

Exploring the impact of embedded social media within the corporate websites of media organisations.

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Submitted in fulfilment of
Doctor of Philosophy

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Acknowledgements

To my Mum Hana,

Mum, I will never be able to show you how much I appreciate everything you've done for me. Thank you for keeping me warm when I was freezing, for pushing me endlessly and sharing my sleepless nights, for cooking me the most delicious meals to help me cope with stress, for taking care of me when I was sick, for stocking my fridge with food, for giving me a lift to work every morning so I don't carry my heavy laptop, for all the countless sacrifices you made for us, and your unconditional and eternal love. I will forever be grateful. This is for you ... Thank you Mum ...

To anyone who reads this, always love your mother, cause you never get another

To my Supervisors Professor Sylvia Edwards and Professor Helen Partridge, thank you for all the support, encouragement and guidance you gave me, not only in this research, but throughout all the years I was lucky to be your student. I will always be indebted to you.

Statement of Original Authorship

The work contained in this thesis has not been previously submitted to meet requirements for an award at this or any other higher education institution. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made.

Signature

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Date

August 2017

Abstract

Social media has become a vital part of almost every industry, especially media organisations. Most companies have official pages and profiles on popular social media such as Twitter, GooglePlus, Facebook. Not only do most companies have official web pages and profiles on social media but they are also embedding social media on their own corporate websites.

In-depth interviews were conducted with 21 employees of media organisations. These interviews were used to gather data on how and why these organisations are using social media within their corporate websites. In-depth interviews were also conducted with 20 online users of these media sites and used to gather data on people's lived experience with these websites that have embedded social media. This study also explored current social media policies that media organisations are using and the effectiveness of these policies.

The findings indicate that most social media embedded within media organisation's websites aren't used by online users as extensively as the organisations expected. Further, it is revealed that the more social media embedded within a website, the higher technical and business risks the websites are exposed to. Based on the findings, the study concludes with a set of recommendations oriented towards tackling technical issues and business challenges caused from incorporating social media on websites.

This study is significant because it has provided an empirical understanding of the lived experiences of both media organisations and online users with corporate websites that contain embedded social media. Importantly the study provides pragmatic evidence to inform and improve the strategic decision-making processes in the incorporation of social media within an organisation's website. The practically derived recommendations developed in this study will be of direct benefit to any organisation seeking to effectively and efficiently utilise social media within their corporate website and improve the experiences of their online users.

Keywords

Social media, embedded social media, corporate websites, lived experience, qualitative research, social media tools, social media platforms, social media networks

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Chapter 1: Introduction to Research

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Social media has taken self-expression to a whole new level transforming communication norms online on a global scale (Boyd 2007). The success of this phenomenon pushed for new social networks development and a rapid evolution with new tools and features. Many industries jumped on this opportunity and added popular social networks to their communication channels (**See Appendix A**). Nowadays, certain industries have made social media as part of their core business operations (Kiron, Palmer, Phillips, and Kruschwitz 2012). Most websites have embedded social media in such a way that users online are expected to be account holders of these platforms to be able to engage. However, this aspect of this online revolution and transformed communication method resulted in various challenges for both the organisations and online users. This study especially explores at the challenges faced in the media industry. These issues have received very little research attention to date.

This chapter introduces this Australian study and provides a background to the research problem. It begins by first outlining the growing importance of social media for individuals, communities and especially organisations. The chapter then explores the driving motivation for the study before introducing the research problem and providing a description of the chosen method. The significance of this study is outlined along with an overview of the study's limitations. The chapter concludes by outlining the overall structure of the document.

1.2. THE RISE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

With the rise of internet in the late 20th century, communication between individuals and organisations has gone through a considerable change. Individuals all around the world are connected at all hours of the day through the Web. This novel form of technology allowed the formation of new communities with high-speed communication. Users exploited it for various things such as personal hobbies, business operations, entrepreneurial endeavours, research, news distribution, and entertainment (Threatt 2009). This technological revolution also led to the creation of numerous platforms that are created specifically to unite people online via social media. There are hundreds of diverse range of social media platforms (e.g., social networks, photo-sharing platforms, podcasts, text messaging, video streaming platforms, wikipedias, blogging platforms, discussion threads) that have become part of everyday life (Hanna, Rohm et al. 2011). The increasing use and popularity of social media provides the background or context for the proposed research.

A 2015 Sensis report noted that nearly three quarter of Australians were on social media (Sensis Social Media Report 2015). The report showed an increased level of engagement with social media as a critical way in which the public, business and government are communicating. Sensis Reports referred to social media as social networking websites such as Online Blogs, Online ratings and review mechanisms. These included Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn and Twitter. The study summary table shown in **Figure 1.1** reveals the frequency of use with 49% of the population accessing social media sites every day (up marginally from 46% from the previous year) and 24% checking social media more than five times a day (up from 19% last year). Just under half of those surveyed, 45% used social media first thing in the morning, 20% while commuting, 32% during work hours, 27% during breaks, 23% during lunch time, 40% after work or in the evening, and 41% last thing before they went to bed. This suggests the intensity of social networking usage has gradually increased since 2011.

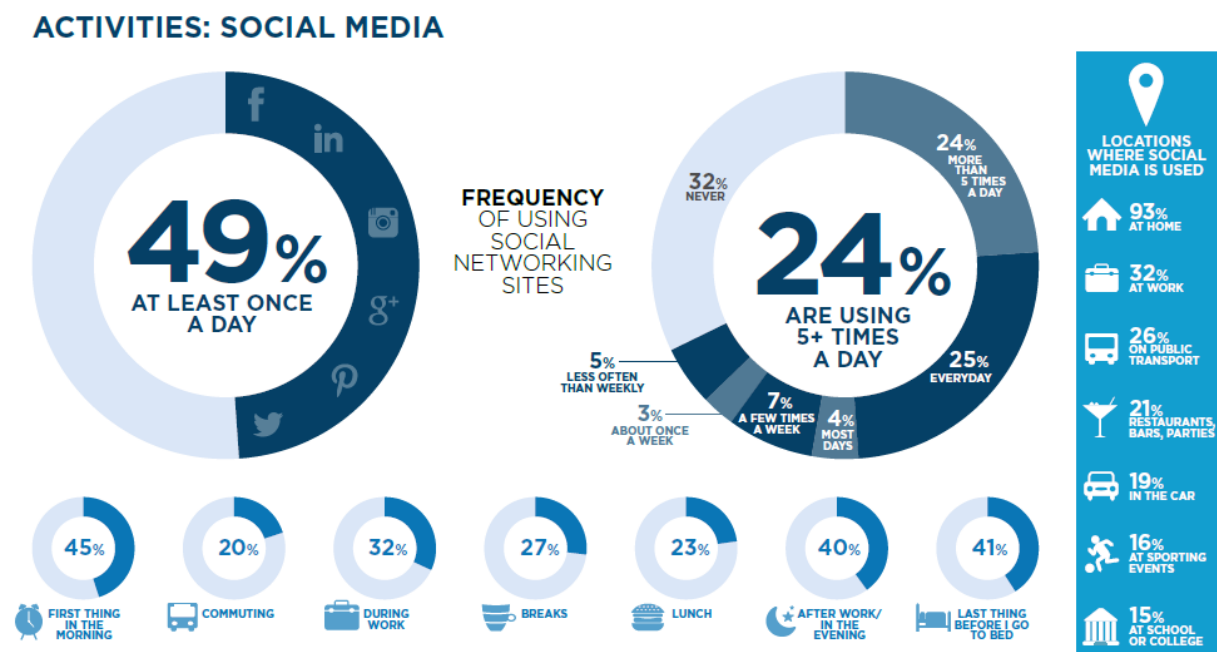


Figure 1.1: Frequency of using social networking sites - **Source:** Sensis Social Media Report, March 2015

In comparison with a recent 2016 Sensis Report, 63% socially networked after work or in the evening, 49% first thing in the morning, 36% during lunch time, 35% last thing before they go to bed, 33% during breaks, 22% during work hours, 18% during commuting (**Figure 1.2**). Of social networking sites used in 2016, Facebook has maintained its almost ubiquitous appeal with 95% of users. Instagram (31%) was on a growth trend, almost doubling its reach since 2013. Relative to last year, penetration of LinkedIn was on 24% and Google+ on 10%. Snapchat has become more appealing in the last 12 months, with usage rising from 15%, in 2015 to 22% this year. The penetration of Twitter

was 2 percentage points higher at 19%. What appeals most to Twitter users circles around the content and user-friendliness.

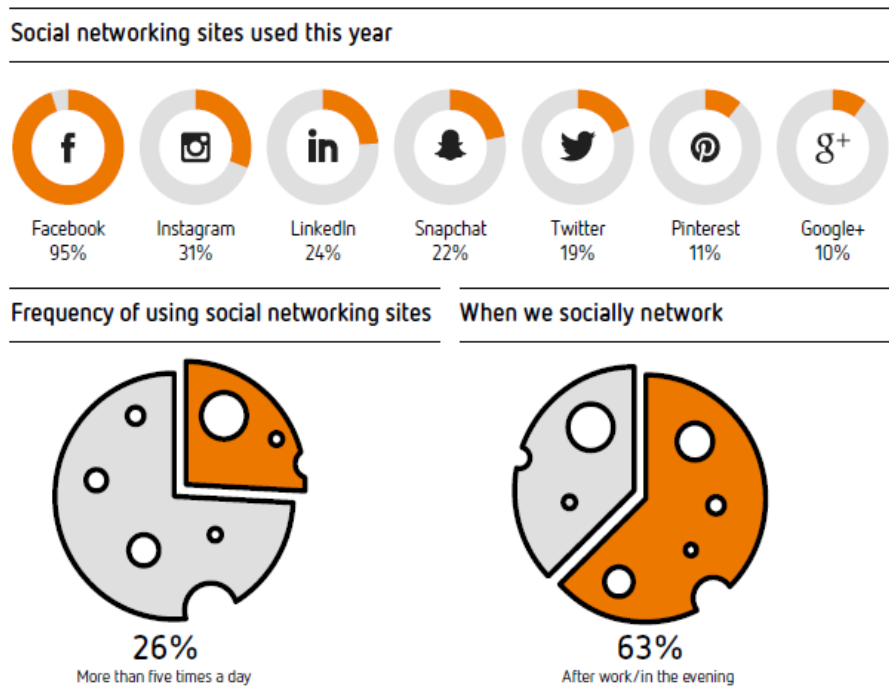


Figure 1.2: Frequency of using social networking sites - **Source:** Sensis Social Media Report 2016

The 2016 Sensis study also explored the use of social media by Australian businesses (Social Media Sensis Report 2016). Of the 1100 business that participated in the study 48% of small businesses, 54% of medium businesses and 79% of large business have a social media presence (**Figure 1.3**). The steady increase since 2012 of the proportion of businesses that have a social media presence can be seen in both small and medium size businesses (**Figure 1.4**)

Proportion of businesses that have a social media presence

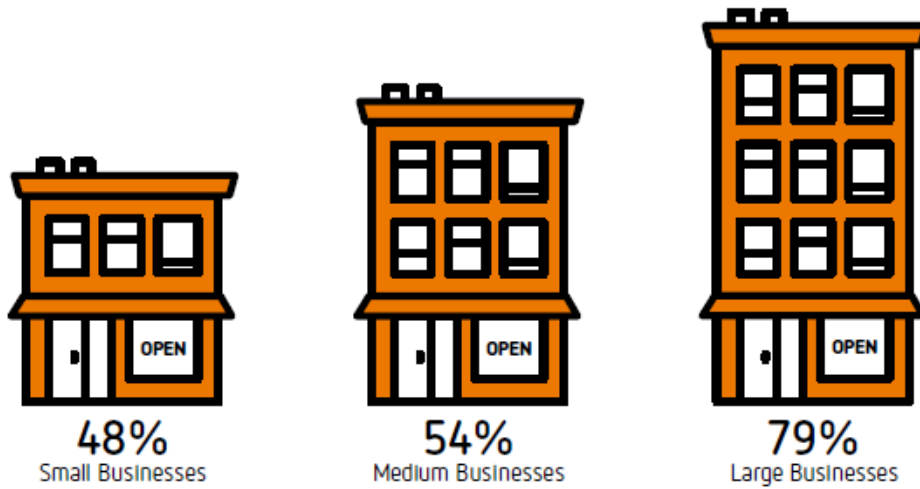


Figure 1.3: Social Media presence for all business sizes - **Source:** Sensis Social Media Report, June 2016

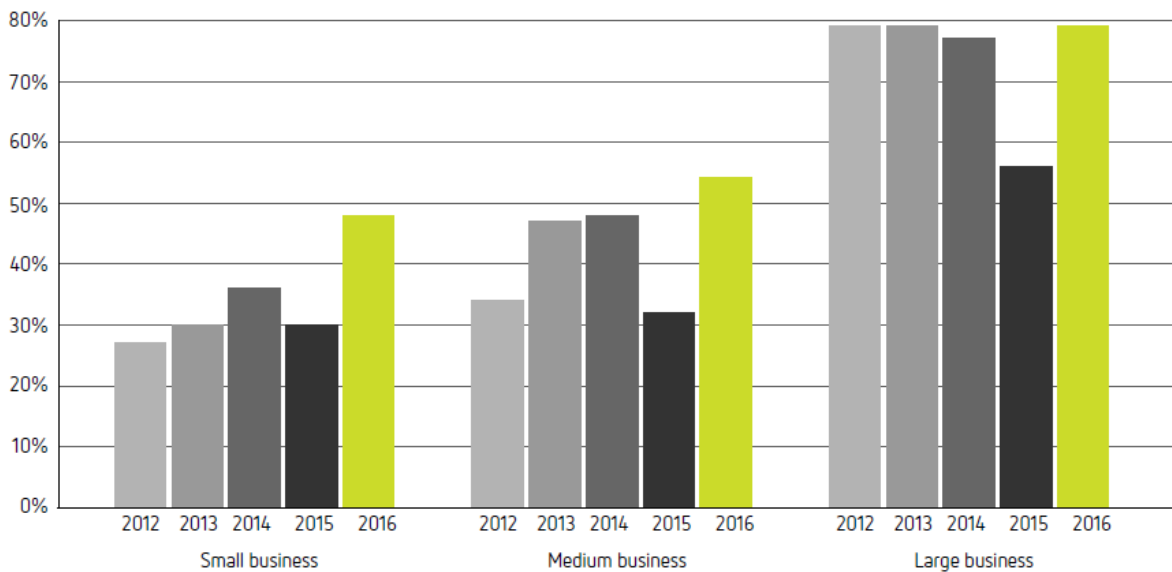


Figure 1.4: Proportion of businesses that have a social media presence

Base: All businesses: Small: n=900. Medium: n=100. Large: n=100

Social media exploitation for business gains is top of the agenda for many business executives as decision makers in companies try to identify a variety of ways in which firms can make profitable use of these applications (Gillin 2007; Gillin 2010). A research by Clearswift revealed that attitude has changed dramatically in organisations in regards to social media (Turner 2011). Until fairly recently, only one in 10 employers permitted their staff to engage in social media activity while working.

Turner (2011) has reported that one in five employees would not accept a job offer if they were not allowed to engage in social media activity during work hours (Turner 2011). Turner suggests that this transformation has occurred due to the realisation that the use of social media provides business benefits to the organisation, plus its use both helps retain staff and boost their morale (Turner 2011).

Nearly two-thirds of the 2,100 companies who took part in a Harvard Business Review Analytic Services survey said they were either using social media networks or planning for social media (Gillin 2010). Many businesses are trying to understand how to find the best methods to use the different channels, gauge their effectiveness, and integrate social media into their strategy (Gillin 2010). Despite this, Harvard's survey showed that just 12% of respondents described themselves as effective users that employed "best practices" to fully-leverage the benefits of social media by using multiple channels to reach customers. Social media sites have become powerful tools within companies for customer acquisition, retention, and for internal company knowledge transfer (Lariscy, Avery et al. 2009). The nature of social media makes them helpful tools for organisations as they allow them to create a series of dialogues with their audiences (Carpenter 2011). They are using social media "to engage in important conversations" while they also enhance the companies understanding of their market, including both competitors and their clients. Therefore, organisations have adapted social media into their practice to build strong lasting relationships with their communities (McCann 2008; Briones; Kuch, Liu, Jin 2011). Social media remain a communication tool that is fast, low-cost, and gives a company's site a boost by building traffic and getting opt-ins through a little strategic planning and judicious use of social media press releases, blogs and micro blogs. The increasing use and popularity of social media provides the background or context for the proposed research.

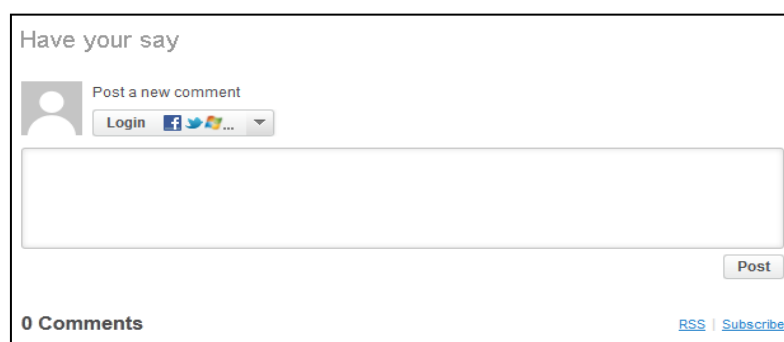
1.3. DRIVING MOTIVATION BEHIND THIS STUDY

Social media have become a common destination for people to engage, communicate and share information. More and more contemporary organisation are taking advantage of social media to interact with their clients (Briones; Kuch, Liu, and Jin, 2011). Naturally businesses seem to have seen this as a marketing opportunity to approach people in a space where people are spending most of their time.

Social media encourages feedback, and general commenting forums are available to contact a service provider directly. Commenting on articles was simple and did not require more than basic

details from the user. Early versions were not as sophisticated as the current engagement platforms seen on most websites these days. A key question arises though, what is price of using these sophisticated tools of new social platforms and commenting forms? For example, many websites began using services of third-party platforms such as share tools, various widgets and commenting mechanisms. This means that any individual user must be either an existing account holder of these third party social platforms or is being forced to sign up to them to be able to contribute content on the variety of websites they choose to visit. Social media platforms contain a great deal of information about their users, whether they acknowledge it or not. Some of the user information are user contributed pieces of information and some other information, such as user activities online, are stored automatically. For instance, IP addresses, user activity history, email address and contacts email addresses, and saved passwords (Weber 2010). From the end users' perspective, how many people fully understand the terms of use they agree to? Or for that matter, how many users even read these terms of use before agreeing? Once an organisation's website embeds any of these social media, the tool's service can access more information about the end user that they may not be aware of. Added to this is the existence of online trolls, spam email, viruses, and privacy loss.

Prior to undertaking this research, I tried to contribute content to provide my opinion on an article on a website. The commenting system at the bottom contained a form with a Text Area field and several login options: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and MSN (**Figure 1.5**). I clicked to select MSN service as I held an account with its messenger service. The website required me to agree to provide personal information such as email, but also to access my private contact email list (**Figure 1.6**). As a result, I backed out from contributing my opinion through, from what I perceived to be an intrusive commenting system that they had implemented.



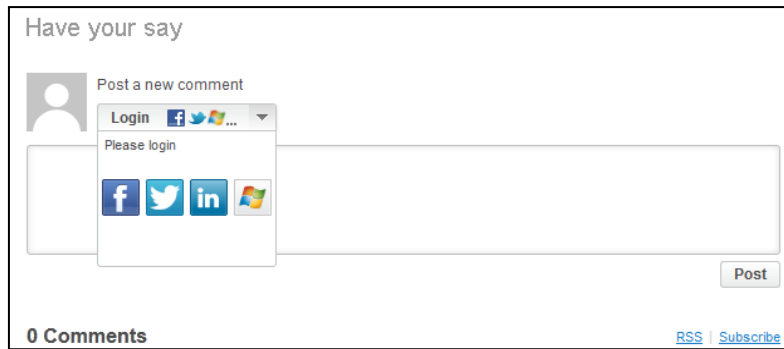


Figure 1.5: Commenting forum under an article

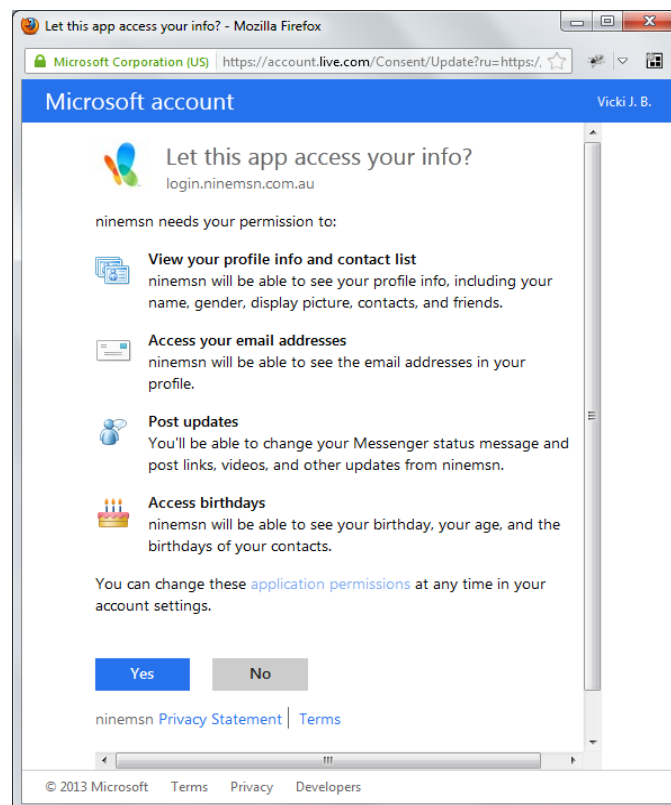


Figure 1.6: Pop up window requesting access to personal details and contact list

This triggered my curiosity as I felt more and more sites were enforcing users to share too much private information that to me was even a bigger trade off than using the site to contribute my opinion to an article. I felt that there was a fundamental ethical matter that should be examined here. From a user's perspective, I can only assume that, among other activities, the website's request to access my contacts list was probably to send marketing campaigns and possible spam email to market commercial services or products to me, or to even share it with other third parties. From a contact's perspective, I did not get an option to agree/disagree with the website's conditions and accept for them to access my email address and my contacts' list. I felt annoyed that they would

have the right and the deciding power to share my email address with a third-party when I may not want them to. In addition to this, the website provided no guarantee for my security as a user. I have been an IT professional for 15 years and have worked in a large media organisation for 8 years. As a developer, I've incorporated a variety of social media tools into many online sites. The sole purpose of incorporating the third-party social media widgets and apps was to attract more news-readers in and increase their engagement on the website. I came to realise that every tool and its social platform had their own specific incorporating method and styling. I began to document the business decisions that led to their adoption, their features, how to incorporate them onto the website, the challenges faced during and after incorporating them. I've established certain views and conclusions on their use but also developed different methods on how to counter some of these challenges. I have also come to know many of the professionals I work with make decisions to increase the organisation's social media visibility on the World Wide Web.

As I contemplated on these thoughts above, I began to wonder that there may be a large hidden population that exists silently on the web concerned about this exact same experience as my own, concerned that maybe websites had incorporated social media excessively on websites, forgetting about the experiences of their online users. If this group existed, then they may have been out-casted on the web and by doing so, companies could be missing out on valuable insights for their business from this hidden population. I came to the following assumptions:

1. Although social media networking sites are used widely, this does not mean their embedded third-party tools/widgets within media websites will be used as widely.
2. Although social media networking sites are used widely, this does not mean users will consent for websites to access their private data.
3. Enforced Signups and the requesting of personal information within websites (such as access to private contact list) discourages the majority of users (especially professionals) from actively engaging on media websites, prompting users to find other ways to engage on the websites.

I wondered whether these theories could be validated and confirmed. I set out to confirm my theories. I spoke to other people and found that their reactions and concerns were similar to my own: that when too much information was required from them, they chose not to share their private

information. Further, they were not likely to contribute their opinion online as they also feared it could attract trolls since websites have no guarantee of security and protection from the variety, and growing list, of online threats. In fact, many of the websites had embedded the use of social media accounts into their commenting threads. It is clear that the organisations perceive an added benefit to this implementation, but it was also clear that there would be a resulting impact on the engagement of users like myself and others I have spoken to. A key question from this preliminary investigation was:

- are the tools and widgets of third party social networking sites embedded on organisations websites achieving what the organisations themselves expected?;
- are organisations working under the false assumption that online users would utilise their sites simply due to the popularity of social media?

I investigated a little further, going through several scholarly search engines to find any existing literature that reported on studies in this area but found none at that time. I did, however, come across a lot of scholarly papers that outlined the benefits of social media and their use in different industries. One of the useful studies I came across contained a graph of the importance of social software to their organisations (**Figure 1.7**). Some industries were seeing more value from social media compared to other industries. According to MIT Sloan management review (Kiron, Palmer, Phillips, and Kruschwitz, 2012), social media thrives in Media and Tech industries (**Figure 1.7**).

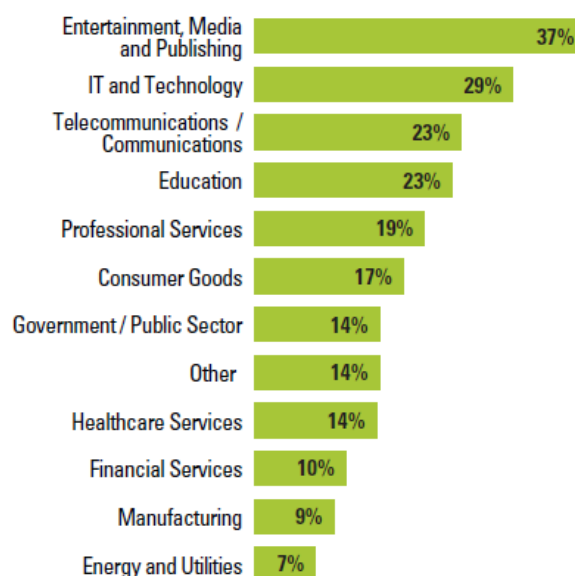


Figure 1.7: The importance of social software by industry

1.4. RESEARCH PROBLEM

While the increase and popularity of social media has opened up numerous new communications and information sharing and gathering methods for individuals and organisations (Cosoi 2011), accompanying these new methods is a rapid increase of new threats being created. Social media raises significant information management issues, particularly within the domains of privacy, security, accuracy, and bullying (Weber 2007; Kaplan and Haenlein 2009; Kim, Jeong et al. 2011; Turner 2011). These threats can seriously damage business reputation, as well as the reputations of individuals. Despite these concerns, more and more organisations are adopting social media as a core part of their business functions.

There are an increasing number of studies that examine the use of social media for business benefit, in areas such as staff recruitment (Brown and Vaughn 2011), public relations (DiStaso, McCorkindale et al. 2011), internal business communications (Gillin 2010; Cosoi 2011). Yet, to date, the experience of online users who access media websites that mandate the use of social media has received surprising little academic attention. The majority of social media studies within the business arena have focused on the benefits of using this technology and how organisations can take best advantage of its commonly used services. However, there is a strong indication that when social media are embedded within organisational websites, they aren't as widely used as perceived by the organisations using them. There is also some indication that some of these tools are found to be of some interest to users but does not necessarily mean their implementation will directly benefit the organisation.

Previous research has not focused on the fundamental issues of organisational websites that mandate client or user engagement through external social media. The gaps in the literature leave questions not only as to whether social media works in accordance to organisational expectations, but if they do, then what are the business benefits, and what is the lived experience of the organisation clients (e.g. the users of their corporate websites)? Thus, the research problem is to explore the real life experiences of organisations that embedded social media in their official corporate websites. The study will explore the types of social media organisations are using on their websites, why they are using social media, and the expected benefits they believe social media will provide. The study also seeks to explore the real life experiences of the clients or users who use these corporate websites. Social media are huge traffic drivers to websites but still remain "uncontrollable". This study sets to find out what kind of benefits or harm is caused by social media when they're incorporated specifically into corporate websites. It will highlight opportunities and

challenges organisations face implementing them on their website, as well as possible approaches they can take to address these challenges.

Researching every industry would be a near impossible task to undertake within the allocated timeframe for this academic research. Based on the survey data revealed in **Figure 1.7**, media and publishing industry along with IT and technology industries tend to see the most value from Social Media. Finding individuals who worked for media organisations is generally a difficult task as many would not want to give insider information. The researcher's profession in media and their existing knowledge, connections and associated networks helped leverage the right type of participants and the high possibility of gathering rich data. Therefore, media organisations and their official websites were the main focus of this study.

1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The identification of research problem opened the avenue for the development of a set of distinctive and direct research questions:

1. What are the experiences of media organisations in embedding social media on their corporate websites?
 - 1.1 What social media are media organisations embedding on their corporate websites and why are these embedded social media being used?
 - 1.2 What policies and procedures do media organisations use to evaluate the use of embedded social media on their corporate websites?
2. What is the experience of online users with media organisations websites that have embedded social media?

1.6. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

As organisations are using social media to connect with their online users/customers to increase traffic to their websites, the preliminary research objective here is to reveal to organisations the type of risks and challenges they could be facing so that the assumptions stated in section "Driving Motivation Behind this Study" are validated and risks from social media be accounted for more explicitly. Further, the objective is to drive decision makers within organisations and social media practitioners insights into online users' activities on the way they use social media and how much private information they are willing to share online with third parties and the ethical dilemma that revolves around information sharing and privacy protection.

The examples of the lived experience of media organisations and their website visitors presented the actual value of embedded social media to media organisations. These were used to present specific recommendations to assist organisations in tailoring IT focused Social Media policies that fit with the organisations' objectives in reaching the audience.

1.7 RESEARCH METHOD

The proposed study used a qualitative research approach to answer the research questions. Qualitative research is suitable as this study seeks to explore why a certain phenomenon is occurring (Cooper and Schindler 2006). The focus of qualitative research was not on numbers but on the words and observed evidence such as stories, interpretations, meaningful characterizations, visual portrayals, and other expressive descriptions (Babbie 1989). It involves the thorough investigation of participants' experiences with a particular phenomenon, aiming to uncover how they made sense of these experiences, and in particular aiming to discover the meanings that are attached to these experiences. The intention is to both build an understanding of the issues as well as prove a theory (Cooper and Schindler 2006).

This study adopts pragmatism as a research paradigm, and uses lived experience and constructivism as the guiding theoretical framework. Pragmatism expresses the notion that the research question is of primary importance and thus the methods and worldview are compliant to the question (Teddlie and Tashakkor 2003; Creswell 2007). Lived experience is the exploration of pre-reflective dimensions of human experience. In other words, it's the understanding the experience of a particular phenomenon directly from individuals that are "living through" a situation. It composites the 'living through something' that is seen in the works of Dilthey (1985). In this study, it's the exploring of the real-life experience of media organisations and users of their websites that embed third-party social networking tools and widgets. These experiences will be explored through qualitative interviews and used as a core unit of analysis to determine the research contribution.

The Constructivist framework is also used to inform the study. The constructivist view establishes knowledge through meanings attached to the phenomena under study where researchers interact with the participants to acquire data; inquiry changes both researcher and subject; and knowledge is context and time dependent (Coll and Chapman 2000; Cousins 2002).

This study used in-depth semi structured interviews to gather data. Interviews were conducted with two types of participants: employees working in the media and publishing industry and online end

users (e.g. online news readers). The interviews provided deep insight into the different experiences of the two key stakeholders and were beneficial to this study for several reasons. Participants were able to liberally discuss thoughts or viewpoints about the subject matter and provide a more detailed response where needed (Cooper and Schindler 2006; Stokes and Bergin 2006). The interviewee was also more likely to be comfortable about being candid in their opinions and often the data received was comprehensive and had more depth to it (Hair, Babin, Money & Samouel 2003). In-depth interviews present an opportunity for establishing trust and understanding between the interviewer and the interviewee, which improves the quality of the data (Davis 1997).

Twenty employees who worked for ten media organisations were interviewed. Prior to the interviews, official websites of these media organisations were audited to explore what social media they utilised and how they were being implemented. This helped the researcher tailor specific interview questions to determine the use of each of social tools. In addition, twenty interviews were conducted with clients of the media organisations who were engaging with the corporate websites that embedded social media. Thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke 2006) was used to analyse the data.

1.7. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

This study is significant because it has provided an empirical understanding of the lived experiences of both media organisations with official corporate websites that contain embedded social media and their online clients. As social media continues to grow and evolve with more organisations enforcing the use of social media via their corporate websites, it is important to investigate the effects of this adoption on online users, and whether the social technologies being embedded and enforced are as beneficial as organisations assume. If organisations do not understand the implementation of social media on their corporate websites from the end users point of view, then they may be missing out on valuable insights from a 'hidden' population of well-informed users which may have a potential negative impact on organisations goals.

The major contributions from this study was to test and validate the myth of perceived benefits of embedded social media on websites and whether they are improving their end user experiences online. The study is also significant as it provides empirical evidence to inform and improve the strategic decision-making processes in the incorporation of third party social media within an organisation's website. It presents the experience from both sides of the spectrum; the experience

of the organisation utilising these social networking tools within their websites and the online users' experience these websites.

It is anticipated that this study will be of interest to the research domains of information and communication technology, media and communication studies by providing new knowledge and understanding about organisations, and engagement with social media as part of corporate websites. The practically derived recommendations developed in this study will be of direct benefit to any organisation seeking to effectively and efficiently utilise social media within their public website and improve the experiences of their clients. The compiled set of recommendations has been developed based on the user and the organisations experiences that highlight and tackle the technical issues and business challenges perceived by both groups of participants. As social networking sites change and update constantly, this study can be a useful guide to consider what issues to expect, as well as for future strategic planning of an organisation website. Moreover, this research has the potential to enhance the online users experience within the layout and structure of an organisations website. More specifically, the findings may also guide future researchers to help evolve social networks into effective tools that can be utilised for business benefit without posing any privacy or security risks to website users. The empirically derived recommendations developed in this study will be of direct benefit to any organisation seeking to effectively and efficiently take advantage of embedded social media within corporate websites.

1.8. DEFINITION OF TERMS

A number of key concepts are of relevance to this research. This section will establish how these concepts have been interpreted and understood.

Organisation is a company that operates as a public or a private sector fulfilling duties and developing commercial market activities.

Media organisation is an organisation or company, commercial or none-commercial, that deals specifically with public broadcasting of news and various programming through free-to-air or paid means on media platforms such as TV, Radio and Online Web.

Corporate website is a set of related web pages from one organisation containing content (text and media elements) hosted on at least one web server accessible on the internet or intranet. It is developed to provide background information about a business, organisation, or service.

Social media is a term that stands for web applications that allows the creation of personal profiles or business spaces and exchange of user generated content through engagement using desktop and mobile devices through their own interfaces (Boyd and Ellison 2007; Beer 2008)

Embedded social media: The reference of "embedded tools" refers to any component provided by an external platform or service that is included on a website to perform a specific function or access the platform's contents/features. Embedded social media are tools and widgets that are developed by third party social media companies and are available to be embedded onto websites to create a virtual link from the social media service onto the website.

Lived experience: It's the exploration of pre-reflective dimensions of human experience. In other words, it's the exploration and understanding the experience of a particular phenomenon directly from individuals that are "living through" a situation. It composites the 'living through something' that is seen in the works of Wilhelm Dilthey (Dilthey 1985). In this study, the real-life experience of media organisations and their users with websites that embed third-party social networking tools and widgets will be examined. These experiences will be explored through qualitative interviews and used as a core unit of analysis to determine the research contribution.

User(s): individuals who surf news and media websites specifically for news consumption

Social Media Users: individuals who have access to social media networking sites (i.e. user/password login).

Website Users: individuals who are user websites for news or entertainment purposes.

Return on Investment (ROI): A method to measure profitability by evaluating the performance of a business by dividing net profit by net worth. It is the most common profitability ratio. There are several ways to determine **ROI**, but the most frequently used method is to divide net profit by total assets.

1.9. OVERVIEW OF THE CHAPTERS

Following this introduction, **Chapter Two** provides an overview of the relevant existing literature of the research in order to both understand the research that has already been undertaken on social media use within organisations, and to further explore some theoretical concepts that are applicable

to this area. The chapter positions the proposed study within the broader research discipline, and highlights the contributions the study will make.

Chapter Three outlines the research approach used for the study. It situates the research in the pragmatist research paradigm and introduces constructivist and lived experience as the guiding theoretical frameworks. The chapter outlines the research participants including recruitment processes and provides a breakdown of data collection and analysis.

Chapter four presents the study's findings in response to research question one. It describes the experiences of media organisations – through the lived experiences of employees – in corporate websites that have embedded social media.

Chapter five presents the study's findings in response to research question two. It describes the experience of media organisation's clients with corporate websites that have embedded social media.

Finally, **Chapter Six** bridges between the two groups and presents a discussion around whether social tools on media websites enhance or derail the user's experience online. Based on the logic of the discussion, it presents set of recommendations to better improve the current experience and deal with existing and potential future social media challenges.

1.10. CONCLUSION

This chapter outlined the research background and introduced research gap and research questions. Although social media has received significant academic focus in recent years, little has been directed towards exploring the lived experience of both the organisations and their online users with websites that contain embedded social tools. Primarily the research has outlined the motivation for the study, articulated the research problem and questions and discussed the study's significance. A review of the relevant literature will follow in the next Chapter.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided an introduction to the research including the motivation for the study, the research problem and questions, the research design and method, and the significance of the study. This chapter examines the current literature and scholarly studies that investigate the use of social media by organisations, with particular focus on how this new and emerging technology is being used to engage with users. The chapter provides a brief discussion on what social media is and explores the key social technologies currently available. It investigates what organisations are doing with social media platforms and tools from business-to-business and business-to-consumer perspectives. It also outlines the issues arising from an organisation's use of social media from both a technical and non-technical viewpoint. The chapter concludes by affirming the lack of research into the real life experiences of organisations and their users with corporate websites that embed social media platforms and tools.

2.2 WHAT IS SOCIAL MEDIA?

The term "Social media" stands for web applications that allow users to share information using multiple devices through their own interfaces, or mobile devices such phones, blackberries, etc. It refers to the use of internet to engage in a virtual communication on community sites rather than direct face to face communication. People sign-in and create profiles to engage in communication on Message Boards or "walls" to interact and share content with one another (Boyd 2007; Boyd and Ellison 2007). It groups individuals into a specific group or community or division with a common hobby or cause. Some sites have been so effective in the communication process that they engineered those sites to send alerts to its user community whenever there is an update on the social media site.

The first universal idea of Social media was started by Dutch man, world traveller and author, Ramon Stoppelenburg's blog *letmestayforaday.com* offered places to stay for the night. This made Stoppelenburg the first person who used a website in a social and effective manner (Jacinto 2001). In the beginning of 2001 he started the website using the internet to request for accommodation, food and drink. Stoppelenburg received 3,577 invitations from 77 countries. After he was given the hospitality in each stay, he wrote an everyday blog, usually quite an extensive one about his stay, before hitchhiking to his next location. Stoppelenburg travelled through 16 countries, including Austria, Australia, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, England, France, Ireland, the Netherlands, Northern

Ireland, Norway, Scotland, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, and Wales. Stoppelenburg's travel adventures received coverage by the international media and huge traffic to his website and opened the doors for him receiving sponsorship for his lifestyle, i.e. his website, clothing, camera, backpack, shoes and airline tickets (Berman 2002).

As high-speed Internet access spread and improved the popularity of the concept also grew, leading to the creation of social networking sites such as MySpace (in 2003) and Facebook (in 2004). This devised the term "Social Media" and subsidized the distinction it has today. An addition to this technology was what the use of three-dimensional avatars in "virtual worlds": computer-based simulated environments. One of the best examples of this is Linden Lab's Second Life (Kaplan and Haenlein 2009).

2.3 CURRENT SOCIAL MEDIA

Numerous Social media sites have emerged in the last 10 years, some are solely focused on general knowledge sharing and others are on personal information. This section will outline some of the most popular tools and the general purpose of their creation, although some of these tools have gone through major evolution since their launch. Some of the current social media tools include:

- LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com) is a business related social networking site that was launched in May 2003 and is used for professional networking, with over 135 million registered users in more than 200 countries and territories.
- Instagram (<https://www.instagram.com>), launched in October 2010 that is an online mobile photo and video sharing social networking site that enables users to take pictures, videos and share them publicly or privately. It has over \$300 million active users.
- Slide Share (www.slideshare.net), launched in October 2006, is a slide hosting service for uploading presentations from around the world on every topic with about 16 million registered users.
- Google Plus (plus.google.com) is Google's social media platform launched in June 2011 with 170 million registered users.
- Digg (digg.com) launched in November 2004, is a social news site where news articles can be submitted and ranked, with a reported 236 million visitors annually by 2008.
- Tumblr (tumblr.com), launched in April 2007 with 58.9 million blogs, is a micro-blogging social networking website that allows users to follow others and to post multimedia and other content to a short-form blog called "tumbelogs".

- Quora (quora.com) is a questions and answers website that was founded in June 2010.
- Sulia (sulia.com) is a service that compiles a list of experts on different topics and connects users to just these experts on different subjects/areas of interest. Social mention (socialmention.com) is a real-time search engine with a social sentiment, keywords, top users, hashtags, and sources.
- Foursquare (foursquare.com) is a social networking site to keep up with friends, explore nearby amenities, save money and unlock rewards and used commonly by journalists to track where people go.
- Pinterest (pinterest.com) is an online Pin board where a user can organise and share information of interest.
- Stumbleupon (stumbleupon.com) is a form of web search engine discovery site that finds/recommends web content of any format and has over 25 million registered users.
- Yammer (yammer.com), launched in September 2008, is an internal corporate social media platform used for private communication within organisations in 80.000 companies world-wide.

MySpace, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Flickr, Google Plus, and Digg are the most universally well-known. MySpace, Facebook and GooglePlus are focused on user's profile that share personal information by allowing users to write themselves into being (Boyd 2007). Twitter is a micro-blogging platform that allows users to send personalized messages from portable devices such as iPhones and Blackberries. Flickr and Digg are focused on storing online various formats of data. In January 2009, Facebook had achieved more than 175 million active users (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010). At the same time, every minute, 10 hours of content were uploaded to the video sharing platform YouTube. The image hosting site Flickr hosted over 3 billion photographs, which is ten times more than the renowned Louvre Museum's collection which contains 300,000 objects (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010).

The popularity of these tools has led businesses to mass adoption for their benefit. The next section will explore how businesses are utilising social media.

2.4 SOCIAL MEDIA USE IN BUSINESS

Enterprises, as well as small companies, have integrated social media into their public websites to promote their business and engage with their clients. These activities are done via answering customer queries on the site via social media tools. Some even allow other users to assist each other without support team needing to intervene (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010). Small web applications such

as “widgets” show recent Facebook and Twitter updates draws the attention of clients and encourages engagement and customer feedback. These tools also provide links to media elements such as Photos, Podcasts and Videos. It can also allow the company to monitor client conversations and improve their products or services through social media listening tools. In the next section, benefits of social media tools to a business are explored.

Social media has become a vital part of any modern company strategy. With the expansion of companies such as Facebook and Twitter, to ignore the hundreds of millions of users using social media that companies could then connect to for both business and personal affairs, is simply nonsensical. A study by the Centre of Excellence at the University of Maryland School of Business (Gerber 2010) found that:

- Small businesses’ adoption of social media doubled from 12% to 24% in 2009
- 75% of the small businesses surveyed have a company page on a social networking site
- 61% utilised social media for identifying and attracting new customers
- 57% have built a network through a site like LinkedIn
- 45% expected social media to be profitable in the next 12 months

A 2012 Research report by MIT Sloan management review and Deloitte reported on a research aiming to perceive the use of social media in their organisations. The study surveyed managers from 24 different industries companies in 115 countries to perceive the use of social media in their organisations (Kiron, Palmer, Phillips, Kruschwitz 2012). The results pointed to external use of social media such as marketing and innovation as key areas for capturing value and suggests that internal use such as operations and leadership stand to benefit as well. The report outlined the importance of social media as a “social” business tool that is often viewed as a tool for external-facing activities. On average, the respondents noted the most important use of social media software is for managing customer relationships. Further, the report found that social media thrived in media and entertainment (74.0%), and IT (65.9%) industries. Whereas utilities and energy, manufacturing and finance were the least likely industries for social media boom. Although the study noted that its importance in the latest industries will become more prominent in 3 years to come.

Social media is utilised in the innovative process of new products. The study by Jonhonen Jussila and Karkkainen (2011) provided a holistic view of social media opportunities from the business-to-business (B2B) innovation process standpoint. It investigated the potential of social media for the

creation and sharing of customer information and to consider knowledge that may be gained from the B2B companies' perspective in innovation. It revealed and discussed existing literature in companies where customers have been involved in the actual formation of new ideas and in some case the co-development of new products, including their testing and trials of new products and their provided end user product support. The study provided an analysis of the prominence and importance of social media research in the analysis of B2B innovation and the customers interface, both in relation to the management of customer information and the knowledge gained by these B2B companies in general; as well as the benefits brought by social media in managing this newly acquired customer knowledge in the different stages of the product innovation process. Further, the study confirmed that while B2B applications of social media have some similarities they are different from the common applications in the business-to-consumer sectors. Social media can enable companies to move from simply exploiting customer knowledge to viewing their customers as knowledge co-creators. The study demonstrated a multitude of ways for using social media innovatively so that companies can utilise and benefit in the B2B sector.

There are several beneficial uses of social media tools by organisations, external and internal: they are a way to get closer to customers and receive feedback; they are useful for marketing and branding; they encourage collaboration within the organisation and provide a mechanism to share information and ideas; and they assist in the support of the decision-making process. In this study, the focus will be investigating the external uses of social media tools that benefit the organisation as well as the challenges and threats arising from such engagement. It will also explore the current strategies companies follow in the use of social media, if any, and whether these strategies are efficient enough to protect the organisation from social media threats. As social media use is utilised by integrating its tools and applications into the website, the following section will explore how organisation use these tools.

2.5 HOW ORGANISATIONS USE SOCIAL MEDIA

Numerous companies have found ways to introduce social technologies into the way they do business. This included using social media within the organisation to support employee and corporate activities and goals, as well as using the new and emerging technology outside the organisation to facilitate greater collaboration and engagement with other businesses and with customers (Fournier and Avery 2011). There are no studies that have explored how organisations use social media as part of their official public websites. Consequently, this discussion will focus on the closest body of literature available, how organisations use social media to engage externally with

others outside the organisation. It is the business to client context that provides the focus for this work and in particular the use of social media as a vehicle for fostering client relationships. In terms of the business to client context, organisations use social media for three primary purposes: public relations, brand promotion and marketing, and client engagement. This section will explore the scholarly papers on social media use by organisations within these contexts. It will investigate the pros and cons of incorporating this development into business activities, in an attempt to narrow down important studies useful to assist in filling the gap in this research.

2.5.1 SOCIAL MEDIA IN PUBLIC RELATIONS

Lariscy, Avery, et al. (2009) investigated the perceived value of social media by business journalists and considered the agenda-building role it plays in journalistic work. Of 200 journalists interviewed, only 15 indicated that social media was critical to their work, 49 believed it was important, and the remaining considered social media of little or no importance. The study also found blogs to be the first place journalists seek information, followed by Facebook and MySpace as second, and wikis as third preferences. Although the study provided interesting insights, there were limitations to the work. For example, the study did not clarify what resources the journalists interviewed depended on for retrieving their information. With 79% of journalists consulting websites for primary information, the study findings did not probe further into the specific types of websites being used in this context (major news websites, news bloggers, and competitor websites). The study stated journalists did not feel social media improved their work although a huge number reported websites (with a high probability of social media embedded technologies) were their major source of information. Diga and Kelleher's (2009) study determined perceived structural, expert and prestige power of practitioners who used social network sites and tools more frequently were significantly greater than practitioners who used social network sites less frequently (Diga and Kelleher 2009). A study by Bajkiewicz, Kraus and Hong acknowledged the importance of social media in the communication line between PR professionals and journalists and their growing relevance in performing their duties (Bajkiewicz, Kraus et al. 2011). However, it also reveals that there is a need for the two Media types (traditional media and social media) to be used together to utilise their full potential.

Another study by Mergel (2009) explored government agencies' use of social media tools and the formal adoption process within the organisation. As organisations are facing fluctuating experiences with social media, they are being forced to develop more in-house governance processes and procedures, and each of these are being designed to work together with the standard operating procedures and the hierarchical nature of the accepted technology standards. The study showed

that technology acceptance has to be in alignment with the existing organisational needs and adequate IT standards. These assumptions were made but the study did not outline what the standards were. It mainly focused on making the argument of evolving governance mechanisms and the online tactics used: experimentation of social communication, consolidation of routines, and institutionalisation of policies of online interactions and editing procedures. Agencies have gone as far as developing editing tools for social media use with clear hierarchical approval mechanisms.

For public relations practitioners, social media has become powerfully helpful tools. For example, in Facebook over 700,000 businesses have active pages enabling the organisations to initiate discussions with their audiences (Hird 2010). A study by McCann found that 38 per cent of active Internet users think more positively about companies that maintain a corporate blog (McCann 2008).

Social media usage has also been found to be beneficial for non-profit organisations for several reasons. It can assist these non-profits to deepen their existing relationships, and also enables individuals to join forces through collaborating with each other around various causes (Kanter 2009). In the Waters et al study they found that social media is used by non-profit organisations mostly to restructure management functions, to communicate with their constituents, and importantly to educate the public about their programs and services (Waters, Burnett et al. 2009).

A study by Briones, Kuch, Liu and Jin pioneered of how the American Red Cross uses social media to build relationships by interviewing 40 employees (Briones, Kuch et al. 2011). The study focused on the strategy the Red Cross uses to build online relations with their key audiences, the reasons behind lack of social media utilization by PR practitioners, the barriers they face in using social media in building relationships and the opportunities arising from using it. The method of participant selection did not mention whether social media tools were part of the job description for PR practitioners and whether it was used for personal preference or as a business strategy. Therefore, results are difficult to determine without knowing the amount of time allocated for effective social media use. Furthermore, results indicated Facebook and Twitter are the basic means for online engagement however the study lacked detailed strategy description and only discussed how Red Cross PR practitioners used them on daily basis for notifications. It did not outline a formal strategy of monitoring their social media spaces and how they engage in conversations with clients on a business level and did not provide a descriptive analysis. Another inconsistency in this research, it did not follow-up on the assumption that some participants from the Red Cross have a view that an obstacle to using social media is that it alienated the older generation which made up the majority of

the volunteer and donor base. However, a previous fundamental study by Pew Research Centre (PewResearchCentre 2010) found social media use has grown dramatically across all age groups

Half of online adults ages 50-64 and one in four wired seniors now count themselves among the Facebooking and LinkedIn masses. That's up from just 25% of online adults ages 50-64 and 13% of those ages 65 and older who reported social networking use one year ago in a survey conducted in April 2009. (Pew Research Center, <http://www.pewinternet.org/2010/08/27/older-adults-and-social-media/>)

The conclusion of the study briefly mentioned the need to develop standards that local Red Cross offices can adopt to create consistency of social media tools use, however it failed to clarify the type of standards and technical practices, were meant.

Many organisations are still not fully utilizing social media. Waters, Burnett, Lamm, and Lucas (Waters, Burnett et al. 2008) found that non-profit organisations were failing to fully utilize the interactive function of Facebook, which could potentially cultivate relationships. Additionally, Waters (Waters, Burnett et al. 2009) discovered that non-profit organisations lag behind others in social media adoption. Instead waiting to observe others and their utilization of this new technology. Another study by DiStaso, McCorkindale, Wright (DiStaso, McCorkindale et al. 2011) investigated public relations executives' opinions about the drivers of social media in organisations, what type of challenges they face, and questions about social media measurement. The study explored the opinions of public relations executives on the importance of social media within organisations but did not determine what tools to use and how they can effectively measure the use of these tools. Many participants stated they would like examples of best practices of social media that delivered quantifiable business value and verified policies that had sensible appropriate use of social media. It also highlighted the importance of companies' preparations to efficiently put a control over social media by instituting organisational social media policies. Therefore, this study will attempt to fill this gap by measuring the impact of social media tools incorporated on the organisational website for client engagement to produce a business-oriented IT based social media policy.

