THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHREYER HONORS COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF ADVERTISING/ PUBLIC RELATIONS

BEST PRACTICES IN SOCIAL MEDIA USE AND INTERACTIVITY BY AUTOMOTIVE COMPANIES

CHEYENNE SEXTON
SPRING 2014

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements
for a baccalaureate degree
in Advertising/ Public Relations
with honors in Advertising/ Public Relations

Reviewed and approved* by the following:

Denise Bortree
Associate Professor of Advertising/ Public Relations
Thesis Supervisor

Susan Strohm
Senior Lecturer in Advertising/ Public Relations
Honors Adviser

* Signatures are on file in the Schreyer Honors College
ABSTRACT

Historically, automotive companies have been labeled as “lagging” in terms of acceptance to social media. Despite the multiple studies performed defining the benefits of social media for all aspects of an organization, some are still not aware of how to use it effectively to achieve positive results. Facebook, being the largest social networking website, is a playing ground for brands to flourish, allowing content creation to spark customer-brand interaction. This study examined the top six largest automotive companies use of Facebook to determine what was being posted, how much users were interacting with the content and if certain attributes would cause an automotive company to perform better. Since communication occurs with interaction in mind, it was vital to see if the automotive companies communication efforts were resulting in high interactivity rates.

A content analysis of 400 posts from the six automotive companies found that most automotive companies on Facebook are not using the post types that garner the highest percentages of likes, comments and shares, but are using the post focuses that do. This study found that only three characteristics are positive and negative indicators to the percentage of interactivity. There was no statistical significance found between the automotive companies that received a greater percentage of likes, comments and shares to Facebook posts and their percent of growth of “Likes” to the overall Facebook Fan page throughout the time span of this study.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES, TABLES, APPENDICES ................................................................. iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ......................................................................................... iv
INTRODUCTION ................................................................................................. 1

LITERATURE REVIEW ....................................................................................... 1
  SOCIAL MEDIA ................................................................................................. 2
  INTERACTIVITY ............................................................................................. 4
  FACEBOOK (SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES) ....................................................... 7
  POST TYPES .................................................................................................. 10
  POST CHARACTERISTICS ............................................................................. 18
  AUTOMOTIVE COMPANIES USE OF FACEBOOK .......................................... 23

RESEARCH QUESTIONS .................................................................................... 27

METHODS ........................................................................................................ 29
  CREATING THE CODESHEET ..................................................................... 30
    GENERAL KNOWLEDGE .......................................................................... 30
    POST TYPES ............................................................................................ 30
    POST CHARACTERISTICS ...................................................................... 32
    INTERACTIVITY ....................................................................................... 33
  RELIABILITY ................................................................................................. 34

RESULTS ........................................................................................................... 35

DISCUSSION ...................................................................................................... 46

RECOMMENDATIONS ....................................................................................... 53

CONCLUSION .................................................................................................... 57

APPENDIX A ..................................................................................................... 58
BIBLIOGRAPHY ................................................................................................. 68
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1-1. Promotions on Facebook.................................................................15
Figure 1-2. Facebook Photos Infographic..........................................................19
Figure 1-3. Word Count Statistics......................................................................21
Figure 1-4. Facebook Resources used by Automotive Buyers............................25
Figure 1-5. Automotive Company Facebook Post Types......................................35
Figure 1-6. Automotive Company Facebook Post Focus.....................................36
Figure 1-7. Automotive Company Facebook Post Characteristics......................37

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2-1. Most Used Post Type and Post Focus..................................................36
Table 2-2. ANOVA for Percentage of Likes based on Post Type..........................38
Table 2-3. ANOVA for Percentage of Comments based on Post Type..................38
Table 2-4. ANOVA for Percentage of Shares based on Post Type........................39
Table 2-5. ANOVA for Percentage of Likes based on Post Focus.......................40
Table 2-6. ANOVA for Percentage of Shares based on Post Focus.......................40
Table 2-7. Regression for Percentage of Likes and Post Characteristics...............41
Table 2-8. Regression for Percentage of Comments and Post Characteristics.........42
Table 2-9. Regression for Percentage of Shares and Post Characteristics.............42
Table 2-10. Growth of Automotive Company Facebook Fan page “Likes”.............45

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A. Automotive Facebook Posts Codesheet........................................58
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Most people who know me, know that I am extremely determined to produce the best work possible. Those people who stuck by my side during the thesis process know that I could not have completed this without them. Now, those people who really know me know I love the spotlight. Therefore, I’m treating this section like my acceptance speech and I’m not getting off the stage until the music kicks me off.

First, I must thank Denise Bortree, a wonderful professor, EcoCAR 2 supervisor and thesis supervisor. She challenged me to work even harder and has been such an inspiration to me. I also must thank Susan Strohm for her guidance along my honors career here at Penn State. The Penn State library and databases are also to thank, along with the librarians that I spoke with on via online chat, for ensuring I received all the research articles I needed.

To my parents, Ed and Candee Sexton, I thank you both for pushing me to achieve all that I can truly be. To my sisters, Savanna and Baylee Sexton, thank you for believing in me every step of the way. I also cannot forget to thank Penn State graduate, Samuel Foran, for his endless hours of technical and moral support.

Lastly, I must thank Taylor Kidd for knowing how to critique my writing, EcoCAR 2 for my passion in social media and the automotive industry, Starbucks for their Chai Lattes, Pandora for getting me through the long hours and Snapchat, for providing me with some connection to the outside world.
INTRODUCTION

According to the work of Rafaei & Sudweeks (2006), communication efforts are mostly performed for the purpose of interaction. In today’s society, communication occurs through computer-mediated sources, like social media, rather than solely face-to-face. With more than 15 million brands on Facebook (Koetsier, 2013), it is important to connect the everyday user to the brands on Facebook to examine how and why interactions occur. The automotive industry, bringing in more than 910 billion dollars in 2012 (w3gk.com, 2012), is an industry that could capitalize on the opportunities provided by social media, especially Facebook. Holding the title of the largest social networking website, Facebook allows users to generate content, engage in conversations and build relationships. Historically it has been stated that the automotive industry has “lagged” behind in embracing the social world. After examining the automotive purchase cycle: interact, consider, evaluate, purchase (dealer.com, 2012), Facebook can allow these brands to engage in this cycle with ease. Along with increasing sales, social media can help restore a positive reputation to an automotive company struggling with image by allowing it to project its message and continuously interact with customers. Overall, automotive companies and their customers both benefit from targeted, consistent use of social media.

To understand the effect of social media on the automotive industry, it is important to examine its social media efforts, especially on Facebook. To get the most interaction with their fan base, automotive companies must use effective social media techniques. This study will determine how effectively the automotive industry uses social media – in particular Facebook – to communicate with its audience and build a loyal following.
LITERATURE REVIEW

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is the top activity on the Internet. The average American spends 37 minutes daily on social media outlets (Adler, 2014). Although most Americans could identify what social media is, it is difficult to fully define the term. According to Solis and Breakenridge (2009), social media can be defined as “anything that uses the Internet to facilitate conversations” (p.17). Social media outlets allow users to participate in a large range of platforms including: social networking sites, like Facebook, LinkedIn, Myspace; microblogging sites, like Twitter, Tumblr; social news sites, like Reddit, Digg; photosharing, like Flickr, Instagram; videosharing, like YouTube, Vimeo. Smith (2010) states, “social media sites are virtual platforms for interactivity and information exchange” (p.330).

Since social media is available to all individuals with access to the Internet, social media outlets are one of the largest playgrounds for user-generated content. It has “profoundly changed our lives and how we interact with one another and the world around us (Qualman, 2009; Safko & Brake, 2009)” (He, Zha, & Li, 2013, p. 464). The platforms encourage a free flow of communication between individual, place, group, organization, etc. This flow allows two-way communication, or reciprocal communication, which has demonstrated importance for both businesses and customers. (Muralidharan, Rasmussen, Patterson, & Shin, 2011).
According to J.E. Grunig & L.A. Grunig, 1992; J.E. Grunig & Hunt (1984), organizations anticipate responses from users. “Reciprocal communication enhances the dialogues and exchangeable views between the message sender (the organization) and message recipient (public)” (Jo & Kim, 2003, p. 202).

Recognizing the growing activity on social media, organizations created a presence on the same outlets.

“Many large companies are adopting social media to accommodate this growing trend in order to gain business values such as driving customer traffic, increasing customer loyalty and retention, increasing sales and revenues, improving customer satisfaction, creating brand awareness and building reputation (Culnan, McHugh, & Zubillaga, 2010; He, Zha, & Li, 2013; Kietzmann, Hermkens, McCarthy, & Silvestre, 2011; Sinderen & Almeida, 2011; Weber, 2009 )” (He, Zha, & Li, 2013, p.464).

These outlets – available to organizations and general users – can facilitate the growth of relationships by participating in open dialogue, both internally and externally (DiStaso & Bortree, 2012). After all, companies have a goal to find and appeal to customers, with the intention of making a sale. Since social media is easily accessible to both parties, frequent interactions can occur causing a relationship to build between the brand and the social media user.
To continue a relationship with the customer and promote brand loyalty, organizations can create brand fan pages where real-world fans become online fans (Vries, Gensley, & Leeflang, 2012). In 2011, more than 50% of social media users followed brands on social media (Bellegem, Eenhuizen, & Veris, 2011). Most consumers believe that information regarding products and services posted on social media is more trustworthy than “corporate-sponsored” communication (Mangold & Faulds, 2009). Since customers view social media as a trustworthy source, it is valuable for organizations to use it. It allows organizations to deliver messages directly to consumers in a way they will believe, unlike traditional communication techniques.

