Fostering democracy through social media: Evaluating diametrically opposed nonprofit advocacy organizations’ use of Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube

Giselle A. Auger*
Department of Journalism & Multimedia Arts, 308 College Hall, Duquesne University, 600 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15282, United States

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ABSTRACT

Nonprofit organizations contribute to a democratic society by allowing those with diverse opinions to assemble and voice these ideas. Social media has provided an extensive new marketplace in which such organizations can give voice to their ideas. Thus the purpose of this study was to explore and assess the use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) for advocacy by nonprofit organizations with diametrically opposed points-of-view on two social issues, the pro-gun/gun control issue and the pro-choice/pro-life issue. Results of this study indicate that nonprofit advocacy organizations are using social media to ethically persuade people to their point of view, for the most part through use of one-way communication. Moreover, organizations are using the various social media for different purposes, providing thanks and recognition on Twitter, and soliciting feedback and other two-way communication with stakeholders on Facebook. Use of authority figures to communicate messages is generally reserved for YouTube.

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1. Introduction

The rise of social media has affected more than just communication practices – it has provided a substantial new platform for the democratization of interests and ideas by dramatically expanding the opportunity for expression of competing and controversial ideas in society. In doing so it has also expanded and altered the importance of public relations. No longer are individuals and groups hindered by lack of access to print media or the limited dissemination of such collateral. Today, individuals and organizations may promote and persuade using the various platforms and tools of social media, potentially reaching anyone in cyberspace. And within organizations, the task of understanding and making use of such technologies to promote and persuade frequently falls under the guise of public relations.

While all types of organizations are engaging in social media, it is particularly important for nonprofits to do so as they rely on individual support in the form of donations and volunteers, and they also rely on general public support for their very existence. Formation of nonprofit organizations can be seen as the result of the 1st Amendment, a cornerstone of American democracy. As far back as the early 1800s, Alexander de Tocqueville identified one of the unique and enduring features of this democratic society – the freedom for individuals to form organizations with like-minded people to address social issues through persuasion and advocacy. He did not identify the simultaneous opportunity for those with opposing viewpoints to organize, persuade and advocate on the same issue from their point-of-view, but in fact the 1st Amendment does so.

* Tel.: +1 207 423 7671.
E-mail addresses: augerg@duq.edu, giselleauger@yahoo.com

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In the U.S. such organizations are generally formed as tax-exempt or nonprofit organizations and are considered part of civil society or the third sector (Lohmann, 1992) as opposed to the government or business sectors of society. Though the size of the sector decreased in 2011 for the first time in decades as the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) purged their records of inactive groups, it is still large with 1,629,149 registered Tax-Exempt Organizations and Nonexempt Charitable Trusts reported (IRS, 2012). Within the sector, individual organizational missions may be predominantly lacking in contentious ideas, or extremely contentious, for example the points-of-view espoused by the National Rifle Association (NRA) or Planned Parenthood.

Communication of advocacy organizations’ ideas may appear unduly biased or one-sided because of the passion those involved feel about their cause; however, it has been argued that democratic debate requires persuasion to alter the minds and behaviours of publics (Pattie & Johnston, 2008). Though often seen as a less optimal form of communication than two-way communication or dialogue, persuasion is a function of public relations and falls within the scope of advocacy. According to the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) advocacy is the first of six core professional behaviours that practitioners should exhibit. Advocacy is defined as “[serving] the public interest by acting as responsible advocates for those we represent. We provide a voice in the marketplace of ideas, facts, and viewpoints to aid informed public debate” (PRSA, 2012). Providing a voice in the marketplace of ideas is inherently democratic in nature as it provides just one voice or idea in a pluralistic marketplace full of contradictory, conflicting, and supporting ideas. Within nonprofit organizations the role of public relations is central to the dissemination of core values and building of support.

Initially, the Internet provided organizations with space for organizational communication such as websites where content was often static. The dramatic shift of social networking sites from providing space for interpersonal communication to also providing for organization-public communication has changed the landscape for the marketplace of ideas. No longer can organizations allow information to remain static but the information they provide must compete with many more voices in the vast online communities of cyberspace, and the information must be timely, responsive, persuasive and transparent to compete within this large marketplace of ideas.

