

**The Report committee for Lauren Elizabeth Alexander**

**Certifies that this is the approved version of the following report:**

**An Examination of Source Credibility and Word of Mouth Best  
Practices for Social Media Marketing With an Emphasis on Twitter**

**APPROVED BY**

**SUPERVISING COMMITTEE:**

**Supervisor:** \_\_\_\_\_

Gary Wilcox

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lucy Atkinson

**An Examination of Source Credibility and Word of Mouth Best  
Practices for Social Media Marketing With an Emphasis on Twitter**

**By**

**Lauren Elizabeth Alexander, B.S.P.R.**

**Report**

Presented to the Faculty of the Graduate School

of the University of Texas at Austin

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements

for the Degree of

Master of Arts

The University of Texas at Austin

December 2011

## ABSTRACT

### **An Examination of Source Credibility and Word of Mouth Best Practices for Social Media Marketing With an Emphasis on Twitter**

By

Lauren Elizabeth Alexander, M.A.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2011

SUPERVISOR: Gary Wilcox

Abstract:

*Because social media is a relatively new digital medium and Twitter is an even newer medium, it is important for practitioners and academics to understand how to create and utilize the best messaging strategies to induce persuasion, win brand advocates and create a sustainable, credible presence for brands on social media platforms such as Twitter. The author seeks to examine the theoretical and practical relevance of social media, with an emphasis on Twitter as well as explore how the theories of source credibility and word-of-mouth can help to better understand and measure promotional message and strategy effectiveness.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Definitions.....	2
History of the Social Media Platforms including Twitter, Facebook and YouTube.....	3
Chapter 2: Communication Theories in Traditional Marketing.....	9
Overview of Source Credibility.....	9
Functionality of Source Credibility on Twitter.....	11
Overview of Word-of-Mouth Theory.....	12
Functionality of Word-of-Mouth Theory on Twitter.....	18
Chapter 3: Social Media Case Studies.....	21
Ford Fiesta.....	21
Old Spice.....	34
Southwest Airlines.....	41
Chapter 4: WOM and Source Credibility Best Practices and Key Learnings from Case Studies .....	47
Ford Fiesta.....	47
Old Spice.....	51
Southwest Airlines.....	53
Chapter 5: Limitations and Conclusion.....	56
Criticisms and Limitations.....	56
Conclusion.....	57
Bibliography.....	59

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Technologies and media channels are changing every day, and there is a need for academia to provide practitioners with theoretical guides to help professionals make sound management decisions when using these new media environments. This research project will investigate how social media networks and technologies and their characteristics as word of mouth mediums influence listeners on social networks. The exponential growth of this medium during the past few years proves research and theory are needed to understand how it operates within the consumer decision-making process. The following analysis will contain secondary research to define social media, source credibility and word-of-mouth communication theories, as well as three recent social media case studies. Finally, the author will seek to examine how the marketers involved in each of the three case studies used source credibility and word-of-mouth to their advantage, as well as how it could have been better utilized. The goal of this analysis is seek to understand how existing theories relate to the growing social media phenomena, and what best practices practitioners can learn from previous companies' forays into the medium.

## DEFINITIONS

### *Web 2.0*

Prior to the existence of social media, the initial iteration of the internet consisted mostly of a simple web architecture designed to search for and retrieve information. Soon, the technological capabilities of both computers and the digital age evolved, and allowed the typical internet user to utilize web applications that facilitated participatory information sharing, interacting, collaborating and creating in a sort of digital community. These digital communities include social networking website, blogs, wikis, and video sharing websites, among many others, and define what is known as Web 2.0.

The term “Web 2.0” was first used in an article by Darcy DiNucci entitled “Fragmented Future.” She described the difference between the then World Wide Web as she knew it, and the next iteration of the internet that she envisioned:

“The Web we know now, which loads into a browser window in essentially static screenfuls, is only an embryo of the Web to come... The Web will be understood not as screenfulls of text and graphics but as a transport mechanism, the ether through which interactivity happens. It will [...] appear on your computer screen, [...] on your TV set [...] your car dashboard [...] your cell phone [...] hand-held game machines [...] maybe even your microwave oven”

(DiNucci, 1999.)

In 2003, the first Web 2.0 conference was hosted by O’Reilly Media and Media live, where the term began to rise in popularity. Hosts Tim O’Reilly and John Battelle used the term in their opening remarks to describe their vision, in which software applications

are built and used exclusively on the web instead of for the desktop, and argued that this type of capability would allow companies' customers to build "your business for you" and that user-generated content could be harnessed to enrich the web and create value (O'Reilly and Battelle 2004.) Advances in technology as well as a rise in popularity of implementing and cultivating user-generated content online, helped create an atmosphere where social media platforms examined in this article could flourish, and where users could not only interact one another, but where marketers could share information about products or services with consumers.

### *Social media defined*

The simplest definition of social media is that it is a means of personal communication between individuals or groups (Stein, 2010). It is the evolution of the fundamental human urge to communicate and a transition in the way people talk to each other (Green, 2010). From a consumer perspective, social media is a way to keep in touch with or updated about family and friends, create online relationships with existing personal relationships, and a way to share their lives with others through posting their thoughts or photos and sharing anything else they find relevant or interesting. Consumers also use social media to get news, support and advice on anything (Green, 2010). Different from traditional websites, the content is contributed by the users who are able to communicate with other users directly via social media. Social media is a two-way communication channel that enables users to address their point of view immediately in public.

Social media enables users to interact directly with people and brands through their personal accounts as well as use their accounts to stay up-to-date with the latest information.

For brands, an important aspect of social media to note is that content and comments are much more difficult to control than with traditional media. In addition, finding a good fit with the brand and the form of social media is crucial in advertising when companies try to embody their message and to connect with their target audience.

### *Facebook*

Facebook.com was originally launched as thefacebook.com on February 4, 2004, and was created by then Harvard sophomore Mark Zuckerberg as a “face book” or digital yearbook and online academic networking portal for Harvard students (Tabak, 2004). It soon expanded, allowing access to include all Ivy League schools, then most major universities and graduate schools, then high schools and eventually corporations. In 2006, the company announced it would allow open registrations, and the number of users climbed to over 9 million (Rosmarin, 2006). Currently, there are over 600 millions registered users (Carlson, 2011). By 2009, Facebook had climbed in popularity to rank as the most used social network service by worldwide monthly active users, in a study by Compete.com with Myspace.com ranking second, and Twitter.com ranking third (Kazeniak, 2009). In 2010, an article in *Social Media Today* estimated that 41.6% of the United States population had a Facebook account, and that 44.6 million accounts were registered to individuals aged 24 and younger, just over one-third of all U.S. Facebook accounts (Wells, 2010).

In the year after Facebook opened registration to the general population, the company launched a new strategy for advertising on the network. According to TechCrunch.com, The Facebook Ad Network consisted of several new features: Business Profile Pages that users can interact with, Social Ads (ads targeted based on member profile data and spread virally), Beacon (a way for Facebook members to declare themselves fans of a brand on other sites and send those endorsements to their feeds), and Insight (marketing data including social demographics and psychographics which Facebook provides to advertisers in an aggregated, anonymous way). During the announcement of the Ad Network launch, Zuckerberg elaborated “Beacon will let users send information to their page, we confirm it, and share it on Facebook. One partner is eBay. Users can share listings from eBay on Facebook. So users can share social actions from other websites and share them on Facebook. This will be completely free” (Schonfeld, 2007). Beacon met with backlash over privacy concerns, including from political action and consumer advocacy organization MoveOn.org, which campaigned against the advertising system. Critics of Beacon including MoveOn.org voiced concerns over lack of control of Facebook’s data-collecting and the lack of a blanket “opt-out” feature for users (Catone, 2007). The petition prompted a class-action lawsuit against Facebook and its corporate participants in the service, and in September 2009 the service was shutdown as part of the settlement agreement (Metz, 2009). According to Alexa.com, Facebook ranks second only to Google.com in terms of traffic rankings. The population of users has matured over the years as the website switched from a network for exclusively to college students to a global networking platform. Currently, the site's audience tends to be users who browse from school and home; they are also

disproportionately women under the age of 45 who have postgraduate educations (Alexa.com, 2011).

### *Twitter*

Twitter is a fast-growing new social networking tool, known as a micro-blogging or micro-messaging service, in which users can broadcast messages of 140 characters or less to followers and was founded in 2006 at a small podcasting service company called Odeo in San Francisco. At the time, the company was trying to reinvent itself and break a creative slump by holding a “daylong brainstorming session” to create new product ideas. Jack Dorsey first described a service to his brainstorming group that uses short message service, or text messages to tell small groups what you are doing. “I remember that @Jack’s first use case was city-related: telling people that the club he’s at is happening. He said, ‘I want to have a dispatch service that connects us on our phones using text,’” according to fellow Odeo employee Dom Sagolla as written in his blog *How Twitter Was Born*. The idea for Twitter was selected for prototyping and “twittr” was created on March 21st, 2006. Soon after that the product was rebranded as Twitter and Twitter.com launched just in time for the 2007 South By Southwest conference (SXSW) in Austin, Texas, where it gained more mainstream traction and users, (Sagolla, 2009). It was during this event that usage increased from the usual 20,000 tweets to 60,000 tweets per day, with attendees and panelists using the service to broadcast what they were doing and to other keep track of and in contact with others (Douglas, 2007). Since that time, Twitter has grown 1,500% in number of registered users, according to a March 2010 article in

Newstatesman.com. However, *New Statesman* proposed that until Twitter implements advertising or other revenue stream, its long-term viability is limited.

Twitter users are decidedly older, according to a 2009 Comscore.com report by Andrew Lipsman, with 49% of users falling between the ages of 18-44, and only 11% of users are under the age of 18. This is most likely because of the “early adopter period” during SXSW when the first initial users joined for news or business information (Lipsman).

Twitter is a powerful communication tool – it enables individuals, companies and brands to interact and converse with each other. It enables people to become citizen journalists, delivering information to the world in real time, from a first person perspective and enables that information to spread virally. Finally, it helps pool the collective ideas of thousands of people to help solve problems as a community. Such an influential communication channel deserves further theoretical research and understanding.