At the same time, companies must be aware of their presence and appearance on social media. With gateways available online for customers to “vent,” content can be posted that can translate to poor customer satisfaction, poor loyalty, etc., which is the opposite of what companies set out to accomplish. To ensure an organizations’ social media presence does not become counterproductive, it must encourage its customers to interact with the content positively and quickly acknowledge negative posts.

**INTERACTIVITY**

In addition to managing customers’ social media content, another important aspect of developing relationships online with stakeholders is interactivity. According to Liu and Shrum (2002), “interactivity is the degree to which two or more communication parties can act on each other, on the communication medium, and on the messages and the degree to which such influences are synchronized” (p. 54-56). Jo and Kim (2003) found that interactivity was essential if organizations wanted to develop relationships with their
audience or “stakeholders.” Rafaeli and Sudweeks (1997) found that a key part of attracting networks and producing growth patterns was interactivity. On social media, this means number of “Likes” a brand page has correlates to its popularity. While this is one aspect of interactivity, Steuer (1992) defined it as “the extent to which users can participate in the message content in a computer-mediated environment in real-time” (p.84). Steuer’s definition shows that interactivity can be viewed as how much the users are interacting with a specific post.

Interactivity is also “characterized by two-way communication between companies and customers, as well as between customers themselves; put differently, it characterizes many-to-many communication (Goldfarb & Tucker, 2011; Hoffman & Novak, 1996)” (Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012, p.85). Patton (2007) defines many-to-many communication (interactivity) as—

“Many-to-many interactivity is a form of structural communication created between the interaction of user-generated information and the automatic hypertext linking of that information by the Facebook interface. Unlike one-to-one and one-to-many interactivity where the communication is bounded to another individual and or a group, many-to-many interactivity takes place between the user and the entire network” (p. 9).

Patton (2007) further states, “many to many interactivity requires the lowest level of maintenance and investment on behalf of the primary user, but is a gateway to fostering
one-to-one and one-to-many interactivity by sharing similarities with the audience” (p.9).

An organization’s Facebook Fan page can be defined as many-to-many interactivity because the large network is run by a minimum number of people and aims to reach a large population. Many links and other sources are “shared” from the pages to link the customers to more related issues or brands.

Computer-mediated communication allows for high interactivity (Saffer, Sommerfeldt, & Taylor, 2013). Through social media outlets, organizations attempt to engage in high interactivity. By projecting a highly-crafted message to customers and potential customers, companies increase the potential for more interactivity. Rafaeli and Sudweeks (2006) also presented three important statements—

- “One postulated outcome interactivity is engagement.” (“Interactivity”)
- “Interactivity is the condition of communication in which simultaneous and continuous exchanges occur, and these exchanges carry a social, binding force.” (“Interactivity”)
- “Not all networked content is interactive. Messages, threads and groups can be more or less interactive.” (“Discussion”)

In relation to social media, this means users can engage in a company’s posts on its Facebook Fan page by “liking, commenting or sharing” the content. Social media users – from general users to companies alike – show higher levels of interactivity when they
respond to the post content directly. Based on the quality and content of a message, or post, interactivity levels can vary.

Other research conducted by Saffer, Sommerfeldt, & Taylor (2013) hypothesized—

Higher levels of interactivity on the part of a message sender (organization) may lead to a better quality relationship with a message recipient (public) (p. 2).

This means higher levels of interactivity would lead to a better relationship between the company and customer, which could be measured by the number of “Likes” on the Facebook Fan page.

**FACEBOOK (SOCIAL NETWORKING SITES)**

According to leveragenewagemedia.com, Facebook users around the world share 2.5 billion pieces of content each day. This content originates from the 1.23 billion monthly active users on Facebook and 757 million daily active users (Facebook.com/Info, 2013; Facebook Newsroom, 2013). That means1 in every 13 people on Earth is using Facebook (Bullas, 2013). “Launched in 2004, within five years, it had become one of the most popular social networking sites (SNS) in the United States and around the globe” (Chang & Heo, 2014, p.79).

“In traditional social network theory, a social network is defined as a set of social entities that includes people and organizations that are connected by a set of socially meaningful relationships and who interact with each other in sharing the value (Garton,
Haythornthwaite, & Wellman, 1997; Kempe, Kleinberg, & Tardos, 2003; Kwon & Wen, 2010; O’Murchu et al., 2004)” (Kwon & Wen, 2010, p. 255). Therefore, the foundation of social networking sites is relationships (Waters, Burnett, Lamm, & Lucas, 2009). Just like most social media sites, Facebook lets users and companies create a mutually beneficial relationship, connection or ongoing conversation. Similarly, Tredinnick (2006) stated that user-participation and user-generated content is what defines social media. Ultimately, social networking sites can be an effective way to communicate with audience groups, as long as organizations know how to appropriately use them (Waters, Burnett, Lamm, & Lucas, 2009).

Although it’s not always easy to know how to harness the power of a social media site, it is to a company’s advantage to try. Hungenberg, Denker, & Mauch (2008) said social media sites are better equipped to reach a greater number of consumers in comparison to other social media platforms, such as microblogging sites, video sharing sites, etc.

Because companies’ fan pages are on the social media site Facebook, they holder greater influence over the customers and have more potential to be viewed. Brand fan pages reflect part of a customer’s relationship with the brand (McAlexander, Schouten, & Koenig, 2002), broaden the brand-customer relationship (Muñiz and O’Guinn, 2001) and provide a source of information and social benefits to the members (Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002; Dholaki, Bagozzi, & Pearo 2004)” (Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012, p. 84). Furthermore, “a positive customer experience can encourage consumers to become an active brand advocate, increase brand loyalty and referrals and ultimately boost their
revenues profits (Sashi, 2011; Shen, Huang, Chu & Liao, 2010)” (He, Zha, & Li, 2013, p. 469). If customers favor the page, they can actually “Like” the Facebook Fan page by clicking on a “thumbs up” symbol. As defined by Facebook (2014), a “like” is a connection made. A story about the like will appear on the timeline and may also appear on the newsfeed. A user may also be displayed on the Page recently connected to (Facebook.com, 2014). Consumers who “Like” the page then become a “Fan.” Fans tend to be loyal to the organization, and open to viewing and receiving more facets of information than non-fan (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; Vries, Gensler, & Leeflang, 2012).

With many features on Facebook, users can also “post, comment, share, tag and reply.” Not to be confused with the first mention of “Like” on a brand Fan page, users can also like an individual post. Definitions are detailed below:

- Posts: “Publicly broadcast messages that appear not only on the recipient's profile page “wall” but are also inserted into the News Feed” (Patterson, 2012, p. 2).
- Comment: The option for this is enabled on every post on Facebook, from a picture to a status update. It allows for the users to participate in the conversation or add input.
- Share: By selecting this option on a Facebook post, it allows for users’ connections to see the status update, photo, video, etc. on their timeline.
- Tag: This feature allows users to include other Facebook users, brand pages, places, etc. in the status update, photo or video text description. When a user is “tagged” it creates a connection and allows other users to go directly to the page by clicking the name highlighted in blue.
- **Reply:** Users can select this option to respond to a comment that has been posted. This is seen mostly on Facebook Fan pages, where other users or said company can reply to the original commenter or to others in the feed.

- **Like:** This option is located on two different places of a Facebook profile. If a user is a fan or interested in a brand page, place, etc. they can “Like” the overall page. In relation to an individual post, users can “like” the post, which will then form a connection with the company, as the user’s name will appear beside the “like” button and appear on their followers’ timelines.

Facebook users are also able to customize their profiles, timelines, applications and statuses by creating content from text, videos, pictures, links and more.

Due to all these operations available to Facebook users, “engagement levels on Facebook are much higher than the engagement level on Twitter” (He, Zha, & Li, 2013, p. 469). This shows social media users prefer Facebook’s many options (tag, comment, share, etc.) to the fewer on Twitter (retweet, favorite, quote tweet).

