability of the page is extremely important. To improve readability, the author suggests using bullet points, headers, and brevity in sentence structure.

In addition to readability, the use of multimedia can also impact the effectiveness of an e-learning webpage. This includes the use of sound, video, slideshows, and images to help

reinforce the instruction. Though multimedia can increase the satisfaction of the learning experience, Cook and Dupras (2004) warn of the negative effects of over-using multimedia elements on a webpage, as it can distract the reader and make the page too “busy.” The author’s advice is to only use multimedia in areas where it reinforces the material to be learned. Hyperlinks are also an effective tool to insert in an e-learning webpage (Cook and Dupras, 2004). Hyperlinks embedded in the webpage can direct users to other pages with more depth on a topic, a helpful video page, or a link to other multimedia outlets. Hyperlinks provide users with reinforced information, while simultaneously not making the page too cluttered.

This analysis presents an effective method for the magazine to introduce the new framework to the volunteers by using e-learning, in the form of a webpage. After reflecting with the Magazine Manager and two interns, the Executive Director applied these insights by creating web-based training to guide volunteers through the content-creation process of the SMC (PDF available upon request).

4.4.2 Impact of the SMC on Organic Posting

In addition to developing a framework to increase Twitter engagement through paid advertising, the framework must also guide the actions of content creation and promotion in a manner to increase engagements during times the magazine is not advertising. Utilizing the context of the Twitter platform, the framework has mechanisms in place to increase organic activity. One way to increase organic content is through the use of hashtags in a tweet as it improves content discovery for organic tweets (Soboleva et al., 2017; Enge, 2014; Huang *et al.*, 2010; and Jackson, 2017). The use of hashtags has been described in greater details earlier in this paper and is already incorporated in the content creation portion of the framework. This is a good initial step to increasing organic engagements. Another element to increase organic engagements is the ability of Twitter users to search tweets that contain desired keywords or phrases (Twitter, 2018i); thus it is beneficial to design tweets in a manner that contain trending keywords Twitter users are potentially searching for. This is accounted for in the social monitoring portion of the framework as it assisted in the ability to discover what trends are emerging within social media

platforms (Chen, 2010), and the ability to use these discovered keywords and phrases in the text of the tweet for searchability context. A third way to increase organic content engagement is to ensure the content is in line with the interests of the target market. Content congruence increases the likelihood of user engagements (Zhang *et al* 2017). This is incorporated in the framework through the use of the 4 motivational needs, social monitoring and STEPPS.

However, one element the original framework lacked was a way to guide contributors to promote their own content on Twitter. Volunteer contributors are motivated to share their work on social media to increase exposure, to obtain a sense of accomplishment (Starnes and Wymer, 2001) and gain (Shye, 2010) of added engagements. Surprisingly, after a review of the literature, a gap existed in such methods of guest contributors promoting their own content on social media that was published on a 3rd party site. Thus a fragmented approach was pursued to piece together various elements in literature that did exist. One element that was prevalent was the power of the retweet to increase engagements (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017; Suh *et al.*, 2010; Boyd *et al.*, 2010). In pondering this concept, contributors could assist in the organic promotion of their content by retweeting their content that was posted on the Main St Rock page to their own. This would enact the ability to increase engagement through retweets. Currently, the platform/context section of the SMC has three steps: The text of the tweet will include keywords discovered in social monitoring, the hashtags of the tweet will include hashtags discovered from the social monitoring, and the content will be attached. Now, a fourth step will be included: having the content contributor, retweet the content on their personal page.

Another issue to ponder is the effect of the SMC on social media platforms other than Twitter. Instagram is a popular mobile social network that allows users to edit and share photos and video. Instagram's visual nature and vast population is resulting in the app becoming a valuable channel for marketers (Liu and Suh, 2017). In January 2013, Instagram had 90,000,000 active users; this number has skyrocketed to 1,000,000,000 by June 2018 (Statista, 2018). Sheldon and Bryant (2016) state Instagram is the fastest growing social network globally, and it is the network that individuals spend the most amount of time on. The format of an Instagram post provides the user with the ability to publish an image or video, with a text description that has hashtag and mention capabilities, similar to Twitter. However, unlike Twitter and Facebook,

Instagram does not provide the mechanism for clickable links in a post; instead, Instagram is a platform which is focused on sharing images enhanced by filters (Waterloo et al, 2018). Despite this, bloggers are finding the use of Instagram advantageous because of its high engagement rate (Mee, 2018b), positive effects on brand awareness (Liu and Suh, 2017) and its open API (Roncero-Menedez, 2013).

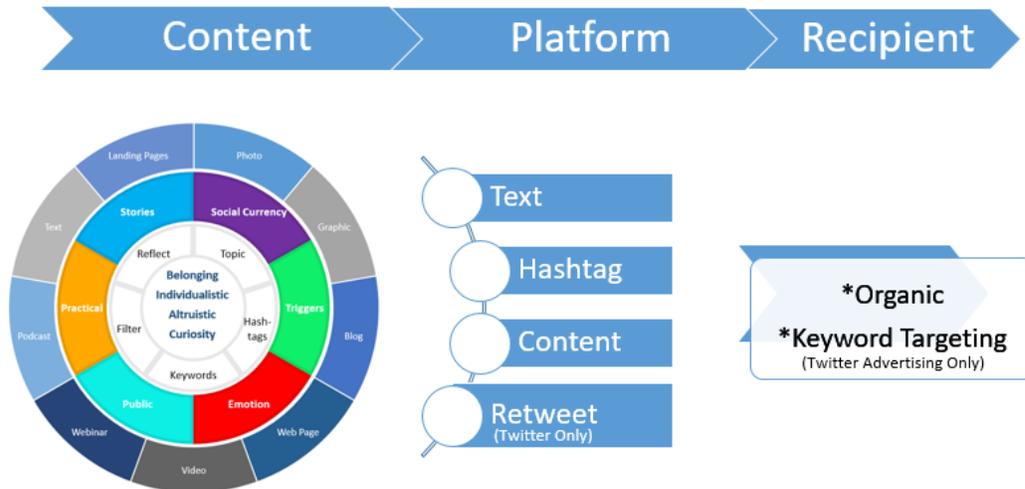
Because of these factors, and the premise that the scope of this research is focused on increasing social media engagements, it was decided to test the impact of the SMC on organic posting on Instagram, as well as Twitter. On Instagram, there is an emphasis on visual esthetics and positive and self-promotional content (Waterloo *et al*, 2018), this focus can help position the magazine favorably to the young professional demographic. This study did contemplate testing the SMC on Facebook organic posts, however due to limited resources, it was concluded the second iteration would focus on Twitter and Instagram for organic posting. One of the responsibilities of an action researcher is being obliged on deciding what action can be obtainable in the provided timeline and given resources (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014).

4.4.3 Revised Framework

At this point of the chapter, a number of modifications have been applied to the SMC through reflection and a supplementary literature review. This revised framework must include the newly designed content wheel to guide the action of content creation. It must incorporate an element of volunteer self-promotion through retweeting. It needs to be conditional to include organic posting or paid advertising. And it must be flexible enough to utilize the platforms of Twitter and/or Instagram. Synthesizing all of the additions, Figure 27 below shows the revised SMC. The first part is content creation, based on the content wheel addressed earlier; in which the stages are four motivations, social monitoring, STEPPS, and content format. The second part is utilizing the context of the social media platform, which includes the four stages discussed in the previous section of text, hashtag, content, and retweet (this step is conditional and will only apply to Twitter as Instagram does not have a share/retweet function). The final part is the recipient who will view the content, and is conditional depending on whether the content is

promoted through Twitter keyword targeting or posted organically. Finally, this model now encompasses multiple social media platforms, and not simply Twitter.

Figure 27: Revised SMC Model



4.4.4 Increase Twitter Followers

One of the more surprising and puzzling observations in the first iteration was the lack of new followers generated. The advertising campaign of the first iteration generated 19 new followers. The month of April 2018 when the advertising action occurred, generated a total of 10 new followers; meaning 9 followers unfollowed the magazine. Individuals follow other Twitter users to stay updated on recent happenings, as well as to gain insider information (Sanderson, 2011). An individual is more apt to follow if they have a favorable attitude toward the user (Yoon *et al.*, 2016), if the personality of the account is consumer-friendly and entertaining (Washenko, 2014) as well as accounts and content that are familiar with the individual (Logan, 2014). At first, this was confusing; the framework just generated a high engagement rate, meaning audiences were attracted to the magazine’s content. Sprout Social (2018) claims 41.1% of Twitter users unfollow when they feel content is not relevant to them. This was the second most

frequently encountered reason, the first being too many promotional messages at 46%; however, this would not apply in this context, as Main St Rock does not post promotional material.

Upon reflection, the magazine's targeting strategy of the four-gear process (Moore, 2014) came to mind, in which a digital organization seeks as many viewers as possible, in a broad targeting strategy. To achieve this, the magazine currently has a large number of sections with each section having its own target audience. The issue that appears to be emerging is the various sections do not resonate with all facets of the target market. For example, individuals interested in the vegan article may not necessarily be interested in the article on the New England Patriots. To attempt to make sense of this, Field (2012) refers to the fact that a business cannot be "all things to all people." This may explain why the magazine generated high engagement rates, yet at the same time did not generate an attractive level of new followers; individuals were attracted to the promoted tweets, due to the power and relevancy of keyword targeting, but did not decide to follow the magazine due to the broad selection of articles that may not have been relevant to them.

According to the literature, the level of congruence a user perceives a brand has with their personal interests will impact their relationship with a brand (Lis, 2014). Unfortunately, in the current layout of the magazine, a user may feel a level of congruence with one section of the magazine, but not with the rest. A solution for overcoming this is to alter strategies from seeking a broad target market to identifying a niche target market in which content is directed at a narrow, homogenous audience, as opposed to a broad, diverse audience (Li and Liu, 2013), 2003). Narrowing content to specific groups will increase visibility within that group (Field, 2012), as now all content will be viewed as relevant, rather than only a fraction of the content. Tailor-packaging messages to a specific audience can generate higher rates of rebroadcasting activity and engagement, due to the emotional connection of the audience with the niche content (Zhang *et al.*, 2017) as message diffusion increases when individuals perceive congruence between the brand and themselves (Lis, 2014).

Two benefits of niche targeting are increased loyalty (Donnelly, 2016) and cost effectiveness. When individuals feel the message a brand releases is in line with their personal profile and

interests, it creates a bond with the brand, increasing the level of congruence. In return, this level of congruence makes rebroadcast of that message more likely than messages not in line with the interests of the user (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). In niche marketing, the target audience is much smaller, resulting in a cost-effective measure to release brand messages (Donnelly, 2016). The smaller size also enables an organization to divert resources and energy toward a specific group (Field, 2012).

In 2017-2018, a separate project, independent from this research, was initiated to re-brand the magazine; it is important to expose to the reader, for the context of this paper. The scope of this research is to evaluate how Main St Rock can establish a framework to guide volunteers through the actions of content creation and promotion in a manner that would increase Twitter engagement. The scope of the separate, independent project was re-designing the website and branding. However, through this reflection of a lack of followers, it appeared this concept of shifting to a niche targeting strategy is impacted of the two projects. During a multi-year action research project, a number of changes on the corporate level can occur; it is the responsibility of the researcher to be able to adapt and incorporate these changes as needed (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). This section will provide an overview of this independent project, as in some areas, both projects overlapped.