### *YouTube*

YouTube is a video-sharing website, created by Jawed Karim, Steve Chen, and Chad Hurley in 2005, on which users can upload, share and view videos. The founders were all employed at online transaction facilitator Paypay.com when they hatched the idea in late 2004 to start a video dating website. Despite fizzling in its original iteration, by 2006, the website had over 100 million videos in its cache being viewed daily, spurred initially by topically relevant content such as the Janet Jackson's "wardrobe malfunction," during the 2004 Super Bowl show, and the Asian tsunami. In October of 2006 the

founders sold the company to Google for \$1.7 billion (Hopkins, 2006). YouTube generates revenue centrally through advertising. In the book *Wikinomics*, authors Don Tapscott and Anthony D. Williams propose that YouTube is a company that succeeds because it is designed for an economy that is based on mass collaboration. "Whether your business is closer to Boeing or P&G, or more like YouTube or flickr, there are vast pools of external talent that you can tap with the right approach. Companies that adopt these models can drive important changes in their industries and rewrite the rules of competition" (Tapscott, 2007). With YouTube's significance and defining impact within the realm of social media had been the ease with which a user can reach an audience through video. Potentially, any user with an internet connection can potentially post a video that a worldwide audience could watch within a few minutes. Currently the most-viewed user-generated video is "Charlie bit my finger – again!" with 385 million views (YouTube.com). The video features a young boy with his infant brother, who continues to get bitten on the finger repeatedly by his gleeful younger sibling.

## **Chapter 2: Communication Theories in Traditional Marketing**

In this chapter, the author seeks to understand and define the history and elements that forged the communication theories of source credibility and word-of-mouth in persuasive messaging. After each theory is defined, the author will illustrate how each of the theories functions within the social media platform of Twitter with respect to marketing.

### *Source Credibility*

Source credibility describes how an audience develops attitudes and perceptions about a speaker in the communication process, and what it may mean for message acceptance and trust. Carl I. Hovland and Walter Weiss (1951) first laid the foundations for the source credibility model in “The Influence of Source Credibility on Communication Effectiveness.” They described two dimensions of source credibility – trustworthiness and expertise. A source that is trustworthy can be trusted to give an objective opinion about the communication topic and ensues no bias or underlying motives. This a key variable in determining how source credibility may affect the degree to which messages are accepted when consumers are looking for specific third-party opinions and recommendations about a brand or product. Next, they looked at how a source’s expertise may affect communication effectiveness. Expertise is defined as the extent to which the source is perceived to be knowledgeable about a subject.

While Hovland and Weiss did notice more acceptance of message content when audiences perceived the source as credible, they did find a sleeper effect. Essentially,

over time after the communication occurs, there is a “decreased tendency to reject the message from an untrustworthy source” (Hovland, Janis and Kelley, 1953). This means there is greater opinion change as more time passes after the communication touch point.

More dimensions have been added to the source credibility model since Hovland and Weiss’ initial contributions and research to this topic. Roobina Ohanian (1991) discusses the inclusion of attractiveness as a degree of source credibility in an article published in the *Journal of Advertising Research*. She raises questions about the degree to which attractiveness – more specifically physical attractiveness – plays a role in assessing source credibility given the increased use of attractive models in advertisements, both print and TV alike. However, her study found that attractiveness does not play as big of a role as does expertise and trustworthiness. Nonetheless, she suggests that due to the proliferation of beautiful models in advertisements, there may be a numbing effect of source attractiveness in advertisements.

Ronald E. Goldsmith, Barbara A. Lafferty and Stephen J. Newell (2000) discuss the concept of corporate credibility and its impact on consumer reactions to brands. They shifted the focus of their research from endorser credibility to corporate credibility, that is, the credibility and characteristics of the company itself. During this discussion, they raised the question of how a company can be attractive and incorporate other literature that defines a dimension of attractiveness as “likability” – which includes dynamism and overall evaluation of a source. This can be a critical component in assessing social media source attractiveness because physical attractiveness may not be emphasized as much as the source’s likability. For instance, a company that engages their consumers and interacts with them in almost a friend-like relationship may be more likable than a

company that does not interact with their followers and takes a more stoic, cold stance to responses on the platform.

Toni Eagar (2009) introduces the idea of brand hero credibility and his or her impact on a brand community. She investigates the rise of “fan culture” within brand communities, such as social networks and addresses the need for a construct of a brand hero within these communities. The brand hero differs from a celebrity endorser in that they have direct relationships with both the brand and the brand community and are “well known for their role in the creation, production or consumption experience of a brand” (Eager). Essentially, the brand hero works with the community to ensure the success of the brand, as opposed to celebrity endorsers who simply appear in an ad and are removed from more intensive fan followings and brand communities. There is need for research to identify what constitutes a brand hero and how they affect the dynamics of a brand community.

### *How Source Credibility Functions on Twitter*

How can practitioners take the frameworks and models of source credibility and apply it to the successful use of Twitter to promote their brand? First, the author believes it is important to differentiate three types of brand communicators on Twitter. There is the company who Tweets on their own behalf – who engage in customer service as Jet Blue does – and there is the active consumer, a brand hero on Twitter who tweets about personal experiences with a brand and garners a strong following among the Twitter community. Finally, there is the celebrity tweeter who may Tweet about their personal and professional pursuits, as well as any brand they may personally or professionally

endorse. On Twitter, if a company can find and identify a brand hero – perhaps someone who encourages followers to try a product, tweets about their personal experiences and also demonstrates a personal connection to the brand, then they can leverage that relationship to increase positive word of mouth communications on the Twitter platform.

Because Twitter relies heavily on short, succinct 140 character messages, there may be little room for physical attractiveness to play a large role in assessing source credibility. Instead, audiences may be focused more on the content of the message and the expertise and trustworthiness of the “Tweeting” communicator. Still, there may be room for a different degree of attractiveness in discerning how source credibility affects message effects within Twitter – likability.

However, since Twitter is a real-time medium, consumers may be swayed by perceived source credibility when relaying communications to their followers via a re-tweet. Since re-tweets occur in a short time period after the tweet was published, the Tweeter would not have time for the sleeper effect to sink in.

For a company to be successful on Twitter and other social media platforms, they need to foster personal relationships with their followers and try to facilitate personal connections to increase their source credibility. On the other hand, consumers are gaining a share of voice in brand conversations on Twitter and have the ability to emerge as brand advocates within the Twitter community.

### *Word of Mouth*

Word-of-mouth describes person-to-person communication taking place among an audience, and specifically in advertising refers to communication between consumers

as well as between marketers and consumers. Ernest Dichter (1966) was one of the first to comprehensively investigate and categorize the motivations of word-of-mouth communication with regard to both the speaker and the listener in “How Word-of-Mouth Advertising Works.” He states that there are two types of word-of-mouth: pre-decision and post-decision and believes that post-decision messaging is the most effective since consumers who have purchased or made the decision to purchase the product can act as brand advocates and help spread their positive experiences.

First, Dichter strived to understand what motivates speakers in the word-of-mouth process to advocate or speak out against a product or service in the first place. He determined that there are four speaker motivation involvement categories for word-of-mouth about products or services: product-involvement, self-involvement, other-involvement and message-involvement. Dichter describes product-involvement as a need to relieve the tension or excitement of experiences with the product by channeling them through talking and recommendations and estimates that a third of all discussions with regard to products or services fall into this category. These speakers have a strong motivation to share their experiences about what they’ve purchased with others; in many instances it is a way to confirm their ownership or discover it. The experience with the product is so strongly felt, that this makes the speakers “flow over” and he or she feels she must share these experiences with the product to the listener. Product-involvement for some speakers is actually a way of verbally consuming or using the product again and functions to help the speaker relive the experience again out loud.

Self-involvement, which makes up a quarter of word-of-mouth discussions, in contrast, is the channeling and gratification of a person’s personal emotional needs

through discussion of the product. It serves as self-confirmation for the speaker and his need to reassure himself in front of others. Some of the most frequent goals of this type of communication are to gain attention, to show connoisseurship or prove that they're "in the know," to assert superiority over the listener, and to be a pioneer or information insider with regards to consumption which makes the listener feel more clever. Other goals include talking about the product to assert or suggest social status and rise to the level of the product, to spread the gospel and "convert" the listener and enlist them to their own "good cause," and finally to seek confirmation of the speaker's own judgment, i.e. the more people who hear and heed the listener's advice about the product, the more justified the speaker feels in his decision. It is often this type of speaker motivation, according to Dichter, which can result in feelings of rejection, hurt and abandonment when the speaker's advice is not taken.

When the product fills the role of satisfying a need to give or share pleasure or to express love or friendship, this motivator is classified as other-involvement, and makes up a fifth of all talking events about products. The products in this case are typically a vehicle for expressing emotions such as love, friendship or appreciation towards the listener. Other-involvement contrasts with self-involvement in that the speaker is typically more easily able to accept when the listener chooses to reject the speaker's advice, however strongly he or she feels about the product himself or herself.

And finally, when talk is concentrated on the way the product is presented, instead of on the experience with the product itself, this is known as message-involvement. Speakers who are message-involved may not be speaking about the product proper, but rather the speaker's experience with the message itself.

Dichter describes three phenomena that shape attitudes towards ad messaging: ads' story and entertainment value, effectiveness of the ads, and the quotability or playfulness of the ad messaging. He describes the phenomenon as viewers being so entertained by the story within an advertiser's message that he or she views it on par with traditional entertainment media. The term "shop talk" can be used to elaborate how listeners of ads view each message with an attitude of skepticism and speak to other people about the cleverness or dimness of the ad's message. Finally, verbal play describes how speakers enjoy quoting catchphrases from ads or other message slogans, in some cases to mock or speak ironically about the ad or the product itself. The speaker enjoys spreading the message because of the pleasure he or she receives by repeating the catchphrase. Because word-of-mouth communication is person-to-person, the experiences and interactions will vary according to the speaker's involvement, expertise and level of enthusiasm, as well as vary according to the type, price range and level of involvement required of the product itself.

Although the primary motivation for the listener to hear the speaker's product advocacy may be to learn about a product of interest to them, Dichter found that speaker experience and knowledge about the product as well as the speaker's interest in the well-being of the listener are the two key conditions necessary to elicit trust and satisfaction with regards to the communication. He outlined seven "influential" types of speakers which listeners are likely to respond positively towards during a word-of-mouth exchange: commercial authorities, celebrities, connoisseurs, sharers of interest, intimates, people of goodwill, and bearers of tangible evidence.