**POST TYPES**

Just as most social media sites, Facebook offers an analytic tool, “Facebook Insights” which allows Facebook pages to evaluate post efforts. This tool has four categories of post types; video, photo, status, and link, and each post is analyzed within one. Though this information is helpful to an organization examining their Facebook Fan pages, it does not provide a more in-depth look to the content. Ultimately, users are going to read the content justifying that an analysis of the messages is needed.
According to Rafaeli and Sudweeks (1994), website postings or messages can be put into nine categories (minimum); a question or request, call for action, announcement, fact, opinion, apology, challenge/dare, attempts at humor and metacommunications. The categories analyzed in this study are question, call for action, announcement and fact. The codebook used by Rafaeli and Sudweeks to conduct their study stems from Rafaeli, Sudweeks, Konstan, and Mabry (1994) *ProjectH: A quantitative study of computer-mediated communication*. Unfortunately, this report is hard to locate, as the links have been removed from the database. Attempts were also made to retrieve the study from the Universities and authors listed to have been part of the study, but failed due to the age of the study. Regardless, this study has been cited by 18 other sources that have used part of the ProjectH codebook, showing the variables have been used multiple times. Wimer and Katzman (2006) states, “ProjectH members purposely created a codebook as broad as possible to accommodate a diverse range of research questions and hypotheses” ("Methodology"). It can be assumed that the variables question, call for action, announcement and fact are almost self-explanatory. *Computer Networking and Scholarly Communication in the Twenty-First-Century University* has analyzed the ProjectH study, and although it does not explain the methodology in detail, it briefly discusses the aims of the study. Two of the aims were “to analyze the content of messages contained in the sample” and “to focus on the single message, authors, aggregate thread, and the lists as units of analysis” (p. 120). The book also discusses the most distinguished features found in the study, being “medium length messages, factual, contain no questions or requests or emoticons, and address another person(s)” (p.130).
In addition to Rafaeli & Sudweeks’ (1994) categories the post type lifestyle and no text are present as Facebook post types. Literature defining and elaborating on the post type lifestyle is little to non-existent, making it unique to this study. Research shows that lifestyle connects to an individual emotional appeal. By creating content that presents lifestyle statements that can be experienced by the user in daily life, helps bond an emotional feeling and lifestyle to the particular organization. Mazur (2005) speaks of appealing to the customers’ needs, “whether a customer looks good to someone whose opinion he/ she values and whether the customer feels good about him/herself” (p.1), which ultimately describe boosting the customers’ esteem. “To design products that will help customers achieve this [esteem] is the goal of lifestyle deployment” (Mazur, 2005, p.1). Lifestyle content is set to show the customer that a particular organization can help achieve the ultimate lifestyle. To form a connection with the automotive industry and views of lifestyles, Mr. Kenichi Yamamoto, past chairman from Mazda Motors promoted making a vehicle in which “ride and interior feel meet the needs and kansei or self-image of the person riding in it” (Mazur, 2005, p.2). Projecting messages on social media sites, specifically Facebook, by automotive companies can help bring in a higher potential customer flow and put the company in the forefront of the customer’s minds. Life statement content can also present high impact appeals that “stimulate strong positive emotions” from the viewing audience (Moore and Harris, 1996, p.2). Again, this content plays at the customers’ emotion appeal and connects it to a particular lifestyle.

The Facebook post type, no text, can be easily defined from the two words alone. These would include posts that just include a photo or video. There is no content that was
written by the organization on the post. Infographics and studies, from fastcompany.com, for example, state, “Writing shorter posts isn’t just handy on Twitter. Keeping your posts below 250 words can get you 60% more engagement than you might otherwise see. You can even get up to 66% more engagement if you cut it down to less than 80 characters.” Other studies state that most individuals can comprehend information better when presented as a visual image, and Facebook posts with a photo, receive 120% more engagement levels compared to a normal status post (nimble.com, 2013). Combining the statistics surrounding post length and visual images, organizations may take the quick approach by leaving out the words completely and presenting a single image to the audience.

**POST FOCUS**
Within a post type, there is also a primary focus of that type. The primary focus helps to steer the viewer’s thoughts into a certain mind set and produce a clear message or outcome.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is one of those focuses, and comes with a varied scale of definitions and meanings. Green and Peloza (2011) believe that the exact definition of CSR is still lacking, despite its prominence in hundreds of studies performed. Among those, the most cited definition is the one proposed by Caroll (1979, p. 500), which presents CSR as a construct that “encompasses the economic, legal, ethical, and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time.” In this definition, Carroll claims that CSR and the responsibilities encompassed in it are for the society overall, not just within the individual firm. These responsibilities fall
into four principle categories; economic, legal, ethical and philanthropic (Carroll, 1979). For companies and social media, messages that are the most interesting to a large audience should be the ones projected to catch the attention. The principle type of responsibility most seen on social media from companies would be that of philanthropic focus. Furthermore, Arikan & Güner (2013); Hong, Yang & Rim (2010); Du, Bhattacharya & Sen (2007) suggest that the likelihood of a customer to engage in communication (loyalty) with the organization largely stems from the companys’ corporate social responsibility efforts. Additionally, if companies are attentive to the community/audiences needs and focused on social responsibility, customers are more likely to value the company. (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004; Hong, Yang & Rim, 2010).

The entertainment factor on social networking sites is also a key factor for effectively creating content (Vries, Genseler, Leeflang, 2012). According to Waters, Amarkhil, Bruun & Mathisen (2012)—

“A growing body of research indicates that entertainment-based informational messages can be an effective way to deliver messages. Some have speculated that entertainment strategies may be more effective at influencing attitudes and behaviors than emotional or factual messages strategies reflected by traditional one-way public relations models” (p.65).

Generally, when contests or sweepstakes are posted through a company to an online source, the act of the contest is the primary focus of said message. “Contests can be a great way to engage your online community, as well as, get them to spread your message
to their friends” (http://www.1stwebdesigner.com/inspiration/online-contests-user-engagement/). Contests and sweepstakes are also a means of engaging a company’s online community. It is important for an organization to make note of what it wants to accomplish from a contest, or something of this nature, or if an award is needed to encourage activity (Taft, 1stwebdesigner.com, 2013). A strong focus can be placed on making sure the contest is fun and simple to obtain the maximum exposure and engagement. Socialmediaexaminer.com states that, “whether you have 100 or 100,000 fans on your Facebook page, running a sweepstakes is an easy way to increase the number of Likes on your page. This expands the audience for your Facebook communications and builds a fan base for future promotions” (Figure 1-1). Although contests and sweepstakes messages are a strong method of interacting with the audience, socialmediaexaminer.com also explains the other side of the argument stating that, “just because anyone can run a promotion, doesn’t mean that everyone should, and it certainly doesn’t mean that a promotion guarantees social media success.”
Presenting messages, pictures, etc. from dedicated fans on online messages can be a strong factor to gain greater engagement. At first, a company must get their customers to want to be a part of the brand and then possible brand advocates will follow. Habibi, Laroche & Richard (2014) state—

“Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1985) explains partly why consumers would join a given brand community: they establish a social identity as part of their self-concept by classifying themselves into specific social groups such as brand communities, allowing brands to fulfill their needs to identify with symbols and groups (Grayson & Martinec, 2004)” (p.124).

When positioning an online message, most companies solely focus on fans within a post, or not at all. Habibi, Laroche & Richard (2014) state—

“Creation and sharing of meaning are the most important aspects of brand community (McAlexander et al., 2002) and creation and sharing of content are the most important aspects of social media (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Thus, the intersection of the two would be an ideal environment for creating, negotiating, and sharing of contents, meaning, and values for like-minded consumers; i.e., brand enthusiasts” (p. 125).

First, companies must create brand communities from customers, who turn into brand advocates and brand enthusiasts who share the company and message content. To actively bring back these communities, showing images, content, etc. from the customers themselves on the company’s online platforms can create an even stronger bond.
Aside from creating brand communities with the customers online (fans), showing employees’ work, accomplishments, etc. can project a well-rounded image and message from a company. Along with doing this, it also makes employees feel as though they are a valued part of the company. Presenting employee devotion has been a main area of focus for multiple companies online. Eren & Vardarlier (2013) state—

“To create a sense of belonging, the organizations must show that they care about their employees by understanding their needs of communication and success. This says that the employee has a commitment to the company’s objectives and values, and this commitment is derived from the strong belief the employee holds for the organization values, loyalty and interest in the job done (Sökmen, 2009)” (p. 855).

Companies that cater posts to focus on employees also lead fans to want to be a part of a company that values the work for all employees. Socialmediaexaminer.com states that “your company is only as good as your hardworking employees—so don’t be afraid to highlight them.”

Another way companies can gain strong brand communities that continue into the future is by catering online message content that primarily focuses on the company. Transparency is of high importance to companies and customers and messages that are all about the company help to show this to the viewers. These messages also help build a brand, improve customer experience and boost brand communities, with the overall goal
of creating loyal brand advocates (Laroche, Habibi & Richard, 2012, p. 80). By creating messages that revolve around an organizations rituals and tradition, users within the community can connect and transfer that knowledge to members outside of the community, building the community. “These manifest themselves in a celebration of brand history, sharing interesting brand related stories and using specific jargon within the community (Casaló et al., 2008; Casaló et al., 2010)” (Habibi, Laroche & Richard, 2014, p. 80). Company posts containing content about their achievements are beneficial to a point and should not cross the line to bragging.

**POST CHARACTERISTICS**

Oxford dictionaries (2014) defines characteristics as, “a feature or quality belonging typically to a person, place, or thing and serving to identify them.” Characteristics within a Facebook post are those that set it apart from others. Ultimately, some characteristics will be more appealing to the viewer.

According to Vries, Gensler, and Leeflang (2012)—

> “One way of enhancing the salience of brand posts is to include vivid brand post characteristics. Vividness reflects the richness of a brands post’s formal features; in other words, it is the extent to which a brands’ post stimulates the different senses (Steuer, 1992)” (p. 84).

An example of this would be both video and pictures. Both are characteristics that would stimulate the viewers, as well as set it out from the rest, when compared to another post. Additionally, visuals allow for users to comprehend information faster and better. (S.Kim, D. Kim, & Wise, 2014).
“If Facebook is an economy, pictures are hard currency. Pictures by far get the most likes and shares on Facebook, and in return drive the most exposure for your page and your brand” (Strategypartners.com, 2013). Steeves (2013) added to that by stating that photos added to a Facebook post will enable the post to receive 53% more likes, and the bigger the photo, the more likely it will be seen. In terms of engagement, Facebook Posts with a photo, receive 120% more engagement levels compared to a normal status post (nimble.com, 2013). Since on average 350 million photos and 240 billion Facebook posts are uploaded daily (Figure 1-2), organizations must be strategic with Facebook posts, ensuring all characteristics are used effectively to receive the most exposure, compared to other Facebook pages (allfacebook.com, 2013). Facebook also allows users to upload photos in a larger capacity by creating a photo album. “A Facebook post that includes a photo albums generates 180% more engagement than the average post and allow users to post multiple pieces of content at once without annoying users with multiple posts giving each post the ability to be engaging/interesting to more users at once” (nimble.com, 2013). A photo album post also allows users to add text to the description of the album, so text can be included in the body of the post and the album.