As social media tools use on websites became mainstream, organisations began to update their strategies and tactics to build relationships. Current literature evidences how participants realize the importance of social media, and how organisations now understand how social media tools can be harnessed to build stronger relationships with the public, to encourage more volunteers, and to assist them to liaise with the media, and the community. A study by Sammons (Sammons 2011) examines the current actions of Social Media users and administration and describes how it can be used by organisations to build a community and promote their missions. It provides an explanation

on how non-profit organisations and communities work to build and promote their goals and missions through Facebook and what motivates their users to participate in the social media community. It found that non-profits frequently participate in the online community on the site, but generally only to promote information and organized events, or post responses to user questions. Based on examining sample posts from American Cancer Society's Facebook page, it revealed a "Other Person" Theory. It states that:

Social media is used by communities as an Other Person, someone who isn't a friend or family member. The motivation for using this Other Person could be the desire to share their story, promote their cause, or simply talk about something they see as trivial. (American Cancer Society's Facebook page)

However, the study does not specify how it's linked to social media application and only emphasises using Facebook pages for communication and promotions. Using "Other Person" theory and "Social selling", this study reveals a distinct difference between the Other Person Theory and "Social selling" in that people share stories with strangers more but purchase products based on family or friend's recommendations or reviews. It emphasizes the reasons why non-profits use of Facebook and not how it's used. The author doesn't investigate reasons relating to lack of other social media platforms by American Cancer Society.

A study done by Lisa M. Given, Eric Forcier, Dinesh Rathi found out the value of storytelling for sharing organisational mission reach into community and use it as a knowledge gathering tool from clients and key stakeholders (M. Given, Eric Forcier, Dinesh Rathi 2013). Several key findings emerged from this study; that using social media for marketing and promotion to reach community is essential for non-profit organisations, balancing duplication of information across multiple platforms with unique media strategies, having a solid communication strategy for implementing social media. The study indicated that gathering suitable story types for non-profits is a challenge due to lack of formal strategies, thus outlining the importance of suitable guidelines for social media direction.

This section explored how PR practitioners use social media tools for external engagement with other PR practitioners from other organisations to build relationships, thus a community, and exchange information. The next section will focus on another important usage for social media tools embedded in the website, marketing products and services and promoting company brand.

2.5.2 MARKETING AND BRAND PROMOTION

Organisations use social networking tools to market successfully by improving their relationship with customers in a number of ways: creating and supporting online-communities; monitoring conversations about their company and brand; developing communication channels; and fostering a variety of advertising and commercials such as coupons and/or events. With these tools, companies are able to effectively promote their brand, improve their reputation by directly interacting with clients and responding to feedbacks, and advertise services or influence buying patterns.

According to Patrick Barwise in The Economist's 2004 collections of essays "Brands and Branding" (Barwise 1990; Clifton 2009), it defines three distinct things that a brand can be: A named product or service, a trademark, a customer's beliefs about a product or service (Healey 2008). Social media platforms enabled the emergence of online consumers who provide an authoritative critique and judgement of the companies and their brands and as eager brand arbiters and commentators. In Web 2.0, the brand message and source received from companies no longer deliver claims to authority. The brand culture is authenticated and validated by the online user base; cultural populism, as Langheinrich and Karjoth study's claim, determines how messages are interpreted and what value brands afford. On Facebook, support is indicated by clicking 'I like This' links; and on Twitter consumer approval is indicated by 're-tweets' ; and finally on Digg.com content is marked as 'favourite' or re-posted with 'thumbs up/thumbs down' ratings. (Langheinrich and Karjoth 2010).

Social networks are used as a viral marketing tool but can also be a double-edged sword: they allow for record propagation of marketing messages at minimal cost, yet they are out of control, and positive publicity can turn into a negative one almost instantly. They effectively "level the ground" between marketers and consumer activists, who can initiate and broadcast virtual worldwide campaigns free of charge with the help of Social networking sites. A study by Dunn (Dunn 2010) makes a valuable point in that brand-related content of social media will be what attracts an audience. It supports Li and Bernoff's "Groundwell" (Li and Bernoff 2008) that emphasises the importance of concentrating on the relationships, not the technologies as its more productive to think of what needs to be communicated (the brand identity) and to whom than of which social media technology should be used. The study examines social media use in 3 different entities in the educational (university), retail (food business) and non-profit (habitat). Several social media platforms have been embedded on the university's home page: Facebook, Twitter, RSS feeds, Flickr, YouTube, iTunes, Google Apps. These platforms have been included to cater for the university's audience that consist of perspective students, current students, faculty staff, and university's own

Newsroom. The study suggests that the university's audience desired to participate in conversations on different platforms therefore decided to cater for all of them. On the other hand, the retail business utilized its own public website with few social media applications such as the site's blog, a Facebook page, Twitter, YouTube page (not Channel). The Site Blog, Facebook and Twitter are used to boast an online photo album of the business and its products, whereas the YouTube page (linked from the site) featured a promotional video. The study findings bring an important point about successful marketing in that the creator of content for social media and the creator of products for the business should be involved first-hand with the product or service. Otherwise, there would be a disconnect in communication and the enthusiasm about a product or service wouldn't be captured or visible and translated to the online space. Therefore, it emphasizes on the importance of the creator of content for social media should both be involved with the product or service. It helps form a personal bond between the social media user and the brand. This is because when the user makes a trip to the business, they actually get to meet the person they have been following on the social media platforms. Research findings bring out controversial points when talking about the brand, that organisational posts should maintain a degree of control over posts, in which it contradicts Weber's (Weber 2007) (complete transparency and zero-involvement from the organisation), and suggests to keep religion and politics out of the context to maintain a healthy and professional brand image. The study also reveals that social media tools are in fact tools organisations get involved in to "keep up with the times" as well as competitors. The study takes a non-complex approach in analysing social media use and concludes its benefits as: similarity of benefits perceived, direct communication, two-way versus one-way, lower cost of social media as opposed to traditional media.

Threath (Threath 2009) examines marketing benefits of Social Media practices and takes a close look at Facebook as the ideal marketplace. It looks at specific strategies that were utilized to improve an organisation's reputation, or product sale, or service or idea. It analysed the organisational use of social networks and websites where consumer generated content is prevalent. It proposes brief social methods for the use of Facebook but does not detail or categorise technical and non-technical in-depth. Although not directly stated, assumption is made that Facebook usage is embedded as part of the organisation's website. Several strategies are outlined in the study, a convincing tie between organisation's brand or main source of communication to its Facebook persona: using interesting and engaging content; the importance of responding to a posted application, ad or message to resolve user problems; gathering market research data by demographic-based polls. However, the findings proposed by Threath don't align with Weber's (Weber 2007) previous findings. It states that while users are open to organisations targeting them on the site, they are not necessarily impressed

or influenced by what they see. On the other hand, Weber opposes people's openness to ads by stating "people don't want to be sold. They are doing their best to avoid commercials. They have pop-up blockers to screen out the ads on the web that are a distraction". Although not directly stated in Threatt's study, an observation can be made from its findings that although customers examine an organisation's Facebook presence, they only do so if they're interested, but this does not mean they are open to ads.

For social media as a marketing tool, a 2010 study by Grainger (Grainger 2010) looked into the effectiveness of social media technologies a marketing tools. Study employed a variety of methods such as Internet searches and Qualtrics web survey to show how specifically Fortune 500 companies carried out their own measurements of social media. It also investigated the social media assets employed by each company on the Fortune 500 list, how companies on that list measured the effectiveness of this form of marketing efforts, and also reported how their communication professionals perceived the benefits by using social media as a marketing tool. Of 461 companies, although 100% had public websites, 43%(217) had Facebook pages, 47%(239) had Twitter accounts, 19.8%(99) had YouTube channels, 19%(95) had company blogs. The study also revealed that Business to customer (B2C) utilises all popular social media platforms, whereas energy, mining and finance utilised the least. These findings are logical and adhere to the fact that B2C companies, such as retail, utilise social media to sell directly to clients, thus motivating a corporation to foster a more direct connection with consumers and potential customers. Whereas for Business-to-Business corporation, social media may seem unnecessary/non-trivial because of its distance from the consumer. The study focused on what social media was used for but not on how it was measured. It did not specify the technicality or the tools used to measure how social media benefited any of the fortune 500 companies. It provided evidence and literature on its usage but lacked description of methods and processes used to measure its benefits. The assumptions made in this article proved to be false since the numbers indicate a higher number of companies not utilising social media tools. Although the study revealed most companies that utilised social media tools utilised Facebook and Twitter as a common ground, findings were that the fortune 500 uses social media to a limited degree. However, the study reveals a detailed analysis of how the fortune 500 companies perceived the importance of social media, perception is that social media is an important marketing tool, although they remain quite ambiguous about its proven effectiveness. More than 80% of companies reported they estimate the effectiveness of click-through rates; over 90% measure the effectiveness of page views, over 95% stated that they could do the same for new website visits.

2.5.3 CLIENT ENGAGEMENT

Active listening is crucial if a company appreciates constructive criticism and builds improvements from their feedback. Brands cannot evolve unless there is organic content to lead their direction. Monitoring consumer conversations in real-time and supplying desired information when they need it can be extremely beneficial for a company or brand.

Weber (Weber 2007) recommends that an organisation can become transparent to build credibility to generate trust. This is illustrated in General Motor's website (GMNext.com) that contains several social media applications. Its blog covers environmental topics, featured GM vehicles, video updates and economic conditions of the company. It also contains wiki pages enabling site visitors to engage in discussions on all GM related topics. The site also contains links to the company's relevant social media spaces such as YouTube, Flickr, and Twitter. Organisational profiles can be found on the site as well as content outside the site that often links back to Facebook with a "share" option. This enables, for example, to send a story or post to their Facebook profile. Weber proposes genuineness and authenticity by letting audience interacts without any involvement from the company. This is because too much involvement by an organisation cannot seem genuine and may turn out to be overwhelming for the audience. This recommendation contradicts Dell's leveraging social media to win customers and build a positive brand image with its active service. The classic example is blogger Jeff Jarvis' DellHell.com, a popular website established to share product and service complaints for Dell consumers (Bernoff 2008). As the public's view of Dell began to go downhill and the increasing use of the company website, the company realised that its participation in social media was necessary for the improvement of their reputation to initiate conversations (specifically blogging) with customers and learn what the problems were and how to fix them. A 14-year veteran employee was selected to work towards improving the company operations and reputation. His assigned role was to individually and publicly address the issues surfacing on DellHell.com (Bernoff 2008). Once Dell began to listen to its customers, the public started to view the brand in a more optimistic light.

A study by Warren, Leitch and Senadheera (Senadheera, Warren et al. 2011) focused on the use of social media in the banking sector in Australia. Banks as businesses are concerned about maintaining a brand and building customer loyalty. The strength of list of banks presence on respective social media services were measured by the number of instances of each individual characteristic of the respective social media service, in this case Twitter. For example, the strength of the conversation block of functionality was defined by the total number of tweets, Re-Tweets and @mentions generated by the banks. This indicates that twitter was used as an 'information service'. Out of 12

major Australian banks, only two of them have made a concentrated effort to have a presence on Facebook by creating an identity presenting a corporate image of their respective brands. They engaged their customers on a regular basis on a wide range of issues and enhanced the richness of the conversations. They also used Facebook as the main medium for sharing information about their Internet Banking and Automated Teller machine failures. Most of the 12 banks, except for one, have community pages and they're not managed or maintained and give no opportunity to Facebook users to engage in a discussion. To post comments, queries, one needs to login to their pages. On the other hand, MySpace isn't used by banks currently, although one bank used it to advertise an online promotion. This study also highlighted that Re-tweets have the potential to generate a new conversation and can be used as a tool to inform others about a useful event or to refer users to material on their official websites. It provided detailed information on the use of Facebook, Twitter, MySpace and YouTube. It also discussed the need for implementing a social media business strategy by analysing each social media service on a regular basis to keep up with the changes in technology. The approach of this study was very direct in hinting a clear need of business strategy that includes an IT policy to ensure effective use of social media.

Another research report by MIT Sloan Management Review and Deloitte conducted a survey of managers from companies in 115 countries and 24 industries to find the importance of social media in their business practices (Kiron, Palmer et al. 2012). Supervalu, third largest grocery chain in the U.S. with 4,300 stores, uses Yammer as their social platform for internal collaboration tool and increases communication between its managers as well as for exchanging ideas and posting photos or videos of successful merchandise displays and specials. IBM, one of world's leading technology leaders use social media to reach out to customers and leverage social tools to interact with both clients and partners.

2.6 ISSUES ARISING FROM ORGANISATION'S USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Many small businesses take advantage of the audience presence on the web and utilise this to gather clients. With millions of people making use of multiple social media technologies on daily basis, it is obvious that these technologies can be quite influential (Langheinrich and Karjoth 2010). There have been several key studies relating to the use of social media in the business environment that highlights the challenges associated with implementation: technical and non-technical. In the following sub-sections, these challenges will be explored in detail.

2.6.1 TECHNICAL CHALLENGES

Social media emerged as web applications that originally been developed assuming people live in an ideal world where all users adhere to ethics and morals. The popularity of social networking sites has opened up numerous methods of communications for individuals and organisations. However, with these new opportunities were a rapid surge in the volume and speed of cyber-threats being created. This section presents the security and privacy design challenges brought by the main functionalities of social media networks and present some opportunities for utilizing social network model to alleviate these design conflicts.

Not only did social media tools attract millions of people and businesses willing to connect and benefit with free information exchange and business support, it's also been a hub for cyber-attacks (Edwards 2011). Recent cyber-attacks on Facebook caused violent and pornographic images to be posted on thousands of users 'profiles. Although Facebook stated it removed most of the images but the hacking has raised serious questions about the platform's security layer.

In May 5, 2010, a network worm spread through Yahoo Instant Messenger, and has aggressively infected systems globally. Report from InfoSecurity:

According to Symantec, which identified the malware as W32.Yimfoca, it attempts to connect to a MySpace URL, indicating that organizers are possibly using the social networking site as a command-and-control channel. It stops processes running on the Windows host to disable the Microsoft Malware Protection Service and Windows Update, and then connects to another URL to download a configuration file. It uses port 2345 to connect to two other network addresses and wait for IRC commands, and finally spreads itself by sending messages that contain links to copies of the worm to all of the victim's instant messaging contacts. (Infosecurity 2010, online published article).

A study by Kim, Jeong, Kim and So (Kim, Jeong et al. 2011) provide detailed taxonomies of the causes and costs of cyber-attacks. Specifically, technology-centric risks that are related to this study and discuss social spam on social networking sites. Social networking spam is associated with social networking services, such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, LinkedIn. Members spam other members. Some spam is to generate new visitors to market something and others are for different reasons. The study reveals techniques spammers use such as creating fake personal profiles to collect information on other members, create malicious links, and phish.

They send messages and write replies to other members with embedded links to web pages of their choosing. They manipulate survey results and/or disseminate unreliable survey results for a wide range of topics, such as popularity of products, people, and organisations. They do this by manipulating click-through rates by, for example, continually voting with new IDS and/or inviting friends to do the same. Social media spam includes inaccurate or

fabricated posts, and the relationships formed online are sometimes based on falsified or inaccurate personal profiles of the members. (Kim, Jeong et al. 2011, p.684)

From a technical perspective, due to the limitations of current methods of testing technology, it is problematic to determine whether the injected keywords or links in fact relate to a web page, or to determine if the information on a personal profile or the posts in social networking sites are authentic. A malware called Conficker, revealed by the study, disseminated from November 2008 controlled 7 million computers in more than 200 countries, and was virtually untraceable by defence mechanisms that kills programs designed to search for it (Markoff 2010) .

Phishing is another risk targeting social networking sites, where personal profile data are bought and sold by online brokers. These would even include login data, personal profiles and posts (Kirk 2006). All these examples may have a negative impact if a corporate social media followers have been exposed to these threats, it can damage company reputation. It is also logical to assume that if phishing or malware links are carried through the posts of a social media application imported as a widget on the company website, it can cause serious harm to the users' security and damage the company brand. Although widgets are widely used, one of the major issues with incorporating social media elements, such as imported posts or media is the use of third party widgets provided by the social media company. Unlike organisational in-house coding standards, third party widgets are contributed by external entities, people or social media organisations. These widgets are outside the control of an organisation and can either contain code bugs or compromise security. In most cases, it can also be un-aligned with the corporate brand on the public website. Such an instance occurred when twitter users complained about avatars showing in profile widget despite being set to "false", twitter announced they pushed an update to their "Search and Lists" widgets to display avatars regardless of users' configuration options to ensure they are in-line with their Display Guidelines (twitterBlog 2011). Another issue with social media spaces there are no guarantees of failures or permanent fixes to application bugs. In December 2011, a bug in Facebook's code briefly gave users access to other users' Facebook photos – including of its CEO Mark Zuckerberg, without permission (Kessler 2011).

Koobface is one of the most advanced e-threats targeted users of social networking websites such as Facebook, Yahoo Messenger, and Skype.

It's extremely advanced infection mechanisms make it the ultimate 'war machine' ready to besiege users' accounts. Once installed, the worm looks for cookies belonging to well-known social networks such as Facebook, Twitter and MySpace. In order to spread from one infected account to another, Koobface sends messages on behalf of the compromised users to all their friends. Since Facebook is extremely restrictive with large numbers of messages originating

from the same account in a short time span, the worm forces the infected user to solve the Captcha dialogue for it. After the Captcha has been successfully 'defeated', it would post a link to a fake YouTube video concealed with a URL shortening service (usually bit.ly). Unwary users clicking on the malicious link will subsequently be asked to install a codec, which ultimately turns out to be the very downloader that drops, installs and 'configures' the Koobface worm (Cosoi 2011, p.15).

Therefore, this confirms previous assumption made that importing Facebook widgets for post displays in an organisation's website can cause damage to users and therefore ruin company image.

Although numerous articles have emerged recently warning against security holes in some social media platforms, millions of people continue to use these platforms. Despite Facebook's security holes, it managed to grow to become world's most popular social media platform (Lipsman, Mudd et al. 2012). A question can be raised of why is it so, when there are numerous literatures and media sources warning against it? A study by Borbey (Borbey 2010) theorised that Facebook user's perception of risk, when the using the site, is related to how they frame the technology and identifies the dynamics that structure Facebook use, and how it balances between technological possibilities and the existing social practices. First, Borbey examined the potential dangers related to the postings of personal information online by drawing on both the sociology of risk and surveillance studies literature. While users comment or blog on social media sites, this can have adverse effects. Postings of personal information on the web are associated with various privacy risks. Once users become members of Facebook, it collects personal information of its users and makes it available for access by marketers. For example, Facebook social ads are a service that targets individuals based on their preferences from their profiles and usage of the site. The study explores the reasons why users risk being exposed to potential threats in exchange for benefits they receive from the site. The study hypothesised that perception of risk on Facebook was associated with how individuals framed the technology. It states that individuals were socially less involved with their acquaintances than with their friends, these can harbour valuable social capital. The data collected suggested that general users do not believe they were subjecting themselves to any immediate risks as they felt they were in control over the information they posted, and trusted the privacy settings offered by Facebook. The study points out that risks associated with online networking are for the most part not immediate threats to the safety or security of individuals but may pose a threat.

With social media, most people feel they are safe as they believe that they have nothing to hide (Arntfield 2008). For those who make the argument that if they do not violate any rules, then they have nothing to worry about. Lyon (2001) states that using social media has become routine, that every day you may have done nothing out of the ordinary, you haven't violated any rules nor broken any laws, yet despite this your every exchange, every conversation, every transactions, even

your movements and any calls will come to the attention of agencies and organisations for whom these activities are significant (Lyon 2001).

It is clear that the attitude that if you have nothing to hide, there is nothing to worry about is somewhat flawed and is thus also relevant to the context of the impact of social media tools use on the organisational websites. Another important facet of online surveillance is that while some information is voluntarily provided, for example, credit card information, other information maybe gathered without individuals being aware. (Borbey 2010, p.55)

In this context, Andrejevis (2007) states that when search engines collect information about users' web-surfing activities, the search engine's users remain mostly unaware of the information that is being collected, and have no idea how it is collected or for what purposes (Andrejevis 2007). While sites provide their users with a free service, there is a counter argument: what will the site obtain in return for this free service? As an example, Google provides their users and Gmail users large amounts of virtual storage space for their documents and correspondence, but the balance to this is that users have given Google the right to mine their data for later use for commercial purposes (Andrejevis 2007).

An important issue to consider is what or how much are users aware of the traces left by their online activities. Gandy (Gandy 2006) describes a variety of methods, which many are hidden from or not disclosed to website visitors that are used to collect transaction-generated details about them. Therefore, these issues trigger the question of even though some website users/visitors aren't worried about the collected information about them, thinking they have nothing to hide, does this still make it acceptable to gather detailed information about users without their consent?

Many organisations continue to adopt new technologies at a rapid rate. This is evident in the widespread adoption of Web 2.0 online social networking services. A study by Mackenzie suggests that organisations adopt emerging and new technologies because of strong external pressures, rather than a clear and defined understanding of any likely enhanced business value (MacKenzie 2011). It explores external pressures influencing organisations to adopt social media services for business communication purposes and increased business value and how is that value being captured and measured. It narrowed down the reasons behind organisations' continued adoption of new technologies although their business value rationale hasn't been determined yet. It looked at technical, social and macro-societal pressures influencing social networking services adoption and gave reasons for every participating organisation's use of social media, the pressures and also provided examples of organisations that failed to implement a social media marketing strategy. The study suggested that members of organisations use social media to exchange information and

simultaneously construct project identities on a firm and personal level, as well as competitors and other stakeholders but lacked empirical evidence to affirm this. However, it made recommendations that IT governance risk management mechanisms provide secure means of developing and deploying social media applications and detect vulnerabilities in them. One criticism of this study would be suggesting that having a presence within a social media platform enhanced reputation and attracts younger employees. The author did not provide convincing explanation or evidence to support this theory. Articles by Kovach (Kovach 1987) and McDermid (McDermid 1960) present reasons for job acceptance that indicate that there are other factors for people to apply for jobs that aren't related to any social interaction. It is fair to state that employees of any age group generally get offered a job that they can perform on the basis of knowledge to perform well at the job.

With numerous social media platforms used by organisations, information is scattered on different sources. A study by Massoudi, Tsagkias, De Rijke, Weerkamp (2011) introduced query model approach in complimenting information retrieval from several social media indexes, specifically discovering implicitly linked social media utterances. It introduced a graph-based method for selecting discriminative terms. The method relied on different representations of the source news articles with title, lead and body and also on auxiliary social media using retrieval and fusion steps. The data fusion methods in this approach have significantly boosted retrieval performances over individual approaches. This approach can be very useful for media organisations in developing tools that utilises the information retrieval model proposed in this study.

Another issue arising from incorporating specific social media technologies is the enforced updates that can intersect with business intentions rather than align with it. Facebook released a program called "Beacon" that was a first attempt at implementing a "word-of-mouth" campaign tool in a social networking platform. Beacon failed. The idea was that whenever a Facebook user bought an item from a participating online shop (e.g. from Amazon), their purchase would be shared with all of their Facebook friend contacts in the status message: "*person* just bought '*book-name*' at *online-bookshop*". This way, Facebook users would be easily updated about each friends' shopping behaviours. However, the "Beacon" was unsuccessful, mostly because of the way it was introduction to the user base. Instead of presenting the "Beacon" as an optional feature, the default implementation was that Beacon was enabled across the entire user base, all done without their knowledge. As a consequence, many secret gifts bought by users at a participating online store, such as Amazon, were broadcast via Facebook to potentially the recipients of the gift, often days before the buyer would receive the actual delivery. Beacon was terminated in Sep 2007 after a tirade of

negative publicity in the 9 months of its introduction (Mccarthy 2009). Therefore, even if the social network's privacy settings prevented certain posts and chat messages from becoming public, questions continue about the legal status of the information circulated within a social network, especially if it concerns business intelligence. Knowing the exact terms and conditions of a social networking site operator is a good way to start, but considering that such guidelines are frequently revised and altered (and usually without any given notice to the user base), the risk of complete disclosure of such messages must be taken into account (Langheinrich and Karjoth 2010).

2.6.2 NON-TECHNICAL CHALLENGES

There have been several key studies indirectly relating to the risks associated with the use of social media embedded as part of the business website. These vary from brand damage and customer dialog management, to ethical considerations. This section highlights some of these challenges associated with this implantation.

An article by Langheinrich and Karjoth (Langheinrich and Karjoth 2010) summarizes the opportunities and dangers that social networks pose for businesses. It raises important sub-headings but fails to effectively address those issues. Two of its sections that discuss '*social networks as a leadership tool*' and '*dangerous liaisons – employees in social networks*' lack clear definition and analytical attention and do not provide evidence to support them. For example, '*social networks as a leadership tool*' describes social networks being highly addictive tools that employees risk neglecting their work and the legal complications of managers 'befriending' their employees. It mentions, very briefly, how managers use social networks to befriend their employees and coordinate work with regular status updates. The section loses focus on the subject matter of social networking sites as a '*leadership tool*' and fails to provide convincing evidence. Further, the introduction of '*dangerous liaisons - employees in social networks*' misleads the reader into social networks complicating company security, however it provides an example on amazon.com "purchase circle" program, a campaign to publish aggregated buying patterns of its customers that is more suited evidence for "social selling".

Social networks can quickly destroy a company's image that took years to build, loss in productivity, online gambling and undermine legal obligations. At the same time, using nothing more than a low-cost grassroots campaign social media can quickly destroy a highly profitable brand image that took years to build-up. With the availability of rating, ranking, and scrutinizing within social networks, it has enabled consumers to become much more critical of companies, their services and the individual

brands. Consumers connect together via social media, becoming powerful allies, and critical consumers who together can and do wreak havoc on a brand. Blogging and other similar Web technologies mechanisms provide an easy forum for online criticism, and the power behind the linked social networks helps this critique to spread quick and faraway (Pitt, Berthon et al. 2002). Inherently, bad news, or negative critiques are interesting and very shareable; these stories hop from social media into the nets of news-hunting journalists eagerly searching for the next story for the mainstream press. Brands suddenly find themselves in midst of a media storm, to which they must bow or fight back with a response. The 'most tweeted' brand status was earned by McNeil Consumer Healthcare when consumers decided that its online advertising campaign for Motrin was both insensitive to mothers and insulting (Belkin 2008). Within a weekend, the video sharing platform YouTube contained videos of the original advertisement, as the storm continued it ended up generating over 500,000 views and reviews of the ad, eventually with posts on the Twitter service calling for a boycott of the brand.

Another study by Blase Ur and Yang Wang highlighted areas of concern to do with protecting user privacy in online social media (Ur & Wang 2013). The study proposed a framework to provide users from diverse backgrounds and cultures a reasonable level of privacy protection. This was achieved through a proposed set of minimum questions that a social media service must address in order to provide reasonable levels of privacy. These questions were related to cultural norms with personal details, legal issues (e.g. privacy info available in user's language) and user expectations also included. The areas of concern were of users using a social media service and not users' experience with embedded social tools on websites. The study presented the framework to be applied by social media providers to identify the potential gaps in their support in their services for user privacy across different cultures.

Further, incorporating Social media tools on a company's website can result in losing audience base. There are active users who are resistant to sites such as Facebook due to its numerous privacy and security issues (Cosoi 2011). This can result in alienating users that might be actual clients of the company, and therefore results in possible loss of quality insights that might have been beneficial to the organisation. Although there is no prior literature to prove this, it can be observed from the number of visitors being higher than share numbers when compared in site visits reports.

One of the most challenging avenues was the measurement of Return on Investment (ROI) for a company. In a research report by MIT Sloan management review and Deloitte they reported on a

survey aiming to explore what drives the adoption of social media in organisations. They surveyed managers from 24 industries companies in 115 countries (Kiron, Palmer et al. 2012). The report found that the lack of management support is seen as the biggest barrier to adoption of social media in organisations. If metrics are in place, however, it can help managers assess, encourage and reward related behaviour. These metrics may be essential elements in organisations to assist them to shift their cultures to be more compatible with their social business.

2.7 IT POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

As social media and other technology for sharing information becomes even more ubiquitous, sophisticated and more embedded in people's lives, it will be vital for individuals with access to workplace data to establish boundaries for what is allowable by the business, and what type of activities and their data that may be exposing to security risk. Also, there is the question of the reputation of the business. To properly protect their brand reputation, it becomes even more imperative that each organisation develops clear guidelines on what may or may not be appropriate to say on the organisations social media site. This is particularly important where the business networking has become interchangeable with the social side of the business. However, the safeguards are not just restricted to a static policy document. While the increased acceptance that Web 2.0 and other collaborative technologies have highlighted the importance of thoroughly examining IT policies, consistent communication and staff training on the ever-changing social media landscape are fundamentals for an effective security programme (Turner 2011). Implementing a social media business initiative is not an easy process. A research advisory firm Garter estimates a 70% failure rate for social media projects (Smith et al. 2009) and suggests several factors could be responsible, such as:

- not using the enterprise software to solve true business problems;
- failing to integrate into an organisation's daily workflows any aspect of social media software; and
- a lack of insight, understanding, knowledge and support from senior management.

All these factors relate to lack of a clearly defined IT strategy that defines business goals, how they can be achieved through social media in an effective manner, measure its value while protecting the organisation from external threats. Therefore, an IT strategy is needed and should include:

- defined business goals that need to be achieved through social media tools;
- support for a successful adoption of social media tools to meet business needs;
- performance measures for the ROI value of social media used; and

- a clear vision to protect the organisation from social media threats.

A study by Bertot, Jaeger, Hansen (2012) explored government agencies' use of, and formal adoption process for, social media tools within the organisation. The study specifically examined regulatory frameworks in place in the organisations and the ways in which these frameworks applied to social media use by the U.S. government. This study highlighted opportunities and challenges government agencies deal with and provided suggestions to address them. It presented brief examples of challenges that public managers deal with such as constant platform changes and emergent citizen behaviour. Due to these issues, social media policies and organisational structures evolve as a result. It provided gaps in literature that current government social media policies did not cover. These related to making information available to everyone without language difference as a barrier. However, the study provided a detailed description of policy instruments related to government use of social media. These were related to website security, data privacy and management, accessibility and various policy issues.

Clearswift (www.clearswift.com) research also provided a set of helpful guidelines for introducing and enforcing an effective IT policy. These guidelines are more focused on employee engagement in social media to protect business data by enforcing certain rules. Putting an IT security policy in place that is flexible, clear, and a policy which can and should be implemented across the organisation is key to IT security coming out of the shadows. More importantly, this form of policy and implementations provide businesses and their employees the reassurance that they need to move forward in confidence.

2.8 RESEARCH GAP

Whether social media are solely about socialisation or they are used for business purposes, it is evident that social media networks are highly prevalent, with tens of millions of users worldwide connecting, and using the various array of tools. Social Media allow companies to engage in direct end-consumer contact in a timely manner, at a relatively low cost, and all done with greater efficiency than can be achieved via more traditional communication tools. Successfully using Social Media in organisations is not a simple task and may require organisations to develop new ways of thinking to achieve success, but the potential gains may outweigh the risks. There is, however, a clear gap in the empirical evidence into the real life experiences of organisations and their users with corporate websites that embed social media platforms and tools. With different social media tools having their own strengths and weaknesses, this study has proposed that knowledge about the

various ways in which organisations and their users experience the embedding of social media in corporate websites is needed, and that applying a constructivist and qualitative approach to investigating this phenomenon provides a perspective that is of value to organisations and their ICT departments. This study will explore the experiences of organisations in embedding social media tools within official corporate websites. It will also examine the user's experience of using these official websites with embedded social media. In doing so, the study will help to bridge the gap between the lived experiences of organisations and the lived experiences of users.

2.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided an overview in relation to prior IT and Information Management academic studies which revealed a lack of empirical evidence that linked embedded social media within organisational websites and the experience of this adoption on organisations and end users. The literature also identified the opportunities social media is presenting in various industries and how it's being leveraged for business benefits. The background analysis provided context for this research and a justification for the importance of exploring the experiences of embedded social media tools. The next chapter introduces the theoretical framework for the study and data gathering techniques applied to answer the research questions.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided a context for the current research within the existing body of related research. It exposed a gap in the existing body of research that this study will address: little to no research has explored the real-life experiences of organisations and their users with corporate websites that embed social media. This chapter outlines the research approach for this study. It begins with an overview of the research paradigm in which the study was situated, and provides a rationale for the appropriateness of the qualitative method chosen for the research approach. Details regarding participant selection, data collection and data analysis are provided. The chapter concludes with a discussion on how quality was maintained and commentary concerning ethical considerations that were adhered to in conducting the study.

3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

A research paradigm is the “set of interrelated assumptions about the social world that provides a philosophical and conceptual framework for the systematic study of the world” (Kuhn 2012). Since different research paradigms are each grounded in different assumptions, they will each produce diverse ways of planning and conducting the research; each is a different research approach. Hence it is vital to recognize, describe and justify the research paradigm undertaken in any research. This study adopts pragmatism as the research paradigm. Pragmatism embraces a practical and applied research philosophy (Teddlie and Tashakkor 2003; Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009). As a research paradigm, pragmatism views knowledge as both being constructed and based on the reality of the world we experience, and it embraces the concept of warranted assert-ability for justification, whereby theories are only true to the extent they currently work. Pragmatism recognizes the existence of the physical world as well as the social and psychological world; it rejects traditional dualisms such as subjectivism versus objectivism, and views truth in meaning and knowledge as tentative and changing over time (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004). The underlying question the pragmatic researcher poses in designing a study is simply “What works?”. The first thing the pragmatist examines is the research question itself and considers the most likely methodological approaches, opting for the approach that will most effectively generate the parameters for concluding the study (Onwuegbuzie and Leech 2006).

3.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Lived experience and constructivism provide the theoretical frameworks of this study. Grounded on constructivism theory, based on the researcher's own professional experience in the media industry, the study sets out to validate a set of theories and introduce research questions. using qualitative interviews complimented by pre-scans of any existent social media tools on participants' media organisation websites. The interview questions focus on the lived experience of the participants with these tools. Lived experience is a narration of a situation or an experience through living it or having 'lived through it'. In order to capture the meaning of lived experience, themes are not formulated as abstract concepts, but rather as condensed description of an interviewee's experience with the phenomenon under examination (Lindseth & Norberg 2004).

The lived experience framework is fundamental and well-suited to this study because it reveals the impact of embedded social media on both media organisations and their website users. It is a research method in its own right and not simply a means of analysing data as it involves detailed examination of participants, in this case employees working in media and the users of their media websites. It will provide a rich explanation of their experiences of this particular phenomenon, how they made sense of these experiences and the meanings they attach to these experiences. The lived experience framework provided a method to uncover the expectations compared to the lived reality. Therefore, it's well suited for this study as the aim here was to provide a multidimensional understanding of a person's experience with websites that have embedded social media in such a way that it enforces the user to use them in order for them to engage on the website. This led to a more informed, nuanced, and empathetic practice (Curry, Nembhard and Bradley 2009; Kearney 2001)

On the other hand, from the constructivist work view, knowledge is established through the meanings attached to the phenomena studied. As qualitative advocates lay it *"In general, qualitative research is based on a relativistic, constructivist ontology that posits that there is no objective reality"* (Coll and Chapman 2000; Cousins 2002).

Constructivist ontology states that there is no objective reality. Rather, there are multiple realities constructed by human beings who experience a phenomenon of interest. People impose order on the world perceived in an effort to construct meaning; meaning lies in cognition not in elements external to us; information impinging on our cognitive systems is screened, translated, altered, perhaps rejected by the knowledge that already exists in that system; the resulting knowledge is idiosyncratic and is purposefully constructed (Lythcott and Duschl 1990). (Krauss 2005 , p.760)

As in the case of this study, decision makers are imposing certain tools to be used through-out the organisations and constructing certain realities that they may think cannot be achieved unless they're involved in the social media space. With constructivist paradigm, the information gathered from data collection phase can be dissected to explore the experiences of people involved in the phenomenon under study (e.g. employees in the organisations, clients or users of the organisations public web sites) and find out what those (realities) are.

This study's author argues that if they are able to prove the impact of social media through participants' lived experience, they will not only assist media organisations be proactive in the way they handle business and technical challenges from embedded social media, but also produce practical recommendations that can be used across a variety of organisations and industries.

3.4 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Qualitative research is an approach to scholarly inquiry employed to help interpret and better understand the complex reality of a given situation or a particular issue (Rubin & Babbie 2011). Qualitative research aims to answer questions about the 'what', 'how' or 'why' of a phenomenon rather than 'how many' or 'how much', which are answered by quantitative approaches (Rubin & Babbie 2011). A key strength of qualitative research is that it pursues answers to questions by exploring a variety of social settings and the entities who inhabit these settings (Patton 1990). The data obtained through qualitative approaches can provide a rich source of evidence because it includes virtually any information that can be captured that is not statistical in nature. The aim is to capture behaviours, beliefs, emotions, opinions, and even the relationships of individuals.

The current study employed a qualitative research approach, since it sought to explore the real life lived experiences (e.g. behaviours, attitudes, emotions) of organisations and users with corporate websites that have social media embedded. The interviews were examined using thematic analysis as it offered a flexible approach in analysing qualitative data. In addition, given the lack of research undertaken of the topic to date, a qualitative approach was appropriate for achieving the stated goals of the study (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). The study required the discovering of meanings that participants attach to their behaviour, how they interpret the various situations they find themselves in, and what their perspectives are on particular issues. Therefore, the study proposed an exploratory method for qualitative classification. The idea was to strike a balance between allowing emerging themes to appear and identifying the answers to the research questions. The 6-phase thematic analysis guide identified by Braun and Clarke was used. New themes were identified

through grounded theory approach to generate theory of the phenomenon through coding (Braun and Clarke 2006). This will be detailed further in section 3.9 in the Analysis section.

3.5 DATA COLLECTION

As discussed in the previous section, the qualitative approach was selected as appropriate to achieve the purpose of the study. Several research methods were considered prior to the final selection for this study. Although case study might seem best suited for this study, it was not in reality possible. Case study requires the research to have access to organisations and their inner activities including processes, systems and protocols. Unfortunately, potential organisations viewed this level of access as too exposing and were not willing to engage in this type of research. Hence alternative research approaches needed to be considered. This approach to selecting the data collection technique is also in keeping with the pragmatism research a paradigm informing this study. Finally, in depth interviews (King 1994) was deemed appropriate for accomplishing the research goals for both theoretical and practical reasons.

The primary technique used to gather data was in-depth qualitative interviews and audit technique as a secondary supporting method. Prior to interviews with employees of media organisations, auditing of the official website of media organisation they worked for was conducted to make the interview questions target the existing condition of media websites to provide valid lived experience examples. Additional data was collected through some participants reporting back to the researcher on some of the issues they remembered or come across. This was beneficial as it resulted in further findings and validating for discussions that is reported in chapter 6.

3.5.1 INTERVIEWS

In-depth interviews are the most common form of qualitative data collection used in organisational research (King 1994), and as such, are an appropriate data collection choice for the current study. The goal of an in-depth interview is to examine a research topic from an interviewee's perspective (King 1994). Marshall and Rossman (2006) build upon this point by describing in-depth interviews as being more like conversations than formal events, enabling the researcher to explore general topics and the participant to frame and structure responses" (Marshall and Rossman 2006). This is consistent with Minichiello, Aroni, Timewell and Alexander (1990), who stated that in-depth interviews are "a conversation with a purpose" and that this conversations is conducted between the participant and the researcher, but that conversation is focused on the participant's perception of his or her self, life and experience (Minichiello, Rosalie Aroni et al. 1990). During the

conversation, both the informants' perceptions, and the language they use to express themselves , provide empirical material for a research study (James, Milenkiewicz et al. 2007; Kvale 2008). Through this mutual conversation, the researcher has a "unique opportunity to uncover rich and complex information" (Cavana, Brian L. et al. 2001). In-depth interviews are an appropriate choice for the current study because of their ability to elicit information about the participants' views, opinions, ideas and experiences (Arksey and Knight 1999).

3.5.2 BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS

In-depth Interviews have benefits and drawbacks. They are particularly useful for getting the story behind an individual participant's experiences. They are useful for learning about the perspectives of individuals. They have consistently proven to be effective in getting individuals to talk about their experiences, opinions, and personal feelings. They are also an opportunity to gain insight into how people interpret and view the world around them. This can be accomplished by a researcher's focus to the underlying explanations participants provide on their experiences and beliefs and with active probing about the connections and relationships they see between particular events, phenomena, and views (Mack, Woodson et al. 2005). Interviews are also especially appropriate for addressing delicate and complex topics that people might be hesitant to debate in a group setting.

Although interviews can provide a rich source of data, they have certain limitations that can impact on a study. They are time consuming and resource intensive. To retrieve in-depth information requires time, and in most cases, finance for participants' reimbursements. Also, it requires the researcher to be prepared and well-trained on how to respond to any contingency (Johnson 2002). In this study, time management and pro-activity techniques were used to decrease the impact of the limitations and ensure interview times were set appropriately.

Another issue to consider is that the anonymity of the participant. The information a participant shares with the researcher must be assured to be confidential and that confidentiality maintained when reporting the research (Johnson 2002). This is because during an interview, the individual participant may share information that could jeopardise their position in their place of employment. As Johnson states, this collected "information must remain anonymous and protected from those whose interests' conflict with those of the" participant (Johnson 2002). An example of this can be incorporating social media tools onto the organisational website. Some social media coordinators may have chosen not to answer questions that may show a gap(s) within their social media policies

and its adoption, as it may impact on their duties at work. Therefore, the answers they provided may have been completely biased and not factual.

It is important to include in the research plan a method of recognizing the contributions that participants made to the success of the research process and to compensate them in various ways for their work (Anderson 1991). Therefore, the following section provides an overview of selected participants and how they are selected to decrease possible flaws of interview process.

3.6 PARTICIPANTS

Two groups of participants were invited to take part in the in-depth interviews, employees of media organisations and external users of the media organisations. As this study explored the use of social media within organisations corporate web sites, it was important that the participants have diverse and rich experiences of using this technology from both the organisations and the users' perspective. This would have helped in revealing the range of views, experiences and practices that currently exist in the phenomenon under study.

The first group were a mixture of individuals who were tasked with incorporating and embedding social media on the website. This group was a mixture of business and technical employees. Business individuals were the decision makers on the organisation's engagement levels in the social media space and whether they should be incorporating social media into the organisational website. Therefore, getting their insight on the reasons behind choosing to incorporate social media into the website and the business value they receive from this was important to this study. The second group of participants were technical employees such as developers who incorporated social media onto the organisations' website. Their knowledge on using third party code and widgets was invaluable as they reported their personal experience on technical functionality and code quality. The first Group will be referred to as **G1** and the second Group as **G2**. Participants' excerpts from each group will be referenced in the following format:

Group{*number*}-Participant{*number*}-page{*number*} -> G#-P#-p#

Example: The second interviewed participant from Group 1, from interview transcript extract on page #66 (i.e. employees working in media organisations) will be displayed as G1-P2-p#66.

As shown in **Table 3.1**, participants were 12 males and 8 females from both commercial and non-commercial media organisations with age ranges from 30-50. It could be argued that this is a biased

sample group because there are too many males or too many females in this area for the IT industry, but readers are reminded that this research includes business individuals. The selected participants were a healthy mix of different positions within the media industry such as IT employees, journalists, social media coordinators. They also varied from technical and non-technical skill-set and were from both genders and of varying age groups.

| # | Occupation | Organisation type | M/F | Age Group |
|----|--|----------------------------------|-----|-----------|
| 1 | Web developer | Non-commercial | M | 40-45 |
| 2 | Web developer | Non-commercial | M | 40-45 |
| 3 | Social media coordinator | Non-commercial | M | 40-45 |
| 4 | Executive Producer | Non-commercial | M | 30-35 |
| 5 | Social media producer | Non-commercial | M | 30-35 |
| 6 | Queensland editor | Non-commercial | F | 31-35 |
| 7 | External relationship manager | Non-commercial | F | 35 - 40 |
| 8 | Editor | Commercial | F | 31-35 |
| 9 | Freelance producer + journalist | Both commercial + non-commercial | M | 41-45 |
| 10 | Web Developer (redo interview of participant 1 after the interview question changes) | Non-commercial | M | 40-45 |
| 11 | Web Developer | Commercial | M | 36-40 |
| 12 | journalist news reader and a host | Commercial | F | 40-45 |
| 13 | Journalist | Commercial | M | 46-50 |
| 14 | State political reporter | Commercial | F | 46-50 |
| 15 | national affairs reporter | Commercial | M | 30-35 |
| 16 | Lead developer | Non-commercial | M | 31-35 |
| 17 | Presenter / journalist | Non-commercial | F | 40-45 |
| 18 | Chief of staff | Commercial | F | 31-35 |
| 19 | Senior manager | Commercial | F | 40-45 |
| 20 | Digital producer | Commercial | M | 30-35 |

Table 3.1: Participants that are current and were employees for media organisations

The second group of participants were members of the public who use organisations' website that have social media embedded into them but the majority were not employed by any of the organisations. It was important that participants be impartial and not affiliated with any online brand or any organisation selected in the interviewed sample in the study. It was also vital to interview few participants who worked for media organisations to see their interaction with media websites as users only and examine the way they interacted on media. Recruitment of these participants was conducted to balance a variety of professions (banking, hospitality, academia, technology, and media), gender and age. Exploring participant's experiences and their interaction with the social media embedded within the organisations corporate websites was a major focus. It can be seen in **Table 3.2** that there was a variety of technical expertise from non to limited to advanced level of technical knowledge.

| # | Occupation | M/F | Age Group |
|----|--|-----|-----------|
| 1 | School psychologist (no technical expertise) | M | 30-35 |
| 2 | University Student/video editor (has technical expertise) | M | 20-25 |
| 3 | Digital producer (has some technical expertise) | F | 30-35 |
| 4 | Production manager (has no technical expertise) | M | 40-45 |
| 5 | Digital producer (has some technical expertise) | F | 45-50 |
| 6 | Personal Trainer (has no technical expertise) | M | 20-25 |
| 7 | Software engineer/consultant (has high-level technical expertise) | M | 40-45 |
| 8 | Video editor (has technical expertise) | F | 35-40 |
| 9 | System engineer (has technical expertise) | M | 35-40 |
| 10 | post-doc research fellow (has some technical expertise) | F | 45-50 |
| 11 | Financial advisor with Suncorp (has no technical expertise) | M | 25-30 |
| 12 | UX Designer/front end developer (has technical expertise) | M | 20-25 |
| 13 | Fulltime student and part-time worker (front desk at Terry White Chemist) | F | 20-25 |
| 14 | Food sales assistant at supermarket giant (has no technical expertise) | M | 25-30 |
| 15 | Hairdresser (has no technical expertise) | F | 20-25 |
| 16 | Unemployed - will be starting telemarketing (has no technical expertise) | M | 40-45 |
| 17 | Hospitality - serving food (has no technical expertise) | M | 25-30 |
| 18 | Hospitality - serving food (has no technical expertise) | M | 30-35 |
| 19 | Financial consultant with Suncorp (has no technical expertise) | M | 30-35 |
| 20 | Hospitality - food and beverage attendant (has no technical expertise) | F | 19 |

Table 3.2: Participants that view media websites for news

In the following sections, the sampling approach to participant recruitment is given, including the type of population sampled, the data gathering techniques, data analysis approach and key results.

3.6.1 SAMPLING AND RECRUITMENT APPROACH

There are many different approaches to sampling that can be used in research involving in-depth interviews. Purposeful sampling is when researchers purposely choose specific participants who they know have experience with the central phenomenon or the main idea being explored (Vogt 1999). The Purposive sampling approach was selected as the most effective option to access the participants for the current research. It was appropriate for this study because its strategies are designed to enhance understandings of selected individuals or groups' experiences for developing concepts or theories (Frankel and Devers 2000a; Frankel and Devers 2000b). Snowballing is a subset of Purposeful sampling and was used to recruit both groups of participants. The technique is intended to open access to participants from a population that may be hard to approach, either due to the sensitivity of the topic or a low number of potential participants (Berg 1988). Thus, it is important to correlate with those that are important to create more opportunities, and a credible and dependable reputation.

Snowball sampling is a technique for building networks and increasing the number of likely participants. They select “information rich” cases, individuals, or organisations that provide the greatest insight to answer research questions. Although snowballing is a successful technique for participant selection, success depends greatly on the initial contacts and connections made. This strategy involves locating a “hidden” population that a researcher may not know about and can only achieve contacting them through associations (Faugier and Sargeant 1997). Snowball sampling’s strength, as Thomson states, “*seek to take advantage of the social networks of identified respondents to provide a researcher with an ever-expanding set of potential contacts.*” (Thomson 1997). The strength of the approach is that it is inexpensive, very convenient and timely.

Snowball sampling can be applied for two primary purposes. Firstly, it can be used as an 'informal' technique to reach a target population. If the intent of a study is of a qualitative, descriptive and even an explorative nature, snowball sampling provides practical advantages, especially when using the interview method (Hendricks, Blanken and Adriaans, 1992). Furthermore, snowball sampling is a more formal technique for making assumptions about an existing community or group of individuals who have been difficult to line up previously through traditional research methods such as household surveys (Snijders, 1992; Faugier and Sergeant, 1997).

At the beginning, the study was advertised through emails to several media organisations that had social media presence on social platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and others. The incentive for participating was receiving a \$50 voucher from their favourite stores but the recruitment email designed did not achieve the required outcome. This test indicated that the recruitment method had indeed stretched beyond emails and assistance was needed from their immediate professional contacts. Therefore, the chain-referral method was used in the selection process. The researcher contacted well-known television personalities and journalists they worked with and through these first contacts were able to connect with other well-known media individuals in other media organisations.

Participants were selected based on whether their role in the organisation allowed or required the use of social media tools as part of their duties. Ahead of each interview, a scan of the participant’s organisational website was conducted to investigate what external social media tools were used, whether embedded as streaming widgets or used as share-buttons. This was used to generate a list of embedded third-party widgets and apps. This list would be used during the interview to ask the participant specific questions tailored to suit the social media tools incorporated onto their

organisation's news website. Each tool was explored in detail to find out the purpose they were embedded for on the corporate website, whether they served these purposes, and the outcome from such adoption. The data from one participant was excluded simply because their website was not populated with any social media embeds and they promoted their program using their personal social media profile.

3.6.2 THE SAMPLE SIZE & NATURE

Having established the sampling approach, the next major issue considered when using in-depth interviews was that of sample size. Many qualitative researchers prefer not to constrain research by providing exact sizes of samples, however the numbers may range from one or two participants, as in a narrative type of study, and it could be well between 50 or 60 in a grounded theory project (Creswell 1998). Creswell indicates that when cases are reported, a small sample between 4 to 10 of participants is used. The number is related to the nature of the qualitative approach used, such as case study, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative, or phenomenological research (Creswell 1998). While there is no strict sample size for interviews, most studies using this data collection method engage between 20 and 50 participants to ensure a rich and complex data pool has been gathered. Douglas asserted that interviews with at least 25 people were needed before reaching the saturation point (Douglas 1985). This view was also noted by Green and Thorogood who states that in "interview studies little that is 'new' comes out of transcripts after you have interviewed 20 or so people" (Green and Thorogood 2009). Hence the sample size for this research investigation was 40 participants; split evenly across the two participant groups (i.e. 20 participants for employees of media organizations and 20 participants of end users).

3.7 DEVELOPING THE INTERVIEW GUIDES

Essential for the data collection phase is the development of an interview guide for conducting the in-depth semi-structured interviews. The interview guide is the first step in the interview process as it ensures that all key themes are raised, and assists in managing time effectively during the interview (Marschan-Piekkari & Welch, 2004). The interview question list which were asked of the study participants in this study can be found at the end of this section. Two separate interview guides were developed; one for the first group of participants (the employees) and one for the second group of participants (the users). The questions used in each guide were revised and modified after conducting a pilot study for each participant group to ensure the relevance, clarity, simplicity and unambiguity of the questions (Yaghmale, 2003). Details of the pilot study follow.

In any research, the benefit of conducting a number of small pilots prior to the main study has been emphasised in numerous literature (Stake 1995; Creswell 1998). This process of conducting pilot interview is to test quality of questions and assist with their formulation and refinement to best capture the particular phenomenon under investigation. One of the main reasons for conducting a pilot interview was to enable the researcher rehearses the interview process and gain experience in carrying out a thorough examination using a qualitative approach.