Thus the purpose of this study was to explore and assess the use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) for advocacy by nonprofit organizations with diametrically opposed points-of-view. Such organizations are created through the democratic freedoms of the 1st Amendment and their ideas represent the diversity and uniqueness of such government. As purveyors of these ideas to stakeholders of all kinds, it is important for public relations practitioners to understand how best to use social media for advocacy while encouraging increased communication of democratic interests and diversity in society.

2. Literature review

This study incorporates the concepts of nonprofit organizations in a democratic society, the role of public relations in communicating diverse ideas in the marketplace of ideas, and the significance of social media in providing new platforms and opportunities for communication of such ideas. Each of these concepts is addressed in turn, beginning with nonprofit organizations in a democratic society.

2.1. Nonprofit organizations and democratic society

Democracy in America is founded on the principles found within the First Amendment to the Constitution which grants individuals the freedoms of religion, the press, free speech, the right to assemble, and the right to petition the government for redress of grievances. In the early 1800s Alexander de Tocqueville wrote glowingly of American’s propensity to assemble, or form associations to address social needs. He noted:

“In no country in the world has the principle of association been more successfully used or applied to a greater multitude of objects than in America. Besides the permanent associations which are established by law under the names of townships, cities, and counties, a vast number of others are formed and maintained by the agency of private individuals. (Chapter 12, para.1)"

He identified broad areas in which associations had been formed to address social issues such as intemperance, public safety, industry, and religion and concluded, “there is no end which the human will despairs of attaining through the combined power of individuals united into a society (Chapter 12, para. 3)”.

Today, these associations are known collectively as nonprofit organizations and are categorized by the IRS into 25 broad groups including the 501(c)(3) religious and charitable organizations to whom monetary contributions are tax deductible, and the remaining 24 categories including the 501(c)(4) public welfare organizations, to which contributions are not tax deductible. According to the IRS, today there are more than 1,600,000 nonprofit organizations in the U.S. (IRS, 2012).

Some suggest that the vitality of the nonprofit sector is paramount to the continuation of a democratic society and that these organizations have an obligation to society to promote the needs of their constituents. As Greely (2006) explained, “Theory, history and practice have shown that a vibrant, independent, nonprofit sector is critical to democracy. As such nonprofits have an obligation to represent their constituents’ needs to the government, media, and public at large” (p. 14). Such representation falls under the role of public relations, which has been defined as “the management of
communication between an organization and its publics” (Grunig & Hunt, 1984, p. 6). And among the core types of communication techniques used by public relations is that of advocacy, addressed next.

2.2. Public relations advocacy

The role of advocacy in public relations can be as quiet as reminding upper management of the concerns of local citizens to proposed actions by the organization, or as visible as professional lobbyists and issues advocates. And despite its importance, advocacy is often portrayed as a less satisfactory form of public relations than engaging in a dialogic process or building relationships with publics. In fact some equate advocacy with propaganda, perhaps as Freeman (2009) suggests, because “the communication materials of activist groups who are passionate about their cause...may appear close-minded or one-sided” (p. 271). Yet not all propaganda or persuasive communication need be unethical. As Freeman (2009) explains, “propaganda has some distinctive and largely negative characteristics that distinguish it from mere persuasive speech” (p. 271). Such distinctive characteristics include purposely distorting the message and misrepresenting information as well as concealing the source of the messenger from the audience. Further, propaganda may also reduce complex issues into suggestions of simple cause and effect, rely on the use of authority figures, and may place “emphasis on conflict over cooperation” (Freeman, 2009, p. 271).

Because issues advocacy promotes the point-of-view from just one side of a social issue, it is often seen as a controversial form of communication. Such communication “moves beyond the traditional realm of promoting an organization’s image, product, or service, into efforts to influence a legislative or regulatory outcome or a public policy debate” (Miller, 2006, p. 1). Despite its controversial nature, such persuasion is necessary to develop debate in the marketplace of ideas. For example, Patti and Johnston (2008) contended, “Democratic debate depends upon the possibility of (hopefully rational) persuasion to change minds and behaviours” (p. 678).

Among the key factors in developing persuasive appeals is the use of message strategy. As discussed below, several studies have examined the use and effectiveness of message strategy by nonprofit organizations.