Figure 1-2. Facebook Photos Infographic (http://www.nimble.com/blog/ posting-and-analyzing-on-facebook/)
Similar to pictures, videos are a highly effective choice when choosing what to post online. “In March 2013, 85% of US Internet users viewed online videos” (videobrewery.com, 2014). Videos uploaded to Facebook posts can generate 100% more engagement (nimble.com, 2013). Digitalsherpa.com states that “not only is video content a great way to communicate your product, service, company and culture, it’s also a proven marketing method for increasing page rank, click-through rates and social sentiment.” Posting videos on social media seems to be a way to stand out in the million-odd numbers of content being projected each day.

The number of words within a message or post can also be categorized as a characteristic. According to socialmediatoday.com and jeffbullas.com, posts with 80 characters or less receive 66% higher engagement (Figure 1-3). Very concise posts, between one and 40 characters, generate highest engagement. “Only 5% of all retail brands (Facebook) wall posts are less than 40 characters in length, even though these receive 86% higher fan engagement” (Barnett, 2011, sect. 2). Nimble.com added to the word count characteristic by noting that “posts between 100 and 250 characters (less than 3 lines of text) see about 60% more likes, comments and shares than posts greater than 250 characters.” It can be assumed that Facebook does not follow the guidelines of message boards, blogs or forums where a larger number of words is accepted and appreciated.
Along with the many features that users have access to on Facebook, in 2011, users were able to edit comments. Not much research exploring the use of the “editing” capability for Facebook companies, or let alone users, has been conducted. With the ability to correct mistakes before they reach a large audience, companies are able to control more of their appearance and brand on social media. After all, a company’s integrity and reputation is of upmost importance, especially online where a simple word or statement can be twisted to negatively impact a company. If a company edits a post, users are able to see that it was edited, but not why or how. This characteristic helps set it apart from other posts on the company’s profile.

A hashtag (#) is a characteristic of a post that can be examined and makes it separate from other posts on the page. According to dictionary.com, a hashtag is defined as “a word or phrase preceded by a hash mark (#), used within a message to identify a keyword or topic of interest and facilitate a search for it.” Started by Stowe Boyd in 2007, who
was the first blogger to officially name it the “hash tag,” and soon adopted by Twitter in 2009, hashtags became a way to connect similar topics for users to talk about, connect and explore (about.com, 2014). Facebook did not accept the notion of hashtags until about 2013. Hashtags on Facebook are not used similar to Twitter, even today, since Twitter warrants users to search for information and Facebook enables users to view information by scrolling through the news feed (unbounce.com, 2013). Companies on Facebook have begun to use hashtags similar to Twitter, as a means of promoting a specific campaign. Since a strong adoption of the hashtag hasn’t taken place on Facebook, users who want to increase the viral reach of a post may not receive the outcome that they were predicting, if in comparison to Twitter rates. Facebook also allows users to tag other users, fan pages, places, events, etc. A tag can be defined on Facebook as a link to another profile, page or place. The feature allows for users to “tag” other things they are connected to on Facebook. This can be done in status updates and other posts from the publisher. Research studying whether there is an impact of this characteristic on companies and users alike is little to non-existent currently.

Similar to the hashtag, links also allow users to participate and communicate with other, whether originating from the overall brand or completely separate accounts. According to Bullas (2013), approximately 1,000,000 links are posted and shared through Facebook every 20 minutes. Along with that, users are creating 90 pieces of content each month that can be shared within their network, that then moves on to a wider network, then an even wider, and so forth. Specifically on Facebook, the social networking site allows users to share links themselves, share others or have a post be solely a link. Links can be
company specific and take a user to an external site owned by the company or another company specific, which take a user to an external site not operated by said company. Socialbackers.com (2013) states that links that are branded (to that organization) are more appealing to users. In an article by Huffington Post (2013), it states “part of being an authentic (marketer) is being able to put the needs of your community first. This means offering valuable content and information, regardless of where it originates from” (“10 Traits Shared by Successful Social Media Entrepreneurs”).

Emphasizing a company or product by a company for users to view can evoke a sense of pride, loyalty, devotion and passion within a viewer, which are key traits of a returning user or customer to the company. As stated by Huffington Post (2013), “true passion is contagious, especially when expressed on social media.” This enthusiasm encourages, spreads to a larger audience, inspires and begins to strengthen a following. In the words of author Simon Sinek, “People don’t buy what you do, they buy why you do it” (“10 Traits Shared by Successful Social Media Entrepreneurs,” 2013). Instilling the core values and roots of a company or organization to the public can be a driving force that brings in interest. Company dates, breakthroughs, monumental moments, awards, etc. show the lasting success of a company, in which people will want to latch on to. History is a key characteristic that helps establish a brand, and according to Fast Company magazine, “the brand is a promise of the value you’ll receive” (smallbusiness.chron.com, 2013).

**AUTOMOTIVE COMPANIES USE OF FACEBOOK**

Studies that focus primarily on the automotive industry’s use of Facebook are slim. Lobschat, Zinnhauer, Pallas & Joachmsthaler’s (2013) study observed the social currency
of a brand through insights from the automotive industry, attesting to be one of few studies to gather data from the industry. They found that “automobiles, as high-involvement producers, offer a continuous platform for customers to engage in promoting a brand or to inform themselves about a respective brand” (p. 16). Topics of brand loyalty, brand communities and brand performance were focal points in the study.

A team from www.dealer.com also dove into “Social Media and the New Automotive Purchase Cycle.” They found four critical points that automotive brands on social media need to consider:

“The purchase process for consumers now includes social media, the use social media to help buyers become loyalists; in a world with social media, the new critical moment is the moment after purchase; when consumers are “bonding with” their new vehicle and highly likely to tout their purchase experience or their new vehicle on social media channels; the need to deliver a consistent online and offline experience.” (p. 5-6)

The statistics from the study provide even more verification that automotive companies need to be represented on Facebook.

“84% of U.S. vehicle shoppers use Facebook. 27% of them have used or will use Facebook as a resource while shopping for their new vehicle. 38% of new vehicle buyers will use social media to research their new vehicle purchase. One out of every four buyers is using social media to communicate the purchase experience...among those who used social
media in the new vehicle process, 58% of purchases posted a comment or status update on Facebook about their new vehicle and 24% “Liked” the brand. Of those who used social media while shopping, 41% said they saw a post that caused them to add a brand or model to their consideration. Similarly, 72% said they were very likely to commend the brand they were loyal to” (“Social Media and the News Automotive Purchase Cycle,” 2012, p. 4-5) (Figure 1-4).

The numbers show that a lot of interaction and communication occurs between customer and customer on social media, with a strong focus on Facebook. It seems that a majority of online conversations occur on this outlet, as it is the most effective outlet for product communication to occur (www.SproutSocial.com).

![Facebook Resources Used or Will Use](http://www.dealer.com/assets/APC-Study-21.pdf)

**Figure 1-4. Facebook Resources used by Automotive Buyers**

The negatives come with social media use, just as much as the positives. Consumers take to Facebook to share their experiences during the purchasing process and the aftermath.
The high percentage of those who take to Facebook to get recommendations on brands and vehicles shows that one negative post could turn a consumer away.

Facebook markets itself as a resource for consumers in the car buying process. Currently, and in the near future, Facebook is said to be used by consumers as/ to gain; “advice from friends/ family on brands/ models, automotive manufacture(s) Facebook page, Automotive dealership(s) Facebook page, consumer reviews or blog postings and advice from friends/ family on dealerships” (“Social Media and the News Automotive Purchase Cycle, 2012, p. 29).

The research above offers reasons why the automotive companies should take to social media, and specifically, Facebook. With its involvement in the car-buying process, automotive brands need to lend a helping, guiding hand in the process. This in turn can lead to what the automotive brands seek, profits. It is not realistic for automotive brands to be ignorant of social media’s high potential. With a user-generated focus, social networking sites, such as Facebook, are the ideal platform for engagement, interaction and sales leads for consumers and automotive brands alike. Utilizing the features of the social networking sites to obtain the maximum reach and successful experience unto consumers must be a focus for the automotive industry. This study will look at how automotive companies on Facebook are currently using social media and how they can achieve the highest interactivity to the posts.
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research questions were devised during the research process that would help address the specific categories created to ensure a successful study.

RQ1: What post types are used the most by automotive companies on their Facebook Fan page?

Facebook insights provides an opportunity for every brand page on Facebook to see what post types they are using for their Facebook posts. However, these do not go into detail on the specific type or focus of the individual post. Also, other companies or users cannot view these insights. It is important to conduct research on this question to find out what post types automotive companies are primarily posting on their Facebook Fan page.

RQ2: What are the post characteristics that automotive companies use the most on their Facebook Fan page posts?

With many studies, articles, blogs, infographics, etc. that show the most effective characteristics for a social media post and specifically a Facebook post, it is important to see if these garner the most interactivity for automotive companies.