It was decided that the interviews with organisations employees would be the first data collection technique to pilot test. The reason for this was pragmatic in nature; the researcher was able to easily access participants for this part of the study via her professional networks. Data collection for the pilot study was undertaken in April-May 2013. Four participants were purposively selected to take part, two were business individuals who are part of the decision making process, and the other two were technical individuals who implement the tasks passed on from the decision makers. Criteria for selecting the participants included: being an employee of a media organisation that uses social media tools embedded on its public website, employed fulltime, must be either a business individual that uses social media tools as part of their job description, or a technical individual that is involved in hands-on implementation of social media tools on the organisation's website. The interviewees selected were all male, 2 technical developers and 2 business employees (social media coordinators). They all worked for large media organisations that utilised social media tools and spaces heavily on their websites. The interviews were audio recorded and ran for approximately 30 to 40 minutes. However, the fourth pilot test with a social media coordinator took 1 hour and 16 minutes.

The questions used in the pilot interviews were formulated following examination and consideration of questions used in a number of previous qualitative studies. These questions were designed to reveal different aspects of the phenomenon. The initial list of questions before the pilot interview included:

- Tell me about your role in your organisation?
- What social media technologies does your organisation use within its public website?
- Why did your organisation decide to start using social media technologies in its public website?
- How were the specific social media technologies selected? What process was used? Who was involved in making this selection?

- What benefits are there to your organisation in using social media technologies in its public website? What are the benefits of the specific social media technologies you have selected?
- What are the challenges to your organisation in using social media technologies in its public website? What are the challenges of the specific social media technologies you have selected?
- How does your organisation monitor or evaluate its use of social media technologies in its public website?
- What policies or protocols does your organisation use to guide its use of social media technologies in its public website?
- Did your (or does your) organisation consult with users of its public website in regard the use of social media technologies? If so how? If not, why not?
- Does your organisation use social media technologies in other parts of its business operations and processes? If so, please provide details. If not, why not?

In addition, a range of general probe questions were used to elicit further information from participants about the responses they provided. The general probe questions chosen were similarly devised from previous qualitative studies. These probe questions included:

- Could you explain that further?
- Could you tell me more about that?
- What do you mean by that?
- Why is that important?
- Could you please give me an example?

Responses from the first interview weren't as high quality as anticipated. Although the questions did orientate the participant to the phenomena being explored, it was noted that the participant spoke in generalities and not specifics e.g. they did not discuss particular social media or specific experiences in great detail. After reflecting on the first interview conducted and examining interview transcript, it was evident that amendments to the interview discussion guide was required. The interview questions were retained but the flow and structure in which they were posed was modified. It was hoped that by changing the manner in which the questions were asked would allow the participant to focus their discussions on specific experiences they had with a particular social media, rather than having them discussing the overall experience which can be

too much and confusing. In addition, three new questions were included: (i) *tell me about your organisation?* – was added to provide more context to the participant’s discussion; (ii) *If you identified a new social media tool and thought it should be added to your organisations official public website, what process would you need to go through to have it added?* – was added to explore further the processes and systems employed in selecting and deciding to implement a new social media tool; and (iii) *Is there anything else you would like to say about your organisations use of social media in its official web site?* – was added to allow the participant to discuss any final points not yet considered during the interview.

The modified discussion guide is as follows:

- Tell me about your role in your organisation?
- Tell me about your organisation? (e.g. what business is it in? how large is it?)
- What social media does your organisation use within its public website? For example, Facebook, Twitter etc. [A laptop will be available for the user to show the organisations official public website and what social media is being used].
 - For each specific social media tool/space identified (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) the following questions will be asked:
 - Why did your organisation decide to start using this tool in its public website?
 - How was the tool selected? What process was used? Who was involved in making this selection?
 - What benefits are there to your organisation in using this technology in its public website? Can you tell me an example of a real life challenge that was recently experienced?
 - What are the challenges to your organisation in using this tool in its public website? Can you tell me an example of a real life challenge that was recently experienced?
 - How does your organisation monitor or evaluate its use of this tool in its public website?
 - What policies or protocols does your organisation use to guide its use of this tool in its public website?
 - Did your (or does your) organisation consult with users of its public website in regard the use of this tool? If so how? If not, why not?

- If you identified a new social media tool and thought, it should be added to your organisations official public website what process would you need to go through to have it added?
- Does your organisation use social media technologies in other parts of its business operations and processes? If so, please provide details. If not, why not?
- Is there anything else you would like to say about your organisations use of social media in its official web site?

The modified discussion guide was used with interviews 2, 3 and 4. It was readily apparent that the new guide worked well in orientating the participant to the phenomenon of study and providing them the opportunity to discuss their experiences in using particular social media tools. This interview guide was used to undertake the main study. It had also been noted in the first interview that whilst the researcher was aware that they should ask probing questions in practice, they did not. As this was the researchers first time in conducting this type of data collection, there was room for improvement (e.g. confidence building, refining interview techniques). During interviews 2, 3 and 4 the researcher made a concerted effort to engage in more active listening and to proactively and strategically use probing questions to bring out more details from the participants. A review of the interview transcripts reveals that this effort was successful with more quality data emerging from these latter interviews. It was also noted that having access to a computer during the interview process was indeed beneficial in that it allowed the participant to show the organisational website and demonstrate the particular social media being discussed. The researcher brought along a laptop to all the interviews following the pilot test.

Some of the interview responses from business employees (i.e. journalists) as opposed to technical employees (such as developers) have proven difficult as some did not understand the difference between an embedded external social media tools such as widgets and links to social media platforms. Therefore, further probing was required during interviews and clarifications were needed to ensure participants understood specific questions related to this phenomenon. Further, interviews conducted with business employees who were specifically social media coordinators of the organisations were easier and useful data were collected from this group. Interviews were even easier when conducted with technical developers as they understood the terminologies pretty well and provided rich source of information of technical issues of social

media tools. Although these issues presented serious risks to organisations online, all participants from group 1 thought that incorporating social media tools into their business operations was extremely effective and helped them greatly in reaching out to audience and communities.

Second group of participants, the online users, were those who access media organisations' websites for latest news and articles. Questions were tailored based on some of the findings from interviews of the first group. This is to determine if media organisations have covered the needs of online users. For instance, in the first group of participants, media professionals stated that they embedded certain social media tools because they are popular. This question led to tailoring a question for the second group of participants (i.e. external online user) that aimed to validate which social media platforms they used and why. The questions were formulated in the following manner:

- What external social media platforms do you use? Why? Are you signed up with?
- How did you decide what social media platform to use?
- Do you use these platforms to engage with media websites?
- How do you engage with the website? (i.e. reading news, sharing or leaving comments)
- What kind of difficulties do you experience when engaging with media websites?

After the pilot study was conducted, it became clear that more open ended questions were needed that contained further probing. It was noted that if participants in this group demonstrated, on a PC/laptop, their surfing for news and their favourite websites, it will provide more realistic responses. This technique provided the interviewer an avenue to capture the participant's actual browsing habits or certain features and functionality of the website that are appealing/non-appealing to them. Responses were therefore more related to what their lived experience with these websites was. It was also to prompt avenues for the interviewer to ask specific questions on any embedded social media and reveal the pros and cons to the users' experience. Therefore, the questions were framed in the following style:

- Could you tell about your role? What do you currently do?
How do you get your news? (what's happening around the world, weather, government, stories)
- When you see important news articles or stories? Do you like to share them with other people? Friends or family?
- How do you share information?

- Sharing buttons?
- Copy/Paste link into an email and send it?

- Do you have Facebook account?
 - If no, why not?
 - If yes, why?
- Do you have Twitter account?
 - If no, why not?
 - If yes, why?
- What other social media accounts do you currently have?

(for each SM account, the following questions will be asked)

 - What do you use it for?
 - Sharing buttons - to share links or;
 - Engagement - to comment on stories and articles
- Are you finding it helpful to share news with others using external social media accounts?
- Could you tell me about a problem you experienced on a website when you tried to share articles/links through social media tools?
- Could you tell me about a problem you experienced on a website when you were engaged in commenting on an article or story on a news website?
 - If Yes, could you tell me more about that?

The detailed formulation of the questions was indeed proven successful. Participants in this group revealed their experiences with embedded social media within websites and also provided further information about their challenges and preferences. These are presented as examples in chapter 5 of the study.

3.8 CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEWS

In most qualitative research, researchers vary the degree to which they structure their interviews (Frankel and Devers 2000a; Frankel and Devers 2000b) Devers and Frankel recommend that when a study is attempting to discover and/or refine theories, when it is more exploratory in nature, when it is attempting to define or concepts, then a very open-ended protocol is appropriate to consider. Another factor for influencing the degree of structure is the extent of existing knowledge and literature about a subject matter. As the current study was to explore lived experiences and to gain a better understanding of a phenomenon that very little is currently known, it used a semi-structured format (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006). Semi-structured interviews encourage the

interviewee to share detailed descriptions of a phenomena under study while permitting the researcher to interpret or analyse the data. Interviews are generally organised around a set of prearranged and well-thought through open-ended questions, with other probing questions developing from the dialogue between researcher and the interviewee (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006).

When a researcher prepares for an interview, its best to consider several points such as choosing a setting with the least distraction to ensure participant can answer interview questions without any uncomfortable surroundings. This is also important as it impacts on the method used to record data such as video tapes or taking notes (Creswell 2006). Ideally, interviews should be conducted in a mutually agreed private location, somewhere where participants feel comfortable and also know that their privacy is completely protected. Every effort was made to ensure the participants' privacy was protected to the greatest extent possible, and there was a comfortable environment for each participant during the interviews.

When explaining the purpose of a study, it is recommended that the researcher explain the format of the interview and indicate how long it will take (Foddy 1993; McNamara 1999; Dick 2002). Allowing interviewee to clarify any doubts about the interview from the beginning is necessary so their answers won't be biased. It is also vital to prepare participants ahead of an interview and provide examples of the questions they will be asked. Pilot study revealed that participants may forget scenarios of their experiences. However, when prepared ahead, they provide better details and descriptions of scenarios resulting in rich data. This technique was used and proven to be valuable.

The two sets of interviews were conducted by the one researcher. The interviews with the employees of the media organisations were conducted first. The reason for this was pragmatic in nature; the researcher was able to easily access participants for this part of the study via her professional networks.

Ahead of each interview with the employees an audit of the participant's organisational website was conducted to investigate what external social media tools were used and how they were being used or embedded. The audit process used a method to compliment the qualitative interviews and tailor specific questions suitable to ask the participant working for a media organisation. This was used to generate data (**Table 3.3**) that was then used during the interview to ask the participant specific questions tailored to suit the social media tools incorporated on the participant's corporate website.

Each tool was explored in detail to find out the purpose they were embedded for on the corporate website, whether they served these purposes, and the outcome from such adoption.

Ten Media websites were audited to examine the kind of third-party social media tools that were embedded and used. The websites that were audited were all Australian, some government and others commercial. The audit process included scanning a website for any third-party social media tools such as share buttons, widgets, and applications. This was done to determine the purpose the organisation believed or assumed these tools were trying to fulfil (**Table 3.3**). There is one obvious limitation to conducting website audits: the constant updates to websites. Media organisations constantly update their websites and this usually means they could remove certain third-party tools or apply new ones. Thus, interview questions may have been impacted as some of the findings reported in this study may have updated or does not exist anymore.

| P# | AddThis | Facebook | Flickr | LinkedIn | Twitter | Storify | StumbleUpon | Youtube | Vimeo | Others |
|----|------------------|---|-----------------------|----------|---|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|------------------|--|
| 1 | Share | Link/share | Embed gallery | share | Embed | embed | link | Embed | embed | |
| 2 | Share | Link external | Embed gallery | | Embed tweets | | | | | |
| 3 | Share | Link/share | Embed through Storify | | embedded Twitter stream on breaking stories /single tweet | Embed to curate content on other SM | | embedded videos | embedde d videos | Mass Relevance - embedded only during elections, removed Instagram |
| 4 | Share | external link | Gallery embed | | embedded | | | | | SoundCloud embed embedded to view PDF docs. |
| 5 | share | Embedded Facebook chat for competitions only | Gallery embed | | Embed twitter stream | | | Linking directly to music track | | Internal commenting system, Spotify link directly to music traffic |
| 6 | Share | Share buttons on website/ embedded on CMS/external link | | share | Embedded on breaking stories | | | | | Google Chat Reddit Internal commenting system |
| 7 | Share | Share buttons on website/ embedded on CMS/external link | | | Embedded on breaking stories | | User stated its used but website did not show any sign of external link or embed. | | | Reddit- share/external link |
| 8 | Share | | | | Embedded on specific stories | | | Embedded videos | | |
| 9 | Share | External link | | | Embedded | | | | | |
| 10 | Share | External link | | | embedded | | | | | |
| 11 | Share | Link/Share on individual articles | | | embedded | | | | | Reddit share GooglePlus share LinkedIn share |
| 12 | | Share | | Share | Embedded/share | | | | | PinIt share GooglePlus share |
| 13 | share | Link/share on individual articles/external link | | Share | Embedded/link/share | | | | | Instagram |
| 14 | Share | Share/external link | | | embedded | | | | | Instagram embed |
| 15 | Share | External link | | Share | embedded | | | | | Google Chat Reddit |
| 16 | Share | Embedded but removed after network security issue | Embed through Storify | share | Embedded/share/external link | embed | | | | Photo embeds through Instagram |
| 17 | Nothing embedded | | | | | | | | | |
| 18 | Share | Share | | | embedded | | | | | Google Chat Reddit |
| 19 | | External link | | | embedded | | | | | |
| 20 | share | Embedded "Like" box/User comments | | share | embedded | Starting to embed | | | | Embedded Instagram |

Table 3.3: Participants' employer website and their use of embedded social media

The interviews for both participant groups were conducted at a time and place convenient to the participant. The duration of the interviews was between 30 mins to 1 hour with participants who were accessed websites of media organisations, and 1 to 2 hours with the employees of organisations. Due to the researcher's background in media, an assumption is made that employee interviews will take longer time due to the fact that qualitative interview questions might encourage an employee to further provide analysis of certain events or issues relating to social media tools. These issues could also contain technical information that may need to be demonstrated. Therefore, adequate amount of time should be set to ensure the participant is comfortable and not rushed into answering questions. The interviews were all audio recorded and transcribed verbatim. Not all interviews were conducted face-to-face. As some participants were located inter-state, some interviews had to be conducted through phone. As the phenomenon under investigation can be displayed on a PC or a mobile device to demonstrate the share and engagement experience through social media on media organisations' websites. Screenshots of the websites, and their URLs the interview questions were related to were sent to the interviewee. Further, instructions were given to the interviewee on which site URL's to visit to proceed with the interview.

Developing a rapport is an important step in the interview process. The interviewer needs to quickly grow a positive relationship with their participants. The process of initiating rapport is an important element of the interview and has been well documented in the works of Palmer (Palmer 1928) and Douglas (Douglas 1985). Fundamentally rapport involves both the trust of the interviewee and a respect for them both as study participants and for the information they provide during the interview. It is also the way to establishing a safe and comfortable environment for sharing the participant's personal experiences as they occurred in the actual sense. Four Stages of rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee have been defined by Spradley (Spradley 1979) and others (Briggs 1986; Crabtree and Miller 1999; Rubin and Rubin 2005) and generally consist of apprehension, exploration, co-operation and participation.

The initial apprehension stage is characterised by uncertainty stemming from the strangeness of a context in which the interviewer and interviewee are new. During this phase the goal is to get the interviewee talking. The first question should be broad and open-ended, should reflect the nature of the research and be non-threatening. If necessary, this question can be repeated with some embellishment, giving the interviewee time to hear what is being asked and to think about how to respond. As responses are given, the interviewer can in turn respond with prompts that repeat the words used by the interviewee. This process signals the need for further clarification without leading the interviewee. Questions that can be interpreted as leading or that prompt the interviewee through the use of words other than those used by the interviewee can result in misleading answers (DiCicco-Bloom 2004, p.316).

Johnson states that “Throughout the interview, the goal of the interviewer is to encourage the interviewee to share as much information as possible in their own words” (Johnson 2002). The exploration phase, in DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree’s words, is all about diving into the interviewee’s world, initiating rapport to a degree where the participant is comfortable to share sensitive information.

The exploration phase is when the interviewee becomes engaged in an in-depth description. This process is accompanied by learning, listening, testing and a sense of bonding and sharing. The next phase, the co-operative phase, is characterised by a comfort level in which the participants are not afraid of offending one another and find satisfaction in the interview process. The interviewer may take the opportunity to clarify certain points and the interviewee may correct the interviewer as they both make sense together of the interviewee’s world. This may also be a time to ask questions that were too sensitive to ask at the beginning. If the interview process continues for a long time or if the interviewer and interviewee develop rapport rapidly, the participation stage may occur within the time limit of the in-depth interview. This stage of the process reflects the greatest degree of rapport and at this point the interviewee takes on the role of guiding and teaching the interviewer. (DiCicco-Bloom 2004, p.316).

DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree also highlight the importance of the researcher finding out more about the participant through the elimination of hierarchy between them through sharing of information in response to the informants’ requests:

It could be argued that the goal of finding out about people and establishing trust is best achieved by reducing the hierarchy between informants and researchers, which in this case involved sharing information in response to the informants’ requests. (DiCicco-Bloom 2004, p.317).

3.9 ANALYSIS

Thematic analysis was used to analyse the data obtained from both sets of interviews (Braun and Clarke, 2006). Thematic procedures are a qualitative analytic method that identify, analyse and report patterns found (or the themes) within the research data. The intention is to both minimally organise as well as describe the data set in rich detail (Braun and Clarke 2006). This allows approaching the subject matter from different perspectives or paradigms as it may help in gaining a holistic view of the phenomenon. This is important in the current study because the unit of study is an exploratory lived experience as there is no existing empirical work on this phenomenon.

The first step to thematic analysis was to collect and be familiar with the data. All interviews in the current study were transcribed and these verbatim transcripts provided the data for analysis. Early familiarisation with the data started while transcribing the interviews through repeatedly listening to audio files for transcription and catching of the meanings. Next, the transcripts were read multiple

times to acquire a thorough understanding of the data. Preliminary notes were taken after each interview transcription to aid in developing ideas related to the data.

The second step to thematic analysis is generating codes based on the data. Coding of the data was undertaken both deductively (theory driven) and inductively (data driven) (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The codes were developed based on the Research Questions. This study primarily utilised an inductive approach in order to identify what originally emerged from the data. Coding Cycles applied previously also simplify filtering process applied on the data, as filtering language used wasn't to describe an opinion or a personal view, but mere description or summary of what the data was saying. This tactic is beneficial for the analysis phase as data is being analysed while steering clear of injecting personal views or opinions on the coding language used (Cruzes and Dyba 2011 page 5). However, it's important to note that some research questions did ask participants about their personal views on social media tools and how it's applied on the site, however this is separate from a non-biased code filtering language as the research describes personal experiences with different social media tools.

The third step in thematic analysis deals with searching and identifying main themes of the study (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). In Boyatzis's words:

Themes in thematic analysis generally refer to abstract constructs or broad categories that conceptually link expressions found in the data. Themes are patterns in the data that explain and organise "the possible observations" and "aspects of the phenomenon" (Boyatzis 1998).

To generate themes in this study, the codes developed in the previous step of the analysis were combined to shape some tentative overarching themes.

The fourth step was to, while focusing on the main research question, review transcripts again to determine if there were any further references to the themes that had been missed, or any new themes that had been missed that had also emerged from the data. No limitations were imposed at this stage of the data analysis in terms of scope, likely significance, or any arbitrary limitation in the number of themes or sub-themes.

The fifth step of the thematic analysis was defining and naming of themes and finding similar narratives within each line of text that answered or helped in answering research questions.

The last step was to produce themes that were composed into headlines for sections and narrated participants' excerpts using the lived experience method.

3.9.1 CODE DEVELOPMENT

The initial codes that were developed for this study is presented in **Tables 3.4 and 3.5**. These codes reflect key themes such as participant role, the social media platform used, the purpose of the embedded social media. These codes were specifically designed to capture responses that are related to the first research questions presented in Chapter 1 section 1.4. The initial codes that were designed to capture responses that are directly related to the research questions are presented in **Table 3.4**.

| Code Label | Definition | Description | Comments |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| P-Role | Participant Role | The current job description of the participant and the type of user they are. E.g. business vs. user | |
| SM-Name | Social media tool name | Social media tool name such as Twitter, FB | |
| SM-Purp | SM tool purpose | The main purpose or reason this particular Social Media tool is being used for by the organisation on the public website. Expected Outcome. | |
| SM-Bus-Ben | Social Media tool business benefit | Actual Social Media tool's benefit as a whole from its use. Different to the expected outcomes. This is the practical usefulness of the tool from measurements. | |
| SM-Bus-Issue | Social Media Business Issue | Issues generated from a particular Social Media tool that's impacting on the operation of the business in a negative | |

| | | | |
|---------------|------------------------------|---|--|
| | | manner. | |
| SM-Tech-Issue | Social Media Technical Issue | Technical Issues generated from a particular Social Media tool that's impacting on achieving the tool's main intended purpose its being used for. | |

Table 3.4: Initial Code developments

During the interviews, new themes emerged that were related to the research questions. Therefore, new codes were developed to cater for the unexpected responses from participants (**Table 3.5**). Some were abbreviations and others were descriptive text.

| Code Label | Definition | Description |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| SM-Tech-Ben | Social Media Tool Technical Benefit | Technical benefit or feature that a social media tool/platform provides that satisfy general or specific business needs. |
| Profession influence on engagement | Profession influence on participant's engagement using social media | Profession influence on participant's engagement using social media |

Table 3.5: New emerging codes

It was clear from the type of responses to the interview questions that it was indeed difficult to pre-determine codes. Thus, descriptive text was well-suited for the responses that did not fit any of the codes mentioned in **Tables 3.4** and **3.5**.

3.5.1 RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

Joppe describes reliability as the extent to which outcomes are consistent over time and how accurate the results are as a representation of the total population under study (Joppe 2000). Also, if the results of a study can be regenerated under another different yet similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable. On the other hand, validity determines whether the research truly measures to what it was intended to measure or how honest the research outcomes are (Joppe 2000). It questions whether the research instruments pinpointed the target of the

research object. The interview process in the current study will be developed to ensure it is solidly reliable and valid.

Retrieving quality data from the participants is crucial. Therefore, interviewer training is a must. “It is important to organize in detail and rehearse the interviewing process before beginning the formal study” (DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree 2006). The researcher conducting the interviews needs to know the various ways that they can inadvertently bias the results by slanting the questions inappropriately. In approaching a study with this form of bias, they jeopardize the results or purpose of the original study. Hence, it’s extremely important they take an ethical approach to reporting research findings and ensure they don’t bias the study. Moreover, “the researcher should know how to ask appropriate questions that would draw out the information being sought” (Spradley 1979).

The style of the interview, interview conditions, and participants’ comfort level with the researcher may also affect reliability of the information they provide (Briggs 1986; Whittemore, Chase et al. 2001). There is no certainty that reliable participants are also necessarily competent in the specific aspects of the phenomenon, however. Reliability refers to the informant’s honesty, truthfulness, and transparency with information. Competency involves how qualified the participant is to answer questions about the phenomenon under study. To guarantee validity of the data, a pilot test was conducted with 1 participant to pre-test the research instruments by practice interviews. Interview questions were transcribed and reviewed for accuracy to determine whether they were sufficient to answer the research questions or if they required any modification or additions.

3.6 RESEARCH ETHICS STATEMENT

Full ethical clearance of the research tool and data collection process was obtained from the QUT Ethics Committee (QUT Ethics Approval Number 1300000). The following ethical considerations were adhered to in the study:

- Voluntary participation was respected at all levels of the study;
- A consent form was provided to every participant prior to interview;
- Participants could withdraw from the study at any point of the study;
- Any potentially identifying information was removed from transcripts
- Audio recordings were destroyed once the research was completed.

3.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the research approach that was selected for this study. It has outlined the key features of in-depth semi-structured interviews and how this approach was implemented in the study. The next two chapters present the study's findings. These findings provide descriptions of embedding social media in the corporate websites are experienced by both the organisations responsible for the websites and the users of those websites.

Chapter 4: Findings from the organisation's experience

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the research approach that was selected for this study. It presented the data collection method and reasons for its selection. This chapter will discuss and analyse the lived experience of individuals employed by media organisations. In doing so, this chapter responds to the study's first research question:

1. What are the experiences of media organisations in embedding social media on their corporate websites?
 - 1.1 What social media are media organisations embedding on their corporate websites and why are these embedded social media being used?
 - 1.2 What policies and procedures do media organisations use to evaluate the use of social media on their corporate websites?

The first part of this chapter provides details on the social media that the media organisations embed within their corporate websites, including a discussion on the reasons why social media was used. The second and third parts of the chapter articulate the benefits and challenges in using social media in corporate websites. The final part of the chapter discusses organisational policy in embedding social media in corporate websites.

Media organisations have permeated third-party social networking share tools, widgets and apps into their websites to bring them pre-conceived perceptions of likely benefits. The results indicate media organisations face several technical and business challenges with the use of social networks and further challenges with their embedded tools and widgets. The policies and standards created to date by the media organisations in this study are not efficient enough to deal with those challenges and only focus on the editorial side of social media.

4.2 THE EMBEDDED SOCIAL MEDIA

This section identifies the social media tools that are embedded on corporate websites of media organisations. Prior to the employee interviews, an audit process was conducted on the corporate websites of their media organisations. **Table 3.3 in chapter 3** provides a summary of the audit findings. The audit of the website of the organisation started from the home page, then to sub-sites and individual content pages. Any element that can be seen belonging to a third-party platform was

recorded in a table. This allowed the researcher to detect any social tools and identify their inclusion type (i.e. share button, tool, widget, app or link). This data was then used to tailor questions specific to each participant, to determine the purpose of each social media tool and what they were meant to fulfil.

The table (**Table 3.3 – Chapter 3**) presented in the previous chapter demonstrated the wide variety of third-party social media used by media organisations within their corporate websites. Embedded social media ranged from simple buttons to full widgets and applications, most were free tools available through popular social networks. Some were commercial tools, such as Mass Relevance, ScribbleLive and Pluck. Simple tools such as share tools were found to be embedded on all corporate websites scanned in this study, whereas full widgets were only embedded on some sites. Small tools were share buttons that belonged to popular social networks such as **Twitter**, **Facebook**, **Google**, **PinTerest**, **LinkedIn** and **AddThis**. **AddThis** is a social share tool, available free, and incorporates most social media networking in a drop box was found to be embedded on all observed corporate websites. Larger widgets and applications belonged to both free social platforms and commercial ones. Free social widgets belonged to Facebook, such as Facebook "Like" Box or "Follow" box, **Twitter's** Timeline widget, **YouTube** and **Vimeo** videos, **SoundCloud** audio streams, **Instagram** and **Flickr**, **Bebo**, and **Scribd**. Commercial social media applications used by media organisations were commenting systems such as **Pluck**, **FireWire**, **ScribbleLive** and **Mass Relevance**.

This study has found that organisations embedded a variety of third-party social media tools and widgets (Fisher 2009), both free and commercial tools, that had similar features and other tools and widgets to serve specific business needs. The following quotes from two study participants exemplify the variety in choosing social media tools to embed on their corporate websites:

*“there’s quite a lot of social media tools integrated into the website, as well as just linked to. But **Twitter** is used, and **Facebook**, and we’ve got a system, a wide-level system used called **Pluck**. Which we use for our own internal [...] only social media. **Flickr** is used, i believe they’re starting to use **Instagram** in some parts. That’s what comes to mind, but they would be the main ones. **Twitter**, **Facebook**, **Flickr**.” (G1-P2-p1)*

*“We’ve been **using different modules for different sites**. Module such as **AddThis**, which is for pulling in different social media platforms is one of them. And allowing this to let the audience to add their own social tools. So they want to be able to add, so if they want to add*

a **Bebo** account (<http://www.bebo.com/>), they could add that and use that. But for [sitename], its been primary "AddThis" . so some of the other sites like [Brandname], its (**AddThis**) been the main ones. So **Twitter**, **Facebook** and **GooglePlus**. And likewise for [brandname]. [brandname] is looking at **PinInterest** as well cause they do a lot of images. **Facebook** and **Twitter** has been the most dominant." (G1-P5-p#1)

"[we use] **Twitter**; **Storify**; **Mass Relevance**" (G1-P16-p#1)

Both ScribbleLive and Mass Relevance are commercial products that were used by one media organisation for the purpose of live blogging and instant news update for live events or breaking news. MassRelevance was trialled for covering elections however was dropped by the organisation using it as it was not effective and therefore not worth the cost. One participant explained their use of Mass relevance and why they terminated their use of the product:

*"**Mass relevance** we did as a trial for the elections. We only had a set amount of funding to do it. For the elections. we're going to drop it because we don't have funding to continue using it...and I guess our need for it isn't as much as the cost. the **benefit is marginal. I think if it was a success we would have re-visited the contract and decided to continue it, but just because we're about to drop it indicates to me that it wasn't valuable enough.** It was worth trying but it's one of those things that didn't give us a reason to continue it."* (G1-P16-p#1)

ScribbleLive, a commercial social media product, was also used to cover live events as they progress for display on news media. This embedded third-party widget was perceived as useful by the media organisation as it curated content from multiple third-party social networking sites such as Twitter, Facebook and ScribbleLive's own posts. To this day, the media organisation continues to use and embed the product on their website for live events coverage.

In the following sections, the purpose of some of these tools is examined in detail and the lived experiences of their perceived benefits by the organisations using them are explored through real-life examples.

4.3 REASONS FOR USE

Although there are many popular external social media platforms that have large number of audiences, media organisations are utilising specific social media platforms for two reasons:

- (i) to be on a social platform that has an existing large online audience;
- (ii) (ii) to satisfy specific business needs.

This section looks at third-party social tools and widgets that media organisations embedded on their websites and the features and functionalities they provided. It will reveal the reasons why they are embedded, their presumed benefits for the media websites, and the actual benefits they bring.

4.3.1 FOLLOWING THE AUDIENCE/ACCESSING A PRE-EXISTING ONLINE AUDIENCE

Two main reasons emerged from participants for using social media networks and embedding their tools on media organisations corporate websites. These reasons are: to exist in spaces that already have large numbers of audiences and to keep with trend of adopting new technologies. All media organisations were found to be using two social networks due to its large number of existing audience: Facebook and Twitter. The following quotes from employees exemplify the popularity of Facebook:

*"I think ... **the largest reason would be the audience was there [on Facebook]. So they followed the audience.** They've seen the Australian **people are spending a whole lot of time on Facebook** so if we're not involved in that platform, then we're missing out on that audience. So by ignoring it, **you'd risk becoming irrelevant if you ignored such a major platform**, which is, some people spend several hours a day on it. If we're not on there, we're not part of people's lives" (G1-P2-p#1)*

*"**as more people became familiar with Facebook then the tool became apparent...** I don't think there was a formal process but our presence obviously has grown in that space too so **we realised that polls on Facebook and stories, comments worked pretty well integrated with that**" (G1-P15-p#1)*

The popularity of certain platforms makes them desirable spaces to be in, as large numbers on a platform indicates the likelihood of online users being familiar with it. As evidenced above, participants stated that their organisation's use of Facebook was due to the undisputable fact that the general public are spending a large amount of their personal time in that space. They know that audience members are familiar with Facebook and can easily engage with the organisation through

its commenting feature to provide feedback. The same familiarity factor was also present with Twitter. They justified the audiences' familiarity factor with Twitter in the below extract:

*“Well obviously **Twitter** came through the realisation that **a lot of people were in that space** and it's just the ability to bring people to the site probably prompted it, probably prompted us to use it as a group more so than [personally]” (G1-P15-p#5)*

Twitter is another social media platform that is used heavily within media organisations. Twitter is a relatively modern phenomenon that provides new ways to engage with people to attract users to articles and news. This study has found that media organisations encouraged employees with large number of followers to post news items on their personal Twitter accounts for their followers to be alerted to view the news items and possibly respond to them on their corporate websites. This is demonstrated by the following quotation:

*“we now have 30,000 odd **Twitter** followers but rapidly can reach a bigger audience even if your **followers re-tweeted** it to their followers and they re-tweeted it again. It is a way for articles to go viral in a way that. Without social media not only [organisation name] won't work as a website, it could have never got up its feet.” (G1-P6-p#7)*

4.3.2 THE PRESSURE TO "KEEP UP" WITH TECHNOLOGY

For media organisations, their corporate websites are an important product that has to be seen to be either ahead of technology or keeping pace with it. A number of participants revealed a driving need to keep up with current technologies and their competitors. The study data suggests that organisations encourage their users to follow their news stories and news readers through the use of current technologies. A participant explained this importance with the following extract:

*“if you want to know what's happening to follow us and the benefits that **your competitors can see what you're doing and you're beating them to the chase** for things or finding out things they don't.” (G1-P14-p#1)*

This participant explains the importance of showing users and their organisation competitors why a media organisation can be followed for their news. For an organisation to be seen by other media competitors that it is ahead with online trends and beating them to the latest news by the use of a variety of tools and technologies is vital. Twitter is seen as a platform that demonstrates to other users that a media organisation is up with new technological trends. It's a way to engage with people

to attract users to articles and news through followers and bring them to their website. The following extract demonstrates this in the following quote:

*“[Twitter was selected because] **The need to keep up with the technology**” (G1-P15-p#3)*

Although media organisations want to exist on social platforms with large audience numbers, some states that their utilisation of these tools is still at an experimental phase as the use of social tools are not yet standardised in media organisations. One participant shared their own view of their organisation's use of social platforms:

*“a lot of it has been experimental in terms of **following what other companies are doing**, but also what other people are doing and sort of touch and feel to it.” (G1-P15-p#5)*

It is clear that media organisations want to exist in any space they view as commonly used social media platforms by the general public. They also aim to maintain the appearance of following technological trends. While these aspects have not been the focus of this study, it is important to detail what the reasons for using social media on websites are and how they're being used.

4.4 BENEFITS OF EMBEDDED EXTERNAL SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS/WIDGETS

There exists a diverse ecology of external social media platforms that vary in features and functionality. This study has revealed that social media platforms are being utilized not only for their audience numbers, but also for the features and functionally they provide. Many media organisations are embedding popular social media tools to increase their audience numbers through social interaction and to utilize services that they don't have to pay for. For example, media organisations need certain features to be available on their websites that may take longer to implement or costs highly to purchase. Social media platforms provide features that are utilised to meet certain organisational needs. In this section, four benefits of social services the organisation have used for their websites will be explored: (i) share content; (ii) live and instant micro-communication; (iii) embedding distributed content; and (iv) promotion.

4.4.1 SHARE CONTENT

- **Share buttons: Addthis, Tweet, Facebook's "Like", PinIt, LinkedIn, GooglePlus**

The share buttons of a variety of platforms/tools enables sharing of a website page on various social networking sites and help generate followers for particular accounts. By placing these buttons on

the media organisations website, it assists in creating visibility for an organisation's social media accounts. These links and buttons enable website visitors to easily share content with their social media connections. Adding these buttons to web page allows for the expansion of reach of the content to new audiences on different social media platforms and generates new visitors back to the website.

This study found that the most popular embedded social media tool used by media organisations was **AddThis**. **AddThis** is a share widget that pulls in different social media platforms and eases user's ability to distribute content across multiple social networks. When content is disseminated across many social networks, this helps drive traffic to a website. All media organisations used **AddThis** on their individual story pages for content sharing.

*“Module such as **AddThis**, which is for pulling in different social media platforms is one of them [i.e. social media share button]. And allowing this to let the audience to add their own social tools.” (G1-P5-p#1)*

The above participant reveals that their organisation embeds the **AddThis** share widget to give the users a wide range of social tools to choose from and the ability to add their own tool.

Another example displays the share tools provided by Facebook and Twitter. Due to the popularity of these platforms, the organisation assumes that their share tools brought back visitor traffic to the website.

“every time someone prominent with so many followers re-tweets a piece, or shares on their Facebook site or whatever, it draws more traffic, so even though it was published back in October and there is no news hook for why it keeps kicking off, sort of going through patches being really well-read and going quite... it can be driven by users” (G1-P6-p#2)

The above example shows that whenever a prominent individual, who has large number of followers on **Twitter** or **Facebook**, re-tweets or share content on **Facebook** from a website, this subsequently draw high volumes of traffic to the site. In some cases, an old article could be re-activated and become a popular reading piece once again by social media users long after the date it was originally published. For media organisations, however, this aspect of their client activity has the potential to become problematic later.

4.4.2 INSTANT/LIVE/MICRO-COMMUNICATION

Several social platforms provided useful widgets to display real-time content from their external services. These tools are easy to embed, allow the viewing of interactive content that update regularly, monitor the engagement without having to leave the website, and provide the ability to reply within the embedded widgets. These tools are **Twitter** timeline widget, **Storify comment embed**, and **ScribbleLive stream embed**. Examples of these widgets and how they're used are provided below.

4.4.2.1 TWITTER TIMELINE

This study has found that **Twitter** is the most popular social networking platform used heavily by all media organisations. The popular **Twitter timeline** widget has been embedded both on their corporate website home pages to display all tweets from an organisation's official Twitter account. It was also embedded on some individual article pages but with a hashtag to extract and filter specific content related to a news item.

*"Because **it is helpful for people to see what the conversation on Twitter is**, but more what the public conversation is rather than just what you're reading here (on the website). **This is what people are saying in real time.**" (G1-P20-p6)*

Twitter timeline's benefit is not only to display tweets from an official account within **Twitter's** service, but it also allows viewing of on-going live conversations on **Twitter's** platform world-wide for specific content through its hashtag system. The Hashtag feature is also utilised heavily by journalists and their coverage of stories through the use of their mobile devices.

*"what we do is where possible we say to reporters "can **you add a relevant hash tag so** we won't be just pulling in reporter's tweets, **we'll be pulling in their tweets plus the hashtag.**" (G1-P3-p#2)*

In the example above, the participant narrates their method of using Twitter hashtag when covering a story. A communication channel is established between the newsroom and a reporter covering an event, where a relevant **Twitter** hashtag is created ahead of time, then a widget is created to pull in tweets with this hashtag. This is done so that the **Twitter** widget can pull in filtered tweets relevant to the story they are covering from the ground and give users reading the website page a snapshot of on-going conversations on **Twitter's** platform. A participant, a well-known journalist, exemplified this through their coverage of political stories through their use of Twitter:

*"It gets the message out that at the [organisation name] is there instantly when news is happening and **you'll find out about it straight away because I tweet live from media conferences** with photos and with quotes and whatever else is happening while the parliament is sitting." (G1-P14-p#1)*

In the example above, a typical Twitter timeline embeddable widget is useful for covering live political events within a parliament sitting. The reporter's tweets can be viewed instantly when news is happening. Twitter followers of the reporter are able to observe about what is occurring because the reporter is tweeting live from a media conference, and they can supplement this feed with photos and exact quotes from within the parliament.

4.4.2.2 STORIFY

Some media organisations have found social media platforms that curate audience engagement and feedback being received from a variety of social networking mediums into one single embeddable widget. **Storify** curates content from different external social media platforms. If a news article link is published on different external social media platforms and audience comments are submitted on each, **Storify** has the ability to pull all comments on the article published on each platform into one single stream of content and produce an embedded code that can be dropped on a website source for immediate viewing. **Storify** is a growing platform that is used by many media organisations, as shown in the example below, and in some cases it is replacing the traditional commenting systems.

*"so the social media coordinator started using **Storify** to curate social media posts into a single place and found it was quite useful and quite easy to use and fast so he was able to get stuff together within minutes, where it would take much longer to do it any other way ...so we tried that first...I think we ended up liking our **Storify** pages" (G1-P16-p#5)*

This example demonstrates the power of some of **Storify's** features that make it easy to use, create, and embed content onto a website. This Participant also stated that a business individual, such as a social media coordinator, with no advanced technical or coding skills, can use **Storify** to curate social media posts into a single embed quite easily and within minutes, a feature that would take longer if implemented through other means. This feature makes **Storify** a desirable platform to continue to embed its tools and widgets on a media website.

4.4.2.3 SCRIBBLELIVE

ScribbleLive, is a commercial content publishing platform that enables both publishing to different social platforms from one single location. It has a similar feature to **Storify** in that it provides the ability to curate content from multiple social platforms into a single point. Although not widely used or well-known, its usage has been detected during the websites audit phase conducted in this study. It was used to collect audience comments relevant to specific topics from multiple social platforms and embedded on individual article pages. What was yet to be clarified was why any media organisation would use both platforms **Storify** and **ScribbleLive**, one free and another commercial. One participant gave an example of a possible reason for requiring both platforms. Storify is a service that enables the accumulation of comments from multiple third-party social media networking services.

Catch up on the day's events.

Campaign slice

What's making news today:

- **Coalition campaign launch:** [Turnbull urges voters to back Coalition's 'calm heads'](#)
- **Costings:** [Labor unveils policy savings 'worth \\$430 million' over forward estimates](#)
- **Climate change:** [Activists march in Malcolm Turnbull's electorate of Wentworth](#)

Cheerio!

That's it from me here at Parliament House.


I'll be back tomorrow morning from 7am to take you through the final week of the campaign – until then, you can chat with me on Twitter at [@stephanieando](#).




See you tomorrow!

In case you missed it

While I was busy covering the Coalition campaign launch in Sydney, the Greens were also holding theirs in Melbourne.




Former party leaders **Bob Brown** and **Christine Milne** attended the launch, addressed by leader **Richard Di Natale**.



 **Richard Di Natale** 
@RichardDiNatale 

HUGE applause as my federal Greens colleagues arrive to kick off our campaign #Greens16

11:09 AM - 26 Jun 2016

  49  84

Senator Di Natale used the opportunity to push his party's focus on climate change, asylum seekers and tackling inequality.

He those gathered that:

Figure 4.1: A ScribbleLive embed within a website that contains a normal ScribbleLive post and a twitter tweet.

4.4.3 EMBEDDING DISTRIBUTED CONTENT

Several third-party social media emerged in this study that were being used in a non-social way and have been heavily utilised by media organisations for their features and functionalities. These tools and widgets save the media industry time and money as they harvest content produced and submitted via external online content contributors.

“we also have other things [social media] we embed, but we’re not necessarily using them in a social way” (G1-P3-p#1)

Various participant revealed they embedded widgets of social networking services to include external media content such as photos, audio and video. The majority of these external content were user generated and came from platforms such as **YouTube, Vimeo, SoundCloud, Instagram, Vine** and **Flickr**. Photo is another popular media element that is provided through social services such as **Pinterest** and **Flickr**. These photo services also provide share code to embed photos from their services/sites onto another website page.

4.4.3.1 YOUTUBE & VIMEO

Social media services that offer user-submitted videos are being widely used by media organisations. **Vimeo** and **YouTube** are video hosting platforms that are both used by all participating media organisations in this study. Although they are categorised as social platforms, they are not used in a social sense, but only to embed videos on websites. They are incorporated through their own embedded codes to display externally hosted videos onto organisational websites.

“So YouTube is a social platform but we’re more just using it to embed video content. In a similar way we do the same thing with Vimeo which is another... as you know another video one. (G1-P3-p#1)

The studies website audits revealed **YouTube** to be one of the most popular platforms that provide not only videos, but also the creation of personal and official video channels. Website audits revealed that YouTube videos was particularly embedded with stories on internal events. For instance, video footages on international events could be recorded onsite and uploaded to platforms such as YouTube. YouTube provided an embed code on a video page that could be easily embedded into a website source to display the video within the website page (**Figure 4.2**). This makes it easy for reporters to include relevant videos if they did not have the resources to produce and create in-house videos.



Figure 4.2: YouTube embed code provided within the platform for every video

Vimeo is another video platform that fills the need for embedding high quality videos of News Items that isn't created by a media organisation. Instead, external user generated Vimeo videos are embedded within individual article pages. This saves journalists and the organisation time and cost by including high definition user-generated/user-contributed videos (**Figure 4.3**).

*“obviously video **takes service space** but also down to ease-of-use for audience. So using Vimeo is a quick and easy way to upload video and it comes down in high definition” (G1-P4-p#10)*

These video services not only allow the creation of official social media channels of media organisations, but it also allows users to follow a channel to receive updates, rate content, and engage in conversations by leaving comments and feedback. However, some **YouTube** videos can be of poor quality, hence some organisations in this study have resorted into using **Vimeo** as the preferred alternative medium. The following statement highlights the difference:

*“particularly for the [media brand] project we needed to select a video generating site. **They went with Vimeo because of high quality [of videos]** and its a little bit more niche, **whereas YouTube was***

poorer quality...its bit of a free content for all on YouTube. Whereas Vimeo was a bit more arty, so that sort of suited our needs for that." (G1- P4-p#8)

Unlike YouTube videos that are full of embedded ads, a beneficial characteristic of **Vimeo** is the ability to embed ad free videos on a website. This is particularly important for media organisations that do not want to be promoting commercial content within their own content.

*"That's been good cause **Vimeo** doesn't have any ads because it's very different audience to **YouTube** and that's something we don't have to do too much moderation to at all. Certainly compared to **YouTube** we don't have to do any moderation, that's been really valuable." (G1-P5-p#1)*

Vimeo provides high quality videos and permits promotional branding by allowing positioning of official logos on the corner of videos. Further, **Vimeo** is ad free and does not require content producers to moderate content on it as it's not used for audience engagement. This feature has encouraged media organisations to use the **Vimeo** platform as a mechanism to incorporate high quality videos and to lessen the burden of audience' comments moderation. In addition, it is extremely easy to embed within a website as the platform provides the embed code on the relevant video page (**Figure 4.4**).

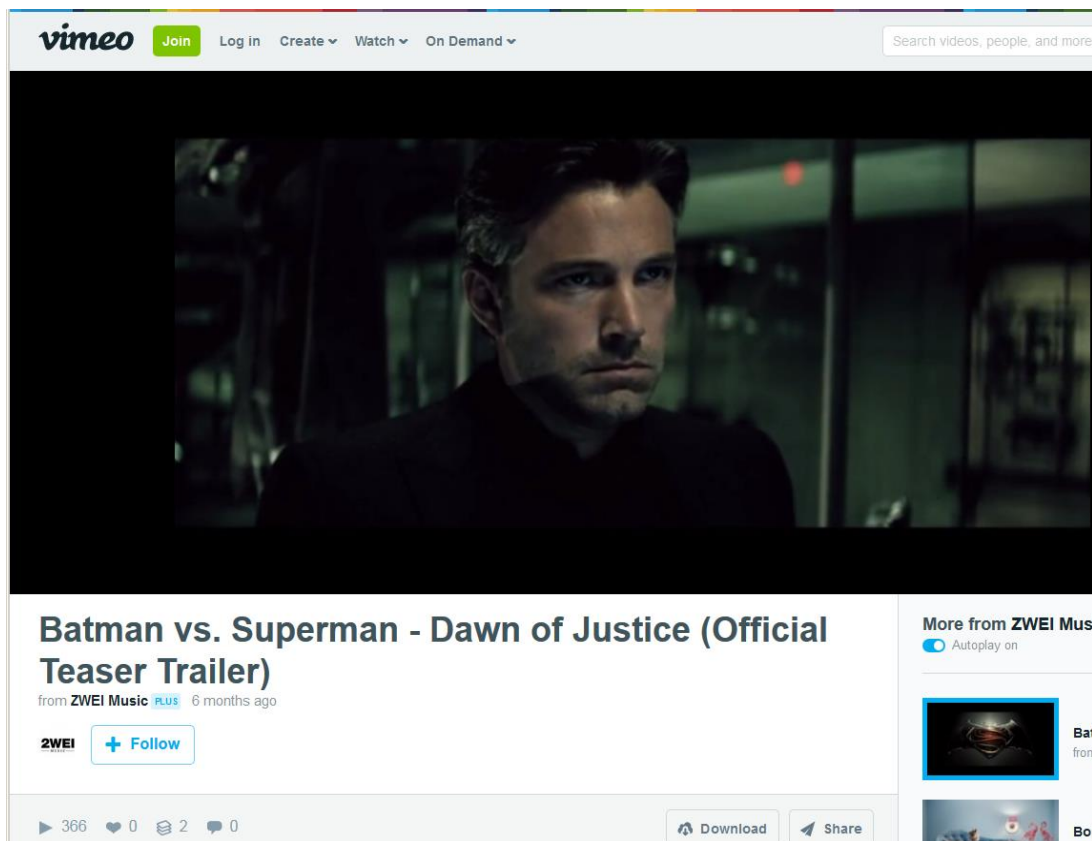


Figure 4.3: A video promotion hosted on Vimeo platform

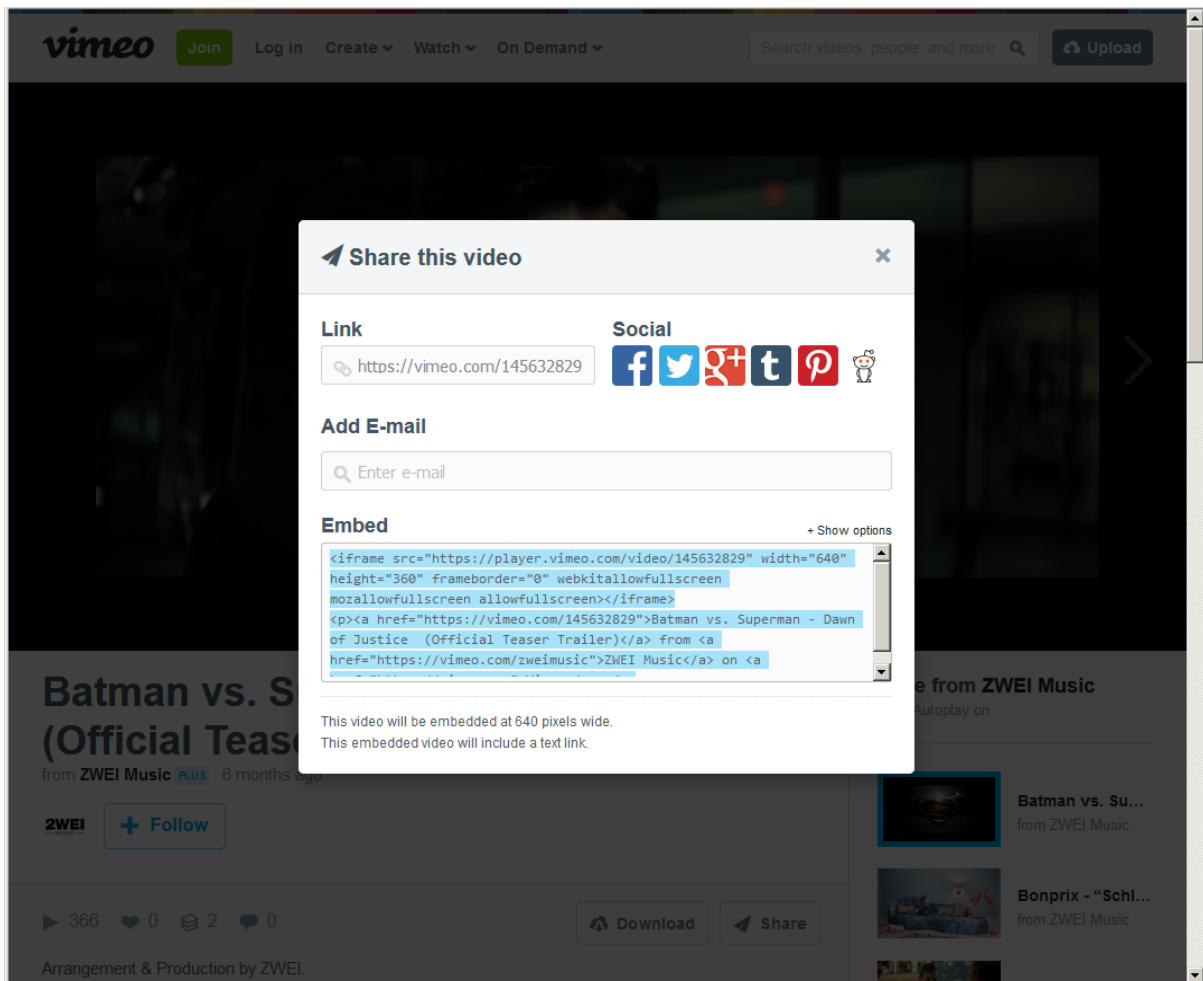


Figure 4.4: "Share" facility provides the full embed code that can be dropped within a website page

4.4.3.1 FLICKR, INSTAGRAM & PINTEREST

In addition to text, media organisations rely on including media elements such as photos and video snippets on their news and story pages. Although they are classified as social media platforms, **Instagram, Flickr and Pinterest** were not used for social engagement purposes, but for their solid multimedia supporting features and their existent large audience numbers. These platforms host photos and videos that can be embedded directly, not just on websites, but also through other social media services (e.g. **Storify**). **Instagram** and **Flickr** were used by some of the media organisations to particularly support photos. Of the two, **Flickr** was used for its high quality photos as it's a platform that is used heavily by photography enthusiasts.