2.3. Message strategy

Studies have examined the importance of message structure in garnering support for advocated issues (Miller, 2006; Scudder & Mills, 2009; Weberling, 2012). In a study of shock advocacy Scudder and Mills (2009) found that the shock messages used by a nonprofit advocacy group were effective against the animal food processing industry without harming the reputation of the advocacy group. Moreover, through analysis of messages from industries whose behaviour could compromise the environment, Miller (2006) found that messages that focused on community identity, “using emotional appeals to highlight the community’s sense of tradition and heritage” (p. 22), had the greatest effect on recipients. Messages that related to individual benefits from the industry’s engagement with the community, such as increased prosperity and employment, were also influential.

Further, in a qualitative content analysis of e-mail messages, Weberling (2012) identified three types of messages sent by a large nonprofit organization known for its advocacy on women’s health – advocacy, fundraising, and news type messages. She noted that the advocacy and fundraising messages employed different rhetoric with advocacy messages designed to inspire logical decision-making and fundraising to appeal to readers’ emotional decision-making. As such, the advocacy messages included facts and figures and in-depth information, while the fundraising messages “focused on hope, survival, and the ‘face’ of breast cancer” (p. 114).

Advancing the study of advocacy in the online environment, Waters and Lord (2009) examined how advocacy groups build relationships on the Internet. Though the study found mixed support for how well these organizations integrated relationship-building into their website design, the authors provided several guidelines for improvement among which were listening and acting upon feedback and comments. Rapid changes in the development of online social media such as the social networking site Facebook and micro-blogging site Twitter have not lessened the soundness of these guidelines, though a great deal more research on social media, and the use of such media by nonprofits has ensued, as discussed below.

2.4. Nonprofit organizations use of social media

Long gone are the days when organizations could consider themselves technologically up-to-date simply because they developed a website. Today, organizations must also be engaged in social media, a type of media that could not have been envisaged as part of organizational communication even at the start of the new millennium. As Saxton, Guo, and Brown (2007) noted, “the increasingly sophisticated second-generation Web technologies enable an intensity of interactions between [nonprofit] organizations and citizens and consumers in ways not previously possible” (p.144). They suggest that to achieve the goals of their missions, organizations must strategically consider the amount of information and interactivity of content that they provide to stakeholders in the online environment.

Social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter are by their very nature, built upon user interaction. Recent research by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012) categorized nonprofit organizations’ use of Twitter into three major functions, Information, Action, and Community. Information related to provision of news about the organization and its activities, while the purpose
of Community was to build relationships and create networks. The final function, Action, was comprised of items encouraging followers to engage in some kind of action such as donating, volunteering, or attending an event.

Earlier research found that nonprofit organizations were not using Facebook to full potential. Though these organizations were transparent with the information provided in their organizational profile, they were not using the social networking capabilities of Facebook to “inform others and get them involved in organizational activities” (Waters et al., 2009, p. 106). Moreover, several studies have found one-way communication to be the predominant form of communication used by organizations on both Facebook and Twitter (Bortree & Seltzer, 2009; Lovejoy, Waters, & Saxton, 2012; Xifra & Grau, 2010). Conversely, in their examination of the American Red Cross’s use of social media, Briones, Kuch, Liu, and Jin (2011) discovered the use of two-way dialogue, in particular in development of relationships with younger constituents, the local community, and the media.

Little research has been conducted on the social implications of a third major social media site, that of YouTube. YouTube is the top video site in the world with an estimated 2 billion views per day (YouTube, 2011). The video sharing site has grown exponentially since the first video was uploaded in April 2005 to the point where an estimated 24 h of video is now uploaded every minute (YouTube, 2011). A study by English, Sweetser, and Ancu (2011) examined the use of persuasive appeals in political videos and found that “source credibility, [was] the highest-ranked appeal in terms of credibility among the participants in [the] study” (p. 744). Moreover, the use of humour appeals was far less successful than the use of fact-based arguments.

Based on the importance of nonprofit organizations to a democratic society, the pluralistic and democratic marketplace of ideas, the importance of communicating persuasively within that marketplace, and the need to engage stakeholders with these ideas, the following research questions are proposed:

RQ1. How are nonprofit advocacy groups contributing to the democratic marketplace of ideas through social media?
RQ2. Have nonprofit advocacy groups moved beyond one-way communication in social media?

