

Ursula Saul
Professor Sharer
ENGL 2201
22 February 2021

Is social media just another marketing tool?

In today's society technology is available to almost everyone which makes social media a huge impact in our daily lives. The brands and individuals you follow on social media impact your lifestyle without you even knowing it. A quick example I would like to use is that of Instagram. This application has become one of the biggest marketing tools in the world. I say this due to the thousands of influencers that get paid to promote certain products. After this application was developed engineers quickly discovered that the data obtained by users can help them select a personal target market for each individual account. So if you are ever wondering why something you've previously googled or searched suddenly starts appearing on Instagram, that's the reason.

If you don't believe that these types of companies have access to this type of information I highly recommend you become familiar with Edward Snowden. He is famously known for being a whistleblower within the CIA. The information he came out with showed that the government is tracking everything you do from emails you send coworkers to text messages you may have sent family members. This doesn't pertain to social media but they were also able to access computer/phone cameras in order to gain live feed access. This is also why Instagram now makes it mandatory for users to agree to certain terms. It's one of the smartest and quickest ways to gain a better understanding of a given customer. This just proves that social media is constantly evolving.

Which leads to public relations professionals having to keep up with current trends. In the communications field, social media is one of the best tools that brands can use to communicate

with their consumers. The response time is something that wasn't even conceivable to think of in the early 1900s. With social media, you are given the opportunity to access information at any given time. So how exactly do major global brands implement the use of social media to advance their public relations calendar and reach global audiences easily?

To gain a better understanding of this question there are two articles I would like to discuss. The two articles I chose for my comparative Disciplinary writing analysis were: "The State of Social Media Research: Where Are We Now, Where We Were and What It Means for Public Relations" by Tina McCorkindale and Marcia W. DiStaso, and "The Global Social Media Challenge: a social marketer's guide to managing brands across borders" by Andres Wittermann. The passages are both catered to public relations and how social media has helped companies build their brands by incorporating it into their marketing strategies.

Social Media has evolved dramatically since the first-ever social media platform "Six Degrees" which was created in 1997. For those that are unaware Six Degrees was named after the six degrees of separation. The platform allowed users to list friends, family members, and acquaintances both on the site and externally. Users could send messages and post bulletin board items to people in their first, second, and third degrees, and see their connection to any other user on the site. Six Degrees was one of the first social networking sites of the general form that is in widespread use today. This led to Social Media Networks becoming popular in the early 2000s but they weren't necessarily used for the marketing purposes that they are used for in today's world. The first popular networks were MySpace and then later finally came Facebook in 2004. Facebook became a huge success and influenced more social media platforms like Snapchat and Instagram which we discussed early both were released around 2010. Social Media is a very important part of marketing/Public relations purposes for all different types of brands.

The first rhetorical context difference between these passages is the audience.

Wittermanns article audience is much broader than McCorkindale and DiStasio's because it explains the main challenge brands go through while using social media, and it is intended to help people create a social media marketing strategy plan that works globally. McCorkindales and DiStasio's audience within the article is strictly for Communications/Public Relations professionals. I say this because they researched companies' social media accounts globally and it includes research theories. It also includes other terms only Public Relations professionals would understand. The second rhetorical context difference is the purposes of the passages. McCorkindales and DiStasio's scholarly journal's purpose is to inform professionals about the history of social media and where we are today because of it. The purpose in Wittermanns passage however is to explain the main challenges that brands face by using social media and to explain to beginners how to avoid such challenges. Wittermann's article is almost a step-by-step guide in curating your own social media strategy. Wittermann's "Best practice recommendations" are to "understand where your communities are, organize your channels, and Don't forget about SEO"(Witterman 2013).

The first main difference in conventions between these passages is the paragraphing, Wittermanns article includes a list in the outline of the passage while the other passage is more academically formatted. An example of "The State of Social Media Research: Where Are We Now, Where We Were and What It Means for Public Relations" being academically formatted is "One study about influencers defined them as an "independent third party endorser who shape audience attitudes through blogs, tweets, and the use of other social media" (Freberg, Graham, McGaughey, & Freberg, p. 90). (McCorkindale and DiSasio 2014)". They also have different writing styles as shown in the presented articles. In "The global social media challenge: a social

marketer's guide to managing brands across borders" the style of writing is simple and almost common so the audience understands. "While you want to encourage participation (you'll need that later), having dozens of social profiles is at best inefficient and at worst damaging to your brand."(Wittermann 2013). Wittermanns article is about two pages long while McCorkindales and DiStasio's Scholarly Journal is seventeen pages long.

In conclusion, If brands aren't advertising and using their social media platforms/ networks as marketing tools then they will quickly become vulnerable to competitors. It's something that must be taken advantage of as a business. If you aren't able to target your market then your competition will. Which overall will cause you to lose business resulting in a decrease in revenue, and as a business that's the last thing you would want to happen. So as you can see social media outlets make it easier to connect to consumers on a global scale which improves engagement with the brand in ways it never could in the past. At first social media was not to be thought of as a marketing tool, just a way to stay connected with one another. As time progressed this changed and now it's mostly known for marketing to consumers directly. Social media is constantly evolving as we know just as a lot of adapting has been done over the years. Overall it is simply one of the best tools to use when wanting to expand brand awareness globally for little to no costs at all.

Works Cited

DiStaso, Marcia W., and Tina McCorkindale. "Social Media: Uses and Opportunities in Public Relations." *Global Media Journal*, vol. 5, no. 2, 2012, pp. 75. *ProQuest*, <https://search.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/social-media-uses-opportunities-public-relations/docview/1266767570/se-2?accountid=10639>.

Wittermann, Andres. "The Global Social Media Challenge: a Social Marketer's Guide to Managing Brands across Borders." *IPRA*, 2013, www.ipra.org/news/itle/the-global-social-media-challenge-a-social-marketers-guide-to-managing-brands-across-borders/

Writing Self Analysis

My first step of my writing process was to research a topic I knew I could write about that grabbed my interest. I first wrote down a couple main topics that were in the field of communication and then finally landed on social media in the aspect of brand marketing globally. After finding my articles I had to read them and then compare them. I jotted down some bullet points that I noticed while reading. At the end, I do think my search for sources and process for writing my draft was effective because I was interested in my topic.

After reading my classmates feedback I revised my introduction to be more entertaining for my audience to read and introduce them to the hard truths of social media. The second thing I revised was my conclusion. In my draft I got pretty lazy and didn't end my paper to wrap it all together. I looked over my paper and gave it to a friend to look over anything I missed.

The aspect I think is the most effective in my writing is that it's entertaining to read. The introduction really pulls you in and makes you think differently than you would usually do about social media. For example in my paper I talk about the scary truth about social media and how nothing is private. This makes the reader think about how companies and brands trust posting on social media and how hard it really is to take the proper precautions.

I think my outline could be improved and make some of my connections clearer and more understanding. I personally understand my paper but others could interpret it incorrectly and could end up being confused. My introduction is a little different then the rest of my paper and I hope the audience will understand my connection to my introduction story.