During this rebranding process, Main Street Rock received viable consumer feedback in the format of informal consumer interactions that addressed two concerns. First, there was a common conception the name “Main St Rock” was confusing. Some thought it referred to a rock band, others a sports pub, and many interpreted mainstrock.com as signifying “Main Strock.” Second, adding to the confusion were the various sections and widespread content. If people read an article on Sports, it might leave the impression that this is a sports magazine, until they see an article on fashion or culture. Due to the wide selection of articles, users did not know what type of magazine this was. These concerns confirm the benefit of shifting to a niche targeting strategy discussed in the previous sub-section.

A rebranding campaign usually incorporates the changing of the organization’s name and targeting strategy (Gotsi and Andriopoulos, 2007). The authors caution a number of pitfalls can arise from this action. First, it can nullify years of brand equity, and second, it can be expensive

to re-gain brand equity under the new strategy. Fortunately Main St Rock did not have an established brand equity, thus this would be a time advantageous to implement the brand change. In addition to a name change, rebranding will often also include a new logo and visual branding in the form of images and color schemes (Muzellec and Lambkin, 2006). This change can also create pitfalls for the organization if not executed properly.

To guide a successful rebranding process, an academic model would be advantageous to guide the action in this process. A model that is highly cited in literature for such a process is Kapferer's (2012) Brand Identity Prism; which provides six elements in developing a successful brand. The first element is physique, which constitutes the logo, images, color scheme associated with the brand. The second element is the personality of the brand, which is the tone, style, and emotions that are expressed as it communicates with the public. Third is culture, which is the value system and basic principles in which brand behavior is based. The fourth element is relationships, which refers to the connection between various people the brand symbolizes. Reflection is the fifth element, which refers to target segment that is most in lined with the brand. To achieve this, it is often advised to establish a buyer persona (Virani, 2013; Jaiswal, 2017); which is a consumer profile of the desired target audience, which includes their demographics, interests, wants, and problems faced. And the final element is self-image, which is the ideal image an individual has of themselves, and was discussed in detail in chapter 2.

Going into the second iteration, the action to be taken will do so under the new branding of the magazine.

4.5 Magazine Rebranding

During the timespan of this research, a separate project independent from this thesis was initiated to re-brand the magazine. The results of the rebranding process are presented in this section to provide the reader with the context of the brand shift. It was decided to conduct the action of the

second iteration after the re-branding was completed. Throughout 2017 and 2018, various reflection meetings were conducted with the Executive Director, the Magazine Manager, and select volunteers to discuss personal expressiveness and observations (Jaiswal, 2017). These insights were applied to Kapferer’s (2012) Brand Identity Prism to guide the re-branding process focusing on the niche target market of young professionals. The six elements of the prism are physique, personality, culture, relationship, reflection, and self-image. In the summer of 2018, the brand identify prism was completed. All elements of digital properties including the context of the website, the magazine sections, the flow of the website, and social media appearance were then modified to reflect this new persona (Jaiswal, 2017; Field, 2012; Zhang et al., 2017). The rebranding strategy is presented in Table 5 below:

Table 5: Rebranding Strategy

Main St Rock Re-Branding Strategy	
Physique	Classic Black and White color scheme, Elegant imagery
Personality	Sophisticated, Ambitious, Charitable
Culture	Success, Helping one reach their potential
Relationship	Inspiration, Mentorship
Reflection	Male and Female, Young Professionals, Ages 22-39, USA
Self - Image	<p>Interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Business, Success, Entrepreneurship ● Live life to the fullest, travel, adventure ● Learning how successful people overcome challenges ● Reach their potential, and look for ways to improve daily ● Use faith and charity to help others in need <p>Problems faced</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work long hours ● Still learning about business, do not have the desired experience ● Limited funds as they are not yet fully established in their career ● Finding their own personal niche in the marketplace

One observation discussed in the reflection session was the connotation that the name “Main St Rock” was confusing. Some thought it referred to a rock band, others a sports pub, and many interpreted mainstrock.com as signifying “Main Strock,” adding to the confusion. Thus, management desired to change the name to one that clearly represented a young professional magazine. Through four months of deliberation, the Executive Director, the Magazine Manager, and two volunteers decided on a new name—Sophisticated Professional—with the URL SophisticatedProfessional.com. This change was implemented in September 2018. The new logo of the magazine is seen in Figure 28. It reinforces the new branding strategy with a classic black and white color scheme and elegant imagery.

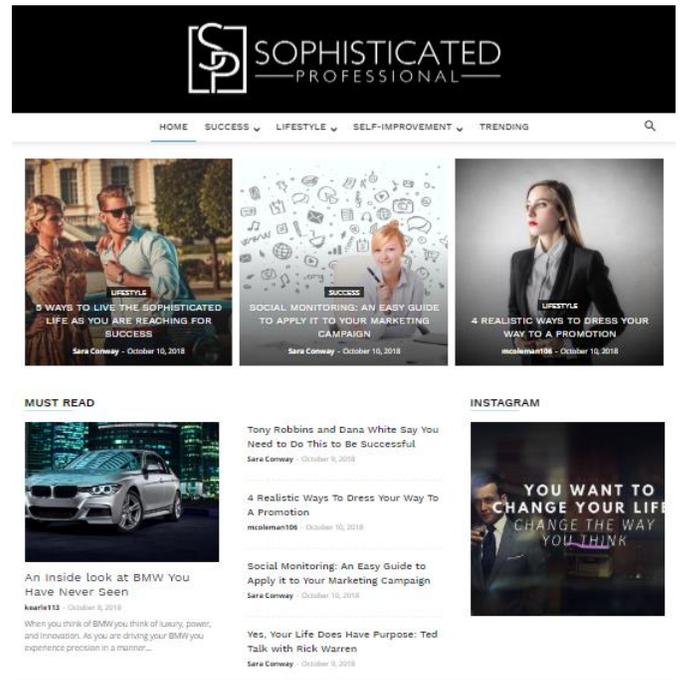
Figure 28: Sophisticated Professional Logo



In addition to the website name, this process signified consumer confusion over the purpose of the magazine due to the vast number of sections. Thus, with the name change, the management desired to take a more targeted, niche approach, providing a narrow number of sections directly in line with the target audience. The three sections solidified through various reflection sessions were Success, Lifestyle, and Self-Improvement. The Success section will feature stories on how accomplished professions were able to gain their success, as well as tips on how young professionals can advance in their career. In applying Kapferer’s (2012) Brand Identity Prism, this section is in line with the magazine personality of being ambitious, the culture of success, and the relationship of mentorship. The section of Lifestyle will feature the leisure activities of young professionals, such as dining, fashion, and vacations. This is in line with the sophisticated personality of the magazine. The section of Self-Improvement will provide content to motivate young professionals to be their best, to overcome challenges, as well as to be professions of charity helping others in need in faith. This is in line with the personality of being charitable, the culture of helping others reach their potential, and the relationship of inspiration.

Originally, content of the magazine was 50% local and 50% national; however this proved problematic confusing readers residing in outside areas. Thus, with the name change and reduction of content sections, management decided to shift to a more universal content strategy of focusing on creating content that would appeal to all young professionals across the nation. All elements of digital properties including the context of the website, the magazine sections, the flow of the website, and social media appearance were then modified to reflect this new branding (Jaiswal, 2017; Field, 2012; Zhang *et al.*, 2017). Figure 29 presents a screenshot of the website redesign.

Figure 29: Website Redesign



4.6 Second Iteration Methodology

In action research, new issues emerge as the “fuzziness” of a problem transforms into a clearer path of action (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014); these issues emerging from the first iteration were described in the previous section. Understanding emerges from this consistent revision, and it is the role of the researcher to go where the story flows (Dutton *et al.*, 1983). Through this application, the initial framework proposed to obtain the desired organizational change was modified addressing the new, emerging issues. This was presented in the previous section.

The second iteration tested the effectiveness of the revised framework in two primary areas. First, it tested if the revised SMC generated the designated baseline of Twitter engagements through keyword targeting promoted Tweets. Second, it tested if the revised SMC

generated the designated baseline of Twitter engagements through simply organic posts; both on Twitter and Instagram.

4.6.1 SMC on Twitter Advertising with Volunteer Involvement

To determine the effectiveness of the SMC with volunteer involvement, this iteration applied the same methodology as the first iteration, with minor adjustments to accommodate for the revised model. In this iteration, the action of content creation was conducted in conjunction with the Executive Director, Magazine Manager, and four volunteers (in the interest of disclosure, the students are from the university where the Executive Director is employed).

Presentation of SMC to Volunteers

Unlike the first iteration, this second iteration fully incorporated the framework to guide the daily actions of volunteers. To teach the volunteers the SMC actions, they received two and a half hours of training consisting of group discussions, lectures, videos/DVDs and readings. This format of training is consistent with the training studied by Claxton-Oldfield (2015). To reinforce this training, and to serve as a guide for volunteers as they engage in their action, an online training web property was created to guide the process. Online training methods, also known as e-learning, has great precedent in literature (Hein *et al.*, 2016; Robinson *et al.*, 2019; and Effendi, 2014) as it is a non-intrusive form of training that is respectful of the geographical and time constraints of the volunteers (Rehberg, 2005). In addition, it provides a convenient method by which volunteers can access the material on demand when needed through the convenience of their smart phone, tablet, or laptop (Business Wire, 2013; Montgomerie, *et al.*, 2016).

To test the effectiveness of revised SMC, six pieces of content were independently created and promoted on Twitter, the same as in the first iteration with literature precedent (Nguyen, Thai, and Dinh, 2017 and Zhang *et al.*, 2017); thus, each article yielded its own dataset of results.

Each dataset represented a section of Sophisticated Professional Magazine (two datasets for each of the sections of Success, Lifestyle, and Self-Improvement).

SMC Part 1: Content Creation

The first part of the SMC is content creation, which followed the four layers of the content wheel. In the first stage of the content wheel, contributors selected a topic to develop content on, in line with the motivations of the target audience. Creating content in line with individual's inner motivations increases engagement (Zhang et al., 2017) as it leads to a consumer-oriented process (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). This was achieved by reviewing a list of brainstorm question(s) (Figure 21) that emerged from the four motivational needs, as described in section 4.3.6. The use of such questions as a guide is prevalent in the literature, with some examples of use by Reason (2006) and Raelin (2001).

In the second stage of the content wheel, the chosen content topic was applied to the steps of social monitoring modeled after Zhang and Vos (2014). These steps were 1.) Select topic, 2.) Identify trending keywords, 3.) Identify trending hashtags, 4.) Apply filters, 5.) Evaluate and repeat. These steps were described in greater detail in section 3.2.1.

In the third stage of the content wheel, contributors applied the STEPPS (Berger, 2013) framework to determine the style(s) of content to be created, identical to the same stage in the first iteration described in section 3.2.2.

And fourth, contributors selected the desired format of content; two were blogs, two were videos, one was an image, and one was a photo gallery inside of a blog. The reason for this was to incorporate the various formats of content (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017, Rogers, 2014; Sprout Social, 2018). These four stages of the content wheel concluded the first part of the SCMS, content creation. This action took place in September 2018.