Commercial authorities are broken into two key groups- professional experts and salespeople, both of whom function to educate the listener based on their training or profession, based on their closeness and experience with the product. Celebrities as one might expect are typically movie, theatre, TV and radio and in present time Internet personalities whose authority comes from their prominence in the media. Connoisseurs, in the case of word-of-mouth product communication function as an informal expert who may know as much or more about the product as the professional, yet does not profit directly from the listener's purchase decision. Typically composed of very close friends, family members or significant others are categorized as intimates, and influence listeners through the merging or taking over of prevailing patterns of product use. Influencers gain authority not necessarily through their relation to the product, but to their close relation with the listener. Similarly, sharers of interest typically share lifestyle commonalities with the listener, and their influence stems from the relationship to the listener rather than the product itself. People of goodwill, the largest group at almost a quarter (24.4%) of all speakers, are trusted friends, neighbors or anyone else who is genuinely interested in the well-being of the listener, and have influences similar to that of the intimates and sharers of interest. Finally, bearers of tangible interest gain the influence of their listeners by being able to demonstrate "before" and "after" effects of using the product.

The researcher also stated that for a word-of-mouth process to be effective for advertising, the recommender needs to establish conviction in the dialogue. This can be accomplished in one of several ways. The speaker should express genuine concern with the listener's well being, by communicating in a way that takes into account the needs of the individual listener. The speaker should attempt to incorporate genuine emotion about

his or her experience with the product as he or she can, not only verbally, but also through non-verbal tools such as gestures, inflection or facial expression. Word-of-mouth exchanges are also strengthened by the use of tangible evidence when the personal or product relationship are not sufficiently completely convincing on their own. Lastly, according to Dichter, “the best proof of a speaker’s disinterestedness is his reluctance to divulge the source or brand name of a product which is wanted by a ‘listener.’” This concept of “secrecy and hesitation” reinforces the idea that the harder it is to obtain something, the more desirable it becomes.

The researcher also gives concrete advice on how to best create a successful Word-Of-Mouth communication experience when addressing a listener. He advises that most consumers need to feel “loved” by the companies that are speaking to them, and that to address this, marketers need to demonstrate a “proof of friendship” to validate a consumer’s need to feel appreciated by the speaker. This proof of friendship can be demonstrated in several ways: anticipate the consumer’s attitude, use a gift package sales message, establish audience kinship, initiate an exclusive group, be a friend of man and convey personal experience. One can “anticipate the consumer’s attitude simply by showing that you the speaker are ad-conscious, and have the ability to be self-aware of your persuasive message. This allows readers to join in on the fun of the messaging, even if to some extent it is at your expense. Using a “gift package sales message” simply means that you are revealing that you care about the listener by expressing your message in an exciting, beautiful, entertaining or humorous package that the listener will enjoy consuming. Being a “friend of man” can best be demonstrated by including in your messaging to the listener information about how the product’s company is giving back to

the community, through by foundation, volunteerism, scholarships etc. When conveying personal experience, the speaker should focus on expressing his or her knowledge and experience with the product in a genuine, down-to-earth, or authentic language that is natural instead of typical everyday ad-speak.

In closing, Dichter elaborated on how a speaker's relationship to the product can help enforce an effectively persuasive word-of-mouth interaction with the listener. He advises that the speaker show that he understands the role of the consumer by showing genuine experience as a consumer of the product, and if possible that the speaker demonstrates an immediate, intimate relationship between the producer and the product. It may also be beneficial if the speaker is able to highlight a unique or exciting company climate in which the product is produced, or if he or she is able to trace a "company myth" of how the product was created or adopted. Finally, the speaker should strive if possible to reflect the adventurous nature of the product or by highlighting the user and his or her personal statement about the product.

### *How Word-Of-Mouth Functions on Twitter*

The author believes that in terms of Twitter, commercial authorities such as brand representatives, bearers of tangible interest, celebrities and connoisseurs are likely to have the most opportunity for companies attempting to use Twitter to launch a word-of-mouth promotional campaign because they are more likely to have greater source credibility. However, it is important that companies research what type of motivation and the level of source credibility the speaker has in relation to product so that the campaign is a good fit with the target consumers. Because Twitter is a consumer-

controlled medium, negative feedback can occur in one or more speaker groups and should be actively monitored to preserve the brand image and build up trust.

Also, because Twitter's messages are only limited by the number of characters, and it does not specifically structure the messaging or content of any of the tweets sent out by its users, word-of-mouth motivations of all four types can be found on the platform.

In reviewing theories and segmentation of traditional word-of-mouth communication in advertising, many of the motivations and key elements of persuasion through person-to-person messaging are still very relevant to Twitter and other social media platforms. The author feels that in understanding how to best apply these components, advertisers and companies should understand it is important to offer an authentic relationship to the product and offer proof of friendship through Twitter to be most effective.

One of several ways to offer proof of friendship to Twitter followers is for companies to separate themselves from the rest of the commercial advertisers and become a tangible, adaptable voice for their brand and show that he has the consumer's well being at heart. Tactically, the author feels that of Dichter's recommendations, the most important takeaways as related to Twitter are for brands to anticipate consumer's attitudes, establish kinship, convey experience, create exclusive groups, and be a "friend of man" by demonstrating goodwill towards the community and showing that they're giving back.

Airline company Southwest Airlines, whose previous traditional promotions as well as corporate culture is known for its tongue-in-cheek tone, is an example of a brand

that works to anticipate consumer's attitudes by not taking itself too seriously (its "bio" information states, "Airplanes can't type so @ChristiDay and @Brandy\_King are piloting the Twittiverse!") yet still working to improve customer service by talking directly with its customers.

Another airline company, Jet Blue, has done an exemplary job of both conveying personal experience as well as establishing kinship with its by offering travel advice and relevant news information as well as by connecting with its consumers through answering and addressing concerns and complaints about service directly with individuals. In addition, Jet Blue offers a separate service on Twitter, called Jet Blue Cheeps, which is an exclusive group that offers deals on last minute flights weekly that are only available for those who follow the Jet Blue Cheeps twitter account. This makes "listeners" or followers of this group or Jet Blue on Twitter feel respected and has built loyalty and trust for the brand in ways that traditional word-of-mouth would not have been able to achieve as quickly on a large scale.

Finally, billionaire and CEO of Microsoft Bill Gates, has used Twitter to become a "friend of man" by discussing with his followers what Microsoft as well as what his foundation funded by his Microsoft earnings has done to give back to the global community by fighting hunger and poverty.

Because Twitter is such a new and fast-paced medium for messaging, it is useful for practitioners to monitor negative messaging and preserve brands that are navigating the digital realm.

## **Chapter 3: Case Studies**

This chapter will outline the history of three companies, Ford Motor Company, Old Spice, and Southwest Airlines. The author will then illustrate a specific social media marketing campaign that the companies engaged in, and document the impact of the cases for each of the companies.

### **Ford Motor Company**

Ford Motor Company is a global automotive industry leader based in Dearborn, Michigan and manufactures or distributes automobiles across 6 continents. The company was founded by Henry Ford in 1903 and continues to be led by his family today. With about 213,000 employees and about 90 plants worldwide, the company's wholly owned brands include Ford, Lincoln, Mercury, and Volvo (Ford Annual Report). Since the introduction of the Model T, Ford has been a constant force in both National and Worldwide automotive industries.

Currently Ford's mission as company is to follow their One FORD plan (Ford Blueprint for Sustainability). It involves the subparts for the company to follow in that under ONE Team its company involves people working together as a lean global enterprise for automotive leadership, One Plan to aggressively restructure to operate profitability at current demand and changing model mix, and One Goal an exciting viable Ford delivering profitable growth for all. In order to provide sustainability the company wants to be a leader in environment, quality performance, and safety causes (Ford Blueprint for Sustainability).

Ford celebrated its centennial in 2003 and has tried to constantly update their advertising with product placement and sponsorship deals with TV broadcast networks, including the popular "American Idol" and "24." (Ford Motor Company). The automaker was getting back on track with improved quality and more stylish new vehicles though with the recent economy and set backs in the automotive industry haven't seen much stability in current years. In 2008 according to the ORCA correspondents survey, Ford had fallen to number 4 ranking worldwide among manufacturers with 15.2% of the U.S. market (World Ranking of Manufacturers). A national study of 2.27 million online automotive shoppers by Compete Inc. in August 2007 showed 22% were actively shopping Ford-brand vehicles — equal to the Toyota brand. In August 2008, Ford's figure was 14%. (Ford Motor Company).

Ford saw drastic improvements in 2009. Ford's domestic brands gained nearly a point of share during the first eight months of 2009. The first two months of the year saw the number of qualified buyers who planned to buy a Ford jump 16% from 2008 (Halliday). Qualified buyers who intended to buy GM fell 12% and Chrysler 33%. Also the brand's retail-market share had increased for four consecutive months for the first time in 14 years. Ford's web site traffic and incentive inquiries spiked also as GM's and Chrysler's have been experiencing constant setbacks (Wilson). In 2009, Ford set aside 40% of its ad budget for digital and experiential marketing (Halliday). TV is the medium still getting the biggest share, with 50%, and print gets 10%. Ford ranked as the world's eighth-biggest ad spender in 2008, with global measured media spending of \$2.45 billion (Halliday). With the launch of Fiesta, Ford will look to continue to reinvent the way they advertise to their market.

## *Campaign Story*

In 2006, Ford announced that due to a changing economy and reduced sales, it was restructuring the company in an effort to align itself with the current scope of the automobile market, which would allow it to return to profitability by 2008. The plan, dubbed, “The Way Forward,” consisted of restructuring the company, as well as the lines and models from the company’s cache of vehicles. Ford planned to do this by dropping some unprofitable and inefficient models, consolidating production lines, shutting down seven vehicle assembly plants and seven parts factories, and reducing the number of officers in the company by 12% (media.ford.com).

“The automotive market in North America is rapidly becoming as crowded and fragmented as other global markets,” said Bill Ford, chairman and CEO. “To meet this challenge, we are acting with speed to strengthen the Ford, Lincoln and Mercury brands, deliver the innovation customers demand and create a business structure for us to compete – and win – in this era of global competition.

“We will be making painful sacrifices to protect Ford’s heritage and secure our future,” he added. “Going forward, we will be able to deliver more innovative products, better returns for our shareholders and stability in the communities where we operate,” (media.ford.com)

In addition, the North American division of Ford collaborated more with its international divisions in the restructuring efforts, in order to gain insight into the emerging trend of smaller vehicles and make it more competitive with the likes of Toyota.

“The team in North America, led by Mark Fields and supported by Anne Stevens, developed the plan for North America, drawing on their extensive global experience in Asia, Europe and The Americas. They have reenergized the Ford team to make it work, and they have the full support of the Ford Motor Company behind them,” said Jim Padilla, president and chief operating officer ([media.ford.com](http://media.ford.com)).

