Self-Presentation Techniques Used by Local Television Sports Broadcasters on Twitter

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Abstract

Using self-presentation theory as a guide, this study examined if local sports broadcasters in the United States were more likely to write about their work life (front stage) or their personal life (backstage) when on Twitter. A content analysis of 19,649 tweets from 201 sportscasters throughout the United States revealed that the majority of tweets (77.4%) demonstrated front stage personas (a work-related tool), with the remaining 22.6% categorized as backstage personas (giving details about their personal lives). This illustrates that sportscasters' interactions with followers online are, in essence, not much different from their interactions with them on television, in that they are simply giving them scores and news. Additional analysis

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addressed the difference in tweet content based on gender and what size city the broadcaster worked in. Theoretical implications regarding self-presentation theory and practical implications for sports media members are discussed.

For decades, sports media audiences have known little about sports writers and broadcasters beyond what is presented in print and on television. The emergence of social media has allowed media members to do more than just report scores and highlights, instead providing a platform on which they can give personal details about their lives (Schultz & Sheffer, 2010). Previous research has demonstrated that if broadcasters provide viewers with more information about themselves, this can create a scenario in which viewers feel a stronger connection to the broadcaster (Horton & Wohl, 1956), which has been proven to be a main factor in why people watch a specific newscast (Levy, 1979).

The purpose of this study is to examine how local sports broadcasters, defined in the United States by Ellis (1992) as someone who is an on-air member of a sports department for a local television station, are using self-presentation techniques on Twitter. Self-presentation theory states that people act differently based on with whom they are interacting (Goffman, 1959). Results will demonstrate if they are using the service more in a front stage manner (as a work tool) or in a backstage manner (discussing their personal lives). Further examination will help determine if there is a difference in the self-presentation techniques used when comparing broadcasters of different genders and different cities of employment.

Literature Review
Sports Broadcasters and Twitter

Research during Twitter's infancy found that the sports world was already "obsessed" with the social network (Gregory, 2009). That trend has only increased, as in 2015, nearly 50% of all Twitter posts about television programming are sports related. This is despite the fact that only 1.4% of television programming is sports (Master, 2016). Overall, sports news is the second most common news topic posted among Twitter users (Barthel & Shearer, 2015). While fans and athletes have embraced the service, it has become a key part of the daily routine for sports media members as well.

Using the Internet as both a source and delivery method for news has become commonplace for local sports broadcasters (Rudd 2012; Sagan & Leighton 2010), and it is Twitter that is dominating their online efforts. A 2016 survey found that 67% of sports media members listed Twitter as their primary source of news and 75% said that Twitter was their most important outlet for sharing content to the public (Duffy, 2016). This is a change from previous research on Twitter, where some sports media members said they were not sure how to use it in their daily routine (Schultz & Sheffer, 2010). Reporters with national sports cable television channel ESPN are encouraged to report news first on Twitter, a change from ESPN's initial policy that stated reporters had to discuss the story with the news desk before posting anything to their social media accounts (Wolfley, 2013). For journalists in the United States, using Twitter as part of their daily routine has become "industry standard" (Adornato, 2014, p.18).

Parasocial Relationship

The concept of a parasocial relationship was first discussed by Horton and Wohl (1956) when they examined how people become attached to those they see and hear through traditional media outlets. The researchers proposed that some viewers form a close bond with celebrities they see through the media, even believing that they are friends with that celebrity but that the relationship is not reciprocated (Horton & Wohl, 1956). In most cases, the celebrity does not know the fan at all. Through Twitter, celebrities are able to have a direct connection with fans through a simple tweet. If a fan asks a question to a famous person, and that celebrity responds directly to the fan, that may help achieve a parasocial interaction (Marwick & boyd, 2011; Sanderson, 2011). The fan believes that the celebrity is talking directly to him or her, but, in reality, the celebrity is simply responding to one of many questions from his followers. Previously, fans could rarely engage their favorite star in any meaningful conversation, but parasocial interactions create a bond that is important to that fan.

Some early research on parasocial relationships focused on the dynamic between television news anchors and viewers (Houlberg, 1984; Levy, 1979; Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rayburn, 1980; Rubin, Perse, & Powell, 1985). Levy (1979) was one of the first to take Horton and Wohl's concept of parasocial interaction and apply the concept to television news viewing. He found that viewers do engage in parasocial interaction with the news anchor while watching the evening news. His survey of news viewers found that more than half likened newscasters to friends that they can count on being there every day. Some view-

ers even noted that they talked back to the television when watching their "friend." For example, when the newscaster would start their broadcast with "Good evening from NBC News in New York," the news viewers reported they would reply "Good evening, John" (in reference to John Chancellor) to the television (Levy, 1979). Further research confirmed Levy's findings and found that there is a high probability that parasocial interaction existed between viewers and local television newscasters (Houlberg, 1984; Palmgreen et al., 1980).