SMC Part 2: Content Publishing on Twitter

In the second part of the SMC, the created content for each of the six datasets were publish on Twitter in the form of a tweet. A tweet contains 280 characters and can include text, links, hashtags, mentions, retweets, images, and videos (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017). Modeled after this, the three elements of tweet are the text, the hashtags, and the content. First, the text of the tweet was constructed utilizing the discovered keywords in social monitoring as a benchmark, as the text of the tweet should be congruent with the target audience to increase engagement (Lis, 2014; Zhang and Moa, 2016; Zhang and Vos, 2014). Second, hashtags were inserted into the tweet, using the social monitoring as a benchmark. Third, the correlating content was attached to the tweet (ei link of a blog, or an image). The tweet was then published on Twitter. Fourth, publishers then retweeted the tweet from the magazine's business Twitter page to their personal page. The act of retweeting increases engagements (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017; Suh et al., 2010; Boyd et al., 2010). These four actions conclude the platform part of the SMC.

SMC Part 3: The Recipient

In the third part of the SMC, each of the six pieces of content were advertised on Twitter through promoted tweets utilizing keyword targeting; the effectiveness of keyword targeting is ability to target congruent users based on recency (Lambrecht *et al.*, 2015). In this part, the executive director inserted keyword(s), phrase(s), or hashtag(s) into the Twitter Ads platform, Twitter then served the ads only to individuals who within the last 24 hours have posted a tweet containing the chosen keywords. This is in line with action taken by Lambrecht *et al.* (2015) in their study, and is described in section 3.2.4. Same as the first iteration, each content in each campaign had a daily budget of \$10. This daily budget is in line with business best practices, but the literature also supports it (Hotkar and Garg, 2017). Each article was promoted for a total of four days, also a common time frame in practice and in the literature (Lambrecht, *et al.* 2015). This action was conducted in conjunction with the Executive Director and the Magazine Manager. The first promoted tweet went live September 30, 2018.

Creating a promoted tweet requires identifying a campaign objective. The primary list of objective choices that Twitter provides are Awareness, Followers, Promoted Video views, Website clicks or conversions, and Tweet engagements. Since this research is studying the increase of engagements, “Tweet engagements” was the chosen objective.

Data Metrics, Recording Methods, and Analysis

This iteration utilized digital data collection methods (Rogers, 2015, and Kennedy *et al.*, 2015), the metrics used to measure the effectiveness of the framework application were engagement rate (Cowie and Gurney, 2018; Lambrecht *et al.*, 2015; Wadhwa *et al.*, 2017) and cost per engagement (Cowie and Gurney, 2018; Lambrecht *et al.*, 2015; Dacres *et al.*, 2013); the same as in section 3.3.1. This iteration continued to utilize data from Adstage as the baseline metric of a 1.51% engagement rate and a CPR of \$0.38 (Rodriguez, 2018).

Through this testing, there was a close observation to the number of Twitter followers obtained through this advertising period. An individual is more apt to follow if they have a favorable attitude toward the user (Yoon *et al.*, 2016), if the personality of the account is consumer-friendly and entertaining (Washenko, 2014) as well as accounts and content that are familiar with the individual (Logan, 2014). The rebranding from Main St Rock Magazine to Sophisticated Professional Magazine resulted in a targeting shift from a broad target market to a niche, narrow, homogenous audience. Tailor-packaging messages to a specific audience can generate higher rates of rebroadcasting activity and engagement, due to the emotional connection of the audience with the niche content (Zhang *et al.*, 2017), as message diffusion increases when individuals perceive congruence between the brand and themselves (Lis, 2014).

It is assumed that because of this, the level of Twitter followers will increase during the advertising of the second iteration, compared to the 10 that were generated in the first iteration. This metric of follower is frequently studied in literature, with Jaakonmäki *et al.*, (2017) as an example.

Methods of data analysis, recording methods, and rigor and quality were the same as the first iteration, detailed in sections 3.3.2, 3.3.3 and 3.3.4 respectively.

4.6.2 Impact of the SMC on Organic Posts

The second element tested in this iteration was the effectiveness of the SMC on organic posting, for times when Sophisticated Professional is not advertising. The platforms used in testing were Twitter and Instagram. Instagram was selected in addition to Twitter due to its high engagement rate (Mee, 2018b), positive effects on brand awareness (Liu and Suh, 2017) and its open API (Roncero-Menedez, 2013). Sheldon and Bryant (2016) state Instagram is the fastest growing social network globally, and it is the network that individuals spend the most amount of time on.

In this iteration, the actions of content creation and promotion organically was conducted in the month December 2018. The duration of one month was selected as this is the time period of Twitter's analytics snapshot. Action was conducted primarily by volunteer contributors and student interns, in conjunction with the Executive Director and the Magazine Manager.

The action of content creation followed the SMC Part 1 process outlined in section 4.6.1. The action of content publishing followed the SMC Part 2 process outline in section 4.6.1. It is to be noted for content publishing that the action of retweeting was only conducted on the Twitter platform, as Instagram does not have a sharing capability. Content that contained URL links was only posted on Twitter, as this format of content is not supported by Instagram. The individual who created the content, also published the content. The recipients for these posts were only those who viewed the posts due to organic activity, as these particular posts were not advertised, thus no further action in the SMC Part 3 was needed.

For a baseline metric, engagement rate will be used. Twitter and Instagram do not provide a target engagement rate for organizations to seek, as this rate will vary based on industry and account. However, Mee (2018) calls 0.33% a very high engagement rate between and 6% a very high engagement rate for Instagram (Mee, 2018b).

It is important to note that organic engagement rate is calculated by dividing the average engagements per tweet by the Twitter profile's total followers—a different metric than for Twitter ads, for which measures of effectiveness are calculated by dividing the total engagements by total of impressions.

As described in section 3.3.3, Twitter has a very effective internal mechanism for recording tweet metrics. Unfortunately, as Instagram is a mobile application, the data recording and analytic mechanism is limited. Kelsey (2017) describes the benefits of utilizing the platform Hootsuite as tool to monitor metrics for various social media networks. Thus to overcome this, the platform Hootsuite provides an effective platform to record engagement activity on social media posts (Hootsuite, 2019). Methods of data analysis and rigor and quality were the same as the first iteration, detailed in sections 3.3.2, and 3.3.4 respectively.

4.7 Results of Second Iteration

The rebranding process was completed in September 2018. Once the rebranding was completed, the action of the second iteration soon followed to test the revised SMC on six separate datasets, as well as the organic impact of the framework on the platforms of Twitter and Instagram. The action of this iteration included participation of volunteers, in conjunction with the Executive Director and Magazine Manager. The results of which are described in this section.

4.7.1 Results of 2nd Iteration of SMC Keyword Advertising

In this iteration, the revised SMC was tested on six separate datasets, with each dataset represented a section of *Sophisticated Professional Magazine* (two datasets for each of the sections of Success, Lifestyle, and Self-Improvement). Content was created by four volunteers,

in conjunction with the Executive Director and Magazine Manager (in the interest of disclosure, the students are from the university where the Executive Director is employed).

Contributors followed the four layers of the content wheel of selecting a topic through the use of the four motivations brainstorm questions, apply social monitoring, solidify a style of content through the STEPPS framework, and identify the format of content to be created. Two pieces of content were blogs, two were videos, one was an image, and one was a photo gallery inside of a blog; this was to incorporate the various formats of content (Rogers, 2014).

In the second part of the SMC, the created content for each of the six datasets were publish on Twitter in the form of a tweet containing text, hashtags, and the attachments. This action was conducted by volunteers in conjunction with the Executive Director and Magazine Manager. Finally, the tweets were promoted utilizing keyword targeting, which was conducted by the Executive Director and Magazine Manager. The action took place in September and October 2018. The screen shots from the social monitoring appear in Appendix 2, the content created appear in Appendix 3.

This iteration generated 23,703 impressions and 1,034 engagements. The mean of all six campaigns were 3,950.5 impressions, 172.33 engagements, an engagement rate of 4.61%, and a cost per click of \$0.25 per engagement. The detailed results from each campaign can be viewed in Table 6; and Table 7 provides a comparison to the April 2018 campaigns. For the organic effect, the campaigns generated a mean of 7,940.17 organic impressions, 13 organic engagements, and an organic engagement rate of 1.087% (the number of followers for this time period was 1196). The details of the organic impact can be viewed in Table 8.

Table 6: 2nd Iteration Promoted Tweets Results

Campaign name	Impressions	Spend	Tweet engagements	Engagement rate	Cost per engagement	Clicks	Likes	Retweets	Replies	Follows
Sophisticated	3,647	38.60	166.00	4.55%	0.23	136.00	21.00	5.00	4.00	0
Breast Cancer	5,055	40.00	274.00	5.42%	0.15	236.00	28.00	10.00		0
Purpose In Life	2,504	40.00	119.00	4.75%	0.34	90.00	22.00	6.00	1.00	0
Tony Robbins	3,114	40.00	183.00	5.88%	0.22	147.00	25.00	4.00	4.00	3.00
BMW Museum	6,072	40.00	126.00	2.08%	0.32	113.00	11.00	1.00		1.00
Disney	3,311	40.00	166.00	5.01%	0.24	125.00	35.00	4.00	1.00	1.00

Total/Average	Paid Impressions	Total Organic Impressions	Tweet Paid Engagements	Engagement Rate	Cost per Engagement	Clicks	Likes	Retweets	Replies	Follows
Oct Ad Set - Total	23,703	47,641	1,034			847	142	30	10	5
Mean	3,950.50	7,940.17	172.33	4.61%	\$0.25	141.17	23.67	5.00	2.50	0.83

Table 7: Paid Campaign Comparison

Paid Campaign Comparison				
	Engagement Rate	Impressions	Engagements	Cost Per Engagement
Oct Keyword	4.61%	3,950.5	172.33	\$0.25
April Keyword	4.22%	6,498.4	274	\$0.17
April Interest	3.32%	5,770.0	178	\$0.25

Table 8: 2nd Iteration Organic Impact on Promoted Tweets

Total/Average		Organic Engagement Rate	Total Organic Impressions	Organic Engagements	Organic Detail Expands	Organic Link Clicks	Organic Profile Clicks	Organic Likes	Organic Retweets	Organic Replies	Organic Hashtag Clicks
Oct Ad Set - Total	Oct Total		47,641	78	15	24	29	3	0	2	5
Mean	Mean	1.087%	7,940.17	13.00	2.50	4.00	4.83	0.50	0.00	0.33	0.83
April Ad Set - Total	April Total		35,194	111	24	35	49	0	0	10	3
Mean	Mean	0.559%	3,519.40	11.10	2.40	3.50	4.90	0.00	0.00	1.00	0.30
April Ad Set - Keyword	% Mean Difference	94.48%	125.61%	17.12%	4.17%	14.29%	-1.36%	-	-	-66.67%	177.78%

The most surprising discovery in this iteration was the increase in new followers. During the month of October, in which the vast majority of the campaign was initiated, the magazine gained 381 new followers, as seen in Figure 30. This is a vast increase from the 10 new followers generated during the April campaign.

Figure 30: October 2018 New Followers



4.7.2 Results of the SMC on Organic Posting

To test the impact of the SMC on organic posts, content was created and published on the platforms of Twitter and Instagram for a 1 month period, December 2018. In this time period, 62 tweets were posted on Twitter, generating a total of 739 engagements of which 165 were clicks, 469 were likes, 103 were retweets, 2 replies. This is a mean of 11.92 engagements per tweet, with an engagement rate of 1.148% (based on 1038 followers during this time frame). This

performance supersedes the target baseline of 0.33% as well as the 2015 engagement rate of 0.087%. The detailed results can be viewed in Table 9.