3. Method

Two controversial societal issues that produced formation of nonprofit organizations with diametrically opposed missions and points of view were selected for study. The first issue selected was the pro-choice vs. pro-life debate. The second was the pro-guns vs. gun control issue. Using Google’s search engine the terms pro-life advocacy groups, pro-choice advocacy groups, gun control advocacy groups, pro-gun organizations, and National Rifle Association were evaluated and Wikipedia selected as the best source for provision of a list of such groups, except for pro-guns, for which a national pro-gun organization list for 2006 was found through Google. Next, organizations listed under American pro-life organizations, pro-choice organizations in the United States, and Gun control advocacy groups in the United States were reduced through elimination of state, political party, or religious specific organizations, and organizations with very broad missions such as the American Bar Association and the League of Women Voters for which the issues in question would be just one of many such concerns.

This study was interested in the use of three social media, thus for each of the remaining organizations a search was conducted on Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube to determine the most active organizations. For the pro-gun/gun control issue the National Rifle Association (NRA) was the most active pro-gun organization, while the Brady Campaign to prevent gun violence was selected for gun control. On the pro-choice side of the pro-choice/pro-life issue, Planned Parenthood was selected and the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC) was chosen for the pro-life side.

Based on the literature, activity posted, shared, liked, tweeted, re-tweeted, on Facebook and Twitter, were analyzed for both characteristics and purpose. Additionally, the captions to videos uploaded on YouTube, were analyzed for message characteristics. Five message characteristics of propaganda were examined as were 10 characteristics of advocacy messages. Five of the 10 advocacy characteristics were sub-coded as structured along the rhetorical tradition of logos, which involves rational and intellectual appeals, while the remaining five advocacy message characteristics were sub-coded as involving the rhetorical concept of pathos, which evokes emotion. A single item category was created to identify type of spokesperson along the remaining Aristotelian concept of ethos, which pertains to the credibility, control, and charisma of the spokesperson.

The functions of social media analyzed were based upon the categories developed by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012) and included a single item for Information, 4 items for Community, and 7 items for Action. Three of the Community items and 5 of the Action items were also sub-coded as relating to the guidelines for online development of relationships proposed by Waters and Lord (2009). Based on the researcher’s experience with social media, an additional function item was added, “direction to view video or articles via links.”

A total of 235 items were content analyzed by two trained coders using a 28 item code book. Approximately 60 items per organization were analyzed consisting of the 20 most recent tweets, the 20 most recently uploaded videos, and up to 24 posts on Facebook. All of the posts from a two-week period were selected, except for the NRA, for which every other post for that time period was examined to maintain consistency in the number of items analyzed by organization. Because all of the items were coded as “1” for present and “2” for missing and because there was high agreement on missing items, overall intercoder reliability using Cohen’s Kappa (1960) was low at just 40%; however, as Freelon (2012) explains, the various intercoder calculations (Scott’s Pi, Cohen’s Kappa, and Krippendorff’s alpha) penalize coders who do not exhibit enough covariation to achieve high coefficient values.
4. Results

4.1. Use of propaganda message characteristics

Of the 274 message characteristics identified, only 17% leaned towards propaganda and more than half of those characteristics referred to the use of authority figures. As described in Table 1, the use of these characteristics was approximately equal within each issue pair, and the pro-choice/pro-life organizations used propaganda characteristics nearly twice as frequently as the pro-gun/gun control issue organizations. Results of one-way ANOVA suggest that use of certain propaganda characteristics significantly varied by type of organization: reducing complex issues \( F(3, 231) = 7.31, p < 0.01 \); use of authority figures \( F(3, 231) = 5.17, p < 0.05 \); emphasis on conflict rather than cooperation \( F(3, 231) = 2.89, p < 0.05 \). Post hoc analysis revealed that the Brady Campaign was significantly less likely to use authority figures in message structure than the pro-choice/pro-life organizations. The Brady Campaign was also more likely to place emphasis on conflict rather than cooperation, and less likely to reduce complex issues to cause and effect, than all of the other organizations.

One-way ANOVA of message characteristics by type of social media used also revealed significances in the use of propaganda. Again, reducing complex issues \( F(2, 232) = 23.44, p < 0.01 \); use of authority figures \( F(2, 232) = 35.58, p < 0.01 \); and emphasis on conflict \( F(2, 232) = 3.75, p < 0.05 \) indicated differences. Post hoc analysis revealed organizations were more likely to reduce complex issues on Twitter than Facebook or YouTube and they were more likely to use authority figures on YouTube than the other media. Moreover, emphasis on conflict rather than cooperation was significantly more likely on Facebook than YouTube.