Theoretical Framework: Self-Presentation Theory

Self-presentation was first proposed in 1959 by Goffman, who believed that people acted in two distinct manners, with one being a desirable image that they want to present to the world and the other being a relaxed image that they are more comfortable presenting only to those close to them. Goffman used actors to help explain his theory, stating that they negotiate between how they act in front of the audience (front stage) with how they act when they are around people with whom they are more comfortable (backstage). When actors are front stage, their goal is to please the audience and perform in a way that will leave the audience satisfied. However, when actors are backstage with friends and colleagues and not performing, they may be more relaxed and reveal more of their "true" personality (Goffman, 1959).

Ultimately, the theory addresses the motivations of people's behavior based on how they believe others will judge or evaluate them. When around people with whom someone feels familiar, that person does not fear being judged harshly, so he or she does not feel the need to per-

form for others. When around those with whom they are unfamiliar, or those whom they are attempting to impress, people will act differently than if they were in a more relaxed situation. Therefore, the theory has an explanatory and predictive power that allows someone to determine how comfortable a person is based on how they act in a situation. For sportscasters, they want their viewers to feel as if they can rely on them for the latest news and information on television, so the sportscaster will act a certain way when delivering the news. However, that may be different from how the sportscasters act when with friends and not working. Much like actors in front of an audience, a broadcaster also has a personality that he or she demonstrates to the viewers while on television. It is likely that the majority of the viewers only know that front stage, or "on-camera," persona of the broadcaster. A social networking device such as Twitter could be changing these roles, however. In addition to expressing front stage personas that are journalism-specific, the broadcaster also has an opportunity to reveal more of his or her backstage personality to the viewers, giving his or her followers a chance to learn more about the broadcaster's identity.

The differences between front stage and backstage presentations were well defined when Goffman first proposed them regarding face-to-face communication in his 1959 book, but those lines may be blurred in the Internet era. In 2011, Marwick and boyd argued that backstage tweets were more of a performance and less of an authentic look at the private life of a celebrity. Therefore, another way to categorize tweets would be to consider backstage tweets a look at the broadcaster's private life, while front stage tweets would focus on their work life.

Ultimately, one of the goals of a local sports broadcaster when on Twitter is to encourage people to follow him or her and then translate that following into the fan watching the evening sportscast or reading articles on the television station's website. The sportscaster has to determine the best way to use Twitter in order to achieve these goals, and successfully navigating between front stage (work life) and backstage (private life) could be the key. If they are demonstrating a willingness to show more backstage characteristics, Twitter users may be shunning these presentation differences and may be comfortable revealing more information about themselves than they normally would in an offline situation.

Hypothesis and Research Questions

While parasocial interaction and self-presentation techniques in both traditional news and sports media outlets have been examined by researchers, less attention has been paid to comparing how broadcasters are using Twitter in this manner. Based on the previous literature, the following hypothesis and two research questions were developed to test the self-presentation and parasocial interaction techniques that local sports broadcasters are using when on Twitter. First, it is hypothesized that local sports broadcasters will use Twitter mostly to report scores and interact with viewers because Twitter has, in most cases, become another reporting tool. Since these uses are front stage personas:

> H_1: Local sports broadcasters will demonstrate more front stage personas than backstage personas when using Twitter.

Little research has compared the difference in self-

presentation techniques of local sports broadcasters on Twitter based on gender and market size. Therefore, this study attempts to address those topics by asking the following two research questions:

> **RQ₁:** What differences, if any, are there in self-presentation techniques used by local sports broadcasters on Twitter based on their gender?

> **RQ₂:** What differences, if any, are there in self-presentation techniques used by local sports broadcasters on Twitter based on the size of the television market in which they work?

Methods

In order to address the hypothesis and answer the research questions a content analysis of tweets from various local sports broadcasters throughout the country was conducted to determine the types of tweets that are being sent by these broadcasters.

Local Sports Broadcasters Sample

In order to obtain a representative sample of local sports broadcasters throughout the United States, a random sample was created by using the 210 Designated Market Areas (DMAs). Market size refers to how large or small the television market is. For example, New York City is market #1 because it is the largest market in the United States. Glendive, Montana, is the smallest at market #210. Within each DMA, one local sports broadcaster who has a Twitter account was randomly chosen to have his or her tweets followed for the sample. While there are 210 DMAs, nine markets either did not have a dedicated sportscaster, did not have a sportscaster who had a Twitter account, or

shared a sportscaster with another market, leaving 201 local sports broadcasters for the sample. Twitter accounts were located either through the local sports broadcaster's official station website or through an Internet search engine.

Efforts were made to select both male and female sports broadcasters. While a representative sample would normally be used to determine differences among various demographics (Babbie, 2013), oversampling of female sports broadcasters was used due to the fact that the vast majority of local sports broadcasters are male (92.2%) (Papper, 2008). Oversampling, commonly used when a group makes up a small proportion of the population, takes additional members from a particular segment in order to obtain enough cases for valid analysis (Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 2005).

Of those sampled, 149 were male (74.1%) and 52 were female (25.9%). While assumptions could be made regarding the race and ethnicity of the local sports broadcaster based on their Twitter profile photo and online station biography, it is inappropriate to include a breakdown of race and ethnicity of the entire sample without knowing the exact race and gender of each participant. Therefore, racial and ethnic differences in the Twitter habits of local sports broadcasters were not studied for this research. Finally, the 210 designated market areas were divided into five equal groups of 42 markets each. Table 1 shows the number of sports broadcasters within each demographics group.