In this time period, 18 post were published on Instagram, generating 667 engagements of which 643 were likes and 24 were comments. This is a mean per tweet of 37.06 engagements per post, and an engagement rate of 12.031% based on 308 followers. This performance supersedes the target baseline of 6%. The detailed results can be viewed in Table 9.

Table 9: Twitter/Instagram Organic Results Iteration #2

Platform	Total Posts	Total Engagements	Clicks	Likes	Retweets	Replies	Engagement Rate	Total Followers
Twitter - Total	62	739	165	469	103	2		1038
Mean		11.92	2.66	7.56	1.66	0.03	1.148%	
Instagram - Total	18	667		643		24		308
Mean		37.06		35.72		1.33	12.031%	

4.6 Chapter Conclusion

Action research consists of continuous and conscious planning, taking action, and evaluating that action (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). Rigor and quality derive from the spiral action of the research cycles (Perry and Gummesson, 2004). This chapter has presented the application of this iterative process to this project.

4.6.1 Keyword Targeting Incorporated into SMC

In the first-iteration test, the SMC with the use of keyword targeting generated 1,370 tweet engagements (\$0.17/ engagement) and a 4.22% engagement rate, compared to the SMC with the use of interest targeting, which obtained 890 tweet engagements (\$0.25/ engagement) with a 3.32% engagement rate. Both methods exceeded the set baseline target of \$0.38/engagement and an engagement rate of 1.51% (Rodriguez, 2018). In determining if the SMC should incorporate

keyword or interest targeting to guide promoted tweet operations, the numbers for the keyword targeting are more attractive with a 53.93% increase of engagements obtained. This proves keyword targeting is an effective guide for marketers to utilize to increase Twitter engagements. These findings are in line with O'Reilly (2013) and MacMillan (2013), who claim keyword targeting is a “game changer” in digital marketing. Thus, the SMC will incorporate keyword targeting as its form of advertising.

There are some instances when keyword targeting should not be utilized. When the use of an individual's name was used as a keyword, such as “Barbara Bush,” “Tom Brady,” or “Rob Gronkowski,” very few impressions were served. Lambrecht, *et al.* (2015) also experienced similar issues with the volume of time-sensitive keywords populated. In such cases, using a non-person keyword, a hashtag, or interest targeting is advised.

4.6.2 SMC Increases Engagement

After the retargeting strategy was complete and the framework modified, the second iteration of action included greater involvement from volunteers. Volunteers underwent two and a half hours of training, reinforced by E-learning, an effective method for organizations with individuals dispersed across various geographical locations (Bandy, 2010, and Montgomerie *et al.*, 2016). The testing phase of Iteration #2 included utilizing the revised framework to create and promote six pieces of content on Twitter. The results generated a 4.61% engagement rate, \$0.25 cost per engagement (CPE), and 7,940 organic impressions; exceeding baseline. Most fascinating about the phase was the addition of 381 new followers, compared to 10 followers in Iteration #1.

In December, the framework was released to contributors at large, who followed the framework to create and publish content on Twitter and Instagram. In this time period, 62 tweets were posted on Twitter, generating a mean of 11.92 engagements per tweet, with an engagement rate of 1.148% (based on 1038 followers during this time frame). This performance supersedes the baseline of 0.33%. In this time period, 18 post were published on Instagram, generating a mean

per tweet of 37.06 engagements per post, and an engagement rate of 12.031% based on 308 followers. This performance supersedes the target baseline of 6%.

5. Discussion

5.1 Introduction

The organizational change this thesis seeks to implement is developing a framework to shape the strategic management of volunteers, guiding them through the actions of content creation and promotion; that will result in the desired level of social media engagements. This is to overcome the problem of the target audience failing to engage with the magazine's content on Twitter. Achieving this calls for a scholarly approach that discovers how the magazine can increase social media engagements, and applying evidence-based insights to establish the organization's ability to guide both content creation and promotion. In the first iteration, literary insights were applied to the development of a framework, the Social Media Conversation framework (SMC), which was then tested to determine effectiveness. These results were reflected upon and analyzed, generating a revised version of the framework.

In the second iteration, the revised framework was tested and analyzed, generating positive results. First, six pieces of content were created and promoted with Twitter keyword targeting through the guidance of the SMC. This garnered a mean of a 4.61% engagement rate and a \$0.25 CPE, surpassing the established baseline a 1.51% engagement rate and a CPE of \$0.38. The organic impact of these campaigns yielded a mean engagement rate of 1.087%, surpassing the established baseline of 0.33%. The time period of this series generated 381 new followers, compared to the 10 followers that were generated in the time period of the first iteration campaign.

In addition to testing the effectiveness the SMC in paid advertising, this iteration also tested the impact on solely organic posts. Content contributors and publishers followed the SMC framework for the month of December 2018, of which 62 tweets were published. This generated

an engagement rate of 1.148%, surpassing the established baseline of 0.33%. The SMC was also tested on the impact of organic posting on Instagram. In the same time period, 18 posts were published generated a 12.031% engagement rate, surpassing the 6% baseline.

This chapter will discuss the reflective insights acquired through the second cyclical action-research iteration.

5.2 SMC Guiding Content Creation

A primary goal of this thesis is to develop a framework to guide volunteers through the process of content creation. This section provides the analysis and reflections of the content creation, which is the first part of the SMC framework.

5.2.1 Motivational Needs to Guide Topic Selection

One of the initial objectives of the desired framework was to design the content creation process in a manner that was in line with human motivations; as an understanding and application of these drivers will increase engagement (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). Through an exploration of literature, four motivational needs were discovered: belonging (Maslow, 1970; Shultz, 1966), individualism (Maslow, 1970; Shultz, 1966; Ho and Dempsey, 2010), altruism (Maslow, 1970b; Shultz, 1966; Ho and Dempsey, 2010; Oh and Syn, 2015), and curiosity (Maslow, 1970; Oh and Syn, 2015). In the first iteration, it was assumed these needs would be applied through the application of social monitoring and STEPPS; however with a period of reflection after the first iteration, it became clear the application of the motivational needs, as well as the focus on the target audience, was lost in the original framework. Essential elements of a framework cannot be assumed, as it is important for organizations to properly communicate processes with volunteers to ensure success (Starnes and Wymer, 2001).

To accommodate this, the framework was revised to incorporate the motivational needs into the content creation process. The first stage of the content creation process of the revised framework presented a set of brainstorming questions; which were derived from the discovered four motivations presented earlier. One question to represent each part of every motivation, to serve as a guide for contributors to select a topic as the subject of the content. The use of such questions as a guide is prevalent in the literature, with some examples of use by Reason (2006) and Raelin (2001).

An observation that can be attributed to the application of these motivations was an increase in engagement rate between the first iteration to the second. The April keyword iteration generated a 4.22% engagement rate, the October iteration generated an engagement rate of 4.61%; a 9.24% increase. The impact of this ability to select content topics congruent with the motivations of the target audience is also reinforced by the organic impact generated by the tweets promoted (a promoted tweet generates engagements that are paid for, in addition, it also generates engagements that occur organically, meaning not paid for). The April iteration generated a combined mean engagement of 0.559%, while that of October generated a rate of 1.087; a 94.48% increase. In comparing the results of the two iterations, the April campaign averaged 3,519 organic impressions per tweet; and the October campaign averaged 7,940, a 126% increase. In addition, the October campaigns collectively generated a greater mean per tweet in total engagements, clicks, and likes organically.

This ability to select a content topic focused on internal motivations contributed to the increase of engagement rate, in line with literature (MacInnis *et al.* 1991; Wu and Lin, 2012); as it lead to a consumer-oriented process (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010).

5.2.2 Social Monitoring and STEPPS to Create Congruent Content

The application of social monitoring and STEPPS was applied to all iterations of content creation. Contributors selected a topic to create content on, and then applied the topic to a social

monitoring platform; to discover trends and interests surrounding a given topic on social media, in line with Chen (2010). Through this application, contributors were able to discover trending keywords and hashtags (in the second iteration) surrounding the chosen topic on social media in real time. This application served as a benchmark to assist contributors in selecting keywords and hashtags to utilize in the content creation process that were actively trending on social media.

This process deemed beneficial in increasing engagement rate. For example, the first iteration ran two simultaneous campaigns, one campaign promoted content created through the SMC application using keyword targeting, and the second promoted the same content utilizing interest targeting. The keyword targeting campaign generated a 4.22% engagement rate, and the interest targeting campaign generated a 3.32% engagement. In the second iteration, one campaign ran utilizing keyword targeting, which generated a 4.61% engagement rate. All three campaigns superseded the established baseline of 1.51%.

Engagement rate represents the relevance of the content to the audience that views it, to determine if the individuals who view the content are interested in it. The application of these insights generated through social monitoring allowed contributors to develop custom content relevant to topics their target audience was actively engaging in (Zhang and Moe, 2016 and Zhang and Vos, 2014). This is referred to in practice by the term “joining the conversation” to increase social media engagement (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). This ability, along with the application of Berger’s (2013) STEPPS to create tangible content (discussed in section 4.3.5), contributed to the high engagement rate that was generated.

5.3 Organic Publishing

The first part of the SMC guided contributors through the process of content creation, the second part of the framework guided the process of publishing the content on social media. A social

media post has three elements, the text, the hashtags and the content. Keywords discovered in the social monitoring stage of part one were used as a benchmark for the text of the post, this was to ensure the text of the post was congruent with the target audience to increase engagement (Lis, 2014; Zhang and Moa, 2016; Zhang and Vos, 2014). Hashtags discovered in the social monitoring stage of part one were used as a benchmark to use in the post, as the use of proper hashtags will increase engagement (Soboleva et al., 2017; Enge, 2014; Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez, 2016). Finally, the created content is attached to the post (ei. image, link, video), and the post is published to the social media platform. Once the content is published, it will be viewed through organic means (impressions served due to being a follower of a social media account and through the rebroadcasting of user interactions). These are the organic recipients of the post.

One of the key issues of the second iteration was to determine how the SMC would impact organic social media engagement, for times when the magazine was not advertising. Volunteers, with the assistance of the Executive Director and the Magazine Manager, created and published content guided by the SMC on the platforms of Twitter and Instagram during the month of December 2018. In this time period, 62 tweets were posted on Twitter, generating a mean per tweet of 11.92 engagements per tweet, and a 1.148% engagement rate. This performance supersedes the target baseline of 0.33% as well as the 2015 engagement rate of 0.087%. For Instagram, 18 post were published on Instagram, generating a mean per post of 37.06 engagements, and an engagement rate of 12.031%. This performance supersedes the target baseline of 6%. This section provides an analysis and reflection on the observations pertaining to these results.

5.3.1 Hashtags to Increase Discovery

In the second iteration, organic posting on both Instagram and Twitter superseded the designated baseline, which can be attributed in part to the impact of creating congruent content as mentioned in the previous section. This illustrates that the SMC is an effective framework to guide volunteers through the process of organic posting on Instagram and Twitter. An interesting

observation was the Instagram organic content engagement rate and mean engagements per post. In the time period of this study, the application of the SMC generated an organic engagement rate of 12.031% on Instagram, double that of the selected baseline of 6%. The mean engagements per post was 37.06. This is a fascinating discovery considering the Sophisticated Professional Instagram account only had 308 followers at this time. It would be assumed the impressions of such a post would be limited due to the small follower base and considering these were organic posts that were not promoted. This gives reason to assume the high number of engagements were partially attributed to the effective use of hashtags.