4.2. Use of advocacy message characteristics

Rational appeals were the most frequent type of advocacy characteristics used by nonprofit advocacy organizations. As shown in Table 1, of the rational appeals, provision of information (41%) and details relating to politics and legislation (35%) were the most frequent characteristics of advocacy; however, Planned Parenthood and the NRA referred to politics much more frequently than their opposing organizations. The third most frequently used characteristic, empathy (12%), was the largest among the characteristics designed to evoke pathos or emotion. Table 1 outlines the frequency with which characteristics were employed by organization.

Results of one-way ANOVA identified significant differences in the use advocacy characteristics by organization. Specifically, provision of information \( F(3, 231) = 2.929, p < 0.05 \); politics and legislation \( F(3, 231) = 23.17, p < 0.01 \); community or group identity \( F(2, 231) = 7.80, p < 0.01 \) and empathy \( F(2, 231) = 22.22, p < 0.01 \) indicated differences in means. Post hoc analysis demonstrated that Planned Parenthood was significantly more likely than the NRLC to provide information and significantly more likely to promote a community or group identity (women) than the other three organizations in the sample. Both Planned Parenthood and the NRA referred significantly to politics and legislation compared to the opposing organizations. Moreover, the Brady Campaign used the characteristic of empathy significantly more frequently than the other three organizations.

One-way ANOVA of social media types by advocacy characteristics revealed significant differences for use of facts and figures \( F(2, 232) = 5.02, p < 0.05 \); politics and legislation \( F(2, 232) = 11.67, p < 0.01 \); and empathy \( F(2, 232) = 11.51, p < 0.01 \).
Table 2
Functions of message use by nonprofit advocacy organizations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Planned Parenthood</th>
<th>National Right to Life Committee</th>
<th>National Rifle Association</th>
<th>Brady Campaign</th>
<th>Total¹</th>
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<td>4</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>&amp; local events</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>recognition</td>
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<td>5</td>
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</table>

¹ The number of messages was N = 235; however, messages may have pertained to more than one purpose.

Post hoc analysis indicated more extensive use of facts and figures on Facebook than Twitter and more extensive reference to politics and legislation and use of empathy on YouTube than the other two media.

4.3. Purpose of social media use

Of the 13 functions of social media analyzed, those referring to the building of Community function were most prevalent (55%), followed by calls to Action (23%) and Information about the organization (11%). Overall, the pro-guns/gun control organizations used the most functions, particularly in the development of Community. Both sides of the issue just about equally acknowledged current and local events, gave thanks and recognition, responded to messages, and solicited responses. Table 2 provides details of the functions used.

When one-way ANOVA was performed just two items suggested significant differences in use by organizations, both of which fell under the guidelines for building relationships online. The items were response solicitation \(F(3, 231) = 7.05, p < 0.01\) and promoting an organizational event \(F(3, 231) = 5.66, p < 0.05\). Post hoc analysis revealed that the pro-choice/pro-life organizations very rarely sought responses from stakeholders while the pro-gun/gun control organizations frequently sought feedback. Moreover, the NRLC promoted organizational events much more frequently than the other three organizations. Additional one-way ANOVA by type of social media identified significant differences in the functions to which organizations used these media, particularly, giving thanks and recognition \(F(2, 232) = 6.49, p < 0.05\) and response solicitation \(F(2, 232) = 15.04, p < 0.01\). Post hoc analysis revealed that organizations are more likely to give thanks and recognition on Twitter than Facebook or YouTube and are more likely to solicit responses or feedback on Facebook than the other media.

5. Discussion and limitations

Several implications for theory and practice are suggested by this investigation. First, public relations has a special role in building, sustaining, and advancing democratic interests in society. As advocates, public relations should “provide a voice in the marketplace of ideas, facts, and viewpoints to aid informed [public debate]” (PRSA, 2012). Yet communication from activist groups may appear too one-sided or close-minded, reflecting a more propaganda approach than persuasive approach and hindering acceptance of new or different ideas (Freelon, 2012). Results of this study found the public relations activities, in the form of communicating through social media, were contributing to the democratic marketplace of ideas.