Tweet Content – Research Design

Content analytic methods were used to categorize

Table 1

Demographics of Local Sports Broadcasters
Included in Sample

Demographics	Total (N = 201)	%
Male	149	74.1
Female	52	25.9
Designated Market Area		
Markets 1-42	42	20.9
Markets 43-84	42	20.9
Markets 85-126	42	20.9
Markets 127-168	41	20.4
Markets 169-210	34	16.9

the tweets. This method has been used previously in studies that examine Twitter use among journalists (Sheffer & Schultz, 2010; Weathers et al., 2014) and athletes (Hambrick et al., 2010; Hull, 2014; Pegoraro, 2010) and was deemed appropriate for this research as well.

The 201 Twitter accounts were followed during October 2014 and November 2014. These months were chosen because they are traditionally active times for local sports broadcasters with high school sports, college sports, and national sporting events all taking place. Within these months, local sports broadcasters have many different options to tweet about and should result in more active use of Twitter. Within the months of October 2014 and November 2014, a constructed week was created. Constructed weeks have been proven to be an effective method for analyzing online news content and is considered more reliable and efficient than simple random sampling or consecutive

day sampling (Hester & Dougall, 2007).

Self-presentation categories were based on previous research on self-presentation techniques on Twitter by broadcasters (Weathers et al., 2014) and athletes (Hull, 2014; Lebel & Danylchuk, 2012). Each tweet was considered the unit of analysis and was placed into one of six self-presentation categories based on the message sent. The front stage tweets include the promoter, the informer, and the engager. Backstage tweets consist of the employee, the fan, and the average man or woman.

Front stage

The promoter. Occurred when the local sports broadcaster would direct his or her followers to the station's website or discuss upcoming stories on the sportscast.

The informer. Manifested when the local sports broadcaster sent news or information in tweets. These could occur through their own tweets or through retweeting news from other accounts.

The engager. Involved a local sports broadcaster having direct communication with viewers, athletes, or team officials by responding to their questions on Twitter, inviting an interaction, or retweeting viewer opinions.

Backstage

The employee. Included work-related interactions with other journalists or giving followers a behind-the-scenes look at what occurs at the television station.

The fan. Occurred when a local sports broadcaster

demonstrated a rooting interest in a team or when he or she gave commentary on a sporting event.

The average man or woman. Included instances when the local sports broadcaster tweeted personal stories or photos. This category gave viewers a glimpse into the broadcaster's life that he or she likely would not be getting if it were not for Twitter's direct access from the journalist to the follower.

In addition to coding the tweet content, each broadcaster's gender and market size were recorded. Two coders (the primary researcher and a trained coder) coded 200 random tweets for initial coding. Upon discussion and resolution of disagreements from those tweets, final intercoder reliability was determined by coding 2,073 tweets (10.6% of the sample). Testing this percentage for reliability is consistent with published recommendations (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006) and further exceeds the recommendations of other researchers (Kaid & Wadsworth, 1989). Intercoder reliability using Krippendorff's α determined a high level of reliability for both the tweet content (α = .862) and the month in which the tweet occurred (α = 1). The two coders also coded all 201 local sports broadcasters' gender and market size and achieved 100% agreement (α = 1) on the entire sample for both variables.

Results
Tweet Results

The 201 local sports broadcasters tweeted a total of 19,649 times during the constructed two weeks in October and November (*M* = 97.76, *SD* = 102.72). Both original

tweets and retweets sent by the sports broadcaster were examined for this study. The person who sent the most tweets during the time period posted 530 tweets. Two of the local sports broadcasters did tweet during October and November but did not tweet on any of the days that made up the constructed weeks.

To help demonstrate the context of the tweets sent by the local sports broadcasters, examples have been included in the text that follows. However, to maintain the anonymity of the individual journalists, all identifying elements within the tweets, such as television station call letters, team and player names, and cities, have been removed and replaced with generic phrases such as [name] or [city]. In addition, some messages contained links to other website addresses. For clarity, all link addresses have been removed from the tweets and replaced with [link]. Otherwise, all tweets have been transcribed verbatim from the data set, including all misspellings and punctuation errors.

Hypothesis and Research Questions

The first hypothesis projected that local sports broadcasters would demonstrate more front stage personas than backstage personas when using Twitter. An analysis of the tweets showed that both front stage and backstage personas were exhibited, consistent with the idea of self-presentation. In the almost 20,000 tweets, 15,208 (77.4%) demonstrated front stage personas (work life), with the remaining 4,441 tweets (22.6%) categorized as backstage personas (personal life). These results support H_1. Table 2 demonstrates the breakdown of tweets within each category.