In April of 2008, Ford’s “They Way Forward” campaign began to bear fruit, as the company was able to announce that it had posted a profit a year ahead of when the plan as announced by President and CEO Alan Mulally projected to turn the company profitable (Bunkley).

In July of 2008, Ford hired digital marketing and communications professional Scott Monty to head up the social media function of the company’s outreach as Global Digital & Multimedia Communications Manager. He acted as strategic advisor on all social media activities across the company (LinkedIn). Monty’s social media blog for Ford listed his responsibilities as everything from “blogger relations to marketing support, customer service to internal communications and more, as social media is being integrated into many facets of Ford business.” ([scottmonty.com](http://scottmonty.com)).

His goals for Ford in coming into the job, were to elevate Ford to “become a leader in digital communications in four years and to become the world's leading social automotive brand.”

According to Monty, at the end of July 2009, the social media team also developed a number of Twitter feeds (@Ford, @FordDriveGreen, @FordMustang, @FordCustService,) became more active on Facebook, and interacted on blogs and other

multimedia platforms such as YouTube and Flickr. Monty describes his decision-making process about interacting online:

“These activities were intentional, for I knew as an outsider to the industry that Ford didn't have a face to the general public and we needed to begin humanizing the company by getting faces out from behind the Blue Oval. I went so far as to leverage my own personal brand - not because it was convenient, but because I believed so firmly in the direction of the company, and because that's the network I had build up before I came to Ford. It seemed natural to extend it.”

The media team felt that Twitter was a good fit for Ford because it showed that they were listening: the company was able to have direct communication with consumers in a public way. The use of Twitter also showed that Ford understood social media and was “hip & cool.”

The media team wanted a strategy for social marketing flexible enough to:

- Allow them to speak to customers, employees, retirees, dealers, enthusiasts, shareholders
- Apply to whatever department within the organization would like to use social media (HR, communications, IT, marketing, product development, customer service, etc.)
- Change according to the regional differences in social media adoption and technology saturation.

Ford's Social Media Strategy was to humanize the company by connecting Ford employees with our stakeholders, allowing them to connect with each other when appropriate, and providing value in the process ([scottmonty.com](http://scottmonty.com)).

In November of 2008 Monty and his media team also created a special mission and vision page online dubbed “One Ford” that would encompass in social media terms what the restructuring for the company would mean. It featured a number of the company’s top executives talking unscripted about what Ford now stood for and outlined this through a number of documents posted online also (Ford One Mission).

Throughout the month at events Monty began “live Tweeting,” by answering questions as they came up during live during speeches and discussions led by the CEO (scottmonty.com). The social media initial push paid off, with Ford ranking #12 in the list of Virtue.com’s Top 100 Social Brands of 2008 (Strutton).

Ford spent the next leg of their campaign concentrating on staying true to its restructuring pledge by introducing smaller cars. It decided to start selling the Fiesta, a compact vehicle popular in Europe but that was only briefly available in the US in the 1970s. It faced a problem however: how to promote a new vehicle whose target audience was the millennial generation, a group known for using traditional media less often than other generations. Additionally, the Fiesta wouldn’t be available for purchase until the spring of 2010, 18 months after the campaign’s launch date. Monty and his team decided to try something different. They decided to market the vehicle entirely online, the one place they knew millennials would be most likely to be reached (Kee).

The campaign, dubbed “The Fiesta Movement,” consisted of 100 social media-savvy people, who were chosen for their influence, creativity and number of followers online from a pool of over 4,000 potential candidates who auditioned via online videos. The premise of the campaign was that Ford would give each of the 100 brand ambassadors a fully equipped Ford Fiesta for six months complete with insurance money for gas a full

18 months before the cars would be manufactured and sold in the US. The only stipulation was that the ambassadors agreed to document their experiences with the car through social media updates on a weekly basis based on a weekly challenge or task provided to them by Ford (Kee).

Ford knew they were taking a risk; in this type of campaign they realized they would be giving up control over the messaging or context of the media sent out online, but decided to take the plunge.

After the first phase of the campaign was complete in December 2009, Monty reported on his blog:

“The numbers were great. But lost in a lot of that was the fact that the pool of 100+ drivers acted as something of a focus group for six months. The agents gave feedback to our design & engineering team so the North American version could be made with drivers like them in mind. Not only that, but here's the cool part: they've been creating content nonstop for 6 months. And really good content too.”

After completion of the first portion of the campaign, Monty also reported that 58% of consumers were aware of the Fiesta. Additionally the Fiesta gained 3,000,000 Twitter impressions and 50,000 requests for information about the car — 97% of which came from people who did not currently own Ford cars ([scottmonty.com](http://scottmonty.com)).

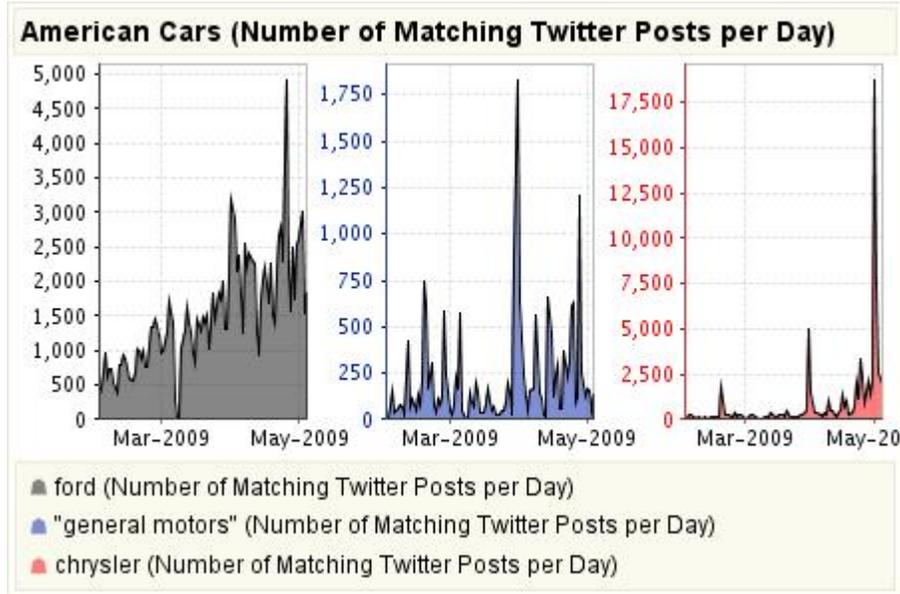
Monty’s advice to other brands looking to take the leap online: “If your customers are there you need to be there too” he also went on to say “You need to listen, see how they behave and act similarly.”

## *Social Media in Motor Industry*

When compared to the Twitter posts Oprah or Star Trek can generate, the automobile industry has had a relatively weak showing. Ford's biggest day, with 4,195 posts, was April 24, 2009 when the company announced a first quarter loss of \$1.4 billion, GM had 1,827 posts on March 30, 2009 when Obama asked the CEO to step down and Chrysler had 18,694 posts on April 30, 2009 when the company was said to face bankruptcy filing (Table 1).

Of the three car companies, Ford was the most frequent about updating and following back, while Chrysler only listened to a small fraction of their followers. With the most followers, Fords story was able to jump from social media to print and TV platforms (Tables 2-5).

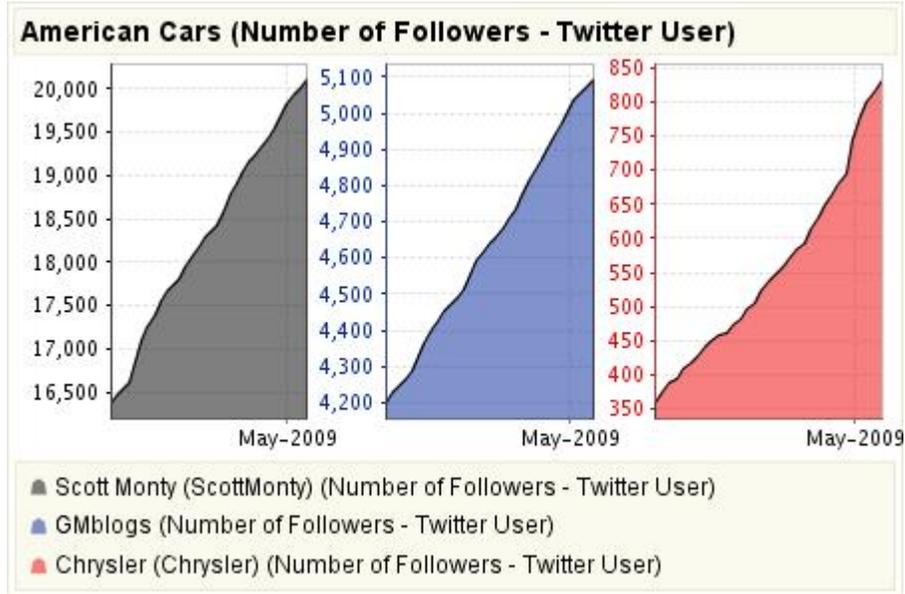
**Table 1**



*Source: Mashable, The Social Media Guide, Why Ford is Winning on the Social Web*

<http://mashable.com/2009/05/18/ford-social-media/>

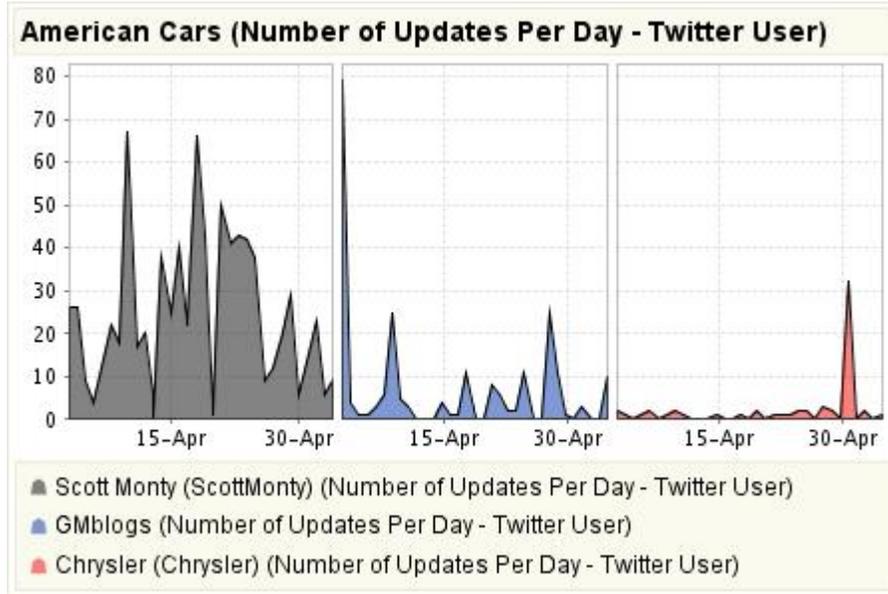
Table 2



Source: Mashable, *The Social Media Guide, Why Ford is Winning on the Social Web*