RQ3: What type of post leads to the most interactivity an automotive Facebook Fan page post?

The post types studied by Rafaeli & Sudweeks (1994, 1997) and the ones newly formulated for this study, are important to look at to see if automotive companies are using the most interactive post type the most.
RQ4: *What are the characteristics of a Facebook post that garner the most interactivity on an automotive Facebook Fan page?*

Studies have been presented that tell Facebook users what characteristics of a post are the most successful, in terms of engagement rates. It is important to answer this question to see what post characteristics are enabling companies to achieve the most interactivity on a Facebook post.

RQ5: *Do automotive companies with the most interactive posts on their Facebook Fan page receive greater “Likes” to the overall brand page quicker (within the time of this study)?*

As stated and formulated from previous research, companies set out to build a relationship in computer-mediated environments. To achieve more overall “Likes” to a Facebook Fan page, it can be assumed that the company with the most interactive posts would build a following faster and more efficiently. It is important to know if there is a relationship between the most interactive companies and overall Facebook Fan page “Likes.”
METHODS

This paper reports the results of a comprehensive content analysis for 400 Facebook posts from six automotive companies. The posts span from about a four-month time frame, from October 15, 2013 to February 4, 2014. The post distribution for the study is as follows; 44 from BMW, 83 from Ford, 48 from General Motors, 58 from Honda, 124 from Toyota and 43 from Volkswagen. To avoid confusion with Facebook posts being altered, deleted or the number of likes, comments or shares changing, the posts were pulled from the website and converted into six different PDF files on February 4, 2014. To compare the number of overall Likes of the six automotive Facebook Fan pages in the time of the study, the total number of “Likes” were recorded for each page on October 15, 2013 and February 4, 2014.

The six automotive companies were chosen based on Forbes “Global 2000: World’s Biggest Auto Companies 2013” list (http://www.forbes.com/pictures/mkk45idlm/worlds-biggest-auto-companies/). This Forbes list was selected because typically the world’s biggest automotive companies are bound to have a strong presence in multiple outlets, whether it is the market, traditional media or computer-based media. All automotive companies were listed, along with four other automotive companies. BMW, Ford Motor Company, General Motors, Honda, Toyota and Volkswagen, the companies in the study, were chosen after viewing their strong Facebook activity.

To ensure the automotive companies selected would provide enough information for the study, a trial coding period looked at posts from the six companies listed from August 1,
2013-October 14, 2014. During this period, 198 posts from the companies were examined. The trial was done also to see on which topics and characteristics the six companies focused on. The results from this period were used to help create a code sheet for the study. A codebook comprised of 25 variables was compiled to accurately perform a content analysis on the Facebook posts. The codebook consists of four separate, specific categories; general knowledge, post type, post characteristics and interactivity.

CREATING THE CODESHEET

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

The first category on the code sheet is labeled “general knowledge.” In this study, general knowledge is defined as information that is readily available and can be used to organize and identify posts. This section analyzes: automotive company the post was from, post number, number in the sequence of company and date of the post. The automotive companies in the study have been arranged in alphabetical order and given a number from one-six to make coding the posts cleaner. Upon arranging the companies in alphabetical order, the posts from each company Facebook Fan page was numbered. All posts were given a number from 1-400, which is documented in “number of post overall.” The date of the post was documented as well to make sure each post was specific and accounted for.

POST TYPES

Two separate categories within the post types category are being examined. They are overall post type and primary focus of the post. As stated earlier, four of the variables under post type come from the content analysis performed by Rafaeli & Sudweeks
(1994), while the other two are unique to this study. They were added to the category after examination of the posts in the trial coding period (August 2013-October 15, 2013).

The options under post type are: question (content that asks a question to the user reading the content, e.g. “What color vehicle would you choose for your next purchase?”), call for action (inviting/calling the viewer to engage in an action e.g. click here, like below, tell us, watch now, view here, learn more, etc.), announcement (content releasing a new product, company statement or other that reveals something), lifestyle (content within a post that can be viewed as random or containing information that is without purpose), fact (content that includes solid figures, from numbers, dates, etc.) and no text (does not contain a text within the post, in other words would just include a visual).

Under primary focus, the options are: mostly product (content that directly mentions a product from the company), mostly corporate social responsibility (any acts of philanthropic focus that the company is stating they have participated in), mostly entertainment (content that does not directly mention the company and is used to merely ‘entertain’ the viewer, e.g. “Are you watching the Super Bowl?”), mostly a contest or sweepstakes (content listing contest or sweepstakes rules, ways to enter, information, etc.), mostly fan (featuring a fan of the company), mostly employee (featuring work or stories of an employee) and mostly company (content featuring company information, e.g. about the workspace, headquarters or company announcement, but does not mention a product directly).
After examining prior studies that analyzed post types on social media postings, it was realized that a more concentrated question on the primary focus of the post was needed. All of these options were found to be discussed separately in studies and were brought together in this study.

**POST CHARACTERISTICS**

For this study, the 16 post characteristics being observed are: word count (the number of words in the post, counting a link as one word and a hashtags as one word, while excluding Facebook users tagged after the post and words included in the image), post edit (whether a post is marked as edited at the top of the post), shared posts (whether the post is marked as shared from another source), pictures (a single image or photo album attached to a Facebook post), videos (similar to a single image but contain a slightly transparent ‘play’ button on the video), links (in the post content, after or below), origin of the links (whether the post is branded with the company name) and product and company history (whether the information presents history of the company, from dates to facts). Previous studies have observed post characteristics individually, meaning that many of these characteristics were not studied together.

The subcategory post characteristics being examined are: origin of the shared post (where the shared post is coming from), specific type of shared post (located at the top of the post, it states whether a post is a link or photo), hashtags (a pound sign followed by a word or phrase), tag of a Facebook user and the amount (whether a post tags a profile account of an individual on Facebook, in the post or after) tag of company (whether the
post tags another Facebook Fan page) and origin of the company tag (is the company tagged owned by the posting company or not).

After looking through the trial Facebook posts pulled from the six automotive companies and using logic found from online postings that analyzed the characteristics of a post that would make it succeed, this list was compiled. With constantly updated features on social networking sites, some characteristics were solely based off what was examined, making them unique to the study.

**INTERACTIVITY**

Following Steuer (1992) definition of interactivity as “the extent to which users can participate in the message content in a computer-mediated environment in real time” (p.84), it was appropriate to view the likes, comments and shares on an individual Facebook post. Users are committing to an interaction with the content and company by clicking on the “like, comment or share” button. To also support these variables in the interactivity category, Liu and Shrums’ (2002) definition “the degree to which two or more communication parties can act on each other, on the communication medium, an on the message and the degree to which such influences are synchronized” (p.54-56), shows that relative to Facebook, this definition is relating to the likes, comments and shares because these communication parties are acting on the medium, the message and its content. In this study, interactivity is observed as the number of likes, shares and comments to each individual post.
RELIABILITY

A research assistant from The Pennsylvania State University was given 10% of the overall posts (40 total) to code with the established code sheet to ensure a strong level of intercoder reliability. The 40 posts were chosen from the overall total of 400 by selecting every tenth post to be involved in the intercoder reliability process.

Two coders were trained in one session to achieve a percent of agreement. Six Facebook posts (one from each automotive Facebook Fan page) were randomly selected from the trial coding period (August 2013-October 2013) for practice. An acceptable level of intercoder reliability would be greater than .8 or 80%, which indicates a moderate level of agreement. Using a simple percent of agreement calculation, all of the items coded in this study exceeded this level with post type reaching .875 (87.5%), post focus reaching .875 (87.5%) and photo reaching .975 (97.5%). All other variables achieved a perfect score of 1.0 (100%).
RESULTS

After the code process was completed, the results of the data were documented. Below are the results as they relate to each research question proposed.

*RQ1: What post types are used the most by automotive companies on their Facebook Fan page?*

A frequency count suggests automotive companies most often use the post type, call for action. Of the 400 posts from the six automotive companies, 162 posts, 40.5%, were categorized as call for action. Automotive companies used the remainder of the options under the post type category much less. They ranked as follows from greatest to least used: lifestyle, 68; announcement, 66; fact, 49; question, 41; no text, 14 (Figure 1-5).

![Automotive Company Facebook Post Types](image)

*Figure 1-5. Automotive Company Facebook Post Types*

Within the same category on the code sheet, primary focus of that post type was also analyzed. It was found that automotive companies Facebook Fan pages used posts that
are primarily focused on the product the most. 166 out of 400 posts, 41.5%, were focused on a product from the automotive company (Figure 1-6).

Combining the two questions within the post type category, the most used overall post type was found. As supported by the two results listed above for most use post type and primary focus, it was found that posts that were a call for action and mostly product focused were used the most by automotive companies on their Facebook Fan page posts, with 66 out of 400 posts, 16.5%, featuring the two (Table 2-1).

![Automotive Company Facebook Post Focus](image)

**Figure 1-6. Automotive Company Facebook Post Focus**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Mostly Product</th>
<th>Mostly CSR</th>
<th>Mostly Entertainment</th>
<th>Mostly Contest/Sweepstakes</th>
<th>Mostly Fan</th>
<th>Mostly Employee</th>
<th>Mostly Company</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Call to Action</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Announcement</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifestyle</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fact</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Text</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RQ2: What are the post characteristics that automotive companies use the most on their Facebook Fan page posts?