Table 2

Self-presentation Techniques Used by Local
Sports Broadcasters

Self-Presentation Technique	Total (N = 19,649)	%
Front stage		
The Informer	10,985	55.9
The Engager	2,587	13.2
The Promoter	1,636	8.3
Total Front stage	15,208	77.4
Backstage		
The Employee	1,908	9.7
The Fan	1,788	9.1
The Average Man or Woman	745	3.8
Total Backstage	4,441	22.6

Within the front stage presentation techniques, the informer category contained 10,985 tweets (55.9% of the entire sample and 72.2% of the front stage tweets). This demonstrates that local sports broadcasters are primarily using Twitter to share news and information with their followers. Acting as the informer was achieved through sending out news, retweeting news from other local, regional, national, or non-traditional media accounts, or live-tweeting sporting events. For example, a broadcaster in the Southeast relayed sports news by sending a tweet that contained the date, start time, and location of a playoff football game between two high schools located in that market. When St. Louis Cardinals' outfielder Oscar Tavarez was killed in a car crash in October, five of the local sports broadcasters in the sample retweeted the ini-

tial announcement from USA Today's Bob Nightengale that said, "Oscar Tavares' agent is telling news reporters in the Dominican that Oscar Tavares was killed in a car wreck. Horrible. #STLCards." Many broadcasters used Twitter to live-tweet the action during a game that they were either at or watching on television. During a college football game between Notre Dame and North Carolina, a broadcaster sent 35 tweets over a three-hour period, live-tweeting the action on the field.

Local sports broadcasters' second most frequent use of Twitter was acting as the engager. They sent 2,587 tweets (13.2% of the entire sample and 17% of the front stage tweets) in which they interacted with viewers, athletes, or team officials. In preparation for a game the next day, a sports broadcaster engaged followers by writing, "Send me your tweets on what you think the final score will be for the [team] game tomorrow!" Others responded to questions from their followers on a wide range of topics including injury updates, game start times, and general sports-related questions. Occasionally, the broadcasters themselves asked the questions to their followers, such as asking fans for their opinions on a game or looking for a final score from a high school game. In some cases, the local sports broadcasters would engage their audience by retweeting their viewers to acknowledge the viewer and demonstrate that they found value in that tweet. After a loss by an NFL team, the broadcaster in the home city retweeted fans' opinions of what caused the loss including bad defense, an interception by the quarterback, and a poor offensive line. However, the broadcaster also retweeted a fan that said, "now rooting for a draft pick. 2015 will be our year!"

The least common front stage technique demonstrated was that of the promoter, in which the local sports broadcaster would send tweets that promoted either the evening newscast or material on the station's website. These promotional messages accounted for 1,636 tweets (8.3% of the entire sample and 10.8% of the front stage tweets). Tweets promoting the newscast often told of a story, highlights, or interview that was to be featured that night. For example, one broadcaster tweeted, "Highlights of [team] and [team] tonight at 10! Both looked to stay undefeated." On the two Friday nights that were examined, broadcasters promoted extended high school football highlights with tweets such as, "Blitz starts in 5 minutes!" Another promoted that members of a winning football team would be live in the studio at 11 p.m. When promoting web coverage, many of the tweets were simply links to stories that appeared on the station website, such as, "Week 11 HS football scoreboard [link]" or "Giants take World Series opener 7-1 [link]." Others promoted highlights ("VIDEO – Volleyball Championships – [link]") or video of entire shows that were online ("Did ya miss [station call letters] and my #FNF Halloween edition? You're in for a good laugh, plus scores and highlights! [link]"). Some broadcasters encouraged web visitors by promoting online polls that were only available on the station's website, such as, "Vote for the Big Game of the Week for November 7th [link]."

The most common backstage category occurred when the local sports broadcaster acted as the employee. Tweets in this category are designated as such because they can usually only occur if someone works at the television station, such as when the broadcasters interact with other journalists regarding work-related topics or give be-

hind the scenes information about the television station. Local sports broadcasters took on the persona of the employee in 1,908 tweets (9.7% of the entire sample and 42.9% of the backstage tweets). For example, two broadcasters discussed the weather for the games they were filming that night, with one broadcaster writing another, "I hope you are dressed properly for this weather." Another used Twitter in an attempt to get highlights from a station in another market by asking a fellow sportscaster, "hey man if I give you our IP can you put low angle highlights on our FTP??" Giving viewers a behind the scenes look at the television station often consisted of the sports broadcasters tweeting pictures. These photos included candid pictures of the anchor team at the desk, the broadcaster setting up for an interview with an athlete or coach, or different locations inside the television station. Some discussed events that happened while putting their sportscast together that viewers at home probably did not know about, including, "oh man. royally screwed up sending those men's basketball highlights to air haha! thanks to everyone behind the scenes for saving me!" and "Had to stand on a chair to interview a [name of college] player today #shortgirlstruggles." With election night approaching in November, many of the local sports broadcasters took to Twitter to discuss their lack of involvement during the busy night in the news department. Some commented on how they were switching jobs for the night ("just became the 'graphics builder' when results come in"), while others essentially had the night off ("Due to election coverage ..No [sportscast] ...but if you have a sandwich & some Mello Yello I will come to your house and give the report"). Some tweeted their excitement over the election night piz-

za, a staple of many newsrooms across the country, as management orders dinner for the staff because few reporters are able to take a meal break during the hectic evening: "News people are running around like crazy...sports people are over here like, "OH! PIZZA!" #electionnight."