<http://mashable.com/2009/05/18/ford-social-media/>

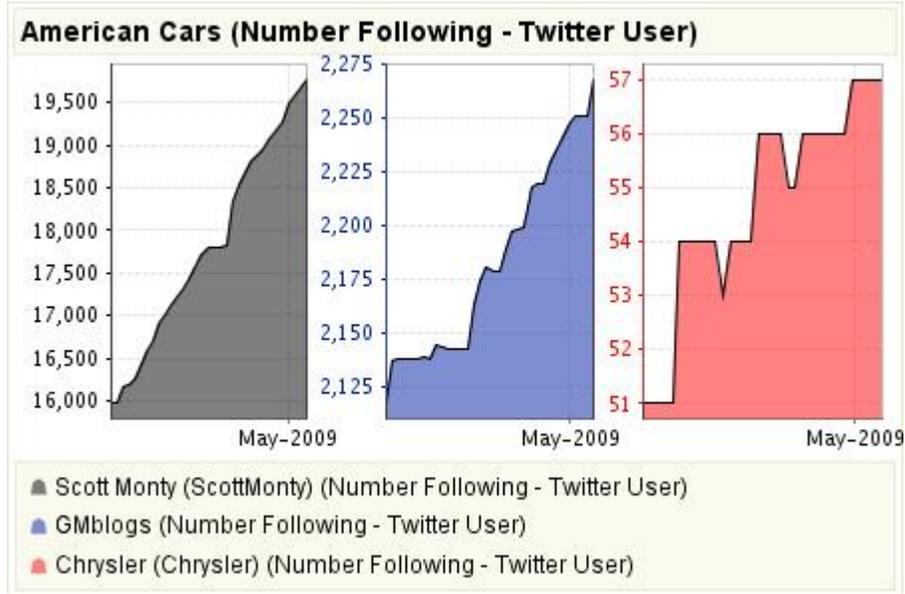
**Table 3**



Source: Mashable, *The Social Media Guide, Why Ford is Winning on the Social Web*

<http://mashable.com/2009/05/18/ford-social-media/>

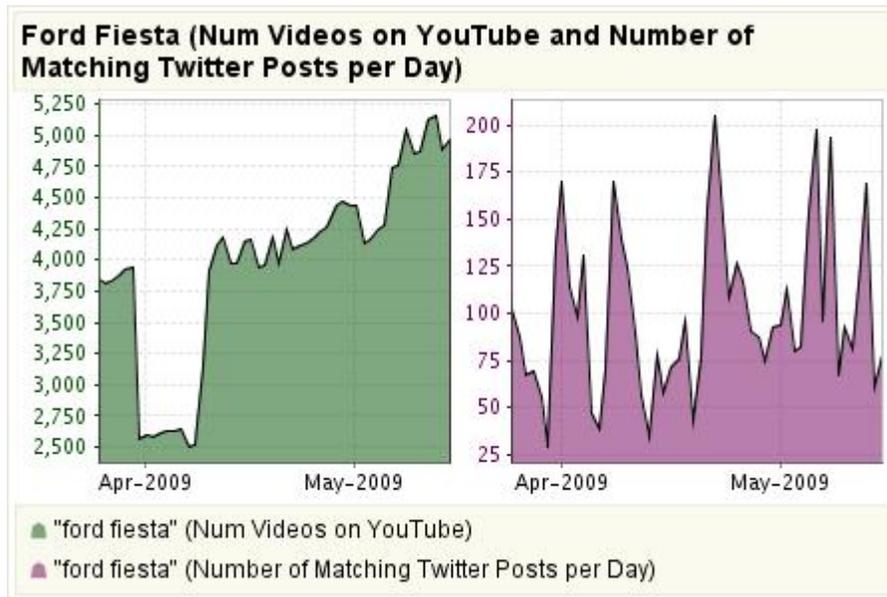
**Table 4**



*Source: Mashable, The Social Media Guide, Why Ford is Winning on the Social Web*

<http://mashable.com/2009/05/18/ford-social-media/>

Table 5



Source: Mashable, *The Social Media Guide, Why Ford is Winning on the Social Web*

<http://mashable.com/2009/05/18/ford-social-media/>

## **Old Spice**

Old Spice is a brand of cleansers and freshening products for men. The company's line of products includes body washes, deodorants, antiperspirants, body sprays, colognes and aftershaves. According to Proctor and Gamble's website, which acquired the brand in 1990, Old Spice was invented by the Shulton Company, founded in 1934 by William Lightfoot Schultz. The first Old Spice product, called Early American Old Spice for women, was introduced in 1937 in the U.S., closely followed by Old Spice for men.

Early American Old Spice was developed around a colonial theme. When Old Spice was introduced, William Lightfoot Schultz was interested in maintaining a colonial feel for those products and chose a nautical theme for Old Spice. Thus, sailing ships, in particular colonial sailing ships, were used as a trademark (PG.com)

According to Bloomberg Businessweek's Robert Berner, when P&G acquired Old Spice from the Shulton Company, it was already No. 1 in women's deodorant market with the brand Secret. Thus, P&G bought Old Spice specifically gain the upper hand on men's underarms. The company felt that since Old Spice was less well-known as a deodorant, it could help the brand shed the its graying image as "your father's aftershave" while keeping the masculine and rugged attributes of the product that Old Spice had garnered over the decades. P&G refocused the brand on performance by launching Old Spice High Endurance deodorant in 1994. It shed its the sailor-themed advertising and began targeted guys 18 to 34, challenging them to try the product or get their money back if not satisfied. Old Spice's business grew steadily, but P&G realized it wasn't able to appeal to men 25 to 45, who still remembered Old Spice as a relic from their father's era.

Therefore, P&G decided to target younger generation and aimed the brand at first-time deodorant users. Beginning in 1999, P&G reached out to tweens and teenagers by started handing out samples of High Endurance to fifth-grade health classes, covering 90% of the nation's schools.

In 2000, P&G launched Old Spice Red Zone, a more expensive sub-brand than High Endurance that offered more protection. Sales rose, with Old Spice edging out Right Guard as the top teen brand in 2001 (Berner, 2004).

However, P&G felt it needed to begin grassroots marketing to maintain marketshare. It handed out samples at skateboarding events and sponsored a contest for high-school football player of the year. In 2005, the company purchased ad time for Old Spice within video games, including Electronic Arts Inc.'s *NCAA Football 2005* game.

However, competitors were nipping at P&G's heels. Gillette launched Right Guard Xtreme in 2001, which featured edgier marketing and packaging. Unilever carved out an even edgier niche in the U.S. male deodorant business with the launch of Axe body spray in 2002, which was promoted with risqué television, Internet, and event advertising. The product, which was a combination deodorant and fragrance, proved hugely popular with young men. Old Spice launched a range of body sprays and body washes designed to fill and compete in the product category that Axe had created in the U.S. (Berner, 2004).

### *Campaign Story*

In 2010, Old Spice was trading water among competitors, and turned to advertising agency Wieden and Kennedy for help in creating a campaign that would

generate buzz. According to Wieden and Kennedy (W+K), the brand's challenge was that:

“With business slowing, Old Spice Body Wash was in need of a boost. With women making more than half of all body wash purchases, we as a company decided to target men and their ladies for the very first time. How could we get couples to have a conversation about body wash? How could we get women to stop buying ladies' scented products for their guys and choose Old Spice?”

(W+K Case Study Video)

Their answer to this question was launched on YouTube during Superbowl weekend and began airing on television shortly thereafter (W+K Case Study Video). The video, dubbed “The Man Your Man Could Smell Like,” featured the shirtless, muscular former NFL athlete Isaiah Mustafa in various poses and settings, speaking directly to “the ladies,” telling them that if they their man “stopped using ladies scented body wash and switched to Old Spice, he could smell like he's me.” And that “anything is possible when your man smells like Old Spice and not a lady.” During the video, he presents the viewers with an oyster containing “two tickets to that thing you love,” which later miraculously turned into a fistful of diamonds in his hand. He ends the video riding bareback on a white horse, and states simply, “I'm on a horse,” (YouTube, 2010).

The agency fueled buzz by airing the video during couple-friendly television timeslots and programs (W+K Case Study Video). However, a significant portion of the buzz came from user-generated content, as the video quickly became a popular subject of parody on YouTube by viewers, with over 1,150 parody response videos generated

(YouTube, 2011). According to W+K, after the initial launch of “The Man Your Man Could Smell Like,” the brand captured 75% of all conversations in the category with over half of this buzz generated by women in the first three months of 2010.

According to the agency, soon after, W+K and Old Spice decided to launch a second video campaign that was even more engaging. They strove to answer the question, “how could ‘The Man Your Man Could Smell Like’ have a conversation with his fans on a more intimate, personal level?” Their answer to this dilemma was dubbed “The Response Campaign” and was deployed in two and-a-half days, by team of creative, digital strategists, developers and producers who filmed 186 video responses to fans and celebrities culled from questions on Twitter, Facebook, and other social media portals that were launched as real-time answers and comments to specific individuals.

After day one of the campaign, Old Spice’s branded channel had 5.9 million YouTube views, which was more than Obama's presidential victory speech after 24 hours. By the second day, the brand secured 8 out the top 11 most popular videos on the web, and by the third day, the campaign eclipsed 20 million views. One week after launch, response videos had been seen more than 40 million times. Throughout the campaign, the brand's twitter following increased 2,700%, Facebook fan interaction went up 800%, traffic to oldspice.com increased 300% and Old Spice became the number one all-time most viewed branded channel on YouTube. Six months since the creation of the first The Man Your Man Could Smell Like video, the campaign generated more than 1.4 billion impressions for the brand (W+K Case Study Video).

