

2017 Sport Marketing Association Conference (SMA XV)

Exploring the Relationship of Social Media to the Brand Personality of the NBA

Jiyoung Park, University of Northern Colorado

Alan. L. Morse (Advisor), University of Northern Colorado

Friday, November 3, 2017

9:00-9:50 AM, Washington Ballroom

50-minute poster presentation

(including questions)

Many sport organizations have used social media to interact with fans and stakeholders (Hambrick & Kang, 2014); thus, social media marketing has significance to academia and in the applied field of sport industry. Many sport organizations have used social media to improve their brand quality (Jason, 2013) since it is important to create a strong relationship between the sport organizations and their fans (Fisher & Wakefield, 1998; Sanderson & Kassing, 2011).

A mounting number of professional sport teams and organizations in the United States has utilized social media as a marketing tool and is hoping to evaluate the effect of social media toward their brands' reputations (Karami & Naghibi, 2014). The National Basketball Association (NBA) has positioned itself as the top sports league in social media in terms of respective followers, likes, and views. According to Wang and Zhou (2015), the NBA has built a strong relationship by sharing information with fans. Doran, Cooper, and Mihalik (2015) explained that social media is a useful way to improve branding efforts and maximize financial resources. Thus, sport marketers should understand what factors are important for fans (Lovejoy & Saxton, 2012). A comprehensive understanding of social media efforts will eventually help sport organizations to utilize social media more effectively for improving their brand management.

Most existing studies have focused primarily on the relationship between social media and brand equity, which is related to understanding customer needs and satisfaction to increase the values of brand assets (Ghodeswar, 2008; Keller, 2003). However, there is a lack of research on brand personality, which is the concept to create a set of attractive associations in consumers' perceptions (Keller, 1993). Therefore, it is important to comprehend how consumers' perceptions toward brand personality contributes to the future success of the brand (Walsh, Clavio, Lovell & Blaszk, 2013). It is essential to understand how large organizations actively use social media, such as the NBA, to represent and increase its brand personality due to the potential impact of brand personality on consumers' purchase intentions. In addition, having a better understanding of the NBA's social media is beneficial for sport marketers and other sport organizations to communicate with their fans effectively. However, no studies to date have extended the literature on the relationships between social media and the brand personality of sport organizations.

The findings of this study will contribute to the body of knowledge on social media and brand personality and provide practical implications to the real world of sport industry in terms of social media use and marketing in sport industry. Regarding the lack of research on the relationship between social media and brand personality and its significance, this study aims to examine the relationship between social media and brand personality. Two research questions are 1) What brand personality characteristics does the NBA attempt to portray on Facebook? 2) Are there differences in the brand personality between the NBA Facebook page followers and non-followers?

A survey will be conducted with individuals who are NBA fans in the United States. Data will be collected at one point in time with online survey. The researcher will submit Institutional Review Board (IRB) applications to collect the data. After receiving approval from the IRB, questionnaires data will be collected by contacting potential participants via email with a link to the survey. The survey will ask participants questions regarding the brand personality items of the NBA, if participants were followers of the NBA Facebook page, their usage patterns, and demographic questions such as gender and age. The participants will be asked to answer multiple choice and short questions. Once the survey is complete, the participants will be directed to a page thanking them for their time.

2017 Sport Marketing Association Conference (SMA XV)

References

- Doran, A., Cooper, C., & Mihalik, J. (2015). A Content Analysis of NCAA Division I Track and Field Team's Twitter Usage: Defining Best Practices in Social Media Marketing. *Journal of Contemporary Athletics*, 9(4), 227-247.
- Fisher, R. J., & Wakefield, K. (1998). Factors leading to group identification: A field study of winners and losers. *Psychology & Marketing*, 15(1), 23-40.
- Ghodeswar, B. M. (2008). Building brand identity in competitive markets: a conceptual model. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 17(1), 4-12.
- Hambrick, M. E., & Kang, S. J. (2015). Pin it: Exploring how professional sports organizations use Pinterest as a communications and relationship-marketing tool. *Communication & Sport*, 3(4), 434-457.
- Jayson, D. (2013, September 24). The Top 7 Social Media Marketing Trends That Will Dominate 2014. *Forbes*. Retrieved from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/jaysondemers/2013/09/24/the-top-7-social-media-marketing-trends-that-will-dominate-2014/#478a563b5af4>
- Karami, S., & Naghibi, H. S. (2014). Social media marketing (SMM) strategies for small to medium enterprise. *International Journal of Sales & Marketing Management Research and Development*, 4(4), 11-20.
- Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 5(1), 1-22.
- Keller, K. L. (2003). *Strategic brand management: Building, measuring, and managing brand equity*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall.
- Lovejoy, K., & Saxton, G.D. (2012). Information, community, and action: How nonprofit organizations use social media. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, 17(3), 337-353.
- Sanderson, J., & Kassing, J. W. (2011). Tweets and blogs. In A. Billings (Ed.), *Sports Media*. New York: Routledge.
- Walsh, P., Clavio, G., Lovell, D., & Blaszk, M. (2013). Differences in event personality between social media users and non-users. *Sport Marketing Quarterly*, 22, 214-223.
- Wang, Y., & Zhou, S. (2015). How Do Sports Organizations Use Social Media to Build relationships? A Content Analysis of NBA Clubs' Twitter Use. *International Journal of Sport Communication*, 8, 133-148.