Through the content analysis of each post, the most frequently used post characteristics were found. The post characteristics are as follows: contains a picture, 353 posts (88.3%); contains a link, 172 posts (43%); contains a hashtag, 171 (42.7%); tags a Facebook fan page, 103 posts (25.7%); photo album shared, 83 posts (20.7%); shared post, 83 posts (20.7%); tags a Facebook user, 80 posts (20%); contains a video, 43 posts (10.7%); edited, 32 posts (8%); contains history information, 16 posts (4%) (Figure 1-7).

RQ3: What type of post leads to the most interactivity an automotive Facebook Fan page post?

To find the characteristics of a Facebook post that garner the most interactivity to an automotive Facebook Fan page post, SPSS was used and ANOVA tests were performed. The post type results were tested first.
The analysis of variance suggested that there is a significant difference in the percentage of likes based on the post type (F(5, 387) = 3.345, p = .006) (Table 2-2). Post-hoc Bonferroni tests revealed significant differences between announcement posts and call to action posts (p = .005), with announcement having a significantly higher percent of likes than call to action. Tests also revealed a significant difference in the percentage of comments based on the post type (F(5, 387) = 3.784, p = .002) (Table 2-3). Post-hoc Bonferroni testing revealed significant difference between question posts and call to action posts (p = .028), with question garnering significantly more likes than call to action. Question posts had significantly more comments than announcement (p = .079), lifestyle (p < .01) and fact (p = .088).

**Table 2-2. Anova for percentage of likes based on post type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between group</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.237</td>
<td>.047</td>
<td>3.345</td>
<td>.006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within group</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>5.404</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>5.640</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2-3. Anova for percentage of comments based on post type**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between group</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>3.784</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within group</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>.016</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>.017</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The analysis of variance also suggested that there is a significant difference in the percentage of shares based on post type (F (5, 387) =2.924, p= .013). Post-hoc testing revealed significant difference between fact and question (p= .037), with fact receiving significantly more shares than question (Table 2-4).

### Table 2-4. Anova for percentage of shares based on post type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between group</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>2.924</td>
<td>.013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within group</td>
<td>382</td>
<td>.061</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In regards to the second part of the post type category, primary focus, ANOVA tests were performed to find which primary focus garnered the most interactivity to a post.

The analysis of variance suggested that there is a significant difference in the percentage of likes to a post based on primary focus (F (6, 387) =3.501, p= .002) (Table 2-5). Post-hoc Bonferroni tests revealed significant difference between product post focus and company post focus (p= .018), with product receiving significantly more percentage of likes than company.
Table 2-5. Anova for percentage of likes based on post focus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between group</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>.295</td>
<td>.049</td>
<td>3.501</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within group</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>5.346</td>
<td>.014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>5.640</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis also suggested that there is a significant difference in the percentage of shares to a post based on primary focus (F (6, 387) = 3.580, p = .002) (Table 2-6). Testing revealed significant differences between product and entertainment (p = .042), fan (p = .032) and company (p = .093), with product receiving more shares than each. The analysis of variance suggested that there was not a significant difference in the percentage of comments to a post based on primary focus (F (6, 387) = 1.606, p = .144).

Table 2-6. Anova for percentage of shares based on post focus

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between group</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>.003</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>3.580</td>
<td>.002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within group</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>.060</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>.063</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ4: What are the characteristics of a Facebook post that garner the most interactivity on an automotive Facebook Fan page post?

To find out what characteristics of a Facebook post garner the most interactivity multiple regressions were performed. To identify the predictors of the percentages of likes, comments and shares, linear regression analyses were conducted with the percentage of
likes, comments and shares acting as the dependent variable and post characteristics acting as the independent variable. Results revealed two negative significant predictors for the percentage of likes, shared posts ($\beta=-.076$, $p<.01$) and word count ($\beta=-.001$, $p=.028$) (Table 2-7). Together the two accounted for 8.1% of variance in percentage of likes.

Table 2-7. Regression for Percentage of Likes to Post Characteristic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Model 2</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SE$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SE$</td>
<td>$\beta$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>.079</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.076</td>
<td>.015</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-.109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A shared post</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>.262</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word Count</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.001</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td>-.109</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To identify the predictors of the percentage of comments to the post, a linear regression was run, and results suggest that a post that tagged a Facebook user was a significant positive predictor of percentage of comments ($\beta=.004$, $p<.01$), while shared posts were a significant negative predictor ($\beta=-.002$, $p=.007$) (Table 2-8). The two account for 7.5% of the variance in percentage of comments.
Lastly, with the relationship between percentage of shares to a post and post characteristic, it was revealed that a shared post was a significant negative predictor ($\beta = -0.010$, $p < 0.01$), while tagging a Facebook user in the post was a significant positive predictor ($\beta = 0.004$, $p = 0.004$) (Table 2-9). The two account for 12.1% of the variance in percentage of shares.

**Table 2-8. Regression for Percentage of Comments to Post Characteristic**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SE$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoestheposttagaFacebookuser</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asharedpost</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2-9. Regression for Percentage of Shares to Post Characteristic**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Model 1</th>
<th>Model 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>$B$</td>
<td>$SE$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asharedpost</td>
<td>0.010</td>
<td>0.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DoestheposttagaFacebookuser</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
<td>0.002</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RQ5: Does the amount of interactivity on Facebook Fan pages of automotive companies influence the increase of followers to the overall page?

To answer research question five, the study conducted analysis in two steps. First, ANOVA tests were run and then, second, were compared to the growth of followers for each automotive company with the automotive company as the independent variable and the percentages of likes, comments and shares as the dependent variable.

There was a significant difference in automotive company and the percentage of likes to a Facebook post (F (5, 387) =46.39, p< .01). Post-hoc Bonferroni testing revealed significant differences between Ford and Honda, with Ford receiving significantly more likes (p< .01). General Motors performed significantly better than Honda (p< .01) and Toyota (p= .006), while Toyota (p< .01) and Volkswagen (p= .002) both received significantly more likes than Honda. In addition, it was found that BMW’s percentage of likes was significantly more than any other company, and Honda was significantly lower than all other companies.

It was also revealed that there was a significant difference with percentage of comments to each post based on the automotive company (F (5, 387) =6.901, p< .01). Testing revealed significant differences between Ford, Honda (p= .001), Toyota (p= .002), with Ford receiving significantly more comments. General Motors received significantly more comments than BMW (p= .058), Honda (p< .01) and Toyota (p= .001). Once again, Honda performed significantly worse than all companies.
Additionally, the analysis suggested that there is a significant difference in automotive company and the percentage of shares to a Facebook post (F (5, 387) =17.28, p< .01). Testing revealed significant difference between BMW, Honda (p< .01), Toyota (p= .002) and Volkswagen (p= .001); Ford, Honda (p< .01), Toyota (p= .001) and Volkswagen (p= .001); General Motors, Honda (p< .01), Toyota (p< .01) and Volkswagen (p<. 01).

BMW, Ford and General Motors all received significantly more shares than the other companies. Since it was found that all companies performed significantly better than Honda, Toyota (p=.037) did so as well.

To identify the companies with the most interactive or successful posts receive a great amount of growth of overall “Likes” to their Facebook page over the time of this study, the percent of growth to the overall “Likes” was found. From greatest percent of growth to least; Toyota, 108.45%; Volkswagen, 107.78%; Ford, 106.26%; Honda, 106.04%; BMW, 105.89%; General Motors, 102.62%. The companies were also ranked from one, being the highest, and six, being the lowest, on the average percent of likes, comments and shares. This shows that some companies that rank the highest did not receive some of the highest percent of growth, and vice versa with the lowest rank (Table 2-10). Those companies that performed better with the percentage of likes, comments and shares to Facebook posts (approx. BMW, Ford and General Motors) did not gain the highest percent of growth. It shows the percentages of likes, comments and shares to Facebook posts did not appear to help an automotive company grow its overall Facebook page “Likes.”
Table 2-10. Growth of Automotive Company Facebook Fan page “Likes”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company</th>
<th>Percentage Growth</th>
<th>Rank of Average Percent of Likes</th>
<th>Rank of Average Percent of Comments</th>
<th>Rank of Percent of Shares</th>
<th>Number of Posts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Toyota</td>
<td>1.084479091</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volkswagen</td>
<td>1.077768475</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ford</td>
<td>1.062609264</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honda</td>
<td>1.060432453</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMW</td>
<td>1.05886427</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Motors</td>
<td>1.02623997</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DISCUSSION

The most frequently used post type by automotive company Facebook posts was call to action. This post type is predictable, as a main focus of many companies is to get the audience, and potential customer, to engage in an action. Most likely, with the goals of a company in mind, the action is going to be a purchase, or interest in a purchase from its company. In regards to what was found from the posts in this study, automotive companies are also enticing customers to engage in a conversation or in an exchange of information. Examples of this are, “watch now to learn more,” “let us know,” etc.

Automotive companies used posts that focus primarily on products most frequently. Again, this does not come as a surprise, as vehicles are the main product of an automotive company. As with any properly functioning company, they set their communication efforts on selling the product to the consumers. Also, many Facebook users follow these brands to see, learn and hear more about their products. Automotive companies know this and attempt to appeal to the customers.