The local sports broadcasters are not normally able to demonstrate who their personal favorite teams are or give sports opinions when on-air, so the backstage persona of the fan allows them to show their followers a side that would not normally be on display. Only 1,788 tweets (9.1% of the entire sample and 40.3% of the backstage tweets) demonstrated their own fandom. Examples of fandom included broadcasters cheering for their college alma mater, as a University of Missouri grad demonstrated when he tweeted, "I love our defense." Another broadcaster tweeted, "How Bout Dem Cowboys!!!!!!!" after a Dallas victory, while a broadcaster in the Northeast lamented the play of his Miami Dolphins after a loss to the Green Bay Packers. Opinions were also given regarding great plays ("best I've ever seen"), local team losses ("interception will be the reason they lost"), and season predictions ("They're a Super Bowl threat"). One broadcaster commented on the death of Oscar Tavarez by writing, "Sick to my stomach about how easily and quickly life can be taken from us. He was my age. Only 22! We lost a baseball stud today."

The least used category was when the local sports broadcaster acted as the average man or woman by sending tweets about their personal life, retweeting inspirational messages, or retweeting life tweets from other media members. The local sports broadcasters kept their private lives mostly private by sending just 745 tweets (3.8%

of the entire sample and 16.8% of the backstage tweets) that portrayed their lives away from the television station. Around Halloween, some of the broadcasters tweeted pictures of their kids (or themselves) in costumes. Others took to Twitter to announce big life moments ranging from the birth of a granddaughter ("Back home today after giving birth to a beautiful baby girl. Proud gramps!") to their best golf shot ("Got the first eagle of my unceremonious golfing career. Oh man, it feels good."). Some talked about television shows they liked ("Gotta say I'm hooked on the @NBCBlacklist !!!), music choices ("Old school tip for that #workoutflo ... Nothing like Pac"), and movies ("Hallmark Channel Christmas movies have taken over my life."). One broadcaster sent multiple tweets throughout his experience at the state fair, including photos of the various foods he was eating. Another let his followers know about his exercise routine when he wrote, "Played in 3 intense hard fought pick up basketball games today. Best workout in awhile." In some cases, local sports broadcasters would retweet inspirational or religious messages ("RT @AthIetesForGod: You don't get what you wish for, you get what you work and pray for.") or tweets from other broadcasters about their off-camera life ("RT @NikkiKaySPX: It's officially on my life bucket list to tailgate at Ole Miss...").

Research question one asked if there were differences in the self-presentation techniques used by local sports broadcasters based on their gender. A Chi-squared test for independence indicated a significant association between gender and self-presentation techniques on Twitter by the local sports broadcasters ($x^2 = 29.151$, p < .001) (Table 3). The tweets of the males were 78.3% front stage

Table 3
Gender Differences in Self-presentation Techniques

Self-Presentation Technique	Male (n = 15,198)	Female (n = 4,451)
Front stage		
The Informer	8,632 (56.8%)	2,353 (52.9%)
The Engager	1,919 (12.6%)	668 (15%)
The Promoter	1,345 (8.8%)	291 (6.5%)
Totals	11,896 (78.3%)	3,312 (74.4%)
Backstage		
The Employee	1,429 (9.4%)	479 (10.8%)
The Fan	1,348 (8.9%)	440 (9.9%)
The Average Man or Woman	525 (3.5%)	220 (4.9%)
Totals	3,302 (21.7%)	1,139 (25.6%)

(N = 11,896), compared to 74.4% for the females (N = 3,312), indicating that, while a significant difference statistically, the male sports broadcasters in the sample demonstrated only a slightly higher percentage of front stage personas than the females.

There were also significant differences between the genders for the categories within front stage and backstage. Using the adjusted residual statistic, the Chi-squared post-hoc test found all had z-scores higher than 1.96, indicating a difference larger than one would expect for a p value of .05 and classifying the result as significant (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006).

Women acted as the average woman in 4.9% of their

tweets, compared to only 3.4% of the men acting as the average man ($z = 4.9$). Females also had a higher percentage of tweets as the engager (15% to 12.6%, $z = 4.1$), the employee (10.8% to 9.4%, $z = 2.7$), and the fan (9.9% to 8.9%, $z = 2.1$). Male local sports broadcasters had a higher percentage of tweets acting as the informer (56.8% to 52.9%, $z = 4.6$) and the promoter (8.8% to 6.5%, $z = 4.9$).

Research question two addressed the differences in self-presentation techniques based on the size of the television market in which the local sports broadcasters worked. The DMAs were divided up into five groups of 42 markets each, and the local sports broadcasters were predominantly front stage within each grouping. At least 72% of the tweets within each of the five groups demonstrated a front stage persona. Table 4 demonstrates the frequency of the different self-presentation personas within each market group.