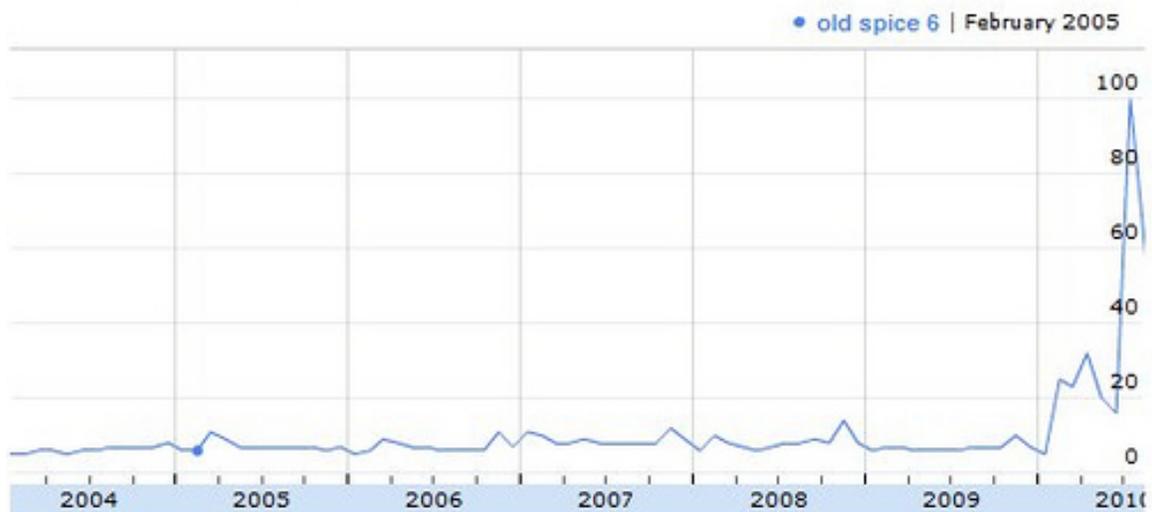
Response from the press and digital communities was mostly positive. Erick Shonfeld from technology blog Techcrunch.com wrote that

“[Old Spice] also just redefined the model for Promoted Trends. Old Spice is a promoted Trend, which takes you to the Old Spice Twitter account highlighting these videos as individual responses addressing each Twitter user who gets their own Old Spice commercial. The irony is that if Old Spice hadn’t paid to be a promoted Trend, it probably would have made it as a Trending Topic organically”  
 (Schonfeld, 2010)

W+K also reported that the campaign had a direct impact on sales. In 2010, they reported that 6 months after the launch of the videos, sales of Old Spice body wash had increased 27% from the past year. Sales were up 55% by May of 2010 and by August 2010, sales were up 107%, which meant that Old Spice had claimed the spot as the number one best-selling brand of body wash for men (W+K Case Study Video).

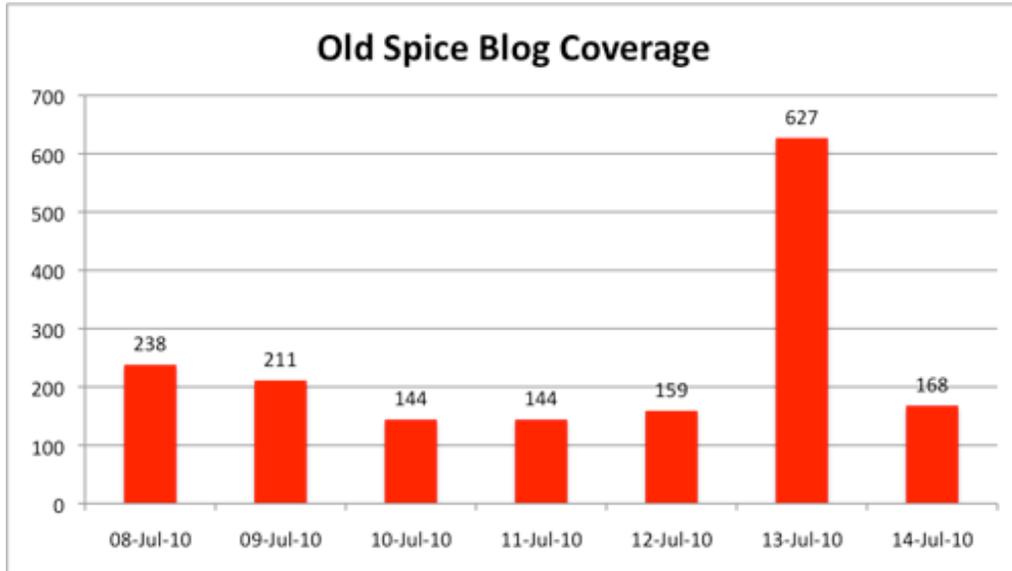
**Table 6**

**Interest Over Time for 'old spice'**



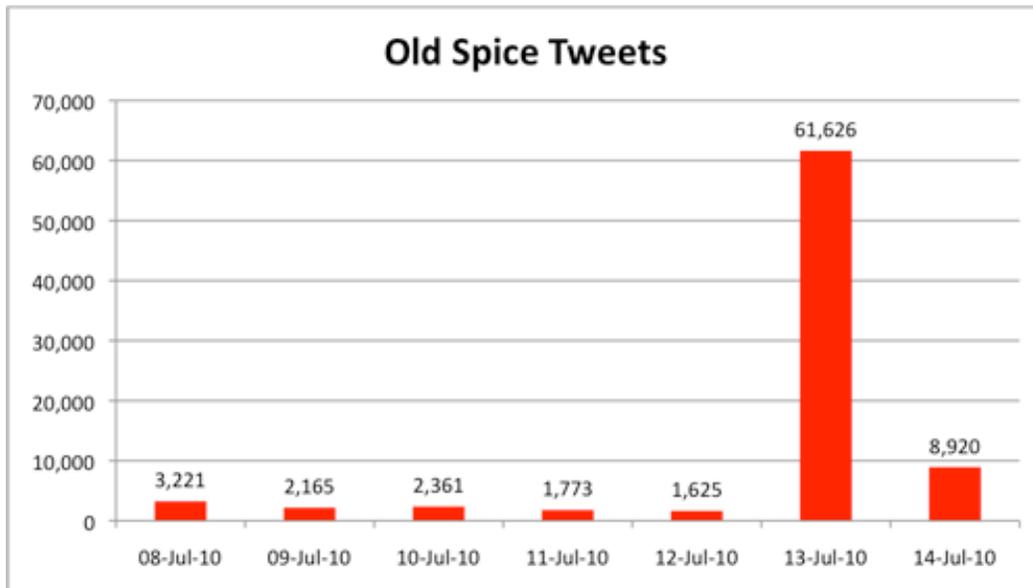
Source: *Who is in control of your brand? Old Spice campaign case study*  
<http://from.simontsmall.com/index.php/2010/08/12/old-spice-campaign-case-study/>

**Table 7**



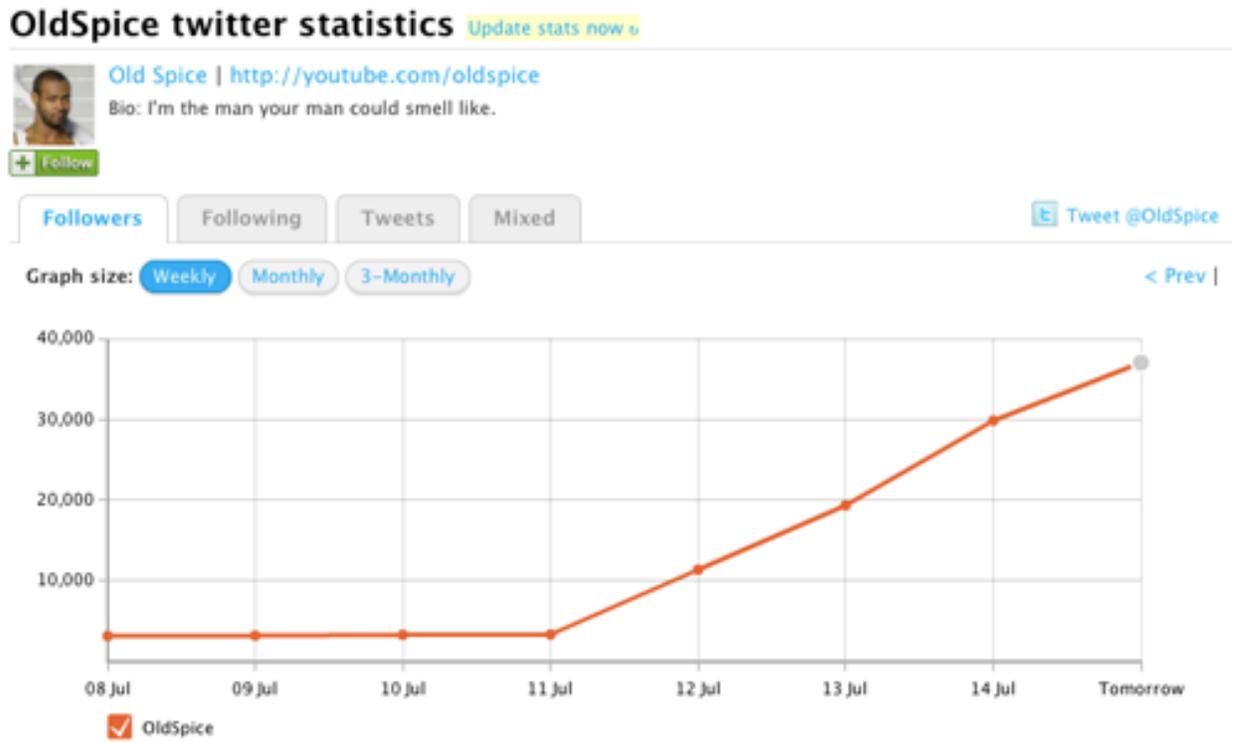
Source: *We Are Social, Social media buzz. Advantage: Old Spice*  
<http://wearesocial.net/blog/2010/07/social-media-buzz-advantage-spice/>

**Table 8**



Source: *We Are Social, Social media buzz. Advantage: Old Spice*  
<http://wearesocial.net/blog/2010/07/social-media-buzz-advantage-spice/>

Table 9



Source: We Are Social, Social media buzz. Advantage: Old Spice  
<http://wearesocial.net/blog/2010/07/social-media-buzz-advantage-spice/>

## **Southwest Airlines**

Southwest Airlines is a commercial airline company headquartered near Love Field in Dallas, Texas and was founded by Rollin King and Herb Keller. The airline began servicing Dallas, Houston and San Antonio in 1971. It currently operates over 550 aircraft in its fleet. According to Southwest's website, the company became a major airline in 1989 when it exceeded the billion-dollar revenue mark and is currently the United States' most successful low fare, high frequency, point-to-point carrier. The company operates more than 3,400 flights a day, making it the largest U.S. carrier based on domestic passengers carried as of December 31, 2010, serving 72 cities in 37 states. (Southwest.com, 2011)

After its initial beginnings, the airline began encountering several significant legal (and thus operational) setbacks. A few years after Southwest Airlines launched and began offering flights within Texas, the U.S. Congress passed the Airline Deregulation Act, establishing a national policy that Southwest believed “would take the government out of the business of regulating which routes an airline could fly.” (setlovetfree.com) The company began planning to offer interstate service from Love Field. Less than a year later, House Majority Leader Jim Wright, attached an amendment that banned any airline from engaging in interstate air commerce from Love Field to an unrelated bill. This bill later passed and became known as the Wright Amendment (setlovetfree.com). The law was an amendment to the International Air Transportation Act of 1979, restricting passenger flights out of Love Field to locations within Texas and to four neighboring states — Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and New Mexico. Although the amendment was modified twice to allow Alabama, Mississippi, Kansas and Missouri after the

Metroplex's annual air traffic began to exceed capacity, Southwest Airlines was still limited in its ability to compete with other airlines (Chang, 2011).