It seems reasonable that the most used combination of the two by automotive companies in this study was a call to action post about a product. Companies are asking the customers to engage with its content and reel them in with a focus on the product they demand. Also, with the automotive industry bringing in well over 900 billion dollars a year, it gives good insights into the importance of selling the product. This post structure aims to engage and interest as many customers as possible to hopefully make a deal.
Certain post characteristics were found that are most frequently used by automotive companies, which both support the research and challenge it. Despite the information that says presenting content that focuses on an organization's (brands) history can lead to building strong connections with brand loyalists and multiple brand communities, a large majority of the posts contained no history. Most companies are very keen on keeping and building a customer base with the ties of history, but this does not show through to the social media efforts. Similar to history, the posts did not frequently contain a video, despite the high engagement rates that follow a video post. Companies do not put a strong focus on distributing videos to the public, via Facebook at least, but may do this on other social media outlets, like YouTube. Research has shown that most individuals are visual learners; therefore, a video would appeal to the customers’ sense, attracting more attention. The post characteristic that was used greatly and appeals to the customers’ visual learning strength is a picture. This can be due to the fact that pictures are a lot easier to post than videos. Automotive companies have the opportunity to show its vehicles in the best light by adding a picture to a post. These posts, as supported through research, usually result in higher engagement rates as well. Customers on the automotive companies Facebook Fan pages also take to the page to see more and learn more about the vehicles, so the automotive companies present that clearly for the customer. To provide the customers with more opportunities to see vehicle and company information, companies could provide a link to another outlet, yet, this was not a popular post characteristic used. Links on a Facebook post have been said to help interaction rates and allow the customers to explore further about a topic. Automotive companies may choose
to not list a link because they want the customer to view only the information presented without hassle.

Another way to connect customers to other companies and people is through Facebook tagging, which was also not a popular post characteristic among the automotive companies. Tagging on Facebook is said to be the start of a connection. By tagging a person or company, it allows those two pages to become “linked” by similarities, and go on to reach a larger audience than that just of the original source. Regardless of this fact, companies did not tag other Facebook users or companies frequently. The low number of posts that tag could be due to the fact that the companies simply do not have an individual or company to tag in the post.

A shared post was also not a frequently used post characteristic by the automotive companies. Again, similar to tagging, the automotive companies may not have had any information from other Facebook pages that they wanted to share with the audience. Customers, at the same time, may not want to see other information, since they are on that page to specifically learn more about that company. Research did show that users like to see companies sharing information from other sources, showing they are not one-sided, but these automotive companies post original content. Hashtags, another way to connect users with information from other sources, was not a frequently used characteristic. Following the research, it seems as though hashtags have not caught on to Facebook as they have to Twitter. Automotive companies may seek to keep these two outlets separate by keeping hashtags out of Facebook. Along the lines of the short 140-
character tweets that come from Twitter, the automotive companies on Facebook used an average of 23 words in a post. Keeping the posts short also appeal to the usually short attention spans of the average individual jumping around from social media outlet to outlet.

There was a statistically significant difference in how many likes, comments and shares a post received based on the post type. This makes sense because each post type is constructed to receive a different goal. Although calls to actions were used most by automotive companies, announcements received significantly more likes. Since announcements are typically made to reveal something new to an audience, customers could like these posts more because they are excited about the reveal, newest item, etc. This shows that the customers are interested in the companies and look forward to the latest and greatest announcements. No other post types were statistically different in helping a post receive a higher percentage of likes.

A question post was seen to help a post receive significantly more comments than any other post type. This is not shocking, as a question post typically asks the customer to list their answer below in the comment section. Also, when given the opportunity to give advice, critiques, etc. to a company, customers feel as though the company values the input.

In regards to shares to a post, a fact performed significantly better than a question. Since facts presented by a company are potentially more valid and concrete than other content,
users may feel more comfortable to share them. Users would not want to share information that would be viewed as pointless and annoying to their profile, so by sharing facts, they are educating their friend base.

Product and company were the only post focuses that showed a significant difference, with product performing better. This connects to the most used post type by the automotive companies, showing that product-focused posts are effective. It is interesting to see a significant difference between the two, since company focused was the second more popular post focus by the automotive companies. Regardless of the fact, it shows that customers physically “like” the vehicles they favor on the Facebook posts. Similar to likes, posts with the highest percentage of shares were product focused. Product posts performed significantly better than entertainment, fan and company posts. Clearly, users are most interested in the product from the company, and are willing to share that information. Automotive companies are increasing interactivity by focusing posts on its products, just as previously done.

There were certain post characteristics that also garnered a post to receive a higher percentage of likes, comments and shares. A longer word count was a negative predictor to the percentage of likes to a post. Again, based on the research, posts over 40 characters and much higher, do not receive as much engagement from the users. Social media is known for short, to the point posts to amuse the user. Keeping posts short, appeals to this and results in more interactivity. A post that tags a Facebook user was found to be a positive predictor to the percentage of comments and shares to a post. Tags on Facebook
create a connection between the two sources, allowing for a larger audience to view the post. This in turn allows more people to potentially interact with the post as well. Shared posts are a negative predictor to the percentage of comments and shares to a post. Customers coming to the automotive company Facebook Fan page must be coming to view only original content created by that company. Content that is just merely shared does not receive high interactivity rates, than if the company put slightly more time to craft an original message. Customers are more likely to share content that is directly from the page they are viewing, showing that they have a certain level of loyalty and favoritism towards that company.

Ultimately, the automotive company Facebook Fan pages with that rank the highest in average percentage of likes, comments and shares to a post are BMW, Ford and General Motors. These three consistently performed better than the rest of the companies in the study. However, each performed differently in each category, with BMW performing the best in average percentage of likes, General Motors receiving the best in comments and shares and Ford placing second and third within each category. Honda consistently performed the worst in all categories. BMW, Ford and General Motors must be taking similar approaches to the quality of content posted, appealing to customers in different aspects. Comparing the rank of each automotive company in average percentage of likes, comments and shares to their growth rate to their overall page “Likes,” it can be seen that they do not match. The page that saw the greatest percent of growth to their overall page was Toyota, although it consistently ranked fourth and fifth in the average percentage of likes, comments and shares. General Motors saw the lowest percent of growth, while they
received the most average percentage of comments and shares, and the second most in likes. It is worth mentioning that the popularity and image surrounding a brand may cause it to gain the attention of more followers. For example, BMW is a luxury brand with many people “Liking” the Facebook page because they fawn over the appeal of the company, product and image surrounding the brand. Regardless, more research would have to be performed on automotive Facebook Fan pages to see if the companies with the most interactivity truly receive a greater following.
RECOMMENDATIONS

COMPANIES

Automotive companies should use the post types, post focus and post characteristics that were statistically found to increase the percentage of likes, comments and shares to a post to efficiently use Facebook. Companies should also set social media goals to know what type of interaction they want to engage in with the audience (customers). Analysis showed different attributes to a post caused it to perform better in percentage of likes, comments and shares.

Most automotive companies were choosing to use posts that were a call to action, although this was not the post type that helped garner the most interactivity. Automotive companies that want to receive a higher percentage of likes should use posts that are an announcement. Users on Facebook are more likely to interact to that post, in terms of likes. If looking to receive a higher percentage of comments, question posts should be created. These encourage customers to write their response to the question directly below in the comments. This can be helpful if an automotive company needs an answer to a pressing question. Companies that want customers to share its posts with their fan base should choose to present facts in the posts. Customers feel more secure sharing information that is valid and reliable. Companies should use the three post types above to see a higher percentage of interactivity to the Facebook posts.
Automotive companies are currently taking to Facebook to produce product-focused posts, which was also found to result in a higher percentage of likes and shares. To keep these interactivity numbers up, automotive companies should continue to create product-focused posts as they are favored by a majority of customers and are shared with a larger audience pool. Company focused posts were also found to help a company receive a higher percentage of likes. Automotive companies should continue to post content that features the company, as customers like to feel included. No post focuses were found to help an automotive company receive a higher percentage of comments. Companies should mix the post focuses studied here with question posts, as they were found to help encourage more comments.

Automotive companies are currently using a variety of post characteristics. Including: does not contain history information, not edited, no video, has a picture, does not tag a Facebook user, not a shared post, does not tag, a Facebook fan page, no hashtag, no link, and a 23 word count, three post characteristics were found to be positive and negative indicators of the percentage of likes, comments and shares. Posts with a shorter word count should be implemented to receive a higher percentage of likes, as it was found to be a negative indicator. Most customers strolling through social media do not want to take the time to read a long post, and therefore do not “like” the content. To receive a higher percentage of comments and shares, automotive companies should not post “shared posts” and should tag Facebook users. Automotive companies should post original content, rather than sharing posts by other Facebook pages, even if it is a brand from the company. To allow a larger audience to see the post, companies should tag
Facebook users. This is a simple way for an automotive company to connect a “real” figure to the post and also project the content to a larger potential reach than without a Facebook tag.

Ultimately, since there was no direct connection found between the companies with the most interactive posts and the overall page growth, companies should focus on getting the most interactivity out of each individual post. This will obviously help the companies to perform better than others.

FUTURE ANALYSIS

There is definitely potential for future analysis to be performed in relation to this study. With many more automotive companies on Facebook, they could be included in this study, making the content more valid. Future analysis could also examine other social media platforms automotive companies have to see how interactive the content is and if it is similar to the Facebook activity.