The proper use of hashtags significantly increases tweet engagement (Huang *et al.*, 2010; Burton and Soboleva, 2011; and Suh *et al.*, 2010) as it increases discovery (Huang *et al.*, 2010; Rogers, 2014; and Jackson, 2017). In this instance, even though the Instagram account had a small amount of followers to view the content, non-followers were able to see the content as they were search for designated hashtags. This reinforces the impact of utilizing social monitoring in the first part of the SMC as it assisted volunteers to identify trending hashtags to incorporate into the social media content. The use of these trending hashtags increases the possibility for the post to be discovered because these are the hashtags social media users are actively seeking content for; this contributed to the increase in engagements for the posts.

5.3.2 Impact of the Instagram Platform

Continuing the observations on Instagram, an unexpected discovery was the level of organic engagements (mean of 37.06) compared to that of Twitter (mean of 11.92) in the second iteration. Sheldon and Bryant (2016) state Instagram is the fastest growing social network globally, and it is the network that individuals spend the most amount of time on. Mee (2018b) claims individuals find Instagram advantageous because of its high engagement rate. This discovery has important implementations for management seeking a framework to guide volunteers through the process of increasing engagements on social media. With Instagram obtaining an attractive level of engagements, it will be suggested that it is an important element of the Sophisticated Professional's social media strategy.

However, implementing Instagram into a social media framework needs to be strategic. Instagram does not allow clickable URL links in a post, as is the case on Twitter. Thus the magazine cannot post blogs on Instagram in which a user can click on the post and be redirected to the magazine website. Yet, even with this incapability, Instagram can be advantageous. Liu and Suh (2017) claim Instagram can have a positive effect on brand awareness. To accomplish this, Waterloo et al. (2018) recommends focusing on the visual esthetics and positive, self-promotional content, as this is a key driver of high engagement level. To do this, the magazine can post images and videos that support the sophisticated image of the brand to increase engagement. This was the type of content published on Instagram in this second iteration and is incorporated in the developed framework, which garnered high engagement.

In the second iteration of this thesis, one of the modifications to the framework was including a stage in the content creation process in which the contributor selects the format of content to create. This is vital in implementing Instagram into the framework as it provides a guide for contributors to create content outside of blogs; such as images and video (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017). This is necessary to incorporate posting on Instagram. Applying this to strategic management, the platform of Instagram can be utilized to share images, quotes, and stories that reflect the brand (Waterloo *et al.*, 2018 and Lua, 2018). Twitter can be utilized to post commentary on real-time occurrences, blogs, and curated content (Waterloo et al., 2018 and Lua, 2018).

5.4 Keyword Targeting Advertising

Another goal for this thesis was to discover a cost effective manner to advertise for times when the magazine seeks to engage in a promoted campaign. This section analyzes and reflects on the decision to incorporate keyword targeting into the SMC as an option for times the magazine decides to advertise. This is the third part of the SMC, the recipient.

5.4.1 Keyword Targeting Continues to Outperform

The first iteration studied the effects of the SMC using keyword targeting, as opposed to campaigns that use interest targeting. Keyword targeting generated a 4.22% engagement rate compare to a 3.32% engagement rate for interest targeting; a 26.97% difference. Keyword targeting generated a CPE of \$0.17 while interest targeting generated a CPE of \$0.25; a 31.79% difference. Keyword targeting received 1,370 tweet engagements compared to interest targeting obtaining 890 tweet engagements; a 53.93% difference. Because of these results, keyword targeting was the form of advertising incorporated into the SMC heading into the second iteration. In the second iteration, keyword targeting generated a 4.61% engagement rate, superseding the set baseline of 1.51%; as well as a CPE of \$0.25, also superseding the baseline of \$0.38 (Rodriguez, 2018). This reconfirms the effectiveness.

These findings are in line with O'Reilly (2013) and MacMillan (2013), who claim that keyword targeting is a “game changer” in digital marketing. Keyword targeting provided an effective format to target the magazine’s content to a congruent audience (Lis, 2014) who are actively participating in social conversations around the selected keywords with recency (Lambrecht, *et al.*, 2015). This has great implementations as management of Sophisticated Professional Magazine embarks on future advertising campaigns. It provides an opportunity to strategically target Twitter users with customized, congruent messages (Zhang et al, 2017) that is relevant and of interest; thus resulting in the increased engagement (MacMillan, 2013).

5.4.2 Change in CPE

In comparing the campaign of the April iteration to that of the October iteration, another observation was the difference in CPE for the two iterations of keyword targeting. In April, the CPE averaged \$0.15 per engagement, yet in October it was \$0.23 per engagement. There are possible explanations for this. First, Twitter’s stated ad cost is based on demand, meaning how much marketers are willing to pay for a particular keyword/interest at a given time (Twitter, 2018h). This cost changes with different times of the year and the targeting utilized. This is why

in comparing keyword targeting with interest targeting in iteration #1 the content of the tweet, the ad spend, days served, campaign duration, and spend were all constant independent variables. The October campaign was conducted at a different time of year with different keywords, thus impacting the CPE. Second, according to AdStage (2018), Twitter CPEs were less expensive in the beginning of 2018, compared to later months. Third, Kinney and Ireland (2015) claim November and October are months of greater volume of tweets on Twitter, while May and April are the lowest. Due to the cost of promoted tweets being based on auction style demand, it is understandable for CPE's to be more expensive in higher volume months due to demand.

5.5 Rebranding Effect on New Followers

One of the more surprising results of the second iteration of promotional campaigns was the increase of 381 new followers, compared to an increase of only 10 followers in the first iteration. This increase can be attributed to the decision to shift from a broad targeting strategy to a niche strategy; and confirming the rebranding campaign. Individuals follow other users on Twitter because they are interested in the content that user publishes (Sanderson, 2011), they have a favorable attitude toward the user (Yoon *et al.*, 2016), as well as them feeling the user's profile is relevant to them (Sprout Social, 2018).

Changing the name to Sophisticated Professional and narrowing content from 9 sections to 3 (Success, Inspiration, and Lifestyle) resulted in providing tailored messages congruent with the interest of the young professional demographic. This targeted content strategy increased the level of perceive congruence between the individuals and the brand (Lis, 2014), generating higher rates of engagement due to the emotional connection of the audience with the niche content (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). As individuals feel the message a brand releases is in line with their personal profile and interests, it creates a bond with the brand, increasing loyalty (Donnelly, 2016); which in return encourages them to engage in the follow.

Engaging in a rebranding campaign is accompanied by great risk that could damage the reputation of the organizations (Gotsi and Andriopoulos, 2007). Throughout this process as a new name, logo, and visual imagery was established, it was important to maintain pragmatic focus on the target audience to ensure the theme of the rebranding was in line with the interests of the target audience (Muzellec and Lambkin, 2006). The use of Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism (2012) provided an effective framework to guide the rebranding action. It is to be noted to the reader that the rebranding action was a separate project and independent of this research. It is simply presented to provide context of the action as it pertains to this research.

5.6 Implementing the Framework

Once the framework was developed, it needed to be conveyed to the volunteers in a manner that was easy to understand and did not require much time to enact. Failure to do so could have resulted in volunteers losing interest (Rehberg, 2005) in the magazine and forfeit their involvement. Volunteers received two and a half hours of training consisting of group discussions, lectures, videos/DVDs and readings. This format of training is consistent with the training studied by Claxton-Oldfield (2015). To reinforce this training, and to serve as a guide for volunteers as they engage in their action, an online training web property was created to guide the process. The use of e-learning, training conducted through online properties (Effendi, 2014), provided a convenient format which respected the time constraints of the volunteers, but was effective enough to provide a keen understanding of the material.

This provided a helpful method for magazine volunteers who are dispersed across various geographical locations (Bandy, 2010), as well as providing materials available on demand, allowing individuals to view them online at a convenient time, with access by computer, smart phone, or tablet (Business Wire, 2013). This ease of use is in line with the gaining in popularity in both practice and academia; 80% of U.S. firms employ some form of e-learning in their operations (Montgomerie, *et al.*, 2016). Reflection sessions with the Magazine Manager and interns concluded the use of multiple media, such as videos, images, hyperlinks, and diagrams,

was helpful in the framework application process (Cook and Dupras, 2004). This provided engaging content that was easy to grab the reader's attention and help them understand (Buchanan, 2017).

5.7 Chapter Conclusion

The creation of the desired framework was guided by literary insights, and endured multiple iterative cycles of constructing (issue identification), planning, acting, and evaluating (Argyris et al., 1985; Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). In each iteration, new insights were obtained through the testing of the framework (Dudovski, 2018); these insights were reflecting upon, both personally and with organization members. Rigor in this action research approach was manifested through this cyclical process (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014).

The revised framework has three parts: 1.) Content Creation, 2.) Platform Publishing, and 3.) Recipient. The first part guides contributors through the process of creating content in a manner to increase social media engagement and has four stages. First, contributors view a list of brainstorming questions, derived from four human motivations, to select a topic as the foundation of the content to be created. This is to ensure a consumer oriented process (Hoffman and Fodor, 2010). Second, the selected topic is inserted into a social monitoring platform to discover trending topics and hashtags actively surrounding this topic in real time. These insights are used as a benchmark for content creation (Zhang and Vos, 2014). Third, the STEPPS (Berger, 2013) framework is applied to select a style of content proven to increase engagement. Fourth, a content format is selected; possibilities can include URL link, retweet, image, and video (Soboleva et al., 2017).

The second part of the SMC is to publish the content on social media, and has four stages. First, create the text of the post, utilize trending keywords discovered in the social monitoring stage as a benchmark. This is to ensure the content text is congruent with the target audience to increase engagement (Lis, 2014 and Zhang and Moe, 2016). Second, select the hashtags to insert into the

post utilizing the hashtags discovered in the social monitoring stage as a benchmark. The use of proper hashtags increases discovery and engagement (Soboleva et al., 2017; Enge, 2014; and Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez, 2016). The third stage is to attach the content to the post and publish it on the social media platform. The final stage, is to retweet the post from the magazine's profile to the contributor's personal profile in an act of self-promotion (this stage is conditional to the Twitter platform only). The power of the retweet has the capability to increase engagement (Soboleva et al., 2017; Suh et al., 2010; Boyd et al., 2010).

The final part of the SCMS is the recipients who will view the content on social media which includes two possibilities, organic and paid viewers. All posts that are published will receive organic views, or impressions; which are impressions obtained based upon the magazine's followers and the viral activity of individuals interacting with the post. In addition, the SMC has a mechanism to promote Twitter tweets through the use of keyword targeting for times the magazine wishes to engage in paid advertising campaigns. In this option, the publisher will insert desired keyword(s), phrase(s), or hashtag(s) into the Twitter Ads platform; Twitter then serves the promoted tweet to individuals who have recently posted a tweet containing the inserted keywords. The power of keyword targeting is the ability to target congruent users based on recency (Lambrecht *et al.*, 2015).