In 2004, Southwest launched a large-scale public relations effort to garner attention and support for a full repeal of the amendment, and created a website called [setlovetfree.com](http://setlovetfree.com). Southwest finally prevailed in repealing the amendment, and Love Field soon became one of Southwest Airlines' fastest growing markets, boosting its revenue from \$11 million in 2006 to \$113 million in 2007. Passenger volume increased from 1 million in 2005 to 1.45 million people in the third quarter of 2007, and by 2008 the airline had increased its number of destinations by 400% (Chang, 2011).

Southwest has been known for a number of firsts in the airline industry. Southwest hired its first black pilot in 1980, and in 1992, he was promoted and recognized as the first African American chief pilot of any major American airline. (Baltimore International Airport Press Release, 2005). Southwest was also the first airline to establish a home page on the Internet, and has set a trend as pioneering and introducing new tools for the digital realm ahead of its competitors. Southwest also claims the "Southwest Shortcut" feature on [southwest.com](http://southwest.com) as the first online tool that helps customers find the lowest fare based on availability over an entire month. Finally, in 2005, the airline became the first to introduce a downloadable desktop application to notify customers of exclusive offers. When mobile versions of the application were introduced in 2009 and 2010 on iPhone®, Blackberry® and Android™ platforms, Southwest was the first airline to offer this type of application on all three mobile platforms (Southwest.com, 2011).

Its customers have responded appreciatively by adopting the digital offerings at a high rate. As of March 2011, southwest.com was the 2nd largest travel site and largest airline site in terms of unique visits. During the first quarter of 2011, Southwest reported that a whopping 84% of its passenger revenues were booked via southwest.com and that more than 11 million people were subscribed to the company's weekly Click 'N Save e-mails. It also reported that over 81% of Southwest Customers checked in online or at a kiosk (Southwest.com, 2011).

One of the airline's key differentiators from its competitors is that it regularly offers low-priced or discounted fares. Southwest Airlines offers an average of 84 %of their seats at discount, and approximately 25% of those discount seats are still available when the timeframe to buy them expires. In 2011, 79% of all seats actually flown were at discount fares (Southwest.com, 2011). Southwest's business model relies on reducing aircraft turn around time and fuel hedging programs to keep costs low. Southwest has hedged more oil than any other airline, which has ensured the lowest prices on jet fuel following the spike in oil prices in 2007 and 2008 (seekingalpha.com, 2011). The company provides point-to-point, rather than hub-and-spoke, service (topics.nytimes.com, 2011).

The culture of Southwest is unique from many other airlines. Southwest's culture, emphasizes employees as the airline's "first customers" and passengers as the second, and flight attendants often run humorous contests with the passengers, notably by offering a free-round trip anywhere Southwest flies to the first passenger to show a sock with holes. Southwest believes their culture of shared goals, shared knowledge and mutual respect improves labor productivity and provides them a competitive advantage (Smith, 2004).

## *Social Media Incident*

On February 13, 2010, Hollywood director Kevin Smith, whose most notable films include *Clerks*, *Chasing Amy* and *Dogma*, was on board a Southwest Airlines flight in Oakland, California bound for Burbank when he was removed from the plane, allegedly over concerns he was too obese to fly safely (Lee, 2010). In reporting the incident, Chris Lee from the Los Angeles Times described Kevin as “one of the entertainment industry's most online-savvy operators -- a guy with over 1.6 million Twitter followers and the propensity to channel righteous indignation, as well as his own frequent humiliations, into 140-character dispatches.”

After he was ejected from the flight, and once inside the airport terminal, he sent several tweets to Southwest's twitter account criticizing the handling of the incident and mocking the airline's handling of the situation:

“I was wrongly ejected from the flight (even Suzanne eventually agreed). And \*\*\*\* your apologetic \$100 voucher, @SouthwestAir.”

“Wanna tell me I'm too wide for the sky? Totally cool. But fair warning, folks: IF YOU LOOK LIKE ME, YOU MAY BE EJECTED FROM @SOUTHWESTAIR.”

“But if I am, why wait til my bag is up, and I'm seated WITH ARM RESTS DOWN. In front of a packed plane with a bunch of folks who'd already I.d.ed me as ‘Silent Bob.’ So, @SouthwestAir, go \*\*\*\* yourself” (Twitter.com).

According to Lee “Smith...used almost every Information Age tool available -- his blog, social networking websites, a podcast and the 24-hour news cycle's insatiable churn -- to conflate a personally embarrassing ordeal into a larger contretemps about society's alleged mistreatment of overweight people.”

Smith later released an episode of his podcast devoted entirely to the incident, giving a lengthy description of his side of the story, in which he claimed that he had been able to lower the armrests completely and comfortably and claimed to have been repeatedly lied to by airline personnel. He referred to Southwest Airlines as the "Greyhound of the Air" and vowed to never fly with Southwest again (SModcast.com, 2010).

Southwest Airlines responded to Smith's tweets with several messages sent through their Twitter account (@Southwestair), which at the time had over 1 million followers. Southwest's social media managers replied to Smith soon after the incident, apologizing and saying they were trying to “make things right” (Twitter.com). However, the next day, the company posted a statement defending their decision entitled “Not So Silent Bob” which referred to a character Smith had played in the movie *Clerks* :

“Mr. Smith originally purchased two Southwest seats on a flight from Oakland to Burbank – as he's been known to do when traveling on Southwest. He decided to change his plans and board an earlier flight to Burbank, which technically means flying standby. As you may know, airlines are not able to clear standby passengers until all Customers are boarded. When the time came to board Mr. Smith, we had only a single seat available for him to occupy. We are responsible for the Safety and comfort of all Customers on the aircraft and therefore, we made

a judgment call that Mr. Smith needed more than one seat to complete his flight,”  
(blog.southwest.com, 2010)

In releasing this statement, Southwest disclosed Smith's personal travel details without his permission, stood by their decision to eject Smith and did not admit any fault on their end of the incident. Additionally, several members of the press criticized Southwest's handling of the incident, including Computerworld.com's Mitch Wagner, who declared that “The headline makes light of the situation and wouldn't do anything to pacify Smith, his outraged fans, and sympathetic fat people everywhere” (Wagner, 2011). However, on February 15<sup>th</sup>, Smith noted in a tweet a few days after the that , “in a current CNN.com home page poll, 58% of responders are on @Southwest Air's side! Guess it's time I shut up about it.” (Twitter.com, 2010).

## **Chapter 4: WOM and Source Credibility Best Practices and Key Learnings from Case Studies**

This chapter will begin with an examination of how Ford Motor Company's Fiesta Movement campaign implemented the tactics and strategy outlined by the researchers in chapter two. Similarly, next, the author will seek to illustrate how Old Spice was able to use source credibility and word-of-mouth techniques in their campaign to reach their target audience effectively. The chapter will end with an examination of when Southwest Airlines utilized each of the tactics outlined in the theories effectively, as well as when the company was not successful in achieving its communication goals.

### *Ford Motor Company*

Ford Motor Company's Fiesta Movement campaign is an excellent example of a post-decision word-of-mouth persuasive communication promotion for social media. All 100 brand ambassadors were each chosen because of their excellent source credibility as a speaker and influencer on their respective social media channels. The brand ambassadors were given a Ford Fiesta to initially test first, and then asked to share their impressions about the vehicle while they continued to drive and create online content throughout the campaign. As outlined by Dichter, an effective word-of-mouth speaker should fall under one of four involvement categories. Participants in The Fiesta Movement were encouraged to become product-involved by being given the guideline to create content solely centered around living with a Ford Fiesta. However, many ambassadors were also self-involved since they were specifically chosen because of their

online savvy and popularity within the sphere of social media. Ambassadors personally benefitted by participating in the project because of the added influence and attention that could be gained by becoming a “brand ambassador” in addition to their established influence within their social media communities. In addition to gaining attention, which is one of the speaker attributes of self-involvement that Dichter outlined in his research, ambassadors also were able to act as information insiders and brand pioneers because of the privilege of being one of the first people in the United States to have the opportunity to learn about and experience owning a Fiesta firsthand. Many ambassadors also sought confirmation about whether ownership of a Fiesta was the right choice for them by conversing and interacting with their followers online.

The Fiesta Movement had a range of different speaker types. The Ford Motor Company as an organization acted as a commercial authority through corporate promotion of the campaign; however, salespeople working for Ford such as Scott Monty and his marketing team also acted as commercial authorities by speaking out as individuals about the campaign and their experiences with the product. The brand ambassadors acted as speakers for the product on several different levels. First, because of their established online savvy and presence throughout the social media community, it could be said that the brand ambassadors were already minor Internet celebrities in their own right. In addition to being celebrities, they were also bearers of tangible interest, who demonstrated the perks and downsides of owning a Fiesta by documenting and demonstrating their experiences firsthand. Since Ford was explicitly targeting tech-loving individuals in the millennial generation, the ambassadors were chosen because of

their common interests already in common with their followers. Therefore, the ambassadors acted as “sharers of interest” as defined by Dichter.

The researcher also proposed that in order to be effective in word-of-mouth communications, consumers need to feel a “proof of friendship” with their speaker. Ford Fiesta ambassadors were able to accomplish this by conveying their personal experiences with the brand and by maintaining an exclusive group of insider information for their listeners. Only followers of the brand ambassadors would receive updates about videos, photos, posts, or tweets containing insider information about what the Fiesta was like to use every day. Since one of the criteria for being chosen as a brand ambassador was creativity and technology knowhow, the Fiesta Movement influencers were already easily able to produce creative, quirky multimedia communications to their audience. These inventive and often pieces were essentially a communication “gift package” to listeners as defined by Dichter. Lastly the ambassadors were able to establish a successful “proof of friendship” with their audiences by conveying their personal experience with the car, and by maintaining and deepening their kinship with their audiences by taking them along on their “Fiesta Movement” adventure.