More analysis could be performed to examine the relationship, if any, between automotive companies with the most interactive posts and overall page growth. Since this study looked at a short span of time, there was no relationship found. Performing a longer, more in-depth analysis, a relationship could be found, along with the attributes that contribute to that.
More research into the post types that were analyzed in this study could be explored. Since it was difficult to find the original methodology from Rafaeli, Sudweeks, Konstan and Mabry (1994), more research could be found to explain and justify these post types. Although many other scholars used these variables, it can be explored further to support the results found, as well as expand on it.
CONCLUSION

The major findings in this study suggest that there are post types, focuses and characteristics that garner more interactivity. Most companies are not using the post types that are statistically found to garner more interactivity, while they are using the post focuses that allow for this. A combination of the two should be used to produce the best interactivity outcome. This study examined an array of post characteristics, but found that only three acted as positive or negative indicators to the percentage of likes, comments and shares. Companies should make an effort to create a social media plan that states where they want to achieve the most interactivity, and post content that contains the variables that allow for this to happen.

This study also finds little evidence that automotive companies will see a greater overall page growth if the posts are more interactive, receiving more likes, comments and shares to posts on average. The automotive companies that performed the best with a higher average percentage of likes, comments and shares (BMW, Ford and General Motors) saw some of the lowest percent of growth to the overall page “Likes.” This shows that although automotive companies should focus on ensuring each post is as interactive as possible, it does not relate to the overall page growth. Again, future analysis should be performed to pursue this question further or to verify it.
APPENDIX A

CODEBOOK- USED BY CODER 1 AND CODER 2, JENNIFER DIEHL

General Knowledge for Each Post

1. Which automotive company is the post from?
   1. BMW
   2. Ford
   3. General Motors
   4. Honda
   5. Toyota
   6. Volkswagen

2. What number is the post overall? ____________
   - All posts have been given a number from 1-400. The six companies have been organized in alphabetical order (BMW, Ford, General Motors, Honda, Toyota, Volkswagen) and then all numbered. Please document the number in RED.

3. What number in the sequence of company posts is the post? ____________
   - The posts have been numbered in a sequence, taking into account only the Facebook posts for that company. Please document the number in BLUE.

4. What is the date of the post? ____________________________
   - The date the Facebook post was listed can be found directly under the company name in the post. It includes the month, date and year. An example of how this should be written is 01.13.14 Please document all three.
Type of Post

1. What does the post contain?
   1. A question/request?
   2. A call for action?
   3. An announcement
   4. Life statement
   5. A fact
   6. No text

2. What is the primary focus of the Facebook post?
   1. Mostly Product
   2. Mostly Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
   3. Mostly Entertainment
   4. Mostly a Contest or Sweepstakes
   5. Mostly Fan
   6. Mostly Employee
   7. Mostly Company

For both of the categories above, please use our best judgment to place them within a “post type” and “primary focus.” Please use process of elimination when faced with a difficult decision in the coding process.

 Characteristics of the Post

1. How many words are included in the post? ______
   • Count the number of words in the Facebook post. Please provide only the text written from the company. Exclude any tags, company name, text on separate part of post, etc. Below (Example 1) is a sample showing what is included in the word count for a post
   • If the only text provided is only from what the company shared, as in a shared post (Example 2), please then count that text. In every other situation, like example 1, please ignore it.
• If the post only shares a photo or photo album, with no descriptive text, then there is no word count for the post (Example 3).

EXAMPLE 1:

![Example 1 Image]

Sometimes gaining access requires competition. Most of the time that competition is you.

EXAMPLE 2:

![Example 2 Image]

At Austin City Limits Music Festival (ACL) this weekend? Come check out the Honda Zone and get your picture printed on a sweet bandana. #HondaStage
EXAMPLE 3:

2. Was the post edited?
   - This is shown directly to the right of the time the post was listed. It is noted with an “Edited” label.
   1. Yes
   2. No

EXAMPLE 1
3. Is this post a shared post?
   1. Yes
   2. No

4. If yes, is it a shared post from another Facebook page?
   - If it is shared from another Facebook page, it will say, for example “General Motors shared Chevrolet’s photo.” If it just states, “General Motors shared a link,” then it is not from another Facebook page. Please refer to the examples below.
   1. Yes
   2. No

EXAMPLE 1:
5. If the post is a shared post, is a photo or link?
   - If the answer to question #3 was YES (1), then please answer this question as well. Whether the shared post is a shared photo or link can be found at the top of the post to the right of the company name. Below is an example.
     1. Photo
     2. Link

EXAMPLE 1:

6. Does the post include a hashtag?
   - A hashtag is shown as (#) on Facebook and is shown in the color blue. It will be accompanied by a word(s). This hashtag can be located anywhere in the post.
1. Yes  
2. No  

7. Does the post tag a Facebook user?  
   - A tag on Facebook is shown as a person’s name highlighted in blue. This means that the company wanted to “tag” the individual in the post. A Facebook user is defined as an “individual” not a company page. The tag can be located anywhere throughout the post. Please note that some “tag’s” may be listed on the post after a dash (-) and present itself with a “and ___others.” This means the company tagged multiple Facebook users, although they are not all shown.  
   1. Yes  
   2. No  

**EXAMPLE 1:**

![Facebook post example](image)

8. If yes, how many Facebook users were tagged? _________  
   - Please write the number of users tagged. Refer to “EXAMPLE 1” above.
9. Does the post tag another company on Facebook?
   - A tag of a company will be shown the same as an individual Facebook user tag. It will be highlighted in blue. A difference can be seen from a typical Facebook user name “tag” and a Facebook company name “tag.” If you are unsure whether a tagged company is a division of the company or separate company, please search online.
   1. Yes
   2. No

10. Does the company tag other Facebook pages that are owned by that brand?
    - These are brands that are divisions of the overall brand. If you are unsure whether a tagged company is a division of the company or separate company, please search online.
    1. Yes
    2. No

11. Does the post contain a picture?
    - A picture will be displayed below the written text of the post.
    1. Yes
    2. No

12. If so, is it a photo album post?
    - A photo album post will contain more than one picture. The photo album’s name is highlighted in Blue, with a description and then the pictures below.
    1. Yes
    2. No

13. Does the post contain a video?
    - A video will look similar to a picture in a post, but will have a small, slightly transparent “play” button in the center. Please look carefully at the pictures to ensure if it is a video or picture.
1. Yes
2. No

14. Does the post contain a link?
   - A link will be highlighted in blue on the posting. The link will start with http://,
     showing that it is a link to another website.
   1. Yes
   2. No

15. Is the link from their company or from another source?
   1. The Company
   2. Another Source

16. Does the post contain information about the company or product history?
   - Please look for any fact of company history in the post. Some are accompanied
     with the #tbt or Throwback Thursday, while others are not. This can also include
     historical dates or notions at past products or company. Please refer to the
     example below.
   1. Yes
   2. No

   EXAMPLE 1:
Interactivity ➔

1. How many likes did the Facebook post receive? ________
   - The likes can be found underneath the content from the Facebook post. It is
     located on the bottom right hand side of the post, across from the “like, comment,
     share” option. The number of total likes for the post are to the right of the
     “thumbs up, like” symbol. Please write the number of total likes to the post.

2. How many comments did the post receive? ____
   - The number of comments can be found underneath the content from the
     Facebook post. It is located on the bottom right hand side of the post, across from
     the “like, comment, share” option. The number of total comments for the post are
     to the immediate right of the dialogue box symbol. Please write the number of
     total comments to the post.

3. How many shares did the post receive? ________
   - The number of shares can be found underneath the content from the Facebook
     post. It is located on the bottom right hand side of the post, across from the “like,
     comment, share” option. The number of total shares for the post are to the
     immediate right of the “paper” symbol. Please write the number of total shares to
     the post.
BIBLOGRAPHY


<http://strategypartners.co/marketing/6-characteristics-of-a-good-facebook-fan-page/>.


Mazur, G.H. Lifestyle QFD: Incorporating Emotional Appeal in Product Development. QFD Institute, Transactions the Symposium on Quality Function


Richard D. Waters, Emily Burnett, Anna Lamm, Jessica Lucas, Engaging stakeholders through social networking: How nonprofit organizations are using Facebook, Public Relations Review, Volume 35, Issue 2, June 2009, Pages 102-


(http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0363811109001751)


Sung-Bum Kim, Dae-Young Kim, Kevin Wise, The effect of searching and surfing on recognition of destination images on Facebook pages, Computers in Human Behavior, Volume 30, January 2014, Pages 813-823, ISSN 0747-5632,


Cheyenne Sexton  
61 Westminster Drive  
Elizabethtown, PA 17022  
cns0518@gmail.com

Education:  
The Pennsylvania State University  
Bachelor of Arts in Advertising/Public Relations, May 2014  
Schreyer Honors College  
Thesis title: Best Practices in Social Media Use and Interactivity by Automotive Companies

Experiences:  
Communications Manager, Penn State Advanced Vehicle Team, PSU EcoCAR 2  
Fall 2012- Summer 2014

Account Executive, Happy Valley Communications  
Fall 2012- Spring 2014

Teacher’s Assistant, COMM 409 News Media Ethics, Penn State University  
Spring 2014

Marketing Intern, Shipley Energy  
Summer 2013

Panelist, Association for Education in Journalism & Mass Communication (AEJMC ‘13)  
Examining Mainstreamed News Media Coverage of Women and Underrepresented/underserved Communities in the ABC, CBS and NBC Evening News Programs

Public Relations/ Event Planning Intern, Hershey Children’s Miracle Network  
Summer 2012

Awards & Honors:  
Alpha Lambda Delta Honors Society  
National Society of Collegiate Scholars  
Founders Award, Happy Valley Communications  
Dean’s List