"its [Flickr] a very popular tool with photographers" (G1-P2-p#2)

Some participants indicated that their organisations run regular competitions that require their audience members to submit high quality photos on weather emergencies such as lightings and hail.

Platforms such as **Flickr** and **Pinterest** are used specifically for high quality photo sharing and distribution. Pinterest in particular was considered a powerful social platform to distribute photos across social media users easily with its powerful search feature. The below extract exemplifies benefits of **Pinterest** and **Flickr**:

*"there are people using **Flickr**. So you already have a built in set of photos in there. It's not like you have to go chasing content for social media networks, there's already photos of pretty much every area in Australia **Flickr**, so it was a matter of, again, going where the audiences are. But it tends to be more used by photography enthusiasts rather than the broader general public. But that has a plus side because it means quality of the photos is very good. So it was seen a good way to have, to get audience photo submissions of a pretty good quality". (G1-P2-p#6)*

"the [organisation name] using it [Pinterest] to a reasonable degree because there is interesting functionality for a good sized audience, of our audience and it can do things that we can't do on [organisation name] sites.... the photo sharing and being able to distribute stuff across a broad audience, the search feature on Pinterest is pretty powerful. That's another thing that been a benefit for us, that people can find our content." (G1-P5-p#6)

When it comes to media elements, although **Instagram** and **Flickr** are similar platforms for photo and video sharing, **Instagram** was used for embedding quick personal photo snaps through mobile devices. On the other hand, **Flickr** is used mainly by professional photographers for high quality imagery. Instagram is used for embedding celebrity or politician selfies or to share weather emergency photos submitted by online audience members.

"on an actual story they might have embedded Instagram photos from Jen Hawkins or Lara Bingle and network entertainers have built in story on Lara Bingle's latest raunchy Instagram photo or something like that. So they use the Instagram native embed code so its pulling from Instagram into the story page." (G1-P20-p#12)

4.4.3.2 SOUNDCLOUD

Audio is another essential multimedia element used by the media organisations. Media organisations in this study use an audio focused social media platform called SoundCloud to support their audio needs. It is an online audio distribution platform that enables its users to upload, record, promote and share audio. This study found that organisations audio recorded Interviews and songs and attached these to news and articles. **SoundCloud** has been adopted by some media organisations to support audio. It's an online audio distribution platform and enables its users to

upload, record, promote and share audio. **SoundCloud** is used specifically to store audio files such as on-air radio interviews and embedded on individual story pages. Some participants noted they used social media platforms as they needed a suitable medium for uploading audio content that also provided excellent sound quality. For instance, **SoundCloud** was used as their choice to upload audio content of interviews onto a pre-registered **SoundCloud** free account. This enabled them to make these available to the general public. One participant noted cases where journalists needed to carry direct interviews with figures such in public service personnel during weather emergencies and make them available to their website users. Therefore, **SoundCloud** provides a platform to do that, but it can also be embedded as a widget onto a website by importing an audio file readily available.

*"out of all our existing mediums **Facebook** and **Twitter**, neither of them deal particularly well with audio. ...so what we decided to do was our work with **SoundCloud**. **SoundCloud** is for during emergency coverage for example. So let's say we interview a Fire commander that has some really essential information we can take notes of it and post those notes on **Twitter** but quite often our audience would like to hear sort of information straight from the horse's mouth as they say. So **we can quickly post an interview with the Fire inspector giving as much detailed and local knowledge that there is and we can post that we can record that straight to SoundCloud it uploads usually in less than a minute** ... then **we can embed that in stories on our websites and we can easily post them to Twitter and Facebook**. And **what that allows our audience to do is to stream the audio straight away from SoundCloud**." (G1-P4-p#7)"*

Here, the participant outlines their reason for selecting SoundCloud. They note that SoundCloud was selected as neither of the more popular social media services, Facebook and Twitter, handled audio content (i.e. content embed audio files). Therefore, the organisation found an alternative medium for posting and embedding interviews such as phone interview with emergency personnel. This way, they can post information on their other official social media pages and link to the relevant audio on SoundCloud.

4.4.3.3 SCRIBD

The diversity of social media enabled media organisations to use them for the variety of features and functionality they provide, not just using them in the social sense. For instance, **scribd** is a digital library and e-book subscription service that hosts 60 million documents on its open publishing platform. According to ComScore, it is ranked one of the top 20 social media sites (Schonfeld 2008). The study revealed that it is used by some media organisations to upload large rich text documents such as PDFs and embed them on individual story pages:

*“And also **Scribd**, which is for documents, **you can upload documents**. And again it’s not really social in that way, but it is an external site that’s been embedded on the [media organisation] site.” (G1-P3-p#1)*

Although not heavily used, a few of media website audits revealed that **Scribd** was used to embed externally hosted PDF files. It was particularly popular with articles that were of a political nature where the **Scribd** widgets were used for embedding government policy documents and other documents already available within **Scribd**'s platform for public view.

4.4.4 PROMOTION

Marketing was revealed to be one of the reasons social media are used by media organisations in this study. Qualitative interviews revealed a few widgets that were used by media organisations to promote their official social media pages or campaigns and events. These tools were: **Facebook**'s both "Like" and "Follow" widgets and **Twitter**'s Hashtag within **Twitter** timeline widget.

4.4.4.1 FACEBOOK "LIKE" BUTTON AND "FOLLOW" BOX

A few of the media organisations embedded **Facebook**'s “like” box on the homepage of their corporate websites (Roosendaal 2011). **Facebook**'s “Like” box widget is a larger version of a “Like” button designed to promote a **Facebook** page through the creation of an easy-to-embed box and including it on a website. Once embedded within a website, this box displays the logo of an organisation; several thumbnail photos of users that “liked” a **Facebook** page; and the total number of all users who "liked" the external official Facebook page.

“if I’m working on the website putting in stuff into stories for like our social stuff like embedding Facebook box or “like box” for our Facebook page in stories so people reading can “like” our page.” (G1-P20-p#1)

This statement suggests that the benefit of embedding a **Facebook** "like" box on featured story pages makes it easier for people reading content on a website to initiate a "like" click on the story and this alone ensures the reader will receive posts in their Facebook NewsFeed from the media organisation official Facebook page every time the organisation posts news/articles on their Facebook page.

4.4.4.2 TWITTER HASHTAG

Twitter's Hashtag metadata tag was used by the organisations in this study to promote certain campaigns that the commercial media organisations run for different products or events. Some participants indicated they use a process to create a unique hashtag for an event. The process involves creating a suitable Twitter Hashtag relating to an event, informing a journalist covering an event of the Hashtag to use in their tweets, and using it to pull in filtered tweets through a timeline widget. One participant provides an example of their use of Twitter Hashtag:

*“Unless there is certain plan around something to incorporate, so for example **Twitter stream module for a hash tag that we’re promoting**, so there was a [.....] campaign about the airport for a while and so semi-regularly we would embed the **Twitter Hashtag stream**.” (G1-P20-p1)*

The above statement suggests that plans within the typical newsroom are initiated around what type of social media to embed to incorporate on a semi-regular basis within articles. An example of this would be when business individuals such as social media coordinators and journalists decide to embed the **Twitter Timeline** that uses a hashtag to filter content relative to a specific promotion for a product or an event the organisation is marketing or promoting.

In summary, a variety of social media embedded-able tools such as share buttons and promotional widgets are used to bring people back to the organisations website. They use social media to promote and increase external their user engagement, encouraging them to follow the organisation's news pages. Other benefits are the ability to embed external elements from external social media sites, from the items that have been created or submitted by other users or by the media organisations themselves.

4.5 CHALLENGES AND ISSUES OF EMBEDDED EXTERNAL SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS

The previous section outlined the beneficial features that social media third-party tools and widgets that media organisations utilised. Despite their numerous benefits, interviews with employees, especially tech-savvy individuals, unravelled numerous issues and challenges that have been a constant challenge for the organisations in the past few years as they worked to incorporate this variety of social media tools. This section will identify some of the prominent challenges that emerged from the lived experience of employees of media organisations on their websites. Some of these challenges are technical in nature (brought by the technologies used) and some were business related. Technology-centric challenges included threats to website security, constant changes to

third-party APIs, the need for ever evolving technical skills to integrate social media tools into websites, feature limitations of third-party social tools, and technical issues which arise from the unpredictability of third-party code behaviour. First the technical challenges and issues will be addressed, these include missing content, network security and privacy risks, hacking of account passwords, constant change, the integration factor the limitation of third party embedded tools, lack of flexibility and imposed third party style. The non-technical challenges and issues addressed include legal ramifications, constant moderation, and the difficulty in managing the variety of social media. These challenging elements will be discussed below in more detail.

4.5.1 TECHNICAL ISSUES

A variety of risks and challenges emerged from the qualitative interviews with media organisation employees. These risks posed open threats to websites and exposed them to serious vulnerabilities. These risks can be categorised into three types: surface risks, network risks and technical challenges. The first wave of technical risks was surface risks such as widget failure or missing content. The second was network security such as page hi-jacking and password hacking. The third wave is actual technical challenges and limitations that exist within the tools and widgets that introduce new challenges that go against business requirements of a media organisation. These areas will be examined in depth and exemplified in more detail.

4.5.1.1 MISSING CONTENT

Surface risks are the type of risk that does not pose a major security risks or breaches to a website or the network hosting the website, but its visibility reflects poorly on the overall quality of the website and hints at signs of poor implementation. Several issues emerged such as missing content from embedded social widgets. Below, a participant recounts this challenge within Storify's embedded widget:

*"if we embed content and that content is removed, it basically leaves a hole in our presentation. So we had situations where someone's posted a picture on **Flickr** and then we went "oh great photo" and pulled it in, **then for whatever reason they (the owner of the photo) might decide to delete it or change the privacy settings on it**, so then within your presentation **you get a blank thing that says "content not available"**". So again if we decided that speed wasn't as important and said to that person "can we use that photo on our site and actually put it in our content management system then we've got that basically, as long as it's on our service, that's another **Storify** challenge." (G1-P3-p#7)*

In this example, when content is deleted from within **Storify**, the embedded widget leaves a gap on the presented page (i.e. article). This issue became apparent when a **Flickr** user posted a quality photo on external image hosting website **Flickr**, that was pulled-in through the **Storify** widget. This photo disappeared either through its deletion from the **Flickr** platform or due to a change to the privacy settings of the **Flickr** profile that hosted this photo. This resulted in a blank gap displaying within the embedded **Storify** widget with an error message "content not available" on the article page. This prompted the media organisation employee to direct an email request to the owner of the photo to seek permission to import and include the image within their internal content management system to ensure the photos could display permanently on the media organisations website.

After hearing of this example, the researcher undertook further website auditing on media organisations websites examined in this study. This second round of mini-auditing revealed that missing content issues occurred regularly with various other embedded social tools and widgets of different social networking services. Sample screenshots that demonstrates this challenge are provided below (**Figures 4.5, 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, 4.9**).

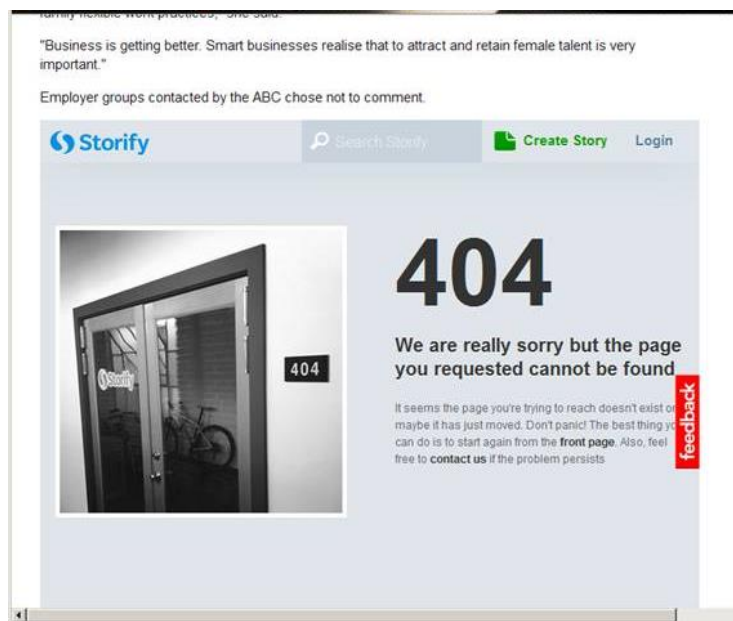


Figure 4.5: Example of **missing text content** within **Storify** Widget

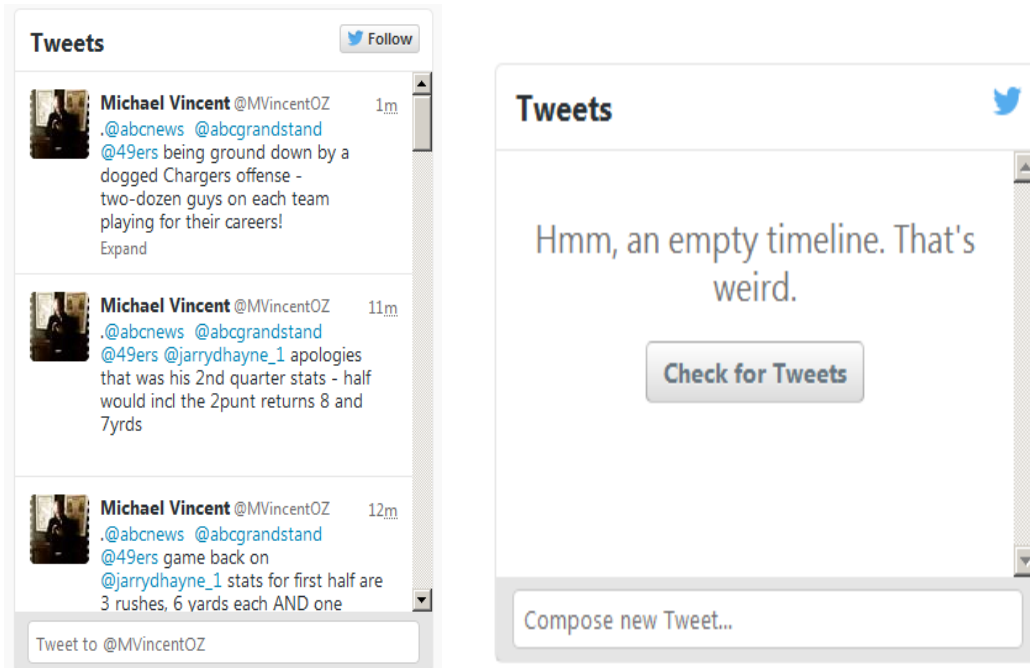


Figure 4.6: A **Twitter** timeline widget with tweets, a **Twitter** timeline widget missing content

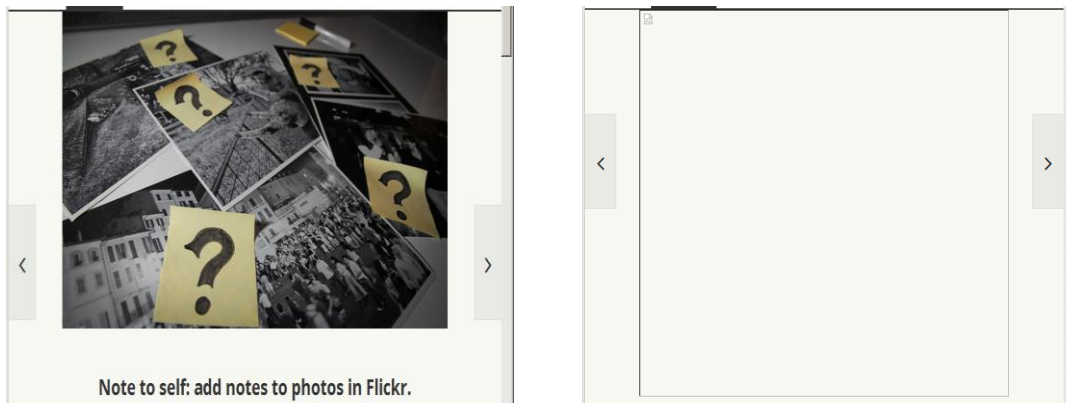


Figure 4.7: Embedded **Flickr** galleries: one with photos, second missing photos due to external content removal without prior warning



Figure 4.8: What an embedded **SoundCloud** widget looks like

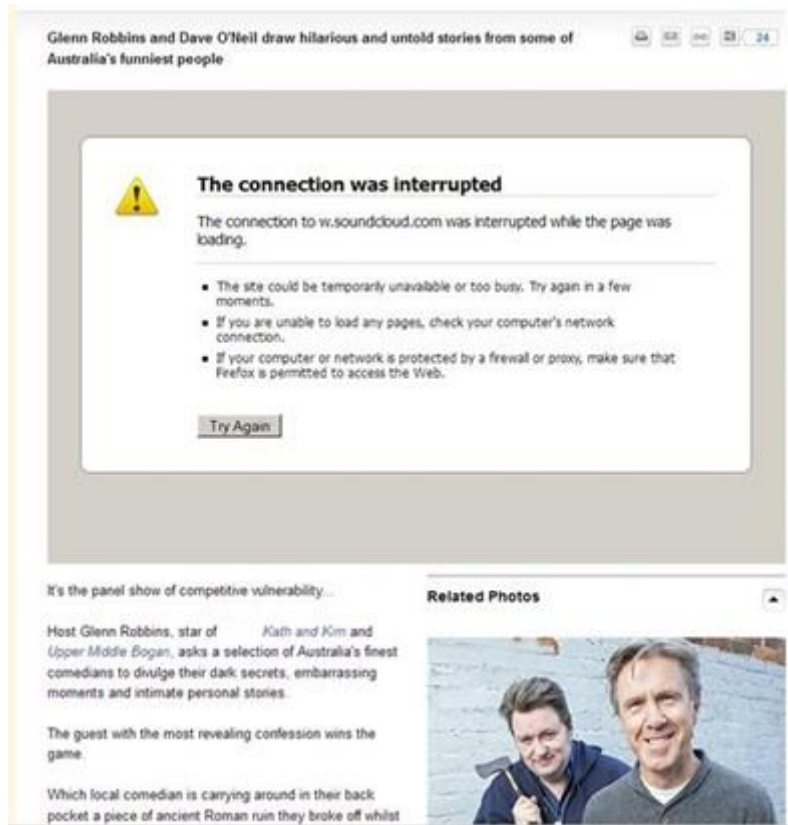


Figure 4.9: What missing content from embedded SoundCloud widget looks like

4.5.1.2 NETWORK SECURITY & PRIVACY RISKS

Media organisation participants indicated that some widgets were a constant concern to them because of their reliability on third-party JavaScript library code. This reliability makes web sites vulnerable. Several quotes offer an insight into the experience of these participants that have used Facebook both as an external and internal platform and incorporated its tools within their websites. The extract below is taken from a technical developer's account, and it demonstrates their lived experience with Facebook's overall performance.

*"We had **our corporate network not necessarily working properly with Facebook** - people are finding it **very slow to load**, Facebook. Which might not seem like a big issue. But **in an emergency situation**, which we do emergency coverage and **someone is trying to post a bush fire warnings. Speed is quite important** and there were times, and there were times where, **because of our corporate network having problems with Facebook, it was taking them twenty minutes to half an hour to post information**. By which time it may be out-of-date if it's a fast emergency moving situation" (G1-P2-P#2)*

The experience above suggests that the organisation's corporate network did not work efficiently with **Facebook**. The **Facebook** platform was found to be extremely slow which delayed posting information. This is specifically problematic during weather emergencies when a media organisation is releasing alerts and warnings on road closures to audiences. The speed of posting emergency information on a popular platform such as **Facebook** is particularly important for media organisations racing with time and their competitors in relaying information to their users and the general public. In the example above, due to the network's unknown problems with **Facebook**, it was taking reporters twenty minutes to half an hour to post emergency information, and by that time the information may already be out-of-date, given that some emergencies can be fast moving situations. From this, it is logical to assume that the delay of posting emergency information on popular social platforms for a media organisation is likely to result in lack of credibility of the media organisation and may cause online audiences to switch receiving their information from competitor websites.

One technical participant provided their perspective on using third-party library code to embed Facebook widgets within their websites:

***"Incorporating Facebook on our website would require us to link to third-party JavaScript code that remains totally under Facebook's control. We would have to trust Facebook not to abuse this privilege."** (G1-P16-p#1)*

This technical participant suggested that incorporating **Facebook** widgets on their corporate website would require them to import third-party JavaScript library code that would always remain under **Facebook**'s full control. In order for the organisation to do so, they would have to have trust that **Facebook** would not abuse this privilege. In the following quotation, the continuation of this example, the participant took a stance and declared that their organisation's trust in **Facebook** should be regarded of high standard and not be taken advantage of in terms of any possible negative consequences that may result in using **Facebook** library code within the organisation's website. The participant highlighted that trust is an important factor to consider when importing third-party code libraries on their websites. They stated the following:

*"most of the embeds are all JavaScript based so you have to add JavaScript tag to your website and you can add bits and pieces but that JavaScript tag lives on **Facebook** server, which basically gives **Facebook** unlimited access to execute any code it wants to on the website, so you have to be very trusting of **Facebook** not to abuse that privilege"(G1-P16-p#1)*

This participant further suggested the importance of recognising the serious effects and likely impact of using third-party JavaScript code may have if imported on the website. Most embedded widgets provided by **Facebook** are JavaScript based and to add them one must add JavaScript tags to a website. This JavaScript tags' source lives on **Facebook** server which gives **Facebook** unlimited access to execute any code it wants on the website that is importing it. The participant shared further technical reasons of why they have made decisions not to embed **Facebook** widgets on their corporate website. In this next example, the participant provided a prediction of what may go wrong if **Facebook** platform made unforeseen API changes:

*“So far we decided not to embed Facebook on the public website. **We decided against it primarily because of privacy concerns for our organisation and the users of our website.***

If Facebook suffers a temporary outage, we would risk suffering an outage as well.

The content entered via Facebook’s tools remains under Facebook’s control.

If Facebook shut down, we would risk losing a lot of content from our website.” (G1-P16-p#1)

This statement suggests that this participant and their team decided not to embed **Facebook** widgets on their public website primarily due to the privacy concerns for both their organisation and their online website users. This participant provided several possibilities of what may go wrong with their platform: (1) If the *Facebook* platform suffers a temporary outage, the media organisation risks suffering an outage as well if there were any embedded Facebook widgets on the website; (2) Any content retrieved from **Facebook**, even if it's from an corporate page of the organisation, still remains under **Facebook**'s control; (3) if Facebook’s service shut down, every piece of content retrieved through the variety of the Facebook tools and widgets in use on the media organisations website would be lost. Due to these possible reasons, this participant stated they would be against any future use of embedded **Facebook** widgets on their website.

Later in their account, a significant issue emerged from this participant where they explained that based on a negative experience with **Facebook** they decided against incorporating any **Facebook** widgets within their websites and to keep **Facebook** for external use only. They defended their decision in the following example:

*“we've also had examples in real life, **from a technical perspective where services have gone offline and every webpage that uses a Facebook widget has gone down with it.... that happened last year for about an hour and half of the internet went missing. Half of the internet went off the air.**” (G1-P16-p#1)*

In this above extract, the participant provided an example from the previous year of the date of this interview which was a consequence of an embedded **Facebook user comments** widget. They described their media organisations' internal network services going offline, which resulted in every web page containing a Facebook embedded widget on their corporate website to go offline for an hour. This outage also affected their internet connection service. With further correspondence and investigation, it was revealed that the cause of the services breakdown was still not 100% confirmed, however it was assumed that the corporate firewall was treating the requests from the embedded **Facebook** widgets as DNS attacks (Atkins & Austein, 2004). From a privacy perspective, Facebook has been one of the platforms that caused concern to some of the media organisations in this study when they embedded it on their sites, both in reputation and performance.

Due to the detrimental impact experienced by the organisations when they embedded **Facebook** widgets on their sites, the same concern extended to another popular social media the organisation has embedded on their website. They stated the following extracts in regards to embedding **Twitter** widgets on their website:

*"There's risks in terms of **Twitter** itself. If their platform goes down, your content can't get out." (G1-P2-p#5)*

"I'm not very comfortable with Twitter's new API - it requires JavaScript tags." (G1-P16-p#1)

These passages from different technical participants clearly suggest that they are not comfortable with the use of the third-party provided library codes; especially JavaScript code libraries. Despite this, one participant acknowledged that they trust the **Twitter** service more than **Facebook's**.

*"we just trust **Twitter** more than we trust **Facebook** - Because twitter doesn't contain a whole lot of information as much as Facebook does from a user's privacy perspective we're concerned with how much data Facebook knows about everyone who uses it and we've also had examples in real life [reference to the major **Facebook** outage the organisation suffered from]" (G1-P16-p#1)*

This participant's team has more trust in **Twitter** in comparison to **Facebook** as they assume that the **Twitter** platform does not store such large amounts of information on users as **Facebook** does. From a user's privacy perspective, they indicated their concern with the amount of data **Facebook** collects on its users. This has become the rationale for their decision to no longer embed **Facebook** widgets

on their websites in the future. Due to organisation's perception of **Twitter** timeline widget benefits, yet their ongoing lack of trust in third-party JavaScript based APIs, they decided to take the lesser risk by embedding **Twitter** widgets only on a limited and specific story pages.

“with Twitter we only add the (Twitter) embeds for few pages here and there”. (G1-P16-p#2)

They also discussed the possibility of complete removal of the widget if the tool becomes a liability on their site. In this case, the participant indicated that they use high-end content management systems that can track which website pages contain Twitter embedded widgets and can easily remove them from every website page if the API becomes completely un-trusted. The extracts below discuss the ability to remove Twitter embeds if they become a liability:

“our content management system allows us to find out which stories had twitter content in there so we just run a query and disconnect from those pages” (G1-P16-p#2)

*“The security and privacy issues still exist to this day I think we're more trusting of **Twitter** than we are of other social media networks because I don't think they have much available data about people that is available publically anyway so I don't think there is an issue there. The bigger issue is probably more ...now that we're linking through to them using script tags are we just confident that their services are going to remain online and so far they have been fine but if it started to become flaky then we would seriously consider not using it.” (G1-P16-p#3)*

It is clearly evident that although external social media tools are valuable, media organisations are greatly concerned about their exposure to network security from any online threats. If any aspect of an embedded social media tool becomes a liability, they will not hesitate in removing their widgets/tools from their sites and terminating its use.

4.5.1.3 HACKING OF SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT PASSWORD

One of the well-known issues technical participants have voiced concern over was with **Facebook** and **Twitter**'s history with **password hacking**. Another term for password hacking is password cracking, a method of recovering passwords from data transmitted by [or stored on] a computer/laptop. Below extracts are examples of password hacking media organisations have experienced from both **Twitter** and **Facebook**.

"There are risks in terms of getting hacked, reasonably common for people to have their password hacked. And that's happened to other media organisations. I'm not aware of it happening to the [organisation name] but it's certainly a risk people need to be aware of." (G1-P2-p#5)

Further correspondence via email with one of the study participants, a social media coordinator, revealed several of their social media accounts such as **Twitter** and **Facebook** have been compromised (**Figure 4.10**). As the study progressed, more participants revealed their organisations have had their official social media accounts' passwords hacked and discussed their concerns that this caused genuine accounts to lose their "verified" ticks. Several extracts below of email correspondences from a business participant highlights this issue:

"This morning we were alerted by Twitter that two significant [brandname] accounts had possibly been compromised, with an external source attempting to secure access. We were able to lockdown the accounts and update their account details. - Twitter have advised that we update passwords for our official accounts, as attempts are likely to be made on other [brandname] accounts. " (G1-P5)

"A number of staff have received a message appearing to be from Facebook saying they are no longer admins of some Facebook Pages - We suspect this is a scam message. If you have received a similar message, DO NOT CLICK ON ANY LINKS. "(G1-P5)

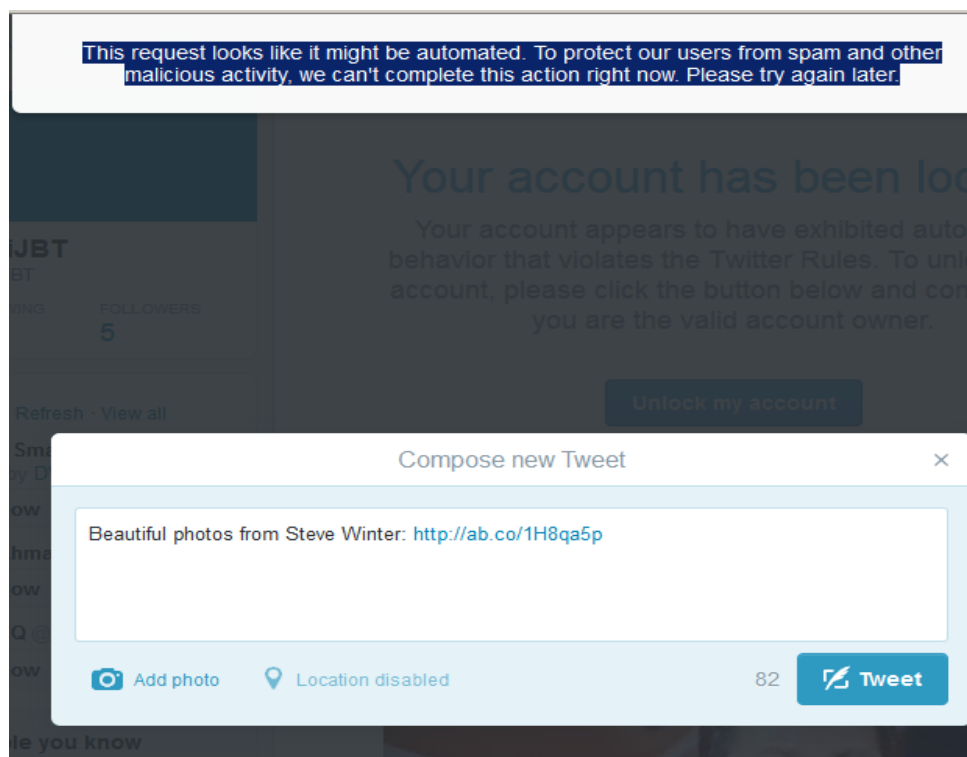


Figure 4.10: A recurring issue experienced by participants: An example of a locked **Twitter** Account

4.5.1.4 CONSTANT API CHANGES

Platform changes in social media networking services was one of the major challenges revealed by all technical participants (such as developers) and business individuals (such as social media coordinators and digital producers) in this study. There are a variety of issues here such as: the deprecation of a platform's APIs; the termination of widgets that the social media platform provides; the enforcing of the use of new tools and widgets that may not be in line with organisation's needs; the addition of features to the existing tools that are unfavourable to the media organisation, removal of customisation capabilities, or modifications to the underlying social media technology that collides with the media organisation website's code libraries making them vulnerable to hi-jacking.

A number of participants outlined these types of changes have caused their organisations to;

- Implement changes on their websites to accommodate to the changes of embedded third-party social tools. This type of changes requires developer(s) involvement; or
- Terminate their use of the widgets and simply using the platform externally by linking to them.

This study has clearly identified that API or feature deprecation is a common theme of external social media platforms. Some of these changes could be classified as upgrades to existing features or complete termination of them. For instance, **Twitter**'s service changed from providing RSS generated feeds of latest tweets to a fully JavaScript oriented timeline embed. Although embedding the **Twitter** widget was still easy to incorporate onto the organisation website, it makes websites vulnerable to page hi-jacking. The following comment highlights the difference:

*"one of the challenges we had was after some time they made changes to their API, which was quite restrictive. So they went from using RSS and JSON as a data format to dropping RSS all together. Since we built so many systems relying on the RSS, **that meant as [we] had to make significant changes at our end. So that a risk you take with external social media APIs, is that they can make changes that affect you, or systems, and you have very little to control over that.**" (G1-P2-p#5)*

In the above example, one of the challenges experienced was their use of **Twitter** API's that provided RSS feeds of latest tweets. Twitter deprecated the RSS and JSON data formats by dropping RSS feeds completely. Since the organisation's system relied heavily on XML type of data, this change from

Twitter forced the media organisation to make significant changes. Further correspondence and auditing of the media website of this participant revealed that prior to **Twitter's** RSS API deprecation, technical developers of this media organisation developed a mechanism to merge posts from **Twitter** RSS feeds and **Facebook's** RSS feeds and outputted this as one stream of content and embedded on the page. This was from JavaScript library inclusion and suited the organisation's needs, reducing the likelihood of exposing them to previous security concerns. However, after **Twitter's** RSS deprecation, developers were forced to split the two feeds and include them side by side; one output from **Facebook** RSS and the other from **Twitter's** timeline widget (**Figure 4.11**). The likelihood of social media tools making changes to their APIs are high and these changes may affect the media organisations end-users' systems; these are changes that the end-users have no control over.

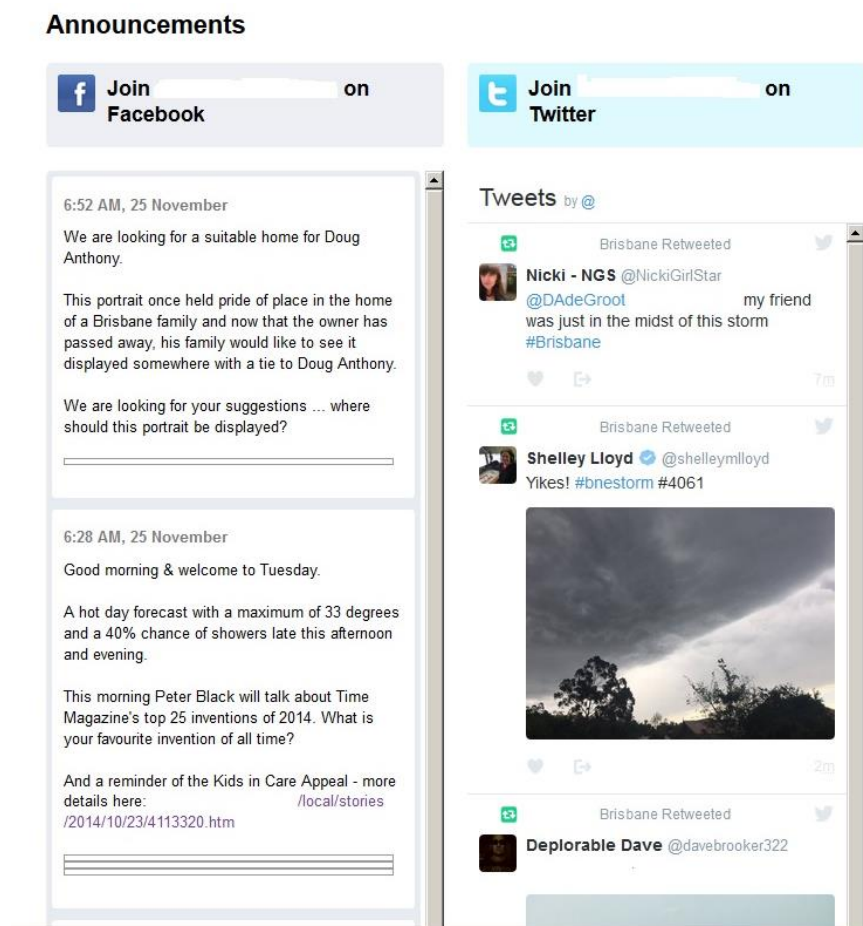


Figure: 4.11: A screenshot of a media organisation's page that displays third-party data from Facebook and Twitter.

One of the many downsides of popular social media networks becoming popular with social media users is for the potential for social media services to seek new commercial avenues and ventures to profit from. This could lead to technical changes within the social media platform that may impact

on media organisations sites that are embedding their tools. For instance, Storify was being used for content curation (such as audience comments) from different social networking services. An organisation participant provides an example of their experience with the use of Storify embeds that displayed a stream of audience comments:

"the social media coordinator started using Storify to curate social media posts into a single place and found it was quite useful and quite easy to use and fast so he was able to get stuff together within minutes, where it would take much longer to do it any other way ...so we tried that first...I think we ended up liking our Storify pages and then experimented with embedding their content in new stories and it's been quite good we've been able to embed Storify features on our site. One of the issues we faced they[Storify] wanted to make money eventually so they started rolling ads and that kind of thing and they started changing the way you embed things which we didn't really like as much and we had ads come in through to our website" (G1-P16-p#12)

In the above example, the participant's non-commercial media organisation embedded Storify widgets which contained comments that included commercial ads in them. This was due to the changes made by Storify social networking service. These embedded ads were an issue for the organisation as they could/did not promote commercial content on their website. Not only was this change a business challenge for the media organisation, but it also prompted them to purchase an account to ensure their embedded website widgets are always ad-free. It also encouraged them to find a different and similar platform to replace Storify. The below extract confirms this:

"We decided to buy a login ...we bought an account that was ad free." (G1-P16-p#12)

Another similar lived experience challenge revealed in this study was with Storify's embeddable widget that demonstrated how changes to a social media platform may impact on the behaviour of their tools when embedded on an organisations website.

*"how **Storify** would work is, you know, you're pulling your photos or tweets or whatever platforms and they're presented in a linear thing, it would be a curated thing. So an [brandname] person would have pulled all that content together and made decisions about being valid content or whatever and we've put that on our site, so **Storify** decided to change how their platform worked, which meant that people could comment on individual items in **Storify**. So we put something on our site and then there's a **Flickr** photo and then people could comment on that **Flickr** photo. There's no moderation process. So in effect people have been commenting on the [brandname] website without any checks or balances." (G1-P3-p#6)*

From the above example, Storify imported different content, i.e. photos [from photo image hosting services] or tweets [from Twitter] or any external social platform and presented it in a linear embeddable stream. For instance, the organisation employee could arrange to collect valid selected content from several different external social platforms and was able to embed that on the organisations website. However, the Storify service made changes to the operation of their platform that included enabling their users to comment on individual items within the Storify widget, without any moderation or filtering process of the content that was also being extracted from other social media networks.

*"So this is an example where we were using **Storify** for higher range of things and then **Storify** changed how their functional worked and we had to change the way we used it. So now we won't use that for story. We made a risk analysis, we made a risk assessment. **We still use it but we won't use it on things that are likely to provoke a lot of comments.** Because we don't have the capacity to get notifications, we don't have the capacity to monitor when people are commenting. So for example, **we did use it for reaction to politics stories and we don't do that so much because people could basically comment and they could be saying anything and it's on [brandname] website.**" (G1-P3-P#6)*

Consequently, this forced the media organisation to undertake a risk analysis on Storify's embeddable service tools and widgets and alter the way they used them in the future. While Storify was previously used before for major news articles, after the occurrence of the above incident, they had to change the way they used it. They continued to use Storify's embeddable comments widget but only for articles that they believed were unlikely to provoke a huge number of inappropriate language or articles of a political nature. This participant suggested that the organisation did not want any comments that may be provocative or hateful to be included on their website. With **Storify's** embedded tool, the organisation did not have the capability to filter comments or a way to exclude inappropriate language, so they decided against using it. The statement below highlights their response:

"there wasn't anything that inappropriate on that story but there saw the potential (to provoke inappropriate comments) ... so we removed it from the site and then we sort of, we made sure that everyone on the team knew that functionality was now there. ." (G1-P3-P#6)

4.5.1.5 THE INTEGRATION FACTOR

All organisations have to eventually tackle issues of integrating social media tools into their entire ecosystem by adopting either centralised, distributed or hybrid methods. For example, many popular social media platforms provide APIs to embed content through their own widgets. Integration becomes an issue when different widgets are imported on a website causing code clashes and heavy page load due to different API scripts, thus requiring developer intervention. One media organisation that used **Storify** narrated their experience with integrating its widgets. The **Storify** service provided an embed functionality that did not work on the organisation's content management system. Therefore, their developers had to develop a customised embed code to include the **Storify** widget on their organisation's website pages.

*"A better example might be like something might work on our desktop site but not on mobile and we had to change... the developers had to change, we were using an html fragment (functionality in CoreMedia to embed external content and not content within the system itself) and since it changed to an external link. And what that means is, I don't know about the technical stuff. but depending on where it is it'll display differently, like, it's got a fallback. So when someone's looking at it (the page on the site that contains **Storify**) on the desktop when an external link is embedded it'll go find the content and drop it in, whereas if someone's looking at it on mobile on an app, it'll just say "external link blah", like it'll just say external link **Storify**, and then people would have to actually have to tab into that, and then they go off to **Storify** website." (G1-P3-p#7)*

The above paragraph provides an example of how a Storify widget may work on a website viewed on a desktop platform but may not work as well, or even similarly on a mobile one. This issue resulted in the need for developer intervention to modify the code from using an html fragment to a custom built JavaScript-based embed. This new custom embed executes a search function that looks for content on the external **Storify** service and displays the content (results of the search) onto the website. However, the custom-built embed for **Storify** widget was limited on a mobile platform that displayed "external {URL-link}" which, once clicked, takes the user to the external **Storify** page to view the content.

Further, social media platforms force the organisations to use their own methods to display content. For example, Twitter provides a feature called Cards. Twitter Cards enables the media organisation to attach elements such as photos and videos to tweets. Such features are likely to increase audience traffic volume on their website. This way, users who tweet links to news articles will have a "card" added to the tweet that's visible to all their social media followers. This is done by adding set

of mark-up tags such as summary (with/out large image), photo, gallery, app, player, and product onto a website. Once a website page URL containing these metatags is pasted on Twitter page, the content is presented with its appropriate media elements, attracting more visitors to the website through click-throughs. In addition to displaying content in a more engaging way, cards are also built for mobile view by driving downloads of mobile applications and even linking directly to them.

Twitter Cards metatags are implemented within the source of a website page as follows:

```
<meta name="twitter:card" content="{type-of-card, e.g.photo}" />
<meta name="twitter:site" content="{@photo-source}" />
<meta name="twitter:title" content="{caption}" />
<meta name="twitter:image" content="{image-path}" />
<meta name="twitter:url" content="{image-page-path}" />
```

On the other hand, **Facebook** provides their own mechanism to display content on **Facebook** pages called Open Graph metatags. **Twitter** Cards look similar to Open Graph tags as the code is based on the same attributes and properties in the Open Graph protocol. When the Open Graph protocol is used on a website page to describe data, it's easy to generate a **Twitter** card without replicating tags and data. When the **Twitter** card processor searches for tags on a page, the first item it checks for is the **Twitter** property. If this property did not exist, the supported Open Graph property is used as a fall back. This allows for both properties to be defined on the page independently, and decreases the amount of duplicate mark-up tags required to define content and experience. The Open Graph metadata tags is in the following format:

```
<meta property="og:title" content="{title of story/image}"/>
<meta property="og:type" content="{type of media element, image, video, audio}"/>
<meta property="og:url" content="{url of the resource}"/>
<meta property="og:image" content="{image-path}"/>
```

With every social media platform providing their own methods of embedding their content on websites, it becomes a major challenge for media organisations to incorporate and manage each one and allocate resources for implementation. One participant highlights this challenge below describing it as "an overkill":

"this is probably the biggest problem that **we have its just that so many platforms** and so many different...I guess its motivation for people to try different things but you know **there is so many different platforms people having to use it just becomes an overkill.**" (G1- P5-p#5)

Although internal staff of media organisations are motivated to find new social media platforms and tools to utilise them for business needs to help in delivering functionalities to their websites that can provide benefits to the media organisations, there can be many different social media platforms that users may be using. Having to use and manage each different one becomes challenging and time consuming and will continue to present different flaws and challenges.

4.5.1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THIRD-PARTY EMBEDDED SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLS

Some social media widgets contain beneficial features that make them useful tools to satisfy certain business needs. In media organisations, mobile platforms provide a fast mechanism to file information directly from a scene or an event. However, they have to be used within the social media tool's predefined conditions in order for the widget to function as it is meant to. For instance, **Twitter's** timeline stream widget is a common example of a beneficial tool if used within certain conditions.

*"this was an example of something where it was a challenge for us **we were embedding a reporter's tweets who's covering a court case, so we just started to pull in anything they tweeted and at the end of the day they went home and so they were tweeting this other stuff**, and that module was still on the story. So that was a situation where we hadn't fully thought through how we're going to use that module." (G1-P3-p#2)*

Although Twitter's timeline widget is very popular and heavily used in media organisations, but it works well only within certain constraints (i.e. the use of hashtag filtering) and the organisations need to ensure they control the Twitter feed. The above extract provides an example of the constant challenge a reporter is faced with when embedding their tweets for any news story. After the reporter completed their coverage of the live event, their tweets were extracted through a Twitter timeline stream and embedded on the relevant article page, but there was no hashtag established within the tweet. This caused other irrelevant personal tweets to display on the article page. This challenge encouraged the social media coordinator of the organisation to establish a process to utilise Twitter's timeline widget more effectively. The process implemented was to plan ahead of an event, establish a suitable hashtag, communicate the event's selected hashtag to the reporter covering the relevant event and then use that hashtag to filter the extracted reporter's tweets within the Twitter timeline widget. This paragraph describes this implemented process:

" now what we do is where possible we say to reporters "can you add a relevant hash tag so we won't be just pulling in reporter's tweets, we'll be pulling in their tweets plus the hashtag. With #baydenclay trial we were asking the reporters covering that to tag the tweets Bayden Clay. It's a way to make sure if they wanted to tweet what they're having for lunch or whatever it doesn't get pulled into the story where it looks out of place. " (G1-P3-p#2)

However even this process was not a perfect resolution, as it laid the possibility of process failure if not executed within the correct conditions. The following statement from the participant highlights this restriction:

*"That's the ideal where we've got a reporter, or even like you could set it up to search for, if you had three reporters covering the one story you could set it up so it would capture all of their tweets with a particular hash tag. **But the problem with that is then you get the other side which is they may forget to add the hash tag so you don't have all that information going into the module on that story.** So I guess it's just weighing up the risks of each approach and sometimes the reporter might start tweeting cause we don't always have time to plan. Like **if a reporter just happens to be on the ground, we may have not had time to communicate to them to use a particular hashtag.**" (G1-P3-p#2)*

In summary, an ideal scenario for a media organisation when sending a reporter(s) to cover a story would be if they had already planned ahead, created a hashtag, and then used it to pull in their relevant tweets. However, there remains a challenge if the reporter(s) forget to add the relevant hashtag in their tweets or misspell the hashtag, which can cause **Twitter's** timeline widget not to include their tweets on the page. Unfortunately, there is not always enough time to plan ahead and create the widget with the planned hashtag; for instance, if a reporter happens to be on the breaking news ground and they begin tweeting about the breaking news event.

Another challenge outlined by media organisations participants related to content limitations arising from the character limit on the social media post. For instance, **Twitter's** 140-character limit has been one of the major drawbacks as it makes it difficult for journalists and content presenters to post a longer context or description for a news item.

*"[With **Twitter**] I try to insure you get the message out there with the link to the words, that's sometimes a challenge, and also now you can incorporate video and photos that limit size of the text as well, so yeah, **sometimes you want to convey a message on Twitter but because of the limitation of the word count, you sometimes have to abbreviate or instead of saying "tonight" I write the letter "2nite" to shorten it**" (G1-P12-p#3)*

Here, the participant outlines their challenges with **Twitter's** constraints in conveying messages through tweets to their followers. With **Twitter** enabling both video and photo publishing, admittedly a beneficial feature, but this further limits the size of the text allowed within a tweet. This forces the reporters, and for that matter any social media users, to find ways to minimise their text, finding abbreviations for their words, which provides them more space for text input to convey their message more clearly in their tweet.

4.5.1.7 SUITABILITY OF MEDIUM

Several participants discussed the pressure to use new social media platforms as alternatives to cope with challenge or limitations of existing social media services. Platform or feature limitations of existing social media may push organisations to find other newer social media to store and distribute content. Not only will the media organisations add further tools and widgets to compensate for the limitations of the existing ones used, but they also will then have to deal with further integration issues. As any visual is a valuable addition to the text, media organisations rely on adding media elements such as photos and audios to their stories; this signals meaningful cues about their news items. One of the issues outlined was the limitations of adding the variety of media elements on social media platforms that are important to media organisations. For instance, Facebook and Twitter do not handle audio files well therefore organisations had to find other platforms that do.

*" out of all our existing mediums **Facebook and Twitter, neither of them deal particularly well with audio**. So on Facebook generally you need to have a video, **you can't add audio just by itself it difficult so what we decided to do was our work with SoundCloud to sign up with one of their accounts to see how we can integrate some of that material onto our websites**. So the main way that we use that the local websites use **SoundCloud** is for during emergency coverage for example. So let's say we interview a Fire commander that has some really essential information we can take notes of it and post those notes on **Twitter** but quite often our audience would like to hear sort of information straight from the horse's mouth as they say." (G1-P4-p#7)*

The participant example above suggests that their existing popular social pages **Facebook** and **Twitter** did not particularly support audio files well. In the case of **Facebook**, when a link is added to a post, it displays a snapshot of the video, however an audio link cannot be added by itself. Hence the participant and their team decided to work with another external medium, **SoundCloud** to cater for audio content. They decided to sign up to **SoundCloud**, a known medium for being a global audio distribution platform that enables uploading, recording, promoting, sharing of audio content. **SoundCloud** was found to be suitable specifically during emergency coverages. For instance, if an interview was conducted with a Fire commander that contained essential information for the general public, notes could be taken on the interview and published on Twitter and linked to the interview on **SoundCloud** available for existing media organisations users and visitors to stream the information from "the horse's mouth".

Although **SoundCloud** was identified as a suitable medium to support audio content, it has its restrictions. For instance, according to another participant, **SoundCloud** does not provide context to an audio.

*"content wise it's always handy if you got some really great audio you wanted to be on your service so you can keep it for eternity if you like. So we had to make some hard decisions and some pretty strict policies on how we're going to use **SoundCloud** because we don't want all the bits of audio that we do to be on **SoundCloud**. We only want the stuff that needs to be up there quickly. So that's been a challenge because **SoundCloud is so easy to use but it doesn't allow you to provide extra context so you put a caption on there but you can't add bits of written information that help put our audio into context.** So that's been a bit of a challenge that we had to work through. There's also been a few challenges embedding it and it's been capability within our public websites". (G1-P4-p#8)*

In summary, despite with the variety of social media platforms available to media organisations, participants in this study demonstrated that in their experience each has its own limitations and challenges. Managing each service and their tools has proven to be difficult. However, the suitability of a social media platform in supporting various media elements is of equal importance. Media organisations are dealing with these challenges proactively and continue to remain active by embedding these social media services.

4.5.1.8 LACK OF FLEXIBILITY

One of the frequent participant complaints about their experiences in their organisations using social media were the technical issues arising with the extraction and correction of previously posted content. The challenge varies from one social media platform to another. For instance, although tweets are posted on a Twitter page, and it is reflected immediately in an embedded timeline widget on the organisations website, any update to a tweet does not take effect on its embedded timeline widgets.

"if you get a spelling error in a tweet and it gets few re-tweets and it goes off and you can't sort of edit it - I think sometimes a rogue apostrophe you can let go but if it's sort of a major spelling error you probably got to delete it and start again. But it's a shame to lose that momentum sometimes." (G1-P15-p#4)

Here, the participant highlighted this constant concern they experience every time they tweet. If a tweet contained a spelling error and it was distributed to other Twitter profiles through their followers' re-tweets, the original tweet can be edited on the profile but the re-tweets remain the same as the original tweet. Any corrections or edits made to the original tweet within a profile are

not reflected on the re-tweeted content on other profiles, nor on the re-tweets pulled in through an embedded Twitter timeline widget. This technical limitation could potentially cause legal ramifications for any media organisation, as any error could be seen as incorrect information and misleading. Therefore, this limitation within Twitter is forcing media employees, specifically journalists, to take extreme caution when tweeting news and information to organisation's users and followers, as any error they make could reflect poorly on the journalist and may even result in legal issues for the organisation.