This resulting framework can be utilized to alleviate the managerial problem of failing to obtain adequate social media engagements by providing Sophisticated Professional management with recommendations useful in making optimal decisions and procedures in respect to digital marketing campaigns based on the analysis of actual data.

6. Thesis Conclusion

6.1 Introduction

Sophisticated Professional (formally Main St Rock) is a U.S.-based nonprofit online magazine (OM) with the purpose to provide aspiring bloggers and content creators a collective platform to share their work, express their passions, and build a following. The promotional strategy of the magazine is to publish content on social media to maximize engagement capability and expand brand awareness (Hutter *et al.*, 2013); social media applications are observed as one of the most influential and efficient vehicles to engage individuals (Alalwan *et al.*, 2017). Unfortunately, the organization's engagement rate on Twitter of 0.087% underperformed; signifying the target audience was failing to engage with the content. This is problematic for the organization as the inadequate social media engagements effected brand image building and viewer acquisition (Godey *et al.*, 2016). This is a problem consistent amongst nonprofits (Creedon, 2014), who are largely unaware of how to effectively utilize the platform (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012); which illustrates the significance of this work (Reason, 2006). The low engagement level also impacted volunteers who contribute to the magazine seeking a sense of accomplishment (Starnes and Wymer, 2001) in sharing their work. Volunteers began to lose interest in the magazine because the gain they were seeking of added exposure did not manifest (Shye, 2010). Content submissions declined from 4–7 submissions per week in 2015, to 3–5 submissions per quarter in 2016, to periods of being dormant in 2017.

From an organizational perspective, the magazine did not have a framework to properly guide volunteers through marketing activities. This lack of guidance impacted volunteer motivation (Starnes and Wymer, 2001) and resulted in low social media engagements. Developing procedures to guide volunteer actions on social media to overcome low engagement is a managerial problem that needs to be addressed by marketing managers and CMO's. The

organizational change this thesis implemented was developing a framework, called the Social Media Conversation (SMC) framework, to shape the strategic management of volunteers through the actions of content creation and promotion on social media; resulting in the desired level of engagements. The actionable knowledge developed from this action was utilized by the Executive Director and Magazine Manager in establishing procedures to manage the volunteer's marketing activities. This actionable knowledge not only served to the benefit of Sophisticated Professional, but is also a contribution to general knowledge as it can help alleviate the managerial problem of CMO's who are failing to obtain adequate social media engagements by providing recommendations that will be useful in making optimal decisions in respect to digital marketing campaigns based on the analysis of actual data.

This C1 Phase of Inquiry thesis (UoL, 2017) evaluated the success of implementing the SMC; but also discussed why the desired change occurred using literary inferences. This concluding chapter provides a final reflection on the thesis process and resulting outcomes, and it will provide multiple inferences to Reason's (2006) points of ensuring quality in an action research project (these points were presented in chapter 3). Rigor and quality are judged against action-research standards that emerge through the cyclical process (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). Presenting a conclusion that is reflected upon using such standards will ensure the outcome of the thesis is one of quality.

6.2 Research Project Design and Management

The creation of the desired framework was guided by literary insights and designed through a focus on action, with a concern of practical outcomes in the context of Sophisticated Professional (Reason, 2006). This framework endured multiple iterative cycles of constructing (issue identification), planning, acting, and evaluating (Argyris et al., 1985; Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). The first iteration tested if the SMC generated the designated baseline of Twitter engagements through promoted Tweets; it also tested if the SMC with the use of interest

targeting or keyword targeting would be more effective in obtaining engagements in a Twitter advertising campaign. The SMC with interest targeting generated a CPE of \$0.25 and an engagement rate of 3.32%; the SMC with keyword targeting generated a CPE of \$0.17 and an engagement rate of 4.22%. This signified both campaigns superseded the designated baseline of a 1.51% engagement rate and a CPE of \$0.38 (Rodriguez, 2018), it also signified keyword targeting was more effective than interest targeting. Thus, keyword targeting was the form of advertising incorporated in the SMC.

In each iteration, new insights were obtained through the testing of the framework (Dudovskiy, 2018); quality is exercised in the reflection of these insights, both personally and with organization members (Reason, 2006). Issues that emerged from the first iteration were the need to revise the content creation process to include a topic selection stage and extend the formats of content beyond a URL link, to expand the framework beyond Twitter incorporating Instagram, to test the framework on the creation of organic content as well as promoted tweets, to investigate the strange lack of followers, and to discover a method to transfer the information of the framework to volunteers in a manner in which they understand and can implement.

In line with action research, the role of the researcher was that of a native actor providing insights, experiences, and tacit knowledge valuable to the project (Argyris et al., 1985; Coghlan and Brannick, 2014; Perry and Gummesson, 2004). As iterations throughout the process developed, it was an imperative role of the researcher in managing the project to ensure thinking was exposed to alternative solutions (Reason, 2006), and to properly probe new assumptions to avoid insider researcher bias (Coghlan, 2001). The researcher was mindful that action was guided by the evolution of research story (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014), such was the case in included Instagram due to the increase of popularity (Sheldon and Bryant, 2016). Likewise, decisions were also mindful of the resource and time constraints of the project (Coghlan, 2001), such as the decision to exclude Facebook from the study. A key element of action research is re-education as the status quo changes; it was vital for the researcher to present the developed framework to the organization in an easy to follow format that is respective of individual's time (Rehberg, 2005). This was accomplished through training consisting of group discussions, lectures, videos/DVDs and readings (Claxton-Oldfield, 2015) as well as online training (Hein *et*

al., 2016; Robinson *et al.*, 2019; Effendi, 2014). The constant awareness of the effect this presence as a manager and as a researcher has on what happens not only assisted in the quality of the project, but also the development of the researcher.

To exercise proper judgement and problem solving, a supplemental literature review was conducted in the second iteration to make sense of these emerging issues (Section 4.4). Through a period of reflection, a revised framework was then created, in which assumptions were challenged and tested (Reason, 2006). This second iteration tested if the SMC would generate the established baseline metrics of organic posts on Instagram and Twitter. It also tested if the revised SMC would generate the established baseline metrics in times of advertising through the use of Twitter's keyword targeting. The framework was implemented to guide the actions of volunteer contributors and student interns, in conjunction with the Executive Director and the Magazine Manager.

To test the effectiveness of the SMC, digital methods were applied as it would measure precisely if the implemented framework would indeed increase Twitter engagements, which is the objective of this study. The use of digital methods is in line with Rogers (2015), Kennedy *et al.* (2015), Ruppert (2013), Savage and Burrows (2009), and Lambrecht *et al.* 2015 have all applied digital collection methods to research. The selected metrics of measure were engagement rate, which is utilized by Cowie and Gurney (2018), Wadhwa *et al.* (2017), and Lambrecht *et al.* (2015); and CPE, which is utilized by Cowie and Gurney (2018), Lambrecht *et al.* (2015) and Dacres *et al.* (2013). The details of the testing methods, along with the justification of the proper use of such, were presented in Section 4.6. Through this testing the SMC generated a 4.61% engagement rate and a \$0.25 CPE for advertised tweets, an engagement rate of 1.148% on Twitter, and an engagement rate of 12.031% on Instagram. All superseding baseline signifying the effectiveness of the framework.

6.3 Creation of Actionable Knowledge and Recommendations for Marketing Managers

The SMC can serve as actionable knowledge to alleviate a managerial problem of marketing managers who are failing to obtain adequate social media engagements by providing recommendations that will be useful to making optimal decisions and procedures in respect to digital marketing campaigns based on the analysis of actual data.

6.3.1 Content Creation

The foundation of the SMC was structured upon the diffusion of content on social media. Based on literature pertaining to message diffusion (Rogers, 2010; Katz, 1957; Ho and Dempsey, 2010), the action of the SMC is broken up into three parts: 1.) Content, 2.) Platform, and 3.) Recipient. As managers develop procedures to guide content creation, it is beneficial for the topic selection process to be guided by the motivations and drivers of the target audience to increase engagement (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). To do this, the SMC provides a list of brainstorming questions content creators can use to help them select a topic in line with the motivations of their target audience. These brainstorming questions pertain to a particular element of the identified four motivations of belonging (Maslow, 1970; Shultz, 1966), individualism (Maslow, 1970; Shultz, 1966; Ho and Dempsey, 2010), altruism (Maslow, 1970b; Shultz, 1966; Ho and Dempsey, 2010; Oh and Syn, 2015), and curiosity (Maslow, 1970; Oh and Syn, 2015). The use of such questions as a guide is prevalent in the literature, with some examples of use by Reason (2006), and Raelin (2001).

Once a topic is solidified, it is beneficial to obtain an understanding of the conversations the target audience is actively engaging in on social media surrounding that topic (Zhang and Moe, 2016, Billington and Billington, 2012; Zhang and Vos, 2014); this can be accomplished through social monitoring. The SMC provides five steps to guide marketing managers in developing a social monitoring process, based on the work of Zhang and Vos (2014). These steps are insert a

topic into a social monitoring platform; identify trending keywords pertaining to this topic; identify trending hashtags pertaining to this topic; apply filters to improve context; and analyze the results repeating the process if needed.

Marketing managers also need a process to transpose the solidified topic into the creation of tangible content. STEPPS (Berger, 2013) is a framework to select a style of content to engage the target audience. In addition, the SMC provides a selection of content formats a creator can choose from. These formats can include text, images (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017; Boyd *et al.*, 2010), links (Boyd *et al.*, 2010; Enge, 2014) such as webpages and podcast links, and videos (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017; Rogers, 2014).

6.3.2 Social Media Platform

Just as the message is important to the diffusion process, so is the channel to share the message (Rogers, 2010; Katz, 1957; Ho and Dempsey, 2010). In developing procedures to publish content on social media, the SMC provides marketing managers three elements to account for: the text, the hashtags, and the content (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017; Sheldon and Bryant, 2016; Boyd *et al.*, 2010). Results from the social monitoring stage can be utilized as a benchmark in determining engaging text and hashtags to incorporate into the post. Essential to this stage is the use of proper hashtags, as it directly relates to the increase of discovery and engagement (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017; Enge, 2014; Lahuerta-Otero and Cordero-Gutiérrez, 2016). An example of the power of using proper hashtags is the organic posts on Instagram generating a 12.031% engagement rate with a mean engagement of 37.06 per post having only 308 followers.

The created content can then be attached to the social media post, and published. The SMC accounts for the platforms of Twitter and Instagram. For content published on Twitter, the tweet is retweeted from the magazine's business Twitter page to volunteer's personal page to implement the power of the retweet to increase engagements (Soboleva *et al.*, 2017; Suh *et al.*, 2010; Boyd *et al.*, 2010). This final action is not conducted on Instagram as it does not provide a sharing mechanism of posts.

6.3.3 Keyword Targeting to Increase Engagements

After the content is posted on Twitter and Instagram it receive organic views, which occurs naturally after a post is published. However the SMC also provides an effective option for managers who want to develop advertising campaigns through the use of Twitter keyword targeting. Conducting a keyword targeting campaign is accomplished by inserting desired keyword(s), phrase(s), or hashtag(s) into the Twitter Ads platform; the insights obtained from the social monitoring stage served as a benchmark as to what keyword(s) and/or hashtag(s) to insert. Twitter then serves the promoted tweet to individuals who have recently posted a tweet containing the inserted keywords (Lambrecht *et al.*, 2015). As discovered in this research, it is not advised, however, to use the names of actual people in keyword targeting as the advertised tweets do not serve properly. In such cases, avoid the use of actual names in the campaign, or if this is not possible, then the use of interest targeting is advised.