Using the five groups of 42 markets each, a Chi-squared test for independence was run comparing the self-presentation traits between the market groupings. This test indicted there was a significant association between market size and self-presentation techniques ($\chi^2 = 79.702$, $p < .001$), meaning that self-presentation personas varied based on what market grouping the broadcaster worked in. To further examine the differences, a Chi-squared test for independence was also run between each market size group in pairs of two (for example, DMAs 1-42 were compared to DMAs 43-84). This was done to determine which specific market groups had self-presentation personas that were significantly different from other groups. Due to the fact that ten different pairings were being tested, a Bonferroni correction was implemented at $\alpha = .005$ (.05/10

Table 4
Market Size Differences in Self-presentation Techniques

Self-Presentation Technique	DMA 1-42 (N = 5,049)	DMA 43-84 (N = 3,707)	DMA 85-126 (N = 3,516)	DMA 127-168 (N = 4,408)	DMA 169-210 (N = 2,969)
Front stage	4,015 (79.5%)	2,972 (80.2%)	2,556 (72.7%)	3,422 (77.6%)	2,243 (75.5%)
Backstage	1,034 (20.5%)	735 (19.8%)	960 (27.3%)	986 (22.4%)	726 (24.5%)
Front stage					
The Informer	2,678 (53%)	2,092 (56.4%)	1,933 (55%)	2,575 (58.4%)	1,707 (57.5%)
The Engager	921 (18.2%)	550 (14.8%)	339 (9.6%)	484 (11%)	293 (9.9%)
The Promoter	416 (8.2%)	330 (8.9%)	284 (8.1%)	363 (8.2%)	243 (8.2%)
Backstage					
The Employee	409 (8.1%)	332 (9%)	361 (10.3%)	529 (12%)	277 (9.3%)
The Fan	359 (7.1%)	297 (8%)	427 (12.1%)	346 (7.8%)	359 (12.1%)
The Average Man or Woman	266 (5.3%)	106 (2.9%)	172 (4.9%)	111 (2.5%)	90 (3%)

= .005). The Bonferroni correction is often used in statistics to counteract the issues involved with performing multiple comparisons (Dunn, 1961). These results indicated that there was not a significant association (i.e., the presentation personas were not statistically different) between market size and self-presentation between DMAs 1-42 and DMAs 43-84 (χ^2 = .524, p = .469), DMAs 1-42 and DMAs 127-169 (χ^2 = 4.88, p = .027), DMAs 43-84 and DMAs 127-168 (χ^2 = 7.630, p = .006), DMAs 85-126 and DMAs 169-210 (χ^2 = 6.654, p = .01), and DMAs 127-168 and DMAs 169-210 (χ^2 = 4.208, p = .04). There was a sig-

nificant association (i.e., the presentation personas were statistically different) between market sizes in the remaining five pairings: DMAs 1-42 and DMAs 85-126 (χ^2 = 53.664, p < .001), DMAs 1-42 and DMAs 169-210 (χ^2 = 17.229, p < .001), DMAs 43-84 and DMAs 85-126 (χ^2 = 56.161, p < .001), DMAs 43-84 and DMAs 169-210 (χ^2 = 20.631, p < .001), DMAs 85-126 and DMAs 127-168 (χ^2 = 25.448, p < .001).

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine self-presentation techniques used by sports broadcasters on Twitter. Using 19,649 tweets from 201 sportscasters, results demonstrated that broadcasters are infrequently using Twitter as a way to reveal their backstage persona (personal life) within the guidelines of self-presentation theory, demonstrating that broadcasters either feel Twitter is not an appropriate device to discuss these topics or feel less comfortable discussing their private lives and opinions than they do discussing work-related topics.

Parasocial Interaction

Previous research has determined that television broadcasters have the ability to create parasocial interactions with viewers watching the evening news (Houlberg, 1984; Levy, 1979; Palmgreen, Wenner, & Rayburn, 1980; Rubin, Perse, & Powell, 1985). Despite the high percentage of work-related tweets, the local sports broadcasters in this study demonstrated that Twitter can also be a vehicle for creating these pseudo-friendships. Furthermore, a closer examination of the benefits of Twitter reveals that the social network may, in fact, be a better tool than the tradi-

tional evening newscast when it comes to creating parasocial interaction. Instead of only talking to the viewer once or twice a day during the sportscast, sportscasters can use Twitter to speak to the audience several times a day and, in some cases, even provide direct interaction with their followers.

Levy (1979) stated that the news was an ideal venue for parasocial interaction because the newscaster is a daily constant in a loyal viewer's life during the evening newscasts. Twitter can go beyond those few minutes a day that a broadcaster is on television, because Twitter is "always on." A broadcaster can tweet during any time of the day and those tweets will show up in a follower's timeline. This can create even more parasocial interaction because if an important sports story is happening, a viewer can expect the broadcaster to be on Twitter delivering news and opinions about that event. Levy (1979) also found that those who were alone were more likely to develop parasocial interaction with the broadcasters on television and Twitter can provide that companionship as well. Through Twitter, broadcasters can use live-tweeting as a way to create parasocial interaction because viewers can watch the game and know that the sportscaster is, essentially, watching the game with them. As demonstrated in the frequency of their tweets, local sports broadcasters are using Twitter frequently, and these constant updates on scores, opinions, and personal life stories are giving their followers a sense that the broadcaster can be counted on to be a part of their lives on a daily basis.