4.5.1.9 IMPOSED THIRD-PARTY STYLE

Promotional branding is extremely important factor for media organisations as they try to build lasting value with their website visitors and regular news readers through developing an identity that represents a desired look. This is usually achieved online through certain colours that construct logos and website guidelines. One of the issues the participants discussed in interviews was the look and feel of a social media tool and how they are then represented on the organisations website. One participant noted that embedding some social media violated the organisation's branding because the social media in questions used a pre-set enforced style and colour-scheme. For instance, although SoundCloud is a useful platform for embedding high quality audio, its widget was not suitable for one organisation's branding as it enforced its own pre-set default colours and styles. The below extract highlights this challenge:

*"just in terms of embedding we had some style issues **I don't think it's broken a page but definitely thrown the style out**, which can be a little bit problematic for audience expectations. " (G1-P4-p#8)*

4.5.2 NON-TECHNICAL ISSUES

Social media tools can have an unpredictable behaviour results when embedded in the organisations websites, depending on the way they are developed, or the type of changes that are applied on them by their relevant service providers. Some of these changes can be beneficial and an improvement on their previous versions, and other changes could result in new business challenges. This section will explore four non-technical issues that participants identified in media organisations that embedded social media tools within their websites:

- I. legal ramifications
- II. constant moderation
- III. inaccurate content
- IV. management difficulties

4.5.2.1 LEGAL RAMIFICATIONS

Incorporating third-party social media widgets may have implications on how content is displayed within its platform or other external platforms. These types of issues are extremely hard to monitor as external platforms are developed by separate companies and each have their own rules, guidelines and policies. One participant narrated their lived experience with Twitter service when a change was applied to their rules:

*"Twitter said now if you want to include a tweet it has to have the related functionality, so it has to have reply, re-tweet, favourite. And also you can't, **Twitter said you can't build a conversation off a tweet, so what Storify was doing was effectively taking a tweet and putting it on their platform and then allowing people to reply to that tweet, but only within Storify.** So Twitter said you can't do that anymore, so now with Storify, you can't do that with tweets. So (laughs), so you see they can change these things at any time and then we have to respond to that or not. So the ground is constantly shifting. It's a really big challenge." (G1-P3-p#7)*

Twitter prohibited certain activities and enforced a new rule on communications on its platform. **Twitter** banned conversations that have begun within its platform to continue on other external platforms. The new term of use dictated that conversations that start on **Twitter** have to remain on its platform alone and should not continue off on a different platform. However, **Storify** services continued to pull in published tweets from **Twitter**, and they enable comments submissions and reply mechanisms on individual tweets within **Storify**. This may require organisations technical employees to have significant knowledge of the ins and outs of every social media service, not only when they're embedded individually on a website, but also on how they integrate with each other. This level of expertise adds further complexity to the task, making it more difficult to predict how an embedded social media may perform in an organisation website.

Some of the social media tools can have unreliable behaviours that may not be exposed until it has been embedded on a website for a period of time. The following extract provides a detailed examination of the participant's experience with an embedded Facebook Chat:

*"So what we did two years ago was we embedded a **Facebook** chat module within a [brandname] page, and it was for a particular event, it was around another event that we were running with [brandname] and it was a great way, we could post content and people could comment and chat by using their **Facebook** account to chat, but on the [brandname] site, so we were very careful of making sure people realise that this was the [brandname] site but they could use their Facebook login and*

*interact as if they're on **Facebook** but it was on [brandname] site. One of the issues that arose was when we were basically using an APP to link our **Facebook** page to [brandname] site was that permissions in terms of data and what information we captured because people were signing to that APP, and also because just the information that was being displayed and the issue came up around information was being displayed was what we've discovered with **Facebook** chat that people, the information they publically disclosed in **Facebook**, some of the information was being displayed on [brandname] site, and it was things like where people were working or schools that they've attended, now that was a concern for us, particularly people who were commenting were under 18 were teenagers and that sorts of details that were identifiable by their name and also by their school, and we were very concerned around that because that wasn't something we wanted to broadcast or publish, I'm not sure people didn't realise when they commented that that sort of information would display. " (G1-P5-p#2)*

The example stated above, from a participant who holds a social media coordinator position, offers a detailed examination of the possible unexpected privacy breaches resulting from using embedded social tools. The experience suggests that it is the unpredicted behaviour that results from the technical implementation of social media tools that is quite alarming. In this case, **Facebook Chat** was embedded on the site to encourage their online audiences to engage (i.e. chat and leave comments) through their existing logins with **Facebook**. However, permissions in terms of data were unclear and this led to the display of information of the users on the media organisation website from their **Facebook**; such as their names and the schools they attended. Users who engaged through **Facebook Chat** were not aware that their information would be displayed within the embedded tool on the website. This may have led the host organisation into a legally challenging position, as some of the users were underage. To complicate things further, it was a feature that could not be switched off through any **Facebook** settings:

"we couldn't switch it off, we couldn't disable that. It was something that people would comment, if their personal settings were as such on their home page displayed, where they worked or what school they went to that sort of, it's kind of that second tier about information in terms of Facebook, that just automatically appeared and there was nothing we could do about it." (G1-P5-p#2)

In a reactive and pre-emptive approach to the potential problem, the media organisation provided an announcement on the website that informed users that their information was being revealed outside their Facebook profile. This was to clarify to their users that if they wanted to perform activities such as commenting using their Facebook logins, some of their personal information from their Facebook profiles may be displayed. The statement also clarified to users that the organisation

had not captured any of that personal data and any of the currently displayed information on the embedded **Facebook Chat** widget. The extract below details this challenge:

*"We added a lot more information within the module on the Tripple J site just for trying to make it as clear as possible that if you were to comment, that some of your personal information may be displayed. And that wasn't something we were capturing but it was just something the individual's **Facebook** settings were happening and it wasn't something that the [organisation name] or [brand name] was seeking or trying to capture." (G1-P5-p#2)*

4.5.2.2 CONSTANT MODERATION

All organisation participants noted content moderation has been their biggest challenge. Moderating audience comments is necessary as it can have legal implications on certain news items if sensitive or defamatory information takes place; information that should remain private, or information that could be considered as defamatory, libellous, and so forth. With platforms such as Facebook, post-moderation has been a major challenge.

"There is issues with moderation. For example, people would get in there and, let's say you post an article on a court case. People can go in there and make comments about the court case and actually, if you're not moderating it, that can actually violate laws in many states. Saying the wrong things about an active case that may influence it. Other things are defamation, people might defame people in the comments on your Facebook page, unless you're moderating it. You can be held responsible. copy right infringements. There can be problems with that, if people post stuff to your wall. Copy-right abuse. People can get quite crazy at times, abusive and vilify other people and express racist comments, things like this. Especially an organisation like the [brandname] that posting content on Facebook about news stories, people commenting on that quite often are quite harsh in their comments. The majority of people are fine, but the minority are, like any social media site, there is a minority of trouble makers and people that just don't get social norms and don't believe social norms apply online and post inappropriate material so that's definitely a big problem, is you got to watch out for that sort of thing" (G1 - P2- p#2)

The experience above reveals the continuous issue media organisations face regarding content moderation. For instance, if a news article is posted on a website about a court case that triggers users' online engagement through commenting threads, there is no moderation process in place. This could potentially violate laws in many states as it may be illegal in variety of ways, and may indeed be deemed to influence a potential future court case outcome. This Participant states that in their experience, Facebook is a common virtual space for people to defame other people. Other

unlawful activities that may occur such as copyright infringements or expressing racist slangs. A media organisation could be held accountable for any of these activities if these comments are occurring on its social pages and pulled into the media organisations' corporate website through social media embedded widgets.

Moderation was reported as a constant concern for nearly all employees of media organisations interviewed in this study, but specifically for business employees. Several vital examples emerged from the qualitative interviews showcasing the heavy responsibility felt by the organisation staff in relating to content moderation. In some cases, it's extremely difficult to moderate content, particularly when content has already been pulled through an existing widget onto an organisations website. For instance, Twitter's stream widget is extremely popular and embedded on all media organisations' websites in this study. This also means it can display some of the raw (unfiltered) content that may contain inappropriate material. This statement highlights experiences regarding Twitter's moderation difficulty:

"We have to be careful what feeds we allow on our website. It is very difficult to moderate content coming in a Twitter feed." (G1-P16-#p4)

4.5.2.3 INACCURATE OR MISLEADING CONTENT

The difficulty in determining accurate content submitted by online audience through social media platforms can also be a major challenge. Many media organisations these days not only audition material and ideas to their target audience through social media networks to receive their feedback and interests, but they also request their users to contribute different types of content such as photos. Social media tools do not detect submission of fabricated data or content. The following example from one participant provides a famous "photo of the moon" situation that was posted both online and on national television. This incident presented a business challenge due to Facebook's platform limitation:

"There's an example I think, a few months ago now, it was a, some sort of a blue moon situation I think, where people were sending in, can't think if specifically, but they were some sort of strange moon where... if you saw it, it was stunning, we were asking people to send in images, if they had seen it, someone sent in a photograph which was not from the moon that night, but it was from 10 years prior, and we had no way of actually knowing that was real or not, I mean you kind of try and have to get it factually correct, but sometimes it's quite difficult to sort....So yeah, we fear the accuracy of the images." (G1-P12-p#5-6)

In this example, the participant noted the business challenge of getting images from a specific astronomical phenomenon. Journalists requested audience submission of images of the Blue Moon which occurred on the previous night. Of the many submitted photos of the phenomenon online, the producers felt that one photo in particular stood out that was of high standard and quality so they chose to televise it the next day. Later, it was discovered that the submitted photo of the phenomenon was an old photo, dated 10 years earlier, yet it was wrongfully and unknowingly presented on national television to be a photo of the event taken from the previous night. The participant noted that it was an embarrassment for their network. This example demonstrates ongoing concerns over the legitimacy and accuracy of user/audience submitted content. This issue led to the suspension of future user submitted content. Furthermore, this example illustrates problems that may cause audiences to have a lack of trust in the media organisations brand, which may also result in the media organisation losing its credibility among its competitors.

4.5.2.4 DIFFICULTY IN MANAGING VARIOUS SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS AND THEIR TOOLS

In contrast to the benefits of social media tool use discussed in the previous section, this section revealed numerous technical and non-technical challenges that resulted from embedding social media. Yet media organisations continue to embed social media on their websites as "it brings traffic to the website". Media employee participants even made adjustments to their websites to integrate selected third-party tools.

The suitability of social media mentioned in the technical challenges section opens the doors for a business challenge, the difficulty to manage the problems arising. Finding suitable social media that provide useful features and functionalities that existing and popular social media do not provide is beneficial, as it means there are ways to fill in the gaps. However, adding more platforms is making it difficult for media organisations to manage their websites as each platform has its own rules, regulations, and challenges. To support this interpretation, in the example below, one participant noted the difficulty of managing several social media platforms:

*"this is probably the biggest problem that we have it's just that so many platforms and so many different.... I guess it's motivation for people to try different things but you know **there is so many different platforms people having to use it just becomes an overkill.**" (G1-P5-P#5)*

With so many different types of social media to manage, it becomes difficult to manage each one, plus it increases the difficulty of having to train staff in each different version to ensure future efficient use by the organisations on their websites. It also makes it a challenge for the organisation to keep up with the ever-changing rules of external social media platforms and ensure they are using these platforms within their legal regulations.

*"often the terms and conditions of these platforms change. Instagram added significant change in their 'terms of service' after they were bought by **Facebook**, and so we had to review our use of **Instagram** at that stage, to say what that means to the [organisation name] cause now what they used to do that we felt complied with our needs changed, and so we had to make those decisions as those things change and adjust them so it's always an ongoing thing, working in social network's favour and other times to their detriment cause we can't use anymore" (G1-P5-p#5)*

4.5.2.5 THE EVALUATION OF THIRD-PARTY SOCIAL MEDIA WITHIN MEDIA ORGANISATIONS

The evaluation of the perceived benefits of third-party social media platforms and their embedded tools has been done in each media organisation in this study in variety of different methods. Some media organisations focused on Webtrends detailed report of the activities of the performance of their stories on third-party social media networking sites. They also resorted to the tracking activities already provided within each social media sites. Below this experience exemplifies this:

*"there are people in the role of social media coordinators who keep track of things like the number of likes or amount of activity on a page. I'm not involved in that activity so I don't know all the stuff they do but there is certainly measuring of the matrix. So things like measuring likes, measuring bull-posts, measuring activity, also the **Webtrends** package third party statistics package provides information on Facebook activity on specific stories. Also we track referrals from Facebook to our site. Cause quite often, lets say someone posts a story on a website, puts a link to it on Facebook and we can see how many people clicked through on Facebook link back to our site." (G1-P2-p#3)*

Webtrends has been found to be a major tool used in monitoring user activities on media organisation websites in this study. External user activities are measured on the social media services. Every media organisation had a measurement matrix they followed to extract data; that data displays what their users are interested in, what stories received the most engagement and had the most activities. Some of the media organisations in this study monitored the type of content that received the most attention and engagement from their users, relying mostly on counting the number of shares of any news story.

"We do a lot of measurement in terms of what people are using. What gets engagement, what's popular, but also what is the stuff where there is a potential audience. So that could mean posting content on the {media organisation name} and posting it elsewhere, like on Reddit, or Gora, or LinkedIn, something like that. We say there is a potential audience because of that content, and identify the content that draws people back to the {media organisation name} - once we used Addthis you know not an unreasonable level of analytics to track what's being shared, so that's one. But also Webtrends, a big part of what we do is adding social accounts to Webtrends and looking back to the ABC sites so we can see what is it that people are sharing on social media and Webtrends is a really good way in doing that." (G1-P4-p#5)

During the website auditing phase of this study, the source code was also investigated and this revealed that all media organisations embedded tracking codes in their sites for tracking programs such as Google Analytics (a free tracking mechanism) or commercial tracking programs such as Webtrends and Nielsen ratings. Tracking mechanisms provided within social media networking services to track user activities, engagements and how well their articles performed when posted externally.

A conceptual model for the organisation's experience of embedded social media in the corporate websites of media agencies

Social media play a crucial role in increasing traffic in media organisation websites. This chapter revealed the variety in the use of popular social media embedded within media organisations websites, and the challenging experiences faced by the organisations and their staff. Social media use has also brought numerous challenges to the media organisations, and to date it seems that the organisational social media policies do not outline methods or processes to handle these challenges effectively.

The findings from this study of individuals working for media organisations has enabled the identification of different embedded third-party social networking tools. These could be further categorised into third-party share tools, widgets and full apps (**Diagram 4.1**). Each category was embedded within news and media websites to satisfy a different purpose. For example, share tools such as AddThis, Twitter's tweet, Facebook's "like", Pinterest's "PinIt", LinkedIn, GooglePlus are tools that create link between the website and the social service by creating a snapshot of the content page from a website onto the social media page. Live blogging from news site was done through free

widgets such as Twitter's Timeline widget and Storify and commercial ad-free widgets such as ScribbleLive. Inclusion of external media elements was implemented through a variety of embeddable video, audio and photo sharing tools of social platforms such as YouTube, Vimeo, SoundCloud, Flickr, Instagram, and Pinterest. For instance, Vimeo and YouTube were mainly used for embedding video content. SoundCloud was utilised for embedding audio interviews. The use of photo supporting platforms were implemented through Flickr, Instagram and Pinterest. Marketing events and products and brand promotion was achieved through embedded Facebook and Twitter widgets to increase subscriber and follower numbers on official social media pages.

The findings of this study have revealed issues and challenges being faced by media organisations that parallel the purpose of the social media tools being embedded. Sharing tools and embedding media content from external sources result in blank embedded pages due to missing content. It also results in privacy and network security issues. Live blogging widgets have caused both missing content and business challenges such as moderation, inclusion of inaccurate content and content management difficulties. Challenges extended to external social media pages such as dealing with post-moderation of comments and password hacking. The below diagram (**Diagram 4.1**) is a conceptual model of perceived benefits of embedded third-party social networking tools and the challenging outcomes of the lived experience of media organisations.

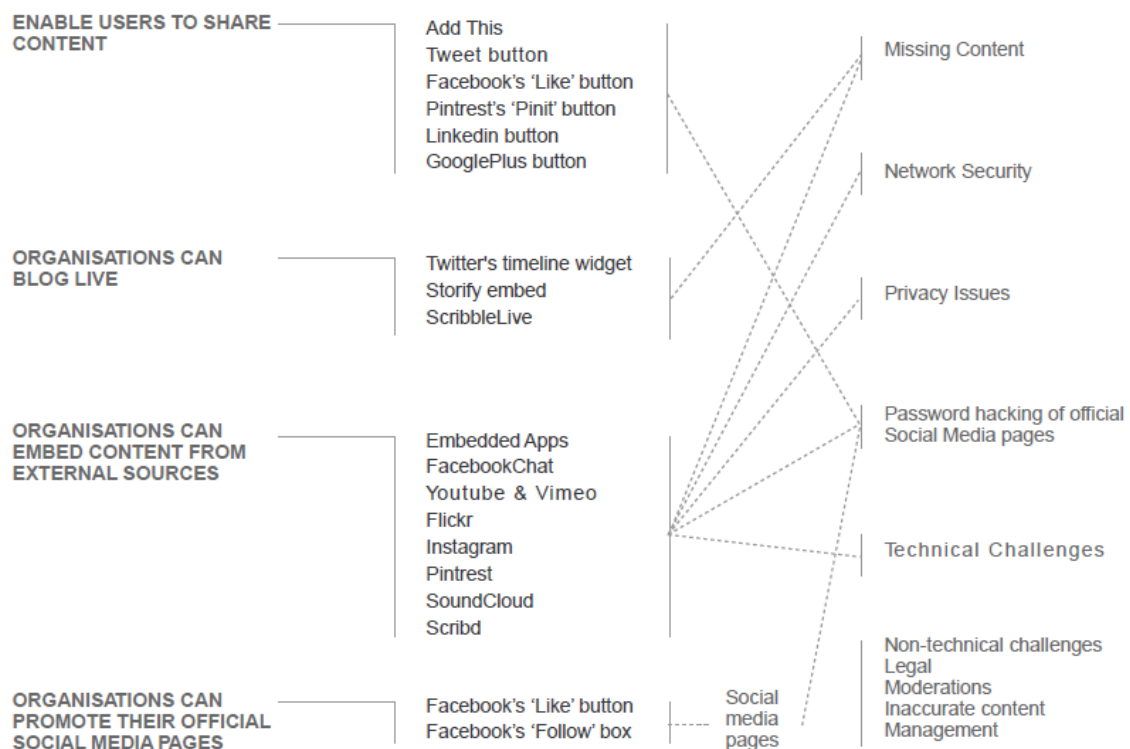


Diagram 4.1: A conceptual model of perceived benefits of embedded third-party social media tools and widgets and the challenges faced from the lived experience media organisations

4.6 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES WITHIN MEDIA ORGANISATIONS

Data from interviews revealed that all media organisations have set social media policies for use in their organisation. Those policies however revolved around the editorial side of produced news and content on popular social platforms such as Twitter, YouTube and Facebook. Official social media documents and manuals were obtained by the researcher for examination to retrieve useful data that could assist in establishing suitable practices for all media organisations to benefit from. The idea was to examine the suitability and efficiency of these social media policies and see if there are any practices that help in dealing with any of the challenges media organisations are being faced with. These obtained documents had specific policy statement that briefed staff on both personal and professional use of all social media by their staff to ensure they did not bring the organisation into disrepute or compromise effectiveness at work or the endorsement of personal views or disclosing confidential without consent or authorisation.

The findings strongly indicate that for the most part, none of the documents retrieved assist organisations in combating any of the technical challenges they face. Some media organisations published their social media policies online and some kept it for internal staff viewing only. This section will provide a brief on the obtained organisational social media policies.

4.6.1 THE USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES WITHIN MEDIA ORGANISATIONS

Media organisations in this study were found to pay a great deal of attention to content posted on their websites and their external official pages on social media networking platforms. Therefore, all media organisations examined in this study had editorial social media policies that covered the posting of any type of content on social media platforms by their staff.

Editorial social media policies covered staff's personal and professional use of social media, to ensure that staff will not bring the organisation into disrepute and compromise its work effectiveness, will not imply the organisations endorsement of personal views or disclose, without authorisation, any confidential information obtained through their work. These policies encourage staff to take responsibility for their activities and aim to clarify when an editorial policy of an organisation should be applied and reinforced in work-related activities. They also included interactive social media services and instructions regarding their use for engagement with existing users and new audiences on content.

Furthermore, the editorial policies covered the organisation's responsibility for content posted on its official social media accounts/pages. As a results of these policies, moderating submitted content, such as audience comments, is one of the most resource consuming activities experienced by study participants.

Even though all media organisations had a social media policy that contained editorial guidelines on the use of social media, none of the media organisations had a technical policy outlining the efficient use of social media tools, nor providing exemplars of best practices for developers implementing the incorporation of social media. The findings from this study on the lived experience of both groups of participants will therefore help in setting up a list of recommendations to assist media organisations to implement a social media technical policy in the future.

4.6.2 SOCIAL MEDIA COMMUNITY STANDARDS

Community standards social media policy identified in this study focused on encouraging the engagement with, and among, external audiences through intelligent, constructive and meaningful discussions. The guidelines in this type of policy stated that online debates were expected to be free of abusive, defamatory language, distorted facts, misrepresented opinions on others or personal attacks, otherwise they will be deleted. Further, it outlined that posting anything that may put a media organisation in legal jeopardy or breach of copyright can also result in deleting the user comments.

In summary, of the ten media organisations the participating employees worked for, only one media organisation had a separate social media editorial policy for their employees and a social media community standards policy for external website users/visitors. None of the media organisation had a technical policy nor any recommendations or exemplars of best practices of embedding social media tools; they did not even have any set processes in place to combat the current challenges they were experiencing.

4.7 KEY EMERGING THEMES FOR FUTURE STUDIES

In examining the use of embedded social media within media industry websites through qualitative interviews, data collection and analysis revealed further themes and common patterns that could be new avenues for future studies and additional paths for improving in-depth understanding of social media use in organisation websites. This section will consider one of these avenues.

4.8 TWITTER VS FACEBOOK FOR CONVERSATIONS

Data revealed that while Twitter and Facebook were indeed the most social media platforms used by all media organisations, each was discussed as a more suitable platform for conversations by different participants. Some organisations preferred Twitter and others preferred Facebook. It was not clearly evident why. The following two statements from different (business-oriented) participants state the difference that Facebook is more conversational platform than Twitter:

Now why was Facebook selected?

I think basically because it's a pretty strong tool and attracts readers to the website and the post is more prevalent and lasts longer than it does on Twitter.

Why is that? Do you think it's the interface?

*Yes. I think in terms of directing people to the website specially comments probably works a bit better for our audience than **Twitter** might. (G1-P15-p#1)*

On the other hand, another participant stated that Twitter worked better for conversations and the feedback was more valuable. There is an indication that articles by certain prominent individuals brought more engagement as it enabled feedback on specific content through tweets.

*"I mean **Facebook** enqagement is great but it tends to be less conversational, sort of asking question or have a read and people comment on it, whereas **Twitter** tends to be, as individual editors with the conversation count, actually engage with the audience and could talk about the articles." (P6-p#1)*

*"**Facebook** is the biggest (traffic driver) but in terms of engagement **Twitter** is has been really crucial as well. We use that very actively too." (G1-P6-p#1)*

As both **Twitter** and **Facebook** are one of the most dominant platforms on a global scale, it is worth investigating this gap to explore why competing media organisations found one tool better for audience engagement than the other. This could be a way to find out what triggers conversation on different social media mediums.

4.9 CONCLUSION

Social media platforms play a crucial role in increasing media organisations website traffic. This chapter revealed that social tools that belong to popular social media networks have become the norm in use by media organisations on their websites. They have also brought numerous challenges,

and to date it seemed that the organisational policies do not outline methods or processes to handle these challenges effectively. Despite this, media organisations maintain their stance that their implementation and embedding of social tools is worth the risks as their benefits outweigh their risks in terms of reaching out to users and new audience members.

This chapter concludes the first part of data collection and analysis of group 1 interviews. It provided a detailed overview of the type of social media tools media organisations use within their website and the type of platforms they use externally to distribute their content. Media organisations want to utilise any social media platform they think will attract further online audience engagement, even if the adoption has risk factors associated with it. The perception behind this analogy is the benefits to the organisation as a whole outweighs its risks and they do not mind dealing with these challenges in a reactive rather than a proactive manner. Certain social media widgets such as Twitter's live-stream widget is seen as beneficial and widely used by all media organisations nowadays as a communication and promotion tool. Besides audience increases, social media tools are seen as a cost effective method for several news media operations. They are seen as suitable alternatives for providing multimedia files to media organisations website users such as Audio, Photo and Videos.

Data gathered in this study strongly hints that the more social media tools are applied on a website, the more technical and business challenges organisations are exposed to. Challenges are dealt with reactively and no media organisation has specific guidelines to deal with them. Policies in media organisations are not yet firmly established, nor communicated well among internal staff. Any media organisations policies examined relating to social media dealt only with editorial content and emphasized heavily content quality and the need for moderation.

Media organisations have already decided the way they currently incorporate social media is what they believe the audience wants. However, this is yet to be proven. Due to the assumptions media organisations have made towards what their users (i.e. website visitors and news readers) would prefer, it is vital to examine the implementation of social media tools from the users' perspective; this is the only way to understand the real experience. Therefore, in the next chapter, the qualitative interviews conducted with twenty online users who access media organisation websites for their news will reveal their side of this phenomenon. It will examine the use of social media tools from the users' perspective to determine whether social media are enhancing their experience or not. This

part of the study will capture their lived experience with media organisation websites that have embedded social media.

Chapter 5: Findings from the client's experience

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the study's finding on the lived experience of employees working for media organisations that have embedded social media tools on their websites. It explored the type of tools media organisations are using within their corporate websites and the purpose they believe these tools fulfil. It also explored the benefits and challenges that media organisations have found with this adoption.

This chapter presents the study's findings that respond to the second research question; '*What is the experience of online users with websites that have embedded social media?*' Part one outlines how visitors to the media organisation websites get their news and information. The second and third parts of the chapter explores the benefits and challenges website users experience when they use sites with embedded social media. The fourth and final part of the chapter discusses the users' perspective of the media organisations policy on client engagement issues when using embedded social media.

Although the study is focused on media websites that utilize embedded social media and the user's experience overall, some results are not directly linked to the social media aspect their experiences but generally with the way a website is implemented. These aspects will also be discussed in this chapter as the intended outcome is to improve the overall user experience.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS

The findings suggest that most participants prefer to engage in their private virtual spaces/walls with their friends on their own social networking spaces. The majority of participants in this study use their social media accounts for sharing and engagement inside their social network of friends. They do not want to engage using social media embedded on a website with other users of that site who are unknown to them. Many expressed concern that if they have to sign-up or engage utilising social media embedded in a media organisations website through the use of their existing social media accounts this exposes them to risks. Several factors were found to play vital roles in discouraging users from using embedded social media to engage on media organisation websites. Of those factors, two key factors which were identified by participants was their fear of exposure to online trolls and seeking to avoid leaving a digital footprint.

Most participants stated a preference that any comments they see being made on content, whichever platform the discussions take place on, need to be moderated. Whether the commenting threads are within the corporate website or within a social media platform. Most participants thought that inappropriate language should not be allowed and discussions should be meaningful and focused on sharing of knowledge and ideas. Most respondents in this study thought that quality comments drive and encourage their active engagement such as leaving comments and feedback on websites or on the official social media pages. The following sections report findings on what drives users to engage and share news with another.

5.3 ACCESS TO INFORMATION

The media organisation website users in this study revealed several ways they accessed news and information online. These methods were either direct from an organisations website or through/from their external social media accounts. In this section, each of these methods will be explored in detail.

5.3.1 SOCIAL MEDIA FEEDS/NEWS AGGREGATORS

Social media platforms such as Facebook, Reddit, and Twitter have integrated features to increase website traffic. The dominant social media networks facilitate their NewsFeed usually within the platform's default home page or customised NewsFeed on the user's profile home page (Paek, Gamon, Counts, Chickering, Dhesi 2010). The NewsFeed facility on some social platforms was the primary method for receiving news and information by the majority of the participants in this study. These participants described how they consume news from various media organisations through NewsFeed mechanism available on social networking sites. Some participants received NewsFeed through their personal social; media profile homepages, while others accessed the social media platform's home page which provides them with audience rated/voted content available on the default page. The example below outlines how one participant receives their news through Facebook's popular NewsFeed feature.

*"I will go through my NewsFeed after what they've, there's quite a few journalists in there, and they all "follow" all the other news media. The Guardian Aus, The Guardian UK I think, so I read all their stuff. And the only thing I really do is I will "follow" a lot of indigenous organisations, like Indigenous Film, or [...] Indigenous or iCampfire.tv or BushTV, so **I often get a lot of my Newsfeed is normally following indigenous organisations. So I get a nice mix, I get my special interest groups, and then I get all my friends who "follow" all the***

other ones, so that when I go through my news feed I get a nice sample of what's happening out there. (G2-P5-p#1)

In this experience, in addition to "following" several organisations directly on Facebook, the participant hints that they "follow" several journalists who in turn are "following" various other media organisations. This trail enables the participant to receive a stream of various news articles in their NewsFeed from the media organisations they are following themselves in addition to the organisations their contacts are following.

This study revealed that participants found another social media platform, Reddit, has a very flexible NewsFeed facility (Duggan & Smith 2013). In the experience below, one participant described Reddit's NewsFeed facilities distinctive features, that make it their preferred social platform for news consumption.

"Reddit aggregates it all, *the most popular or pertinent or urgent stuff floats to the top, because it's all basically everyone up-votes and down-votes things. So I'm literally just letting the masses decide what is important and current and that I can just browse through the front page from there.* There's Sub-Reddits I can go into and actually delve onto a particular topic, but that's usually less news and more targeted information about things, particular games or particular technologies or something. But news, I tend to get that through just the main front page of Reddit." (G2-P9-p#1)

This participant revealed they consume news directly from Reddit's front homepage. Two features of Reddit made it their preferred platform:

- i) the distinct sort mechanism Reddit is equipped with; and
- ii) the sub-categorisation of subjects within the Reddit service.

Reddit's sorting method enables popular or urgent news items to float to the top of the list. The quality of news and articles are automatically generated by the user group as existing Reddit users have the ability to up vote or down vote each news items. On the other hand, Reddit's sub-categorisation lets users dive into further details about targeted information. These characteristics all make Reddit an easy and effective news bulletin board for news consumption by participants in this study. Another attractive aspect to Reddit it allows users to browse through news items from various media outlets without having to go through any enforced sign-up process.

NewsFeed feature provides a social network user a list of stories extracted from various news organisations on their person "walls". These feeds are usually influenced by connections and activities of the user on their social media account. This mechanism means that users see more stories from pages the user has previously "followed" or "liked", or stories that the user's friends/contacts have also "followed" or "liked".

This study confirmed that the majority of participants received their news through social media NewsFeeds. The study revealed that NewsFeed was the most popular method among media organisation website users to access their news. The NewsFeed facility provided by social media platforms leverages the ability to update, not only followers (i.e. users who click "follow" or "like" features on social media networks) of an official social media site, but also influence the contacts of these followers, thereby resulting in higher page views and shares.

5.3.2 SOCIAL MEDIA ALERTS

Web alerts is another mechanism users receive news through. Web alert is an automated web search that assists in monitoring the internet for any developments and activities that interests a user and send search results to a user via email. This study has revealed the majority of users were using alerts and notification mechanisms to receive news content; and that content was chosen by the user specifying certain tags or keywords. One participant outlines their utilisation of Google alerts:

*"I get **Google alerts** sent to me, so I read them every morning- **Alert is set up so it has a keyword search on the news, and it delivers what it thinks is the top articles on that**, and my job being data security and cryptography, my keyword search is encryption. So anything that's got encryption in there that's trending, I guess, trending is the right word. **Anything that seems to be getting a lot of views, they'll send me a link to it and I'll look at those to see what's been happening in my area.**" (G2-P7-p#1)*

This participant, who has a technical background, receives custom news and information through Google alerts, sent to them directly via email. The custom alert is setup to search for keywords they have specified that they are interested in, such as "encryption". Any submitted content to Google search engine that is trending or receiving high views gets automatically sent to the participant in a collated list through email.

This example demonstrates that web monitoring tools such as web alerts, when configured with user preferences, can be an effective method to receiving content and getting the latest updates on what is happening online on the latest trends in one's industry or area of interest. Therefore, media organisations should use this alerting method to tailor content specific to fit their user needs.

5.3.3 DIRECTLY FROM WEBSITE

A few of the participants indicated that they resort to accessing news bulletins directly from their preferred media organisations website without resorting to automated mechanisms or features. They preferred direct access to their chosen media websites to be able to view a wide range of articles as opposed to a limited number that may be provided on another social media platform. Several quotes exemplify this:

"I usually just go straight off onto the website and access the website straight away, and that actually allows me to read every single article, instead of being limited to a certain number of articles per week." (G2-P6-p#1)

*"For general use, for things I find interesting, it is like I said **through [a media organisation official site name.com] particularly**, because I'm allowed to look at that site even at work" (G2-P19-p#1)*

The study revealed that these types of users do not rely on social networking sites to receive content because they are more concerned about either their own privacy or the privacy of their contacts.

5.4 SHARE INFORMATION (SENDING)

The previous chapter revealed how media organisations embed a variety of sharing tools of social media platforms on their websites to facilitate and simplify sharing of their content on external third-party social platforms. This section of the study reports on the various mechanisms the users share news with their contacts online. These methods were: Email, Messaging through Chat apps available within some Social Media Networks, text messaging via SmartPhones, such as Androids and iPhones (See **Appendix B 1, 2**), and the use of tagging and sharing tools. These methods and tools will each be discussed below.

5.4.1 EMAIL

Email remains the main mechanism in sharing news and information among the users in this study. Email is an easy and traditional way of sending links and this was found to still be the most popular mechanism among all participants. Two extracts below from participants exemplified email sharing practices:

*"The only way I share it, I think, is to just **copy and paste the link of the story in an email**, if it was I guess, to family. Or through gTalk or something". (G2-P1-p#1)*

*"if I really want them to look at it, then **I'll copy the URL out of the web browser and create an email, and send the URL** so they can just click straight into it." (G2-P7-p#2)*

Despite these participants were existing account holders of popular social networking sites they indicated that if they wanted one of their contacts to look at an important article or a website page, they compose personalised emails, copy the URL of the website page and paste it into the email form, and then send it to their contact. This way their contact can receive the email with the relevant link and access the website page directly. The study revealed that Email was still a heavily used mechanism for sharing and receiving news. When asked about how they receive/consume news online, one participant confirmed this assumption through the following experience:

*"A variety of ways. Internet, radio, TV, to a certain extent social media. **There's stuff that gets messaged to me via email.**" (G2-P11-p#1)*

The study also revealed that participants who share news and information regularly through email occasionally use the share tools to share news from websites provided on the article page. The following extract provides an example of this.

*"If I'm out and about on the interwebs and I'm checking stuff out and I see something I really like, **sometimes I'll use the email button**, if it's because I might want to target it to a specific person, so I would use their sharing tools. I don't like using sharing tools for stories, I prefer to copy the link and write my own" (G2-P5-p#2)*

However, the use of this mechanism has specific requirements to it. Their response of aiming to target a contact clearly hints that they prefer to control the exact information (heading or excerpt)

they are sending and do not want to rely on the default meta-data or parameters that is coded within the email share tool. This finding is useful in ensuring quality of meta-data or parameter values that gets passed through share or embedded third party tools.

5.4.2 CHAT WINDOWS

Chat programs have been around since the 1990s and offer real-time text transmission. Several participants indicated they utilised chat programs and messenger services provided within their social networking pages to transmit news links to their contacts. Many social media platforms provide their own chat programs embedded within their platforms, such as Facebook messenger (Sullivan 2016) (**See Appendix B**), or standalone chat programs such as Google gTalk or Google Hangouts (**See Appendix B**). Many users utilise various chat programs to share news via the copy/paste mechanism. The following statement evidences this:

"I will just cut and paste the URL out of the address bar and trap it into an email to her, or paste it directly into the open chats that we've got." (G2-P9-p#2)

This study has identified that chat windows are one of the common and popular methods of sending news links among social media users. This feature is available and free-to-use for any user who is signed up to popular social media networking sites, such as Facebook. It is easy to use and it is directly available once the user is logged in to their account profile.

5.4.3 TEXT MESSAGING WITH ANDROIDS AND IPHONES

The growth of mobile devices has increased rapidly, more so than most consumer products around the world in recent years. This was confirmed by all participants interviewed in this study who were all heavy iPhone and Android users. Some participants even used both their smartphones and other smart devices, such as tablets and/or iPads.

Many participants indicated that they heavily utilise the sharing facilities available on their smart devices. The majority of participants revealed they accessed news through their emails received via their mobile devices. For instance, iPhones features an email program that supports HTML that enables users to embed media elements in the email message.

"I use the share button on my phone more often, just because I don't have a mouse and keyboard to quickly highlight and grab that URL. So it is often faster to use the "share via" sort of functionality of Chrome on the phone to do that." (G2-P9-p#2)

"I use Facebook's mobile share, so that's not on the website, that's within the Facebook app."
(G2-P12-p#1)

Participants also revealed that they share information differently depending on the platform they are on or the type of browser they're using. Mobile share was found to be heavily utilised among media organisation website users who revealed they used the default "share" feature facility available within their Smartphones for popular social media platforms to share website page links. Yet many users share links differently on a desktop from a mobile phone. When a participant was asked on their sharing method, they demonstrated their share method on a mac laptop and responded with the following extract:

"On mobile, I just use the, if you're in the web browser, there's a button where you click share and choose email or browser - Just the default in Safari on iPhone, there's a button you press to share to Facebook. It's not the one that's embedded in the page; it's the one in the browser." (G2-P2-p#1-2)

This participant explains that the default browser share already available within iPhone is what they rely on to share links with their contacts. However, this feature's limitation is that the link sharer has to be already signed-in to Facebook.

Another participant stated they used the Twitter share module (i.e. widget) embedded within a website when they are on a mobile platform such as their personal Smartphone(iPhone) as it triggers the mobile version of the Twitter service App:

"I'll actually generally use my phone and I'll use the embedded Twitter thing on the page, if it's a news page or something like that. And use that to fire up the Twitter app on the phone." (G2P8-p#2)

This finding in this section demonstrate the importance of mobile platforms when embedding social media. The high usage of mobile platforms (discussed again later in chapter 6), combined with desktops demonstrates that device compatibility needs to be taken into consideration when

designing websites for different platforms. Sensis Report (2015) revealed that 70% of users accessed social media through Smartphones (Figure 5.1)

ACTIVITIES: SOCIAL MEDIA

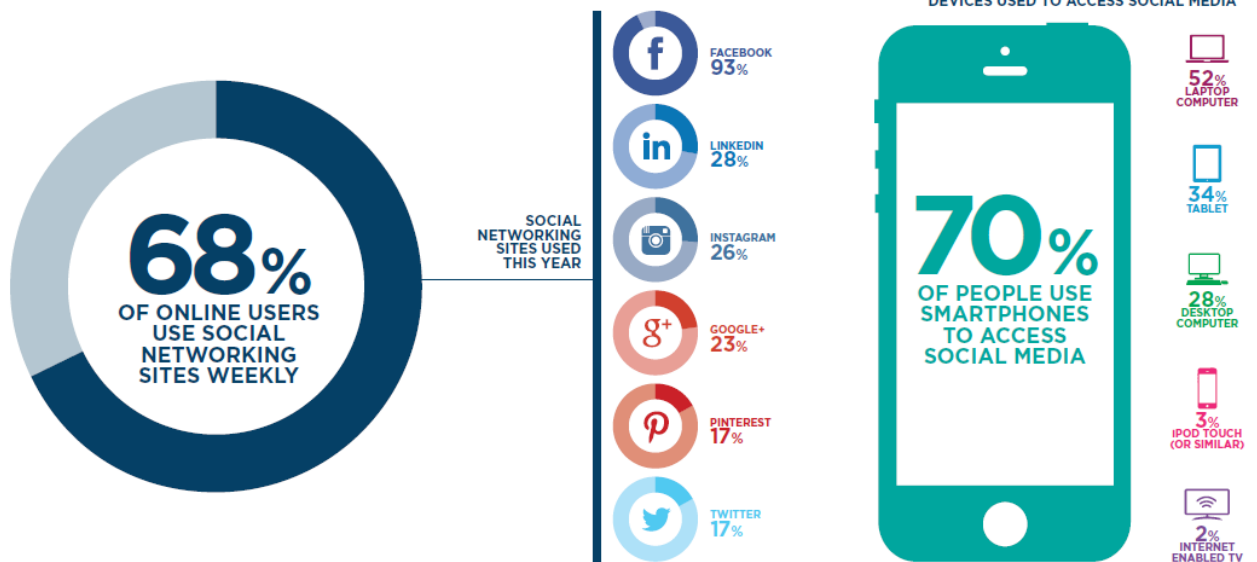


Figure 5.1: Percentage of users accessing social media through Smartphones - Source Sensis Social Media Report, March 2015

5.4.4 EXTERNAL SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES

The study revealed participants who hold accounts with dominant social media platforms use their personal profiles to share information with their contacts. The copy/paste culture is very common where a participant copies the website links and pastes this into their personal "wall" (**BOYD 2007**). Using personal social media profiles and "walls" was one of the common methods of sharing news among the participants interviewed.

"I'll put (the URL link) in on Facebook and say: 'Wow, I've just read this. It made me think of whatever.' And then I'll share that quote." (G2-P5-p#2)

"If I really like it, I'll write a little post and then I'll just share direct from the Facebook page." (G2-P5-p#2)

This demonstrates that website users still revert to traditional methods of sharing to maintain control of what they share and who they share it with.

5.4.5 SHARE TOOLS/BUTTONS ON ARTICLE PAGES

The study revealed that the least used method utilised by media organisation website users for sharing news was the embedded share tools (i.e. sharing buttons) on websites. More specifically, some embedded social media sharing widgets available on media websites are being utilised by their users and others are not. For instance, although Facebook is the most popular social media platform on the internet, very few participants indicated they used Facebook's "share" tools embedded within the website. Facebook "share" is popular within Facebook but not outside Facebook when embedded within the media organisations websites. Several responses from participants demonstrate the rarity of using Facebook's share widget or Twitter's "Tweet" button when embedded within media websites:

"I will very rarely click the "Tweet" or "Facebook share this" button on a website, just because I want to craft my message, and I want to choose the meta-data image and all that sort of stuff." (G2-P12-p#1)

"On the website, so if I'm looking at a news article there's the "Share on Facebook." If it's really important I'd click that, and I've probably done that once." (G2-P14-p#3)

"I don't use any embedded stuff when it comes to Twitter, but I do use what's embedded on the [website] page for Facebook." (G2-P3-p#1)

In comparison, participants heavily utilise the share facility within existing social media networks. Many participants indicated they use the "share" facility within their social media profiles/pages on the social networking sites.

"So for example, I see a really funny news post on Facebook. So on the Facebook post, they have a like or share button, on the bottom of each post. So if I want to share that post with all my friends on Facebook, say I have 300 friends, I want to share that with all of them. So I just basically click that share, and then that post will go to everyone. But if I just want to share that post with you, ..., for example. If you were my Facebook friend. So I would click "share", choose, it will pop up a screen. So I can choose, "Do you want to share with friends? Do you want to share with a particular person? Or do you want to share with the general public?" So you say, "Okay, I want to share with [...]," then it's a click and a tap of the key so the information is only shared between you and me." (G2-P18-p#2)

The participant above explains their preference of using share facilities within their Facebook wall, as it only requires a single click of the share button for a post within their "wall". They could also share a post or a link with targeted contacts through "tagging" feature through a single click to select contacts' usernames. The participant's experience has remained consistent, using Facebook share within their Facebook account because of its simplicity.

Another factor that made participants share news through other mechanisms, not relying on the sharing tools available on media organisations websites was due to the perceived limited range of sharing tools and buttons available. One participant provided the following comment:

"the share widgets are often so limited to the ones that I don't want to use, because they'll be limited to Twitter or Facebook, neither of which I'm ever going to be sharing something via." (G2-P9-p#2)

Here, this participant revealed they could not use any "share" tools simply because the available embedded ones were limited to social networks the participant was not part of. They were limited to well-known social media giants Facebook and Twitter, thus the implementation of these embedded share tools has given the priority to their users leaving other users to find their own sharing methods.

The study has also revealed that the use of some share mechanisms that function as a collector or an accumulator of website links have been on the rise. For instance, some media websites have official Pinterest pages hence they embedded its "Pin" share on their articles. The share tool "PinIt" button is used as a method to save or "Pin" news articles that contain photos to a user's Pinterest "wall". The "PinIt" button enables existing Pinterest users to save content they would like to keep and enables the contacts of that user to re-pin website links, or favour the "pinned" content with a "heart" button. When an article is re-pinned from several Pinterest "walls", it's likely to increase traffic to the media organisations website similar to "the Domino effect". The following two participant responses exemplify the use of "PinIt":

"I use the Pinterest one. If it's something I want to collate and curate for myself, I'll put it on Pinterest." (G2-P10-p#7)

"this is the social sharing feature, and I usually pin a lot, grab them from design blogs, and then the client will usually come in, "heart" which ones they like, they usually put a bit of comments on there." (G2-P12-p#2)

This findings in this section revealed that there are in fact many users who use popular social media networks but avoid using their embedded tools for various reasons. This finding also validates supports assumption #1 made in Chapter 1 that although social networking sites are used widely, this does not mean their embedded tools within media websites will be used as widely.

5.4.6 TAGGING

Tagging is a notification system that is available in social media platforms. If a user tags (i.e. selects) other users within their social networking profile, they create a link to that user's profile. Many social media platforms such as Facebook provide tagging feature where an existing account holder can "tag" contacts they want to share specific information with. In other words, this feature is privately selecting specific contacts whom they specify to share information with. This feature is also available on the Mobile Facebook App. One participant highlighted their use of tagging feature within Facebook:

"through Facebook, ***I will tag in the necessary people that I want to read it. But that also allows everybody on my friends list to read it,*** if they choose to." (G2-P6-p#2)

A tag may notify a contact that another social media account holder has mentioned or referred to them in a post or a photo, thus providing a link back to their (contact's) profile. Also, if a user tags someone in a different post, the post could be visible to the audience they selected and the friends of the tagged person. This could also trigger status updates to social media account holders that will show up on that tagged person's Timeline (**See Appendix B - 5**). In addition to tagging contacts to share content with, Facebook provides a space where an account holder can tag people in their contact list they want to share their comments with, a feature that is not available on websites.

"there's certain people I don't want to see it, I can then edit the privacy of the post. So I can edit and then go custom, and select the people I don't want to see my comments" (G2-P6-p#7)

In summary, besides social NewsFeeds and alerts, social media networking sites have facilitated innovative ways for sharing articles and news posts between contacts. The study has revealed that the most popular method of sharing news and article links are: Email, Tagging within a user's profile, Chat windows, and text messaging via smartphones. It has also revealed the least popular method for sharing among participant is the use of social media share tools embedded within media

organisations' websites. The data strongly suggests that the organisation website users rely heavily on the copy/paste mechanisms available to them to share information and links of media websites with their contacts; as they view this mechanism as the safest approach. It provides them control of who they want to share information with and the assurance of their privacy online.

5.5 ENGAGEMENT

Engagement refers to interaction between the organisation and their users. In chapter 4, interviews with employees of media organisations revealed media organisations monitor website users' engagement and look for new ways to increase user activity on their websites. Online engagement for media is extremely important for media organisations as it drives traffic to their websites and opens avenues for new story ideas. Therefore, this section gives a snapshot of online users' engagement and explores the types of engagement and what factors motivate user engagement online and what disrupts it.

5.5.1 TYPES OF ENGAGEMENT

This study has revealed that user engagement varies and it is affected by the nature of the interaction. Media organisation website users were found to be of three types of engagers: passive, active, and selective. **Passive (PV)** engaging users are quiet web surfers that only consume information through browsing but do not perform any interactive activities that link them to a website. **Active (AV)** engagers are performers of various activities on a website aiming to utilise their tools, such as share tools, and also may use the sign-up and commenting forums. The third type is the **Selective type of users who (SV)** are quiet surfers of the World Wide Web and do not engage on the websites or with other random users. Instead, they select the platforms they want to engage on and only within their own private social profiles with their own known or added contacts.

| # | Occupation | User type | M/F | Age Group |
|---|---|-----------|-----|-----------|
| 1 | School psychologist (no technical expertise) | SV | M | 30-35 |
| 2 | University Student/video editor (has technical expertise) | SV | M | 20-25 |
| 3 | Digital producer (has some technical expertise) | SV | F | 30-35 |
| 4 | Production manager (has no technical expertise) | PV | M | 40-45 |
| 5 | Digital producer (has some technical expertise) | SV | F | 45-50 |
| 6 | Personal Trainer (has no technical expertise) | SV | M | 20-25 |

| | | | | |
|----|---|----|---|-------|
| 7 | Software engineer/consultant (has high-level technical expertise) | SV | M | 40-45 |
| 8 | Video editor (has technical expertise) | SV | F | 35-40 |
| 9 | System engineer (has technical expertise) | SV | M | 35-40 |
| 10 | post-doc research fellow (has some technical expertise) | SV | F | 45-50 |
| 11 | Financial advisor with Suncorp (has no technical expertise) | PV | M | 25-30 |
| 12 | UX Designer/front end developer (has technical expertise) | SV | M | 20-25 |
| 13 | Fulltime student and part-time worker (front desk at Terry White Chemist) | SV | F | 20-25 |
| 14 | Food sales assistant at coles (has no technical expertise) | SV | M | 25-30 |
| 15 | Hairdresser (has no technical expertise) | SV | F | 20-25 |
| 16 | Unemployed - will be starting telemarketing (has no technical expertise) | SV | M | 40-45 |
| 17 | Hospitality - serving food (has no technical expertise) | SV | M | 25-30 |
| 18 | Hospitality - serving food (has no technical expertise) | SV | M | 30-35 |
| 19 | Financial consultant with Suncorp (has no technical expertise) | PV | M | 30-35 |
| 20 | Hospitality - food and beverage attendant (has no technical expertise) | AV | F | 19 |

Table 5.1: The category type participants fell under.

The reason for differentiating the types of engagement between the organisation and its users has to do with fundamental platform differences that affect user engagement. **Table 5.1** lists the participant's engagement category type when accessing news and/or media organisation websites. Each engagement type will be explained in the following sections with examples.

5.5.1.1 PASSIVE (PV)

Passive engagers only read news, but do not comment on the media organisations website nor on social media networking pages. A few participants were found to be passive engagers who have a preference to use traditional methods of engagement, such as verbal face-to-face or by phone to discuss news they've accessed online. When this type of engager was identified, it was due to their private nature and their preference to protect their privacy online. Two quotations from passive engagers outline this type of experience:

"I just don't sort of engage in conversations except face to face, really. I've just never, ever, felt inclined to comment on anything. And I know you can, but I've just never felt the need at all. Yeah, and I deleted my Facebook account because that was as close as I was getting to having any sort of interaction, online interaction." (G2-P4-p#2)

***"when it comes to sharing news, I'll have to admit, it's a lot of word of mouth.**
Obviously that's an important part of my job, and then when it comes to friends, family and in particular, my dad, I have dinner with them every Thursday night, last night. We talk about the news for the first half hour, "Did you see this? Did you see that? What did you think of this?" Because I know that's a secure environment, I suppose, and we all just have a laugh. We do talk quite controversial things sometimes." (G2-P19-p#2)*

Their reasons for this passive engagement varied depending on the participant's negative view of existing trends with online engagement and the sense of the overwhelming stream of activities that takes place within the commenting threads. The first participant was simply a private person in nature and not inclined to share anything online. The second participant was exposed to an online backlash resulting in complete avoidance of active engagement ever since (this will be explained further in section 5.5.3.2 Human Factors - iii) in this chapter.

One participant of type **SV** provided their rationale for avoiding engagement online other than their contacts:

"Usually by the time I read the article, there's been lots of comments, and if people are writing something that's going to get me riled up, then there's already somebody else who's replied to that and made an important point. Sometimes I look at what they've written and they don't quite make the right point in response, but I'm not reading the articles in order to engage with people, I'm reading the articles to get information" (G2-P7-p#3)

The experience can vary from one user to another, but the media organisations website commenting threads can be very active and participants in this experience felt that engaging with the comments does not provide the room for other news readers to submit an opinion. It's also due to the personality of the reader as few of the participants stated the reason why they surfed news websites without any other activities was to receive information only, and not to engage with other people.

Passive engagers noted they preferred socialising with known contacts face-to-face as opposed to online.