Analysis of diametrically opposed organizations on the pro-choice/pro-life issue and the pro-gun/gun control issue found that organizations are generally ethical in their message construction, persuading rather than engaging in propaganda. Not surprisingly, the organizations in opposition to the currently held political or legislative position, the Brady Campaign and the NRLC, were more likely to emphasize conflict over cooperation than their politically entrenched opposites. Conversely, the organizations representing the currently held political or legislative view, Planned Parenthood and the NRA, referred to politics and legislation more than twice as frequently as their opposing organizations.

Secondly, democracy relies upon both the existence of organizations formed to promote the diverse viewpoints of society and also to those who communicative such viewpoints to society at large. As professional communicators, public relations practitioners must balance the need to promote the point-of-view of their organizations with the needs of society. Such balance can be achieved by avoiding negative message characteristics that imply propaganda, using instead more persuasive message structure. By far the largest single characteristic of social media messages in this sample was the provision of
information. Combined with the use of facts and figures, the two categories account for nearly 50% of all message characteristics. This speaks positively of the development of a democratic marketplace of ideas. Earlier studies have bemoaned the prevalence of one-way communication by organizations online despite the potential for two-way communication (Bortree & Seltzer, 2009; Lovejoy et al., 2012; Xifra & Grau, 2010). Given that a healthy and democratic marketplace of ideas is developed by the provision of information, “ideas, facts, and viewpoints to aid informed public debate” (PRSA, 2012) it does not seem necessary that advocacy organizations concern themselves overmuch on the use of one-way or two-way communication. Since the purpose of these nonprofit organizations is to advocate on behalf of an issue, then provision of information, updates on the state of politics and legislation, facts and figures are all reasonable items to communicate into the marketplace of ideas.

That is not to say that these organizations ignore their stakeholders. Communicating with stakeholders was particularly important for the pro-gun/gun control organizations, who responded to messages, solicited feedback, and gave thanks and recognition on a regular basis. Moreover, organizations in this study may tend to persuade through one-way communication but they are using two-way communication. Of the 82 functions of social media coded, 50 (61%) referred to the guidelines for suggested online relationship-building proposed by Waters and Lord (2009). The majority of those items fell under the building of Community function such as giving thanks and recognition and soliciting feedback.

Finally, based on the finds of this study, there are implications for theory. This study identified the different uses for which nonprofit advocacy organizations use each of the three social media examined. Results found that social media platforms are used for different purposes by different types of organizations. Moving forward, research may focus on comparative use of the different media, not just among advocative nonprofit organizations but between different types of businesses and between for-profit and nonprofit businesses. Future studies could explore why Twitter was used most frequently to give thanks and recognition or why Facebook was used by organizations more than Twitter and YouTube to solicit feedback when a request to retweet is brief. Perhaps Facebook was the preferred site for solicitation of feedback because it allows organizations to post extended information about the issue for which they would like support or other response but more research is needed to understand the various and different uses to which organizations put social media.

Among the limitations for the study are the organizations selected. For example, results of analysis suggest that empathy is used more frequently on YouTube than other social media; however, the results are skewed by the Brady Campaign whose entire YouTube video playlist consists of stories from victims of gun violence. In addition, Father’s Day and the NLRB annual meeting coincided with the data collection dates, thus other items, for example, promoting organizational events, giving thanks and recognition, and acknowledgement of current or local events could also be skewed.

Future research of nonprofit advocacy organizations should include qualitative coding of the functions for which they use social media. The functions adopted from Lovejoy and Saxton (2012) were not entirely applicable to these organizations. Moreover, similar qualitative coding should be used to determine the characteristics of such advocacy. The items adapted from Miller (2006) examination of marketplace advocacy were again not entirely applicable to these special nonprofit organizations.

6. Conclusion

Nonprofit organizations contribute to a democratic society by allowing those with diverse opinions to assemble and voice these ideas. Social media has provided public relations with an extensive new marketplace in which such organizations can give voice to their ideas. Results of this study indicate that nonprofit advocacy organizations are using social media to ethically persuade people to their point of view, for the most part through use of one-way communication. Moreover, organizations are using different social media for different purposes, providing thanks and recognition on Twitter, and soliciting feedback and other two-way communication with stakeholders on Facebook. Use of authority figures to communicate messages is generally reserved for YouTube.

References