6.3.4 Proper Targeting Strategy

One of the more surprising results of the second iteration of promotional campaigns was the increase of 381 new followers, compared to an increase of only 10 followers in the first iteration; which can be attributed to the shift of a broad targeting strategy to a niche strategy. Targeted content strategy increases the level of perceive congruence between the individuals and the brand (Lis, 2014), generating higher rates of engagement due to the emotional connection of the audience with the niche content (Zhang *et al.*, 2017). As individuals feel the message a brand releases is in line with their personal profile and interests, it creates a bond with the brand, increasing loyalty (Donnelly, 2016); which in return encourages them to engage in the follow. Though the SMC provides marketing managers effective recommendations in developing social media procedures, it is important for the managers to be mindful of the target audience and targeting strategy.

6.4 Concluding Remarks

One question of quality presented by Reason (2006) asked is if the action would result in sustainable change? At the start of this thesis, the magazine experienced periods of being dormant with an uncertain future. The SMC endured one round of advertising testing in the first iteration, and another in the second iteration. It ensured one round of solely organic posts for both Twitter and Instagram, both in the second iteration. In every round of testing, the SMC overperformed the established baseline. As of the completion of this thesis, April 2019, the Sophisticated Professional Twitter account increased followers from 1,038 in December 2018 (when the framework was launched in the second iteration) to 2,203 followers currently. The Instagram account has 2,197 followers, up from 308 in December 2018. Volunteers who contribute to the magazine seeking a sense of accomplishment (Starnes and Wymer, 2001) in sharing their work are now increasing their interest in the magazine because the gain they were seeking of added exposure is manifesting (Shye, 2010). Sophisticated Professional is generating 5 pieces of new content weekly on a regular basis. This signifies four months after the change was initiated, it is still sustaining results. Through the application of the actionable knowledge developed from this thesis, the magazine is now generating engaging content regularly which is receiving the expected level of engagement on social media. From an organizational perspective, implementing the SMC to shape the strategic management of the organization's volunteers through social media actions has resulted in an increase of engagement, and greater volunteer involvement.

Through this thesis process, the researcher has experienced great academic growth. There were challenges at the start, such as learning how to properly frame an action research problem, using literary insights to make sense of observations, and to properly articulate the experiences of the action. However, through the cyclical process, the "fuzzy" became less "fuzzy", and learning comes from action (Coghlan and Brannick, 2014). This thesis has provided the opportunity for the researcher to learn in action while developing skills as a as a scholarly practitioner. These are skills the researcher will apply in becoming an effective manager of practice.

7. Appendix

Appendix 1: Iteration #1 Keyword Results

Keyword	Campaign name	Impressions	Spend	Tweet engagements	Engagement rate	Cost per engagement
vegan	Vegan - Keyword	8891	\$39.79	294	3.31%	0.14
vegan recipe	Vegan - Keyword	54	\$0.21	3	5.56%	0.07
vegan diet	Vegan - Keyword	41	\$0.34	1	2.44%	0.34
vegan meal prep	Vegan - Keyword	1	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
vegan healthy	Vegan - Keyword	1	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
romance	Relationship - Keyword	4787	\$29.85	238	4.97%	0.13
dating	Relationship - Keyword	5922	\$36.23	281	4.75%	0.13
soulmate	Relationship - Keyword	112	\$0.42	5	4.46%	0.08
relationship love	Relationship - Keyword	3	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
single relationship	Relationship - Keyword	2	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
relationship want	Relationship - Keyword	3	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
relationship looking	Relationship - Keyword	1	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
relationship happy	Relationship - Keyword	3	\$0.37	1	33.33%	0.37
new england patriots	Patriots - Keyword	241	\$4.63	14	5.81%	0.33
tom brady	Patriots - Keyword	1195	\$13.55	61	5.10%	0.22
rob gronkowski	Patriots - Keyword	84	\$0.40	4	4.76%	0.10
patriots	Patriots - Keyword	4718	\$37.54	254	5.38%	0.15
#patriots	Patriots - Keyword	1591	\$18.01	62	3.90%	0.29
#newenglandpatriots	Patriots - Keyword	1	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
#tombrady	Patriots - Keyword	21	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
@patriots	Patriots - Keyword	818	\$11.95	45	5.50%	0.27
@tombrady	Patriots - Keyword	1	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
"George Bush"	Bush - Keyword	442	\$10.51	16	3.62%	0.66
"#GeorgeBush"	Bush - Keyword	5	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
"#RIPBarbaraBush"	Bush - Keyword	1805	\$28.56	82	4.54%	0.35
"@georgebush"	Bush - Keyword	5	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
inbound marketing	Inbound Keyword	2243	\$18.19	56	2.50%	0.32
#inboundmarketing	Inbound Keyword	1	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
"online marketing"	Inbound Keyword	2	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
hubspot	Inbound Keyword	1696	\$11.96	36	2.12%	0.33
#marketing	Inbound Keyword	1112	\$10.00	31	2.79%	0.32
@hubspot	Inbound Keyword	82	\$1.50	7	8.54%	0.21
#hubspot	Inbound Keyword	1181	\$7.52	26	2.20%	0.29
marketing career	Inbound Keyword	46	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
marketingcareer	Inbound Keyword	1	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00

#marketingtechniques	Inbound Keyword	17	\$0.00	0	0.00%	0.00
god	Compassion - Keyword	7290	\$39.53	387	5.31%	0.10
compassion	Compassion - Keyword	266	\$1.48	15	5.64%	0.10

Appendix 2: Iteration #2 Social Monitoring

Disney Context of Discussion

astonishing sky art **courage** quit concert jack sponsored experience directv dress **come** life broadcast
 know **new** ashi want fun **comcast** parks media way added photo **liked** today disappointments it's
 halloween home business time king check **pursue** waltdisneyworld killed entrepreneur car **dreams**
 ending growth begin **dream** quote day doing **studios** cartoon orlando playlist
magickingdom family princess say film petition look talking hall **magic** paris love pictures park watch betime
 vintage cinderella **like** samurai players started person news true mouse **company** market
 \$dis wdw disneyworld **witness** date **disneyland** american soul **mickey** sign animation key travel
kingdom thunderstorm electric inside mnssh happy **video**

Disney Trending Hashtags

1	#disney	186 Mentions	11	#success	33 Mentions
2	#magickingdom	163 Mentions	12	#mickeysnotoscaryhalloweenparty	33 Mentions
3	#disneyworld	90 Mentions	13	#entrepreneur	32 Mentions
4	#waltdisneyworld	72 Mentions	14	#waltdisney	30 Mentions
5	#sponsored	72 Mentions	15	#samurajack	30 Mentions
6	#betime	72 Mentions	16	#ashi	28 Mentions
7	#quote	65 Mentions	17	#jashi	28 Mentions
8	#wdw	64 Mentions	18	#jackandashi	28 Mentions
9	#mnssh	46 Mentions	19	#disneyland	27 Mentions
10	#travel	43 Mentions	20	#business	26 Mentions

BMW Context of Discussion

ducati information best development google fuel money mpower astonmartin vehicle cars race turbo toyota
 follow bike lamborghini suzuki porsche amg bugatti nissan carsofinstagram
 check nice carporn comment drive mini sport tesla company post carlifestyle yamaha high kawasaki model
 ride benz today honda year subaru love bmwm power time know automotive engine racing years bentley
 rollsroyce maserati speed auto market mercedesbenz it's driver video motorcycle really audi
 driving look ferrari luxurycars said supercar electric vehicles carinstagram good ford jaguar car supercars little
 series luxury like life don't business motor instacar carswithoutlimits wheels new performance people
 championship mclaren tag cargram mercedes exoticcars

BMW Trending Hashtags

1	#bmw	95656 Mentions	11	#ford	14717 Mentions
2	#audi	33024 Mentions	12	#nissan	14245 Mentions
3	#mercedes	29178 Mentions	13	#supercar	13510 Mentions
4	#ferrari	27744 Mentions	14	#supercars	13250 Mentions
5	#cars	27471 Mentions	15	#toyota	13179 Mentions
6	#lamborghini	27380 Mentions	16	#carporn	13015 Mentions
7	#porsche	26203 Mentions	17	#bugatti	12560 Mentions
8	#car	24822 Mentions	18	#bentley	12536 Mentions
9	#luxury	17555 Mentions	19	#mclaren	12084 Mentions
10	#honda	17383 Mentions	20	#carsofinstagram	10999 Mentions

Tony Robbins Context of Discussion

delivered t-shirts years best making daily cage environment instagram supported questions better world important response subscribe
 going confidence rules want life view platforms formula subbing work great result buy join you're books day evan
 create build used quote unabridged itll dreams twitter don't october think like social feel success
 ways video common money businesses believe book look appreciate bns really website fm comment business
 liked cheers goals videos connect believenation entrepreneur youtube way evans does watching people know
 good experience it's thank change help leave facebook love action encouraged free vote channel need motivation newsletter
 different new time things

Tony Robbins Trending Hashtags

1	#quote	3006 Mentions	11	#quotes	228 Mentions
2	#tonyrobbins	900 Mentions	12	#wisdom	135 Mentions
3	#success	655 Mentions	13	#mindset	130 Mentions
4	#entrepreneur	424 Mentions	14	#business	125 Mentions
5	#motivation	358 Mentions	15	#gratitude	123 Mentions
6	#inspiration	292 Mentions	16	#mytechhomebiz	120 Mentions
7	#personaldevelopment	270 Mentions	17	#goals	117 Mentions
8	#mlm	255 Mentions	18	#powerofsuccess	113 Mentions
9	#workfromhome	241 Mentions	19	#love	110 Mentions
10	#leadership	233 Mentions	20	#believe	98 Mentions

Purpose in Life

best truth read know came things ask thoughts great i'm says that's meaning love let mind happy live lost living going reading rich reality
 new lives like understand start person doing well way job feel don't people place jesus time said having lot power come words
 family you're reason true want say work years money man writing god use it's thought dreams point friends world does thing heart end
 different answer change help i've positive today faith need home able really believe learn far spiritual better book times day social death john think
 health away good look wanted long right

Purpose in Life Hashtags

1	#motivation	154 Mentions	11	#business	55 Mentions
2	#love	149 Mentions	12	#goals	54 Mentions
3	#purpose	147 Mentions	13	#awakening	49 Mentions
4	#entrepreneur	106 Mentions	14	#tarot	49 Mentions
5	#success	101 Mentions	15	#intuition	49 Mentions
6	#inspiration	80 Mentions	16	#empath	48 Mentions
7	#positivevibes	76 Mentions	17	#crystals	47 Mentions
8	#meditation	69 Mentions	18	#mindfulness	47 Mentions
9	#spiritual	63 Mentions	19	#spells	44 Mentions
10	#life	59 Mentions	20	#depressed	44 Mentions

Breast Cancer Awareness Context of Discussion

great honor **new** today campaign saturday mother black **treatment research** bring chemo survivor patients avon
 surgery people join **pink breastcancerawareness** want study **love** tomorrow free risk **october**
 medical **like** share products told disease link increase good **fight early** cbd prevention raise society
 comment national used start fighting come care **day help** promise blood body post american hope **breastcancer**
 events event breastcancerawarenessmonth got **know** symptoms light center lives i'm going **month women** need support
 cause **it's** life cells best **awareness** pain use making **health** doctors times family foundation story year years
 man home diagnosed think ribbon sister **time** let thank detection