5.5.1.2 ACTIVE (AV)

Active engagement is an online behaviour that involves submission or distribution of content from the user's end to the media organisation. This may involve commenting within the organisations website or commenting on their external official social Out of 20 participants, only one was found to be an “AV” engager, and did not mind signing up to a website to leave comments on news articles. The following highlight this type of engagement:

"I'm happy to be logged in, I'm happy for them to know who I am. I don't mind. If they want to comment back that's cool, and then if they know who I am, they can comment back and I can see it. Because they can post my name in there as well." (G2-P20-p#2)

"Yes, definitely, I will comment. It's not so much that I think anybody will actually look at it, but I like having an opinion. So if I do see a news article that I am actually passionate about, I will make a comment of what I think of their article, or something like that. Or what I feel has come out of their article, and I like to think that they see it, and they accept the either criticism, or the nice things that I have to say. I think it's good to be able to comment on it so you can speak to the person who is posting the article." (G2-P20-p#3)

Although “AV” type of users were rare among participants in this study, they indicated they were not concerned if their real name was published online to express their opinion on an article even if it exposed them to online trolls. They expressed that "whatever happens online stays online".

5.5.1.3 SELECTIVE (SV)

Selective engagers select the type of engagement or share method they wish to use, and they select the social media accounts or the virtual spaces they want to engage on. The majority of participants in this study were found to be of selective type of engagers with media organisation websites. In other words, they select the type of engagement or share method and the platforms or the virtual spaces they want to engage on and the individuals they want to share information with. They are passive engagers on a media website, and only engage through traditional methods such as email or actively engage in their personal social media space or "walls", where personal walls are obstacles that restrained visibility to the online general public. This was particularly popular among

participants who had concerns over potentially bringing disrepute to the company/organisation they're working for if they are found to have engaged in a controversial discussion online. The following comments demonstrate the behaviour of Selective engagers.

"I wouldn't do it if I had to sign up. Yeah, because I wouldn't use my name. I guess my profession, I have to be particularly careful as well, because if I had a particular opinion that wasn't popular, and it could be seen as bringing the profession into disrepute, I could be deregistered. So yeah, I think the only way I would do it would be with very little effort and I'm anonymous" (G2-P1-p#6-7)

"I think because I work for the [media organisation], I would never, I don't think I would ever say anything that would bring it into disrepute, but I wouldn't want a comment taken out of context and used to attack the [media organisation]. If I want to engage in something that's political, I don't want people to know that I work for the [...], because then they could use that as sort of ammunition against the [media organisation]" (G2-P3-p#4)

Whether it's directly emailing a contact or interacting with them on their personal space on an external social media platform, certain news sharing mechanisms gives them the reassurance that what they are sharing will remain private in a personal space and provides them with a feeling of privacy and safety. One participant highlighted their sharing of news with private contacts through email or Chat Window as their main method of sharing:

"How I would engage on a story and dialog with another person on there would always be somebody I know, and would always be on a personal level I think, where **again it might be email or it might be through my chat program**, where I'm talking to a single person" (G2-P1-p#5)

Selective type of participants all revealed that they are driven to engaging with users on a personal level and not with random website users they did not have any relations with. It was clear that this type of engagers were cautious users and preferred to keeping a low profile online.

5.5.2 FACTORS ENCOURAGING "ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT"

Although most participants stated they preferred to remain anonymous online, this study revealed a common response and pattern of behaviour among participants, where they felt it encouraged them

to engage actively online on a news website. These common areas are the sense of belonging to a community, the easiness of online engagement or sharing feature, remaining anonymous, and receiving automated notification responses from engagement activities. Each of these factors will be detailed with examples that showcases the online user lived experience.

5.5.2.1 SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Several participants stated that they engage actively when they felt they were part of a group or community and shared a commonality. The sense of being part of a community encourages people to engage online even among private individuals. This is evident from the below statement:

*“having the social aspect to the news article is important, I think because you've got to be able to be producing the content, there's got to be some way to distinguish yourself from other people, other groups, other sources. And if there's a community around it, that source of information, then **it can be more engaging and people will feel, will be drawn to a community**, so to speak, around stuff. So it's important to have it, and what form the comments take, it's hard to know. Should you allow long written comments, or just Twitter or something like that? You know, there's not much need to have large pages of comments in there, because most people don't want to read that much information. So having a Twitter thing or something like that, that makes sense” (G2-P7-p#7)*

In the above extract, a participant notes the importance of the social aspect in an online active engagement scene. For instance, the ability of the user to produce content and distinguish one's self from other people, other groups, and other sources. If there's a community around a contributed content that website and social media users can relate to or share a common theme with, the social aspect to it can be engaging. The quality of content such as its refinement and conciseness it's presented in is another aspect to users being drawn to a community. It's not only a common theme that online users are attracted to, but they are also attracted to the quality of information they receive, and their ability to learn from it and apply it in their life and practices, all within the safety net that space is in. For example, one participant provides a description of a private group they are part of and use to obtain useful information from:

*“**I am in a private Reddit group for parents** with kids with ASD. Yeah, and so I actually find a lot of really interesting and good information in that, and it seems that across the board, **the way it's been locked down and the way they give access to people means that the***

commenting system is much more gracious, there's no kind of hard-line opinions being shared, it's very, I'm trying to think of the word. It's a safe place, yeah, I guess that's it. It's about what is a safe place and what isn't a safe place. (G2-P8-p#4-5)

In this abstract, the participant who is a private nature and a parent to a boy with ASD (Autism Spectrum Disorder), demonstrates her involvement in an online Reddit group for parents of children with ASD. They receive quality and helpful information across the breadth of the online group. It is also a virtual space that feels safe with no signs of trolling and provides a commenting system that is perceived as "gracious" by the participant.

Several participants indicated that if they had the choice to comment on a platform, they would prefer to comment on external social media pages of media organisations. In order to do so, it has to be a trivial topic participants cared about or a controversial one they had a strong opinion on. One participant highlights this in the following passage:

*"if there's a post made by a media organisation and it's on a topic that I care about, and also I guess it would have to be a topic that's at least somewhat controversial. Like if it's just, a real black and white story where there's very clear, when there's just a really clear point of view that almost all people would take, I probably wouldn't feel inclined to share my opinion, just because I don't really feel it's worth anything. But **if it's either relevant to my life and my experiences, or it's something I have a strong opinion on that's not necessarily shared by everyone, then I might feel more inclined to comment.**" (G2-P2-p#4)*

Whether 'Active' or 'Selective' nature the participant is having meaningful topics or information that is of important to them is what drives the type of engagement at the end. Quality of information is shared among all types of participants and sense of belonging to a community does encourage users to actively engage with others online.

5.5.2.2 EASE OF USE

Several participants discussed that simplicity is the key to encourage their engagement and might make them inclined to be commenting on news and articles located on websites. Users online prefer to have a simple process for leaving comments on websites to express their opinions. This could be through a simple form that does not require any effort. The following response highlights the ease factor:

" I think the only way I would do it[leave a comment on a website] would be with very little effort" (G2-P1-p#6-7)

"I probably would engage more if it was really easy, and I consistently found it easy. "
(G2-P3-P#3)

Another participant highlighted their main reason of their external "active engagement" on an official social media page of a media organisation as opposed to a media website. They explained that they prefer to submit comments on external social media pages as they are already signed up to the social media service. This means it does not require them to go through a sign-up process, thus minimising their efforts. The following extract exemplifies the easiness of the commenting feature within Facebook is the reason behind their use:

"I guess there's a couple of reasons. One of them is, *on Facebook, I'm already signed in, and there's a box I can just type into and hit enter. There's just no effort required at all.*"
(G2-P2-p#4)

Simplicity is one of the factors that contributes to the popularity and the use of any application online. It is noteworthy that the simpler a tool is, the more website users are inclined to make use of it. Thus, majority of participants in this study engage on their virtual private social media spaces due to the existing features available within it that simplifies their online interaction with other contacts.

5.5.2.3 ANONYMITY

Anonymous engagement on a website is defined as performing tasks such as clicks or form entries that result in data transmission but cannot be linked to the subject who supplied it. Prior research has indicated that flaming discussions online "is significantly more common in anonymous commenting scenarios, and requiring real names does not suppress participation rates" (Mungeam and Crandall 2011). On the other hand, this study has found that majority of users diverted from leaving comments if they were to sign up and expose their identity. Website users are likely to be irritated when they are hit with an enforced signup form if they want to leave their opinion on a commenting thread.

While majority of online users do hold accounts with popular social media networks, they prefer to have control over who accesses their information. They prefer to choose users they have a personal

friendship with and have no problem for their "friends" to have access to their information. One participant explains their engagement online with their friends:

"a lot of my stuff is private, only people I'm friends with on Facebook can view my information. But you have to become my friend, so I have to accept you as a friend before, so if you were to view me publicly, you wouldn't be able to see any of my personal details." (G2-P6-p#4)

Responses from interviewed participants with technical and academic expertise proved to have a high level of understanding of privacy in social networking sites. There was a clear sign of distrust of social networks especially from these type of users. One participant highlighted the trust factor particularly well in this extract:

"There's an adage on the internet that whatever you put out there, it's out there forever. You can never delete whatever you put out there, there's always going to be some way that a copy is stored that people can get access to - that means I've got to be a little more careful with my online presence as well. So yeah, and I don't put much on Facebook." (G2-P7-p#3-4)

This deep level of understanding also extends to the strong belief by technical and some non-technical users that whatever comments they contribute to a website or social media page of another organisation will never be truly deleted, therefore they avoid engagement all together. The following response exemplifies this point:

"I don't like to put stuff up on there because it's a permanent record again of what I've been doing, and stuff like that, that will be there forever. Because there's a lot of websites where they say you can remove the content, but it doesn't actually ever disappear, because it's linked against somebody else's profile, or something like that. So it's still readable by reading someone else's profile, so there's never any guarantee that what you put up there is ever going to go away." (G2-P7-p#4)

The majority of website users indicated they do not comment on websites due to lack of privacy and fear of leaving a digital footprint (see APENDIX B - 6). The need to remain anonymous was observed

to be a major factor in news reader's lack of active engagement on media websites. A few participant quotations below demonstrate this further:

*"I don't want my real name attached. Not because I say anything scandalous, but just **because I don't want to leave that big a digital footprint**" (G2-P3-P#3)*

*"you can actually be anonymous, **just as an anonymous user. And put forward the comment, that way at least it's not trailed back to you in any way.**" (G2-P19-p#5)*

Further, many participants stated their method of sharing links of news articles relied on mechanisms that did not involve the use of third-party embedded social media tools. When a participant was asked about the reason why they did not use any social media share tool for engagement on a website, they indicated that they did not want to leave a digital footprint that could be traced back to them. The below extract is a testimony to their concern:

***Digital footprint.** Yeah, that is part of it, yeah. If it was under my name, then yeah, I do have more reservations about trying to leave a comment, because as a consultant software engineer, I represent the company where I write my own blog entries. So if I have my name associated with something in a public forum, then that could reflect, it reflects upon me and my professional role as well, and it could reflect upon the company" (G2-P7-p#3)*

Some participants stated they would engage more if available commenting systems allowed for comments to be submitted anonymously without any mechanism that would identify them online. The impact of enforced sign-in on users, results in them not engaging on articles at all, with some indicating that they have stopped looking at the option of commenting all together because of the expectation that it will request a form of identification. One participant explains this issue in their statement:

*"So if **all my experiences of commenting showed that I could just do it anonymously, then I would comment more often.** But because some websites say, "You must login with this," or "you must create an account," **I've really stopped looking, really. At news websites' comments sections, because I expect that they will want me to sign in with a real name or an account**" (G2-P3-p#5)*

The anonymity factor seems to give users the assurance that they will not be exposed to any malicious activities such as trolling or online-bullying if their comments weren't welcome by other online commentators.

Another participant prefers to remain anonymous on commenting forums as they highlighted their concern that they do not know what information is being extracted from their online activities and what is being done with that information. The following extracts detail their concern.

*"I wouldn't do it if I had to sign up. Yeah, because, I wouldn't use my name. I guess my profession, I have to be particularly careful as well, because if I had a particular opinion that wasn't popular, and it could be seen as bringing the profession into disrepute, I could be deregistered. So yeah, I think the only way I would do it would be with very little effort and **I'm anonymous, or I can be anonymous if I choose to be.** It could be like a text box and I just type my comment, enter, and it's there. I don't care if it's moderated, but yeah. **I don't want to have to go through a signup process, and then who knows what people are doing with your information?**" (G2-P1-p#7)*

*"[I want to remain] Anonymous, because I'm not going to sign up to anything, yeah. Because I don't like signing up for things, **I don't like giving out my email address; I don't like having to make a password for something. If I have to do that to make a comment on something, then I'm just not going to make a comment.**" (G2-P8-p#7)*

The findings here correlate with assumptions 2 and 3 made in Chapter 1 that website users generally do not consent to websites accessing their private data and do not bow to enforced sign-up processes on websites even if it means them not engaging on topic of their interests.

Although the majority of interviewed participants indicated they preferred to remain anonymous in their active engagement through commenting on an article, a small number of participants indicated the opposite. In the following example, this participant indicated their high preference to engage with people they knew well and not strangers online.

*"I generally don't really find anonymous discussion to be very compelling, because I feel like a lot of the ways people say things when they're able to hide their identity is not... **I prefer them to know that they're, to some degree, being held accountable for what they're saying.** - I guess it's more about having a real identity that's tied to what I'm seeing. Like, I'm*

fine with anonymous discussion existing, but I guess I'm not personally particularly interested in it." " (G2-P2 - p#5-6)

When participants were asked how they perceive chatting to other active engagers even though there is no way of distinguishing genuine accounts from fake ones, they further validated their lack of interest in strangers' opinions and asserted their preference to engage with people they knew well. The following extract exemplifies this:

*"I guess I just feel like that's a minority of the profiles, and I also don't really read the discussions that are on there. I might leave my own comment, I might reply to the top comment, but it'd be pretty rare. And whatever reply I receive, **I probably won't necessarily trust that the person is who they say there. And I probably won't really be interested in a stranger's opinion anyway, unless they're either presenting information I didn't have already, or they're in a better position to talk about whatever it is than I am.**" (G2-P2-p#6)*

In summary, the majority of participants indicated their strong inclination to external sharing methods that do not require the use of any embedded third-party tools and widgets of social networking sites. They actively engage in their personal spaces/walls due to the ease factor of social networking sites which provide them a sense of belonging to a group or a community. This way they could also protect themselves from online trolls and malicious activities.

5.5.2.4 NOTIFICATIONS

Notifications is a very useful feature that many users are dependent on if there are any changes or updates occurring within the virtual spaces they are active in or of individuals they are connected to. Many social media platforms contain built-in notification systems that notify users of any activity on their personal walls from their contact list. These services provide notification if a social media user replies to a comment or gets "tagged" from/by another user. On the other hand, most media websites do not have a notification system. If a user leaves a comment, and they get replies back from other website users, they do not get a notification. A participant pointed out the difference:

*"if I just see something on my feed, **all I have to do is type in what I think and click enter, and I'm done. And if someone responds to me, I'll get a notification, and if I want to respond to them I can do that really easily.**" (G2-P2 - p#5)*

Another challenge participants expressed were that they did not receive any notification via the website if and when content they shared or sent to another contact, such as an article link, was deleted off the website. When content that has been shared previously is deleted off a website, it could impact on user's experience if no notification was available to notify users of the deleted content. For instance, one participant highlighted their experience with content deletion off a news website before their contact can access it. The following quotation provides a description of an example:

"So I've sent an email to my mum with a URL link, and she's gone to it and it's actually said, "Page is no longer available." So sometimes that, the article has been removed. So my point of sharing it to her has been invalid because they've taken it off already, and it would have happened if I'd clicked that share button at the bottom of the page, I'd say." (G2-P13-p#4)

Content deletion off the website can be problematic. If an article link was posted on several external social media pages then removed off the website, this gives users bad impression of the media website. It could lead to misconception of the reasons why content was deleted off the website due to legal reasons and loss of trust in the website, its performance and content quality overall.

5.5.3 FACTORS IMPACT ON/ DISCOURAGE ENGAGEMENT

Typically, any engagement activity involves interaction between two or more parties. However, since this study is focused on online engagement on a website, this section will focus on some of the challenges website users and visitors go through when they're in the process of "sharing" or "actively engaging" on media organisations' websites. Some of these factors are **technical challenges** and others are **human factors**.

5.5.3.1 TECHNICAL CHALLENGES

This study revealed of technical challenges that impact on user engagement within websites. These challenges are: constant changes to APIs, Privacy and security settings, features that are not working as they are expected to. These will be discussed in the Technical Challenges section in this chapter (see section 6.6.1).

5.5.3.2 HUMAN FACTORS

Human factors were cited as a reason for some of the factors that impacted negatively on the experiences of online news readers, and some cases discouraged them, from actively engaging on a website. This also included the implementation of a technology within a website. Although these issues may seem technical, their implementation is based on editorial or management decisions and therefore makes them classified as human factors. This section explores these challenges with extract of participant experience.

i. LOW QUALITY OF CONTRIBUTED COMMENTS

Many participants noted that the low quality of comments on website have impacted on their active engagement on a website as they found the comments on some articles were of low material and developed bad perception of online discussion threads on websites. This has been a major factor in derailing them from contributing their opinion online. Therefore, they opt for low key activities and only engage passively through silent surfing of news and media websites.

"I sometimes read it, read people's comments knowing that that's a stupid idea for me. Because as you say, I'll often read something and go, "Oh, these people are stupid," or "they have no clue," or whatever. So I'll read it knowing it's going to make me angry, but yeah. I guess part of me is like, I can't be bothered engaging with people who, I guess because of the effort involved in that, but also because I don't think people are convinced by evidence, people are convinced by what they already believe. So I don't think there's much point to engage with people if they have some ridiculous point, they're not going to change their mind. So that's why I don't do it." (G2-P1-p#3)

Lack of comment moderation was one of the reasons why some users found it difficult to comment on websites. Findings indicate that users prefer to comment on their private walls on external social media platforms and they feel safer to do so among their contacts where they have control over the display of content on their profile "wall" and won't need any moderation. However, with websites, comments are among strangers and they anticipate exposure to online abuse and backlash therefore they prefer engaging on their private spaces. The following quote demonstrates this:

*"most of the news sites I use, as far as I know, they either don't have a comment section, or if they do **it's generally just of a really low quality**, the comments that are in there. A lot of*

them aren't very heavily moderated, or they'll be mostly filled with... yeah, I don't know. Just comments that I don't think form a discussion that's worth contributing to" (G2-P2-p#4)

*"I only do when I find it's necessary to comment. So **if some post is really stupid, people post stupid comments, I don't do it.** And so I only comment on big issues, so let's say they have riots in Baltimore, US, maybe I do a little comment. So, or basically major international affairs, sometimes I do a comment on it. And I comment on the friends' posts, so friends that go on a trip, they've asked where to go" (G2-P18-p#3)*

All media organisations indicated in chapter 4 that they consistently attempt to moderate audience-submitted comments on their corporate websites and on their external social media pages. However, the moderation process may be delayed for some user-contributed comments taking too long for comments to appear on the commenting threads. In other cases, the non-existent moderation process causes inappropriate comments to appear on the site. It is noteworthy that content moderation was revealed in Chapter 4 as one of the most resource and time consuming activities media organisations experience. Although media organisations moderate comments within their corporate websites manually to control quality and eliminate inappropriately submitted material, they cannot apply the same principals to their official social media pages as content display is automatic and can only be post-moderated. One participant experienced this issue on their personal Facebook "wall":

"I've commented on an article before using my public Facebook profile, and received a moderate number of, I guess borderline abusive messages from people. Just because they strongly disagreed with the statement I was making. It wasn't enormously disruptive to be honest, they weren't people I know, they weren't people I care about. It didn't really seem like they were real accounts "(G2-P2-p#8)

ii. FEAR OF ABUSE/TROLLING

This study revealed that a large number of participants do not engage actively on public pages (be it a media website or an official social media page of an organisation) for fear of their exposure to trolls. Online trolls are individuals who make inflammatory comments online with a deliberate intent of provoking other online engagers and causing disruption to an online discussion. As a result, these participants have decided to be passive engagers to ensure their online privacy is protected. The examples below highlight this issue:

*"Just because I feel as though it's already been sufficiently, kind of, touched on, like most of the information. And also, **I don't want** to look like a noob and have **somebody troll me**. (G2-P13-p#2)*

"I've posted probably a few comments on YouTube, or something like that. Not on anything serious, because someone's always, I feel like someone's always going to be there to troll you, or something like that. You see so many trolls on the internet now" (G2-P14-p#3-4)

iii. ONLINE BACKLASH

There is a fine line between exposure to online trolls and online backlashes. Trolls monitor the internet in a deliberate attempt to disrupt a civilised online discussion. Whereas online backlashes are generally caused when an online commentator makes a statement and receives an antagonistic reaction from a large number of other engagers that spreads across into multiple websites. Although different, these two factors discourage users from active engagement online as they do not want to be a target for online-bullying.

Poor perception of online comments was evident from responses with participants. Many participants expressed that some online comments caused them anger that they decided to ignore reading them. This poor perception resulted in regular passive engagement on media websites they accessed. A participant expressed their poor perception of commenting threads in general in the following statement:

"I sometimes read it, read people's comments knowing that that's a stupid idea for me. Because as you say, I'll often read something and go, "Oh, these people are stupid," or "they have no clue," or whatever. So I'll read it knowing it's going to make me angry, but yeah. I guess part of me is like, I can't be bothered engaging with people who, I guess because of the effort involved in that, but also because I don't think people are convinced by evidence, people are convinced by what they already believe. So I don't think there's much point to engage with people if they have some ridiculous point, they're not going to change their mind." (G2-P1- p#3)

In the above extract, the participant indicates that they find the majority of online comments on media websites outrageous. As a result, the participant does not inconvenience themselves by

actively engaging with other commentators online as they believe that people are not convinced by evidence and already fixated in their opinions. This results in the participant's lack of interest in contributing comments and presenting their own opinion online as they feel it wouldn't have mattered.

Exposure to negative comments could have severe effect on a user's engagement online. The impact could at times damage a person's reputation or discourage them from ever engaging online again. Another participant detailed their experience about an article they accessed online for a large news corporation. The article had a personal effect on the participant and it was quite strong thus invoking their sense of empathy, which pushed them to contribute their own opinion on the matter using the commenting forum provided on a popular and well-known news website. In order to do this, they had to sign up to the website which contained the participant's exact first and last name. The following extract narrates their experience:

*"it was a strong article to me. And I think I was reading all the comments, and it was just negative the whole time. Negative, negative, negative. And I don't know why, like I said I never do, but for some reason I decided, "No, screw all of you. I'm going to put something." And it was quite positive. As soon as I send it, within about two minutes, because it was time stamped, I just got slammed by I think a good four people in a couple of minutes. And that's when I said, "Screw this," **went off the site and probably, it was probably a good week and a bit before I went back to [news website name]. And I also logged out, changed users since then.** Just because yeah, I'm not too sure how much people can follow you in that respect."*

*"Literally, **I got slammed by about four, five people in a matter of minutes.** It was like, "Well..." And I'm not the brightest star in the night sky sometimes, **the address was pretty much my name. So they actually technically knew me.**" (G2-P19-p#2)*

This participant highlighted the dramatic online incident they came across for an article that, to them, felt very personal. They read the submitted comments on the article and found it to be of a negative nature. This prompted them to contribute their own comment to the article that represented an opposite view to the majority of existing commentators on that website. They logged in to the website using their genuine account with their real first and last name. The participant explains that they were "slammed" by negative comments directly aimed at them within

a few minutes. As a consequence, this led them to log off the website, change their details and return to the website after one and half weeks had elapsed. This experience has also resulted in this participant in no longer contributing their opinion on any media websites ever again.

Further, website users noted that part of the reason they avoid active engagement through commenting is due to fear of being identified through their organisation, which may affect their career. They feared that their comments could be taken out of context causing disrepute to the media organisation they work for. A participant presented the following example:

"I think because I work for the [media organisation], I would never, I don't think I would ever say anything that would bring it into disrepute, but I wouldn't want a comment taken out of context and used to attack the [media organisation]. If I want to engage in something that's political, I don't want people to know that I work for the [...], because then they could use that as sort of ammunition against the [...]. They'd say, "Look, she works for the [media organisation], and she votes this way," or whatever" (G2-P3-p#4)

This study revealed a similar pattern among professional and academic participants that were particularly worried about being exposed to backlash from other users if they contributed an opinion that may not be popular. The constant fear of online backlash results in participants sometimes creating and using fake identities accounts to avoid getting identified online. Two examples exemplify this challenge:

*"I think because it's almost like a hit and run, it's not actually engaging properly, it's just adding to other people's opinions without actually engaging. And I feel like comments should be engaging, like people should be engaging with what other people have said. **I think, if I can I also have an alias as well, I have a fake name and a fake email address that I can use to comment, and I sometimes use that if it's something that I want to follow.** But if the only options for logging in are use your Facebook account, or use your Google+ account, no way. **I don't want my real name attached. Not because I say anything scandalous, but just because I don't want to leave that big a digital footprint.**" (G2-P3-p#4)*

*"I always get afraid that somebody's going to pick out flaws in what I'm saying, like my arguments. So if I've said, "I don't like what they've said about this," **then somebody comes***

along and just destroys you on the internet pretty much, you know what I mean?" (G2-P13-p#2)

iv. MISLEADING HEADLINES & CLICKBAITS

Clickbait is a pejorative term that describes web content that is aimed at generating revenue from online advertising, especially at the expense of content quality or accuracy, relying on melodramatic headlines or attention-grabbing thumbnail images to entice visitor click-throughs and to boost forwarding of the material over social networks (**See Appendix B**). Clickbait headings' purpose is to exploit an individual's "curiosity gap" through displaying information that is just enough to make the reader curious and interested, but does not provide enough information to satisfy their curiosity without clicking through to the linked content.

One of the challenges revealed in this study was content quality. Content quality challenge was not only confined to audience submitted content, but the quality of content submitted by media organisations. For instance, participants felt that article headlines should be reflected in a clear and concise format; that it should sum up the details of the story and not provide false impressions of the article. However, one participant noted that they've experienced the headline not reflecting what the article was about, and therefore did not want to engage with the website any further. The following statement highlights this:

"If a headline is, you know clickbait, **where the headline isn't accurate to the story, or they just want you to click on it to read it, and then you get part way through the article and you realise that the headline was incorrect, and they just wanted to get you to read it? That annoys me, that could turn me off the entire site"** (G2-P17-p#4)

v. ENFORCED SIGNUPS

Some participants stated they would engage more if commenting online was done anonymously without enforced sign-up or any mechanism that would mean that their identity would be revealed online. Enforced registration leads users to react against any activity that determines their privacy control, resulting in passive engagement. One participant stated their inclination to anonymouse comments in the following excerpt:

*"I don't comment very often, I think one of the, there are two or more things that prevent me from commenting. **One is if they won't let me log in or comment anonymously, that will***

prevent me - if all my experiences of commenting showed that I could just do it anonymously, then I would comment more often. But because some websites say, "You must login with this," or "you must create an account," I've really stopped looking, really. At news websites' comments sections, because I expect that they will want me to sign in with a real name or an account" (G2-P3 - p#3-5)

When participants were asked the reasons they found signing-in to external social media platforms acceptable yet difficult to sign-in to media websites for engagement, they indicated that some websites require them to log in every time they comment, whereas with Facebook, it's an easy one step process. The below extract demonstrates this:

"Yeah, but Facebook, I only login once. I never log off. So every time when I finish, I just turn off my computer, I put my computer on sleep. So every time I open Facebook, it's already open. So I don't need to login every time. But websites, you need to sign in every single time.
" (G2-P18-p#4)

Whether on corporate websites or external social pages, engagement is an important function all media organisations aim to enable and provide for their online audience. Therefore, it is extremely important to examine what factors play a role in user's engagement online. A combination of both technical and human factors plays a vital role in audience engagement online.

5.6 USERS ONLINE CHALLENGES

This study has revealed two major challenges that impact, and in some cases, disrupt the users' online experience. These challenges are categorised into: challenges to do with the technology upon the website is built on (technology-centric) and non-technical factors. These two challenges will be examined below in further details.

5.6.1 TECHNICAL CHALLENGES

Several factors emerged of the types of technical challenges users encountered that impacted on their online experience. This section provides a description of the type of technical challenges users come across that impacted on sharing news experience. Some of these challenges were visual layout, while others were to do with performance of tools as a result of poor technical implementation.

5.6.1.1 WEBSITE PERFORMANCE

The overall website performance has been reported several times by participants. Issues such as download speed of the website page itself overall or the moderation of comments on the website all contributed to issues faced by website users on media websites. When a participant was asked about a technical challenge they experience on media websites, they quoted the following extract:

“when you've got, like, AdBlocker and a bunch of things turned on that neuter foreign chunks of JavaScript on pages that you go to, that's an added sort of hassle to go and disable the AdBlock for those extra things, because they're external, therefore they get whammed by that. You have to literally go in there, and again I know I'm biting into this headache because I'm running those plugins in my browser in the first place, that's just the way it is. I'm running those because I don't want to get flamed by annoying banner ads, and click-tracking things, and scorecard research, and the six different ways of tracking my browsing habits that people embed in their pages these days. So that's why I run AdBlock or NoScript, and things like that. But yeah, it means that those things break when, because they're externally hosted, sort of embedded things in pages. It's one extra thing I have to go on and re-enable, to see comments. [I try] live with it, because I don't really, because I'm not planning on commenting. As long as it doesn't make it too hard for me to read the comments, I don't mind. I don't care if it's either.” (G2-P9-p#8)

In this quotation, the participant detailed their experience with website pages that contained too many embedded third-party code that impacted on the download speed. To avoid slow page performance, there is a variety of browser plugins installed such as AdBlocker and NoScript to block the downloading of any embedded JavaScript library code, banner ads, viewer activity trackers or any browsing habits. Nevertheless, once JavaScript is blocked when viewing a website page, it causes the page to break thus pushing the user to re-enable them to perform an activity such as viewing news comments. As a result, the participant avoids conducting any activities online (such as active engagement) that may require them to re-enable JavaScript download.

5.6.1.2 MOBILE/BROWSER INCOMPATIBILITY

This study has revealed that the majority of participants browsed news websites on external social media platforms through a variety of mobile platforms such as iPads, Tablets, and Smartphones such as iPhones and Android phones. Several participants indicated that some social media platforms they use generally are not designed well for mobile platforms. Some websites contain embedded

third-party social networking tools that do not execute as they should. One participant quoted the following example:

*"it's mainly to do with phones, **web pages not being designed for phones correctly**, so things not working properly. That would work on the desktop platform, that just don't work on the phone" (G2-P8-p#4)*

One participant explained their lived experience with social platforms such as Scoop.it and Pinterest platforms. When the participant was asked how they shared news online, the participant highlighted their preferences to share news URL links on various devices through the following extract:

*" My laptop or my PC, interchangeably depending on where I am. Laptops at work here, PC at home. Then I will go to greater trouble and I will store the link properly, and I will take it and curate the whole article and place it into Scoop.it **but I don't use Scoop.it on the iPad**, it doesn't work very well. **Pinterest only works on the iPad** if you've got the Pinterest button there, but this way if I'm using my PC or laptop, I can take the link and curate it properly. So I can go back into Pinterest, or Scoop.it or LinkedIn and drop it in there, then I can write a comment and some sort of discussion about it as well"(G2-P9-p#3)*

This participant developed their URL link sharing technique based on the knowledge they gathered from their previous web browsing experience. Scoop.It (See Appendix B – 8) does not work well on iPads whereas Pinterest does. Therefore, they utilise sharing tools depending on the platform (i.e. desktop or mobile) they were on which was a time consuming practice.

With numerous combinations of modern legacy browsers, many social media platforms do not perform well for users. External social media platforms have their own issues. For instance, although majority of social networking sites generally work on most browsers, they do not perform 100% with some other browsers and some of their features do not function as they would normally do on others. In the following paragraph, a participant highlights two challenges from their lived experience: Facebook's incompatibility with FireFox browser yet its smooth performance with Internet Explorer; PinInterest's incompatibility with internet Explorer yet its smooth performance with FireFox:

"Facebook doesn't work that well with Firefox, so if I'm using Facebook I have to use Internet Explorer. I generally use Firefox - And sometimes you don't, *it took me a while to figure out what was wrong with Facebook. Then I realised that it was the platform, that if I flicked back to Internet Explorer, that it worked perfectly. Whereas I was having lots of glitches when I was using Firefox, but Internet Explorer doesn't seem to work as well with Pinterest, so you have to use Firefox, it works beautifully"* (G2-P10-p#4)

The browser incompatibility issue causes enormous frustration with website visitors as it forces them to switch platforms and devote extra time to perform a simple task. This issue was tackled by a technical participant in this example, but the issue may be worse for non-technical users that could take longer to comprehend what is behind the technical issue and determine how to resolve it. One participant outlined their frustration with platform incompatibility issues:

*" it depends on what platform, that's why I said it depends on where I am, the laptop, the PC, the iPad, on how I adapt what I've got and how I use it. So I don't know if it's a website thing or a platform thing, or whether things don't get tested to the degree that they should be before they're put out there for the public to use. **There must be an awful lot of frustration for some people, trying to use some of these different things"** (G2-P10-p#4)*

This participant provided further technical challenge examples when they contributed posts on Facebook platform. They discussed their experience in the following manner:

*"When, if you try to make a comment in Facebook, in the text box, make a comment. And if you do it in Firefox, if you try and make a correction, **if you can type exactly correctly all the way through, it's fine. You try and make a change, and it won't accept your changes**, all of the different ways that you've tried to alter your comment, all of those things are there. So then you can say, "Oh, goodness," and you put it up and think, "God, anyone would think I'm illiterate, the way that's come through." So then if you click on the edit button, the only thing you can do then is to delete your whole comment, go out of Facebook, come into it again and then have another attempt" (G2-P10-p#5)*

In this example, participant reveals the difficulties in correcting Facebook posts if they were viewing the social networking service through Firefox browser where editing a typed post is uneasy. If a user were to edit the text they typed (before posting it), a user has to delete the post, sign-out, then log

back in to re-write the post. From the participant's experience, it is evident that some social networking sites are not designed well for various browsers and may contain programmatic bugs within them.

Although not directly related to the study as the issue is external and not on embedded third-party widgets within websites, it still remains vital to reveal participant's experience as this may influence social networking sites to further improve the performance of their platforms and eliminate existing software bugs.

5.6.1.3 LACK OF VISIBILITY

Several participants noted that sharing tools were not used due to a lack of their visibility on the website. For instance, share buttons located on article pages were undetectable as they blended to the colour of the page making it difficult for an online user to identify them. A number of participants gave examples of style and layout issues that may impact on user's ability to share a page URL using social media tools embedded on an article page. One participant highlights the positioning issue of share tools on with the following quote:

"I like it when the share module, or share widget is really obvious. So for example, this one is all the way down at the bottom. You might not even want to scroll all the way down to the bottom before you think about sharing it" (G2-P3- p#4)

Here, the participant described that share tools should be located in a position easily detectable by a website visitor or a news reader. For instance, the participant shared their preference for locating share tools on the top of the page as opposed to the bottom as its less effort and won't require them to scroll down. On the other hand, another participant highlighted another issue to do with the style of share tools. When the interviewer asked the participant the reason they did not use the email share button that provided similar functionality to their preferred share method, they replied with the following quote:

"I don't even notice them [sharing buttons], to be honest. - I didn't even know there was an email button. I don't even notice that one when I use that, I go straight to the headline." (G2-P1- p#2-4)

In the above extract, the participant demonstrated the lack of visibility of share tools to the researcher with a laptop while navigating their preferred media website. The share tools were of a grey colour and almost blended in with the website's background colour. It is worth noting that this participant preferred email for communication and sharing of links of news articles a great deal. They favoured copy/paste method of web page URL through their personal email and sending it to their personal contacts yet did not utilise the email share button available within the website

Another visibility issue appeared with a different participant who reported about their preference to read news online through their PC desktop and not as often as on their mobile platform. They expressed their preference to viewing all the available articles on news website. The participant expressed their view in the following manner:

"[I read news on] Desktop PC. Occasionally mobile, not so much because it's so compact. I like to see the full spread on the articles." (G2-P14-p#1)

The participant's preference hints that they prefer to view full articles that may not be available with mobile view. Therefore, consideration should be taken with websites that have compact view with mobile display. There was no explanation as to why some media organisations don't choose to display full article listing with their mobile view as there was no complication to the implementation of mobile-compatible websites.

5.6.1.4 LACK OF SHARING OPTIONS

Several participants noted that they often find that sharing option available on media websites are limited to social media tools they do not use. This prompts them to use the copy/paste mechanism instead of using their personal email to share content with their contacts. For instance, one participant prefers to use email share as opposed to available share tools on an article page by providing the following reasons:

"Well the vast majority of them I'm not signed up to. I'm not, like, a Twitter user or anything, I barely use Facebook. So it just seems pointless, it's much easier to use, I guess, a form of communication that I use [email], and that everybody else uses as well. So that's why I just..." (G2-P1-p#2)

In this example, the participant, who has a technical background, states that the majority of social media buttons embedded on an article page belonged to platforms that this participant was not a user of (such as Twitter) or barely used (such as Facebook). Therefore, they resorted to the use of their personal communication method (i.e. email) as it's a common global practice, thus eliminating any risk of their contact not receiving the link. Another participant stated the same issue with limited share availability and being confined to the ones they do not use. They quoted the following example:

*"the **share widgets are often so limited to the ones that I don't want to use**, because they'll be limited to Twitter or Facebook, neither of which I'm ever going to be sharing something via." (G2-P9-p#6)*

The same participant also highlighted that some websites include share tools of platforms that are old and explained their preference to use a better share button that enables the direct copying of the page URL so they could paste it into their personal email form and then send it directly to their contact. The following quote illustrates this:

*"I'm trying to think of what it was **I wanted to share it via when the only options I got were**, hilariously, **Digg and a bunch of other ancient ones**. And maybe share it to Google+ or, that's it, the ones that basically gives me every type of sharing except, "Here's a URL that you can copy and paste." That frustrates me, when there's like eight different social media icons I could click, **but none of them let me just get the URL so that I can choose another one again**" (G2-P9-p#9)*

In summary, findings in this section suggest that even though users may hold accounts of popular social networking sites; this does not prove that they will use tools for sharing or engagement on websites. Therefore, it is vital to re-consider the type of social tools on media organisations' websites and re-evaluate their effectiveness in enhancing the website viewer experience.

5.6.1.5 DEFAULT PROGRAMS

Certain features that are known to trigger default software programs of the operating system used have been revealed to be as an unwelcome implementation by interviewed participants. For instance, many media websites contain Email sharing buttons on individual article pages to provide the user with the ability to send a direct email of the URL link of the article to their contacts in the

email automatically to save a user time in copying/pasting the URL. A participant reported the following statement:

*"I don't know if that was on news stories, or... **I just have this memory of clicking on email, and it would go, because I use web-based email, it'd go to Outlook. And I'd go, well, I don't use Outlook. So it would put me off this.** Yeah, I guess it just kind of put me off, going, well, do I have to then set this up to actually go where I want it to be? In which case I'm not going to bother, I'll just control C, control V. It's pretty easy." (G2-P1-p#4)*

This example suggests that setting up share tools to default to specific email programs could be problematic to some website users. As the participant prefers to use their personal webmail, the email share button on the article page is rendered useless as it defaults to the operating system's default email program (in the case of this participant, MS Outlook available on Windows OS). Therefore, this caused the participant to never consider using any of the embedded share tools on the website and simply revert to their traditional method of copy/paste website link into email.

*"where you might go email just for some contact or something, but **it'd always come up with Outlook, and I don't use Outlook. Like, where it's linked to whatever the operating system's email program is. So I've kind of just gone no, I don't want to do that.** That's not taking me where I want to go. I just stopped doing it." (G2-P1-p#4)*

Enforcements made within the online tools, that are related to the operating system they used continuously, was one of the reasons website users did not utilise share tools. When asked the reason participants did not use the email share button (embedded on the article page) some responded that while it performs the same functionality as their email forum, they indicated it was difficult to do so as the email share button did not perform the following tasks: it may force them to sign in, it does not contain a list of their contacts and it may bring up the default mail application for that operating system platform (e.g. Outlook for Windows OS). The following quote from the participant gives an example of this issue:

"I think even with that button, assuming I'm sending that to a friend, I still have to put in their email address, put in my name, put in my email address and submit it. And to me, it's still easier if I'm already signed into my email, which I am at the start of the day and it's open all day. Just to, I already have my contacts in my email client, to click on it, control C and

paste it in. I think it's less effort than doing that, yeah. Because that doesn't have my contacts, I can't just select them. I have to remember my email address or look it up." (G2-P1-p#5)

In summary, findings revealed that default programs in share tools that are automatically triggered based on a user's operating system are found to be non-popular option for website users. Majority of users prefer having control over their information and did not like signing-up to share links with their contacts. This should be taken into consideration when implementing sharing tools within websites and giving users suitable options without any enforced sign-up process.

5.6.1.6 THIRD-PARTY WIDGET LIMITATIONS

The limitation of third-party social networking widget functionality was given as one of the reasons why some participants did not utilise them for sharing news. These limitations could result in users resorting to alternative methods to manoeuvre around a challenge or push the user to share their URL links externally as opposed to using the share tools embedded within the website page, thus rendering their purpose useless. For instance, Twitter's character limit (140) has been a challenge, not only from an external user's perspective, but also from media employees as well. For instance, it limits size of tweets. However, there are features that help in reserving character space such as URL shortening tools. When a Twitter share button is clicked, the twitter popup box opens with the website link already displayed in the textbox. Some media websites automated a link shortening mechanism to simplify re-tweets for website users by implementing a pre-existing one within the share module, thus reserving character space and providing space for more text. However, this feature is not embedded within twitter's share module on all media websites. A participant stated the following challenge with Twitter's "share"/"re-tweet":

*"With Facebook, I will use what's on the page. But Twitter I don't, because they don't automatically shorten the links. So **with Twitter I will copy the URL and paste it into bit.ly which is a URL shortening service, and then I'll use that bit.ly link and paste it into Twitter. So I don't use any embedded stuff when it comes to Twitter, but I do use what's embedded on the page for Facebook.**" (G2-P3-p#1)*

Here, a participant, who's both a Facebook and Twitter user, articulated their experience with share tools embedded within a website page. They stated they use Facebook share tool embedded within a website page but not Twitter share tools as it does not shorten URL links automatically causing the

URL link to fill-in most of the character space. This limitation within Twitter's share tool pushes the user to share a URL link externally through manually shortening the link on a URL shortening service such as Bitly (Antoniades, Polakis, Kontaxis, Athanasopoulos, Ioannidis, Markatos, & Karagiannis 2011) and then simply copying the generated shortened link and pasting it into their official twitter profile. Twitter's re-tweet challenge is exemplified in the below extract:

*"if they shorten it **I will always try to use the Twitter widget. And if it doesn't automatically shorten, and if it doesn't automatically find a good headline, I will ignore it and I will go and manually do it**, I will manually paste the long link into bit.ly and I'll manually write my own headline. But if it does shorten that for me and if it pulls in a good headline, then I'll just use it. " (G2-P3-p#3)*

It is clear that limitations cause users to revert to other mechanisms and find convenient and alternative ways and methods to avoid poor performance of social media tools. Therefore, proper and quality technical implementation of third-party code needs to be planned well otherwise it may end up being a deterrent to the user's experience.

5.6.1.7 INACCURATE METADATA

Metadata is basic data that describes the data included on a website page. Meta is a prefix that is used in the information technology usage as "the underlying definition of the description". It summarizes the content on the website in basic information, making search for content easier. It is defined by a set of html style code that gets included on the website page (such as title, description, image, etc.). Most social media services developed their own meta-data extraction mechanism that extracts certain elements from a website page and displays them on the social media service (see Chapter 4 section 4.5.1.5).

Extracting incorrect meta-data has also been found to be a challenge for many participants when using social media tool embedded on a website that belong to the social networking platforms of Facebook and Pinterest. For instance, one participant discovered such challenge when they attempted to share an article using a Facebook share button within a website page. The thumbnail image on the article page was not the targeted image and the share tool retrieved a different image from an irrelevant part of the website page which did not even represent or described the story.

"sometimes I've shared an article and the thumbnail it's chosen has been from an irrelevant part of the page, and the header text hasn't really properly described the article." (G2-P2-p#7)

Such poor implementation of share tools has been experienced numerous times by participants who attempted to utilise third-party share tools embedded within websites. A participant's experience, below, with incorrect element selection from an embedded Facebook share button has caused them to delete the shared article from their social profile's "wall".

"I feel like that's happened to me a couple of times. I've shared information, and even once deleted it because I realised that there was no way for me to share that link on Facebook without manually edited what it showed, without it misrepresenting the story I'm trying to share" (G2-P2-p#7)

Another participant experienced a similar poor implementation of Facebook share button embedded within the page. They provided the following quote:

"Even if they let you select a different image, so sometimes it'll come up with three and you can click through them, but none of the three are the image that I want to put on Facebook. So sometimes that's annoying, if that's the case then I'll usually just opt for not including a thumbnail at all." (G2-P3-p#3)

In the above extract, the user states that even if the share tool brings up different images the user can select from, but it could still not be the one the user selected to share to their Facebook profile page. This issue has resulted in the participant opting out from using the Facebook's share button embedded within the page because it did not include the targeted thumbnail image with the shared content.

Another participant outlines another sharing example with meta-data extraction. This is an example of instances where the meta-data on the website page does not exist therefore it causes the Facebook platform to only extract the URL link in the post without any meta-data values or descriptions of the page, thus displaying a simple raw link. For example, below, a participant describes their experience when sharing information from a weather emergency website to their social media profile:

*"You copy the link, you copy and then you go on Facebook. You post that, you're supposed to give your [...] **current emergency coverage**, they would give a little title to it, like a little window. So people know what kind of news they're going to read. But **some of the websites, when you copy the link and paste it into the Facebook**, there's just the address. **There's no little window, nothing**. So **that's the only link, nothing else**." (G2-P18-p#6)*

Another popular platform had the same poor meta-data implementation as Facebook on some media websites. For example, the Pinterest module can be used to share images on a website. However, some users reported that due to poor implementation of the share tool embedded on the website, the wrong multimedia element can be "pinned" to their profile, prompting users to download and use a Pinterest "plugin" instead to perform the task.

*"I used to use the Pinterest module, but now I have a Chrome plugin where every image has a, not actually every image, let's say if I go to an article, I'll use the Chrome plugin rather than the Pinterest button. **Simply because it means I can select which image I want to pin. So I used to use Pinterest, the Pinterest kind of buttons**, I guess, to share. **But now I use the plugin more, unless it's disabled on a website**" (G2-P3-p#1)*

Pinterest was used as a repeated example with participants demonstrating its proper implementation on some media organisations' websites. For example, some articles that contained images with an image hover effect brings up a "PinIt" (Hambrick & Kang 2015) module to enable the user to pin an article with the image. A participant explained their experience below:

"there are some where they don't allow you to do the hover, so for example here, I can't just pin straight from that. If I go to this page here and I might be able to, so there it comes up. If they have Pinterest really obviously there, then sometimes I will use that instead, because I want to see what other images are options. So I'll show you, so for example, so there's more than one image probably on this page. If I use the plugin, it will only show me that image. Whereas if I use the module, the [embedded] widget, it will show me all the images on that page, and I can choose which one I want to pin. So sometimes the [embedded] module is better, so sometimes I will use that instead" (G2-P3-p#2)

Here, the participant demonstrated their experience with using Pinterest's share tool "Pin It". This share facility is usually available as an embedded tool that appears through a hover-over effect on an image within a website page. The participant switched their preference to using the embedded tool "PinIt" to display all the images available on a website page and have the option to choose which image they want to "Pin".

The incorrect implementation of metadata on websites impacts on a user's experience and may stop them from sharing an article. This study has found that third-party modules embedded within a website are used by users based on the performance of the widget. If a share widget doesn't select the targeted element (e.g. image) within the website page to share on an external social media platform, external users find other mechanisms to share information or URL links with. This demonstrates that some users will use the embedded tool if it's technically implemented well within the website.

5.6.1.8 DIFFICULTY FACTOR

Several participants provided examples of their experience with social tools and the findings strongly suggest that social media users visiting news websites prefer to use tools that are easy to use and do not require much effort from the user. One participant admitted they would engage actively on a website to submit comments to an article if the feature was available that did not require any effort, and most importantly, did not enforce them to sign up. They stated:

*"I guess if, like I was thinking if I was going to comment, say, on an [media organisation name] story, which I won't. But if I was, it would have to be almost zero effort for me to do so, I think. That I could just go in and type whatever I want to say into it. **I think the only way I would do it would be with very little effort** and I'm anonymous, or I can be anonymous if I choose to be. It could be like a text box and I just type my comment, enter, and it's there. I don't care if it's moderated, but yeah. I don't want to have to go through a signup process, and then who knows what people are doing with your information?" (P1-p#6-7)*

Many participants stated they prefer tools that ease their sharing or engagement process, but found in practise that some tools do the absolute opposite. For instance, one participant stated that an embedded email share button on an article page requires the participant to type their contact's

email address and their own in the form. Instead, they found it easier to login into their personal email and share information with their contact.

"I think even with that button, assuming I'm sending that to a friend, I still have to put in their email address, put in my name, put in my email address and submit it. And to me, it's still easier if I'm already signed into my email, which I am at the start of the day and it's open all day. Just to, I already have my contacts in my email client, to click on it, control C and paste it in. I think it's less effort than doing that, yeah. Because that doesn't have my contacts, I can't just select them. I have to remember my email address or look it up" (G2-P1-p#5)

5.6.1.9 SPAM

Websites, especially media organisations websites, contain commenting forums that require website users to register through providing the least minimal information, such as name and email address. Several participants were concerned that they would receive spam email if they sign up to these websites. This concern also causes them to never to engage on websites. The participant's below response demonstrates this:

*"I don't like logging in, because then you have to give your email address. And **I just don't want to get loaded with spam.** But I understand that by not logging in, and then before you can't verify that, it could be like spam in there anyhow. You can't control the comments that are coming through, so you get a lot of crappy stuff on there" (G2-P10-p#7)*

In the above extract, a user states that although they have a Twitter account they never tweet as they could not keep up with the emails sent from the Twitter service. Further, the volume of emails sent to the user is perceived as spam email which resulted in them ceasing to use the Twitter service altogether. More participants noted this same experience with social media networks' email overreach resulting in users opting out of these services to stop "spam". One example is provided here from a technical participant's perspective:

*"I have a Twitter account that I have sent zero messages, ever, on, it's just purely for, because you need to have a Twitter account to be on Twitter feeds. And to have feeds, so I have a Twitter account that I have to subscribe, to follow them. **I found I couldn't even keep***

up with the small number that I had just because they're too spammy, so I kind of stopped with that. " (G2-P9-p#3)

Further, another participant revealed that shared content could look like spam in a receiver's inbox. For instance, if a news reader sends a URL link of an article to their contact, the contact may view links received in emails as spam, this discourages them from viewing the website. A participant described their experience when they're sharing URL links through email as follows:

"I only find this problem when you copy the address link. I don't usually find the problem when I click to share them, share with friends on Facebook, there's no problem there. But like, if I want to share a particular post, website article, you need to copy the URL link, then you send to your friends, especially through emails. Because you get a lot of scam emails. So I find the one problem, sometimes I copy the link I send to my friends, my friends say, "Oh, what is this?" So he doesn't even want to open it, because there's only an address link, because he's thinking maybe there's a scam, so it could be a virus." (G2-P18-p#5)

Participant experiences revealed in this section describe the level of distrust some website users have. Therefore, the look and layout of content when shared from websites on other external platforms appears to be a vital point for receiving content. Users, in general do not want to receive content that look "spammy" and will simply avoid reading such email.

5.6.1.10 CONSTANT CHANGES

Many popular social media platforms apply new changes and updates to their platforms, be it a security change or a feature deprecation or change. This has an extremely negative impact on its users as it makes them suspicious and question whether the change is an improvement benefiting the website users or if it is simply another add-on to extract information from users' online activities. One participant detailed their concerns:

"when articles come out and essentially say the kinds of information people get and what they can do with that information, I say "Why should I give you? You don't need that information, so why should I give that to you?" So definitely, and I think Facebook themselves say, "Oh, we're changing our privacy settings again," but often there's articles saying, "They're changing it and this is the reason." But I just kind of go, it makes me suspicious of them. If you're constantly shifting the grounds that you're working on, well, I might be happy

with what you do one day. But if you change it again, I have to go in and see if I'm happy with what you do now. So I give them the bare minimum trust I need to use their services. Because who knows what they're doing? " (G2-P1-p#6)

In the above example, the participant talks about the articles they come across on social networking sites such as Facebook and the changes to the privacy settings that are being applied. Such changes make users suspicious as they question the reasons behind the privacy changes and whether it is to do with extracting further private information from all of the users online. This participant states their concern of what social platforms are doing with the information they're extorting from their users. Such suspicions are an evident sign of distrust in large platforms such as Facebook, with users are less inclined to share or engage with any of a social networking services and its embedded third-party tools.