Levy (1979) also stated how some viewers created their own interactions with the newscasters by responding to "Good evening from NBC News in New York," with

"Good evening, John." On Twitter, this interaction can be more than one-sided as the broadcasters can tweet directly to followers to possibly answer questions or give opinions. Instead of simply communicating directly to the audience through the television, Twitter allows for a two-way communication in which the broadcaster and followers can interact. This creates a scenario in which the viewers can feel a stronger connection to the broadcasters, much like how previous research has demonstrated the parasocial connections created on Twitter between athletes and fans through direct communication (Frederick, Lim, Clavio, & Walsh, 2012; Sanderson, 2011). With the parasocial interaction with a broadcaster cited as a main reason why people watch the news (Levy, 1979), Twitter's ability to create an even greater sense of that connection demonstrates the value of the social network to news stations.

In addition, the results of this study further the research on parasocial interaction by including the differences in tweeting habits of males and females. Based on what is traditionally considered the prerequisites for parasocial interaction (interaction and showing a more relaxed personality), the female broadcasters in the study did a much better job of creating parasocial interaction with their followers. When combining the three categories that sports fans searching for parasocial interaction would most likely be interested in (interaction, displaying fandom, and tweets from their personal lives), the females had a higher percentage of tweets when compared to the men (29.8% to 25%). This demonstrates that the female broadcasters had a better chance of creating a parasocial relationship with their followers. Based on previous findings, this means that the followers of the female sports

broadcasters may display more loyalty to those broadcasters than they might a male. That loyalty has been proven to be effective in purchasing of products endorsed by athletes (Frederick et al., 2012), so it could, in turn, lead to a greater number of people watching the sportscast featuring the female sportscasters. Future research could examine the gender differences in parasocial relationship development among athletes or other celebrities on Twitter to further expand upon this finding. Additional research may examine the racial and ethnicity differences in tweet content and how that impacts parasocial interaction.

Self-Presentation Techniques Used on Twitter

The local sports broadcasters examined in this study demonstrated more front stage personas than backstage personas when using Twitter. This illustrates that broadcasters still actively have two separate presentation techniques, despite the opportunities that Twitter allows them. The broadcasters are not utilizing Twitter as a way to reveal more about their personal life by acting as the average man or woman online. Instead, their interactions with followers online are, in essence, not much different from their interactions with them on television, in that they are simply giving them scores, news, and perhaps answering an occasional question about a local team.

There was a statistically significant difference in self-presentation techniques based on gender, with female sports broadcasters sending more tweets in a backstage persona than the males (25.6% for females to 21.7% for males). The women had a higher percentage of tweets than the males in all three backstage categories. This indicates that, on Twitter, the women were more willing to give

their followers a look at their lives beyond just the latest sports news. Female sportscasters sent tweets that included "The perfect ending to a perfect day. Christmas, shopping, Starbucks, and Panera. A lovely little day trip!" and "My mom literally sent me a homemade cake in a box for my birthday today."

Female sports reporters have historically felt marginalized within the industry (Hardin & Shain, 2005), while also struggling with the perception that they are not as credible as male sports reporters (Baiocchi-Wagner & Behm-Morawitz, 2010). Twitter has given women the opportunity to speak on their own behalf away from the anchor desk and to attempt to eliminate some of the perceptions of the past. Through Twitter, female sports reporters are demonstrating that they are athletic ("No gym in my hometown means morning run outside. With frost on the ground"), they are sports fans ("I was so hyped when the #Colts signed Bradshaw. Maybe the most hyped I've ever been about a pick up by the #Colts. So glad he's killin' it"), and they are knowledgeable about the games ("#Bears defense brings on a LB Blitz"). Female sports broadcasters are using Twitter to self-present as a well-rounded and personally interesting reporter and not simply as "blonde and perky" and "eye candy" as many female sports anchors have been labeled (Doyle, 2013; Pearlman, 2014). Through these backstage tweets, female sports broadcasters are giving their followers a more complete look at their lives, beyond just the few minutes that the broadcaster is on television.

In addition, the females were more willing to communicate with their followers, acting as the engager significantly more frequently than males. By directly answering

viewers' questions, the females are able to both demonstrate their knowledge and develop a rapport with followers that could ultimately gain them credibility. For example, when asked about the results of a boxing match, a female sports broadcaster responded, "#Kovalev is a long puncher. He doesn't fight on the inside, not his style." This nuanced response about boxing demonstrates that the female local sports broadcaster is knowledgeable on the subject of boxing and can be relied on for information regarding that sport. A professional organization such as The Association for Women in Sports Media (AWSM) may wish to provide online training seminars or workshops for their members in order to help female sports broadcasters recognize the potential Twitter has in helping to develop their credibility in the eyes of viewers. Future research may wish to focus solely on female local sports broadcasters to further determine why they use Twitter in the manner that they do and if they find it helpful to their image and their personal brand.