Breast Cancer Awareness Trending Hashtags

1	#breastcancerawareness	8455 Mentions	11	#americancancersociety	963 Mentions
2	#breastcancer	7023 Mentions	12	#love	939 Mentions
3	#breastcancerawarenessmonth	2215 Mentions	13	#thinkpink	864 Mentions
4	#cancer	2156 Mentions	14	#health	781 Mentions
5	#october	1999 Mentions	15	#support	774 Mentions
6	#pink	1948 Mentions	16	#survivor	730 Mentions
7	#pinkribbon	1288 Mentions	17	#pinktober	709 Mentions
8	#cancersucks	1235 Mentions	18	#breastcancermonth	660 Mentions
9	#breastcancersurvivor	1103 Mentions	19	#repost	639 Mentions
10	#awareness	978 Mentions	20	#fightlikeagirl	630 Mentions

Sophisticated Context of Discussion

order classic **new** experience kitchen quality **interiordesign like** night join **elegant simple great best**
 help create it's technology **comment art** products set special **beauty** come hello brand i'm day instagood don't way **look**
 gorgeous use modern said right **home** project abuja dress life women stunning years sexy **designer live good chic**
 want insteadaily thank available people **beautiful link time** stylish unique nice white **think really need**
 details girl black furniture **luxury love** marketing elegance events **perfect amazing check today** woman work little
classy design bio kindly fashion cheers london wear color collection **wedding event style** used know
 page don feel

Sophisticated Trending Hashtags

1	#sophisticated	3700 Mentions	11	#instagood	580 Mentions
2	#fashion	1605 Mentions	12	#beautiful	574 Mentions
3	#style	1163 Mentions	13	#homedecor	556 Mentions
4	#luxury	1003 Mentions	14	#chic	531 Mentions
5	#interiordesign	957 Mentions	15	#ootd	458 Mentions
6	#design	923 Mentions	16	#beauty	452 Mentions
7	#love	863 Mentions	17	#art	447 Mentions
8	#classy	685 Mentions	18	#decor	442 Mentions
9	#elegant	661 Mentions	19	#stylish	436 Mentions
10	#home	627 Mentions	20	#lifestyle	427 Mentions

Appendix 3: Iteration #2 Promoted Tweets

	Motivational Need	What content can you create that are in line with your target's interests and hobbies? What is your target audience fascinating about? What type of information can you provide around this fascination?
	Trending Hashtags	#WaltDisney #Disney #success #entrepreneurlife #entrepreneur
	Tweet Text (Created from Context of Discussion)	Walt Disney captured the world with his imagination, but his life was not always a success. Here is the story of Walt Disney you never knew.
	STEPPS	Stories
	Content Type	Blog
	Date Published	September 29, 2018
	Date Advertised	9/29/18 – 10/2/18

	Motivational Need	What content can you create that are in line with your target's interests and hobbies? What self-image is your target seeking to portray? What content can you post to help your target portray this image?
Trending Hashtags	#bmw #luxury #sophisticated #cars #motorcycle	
Tweet Text (Created from Context of Discussion)	BMW provides an inside look into the ultimate driving machine that you have never seen before.	
STEPPS	Social Currency	
Content Type	Image Slides in a Blog	
Date Published	September 30, 2018	
Date Advertised	9/30/18 – 10/3/18	

	Motivational Need	What does your target audience truly want to achieve? How can your brand actually help your target accomplish something they desire to do?
Trending Hashtags	#tonyrobbins #success	
Tweet Text (Created from Context of Discussion)	Tony Robbins and Dana White have defied the odds to reach their goals. They say this was the key to their success.... #tonyrobbins #success	
STEPPS	Trigger	
Content Type	Video in a Blog	
Date Published	October 1, 2018	
Date Advertised	10/1/18 – 10/4/18	

Sophisticated Professional @SophisticatedPM · Oct 2

Sometimes it's difficult to find your true purpose in this world. But when you search deep down, yes God is calling you to accomplish great things. Check out Rick Warren's Ted Talk on finding your purpose in life. #purpose #motivation

Yes, Your Life Does Have Purpose: Ted Talk with Rick Warren
One of the most difficult tasks one will face is finding that true purpose for your life. You know you are destined for greatness, you are filled with

sophisticatedprofessional.com

6 22

Motivational Need	What element of spirituality or purpose in life is your target seeking? How can your brand help them reach this element of spirituality?
Trending Hashtags	#purpose #motivation
Tweet Text (Created from Context of Discussion)	Sometimes it's difficult to find your true purpose in this world. But when you search deep down, yes God is calling you to accomplish great things. Check out Rick Warren's Ted Talk on finding your purpose in life.
STEPPS	Emotion
Content Type	Video in a Blog
Date Published	October 2, 2018
Date Advertised	10/2/18 – 10/5/18

Sophisticated Professional @SophisticatedPM · Oct 3

Breast Cancer is difficult for so many women and their families. This October, let's join together to encourage those in the fight. Take a selfie in pink and hashtag #pinkribbon. Let's show our fighters how much we love and support them! #breastcancerawareness

OCTOBER
breast cancer awareness month

10 29

Motivational Need	What causes or charities is your target market compassionate about? What acts of charity can your brand engage in with your target market to help these groups?
Trending Hashtags	#pinkribbon #breastcancerawareness
Tweet Text (Created from Context of Discussion)	Breast Cancer is difficult for so many women and their families. This October, let's join together to encourage those in the fight. Take a selfie in pink and hashtag #pinkribbon. Let's show our fighters how much we love and support them!
STEPPS	Emotion, Trigger
Content Type	Image
Date Published	October 3, 2018
Date Advertised	10/3/18 – 10/6/18

Sophisticated Professional @SophisticatedPM · Oct 4

The sophisticated lifestyle is filled with luxury, style, and elegance. As you thrive every day to reach your goals, here are 5 to live out that sophistication.

#sophisticated #luxury



5 Ways to Live the Sophisticated Life As You Are Reaching for Succe...
 The sophisticated lifestyle is one filled with accomplishment, knowledge, and dignification. As you are starting to make a name for yourself in your car...
sophisticatedprofessional.com

3 5 20

Motivational Need	How can your brand help enhance the image and status of your target audience? What content can your brand provide to help enhance the status or prestige of your target?
Trending Hashtags	#sophisticated #luxury
Tweet Text (Created from Context of Discussion)	The sophisticated lifestyle is filled with luxury, style, and elegance. As you thrive every day to reach your goals, here are 5 to live out that sophistication.
STEPPS	Practical
Content Type	Blog
Date Published	October 4, 2018
Date Advertised	10/4/18 – 10/7/18

Appendix 4: Iteration #2 Keyword Results

Keyword	Campaign name	Impressions	Spend	Tweet engagement	Engagement rate	Cost per engagement	Clicks	Media engagements	Retweets	Replies	Follows
#fashion	Sophisticated	423	\$6.28	26.00	6.15%	0.24	24.00	-	1.00	1.00	-
#luxury	Sophisticated	145	\$1.60	5.00	3.45%	0.32	5.00	-	-	-	-
#style	Sophisticated	659	\$10.06	40.00	6.07%	0.25	36.00	-	3.00	1.00	-
luxurious	Sophisticated	230	\$2.41	13.00	5.65%	0.19	12.00	-	1.00	-	-
#elegant	Sophisticated	362	\$3.37	12.00	3.31%	0.28	12.00	-	-	-	-
#classy	Sophisticated	2291	\$24.15	111.00	4.85%	0.22	105.00	-	3.00	3.00	-
#luxurylife	Sophisticated	19	\$0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	-	-	-	-	-
#sophistication	Sophisticated	298	\$3.75	14.00	4.86%	0.27	14.00	-	-	-	-
#sophisticated	Sophisticated	259	\$4.10	18.00	6.95%	0.23	18.00	-	-	-	-
#breastcancer	Breast Cancer	3377	\$28.98	189.00	5.60%	0.15	44.00	138.00	7.00	-	-
#pinkribbon	Breast Cancer	2	\$0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	-	-	-	-	-
#pinktober	Breast Cancer	15	\$0.21	2.00	13.33%	0.11	-	2.00	-	-	-
#thinkpink	Breast Cancer	235	\$1.43	12.00	5.11%	0.12	1.00	11.00	-	-	-
breast cancer awareness	Breast Cancer	1861	\$13.33	106.00	5.70%	0.13	28.00	75.00	3.00	-	-
#breastcancersurvivor	Breast Cancer	1	\$0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	-	-	-	-	-
god	Purpose In Life	1132	\$12.43	48.00	4.24%	0.26	42.00	-	5.00	1.00	-
#love	Purpose In Life	1701	\$28.46	85.00	5.00%	0.33	78.00	-	6.00	1.00	-
#inspiration	Purpose In Life	782	\$8.56	35.00	4.48%	0.24	30.00	-	5.00	-	-
#inspired	Purpose In Life	1008	\$11.41	43.00	4.27%	0.27	38.00	-	5.00	-	-
#purpose	Purpose In Life	644	\$7.88	24.00	3.73%	0.33	24.00	-	-	-	-
rick warren	Purpose In Life	4	\$0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	-	-	-	-	-
meaning of life	Purpose In Life	95	\$3.42	10.00	10.53%	0.34	9.00	-	-	1.00	-
#positivevibes	Purpose In Life	4	\$0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	-	-	-	-	-
purpose in life	Purpose In Life	14	\$0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	-	-	-	-	-
#MOTIVATION	Purpose In Life	607	\$5.57	21.00	3.46%	0.27	19.00	-	2.00	-	-
purpose driven life	Purpose In Life	3	\$0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	-	-	-	-	-
#ufc	Tony Robbins	1243	\$14.07	65.00	5.23%	0.22	62.00	-	2.00	1.00	-
#motivation	Tony Robbins	601	\$9.65	31.00	5.16%	0.31	29.00	-	2.00	-	-
#success	Tony Robbins	2300	\$25.09	126.00	5.48%	0.20	116.00	-	3.00	4.00	3.00
Dana White	Tony Robbins	34	\$0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	-	-	-	-	-
#mondymotivation	Tony Robbins	1156	\$11.21	62.00	5.36%	0.18	59.00	-	1.00	-	2.00
tony Robbins	Tony Robbins	6	\$0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	-	-	-	-	-
#luxury	BMW Museum	1864	\$16.30	57.00	3.06%	0.29	56.00	-	1.00	-	-
bmw	BMW Museum	2055	\$14.51	46.00	2.24%	0.32	46.00	-	-	-	-
#bmw	BMW Museum	3494	\$17.32	55.00	1.57%	0.31	54.00	-	-	-	1.00
#sophisticated	BMW Museum	179	\$0.72	6.00	3.35%	0.12	6.00	-	-	-	-
disney	Disney	294	\$1.76	7.00	2.38%	0.25	7.00	-	-	-	-
#disney	Disney	1873	\$17.91	90.00	4.81%	0.20	87.00	-	1.00	1.00	1.00
walt disney	Disney	1335	\$19.78	66.00	4.94%	0.30	63.00	-	3.00	-	-
mickey mouse	Disney	461	\$5.35	28.00	6.07%	0.19	28.00	-	-	-	-

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