5.6.1.11 PRIVACY AND SECURITY CONCERN

The majority of participants interviewed in this study were of professional and academic background. These type of participants revealed their privacy concerns them a great deal online as they are aware of websites and social media platforms tracking user activities. The study has revealed major reasons as to why the majority of participants in this study did not actively engage on media websites. These reasons were found to be: fear of leaving a digital footprint; and opposition to mandatory signing up.

Concern over privacy was the major reason that impacted on viewer experience. Many participants indicated the reason why they avoid active engagement is the fear of being identified online. For example, one participant stated they are against a mandatory signup to be able to submit a comment on a news article on a website. They highlight the following quote:

*"I guess **I'm just opposed to the fact that it's mandatory**. Yeah, the same with all personal information and social media, really. Like, I personally don't care about my information, but I guess I have a general privacy concern for other people and the web." (G2-P2-p#11)*

Several participants highlighted their dislike of using embedded third-party social widgets such as share tools to transmit information to their contacts. They revealed they do not want to leave a digital footprint. They quoted this statement:

“Digital footprint. *that is part of it, yes. If it was under my name, then yeah, I do have more reservations about trying to leave a comment, because as a consultant software engineer, I represent the company where I write my own blog entries. So if I have my name associated with something in a public forum, then that could reflect, it reflects upon me and my professional role as well, and it could reflect upon the company - There's an adage on the internet that whatever you put out there, it's out there forever. You can never delete whatever you put out there, there's always going to be some way that a copy is stored that people can get access to.” (G2-P7-p#3)*

Specifically, technical participants were most careful on signing in to engage actively on the website. Data collected also revealed many participants do not like to cause the company they work for any disrepute even if it meant not expressing their views on websites.

In summary, majority of users indicated that privacy concerns were a major reason for avoiding active engagement on websites. Some social media services enforce users to provide personal details to be able to use a social media platform and its services. Due to this, majority of participants indicated they prefer quieter methods of sharing and engaging online (i.e. email, on their personal space within their social networking space).

5.6.1.12 FEATURES NOT WORKING AS EXPECTED

Several participants noted technical issues that can be narrowed down to poor feature implementations. For instance, videos that play automatically without the user pushing "Play" button was found to be one of the disruptive challenges experienced by website visitors. The below quote describes this issue:

"I don't like it when a video plays straight away. I want the option to push play, it's very annoying." (G2-P17-p#4)

Such challenges could arise from embedded videos from YouTube or Vimeo as they provide special settings to give the user the ability to set auto-play as desired. Several other examples below were given about the poor implementation of embedded tools such as Twitter's share button:

"Some sites have a technology, and so you hit the Twitter button and you hit the share button or whatever, and it just, it doesn't work. Like, it, yeah. It will fire up something

completely different, it won't actually follow, it won't open the right programs or something and so you end up just copying and pasting the link" (G2-P8-p#6)

In this extract, the participant who is a Twitter user highlights the poor implementation of Twitter share button that does not perform as expected. This may result in users reverting to simple and traditional methods such as copy/paste method to share links with their contacts.

Another example below discloses the issue with Pinterest's tool when a user attempts to select a specific multimedia object on the page, such an image but ends up selecting the entire page due to the poor implementation of Pinterest's share module within the page. A participant detailed this issue in the below quotation:

*"Some of them work and some of them don't. Because sometimes Pinterest doesn't let you, it takes that whole website or that whole thing and allows you to say, then you get up with someone's boards, you go follow, follow, follow. No, I don't want that, I only want this one particular thing. And sometimes the Pinterest doesn't work that way, mainly more on the iPad. And **I think it's something to do with the platform, so the way people set their websites up, the pin, the red Pinterest button tries to collect that whole website and not just that particular item. And in my cases I don't want the whole website, I just want that item.** And so by taking that link, I get that particular item. That thing that I want, I don't want your whole website. I want that particular piece of content" (G2-P10-p#3)*

This example highlights the poor implementation of embedded third-party share tools or features within websites results in confidence in its performance and for users to lose trust in the website.

5.6.2 NON-TECHNICAL

Some of the challenges media website users' experiences are to do with deliberate technical implementations that interfere with their online experience. This section will explore these and reveal some of the challenges that push users to discover new mechanisms to bypass the problems resulting from these challenges. Although these challenges are technical in nature, their implementation are deliberate as a result of business decisions and thus classified as non-technical factors.

5.6.2.1 INTRUSIVE ADVERTISING AND PAY WALLS

Embedded ads in embedded videos on websites have been noted to be a major issue with the user experience. Several participants noted two issues with online ads: ads that are longer than the actual video; and ads that force the user to share the content they're viewing. One participant noted the following example:

*"you're wanting to share an article, or like a video, but they always have an ad in front of it. And I understand that they do that to make money, but especially if it's something like, if the film is shorter than the actual ad for itself, it's really a pain in the ass. Because most of the ads will go for 30 seconds, and then you might have a 15 second reel. So it becomes annoying so it then turns you away from wanting to watch it at all, because in order for you to watch something for that time, you've got to sit through the first 30 seconds of an ad that you don't care about. So therefore, **it makes me less likely to share it or keep following that page. So because it annoys me, I just don't follow it any more.** And so as a result, **I'll usually go onto the website and then access it through there, because they don't have advertisement any more.** They will just link it straight to the video." (G2-P6-p#5)*

This participant explains their experience of their attempt to share a video on a website page with a contact. While they accept that companies generate revenue from commercial ads, they object to situations such as when a video includes an embedded ad video that is 30 seconds long and the video they want to view is itself 15 seconds. This was found to be an irritant to users making them inclined to not only to never share that video but also raises the possibility of the user losing their trust of the site and never returning to consume news and content in the future. It could also result in users locating another source for the video to view with a high possibility to search on other competitor websites or social networking sites.

Embedded ads within videos are common with video-based social platforms such as YouTube. This approach either turns the users away from the content or, in some cases, away from such websites permanently, or pushes users to resort to other mechanisms, such as installing ad blocking software and plug-ins, to remove those ads all together from those sites.

Another challenge interviews revealed is that some media websites contain pay walls that restrict website visitors from viewing content. In the following example, a practise has emerged where

commercial media websites allow a certain number of article views before displaying a payment request known as a pay wall. A participant narrated their experience in the following style:

*“Some websites do require you to register, because **you've used up your 25 credits, like [media organisation name], you can only view 25 articles in a seven-day period, then you have to register or sign on and pay a fee**, to receive everything they put in the paper, I guess. So as a result, that becomes really annoying, because the only way you can share it with those people is you then have to go into the website and repeat the same process again.” (G2-P6-p#5)*

In this example, the participant indicates their experience with a media website that requires them to register and pay a fee to view more content after using 25 article views in a seven-day period. As a result, this participant prefers social media networks to consume content as content is offered free of charge. It is evident that some users will turn to other sources of news if they are hit with a pay wall.

5.6.2.2 ENFORCED SIGN-UPS

Some participants stated they would engage more if commenting online was done anonymously without enforced sign-up or any mechanism that would mean that their identity would be revealed online. Enforced registration leads users to react against any activity that determines their privacy control, resulting in passive engagement.

*“I don't comment very often, I think one of the, there are two or more things that prevent me from commenting. **One is if they won't let me log in or comment anonymously, that will prevent me - if all my experiences of commenting showed that I could just do it anonymously, then I would comment more often**. But because some websites say, “You must login with this,” or “you must create an account,” I've really stopped looking, really. At news websites' comments sections, because I expect that they will want me to sign in with a real name or an account” (G2-P3 - p#3-5)*

When participants were asked why they find signing-in to external social media platforms acceptable yet find it difficult to sign-in to media websites for engagement, they indicated that some websites require them to log in every time they comment, whereas with Facebook, it's an easy one step process. The below extract demonstrates this:

"Yeah, but Facebook, I only login once. I never log off. So every time when I finish, I just turn off my computer, I put my computer on sleep. So every time I open Facebook, it's already open. So I don't need to login every time. But websites, you need to sign in every single time.
" (G2-P18-p#4)

Whether on corporate websites or external social pages, engagement is an important aspect all media organisations try to achieve with news readers as it drives traffic to their website. Therefore, it is extremely important to examine the factors that play a key role in user's engagement online. A combination of both technical and human factors were found to encourage user engagement online.

The Conceptual Model for Group 2: Lived experience of website users accessing news websites

To answer the second research question, the findings revealed three types of user engagement. These variations were due to a mix of lived experience and existing user perception of social networking tools and behavioural patterns related to the character of a website viewer. In addition, the findings revealed users preferred less invasive and more traditional activities when sharing information such as email and chat windows and modern techniques such as external sharing within their personal profiles and spaces through "tagging" and "share", and text-messaging through mobile devices.

Furthermore, findings revealed several factors that encourage users to actively engage and contribute comments and content. These factors are: the sense of belonging to a community that share common interests, the ease of the platform an engagement takes on, the ability to remain anonymous and protect their identity online, and receiving of notification of any interactions from other users. On the other hand, several factors were the reasons why website users avoid engagement. These discouraging factors were categorised into two: technical and human factors. Technical challenges were to do with the technology within the websites such as constant changes to third-party embedded social media and content, privacy and security concerns, the website performance overall, the lack of share methods within pages, the execution of default programs of sharing tools, the limitations of third-party social tools and the inaccuracy of metadata that extracts the correct parameters from a website page to produce a snapshot onto the social media page. The following diagram is a conceptual model of variety of share methods utilised by website users,

factors that encourage users and factors that discourage them from active engagement. **Diagram 5.1** collates all the findings in this chapter into a conceptual model.

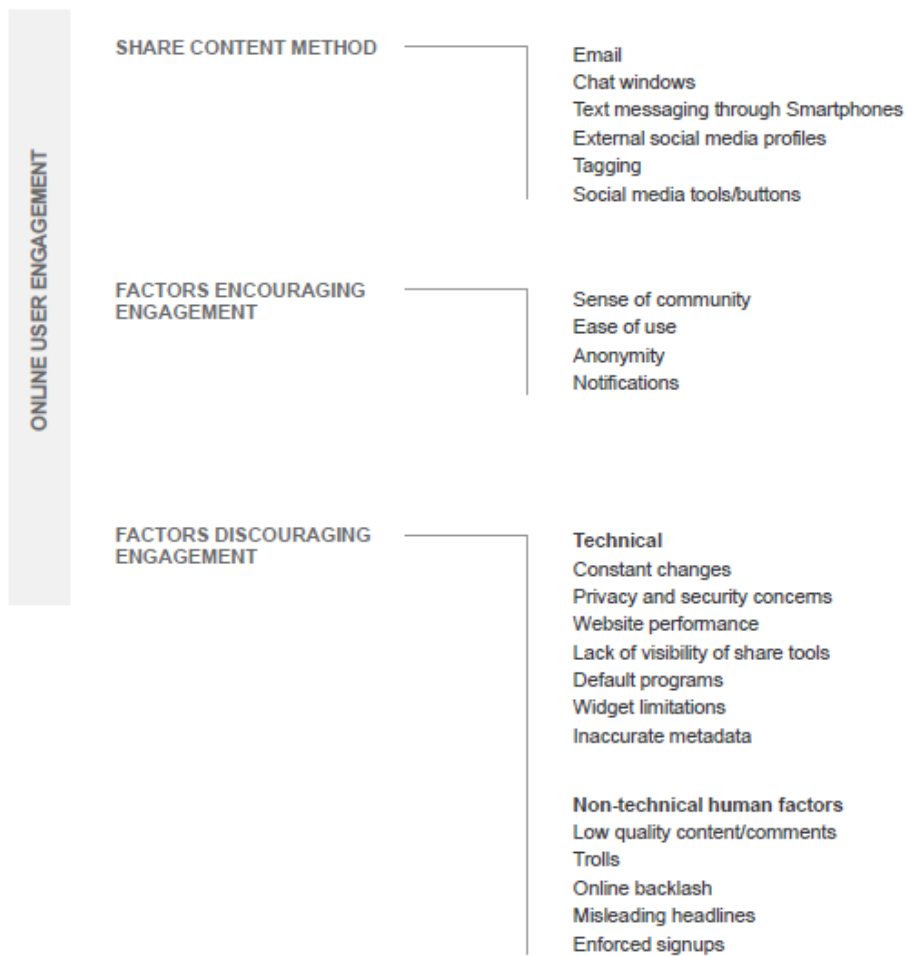


Diagram 5.1: A conceptual model of website viewer lived experience with embedded social media and the factors that encourage/discourage their interaction with media websites

5.7 USEFUL TOOLS/FEATURES/TECHNICAL BENEFITS

Social networking sites provide variety of third-party tools to link users back to their services. Several tools and features emerged from this study that are described as beneficial by both the end users and the media organisations. This section will briefly highlight these features.

- **NewsFeed from followers**

This study revealed that the majority of website users rely on the NewsFeed facility to consume news. Facebook and Reddit platforms emerged as having this facility utilised often by website users. Both of these platforms provided users with tailored news content. Facebook provided NewsFeed to

its users through their personal "walls" and Reddit social platform provided NewsFeed on its homepage without the users' need to login.

"So I use my friends to view the outside world of social media, so I let them bring me all the good stuff.... So I get a nice mix, I get my special interest groups, and then I get all my friends who follow all the other ones, so that when I go through my news feed I get a nice sample of what's happening out there" **(G2-P5-p#1)**

- **Notifications**

The importance of receiving notifications when contacts engage on a social platform with an offline user has emerged as a useful feature. This is a facility that some media websites do not offer. A participant outlined the easiness of engaging with an offline contact in the example below.

"Yeah, if I just see something on my feed, all I have to do is type in what I think and click enter, and I'm done. And if someone responds to me, I'll get a notification, and if I want to respond to them I can do that really easily." (G2-P2 - p#5)

- **Share facility within social networks**

Some popular external social media platforms included certain features and facilities that enabled users to perform certain tasks without much effort. For instance, a platform like Facebook has a feature that enables account holders to display news and information from shares of their personal contacts. This feature is a feed that displays a stream of shared content in which other contacts can continue sharing via the Facebook "**share**" button enabled under each post. Re-sharing shared content is a very common mechanism among Facebook users and encourages further sharing due to its simplicity.

"I tend to only have stuff show up that people have shared on their own wall, and then I'll go, "Oh, that might be interesting. I'll follow." And I think in that case, if I know it's a news story and I know it's going to take me to another website I'm happy" (G2-P1-p#5)

Another useful feature emerged is tagging. Some participants noted that one of the technical benefits of Facebook is that it's easy and quick to share news with personal contacts using Facebook "tag" facility as opposed to sending them by email.

*"so I'll use the mechanism used by Facebook, because that's the quickest way to share it with anybody, instead of personally sending it to them through an email. **It's quicker for me just to tag their name**" (G2-P6-p#2)*

"why would you go sign up on the actual website and go further into researching, when you can just do it straight away whilst you're on Facebook as it is. So it's just easier, and then all you have to do is turn on the notifications for that page and you will receive every article that they send to you" (G2-P6-p#5)

It is noteworthy that some social media platforms give the user control to share information with selected contacts, a feature that is also not available or provided within media websites.

" So that's another reason why I like Facebook - people say that all your information's going to be revealed, but there are settings there for you to block out certain people so they can't read it, or there's settings there for you to block people from viewing your page altogether. So at the end of the day, it's so easy to gain information, if it's there, then why not use it? Why go further into websites when you can easily access it through Facebook" (G2-P6-p#7)

- **Real time content**

This study has found that the Twitter widget is perceived by most participants in this study to be a useful embedded widget. Twitter widget is considered a useful tool as it provides a live stream of rich content with images and videos. Furthermore, Twitter's live timeline streaming widget includes the ability to filter content via hashtags. Twitter's hashtag metadata tag is one of the most popular features among popular social networking services, as it enables users to find messages/Tweets with a specific theme or content and embed within a website easily.

"... probably what I found really interesting kind of recently was The National Party doco that I worked on had a hashtag of #thenationals. It actually had two, which was kind of irritating. It had one, which was #thecountryroad and the other one was #thenationals. And I was

sitting in Brisbane, in daylight saving time at 7:30 at night, while it was going to air in Sydney. And following the comments of people as they were watching the program. So they were all using the correct hashtags, and I was basically listening to a live commentary of what they thought of what was going on in the program as it was going to air. And it was fascinating, really, really cool." (G2-P8-p#5-6)

- **Sharing photos**

Some social media platforms are specifically designed to share specific content. For example, platforms such as Tumblr, Flickr, and Instagram are created specifically for imagery. They include features perceived by participants as useful, such as allowing users to find photos of other people and follow them with "tagging" feature already available. It is simple to tag contacts to view certain photos on these services.

"Tumblr is just photos for me. I just share my photography, and I view my friends' photography, and some photographers who are inspirational to me." (G2-P2-p#10)

"Instagram is purely just photo only and that's how you converse through that. So you don't sort of flood your Facebook page with it, you flood your Instagram with that. And it's so much easier to access, people aren't, it's very easy to access anyone you want, basically, on Instagram. So it's an easier way to link onto pictures, or if somebody says, "Did you see this photo of this person?" then it's easy just to go on there, put in their username and then follow from there. And once again, it's the same as Facebook; if I want somebody to see a photo of a particular location or site or somebody in particular, I can just tag them in that photo. And then they can view that photo from the tag that I've created." (G2-P6-p#3)

- **"Like", "PinIt" and others**

There are a small number of tools provided by external social media platforms that can be used to get news directly from media organisations websites. Several share buttons commonly used by website users who were social media users were found to be beneficial as it was easy to accumulate articles with photos with a click of a button. The "Like" button provided by Facebook and "PinIt" button provided by Pinterest service were very popular due to their simplicity.

"I usually go to, for example, [media organisation name]. So I go to [media organisation name] Facebook page and I "liked" it. So once I liked it, I will receive their news on my Facebook wall. So like, if I wanted to receive particular media information, for example world news or SBS or Channel Seven, Channel Ten for example. So I go to their websites, every company, every news, they should have a news feed on Facebook. So I just go there and have liked it. Once I have liked it, every day I receive their news" (G2-P18-p#1)

" I used to use Pinterest, the Pinterest button to share. But now I use the (browser) plugin more, unless it's disabled on a website" (G2-P3-p#1)

5.8 FUTURE RESEARCH

Two new areas have emerged from the qualitative interviews with this group of participants (i.e. online users accessing news websites). These two areas are: The impact of user's profession and level of education on their type of engagement online; and perception of online users of what they perceive as factual news. These areas are explored further below.

- **Profession impacts on engagement**

The study has found that a website viewer's profession had an influence on the way they engaged online. Due to certain professions, confidentiality was extremely important that they felt they had to be careful about engaging on social media. They did not like to express their opinions loudly to random publics but only to individuals they knew well. The below quote demonstrates their concern:

"even though I have a public Twitter account I'm very careful about what I Tweet. I tend to do a lot of re-tweeting, and I tend to do a lot of Tweeting of articles, but I don't necessarily put my opinion about those articles on Twitter. I don't want to get personally attacked, I don't want people to know too much about me, and I'm also careful about the [...]s reputation" (G2-P3-p#4)

Although data strongly revealed that most participants wanted active moderation on comments within websites and on external social media pages to ensure its quality engagement, one participant indicated that they do not engage due to comment moderation because they felt that media sites heavily moderate content and do not allow freedom of speech and honest opinions.

They also indicated that they opposed comments moderation even if inappropriate language took place within the discussion threads.

"people were saying negative things about that. They deleted that, so it's just another thing where the media control people, and everything. So there's no free speech, so free speech is dead" (G2-P16-p#6)

- **Perception of what is factual and truthful in news**

A few participants noted that they only visited certain sites due to the quality of their content, with genuine facts written that have not been manipulated by the media organisation, nor influenced by its management.

*"I'd prefer them to be written based on actual facts and solid information that's come from the actual source ...instead of just having a journalist .. basically ... manipulate the information so the reader becomes interested. ... **they would get a lot more attraction and interest from social media and the public that follow it if they actually have actual factual information**, or words that have actually been said, and have proof that person said it, and publicise it that way. ...the actual information is useless, because it's like, you just know that's not necessarily the truth, or they just rabble on about crap. And so we get disappointed, so it's less likely wanting to share it, and then you sort of become less reliant on the actual website." (G2-P6-p#6)*

Conversely, some participants believed that news as presented via social media linkages is biased and not factual. For instance, one participant believed that incoming content from Twitter social service such as hash-tagged trends were paid for thus they did not trust the hash-tagged tweets.

"because people pay for trends on there and everything like that. Hillary Clinton actually paid for her trend about feminism and "Vote for Hillary, supporting feminism.... If somebody pays for them, how I am supposed to believe about the rest of the trends on there? I can't believe it, so that's why I don't really, it's irrelevant for me. It doesn't really matter." (G2-P16-p#5)

One participant indicated differences between news websites and their reporting methods. Future studies could dive into exploring the distinguishing factors between biased news and factual news

from a user's perspective. A suggested research question could be presented as: **How do online users experience different news websites? How do they distinguish between biased news and factual news?**

“well if we're going for an example international-wise, anything from the UK or through Europe. Because a lot of the sport that I follow, I wouldn't read it through The Courier Mail or The Daily Telegraph or The Sunday Mail, because I know the source of information's coming from Australian journalists who have nothing to do with what's over in Europe, because they're not over there. I'd rather local information, which is why I was saying before I'd rather factual information coming from a particular person who's being written about in that article, so I can trust that's what's actually being told is the truth. Because a lot of the conversations that we have are based on theories or hypotheses that we make up, but that's because it's only on information that the social media gives us. Whereas the actual fact of the information is always being hidden, and the social media won't tell you, or they won't release it. They'll only release it over a certain amount of time to keep you interested, but in actual fact it turns a lot of people away, because they don't want to keep going onto a website to find information they're still looking for that's not there. So, you know, they get sick of it. Whereas I think if the media just tells it straight as it is, and exactly what's being said, then I think they'll get a lot more attraction out of it.” (G2-P6-p#6)

5.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has sought specifically to respond to the research question: what is the lived experience of a website viewer with embedded social media tools on media websites. The results indicate that many embedded social media tools such as share widgets aren't as highly used as media organisations predicted and that there was no evidence these tools have increased audience visits. However, the data strongly suggests that majority of users continue to share privately through copy/paste method on their private profiles on external social media platforms. Email and Private sharing such as Email, “User Tagging” within a social media space, Share facilities available within a social media service were the most popular methods for sharing news links among participants as users felt more in control. Features such as Newsfeeds provided by social media platforms are the most popular method for news consumption.

The next chapter represents the final phase of the study and provides an overview of all previous chapters. It focuses on considering the intersection between the findings of chapter 4, the media

organisations experiences, and chapter 5, the user lived experiences, presenting a logical suggested implementation approach for social media tools in media organisation websites. It will then present a set of recommendations based on the discussion of the findings presented in chapters four and five.

Chapter 6: Discussion and Conclusion

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter four and five presented the study's findings on the experience of media organisations and their online clients with the organisational websites that contain embedded social media. In this chapter a discussion of the key findings from chapter four (the experience of media organisations) and chapter five (the experience of website visitors) are compared and contrasted based on similar themes and issues. The discussion sections outline each of the aspects that are important elements the media industry need to consider in future practice when embedding social media within their websites.

This chapter has several objectives. It builds a bridge between the key findings from the previous chapters through a comparison of the benefits and challenges faced by both media organisations and their users when using embedded social media within the media websites. The chapter discusses the disconnect between the media industry and their users, where a behaviour, experiences and the needs of media organisations differ from the needs of users. In general, media organisations are experiencing continuous challenges when using embedded social media and they are responding with a reactive approach rather than a proactive one. The findings suggest that the current media organisations practice of using embedded social media usage may not be as effective as it can be, and in some cases may be discouraging their users from engaging with the organisations website. After this discussion, suggestions for the best practice implementation of embedded social tools to enhance the users' experiences are provided. The likely practical implications of social media tools overall for the media industries are also further considered and recommendations for improvements made. The intention is to assist social media practitioners within the media organisations to polish their strategies in an effort to enhance their client experiences and encourage further engagement with the media website. The study then presents social media practitioners in the media industry a set of recommendations to better deal with the daily challenges organisations face with embedded social media. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key contributions of this study and presents avenues for further research.

6.2 RESEARCH OVERVIEW

This study provides two comprehensive theoretical frameworks (Constructivism and Lived Experience) that outline the challenges of embedded social media within media websites, from both the organisational and their users' perspectives. The aim was to investigate the lived experience of

media organisations managing the use of social media within their corporate websites. The study aimed to address the following research questions as outlined in chapter 1:

1. What are the experiences of media organisations in embedding social media on their corporate websites?
 - 1.1 What social media are media organisations embedding on their corporate websites and why are these embedded social media being used?
 - 1.2 What policies and procedures do media organisations use to evaluate the use of social media on their corporate websites?
2. What is the experience of online users with media organisations websites that have embedded social media?

Underlying these questions, there were several assumptions made by the researcher, from their own lived experience with websites that accessed private data and as an IT professional working in a media organisation. These assumptions were:

1. Although social media networking sites are used widely, this does not mean their embedded third-party tools/widgets within media websites will be used as widely.
2. Although social media networking sites are used widely, this does not mean website users will give consent for websites to access their private data.
3. Enforced signups and the requesting of personal information within websites (such as access to a private contact list) discourages the majority of website users (especially professionals) from actively engaging on media websites, prompting them to find other ways to engage on the websites.

Using a qualitative research approach, forty-one in-depth interviews were conducted with two key stakeholders: employees working in the media industry and website users. As anticipated all media organisations used social media and utilized their tools heavily within their corporate websites. However, only a few of these organisations demonstrated a best practice processes in their use (see section 4.6.).

The media organisations' employees had differing levels of technical knowledge and understanding of how their organisation embedded the social media tools. The responses from these employees provided valuable information about the level of disconnect between business employees and technical employees and reinforced the importance of media organisations establishing a specific technical policy and best practice business processes to handle challenges that may arise from embedding social media. Further research is required in this area, but the data suggests that in some cases business people's lack of technical knowledge may impact on their ability to contribute in establishing effective social media policies.

Website users on the other hand, displayed three engagement types that capture the deviation in their online engagement methods when accessing media websites.

Type 1: Passive engager

A user who only reads information on the page (such as stories, articles, breaking news etc.) but does not utilise any of the embedded social media nor signups to the website to leave comments or perform an activity.

Type 2: Active engager

A user who utilises the embedded social media and signs up to the media websites to leave comments on articles of their interest.

Type 3: Selective engager

A user who selectively engages with media organisation websites, passively using the media website but actively engaging by selecting alternative forms of engagements, such as using their private social media accounts or sharing stories with their contacts via email.

The three types of media organisation engagers reveal the variation in the lived experience of the media website users. For example, professional users (see section 5.5.2.3) are very much focused on maintaining their privacy online and do not engage on websites that enforce signup for active engagement. Further, they are the least utilizers of embedded third-party social media tools within corporate websites. It was observed that the majority of participants, including all levels of professional and technical knowledge skills, very rarely utilized embedded social media within media websites and resorted to more traditional methods of sharing such as Email and Chat windows.

An extended discussion will now be given to review the improvements of the overall user experience on media organisation websites that utilize embedded social media. The intention of this review is to provide media organisations with opportunities:

- For self-reflection in regard to the embedded social media use on the organisations website;
- To improve their organisations website performance in general;
- To improve their social media presence on each different social media networks; and;
- To improve existing implementations of embedded social media within their websites.

6.3 KEY FINDINGS

The majority of users demonstrated a common theme of wanting to keep their information and personal data private. They had a fear of being exposed to abusive comments online if they contributed their opinion on a controversial topic.

It is important to remember that there were differences in participant levels of education and industry experience, and this is reflected in their responses that display a wider understanding of the web and social networking websites. Many of the professionals came from academic backgrounds, and some were IT professionals, such as system administrators or software consultants. Those with this level of professional expertise demonstrated a higher level of understanding of privacy and security issues within social networking sites. Some of the individual interview responses from participants may not represent their lived experience, but are in fact pre-conceived perceptions that demonstrate the variety of lenses each individual may bring with them when they use or choose not to use, a particular social media tool.

This understanding of what drives news readers to visit news and media websites, and the challenges that are detrimental to their online browsing experience, will help organisations and social media scholars. In the sections that follow, the study will consider how media organisations know who the users of their sites are; the evidence of distrust in social media sites, how social media may slow down page performance, the challenges faced by a constantly changing technological environment, the need for comments moderation, users' use of Plug-ins and tools, and what drives and encourages user engagement on media websites. Each of these aspects will be explored in the following sections.

6.4 MEDIA ORGANISATIONS WANT TO KNOW WHO THEIR USERS ARE

One of the issues that limited viewer interaction was the media organisations' interest in identifying their online audience and tracking user activities. Responses from employees of media organisations (see section 4.5.2.5) revealed detailed evaluations being made of social media use within the organisations website, with each organisation utilizing a variety of tools and applications to track user activities on their websites. Well-known applications were found to be **Nelson ratings**, **Webtrends** and **Google Analytics**. These analytics applications are used to track down data such as client journeys, referrals from each official social media site, the number of **Facebook** "likes", and the number of re-tweets from **Twitter**. Furthermore, some media organisations requested their users to use their real identities online.

"for instance we have a policy we ask people to use their real names that's extremely difficult cause people can easily set themselves up with a credible fake name with an email. We can't absolutely enforce it, but certainly if we see someone's name or a complete alias and we tend to pick up on it when they're being abusive or having a continuing go at another commenter then we might look at them and go "well this person seems like a fake account" like it's not a real person's name." (G1-P6-p#6)

Many media organisations have built-in commenting systems to encourage user engagement, but most of these utilize an enforced sign-up process, requiring either a registration process or using an existing external social media accounts to sign-in. This is in direct contrast with the preferred practice of their website users (see sections 5.5.2.3 and 5.5.3.2). Users felt they had to use another name or fake ID to protect their identity during active engagement (see section 5.5.3.2 v.) and were careful to not bring the organisation they work for into disrepute. The majority of users simply chose to be selective engagers (see section 5.5.1.3) as exemplified below:

*"I think, if I can I also have an alias as well, **I have a fake name and a fake email address that I can use to comment, and I sometimes use that if it's something that I want to follow.** But if the only options for logging in are use your Facebook account, or use your Google+ account, no way."(G2-P3-p#3)*

This finding highlights the importance of the impact of enforced sign-ups on user engagement. It also confirms the researcher's lived experience online, and their suspicion that by using enforced signups and requesting personal information within websites, media organisations may be discouraging the

majority of their users (especially professionals) from actively engaging on their media websites. Current media organisation website practices prompt users to become selective engagers.

Media organisations need to understand that user privacy is of extreme importance to many of their website users, especially IT and industry professionals. Just as the media organisations are extremely concerned with their reputation and securing their network and information, their website users feel the same. However, users are specifically concerned with exposure to online backlash. As one participant highlighted this concern and identified social media as a way to break and destroy someone online in a matter of seconds (see section 5.5.3.2), users have every right to be concerned for their privacy. If media organisation websites will not guarantee user privacy and online safety, what gives them the right to collect users' private information? Users are concerned about what will be done with this private information. Issues such as invasion of privacy, plus the incidence of defamation of character, have also been supported in a study by Kim, Jeong, Kim & So (2011).

Media organisations need to realise that the creation and use of false identities within their websites, and for that matter within social media networks, is inevitable. As long as social media sites fail to protect their user's privacy, and as long as media organisation websites are not designed effectively to safe-guard their website users, then it is inevitable that users will not reveal their identities. Media organisations should not expect their website visitors to submit to enforced signup forms and allow access websites to their private data or contact lists. Rather than aiming to collect the user's private information, media organisations should focus on securing their websites. They should also remove the enforced signups currently in place on their sites and provide commenting systems that allow website visitors and regular users, their news readers, to submit their comments anonymously.

6.5 EVIDENCE OF DISTRUST IN SOCIAL NETWORKS

Some of the findings related in chapters 4 (section 4.3.2.) confirm findings from Mackenzie's (MacKenzie 2011) study to do with companies' adoption of social media networks. Mackenzie suggested that organisations adopt new technologies as a result of strong external pressures, rather than a clear measure of their likely enhanced business value. This study confirms this approach by media organisations but also extends Mackenzie's finding further by detailing how they're using the technologies to showcase they're ahead with the technological trends to their website users and their media competitors.

Despite being active users of social networking services, the majority of participants in this study who were social media account holders of popular social media such as Facebook and Twitter, revealed they do not trust these virtual spaces. This was particularly evident with technical participants who were well aware of the lack of user privacy within social media (see sections 5.5.2.3 and 5.6.1.11). The finding is not directly supported by any prior literature. It's obvious that users are adopting social media in the same way as companies do; they are adopting new technologies as a result of perceived external pressure. Despite this early adoption practice, users join social networks and create their own private accounts and spaces, but generally do not trust these social spaces. Their perceptions are valid considering the endless password hacking issues the world's largest social media sites experience. The Facebook co-founder's Twitter and Pinterest accounts were compromised after being hacked by a group that calls itself OurMine. This was claimed to be a result of another data leak from another social media networking giant, LinkedIn (Skeels & Grudin 2009).

While some of the active engagers do not mind revealing their identity online, they did have reservations about websites not being clear about what data is being collected on their user activities (see section 5.2.3). Interestingly, one client acknowledged that they recognize that these websites are providing them with free content, and they need to raise revenue for their services. However, this user indicated that websites were missing the "clarity" element for their users, and were not being upfront with their users about what information they were collecting about them.

*" I guess even though I'm aware that when I'm visiting a commercial site, they're going to want to have my data to use to, you know? For a variety of reasons, but partially for targeted advertising, and **I'm aware that's how they're providing me with free content. And I'm ok with consenting to that personally, but I feel like most sites aren't quite open enough about what they do with people's data,** and most people using sites like that... I mean maybe it's a problem on those people's behalf. But I feel like when you're signing up for those things, when you connect your Facebook account, even though it says you're showing your contacts and stuff, **I don't feel like it quite makes it clear enough to people.** " (G2-P2-p#11)*

This finding is also supported by the recommendation made by the European Commission for updating privacy laws to enable citizens to easily delete their own private data, including photos, from the internet (InfoSecurity 2011). In the first major revamp of European privacy law in 15 years, the new recommendations form part of the European Commission's strategy which aims to strengthen the existing European Union data protection rules. The European Commission wants to

force online social media companies to get their users' permission before the social media companies can use the users uploaded content. The strengthened laws ensure tougher penalties for companies and websites that violate them. In an attempt to stop organisations using private data to sell for advertising revenue, the European Commission also wants these online businesses to inform consumers about what information is collected about them, explain their motives for the data collection being undertaken, specify for how long the information is being stored for, and outline what the user's rights are if they want to access, rectify, or delete their data.

Several participants revealed they do not engage on a media website for fear of leaving a digital footprint and being exposed to online trolls (see section 5.5.3.2 ii); website users are increasingly more aware of tracking mechanisms on websites and routinely select other ways of engaging. Social media platforms are seen by participants as platforms that are largely out of their control and known for numerous privacy issues and trolls that normally lurk around commenting threads on any website.

The current media organisations' practices and their implementations of websites prompt website users to become selective engagers, finding other ways to engage to find available news and content on other external platforms. Given users prefer to opt for external engagements through a copy/paste mechanism (see section 5.4.1), it is likely that quality discussions on the media organisation website would be missed out on. As engagement drives a lot of traffic to the site, these organisations are missing out on business value through their enforced sign-up approach.

In some sense, with the current culture, users have more control online than the media organisations. They are able to selectively engage, to choose what information to share, thereby bypassing any website rules through their alternative and preferred methods of communication (e.g. email or on their private social media pages or "walls"). Media organisations need to understand that if they cannot protect their online news readers from the variety of risks they may be exposed to, then they should either build advanced systems that will protect their users in the future, or allow them to engage as guests without enforced sign-up/sign-in processes. Organisations also need to set their systems to provide automatic troll deletion or automatic abusive comment deletions.

This study has identified that the majority of professionals are selective engagers, avoiding revealing their private data and finding alternative ways to engage on official media websites. This study has also identified several possible triggers to encourage website users towards active engagement such

as being part of a community and sharing common grounds. These triggers will be revealed in more detail in the recommendations section in this chapter.

6.6 SOCIAL WIDGETS SLOW DOWN PAGE PERFORMANCE

Technical employees of media organisations in this study from chapter 4 revealed their concern about incorporating third-party JavaScript. They were concerned for two reasons, the changeable nature of third party code and the fact that it slows down website performance.

Load time and responsiveness are very important factors to website users (see section 5.6.1.1) and therefore are a vital consideration when embedding social media (tools and widgets) on media organisation website pages to deliver content and services to users. This study confirms previous case studies which report data on how long before visitors leave the site if it takes too long to load. According to Kissmetrics (Nielsen 2011), a marketing tool used to analyze online customer activity, 47% of website visitors expect a website page to load in less than 2 seconds, with 40 percent of visitors leaving the website if page loading takes longer than 3 seconds.

Incorporating too-many social media options, and large amounts of third party code, drastically reduces the website's load speed, especially if every single social icon, widget or app is pulling external data to be displayed within the media website. If a website has all currently available social media buttons for every single website article, then that website page is calling that social data 20 times.

As an example, an article published by Zurb blog (an interactive blog about web usability) provided a rundown of average load time (**Table 6.1**), with cached and un-cached website pages with embedded social media third party widgets (Zurb Blog 2012):

| Service | Uncached | Cached | Requests |
|-----------------|----------|--------|----------|
| Facebook | 0.91s | 0.8s | 5 |
| Twitter | 0.55s | 0.55s | 5 |
| Google+ | 0.9s | 0.52s | 6 |

Table 6.1: Average load time with cached and un-cached websites with third party embedded widgets

For media organisations, faster load times simply means a better experience for their users, which in turn amplifies the chances for commercial media organisations to convert promotions into revenue (Samuda 2010).

In addition to that, Google and Bing use a websites' load time as an indicator for the website's hierarchical placement in the search engine results (McGee 2010). Faster sites are placed higher in Google results, as Google considers load time as key factor in their website rankings. In simple terms Google wants to list those websites that will provide a better user experience higher in their results and conversely rank sites lower that do not perform as well.

In his book - Usability Engineering, Jacob Nielsen (Nielsen 1993) talks about the delay between a user's action and the application's response and lists 3 important time limits that occur during this process (Nielsen 1993):

0.1 second: *If the application responds instantaneously to the user's actions, it gives an appearance of direct manipulation. It makes the user think that the result was generated by their action and not by the computer. This phenomenon of direct manipulation is a great key to increase user engagement.*

1 second: *If the response interval time is 1 second, the user will notice the small delay and feel like the system is generating the results instead of them, but they will focus more on their train of thought, after which they retain the sense of control a little. A Web page should ideally take one second to load to give the users the feeling that they can navigate freely.*

10 seconds: *By this point, the user has noticed the delay and no longer feels in control. After this period, the users' mind will wander and they will, more often than not, leave the website. If the application takes more than 10 seconds to load, it is important to notify the users (via percent indicators or a progress bar) as to approximately how long they would have to wait. This way they will know what to expect.*
(Nielsen 1993)

Web site performance and user experience expert, Steve Souders (Souders 2010) makes a vital point: performance rules ([YAHOO DEVELOPER CONTENT](#)).

"The key to creating a fast user experience in today's web sites is to render the page as quickly as possible. To achieve this JavaScript loading and execution has to be deferred" Steve Souders - 2010

"The idea is to render the website page first, and then add the JavaScript. A big challenge with this objective is addressing the performance of third party resources" Steve Souders - 2010

With social media demanding and using every day more widgets, plug-ins, badges and buttons, there is an evident lack of knowledge on the part of media organisation website developers about how to ensure that their website buttons, tools, widgets, and the like are as effective and as valuable as possible. Sometimes this means that performance concerns are overlooked, but this can contribute to the problem for media organisation website visitors, due to slow loading webpages. Tagman (Oberoi 2014; Nielsen 2011; Oberoi 2014), a provider for tracking system, worked with Glasses

Direct, who are an online prescription glasses retailer, studying the effects of load speed on consumer conversion. It revealed that every one-second delay caused a corresponding 7% loss in conversions. Basically, no matter how groundbreaking the produced content on a website is, or how many news posts the websites promotes to attract traffic, website users will not keep waiting until the website loads, especially when they can access a competitor's site faster.

Incorporating third party code may drastically reduce the website's load speed, especially if a variety of different icons, widgets or apps in use on a webpage are pulling external data to be displayed within the website page; which could be as much as pulling in the data 20 times. It is relatively simple: reduce the of number of share icons with counters to the social media that is most commonly used, or that have previously given the organisation the best results in, for instance, number of “shares”. The scripts that call the number of times website content was shared can take a lot of time to gather and display that data. If a website has too many social media icons, ensuring they do not all contain post counters as well, is a suggested next step. This is important specifically when the content on official social media pages of media organisations grow and activity on the website increases. **Figure 6.1** displays an example of third-party embedded social media share buttons that contain counter of number of users who shared a website page on each social media page.

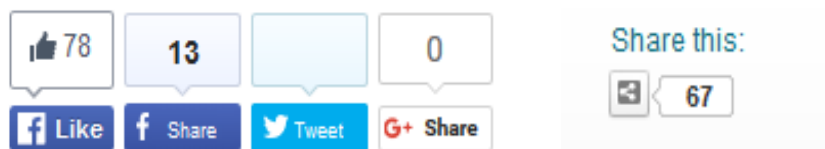


Figure 6.1: Social networking services embedded share widgets with counters

In addition, it is also important to note the importance of mobile-shared content revealed in this study. The optimization of mobile share should also be factored for as it's often not enough for smart devices (i.e. what works on an iPad may not work exactly as on an android tablet; see section 5.6.1.2). Therefore, it is suggested that media organisations implement something faster for both their websites and mobile devices that do not require the inclusion of large amounts of JavaScript to parse, resulting in massive download times. As importing third-party widgets require the inclusion of third-party library codes, it is critical to remember to embed a minified JavaScript library once per page. It is also recommended that the cache is frequently updated as third-party code changes quite often and old cache data may cause anomalies on a website.

6.7 THE CHALLENGES OF A CONSTANTLY CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

As all media organisations in this study are embedding social media into their websites, difficulties came to light in this study due to the perceived benefits in increasing user engagement and audience numbers to the website. Findings from chapter 4 outlined challenges in the lived experience of media employees with third-party embedded tools (see section 4.5). Technical participants in Group 1 (G1) in particular revealed their concern about the constant changes applied to third-party APIs due to previous impact deprecated API had on their websites (see section 4.5.1.4).

In the particular case reported in chapter 4 (section 4.5.1.2), an embedded Facebook widget caused a major network outage that pushed the media organisation to re-evaluate its position on embedding anything from Facebook to terminating its use within their media website. Even though social networking services provide documentation and guidelines on updates, changes and deprecation to their APIs, this is still not sufficient enough to minimize the challenges faced by media organisations. In that particular case, the media organisation suffered a network outage for a half day. It's not difficult to guess the major impact this issue would have had on their website users, especially during peak hours. One would pose the question of the reason it took to fix the issue. Prior research found that this issue may have occurred due to slow adoption of API change by the media organisation, and it could also be explained by the time it takes for technical developers to find solutions to the effects of API changes, by using Q&A systems such as SO (Linares-Vásquez, Mario, et al. 2014).

Another similar study compliments this finding. The findings of Robbes, Lungu and Rotherlisberger (2012) also provide some evidence about the usage of API guidelines. The study presents the impact of depreciated API classes and methods in a *Smalltalk* ecosystem. According to Robbes, deprecation instructions are either non-existent or unclear, or website developers did not to take them on-board. In addition, half of the developers surveyed by Robbes et al. reported that they did not have knowledge about the existence of the guidelines. Sadly, only one of the developers responded that they always followed the guidelines.

This study has confirmed that embedded social media is not what drives clients to media websites, but rather it is the way news content is shared and disseminated within social media that drives traffic. This study has confirmed other studies that traffic drivers are features with social media tools that are made available once an account has been established within a social media network. Such features, such as *NewsFeed*, were discussed by user participants in section 5.7. A social media decision maker needs to re-evaluate the importance of embedded social media tool that deliver the

exact functionality of NewsFeed. For instance, there should be a clear purpose for embedding a live stream of latest news on a website page that's extracting news from a social media page of an organization, a unique purpose that differentiates it to NewsFeed. While there may well be the possibility of promotion, embedding any third-party can introduce complications at the same time. It is necessary to understand the scope of what is intended here: is it the display of all news stream posted on the official social media page of the organization so that website visitors click-through to more stories or to just promote the social media page in general to gain more follows? This way, the intended goal is achieved and unnecessary duplication of tools that deliver the same feature and introduce their own unforeseen behavior is eliminated.

The importance of certain widget embeds can be justified for news organisations as the findings revealed that they were beneficial for both the organisations and website users. For instance, both groups of participants validated the importance of live conversations for breaking types of news (see 4.4.2 and 5.7). However, it is worth mentioning that although live stream of news is good for displaying the ongoing hype of the conversation happening during a breaking news event from within embedded social media (such as Twitter timeline, Storify and ScribbleLive) there are also challenges accompanying the use of these social media tools. They have to be implemented using their own specific conditions in order for them to function efficiently within the website. For instance, a Twitter timeline widget filters related conversations for an event using relevant hashtags, and the same conversation can be taken into Storify and ScribbleLive embeds. An important strategy here is a way to monitor which website pages contain these types of widgets. That way, if any unforeseen API or code changes occur, it will be easily removable from the website without being detrimental to the website or the viewer experience.

As the findings from the viewer interviews confirmed (in chapter 5), this study along with prior studies verified that features within social networking services such as NewsFeed were the main traffic drivers to media organisation websites. Therefore, there is little justification for embedding social media on media organisation websites if it means it's going to bring both technical challenges to the website and business challenges to the organisation unnecessarily. As mentioned in section 6.6, the most vital element of the website is its performance, its content and layout, and not the embedded social media. It can be argued that if there was no definitive value for embedding a particular social media within the organisations websites, then there doesn't seem to be a logical explanation to exposing the website to unnecessary vulnerabilities.

6.8 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT FOR MODERATION

Comments moderation concerns raised by media organisations employees shown earlier in chapter 4 (see section 4.5.2.2) was well aligned with their perception of impact on the users experience from chapter 5. In chapter 5, participants reported that they experience a low quality of comments on websites in general, and that this discouraged them from engaging in online discussions. They refrained from contributing comments in website article pages that contained offensive language. Some participants even admitted they stopped engaging as they felt it was a waste of their time (see section 5.5.3.2 i).

There are two fundamental types of negative comments: comments that are made by individuals who invite constructive and useful discussions or initiate concrete suggestions, and comments made by individuals known as "trolls" (Dekay 2011). Trolls are individuals who provide comments that do not invite genuine discussions, or feedback, between the poster and the sponsoring organisation (Baird, 2011, Kiesow, 2010). For instance, the comment "You're an idiot!" is usually not given to promote constructive interaction with the company, nor intended to resolve a specific issue. Responding to this type of comment serves no useful purpose.

This area may be problematic, as media organisations are allocating considerable resources into moderating online comments. Therefore, they have established editorial policies to ensure their corporate websites and their official social media pages are moderated heavily to ensure malicious vilifications and trolls are eliminated (see section 4.6.2) (Dekay 2011; Baird, 2011; Kiesow, 2010).

"The biggest business challenges comes to mind is moderation." (G1-P5-p#4)

Despite this allocation of resources into the removal of malicious user-generated comments, the website users' likely engagement is being discouraged, and they remain guarded regarding submitting their comments.

While the majority of media organisations were challenged with content moderation, one media organisation explained their use of a content management system with different features to control their client's comments. One participant, an employee of a media organisation, detailed their content management system with full moderation control settings that allow submitted content to be filtered in through from different social media networking websites.

"so their advantages its fairly a controlled environment you can set it to post-moderated, or pre-moderated...so you check comments before you publish them. Whereas FB and twitter, so your externals they're more its open slobber. So sure you can post-moderate, you can hide, you can delete comments on Facebook, you can delete a photo. And Twitter live in action you have some ability to re-tweet if you want to see comments come up on your pages, so I think there is pros and cons between the both of them, certainly if you're going to play it really really safe and you had very low resource levels then you would just stick with your internal...with what you can control " (G1-P4-p#13)

The majority of participants in this study (who were industry professionals and academics) preferred comments to be content moderated, on both media websites and any social media. There was one outlier participant however, who stated that they wanted their comments never to be moderated, even if it included inappropriate and derogatory comments. This participant came from a poor educational background and was unemployed. This outlier wanted un-moderated aggressive comments to take place, since to them it was a form of 'freedom of speech'. Permitting aggressive language online may constitute freedom of speech for some participants, but not with the majority of participants. There is no such thing as an aggressive discussion. However, in being sensitive with their moderation controls, media organisations may be missing out on valuable insights and discussions. Freedom of speech is having the ability to state one's thoughts and opinions without using derogatory language that puts other users off from discussions. It is evident that there is a large hidden population of qualified professionals surfing the World Wide Web who have an adequate understanding of social media that aren't given the opportunity to engage on websites and provide their valuable insights and opinions on news. Thoughtful discussions, where we share ideas and listen to opposing opinions may assist everyone towards achieving a better understanding of news and current affair issues. In order to get more user engagement from their clients, media organisations should try and provide safe virtual spaces and establish online communities for website visitors to engage in thoughtful discussions. This does need to be done, however, in an environment that is free from online trolls and potential bullying.

While this study has found that offensive language is one of the biggest challenges for both media organisations and their users, this study may also hint that both educational levels and a user's profession may have an impact on their behaviour, not just offline, but also online (see section 5.8). This may translate to aggressive behaviour not only in real life but also online and this may impact on the likely engagement of professional users. Hence, it is vital to ensure that there are ways of

dealing with inappropriate user submitted content and ensuring the organisation's website systems have sufficient moderation processes.

In addition, one important point was revealed during this study that media organisation's focus may be set more on increasing audience visits by any means possible. They do not seem to be focused on increasing web safety, keeping trolls at bay and unlocking the way for their website users to engage without the sense of privacy loss. It remains essential to allow reasonable individuals and educated professionals the space to engage within media websites without any enforced signup tactics. A study by Jonhonen, Jussila and Kärkkäinen showcased where companies' customers were involved in generating new ideas for new products, co-creating them with the companies, testing the finished products and providing the end user product support (Kärkkäinen, Jussila, and Janhonen 2011). The same principle can be applied with media organisations with new story ideas generated by simply interacting with their clients:

*"Ah it[**Twitter**]'s fantastic, it's another way of communicating with your audience in terms of getting information out there and getting feedback from your audience. **Twitter** followers can spread the word of what you're doing on the program plus you can get story ideas from your **Twitter** followers as well in comments and observations that they make. Certainly about stories that you're already doing you can take it in another direction or completely new stories" (G1-P13-p#2)*

The idea of allowing clients to easily communicate with the media organisation without any enforced sign-up process will both encourage online engagement and drive better content quality. Yet several clients who acknowledged they steered clear from online engagement preferring anonymity and opposed enforced signups claimed they believed that anonymous commenting could trigger offensive language.

***"People just aren't directly held accountable for what they say on there, so there's a lot of not just controversial statements, because I'm fine with that, but either thoughtless or just offensive statements that I don't feel are worth my time."** (G2-P2-p#5)*

"They both [anonymous and non-anonymous commenting] have their own problems. If it's totally non-anonymous, then that means I have to be careful about what I say, because that can be tied back to me in the future, and it's very hard to delete things once you've made the

*comment. **While on the other extreme, if it's totally anonymous, then you've just got a whole lot of people who say ridiculous things because they know they're not going to be tied back to the statements.** " (G2-P7-p#6)*

***"Although anonymous commenting is a bad thing as well, because it just makes the trolls and offensive ones even worse when they're totally anonymous."** (G2-P9-p#5)*

*"I'd rather people know who it was saying that, because I mean, I wouldn't be commenting if I thought my opinion wasn't worthy of being notable. Does that make sense? And also, **I think with anonymous commenting, people just feel as though it's ok to say anything.** And that even comes down to, like, downgrading another person. Saying things that are obviously offensive to that person, and what not. **So it takes away a bit of social responsibility from a person, for it to be anonymous**" (G2-P13-p#5)*

From this discussion, it is logical to conclude that media organisations need to focus on three things to increase user engagement on their websites: allow anonymous commenting on their websites with built-in troll detection, continue with some comment moderation mechanisms, and establish online communities. As this study confirmed that even the most private people are drawn to an online community, preferring engagement in a safe virtual space.