While there are significant differences in how the local sports broadcasters self-presented based on which size market they are in, the differences do not appear to follow any type of explainable pattern. The broadcasters in the biggest markets, DMAs 1-42, were 79.5% front stage in their tweets. From there, the front stage percentages get higher (DMAs 43-84 were 80.1%), then lower (DMAs 85-126 were 72.7%), then higher (DMAs 127-168 were 77.6%), before dropping again at the final grouping (DMAs 169-210 were 75.5%). This demonstrates that while there is a significant difference between market sizes, there is not a distinct pattern to the ratio of front stage and backstage tweets in relation to market size. Had the percentage of

front stage tweets gotten progressively higher or lower as the market sizes got smaller, then one could determine a relationship. Therefore, from these results it appears that the type of self-presentation techniques being used by the local sports broadcasters are not impacted by the market size in which one works. A study spread out over decades may be better suited to determine if a local sports broadcaster's tweeting method changes as they move from smaller markets to bigger ones.

Overall, the content of the tweets during the constructed weeks reveals that Goffman's concept of self-presentation is still valid when it pertains to local sports broadcasters online. The results of this analysis help to advance self-presentation theory in regards to social media. While Twitter has been primarily used by broadcasters to provide news (Boyle & Haynes, 2013; Emmons & Butler, 2013), the service also provides the opportunity to give their followers a look at the broadcasters' off-air life and interests. However, the data collected demonstrates that broadcasters still actively have two separate presentation techniques and focus primarily on presenting as if they were sitting on the anchor desk as opposed to in a more casual environment. Sports broadcasters either are not comfortable with the audience knowing more about them or do not feel Twitter is an appropriate vehicle in which to divulge this information. Therefore, the broadcasters still have a desire to put on a "performance" when on Twitter, as results demonstrate significantly more front stage personas. In this case, their online interactions with people are not different from how they would interact with a viewer in-person or when speaking on television because they are simply giving them scores, news, and perhaps an

occasional interaction.

Self-presentation theory has been studied extensively in regards to face-to-face communication, and based off the results of this study, is still valid in regards to online communication. The broadcasters had two divided presentation methods, and did not have an equal mix of the two. Through training and education, the potential is there for broadcasters to see the benefits for themselves and for the station as a whole. However, until those lessons occur, it is likely that the large divide between front stage and backstage presentation for broadcasters on Twitter will remain.

Limitations

While this study examined 19,649 tweets, it did have a limitation when examining the differences between genders. Even with the oversampling of women, there was still a much greater number of tweets from the male participants than the females. However, the major reason for the lack of minorities available for this study was based on hiring practices of those in management positions at television stations throughout the country. There is a distinct lack of minorities who are local sports broadcasters (Papper, 2008), so there is little that can be done beyond having a study that focuses exclusively on a specific underrepresented race, ethnicity, or gender.

Additionally, it is unknown what the social media policy is at each sports broadcaster's television station. This may be an influence on how the journalists behave online, especially with a Twitter handle that is associated with their jobs. Future researchers may wish to examine the social media policies at various television stations

throughout the United States

Conclusion

The concepts behind self-presentation can also add to the complementary place that Twitter can maintain in regards to the evening news. While broadcasters have to be unbiased and not give opinions on the air, Twitter allows them to show more personality. In this regard, Twitter is a complement, not necessarily to the content of the show, but to the audience's ability to form a connection with the sportscaster.

By demonstrating backstage traits, a broadcaster can show he or she is the fan, the average man or woman, or the employee giving viewers a look behind the scenes of the workday. This provides opportunities to distinguish one broadcaster from the other journalists in the market. Broadcasters should be viewing Twitter as an equal opportunity to deliver sports news and also information about themselves. These backstage tweets and interactions with viewers can create parasocial interaction and, in turn, a more dedicated news viewer. This research demonstrates that broadcasters are not utilizing the backstage aspects of Twitter, perhaps signifying that they do not feel comfortable revealing details about their personal life to people they do not know. Since the broadcasters are primarily using Twitter as a tool for their job, it is perhaps not surprising that the majority of their tweets are from a front stage persona.

Finally, the measuring stick for success on Twitter should be in the connections the journalists can develop online with other users and not by the number of followers they can recruit. Broadcasters should aim to create bonds

with viewers that motivate those Twitter followers to be-come news viewers. That can be done through news up-dates, interactions, interesting promotional tweets, or glimpses into the broadcaster's off-air life. Having more followers does not equate to more influence, as previous research has determined that it is the content of the tweet, not the sender of that message, which leads to more re-tweets, more exposure, and a more loyal following (Cha, Haddadi, Benevenuto, & Gummadi, 2010). This demon-strates that having a large number of followers is not enough. Broadcasters on Twitter have to give their follow-ers a reason to become motivated to tune into the news on television as well. People are likely not going to tune into the evening news simply because they follow the sports-caster on Twitter. Instead, they are more likely to tune in because that sportscaster gave them a reason to watch through an interesting or entertaining tweet that piqued the interest of the follower. With millions of users on Twit-ter, and many of them sports fans, the opportunity is there for broadcasters to develop a connection with viewers on a different platform from the traditional evening news. Due to the opportunities provided by the social network, it is apparent that Twitter should be used as a complementary piece by local sports broadcasters in which they use both front stage and backstage tweets to promote their evening sportscast and inform and engage their followers.

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