6.9 USE OF PLUG-INS AND TOOLS TO IMPROVE USER EXPERIENCE

It is evident that there was a great deal of resistance by users to the rules imposed on them by media organisations websites or the dysfunctions of embedded social media (see sections 5.6.1.6 and 4.6.1.7). This was especially evident with the professional type of users. This type of resistance prompted users to rely on other tools and plug-ins to perform certain functions or protect their privacy online. Resistance to change has been explored throughout multiple studies. Previous literature hypothesized that "Resistance can be as an outcome, a process, and a motivation" (Knowles and Linn 2004; Tormala and Petty 2004). Brehm's psychological Reactance Theory further suggested that individuals, when they perceive that their personal freedoms are threatened, are driven to resist change (Brehm 1966). Resistance was used to define the motivation to pushback unwelcome influence or protect the status quo. Knowles and Linn identified four different but possibly related components of motivational desire for resistance, including distrust, reactance, scrutiny, and inertia (Knowles and Linn 2004; Tormala and Petty 2004).

Several participants revealed their irritation with advertising within the embedded social media tools (see section 5.6.2.1). These irritations were specifically of pay-walls and advertising within YouTube videos. When Facebook launched auto play ads on its NewsFeed system, in less than 24 hours Web users started searching for ways to block these "annoying ads" (Peckham 2013). Further, AdBlocker was observed to be used frequently in eliminating advertising elements within websites and embedded videos such as YouTube. On the other hand, social plug-ins were used as an alternative to poor performing social widgets. A good example of the later was the Chrome PinInterest plug-in that was used by several participants in pinning/picking specific images within a website page as an alternative mechanism to "PinIt" social button embedded within a media website.

It is evident that the majority of participants, technical and non-technical, resisted advertising by either turning off from the media website and selecting other sources to access the same information or turning to the use of plug-ins such as ad blockers to eliminate this advertising from their experience. This finding is well aligned with research by Cho and Cheon who researched ad avoidance on the Internet finding that the perceived goal impediment, all the prior negative experiences, and the perceived ad clutter that ensued, can lead consumers to avoid all advertising on the Internet (Cho and Cheon 2004). This study confirms and validates this research further.

In this study, plug-ins were seen as the common method to perform two main duties: to eliminate unwanted elements within websites and social media services or as a method to perform certain functionalities that is of importance to the user (see section 5.6.1.7). Virtually, all advertising rights have some level of skepticism simply because consumers realize that advertisers have specific objectives, such as influencing consumers to sell products (Mangleburg and Bristol 1998). According to the Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM; Friestad and Wright 1994), over time consumers have developed beliefs about the different methods and techniques advertisers use (e.g. advertising and other promotional programs) attempting to persuade or influence their thinking, and hence consumers have become more cynical of their tactics. Individuals are likely to become cautious and protective when confronted with a proposal, offer, or message to change because they know already that the advertising is intentionally persuasive hoping to bias their thinking.

The advanced development of information-processing technologies, such as detecting users' browsing habits, has enabled companies and advertisers in general to move the focus from traditional mass advertising to instead distribute personalized advertising messages that are tailored to individual preferences; preferences they have garnered from the browsing habits of the user. This

very personalized advertising however raises concerns in relation to privacy invasion, as marketers have obviously depended on consumer databases for developing these more relevant and targeted messages that are based on the users' online activities and browsing habits. Given such privacy concerns, personalized advertising may lead to negative responses to any form of advertising, and that usually will lead to ad avoidance. Consumers have for some time used various ad avoidance tools, such as filtering their e-mail, subscribing to do-not-call, do-not-mail, or do-not track programs, or more recently simply using tools that are blocking online advertisements. Although this study has focused on Australian media and participants, prior research in other countries indicates some similar behavioural patterns. A survey by Forrester Research estimated that more than half of all American households already used ad-blocking technologies such as spam filters to avoid undesirable advertising or similar messages through e-mail (Forrester Research 2006). Mozilla (2011) reported that Adblock Plus (part of the Firefox Browser package), was used by approximately 13 million people (Baek and Morimoto 2012; Mozilla 2011).

Brehm's "Reactance" theory visited earlier offers a broader understanding of why people resist unwelcome advertising persuasion (Brehm 1966; Brehm and Brehm 1981). This theory hypothesizes that *"whenever people perceive that a free behaviour is restricted or eliminated, they have a tendency to experience reactance and are motivated to modify their attitudes and behaviours to reaffirm their freedom and autonomy"* (Brehm and Brehm 1981, page 1 -7). Brehm's hypothesis is further confirmed in this study as users are selecting their engagement patterns, and modifying their ways of sharing news off media websites, not through the website's share mechanisms but their own personal methods with the use of plug-ins or relying on traditional method such as email or simple copy/paste mechanism of content or URL links onto their social spaces.

A research by Edwards, Li, and Lee used psychological reactance theory in an effort to understand the negative responses being felt towards pop-up ads. Their results indicated that ad intrusiveness was triggered by forced ad exposure, which in turn leads to advertising avoidance (Edwards, Li, and Lee 2002). Personalized, browsing history targeted advertising campaigns may end up in consumer reactance in regard to advertising avoidance; ads that contain too much personal information such as online user activities frighten consumers and particularly threaten their perceived ability to avoid being monitored by the companies (White et al. 2008).

Existing literature indicate that when it comes to the issue of privacy invasion, highly personalized ad messages that have obviously used browsing history without doubt raise customer concerns about

their privacy and their lack of control of the use of their private data; their personal information is being abused (Okazaki, Li, and Hirose 2009). Taking this prior literature into an account for the current study, if ad messages on the media websites are perceived as too personally targeted, then users are likely to experience a reactance state. In simple terms users suspect that their rights, their free choice to control their private data is under threat and may have been taken-over by unknown advertisers or third parties

Therefore, it's vital to realize that there are elements that disrupt user experiences online; and pop-up ads are a major reason. Pop-up ads that disrupt the reading experience are annoying to website visitors. The worst ads are the ones that appear in the middle of a user's screen while they're reading content. A pop-up may get a website some new email subscribers, but is that really worth all the lost traffic when website users and visitors abandon a website in annoyance and retreat to other competitor websites; maybe even to never return?

For commercial media organisations, advertising is a major source of revenue. so it's understandable to populate their websites with ads. Nonetheless, ads do not have to be disruptive to an online visitor but could be cleverly programmed. For instance, rather than pop-up ads, slide-in CTAs (Call-To-Action) on the side of the page, or exit pop-up ads could be used; ads that appear when a user is leaving the page so it doesn't show up when a user is still in the middle of reading content. Other alternative ads could be programmed in a smart means that only show up for users not already in your database or people that have recently seen an exit pop-up and decided not to switch (**Figure 6.2**).

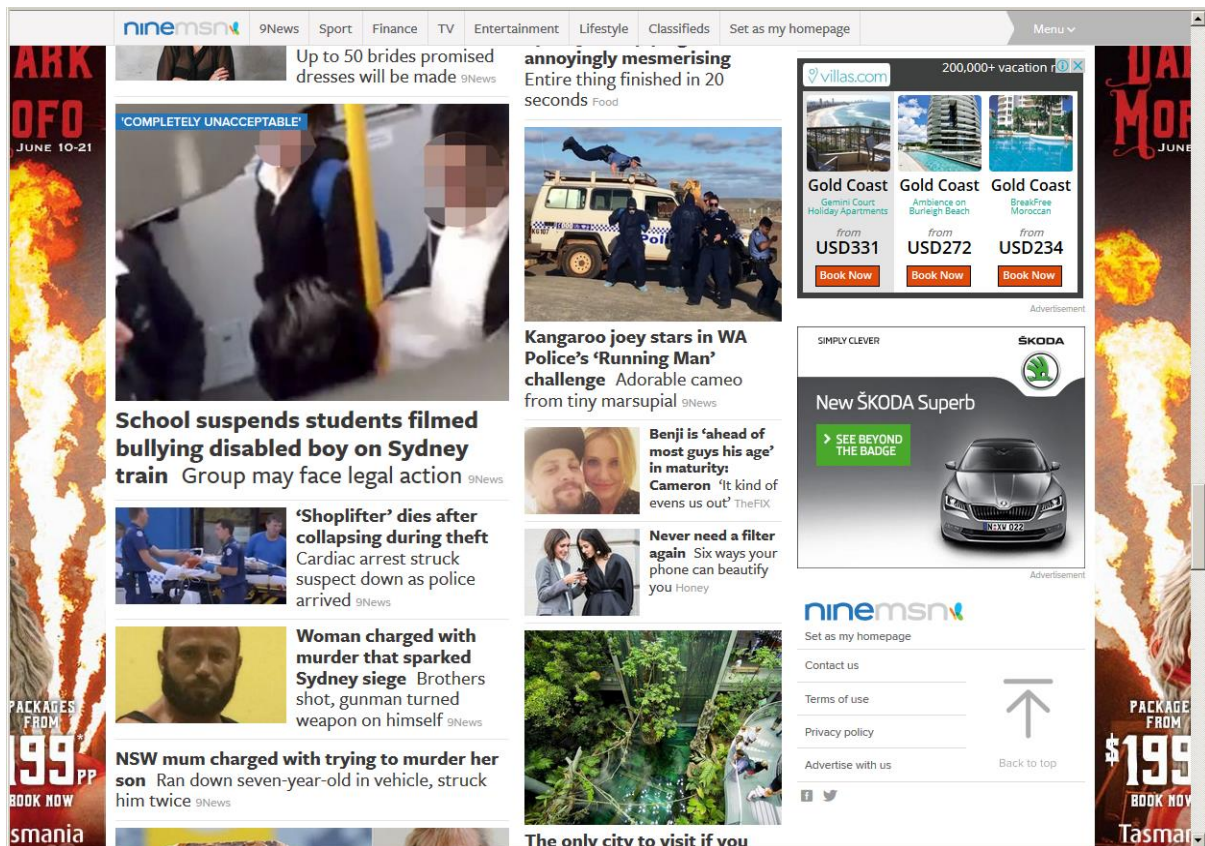


Figure 6.2: A website page that contains cleverly programmed ads positioned on the right panel. It's clear from this that the website visitor had a regular habit of checking regular holiday spots and searching for car deals.

6.10 DRIVERS TO MEDIA WEBSITES

As this study's findings revealed in chapter 5, it is noteworthy that the majority of embedded social media within websites aren't as widely used by website users and bring little active engagement to organisations' websites, but the features already available within social networking services do. Media organisations should have a thorough understanding of each social networking site they're using to distribute their content to their website users. This study has confirmed previous studies' findings that two methods are clear traffic drivers to websites, but it has also identified a third previously unidentified driver. The first two drivers confirmed in this study are the NewsFeed facility and being part of a community. The third driver identified in this study is embedded social media widgets that function as accumulators of favoured content such as website links and media elements. Understanding what drives most traffic to a website is vital as media organisations can drive the development of social networking websites and enhance those particular features.

6.10.1 NEWSFEED OF SOCIAL PLATFORMS

Any NewsFeed facility and updates within social media sites, such as Facebook NewsFeed and Reddit NewsFeed, are huge traffic drivers to media websites. This study has confirmed this finding (see

section 5.7). This finding has been validated by Lipsman study that outlined key findings of Facebook NewsFeed (Lipsman, Mudd, Rich, and Bruich 2012). The study examined the feature within the Facebook "Like" feature, which demonstrated the reach and frequency of branded-content on Facebook. The NewsFeed was found to be the primary location where branded content was being consumed. Lipsman found that users are 40 to 150 times more likely to consume branded content in the NewsFeed than to visit the Fan Page itself.

Every social media service has its own NewsFeed facility. Facebook has Facebook NewsFeed that appears in a user's profile homepage. Reddit is itself a Bulletin Board system that allows its users to determine importance of content by rating it. PinTerest provides Pin Feed with a collection of users' personalised items. Twitter sends latest tweets to its users via email. Media organisations should utilise this functionality further and ensure they are personalising their content for each social networking service. For example, headlines should be tailored suitably for each social platform. The same headline of a news story that appears in Facebook and Reddit may not appear on Twitter in the same length since Twitter has character limitations. Therefore, headlines should sum up an article for instance with consideration to how it will appear in the social platform's NewsFeed.

6.10.2 BEING PART OF A COMMUNITY

Many participants indicated that being part of a community can be encouraging, as they felt that when they are part of a community, then their opinion matters and may be more worthy (see section 5.5.2.1). Giving website visitors a sense of belonging to a community has been proven to encourage more engagement. This finding confirms Sammon's study (Sammons 2011), who found that communities are built upon common interests and issues, creating a bond with others online that previously may not have occurred due to geographical limitations. These communities developed as a result of social media that were previously limited by available traditional media. Giving the media organisations users an online community should provide the users opportunities to shape their own experiences using their thoughts and ideas. It is recommended, therefore, that media organisations develop online communities that their website users can join, thereby sharing their ideas and interests. Only then, can media organisations give true meaning to online engagement and open the pathways for all types of users including professionals, academics, or anyone in the general public, to contribute their insights and ideas.

6.10.3 SOCIAL MEDIA WIDGETS THAT ACCUMULATE AND STORE MEDIA

Findings from the second group of participants discussed in the useful tools and features section (see sections 5.7.5 and 5.7.6) demonstrated that share tools of social media networking services that accumulate website links, articles or media elements such as images, audio or video were used frequently by all types of users. This finding is logical as it is safe to assume that collecting information interesting to users isn't seen by them as performing a risky engagement compared to engaging online with other users, nor does it expose them to online bullying. For example, social widgets such as Pinterest's "Pin It" button is used to "Pin" images to user profiles with a click of a button. Scoop.it users have preferences to using Plug-ins such as "Scoop.it" extension for Chrome browser in the navigation bar.

Given these preferences, it is recommended that media organisation websites are designed and implemented with social widgets that extract correct and accurate parameters of article headlines, a concise summary of the article, and a suitable image size for each social platform. For instance, Facebook uses 851px by 315px for their official Facebook brand image and 480px by 360px or 472x394px for their posts, Twitter uses maximum height of 375px and maximum width of 435px for web and maximum height of 375px, maximum width of 280px for their posts, Instagram uses 1080px by 1080px but it gets scaled down by 640px. In other words, developers who implement social media widgets on media organisation websites need to recognise the importance of the accurate display of media elements on social platforms so that it enhances each articles' appearance and provides a good professional visual representations of the article. This minimizes the need for users to download and rely on third-party social media plug-ins to perform precise functions. This, in turn, encourages more user engagement within the media website.

6.10.4 SUMMARY

From the discussion in this section, it is evident that several factors play a role in improving online experience for news readers. Although some of these elements are psychological, but there is a hint that these are and can be triggered by the technology itself. The activity of a user may seem to be important for media organisations, however their private information isn't of any benefit to the organisation. In fact, user sharing behaviour depended on the ability for them to selectively engage, often controlling their information via a copy/paste mechanism. It could be further argued that user engagement through commenting threads depended on the user ensuring they're not being identified online for fear of exposure to trolls. Most of the challenging elements external users faced and complained about were to do with external elements such as poor share widgets; and the majority of participants stated that they did not even use them. Some widgets such as twitter

timeline widgets were considered by media organisation website users to be 'nice to have' but definitely weren't what drove them to the website. There is a general trend of whatever technology that comes up that tracks user information and activities online or tailors commercial ads, new tools will also emerge to counter them. Therefore, it is vital to ensure media organisations smooth the online experience for news readers by considering those factors.

6.11 SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

The findings in this study highlighted the issues that could arise when organisations do not have comprehensive social media policies, or only have policies that simply cover editorial content. Media organisations need formalised and clear IT security and social media policies that are plainly defined and consistently reinforced. A study by Warren, Leitch and Senadheera have previously identified that an organisations business strategy need to include an IT policy that also ensure effective use of social media (Senadheera, Warren et al. 2011). Another IT security study by Cosoi ascertained the need for an IT based social media policy that is tailored with a focus on social e-threats (Cosoi 2011). This study confirms these findings and clearly demonstrates the need for increased security measures. Media organisations need to act more secure and implement social media policies that both exemplify and enforce their views of social media usage.

A Social Media Policy should outline how employee education and training is to be implemented to ensure the safe incorporation of social media tools. This includes keeping an eye on the healthy usage of social media tools to ensure they are used in conjunction with the organisations' online strategy and to ensure each tool is meeting the identified business purpose/needs, and that they have not just been embedded without a defined purpose. In the section below, recommendations on what media organisations need on their social media policies are detailed. Implementing social media policies and adhering to them will ensure media organisations utilise their social media tools effectively and use these platforms safely without being detrimental experiences to their website users.

Chapter 4 revealed that all media organisations had a social media policy that contained editorial guidelines on the use of social media. However, none of the organisations had a technical policy which outlined ways for the efficient use of social media, nor had they articulated any best practices for developers implementing the incorporation of third party tools within websites. In the next section, recommendations are suggested for social media policy development and implementation, as well as technical implementation recommendations to overcome the challenges identified in this

study, both by the website users and the media organisations employees. These recommendations are remedies for the challenges identified in data collection phases from both group 1 and group 2 participants in chapters 4 and 5.

6.12 RECOMMENDATIONS ARISING FROM THIS STUDY

Establishing guidelines is a process of outlining a controlled solution that meets all of the operational and technical requirements, while improving quality features such as performance, security and manageability. It involves a series of decisions taking into account a wide variety of matters and problems. This section aims to raise awareness of the common challenges organisational websites go through and suggest best practices that could be implemented to both lessen the negative impact and push forward the benefits of embedded social media tools. The recommendations and suggestions here are based on the challenges found in the experience of employees of media organisations from Group 1 (G1) and the lived experience of website users/visitors from Group 2 (G2). This section takes into consideration both technical and business challenges of external social media platforms and tools, presenting safety precautions and good business practices side by side with technical recommendations to secure media organisations web applications (i.e. websites) and their networks.

Recommendation 1: Appoint social media coordinator/s

Organisations should appoint social media coordinators, as identified staff whose role is to specifically deal with all aspects of social media use in the organisation. The wide variety and consistency of unexpected challenges arising for using social media in an organisation requires full-time attention. In this study, organisations who appointed social media coordinators handled arising social media challenges better than organisations where they left content producers, e.g. journalists, to deal with these challenges alone. Social media coordinators should have a high level of social media expertise and be expected to maintain this expertise by being current with the latest trends in social media. This policy should include Social Media Coordinators maintaining tasks from recommendations 2 to 9 below.

Recommendation 2: Password list audit process

Establishing audits on social media accounts can guarantee that all social profiles of an organisation remain secure. Media organisations should keep an authority file of all social media accounts, and

the staff that have access to these accounts, for each department. It is also recommended that password change rotation is consistent to ensure employees who have left the organisation no longer have access to any of the social media accounts that belongs to the organisation.



Figure 6.3: An ex-employee of a media organisation revealed that they still had access to the organisation's official Facebook page after leaving the organisation.

Recommendation 3: Plan for alternative social media platforms to release emergency information.

As emergency content release is one of the top priorities for a media organisation, a backup plan should be initiated for their content distribution. For instance, Facebook has been known to be problematic when used inside an internal organisation's network (see section 4.6.1.2). If one social platform is running slow, the organisation should have a viable alternative platform for their content to switch to for online users to receive news, and especially emergency broadcasts.

Recommendation 4: Plan for releasing content on suitable social media services depending on the type of media element contained within it

Media organisations should plan which platforms are best suited for the different types of multimedia files they are required to use (such as photos, videos, and audio). It's always good practice to provide the best way for audience to get the source of information without any hassles. For example, if an article with an audio content is posted on Twitter, an audio file link could be embedded from/linked to SoundCloud (see Figure 4.8).

Recommendation 5: Introduce a method to garner user feedback.

Reddit's user-rated content has proven to be a popular method that could be adopted for websites. News readers trust the general public's content quality as they believe it's genuine and not pushed by the organisations. Therefore, it is recommended that media organisations introduce a method to garner audience feedback. Most media organisations should survey or actively seek feedback from their website users on their incorporation of social platforms and their tools. Website user feedback should be gathered to test the value of external tools in use, or being considered for future use, on the organisations website ahead of implementing any.

Recommendation 6: Invest in staff training

Any organisation using social media platforms must cater for each platform's limitations. Training of staff, both technical and non-technical staff, is vital to combat social media challenges, but also to ensure organisations provide content in the best possible way. For instance, in section chapter 4 (see sections 4.5.1.6 and 4.5.1.8) the importance of summing up headlines in twitter's 140-character limit platform was demonstrated. This skill requires editorial training and an understanding of how Twitter social language is evolving. Therefore, it is highly recommended to train staff in appropriate social language of each social network so that article promotions by journalists appear professional and do not simply convey a headline.

Recommendation 7: Media organisations should centralise their content moderation.

Content moderation of user comments is a challenge for any media organisation. It is recommended that best practice for this would be to establish a shared internal message board platform available across the organisation, with one team responsible for it. Technically, if any issues are detected, it can be fixed in a central point and applied across the entire organisations website. Business wise, one central team responsible for moderation would be quicker and reduce the likelihood of items flying under the radar. This team should also create sign up procedures for users who do not want to use external social media platforms, so that they may engage in online information exchange in a community environment. The use of social services such as SocialOomph, HootSuite, ScribbleLive and Tweetdeck may also ease monitoring user comments and content moderation as they can be setup to accumulate posts from several social media networks into one view.

Recommendation 8: Ensure communication between technical and business employees.

Social media coordinators should look for synergies with technical developers to ensure they initiate a communication channel with content creators for them to consider existing organisational security measures. Content makers in the organisations who use the embedded social media, code, tools, widgets and the like, within their content (such as the popular twitter timeline widget or Facebook "Like" Box) should receive training from technical developers to understand security issues with these embeds and plan ahead of any changes.

Recommendation 9: Media organisations should create and maintain a social media security policy.

Organisations that want to utilise the social media tools in an efficient and safe manner must ensure they are carefully considering the risks involved and taking the necessary actions to protect themselves from possible social media threats. It is important to include certain guidelines as part of their online strategy to safeguard their website from threats that may be imported through social media networks and their use of the embedded tools and widgets without impacting on their user's experience.

Recommendation 10: Media organisations should keep up-to-date with changes social networking services plan to apply to their tools and features and plan ahead for smooth transition

Most social media platforms provide updates, dates, and times of deprecation of APIs or features. Media organisations should keep track of these changes, to accommodate for them before they take effect. This will secure the media organisations website from unusual third-party code, reducing the likelihood of attacks, and alleviating the extent of damage should an attack or an API change occur.

Recommendation 11: Third party social media (tools, widgets and their platforms) that are known for their privacy and security issues should not be embedded within websites

The quality of a social media platform comes with its reliability and ability to protect any account holder's private information. Any social media platform that has a history of security and privacy issues should not be imported into a media organisations website as it leaves the website vulnerable to security invasion. The simple logic behind this practice is to not popularise features and tools of

insecure platforms so that improvements to the tools and platforms are seriously considered by the social networks. In this way the organisation can push for their deprecation and for new versions of the specific social media in question to be enhanced. This is not to say that a popular social platform may not be utilized just because its features aren't reliable and not used. This is for the users of that social platform to decide. It is however highly recommended to keep the engagement external to the media organisation's website (within the social platform) only. This recommendation is a solution to technical challenges described in chapter 4 (see section 4.5.1.3).

Recommendation 12: Extra caution must be taken with audience submitted content

Safety precautions must be taken with user-submitted content to ensure that they are of a valid timestamp and format. If any submitted content is to be used, the content creation date signature should be examined before usage. This recommendation is to resolve issues similar to the example given in section 4.5.2.3, where a Blue moon event picture proved to be not from the current blue moon event.

Recommendation 13: Safe implementation of social media third-party code without impacting on page load speed

It is recommended when embedding social media third party code to include a simple link in a share button hyperlink and pass the values as parameters in the URL link to the social media service.

```
<a href="http://twitter.com/home?status=STATUS" title="Click to share this post on Twitter">Share on Twitter</a>
```

```
<a href="https://m.google.com/app/plus/x/?v=compose&content=CONTENT">Image or text</a>
```

This step may require users to load a second screen to take action, but it will create a faster and friendlier experience for the majority of users on any platform. For instance, a proper website implementation should allow for website visitors to see content before any third-party widgets. The implementation suggested in this recommendation is accompanied with testing a website page load speed. For instance, Google provides a webmaster tool "PageSpeed Insights" (Wagner 2015). This tool makes it possible for a website developer to see what Google sees in website speed analysis.

Another tool that is useful is Google Webmaster Tools (Simon Heseltine 2014). This tool contains a feature called "site performance" report under the Labs section of the tool (Schwartz 2009). The site

performance report displays a site's load speed compared to other sites. It also provides examples of specific pages with their load time and tips on improving the pages.

Recommendation 14: Establish live content workflow.

When covering a live event through social media, particularly at present the Twitter platform for live news feed hashtags should be provided to reporters (see section 4.5.1.6). When a reporter is notified to cover an event and Tweet live, if hashtags are provided to them and a Twitter widget created that uses that specific hashtag, then any content will be filtered that is specific to that event. The same process concept should apply to other social media platforms to ensure accurate and relevant content filtering.

Recommendation 15: Design the organisation websites for access by both desktop and smartphones or mobile devices

More people are accessing news through a greater number of smartphones or mobile devices, such as iPhones, Androids, iPads and tablets. Most media organisations have designed their website to default to mobile sites if accessed through mobile devices. Some participants noted that they do not like this, and prefer the full website view not wanting to be forced into a certain layout (see section 5.6.1.3). It is suggested that users should be given the option to go back to the main website with a full view. With advanced mobile devices, people can use zoom functionality if they wish to look at more news with a clear view. This can only be beneficial for the media organisation, as more news availability means higher chance of users sharing/engaging and thus driving further traffic to the site. This recommendation is a proactive approach to deal with user challenges in chapter 5 (see section 6.1)

Recommendation 16: Introduce and maintain a thorough test trial phase for new social media tool rollouts

Thorough testing trial phase should be staged on an environment similar to production environment to ensure any new social media applications and widgets are functioning and behaving as expected. A third party social app should be tested with different parameters to ensure they will behave the same from a development to production environment. Social media widgets are unpredictable and changes to their APIs can apply by the services that own them. This could result in unwelcome

changes to the tools embedded within the organisation website. This suggestion is vital to counter challenges such as Facebook Chat stated in chapter 4 (see section 4.5.2.1).

Recommendation 17: Create and maintain an index list of pages with social or any third-party widgets

Constant API changes to social media, their third-party social widgets and apps are anticipated. Although some changes could be an improvement on their current state, other changes can be seen as unwelcome. Therefore, media organisations should keep a list of page URLs that contain medium to large embedded social media widgets and put a process in place to disconnect those pages from widget library sources if they display signs of unpredictable behavior. The revelation of the technical employees of media organisations of constant API changes confirms the necessity to identify what pages of the websites contain embedded third-party social widgets and keep an indexed list of them. This way, if an unwelcome API change was applied to the third-party code, it would be easy to disconnect or remove the code from those identified news pages. This recommendation was developed based on a technical participant's indication that their content management system can search for pages that contain Twitter embeds and can centrally modify their article templates to remove any unwelcome third-party code. This recommendation is to eliminate challenges mentioned in chapter 4 section 4.5.1.4.

Recommendation 18: Counter-act against social media limitations

Despite their benefits, social media widgets and tools have limitations that were revealed in chapter 4 in this study (see section 4.5.1.6). They may need extra optimization and customization to perform extra functions that eases the user experience. For instance, Twitter has character limitations of 140, thus links in a text may take most of the available space. If the Twitter share tool is available on a website page, automatic shortening of the links is an added benefit. This was supported by a user that resorted to using third-party tools (bitly) to shorten links. Embedded share mechanisms should automatically shorten links. This recommendation was developed to counter challenges mentioned in section 5.6.1.6.

Recommendation 19: Provide commenting threads within a website as well as on social media pages

The majority of users in this study indicated they do not engage on media organisation websites due to the privacy and possibility of exposure to online bullying and trolls. Therefore, it is recommended that organisations use an internal commenting system that allows their users to engage with the website without relying only on external social media platforms. Enabling users to comment as a "Guest" or through the Disqus commenting system would be very valuable (See **Appendix C - 1**). This recommendation was developed based on section 5.5.3.2.1.

Recommendation 20: Create commenting threads that are built with automatic troll detection and deletion

Media organisations should create mechanisms for troll deletion. Trolling is a common issue almost every participating organisation in this study has come across (see sections 5.5.3.2 ii and iii). It consumes both time and resources. Sometimes it's either left too late to eliminate from the website or not enough human resources are available to remove them. Therefore, creating an in-house monitoring and deletion tools is a good way to maintain external social media pages. A troll deletion system could be developed by parsing submitted user content. For instance, any words a media organisation wants to exclude from its own commenting threads could be stored within a database that is easily updated. The troll detection system can work by either flushing out any abusive words through text matching mechanism or banning the offending comments altogether. Monitoring tools could queue user comments for later approval or automatically ban any comments with symbolic characters in-between a word, list of aggressive words detected in a comment, or limit the amount of comments from the same source that flow within minutes. Further, commenting systems should be resilient to attacks and SQL injections and comment submission and not be allowed from a single point for a period of time. This recommendation is suggested based on the findings in section 5.5.3.2 (iii) where several participants indicated their fear of being exposed to a backlash from other online engagers.

Recommendation 21: Media organisations should implement social media meta-data and meta-tags within websites pages accurately

As external sharing on social media platforms is very popular and consistent among website users, it is highly recommended to ensure website pages contain valid code implementation of Twitter Cards, Facebook Open Graphs, Schema mark-ups for Google Plus, Rich Pins for Pinterest. This is to ensure content's headline, image, author and reference source display match the one on the website page.

With the implementation of meta-tags for every social platform a media organisation has established a presence on, one can save time and effort in the promotion of articles and website pages. Rather than manually inputting all the required elements for a story on a social post, all the elements such as headline, image, author and direct link to the direct article will be presented by simply copy and paste. This could also mean that one can post several articles in a matter of minutes than posting 1 article that could take triple the time if it was done manually.

Recommendation 22: Make images easily shareable by embedded social media

Some data gathered in this study gave obvious hints that users are inclined to use embedded social media tools that are to do with accumulating images and photos on web pages. In fact, several users claimed they do not use the social sharing tool if it does not function well within a website. For instance, if a "Pin It" share tool is embedded within an article image, it should be implemented to extract the size of the image that is *pin-able* on Pinterest social platform. In other words, with social networking websites, the share tool has to be coded to extract the image size that fits well within the social network's wall. This recommendation is to increase engagement on external social media networking services and plays a crucial role as it features the media organisations website article better on external social media platforms for users.

Recommendation 23: Ensure email shared content does not look like spam in a user's inbox

It is important to ensure any shared content through email does not look like spam content to the user. Therefore, it is important to design email shared content in a proper layout that represents a professional look replicating the organisation's brand. This recommendation counters the point made by a participant (an external online user) in section 5.6.1.9.

Recommendation 24: Videos and Audios should not be set to default to immediate play on page load.

A website page with a video that plays by itself turns into a nuisance for the end user, whose only goal suddenly becomes to find the close or to mute the button where the audio is playing. If a media website user is enjoying what they presumed was a quiet browsing session and they're suddenly bombarded with a background tune or a chatting head on a video for which they didn't click "play" and can't locate a "stop" button, it is logical to assume that they will look for their mute button their computer's volume controls or try to locate the back button on their browser. It is important to remember that locations used when a user is online varies, they may or may not be in the comfort of their home, they may be in a crowded area, or mobile in transit, or anywhere else where listening to an audio or watching a video is not appropriate. Web users like to be in control of their experience. If a video plays automatically without the user initiating any action, then this is a poor usability technique. For example, what if they are on a bus, with headphones in place listening to their favourite music while visiting a website. By forcing the video or audio content to automatically load, organisations are giving their users a motive to close the webpage.

Although there hasn't been any prior major research done on whether the presence of auto playing videos or audio increases the likelihood of people leaving a website as it is indeed an irritating feature to a website visitor's browsing experience. It is also recommended in Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (section 1.4.2) (See **Appendix C - 6**) that state *"if an audio is automatically played for more than three seconds, an option should be given to the visitor to pause or mute the audio. This option should be independent from the systems' main volume controller."* In a related matter to automatically playing videos and audios, in a survey of over 600 participants, 70% of them perceived automatically playing website ads very negatively (NIELSEN 2004). This recommendation counters the point made by a participant (an external online user) in section 5.6.1.12.

Recommendation 25: Do not implement pop-up or enforced ads within your website

Based on study's revelation in chapter 5 (see section 5.6.2.1) and section 6.9 in this chapter, online users look for ways to eliminate ads from their browsing experience and find other sources to access the same content. Added to that, users are already experiencing the exposure to online advertising through social networking websites. Therefore, it is highly recommended that media organisations do not ruin a user's news reading experience through online advertising and instead make their

news access easy. This way, the website will be viewed as a polished space to access news and information and this experience is likely to increase website traffic.

Recommendation 26: Allow online users to rate content.

Giving the option for online users to vote/rate content is valuable as it provides a sense of what type of content is performing well online and measure content popularity. This is especially useful for example in recipe pages where if a recipe was popular or not, then more attention can be paid on description of preparation steps.

In summary, these recommendations are fine-tuned based on the combination of the issues and challenges revealed in data analysis phases and the existent functioning processes of social media practices within media organisations. They are initiated to ensure media organisations websites are better protected from technical and business challenges that are associated with social networking services and embedding their third-party social networking tools. It's considering the value of third-party share tools and benefits of widgets, the third-party tools that are beneficial to both media organisations and users and which tools to avoid due to the possibility that they may derail their user's experience. It is also recommending ways to open a space for users to feel safe to engage actively within media websites.

6.13 AVENUES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Several themes emerged that are related but are beyond this study and will require further research to harness the benefits of social media. Some of these themes require technical analysis and some are related to a more in depth understanding of user experiences.

- Engagements on Twitter vs Facebook

Media organisations experienced different engagement outcomes from different social media services. Large platforms Twitter and Facebook worked on a different level for two competing media organisations. For instance, one participant indicated that they found Twitter to be more engaging for their followers and did not receive the same amount of "hype" from Facebook. They quoted saying:

"we have I think we have around 30,000 followers on Twitter. I can double check that if you want, and that drives a lot of traffic as well, and it's good for engagement too, I mean FB engagement is great but it tends to be less conversational, sort of asking question or have a read and people comment on it, whereas Twitter tends to be, as individual editors with the conversation count, actually engage with the audience and could talk about the articles."

(G1-P6-p#1)

On the other hand, another participant from a competing media organisation stated that Facebook was a great platform to engage on for their audience. This was validated by observing their official Facebook pages and monitoring audience engagement. The below extract

"Facebook is the biggest. It's got about 30 million Australians with active Facebook accounts. So the last few years Facebook has been growing and growing and certainly is the most dominant platform. I guess that's the main thing, just because it's the largest numbers, also across our potential audience. " **(G1-P6-p#1)**

Although both Twitter and Facebook are social networking sites, they remain very different in features and engagement style. The area of engagement would be an interesting avenue for further research. The focus could be to determine what makes each of these large platforms more engaging for the online audience.

- User perception of factual news

A few participants noted that they only visited certain sites due to the content quality and facts written, facts that they believed were not manipulated (see chapter 5 section 5.8). Not all participants, however, believed that news is biased and not factual. For example, one participant from the online users group believed that content from Twitter such as hash-tagged trends were paid for.

"because people pay for trends on there and everything like that. Hillary Clinton actually paid for her trend about feminism and "Vote for Hillary, supporting feminism.... If somebody pays for them, how am I supposed to believe about the rest of the trends on there? I can't believe it, so that's why I don't really, it's irrelevant for me. It doesn't really matter." **(G2-P16-p#5)**

Future researchers, possibly in the fields of psychology, could attempt to determine how web users perceive and trust different news sources. This research may investigate how to improve news websites in terms of content to gain user trust.

6.14 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study is the first one in the field of IT to take on an investigation of the lived experience of embedding social media within media organisation websites, both from the media organisation' and the users' perspective who access media websites for their news and current affairs. This section will identify several issues that may have impacted on the findings in this study. Some of these limitations were to do with location and others by limited access to individuals within media organisations

An obvious areas of limitations must be acknowledged from a researcher's perspective. The critical distance between the researcher and some of the objects of research may have not been as effective for all. As a researcher who works for a large Australian media organisation as a backend developer, who also implements social media tools and incorporates various widgets within the organisation's websites, getting information of social media use from other competing media organisations was often difficult to extract. This was evident in few several interviews with the employees of competing media organisations. There was a critical distance between some participants from group 1 and the interviewer. Some individuals did not want to reveal too much to the researcher as they were observing the interviewer not as an academic researcher but as an employee of their competitor. This led the researcher to remind them constantly of the confidentiality of the interview and the importance of this study to finding ways to tackle social media issues and challenges. The researcher also gave them examples of their own organisation's challenges with social media to gain their trust.

Secondly, as the researcher works for a media organisation, finding and working with participants from other competing media organisations proved occasionally to be difficult and took more time than anticipated. After several attempts from the researcher to track those "individuals", it became obvious that contact needed to be established through professional channels. Although quality individuals participated in the interviews, not all participants had technical skills and in-depth knowledge of technical challenges of social networking sites and their embeddable tools.

Thirdly, while the researcher attempted to get technical participants within every participating media organisation who incorporate social media within their websites, they could not always get approval for their participation. The information from all possible media organisation technical participants could have been extremely valuable for this study as this type of individuals would know the ins and outs of third-party social media. This could have allowed the researcher to extract technical details and perhaps expand on the findings in technical challenges. It could have also allowed for the researcher to compare their own lived experience with embedding social media to the lived experience of other technical employees. There is a possibility that richer, in depth, findings may have been missed.

Another limitation in this study was the research was confined to the Australian media only and no other country was investigated. As the focus of the study was on the media industry only, although this is a strength, it is also a limitation in that it narrows the organisation type and the gathered data is not supplemented by other types of organisations and commercial companies. The researcher believes that while some of the recommendations would generally be applicable to other industries and other countries, not all aspects may be applicable to all regions.

As the web and social networking tools are constantly undergoing exponential growth and software or platform changes, some challenges experienced by media organisations and their users may have a limited shelf life.

Some interviews were conducted on the phone, as the participants were located in different states, and lacked website-specific tailored questions which possibly led to missed opportunities in questioning their exact experience. When interviews were not conducted face-to-face, a participant was not able to demonstrate on a laptop the social media tools and widgets being used on their corporate websites and identify their purpose. Thus, a demonstration over a PC or laptop could not be done and the participant's responses were based on their general knowledge and perception and not on what was implemented on their organisation's website pages. To overcome this limitation, the researcher asked several interviewees that were participating over the phone to have a PC or laptop present to exchange website links or screenshots to ensure the participant understood what the questions were targeting. Using this workaround, quality information was retrieved from the participants however there is a possibility that some information may have been mis-communicated.

6.15 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS STUDY

This study has focussed on media organisations with embedded social media tools, specifically on the lived experience of the media organisation employees and the experiences of their website users/online news readers. The substantive contributions from this study are:

- The first study to examine the phenomenon of embedded social media from both perspectives, revealing the lived experience of both the media organisations and website users.
- The first study to focus on media websites and user activities to determine the perceived and actual level of usefulness of embedded social media tools within these sites.
- The first study to reveal the impact of enforced social media within websites on user engagement.
- Proof that enforced signup processes through third-party social media actively discourages user engagement
- A developed conceptual model of the purpose of embedded third-party tools and their challenges within media websites. This includes a list of social media tools that are embedded in media organisations websites.
- A developed conceptual model of the lived experience of website users with news websites.
- Proof that all media organisations in this study did not have an existing social media policy that deals with technical challenges but only editorial guidelines that deals with the language of website users from active engagement within websites.
- Twenty-six recommendations to guide media organisations about their future embedded social media use; including what should be incorporated into a social media policy for safe social media practice within organisations.

Meeting the Research Targets:

| Research Questions | Chapters |
|---|---|
| 1. What are the experiences of media organisations in embedding social media on their corporate websites? | Chapter 4 reveals that media organisations are experiencing both technical and business challenges with embedded social media. These were: Technical Challenges: Missing Content issues Network Security issues Privacy issues Password hacking Constant API changes The Integration Factor |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>Suitability of Medium Lack of flexibility Imposed third-party styling</p> <p>Non-Technical Challenges: Legal ramifications Constant moderation Inaccurate or misleading content Difficulty managing various social media platforms and their tools</p> |
| <p>1.1 What social media are media organisations embedding on their corporate websites and why are these embedded social media being used?</p> | <p>- Following the audience: Facebook “Like” Twitter’s “re-Tweet”</p> <p>- Pressure to keep up with technological trends Facebook Twitter</p> <p>- Share links externally – Addthis Tweet Button Facebook “Like” Pinterest “Pint” LinkedIn button GooglePlus button</p> <p>- Instant live blogging tools Twitter Timeline widget Storify ScribbleLive</p> <p>- Embedding distributed content YouTube & Vimeo videos Flickr, Instagram & Pinterest SoundCloud Scribd</p> <p>- Promotion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facebook “Like” - Facebook “Follow” box - Twitter “Hashtag” |
| <p>1. 2 What policies and procedures do media organisations use to evaluate the use of social media on their corporate websites?</p> | <p>Editorial Policies: All organisations had an Editorial Policy that included Social Media. This policy dealt with the language used by the journalists</p> <p>Community Standard Policy: this policy dealt with the language used by audience. Only 1 media organisation had one.</p> |
| <p>2. What is the experience</p> | <p>Lived experience of end-users revealed the following factors:</p> |

| | |
|---|---|
| Reveal to organisations the type of risks and challenges they could be facing so that the assumptions stated in section “Driving Motivation Behind this Study” are validated and risks from social media be accounted for more explicitly. | Risks and challenges revealed in Chapter 4 Recommendations presented in Chapter 6 |
| Drive decision makers within organisations and social media practitioners insights into online users’ activities on the way they use social media and how much private information they are willing to share online with third parties and the ethical dilemma that revolves around information sharing and privacy protection. | Challenges of end-users revealed in Chapter 5 Recommendations presented in Chapter 6 |
| The examples of the lived experience of media organisations and their website visitors presented the actual value of embedded social media to media organisations. | Lived experience of media organisations’ employees’ examples presented in Chapter 4 Lived experience of end-users’ examples presented in Chapter 5 |
| These were used to present specific recommendations to assist organisations in tailoring IT focused Social Media policies that fit with the organisations’ objectives in reaching the audience. | Recommendations presented in Chapter 6 |

6.16 CONCLUSION

This chapter bridged between the findings from in chapter 4 (interviews with employees of media organisations) and chapter 5 (interviews with online users accessing media websites). It revealed the lived experience from embedding social media within the media organisations websites from both the employees and the external online user perspective. This enabled a thorough comparison of the purpose of embedded social media on websites and online user activities to determine the perceived and actual level of usefulness of embedded social media.

This study has drawn a clearer picture of the disconnect between media organisations and website users in the implementation of social media within their corporate websites. Further, it revealed the impact of enforced social media within media organisations' websites on user engagement.

Media organisations need to seek new metrics that can help them understand the value of embedded social media tools that are provided by popular social networking sites. This way, they may create effective strategies for reaching their key audiences and provide users ways to engage actively within the websites. The current approaches media organisations are using and the way they implemented social media are not effective in encouraging user engagement on their websites and the enforcement factor is a detriment for website user' browsing experience. In particular, the findings suggest just because a social networking service has a large number of users does not mean that their available embeddable tools will be used. It also does not mean that social media account holders will use their username to actively engage on websites. Measuring the success of incorporating social media into organisation websites and the benefits they bring to the website and to the organisation overall is vital. It gives an indication what works and what does not.

This chapter has concluded with a set of recommendations to ensure best practice to protect media organisations from possible social media threats without having a detrimental effect on their user experience online. Media organisations can utilize social media to increase website visitors and gain new audiences and not try to enforce the use of these platforms.

APPENDIX LIST

THIS SECTION PROVIDES SCREENSHOT IMAGES AND EXAMPLES OF REAL WEBSITES AS EVIDENCE OF WHAT THE DESCRIPTION IS REFERRING TO.

APPENDIX A: WEBSITES CONTAINING EMBEDDED SOCIAL MEDIA

WEBSITES THAT CONTAIN EMBEDDED THIRD-PARTY SOCIAL NETWORKING TOOLS THAT EXPECT NEWS VIEWERS' ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THIRD-PARTY SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS:

[1] URL: <http://www.4bc.com.au/news/ray-hadley-bernard-tomic-20150717-giena3.html>: A website page containing sharing tools available within the page are: Tweet (Twitter share button), Share (Facebook share button), Share (Google Plus Share button), In Share (LinkedIn share button), Pin It (Pinterest Share button), Submit (Reddit Share button) – accessed 2015/08/01

Ray Hadley: Bernard Tomic

July 17, 2015

☆ Read later

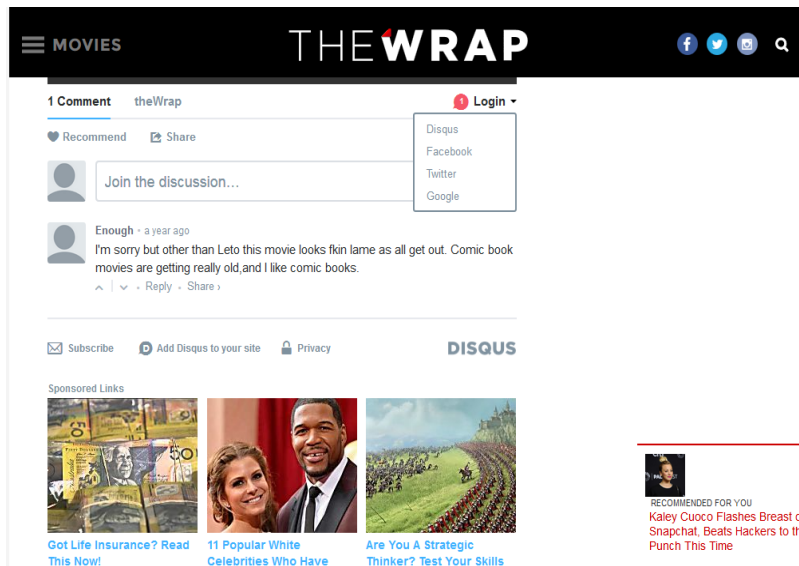
Nick King

[Tweet](#) [Share 0](#) [Share 0](#) [in Share](#) [Pin it](#) [submit](#)



The mug shot of Bernard Tomic as taken by the Miami Police Department.

[2] URL: <http://www.thewrap.com/suicide-squad-comic-con-footage-drops-jared-letos-joker-tortures-fellow-villains/> (at the bottom of the website page as seen, the engagement is only available with third-party platforms and not with an internal commenting mechanism.



[3] URL: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-07-17/labor-asks-afp-to-investigate-speaker-bronwyn-bishop/6628600> (if you click comment link at the bottom, it'll link to the Facebook page where a user has to have a Facebook login to comment on the article - accessed: 2016/07/16 2015



[4] URL: <http://www.9news.com.au/National/2015/07/16/03/36/Police-await-autopsy-on-SA-child-bones> (all engagement is available with Social Media platforms, Email link defaults to outlook) - accessed: 2016/07/16 2015

9NEWS .com.au NATIONAL LOCAL WORLD 9RAW WEATHER MORE 13°C SYDNEY

SOUTH AUSTRALIA 8:55pm July 17, 2015

Police say child died 'violent death' after remains and clothes found in suitcase

By nine

Check out this story I found on 9news.com.au <http://www.9news.com.au/National/2015/07/16/03/36/Police-await-autopsy-on-SA-child-bones>

9NEWS LIVE FEED
Mark Tromp's children happy he is safe after 'confusing' disappearance
An hour ago

[5]URL: <http://www.couriermail.com.au/news/opinion/party-games-precedent-gives-pm-tony-abbott-no-cause-to-complain-about-bronwyn-bishops-helicopter-ride-being-referred-to-police/story-fnihsr9v-1227446371591> (a user has to pay to submit comments + social media tools heavily embedded to be used for commenting)

The Courier Mail

Abbott and his party have been hit by the inevitable payback from Labor and they have no one to blame but themselves.

Comments 167

Hide Comments

Newest | Oldest | Top Comments

Damian Jul 20, 2015
Why are comments so political this is another case of dishonesty/criminality. Every politician in Canberra should be demanding justice as the status of all politicians continue to fall lower and lower. I do not trust any of them I will not vote for either party at the next election because to vote for them is supporting some criminals in both parties. Those that are not dishonest will never be promoted by their dishonest leaders hence we achieve nothing if we vote for them. The electorates where Abbott, hockey, Bishop, Shorten etc etc must have voters that are retarded. They should all step down so we can try and find some leadership and honest leaders.

Like Reply

David Jul 19, 2015
Maybe she would resign for a knighthood?

Like Reply

APPENDIX B:

[1] Androids

Android an Android phone is a powerful, high-tech smartphone that runs on Google's Android operating system. Pick an Android mobile phone and you can choose from hundreds of great applications and multitask with ease. You'll also get regular software updates that add great new features to your smartphone.

Reference Link: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Android_\(operating_system\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Android_(operating_system))

[2] iPhone

The first smartphone designed and marketed by Apple. The first iPhone was announced in Jan 9, 2007. it featured both GSM cellular connectivity and improved data transfer support. A mobile phone that has a widescreen with touch controls and internet connectivity. Its successor, the iPhone 3G was announced in June 2009. The iPhone 4 was announced on June 7, 2010. The iPhone 5 was released on September 21 2012. the current iPhone 6 was announced on September 9, 2014 and released on September 19, 2014. With each version, more features, technology, hardware and the overall design were updated.

Reference Link: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/IPhone>

[3] Facebook Messenger

Reference Link: <http://marketingland.com/author/danny-sullivan>

[3] gTalk

Google Talk is an instant messaging service that provided both text and voice communication developed and provided by google for free. it was discontinued February 16, 2015.

Reference Link: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Talk

[4] Google Hangouts

A communication platform developed by Google which includes instant messaging service, video chat, sms and voip features. it was released on May 15, 2013. google announced they will not be supporting gTalk

Reference Link: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Google_Hangouts – accessed 2015/04/11

[5] Facebook timeline

Facebook timeline is the space on a user's profile where they can see their own posts or posts from friends and stories they tagged and organized by the date they were posted.

Reference Link: <https://www.facebook.com/help/1462219934017791> – accessed 2015/04/11

[6] Digital footprint

A record or evidence of what websites online users accessed.

[7] clickbaits:

Clickbait is a pejorative term that describes web content that is aimed at generating online advertising revenue, especially at the expense of quality or accuracy, relying on sensationalist headlines or eye-catching thumbnail pictures to attract visitor click-throughs and to encourage forwarding of the material over online social networks. Clickbait headlines typically aim to exploit the "curiosity gap", providing just enough information to make the reader curious, but not enough to satisfy their curiosity without clicking through to the linked content.

Reference Link: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clickbait> – accessed – 2015/04/11

[8] Scoop.it

A content curation service provided by Scoop.it enables the gathering of information relevant to a particular topic or area of interest.

Reference Link: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scoop.it> – accessed – 2015/04/11

APENDIX C:

[1] Disqus

A worldwide blog comment hosting service for websites and online communities that uses networked platform.

Reference Link: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disqus> – accessed – 2014/06/17

Reference Link: <https://publishers.disqus.com/engage> – accessed – 2014/06/17

[2] Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (section 1.4.2)

1.4.2 Audio Control: If any audio on a Web page plays automatically for more than 3 seconds, either a mechanism is available to pause or stop the audio, or a mechanism is available to control audio volume independently from the overall system volume level. (Level A)

Note: Since any content that does not meet this success criterion can interfere with a user's ability to use the whole page, all content on the Web page (whether or not it is used to meet other success criteria) must meet this success criterion.

Reference Link: <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20/>

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