Many of the tactics outlined in “How Word-of-Mouth Advertising Works” were followed closely by Ford. The campaign ensured success by establishing an intimate relationship with their target audience. The company chose social media as the sole medium to generate buzz. Social media platforms such as YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, which were used extensively throughout the campaign, lent themselves to a feeling of intimacy by allowing brand ambassadors followers to have a one-on-one, individual relationship with their audience. Dichter recommended that direct experience

was a powerful tactic to use in word-of-mouth communications, and Ford made direct experience with the Ford Fiesta for both the speaker and the listeners the foundation of the entire campaign. Additionally, ambassadors were able to showcase the brand's adventurous nature by taking the Fiesta on scavenger hunts and small "adventure" drives as part of their videos, posts, tweets for the Fiesta Movement.

The campaign used both the platform of social media as well as the ambassadors to help establish and cement source credibility and generate buzz. The ambassadors became "experts" on Fiesta car ownership throughout the 6 months of driving the vehicle and chronicling their journeys in detail. The intimate, more personalized communication nature, as well as the relaxed, casual and "anything goes" atmosphere of social media platforms such as Twitter, YouTube and Facebook helped establish trustworthiness for the brand by adding authenticity to the message. In addition, the company's decision to allow 3<sup>rd</sup> party ambassadors to have uncensored discussions with their audience about what they really thought of the cars showed the target audience that they had enough faith in their product that they didn't need to employ traditional ad-speak to sell the Fiesta. As mentioned previously, because of the ambassador's reach and status that they were able to develop prior to the campaign, their minor internet celebrity made them more attractive as speakers, giving them added source credibility. They were also classic examples of what Toni Eagar defined as "brand heros" by being well known in their consumption experience of a brand. Finally, by establishing and maintaining a kinship with their audiences, they increased their source credibility as a likable source of information and entertainment pertaining to "The Fiesta Movement." Overall, Ford was very thorough in utilizing each of the tactics and strategies outlined by Dichter to initiate a strong word-of-

mouth campaign, and tapped into 3<sup>rd</sup> party resources, as well as internal resources to ensure a high degree of source credibility.

### *Old Spice*

This author would argue that in contrast to Ford's Fiesta Movement post-decision messaging, Old Spice's The Man Your Man Could Smell Like campaign employed a successful pre-decision word-of-mouth strategy in order to persuade its audience. The campaign featured a character instead of actual firsthand users of the product and featured, but did not demonstrate, the use of the product in communications to the listeners. It also heavily featured message involvement as a persuasive tactic by peppering the messaging with catchphrases such as "I'm on a horse" and "Look at me, now look at your man, now back at me" and visually entertaining videos featuring Isaiah Mustafa riding a horse, holding an oyster that turns into diamonds, riding a motorcycle that materialized inside of a hot tub, and diving off of a waterfall. The brand also sought to gain attention from its audience through self-involved messaging and sought to assert superiority by standing apart from competitors with its unique creative tactics. The response campaign helped Old Spice assert superiority by inferring that its body wash made men more rugged and handsome and therefore more like Isaiah Mustafa if they used the products.

Isaiah Mustafa, as a former NFL player, acted a celebrity speaker for the brand. However, since he was also playing the character of "The Man Your Man Could Smell Like" this allowed him to act as more than one type of speaker in addition to being a celebrity. He was a salesperson for the product (and thus a commercial authority) as well

as a bearer of tangible evidence, since Mustafa was “The Man Your Man Could Smell Like” if he washes with Old Spice body wash.

As a speaker for the brand, Mustafa’s character also did an excellent job of incorporating verbal and non-verbal emotion when discussing the benefits, whether real or hyperbole, of using Old Spice. His rugged, enthusiastic tone of voice and theatrical actions throughout the videos of the campaign helped make the messaging more persuasive and entertaining to the audience.

The Old Spice campaign also utilized “proof of friendship” by anticipating audience attitudes, incorporating a “gift package sales message” as defined by Dichter, establishing an exclusive group throughout the response campaign, and establishing audience kinship through the personalized response video interactions generated for Twitter, YouTube and Facebook fans of the brand. By utilizing a messaged-involved communication strategy, Old Spice ensured that the messaging to fans would be an exciting, humorous and entertaining “gift package” to the target audience. The campaign messaging’s frequent use of humor, exaggeration, hyperbole and inference tapped into the audience’s attitudes by being “in” on the joke on and self-aware that it was a persuasive advertising message designed to entertain viewers and to sell body wash. The Response Campaign was a two-day, online-only event that the audience could turn into only if they followed the campaign’s buzz helped the audience feel like it was part of an exclusive, pop cultural event. The “exclusive group” approach added another notch of persuasive word-of-mouth messaging effectiveness to Old Spice’s belt.

Old Spice used attractiveness, likeability and trustworthiness throughout the campaign’s duration to strengthen the source credibility of the speaker. The company’s

choice to launch a major campaign that relied extensively on social media to generate buzz meant that it reaped benefits similar to Ford's. It relied on the more personalized, casual and "anything goes" atmosphere that Twitter, YouTube and Facebook offered to help establish trustworthiness for the brand by adding authenticity. In addition, the messaging strategy of humor and dynamic visual imagery helped appeal to the audience and add source credibility to the speaker by making the brand more likable. The brand also combined the physical attractiveness of Isaiah Mustafa's character as well as his celebrity status as a former NFL player to help secure source credibility and ensure effective persuasive communication. Overall, Old Spice utilized a strong word-of-mouth strategy and used social media to ensure an excellent level of source credibility.

### *Southwest Airlines*

Southwest Airlines differs from the first two cases in that the company was attempting to mitigate negative word-of-mouth communications from a key audience member (Kevin Smith), as well as maintain a positive word-of-mouth interaction with its core audience of followers, specifically on Twitter. Similar to Ford, Southwest could be said to have utilized a post-purchase strategy to its communication, since it mitigated a negative customer experience with Smith, as well as addressed questions and concerns from its current travelers through its social media portals.

The company used primarily a self-involvement communication strategy in addressing the Smith incident. It sought to remedy the situation by deploying messaging intended to "make things right" and win back over Smith and his fans and "convert" them back to the "gospel" of satisfied Southwest Airlines customers. The brand also used self-

involvement to garner attention towards its efforts to respond to the strategy in a professional and friendly manner, and to respond to Smith and attempt to resolve the situation. It sought to use the attention that it had gathered to persuade listeners that its product was fair, dependable and that the company cared about the consumer's welfare. Typically, Southwest also relied heavily on product involvement to express its "love" for its customers, the airline and Love Field. It also utilized the tactic of being an "information insider" by providing via Twitter and other social media platforms travel tips and exclusive deals and offers to followers.

Throughout the Smith social media incident, and when operating normally, Southwest's social media portals allowed the company to be a commercial authority speaker, specifically as an expert on addressing travel concerns and giving travel advice, and by acting as a salesperson promoting the airline's special offers and latest news. Also throughout the incident, Southwest attempted to act as a sharer of interest by acknowledging Smith's situation, apologizing for the negative experience and by understanding and responding to Smith's concerns.

In employing tactics to ensure a successful word-of-mouth communication strategy, Southwest expressed concern to its audience in general and to Smith personally about the situation. It also incorporated written, verbal language expressing disappointment that the situation turned out unhappily for Smith.

Southwest utilized proof of friendship by trying to anticipate the audience's attitude with its signature tongue-and-cheek tone. Specifically, during the Smith incident, the company incorporated this tone in its official response to the Smith incident, entitled "Not So Silent Bob," which was a play on Smith's popular character Silent Bob that first

appeared in his film *Clerks*. However, the tactic backfired, angering Smith and his fans, which were expecting a more serious and contrite message. Southwest typically employed the proof of friendship component of audience kinship on its Twitter platform by tweeting relevant travel information, deploying giveaway contests and sending cheerful @replies to its customers who mentioned their name.

Specific tactics that the airline used successfully include demonstrating experience with the product by answering customer questions and concerns via social media, communicating the airline's uniquely upbeat company climate and attitude towards the airline business and its customers, and by using the more intimate nature of social media platforms to convey a more intimate, caring attitude and atmosphere towards its followers.

Southwest utilized both a professional attitude and messaging through its social media customer relations team via Twitter during the Smith incident to maintain its image of expertise and trustworthiness to help bolster source credibility. It also maintained credibility by replying to Smith's messages quickly and addressing each of his concerns frequently, and in real-time via Twitter to show its audience that it was a trustworthy organization. While it did take a blow to its image for its tongue-in-cheek title of its response statement and for disclosing Smith's personal travel information, overall the company weathered the incident well, and, as Smith even admitted, Southwest was able to gain a majority of support for its side of the story.

## **Chapter 5: Limitations and Conclusion**

This chapter will illustrate limitations involved with comparing the communication theories to the case studies, as well as to illustrate limitations involved in the case studies themselves. Finally, this chapter will seek to summarize key learnings and takeaways for future marketers.

### *Limitations and Trends*

Throughout each of the cases, the companies utilized social media as a way to effectively bolster or improve its source credibility, either through trustworthiness that is inherent to the medium, or through using the medium to highlight its strong likability (in the case of Old Spice) or expertise (in the case of Southwest Airlines).

Each of the brand's campaigns tended to focus on one or two main areas of product involvement, and one key area of source credibility. None of the case studies featured other-involved product communication, thus the author was not able to identify an example in the campaign featuring this type of word-of-mouth communication within this writing.

Because of the occurrences in the Southwest Airlines case study were recent, and because the incident involving Smith was resolved in a relatively short period of time, the author was not able to find concrete documentation of any significant or lasting negative attitudinal or financial impact on the product or the company. The case was chosen by the author to illustrate how the company maintains source credibility and handles negative word-of-mouth interactions in a crisis, and to demonstrate both how Southwest acted

effectively and where its communication efforts were ineffective in the Smith incident. The case was also used to explain how the company handled social media word-of-mouth communication and source credibility tactics and strategies during a non-campaign period, in contrast to Ford and Old Spice's campaign-based communications. The Southwest case's dual-examination of these types of periods meant that the social media communications did not follow the researchers' source credibility and word-of-mouth persuasive communications models as closely as the previous two cases; Southwest's communications sought to mitigate a negative brand experience and maintain positive consumer attitudes without the structure of predetermined campaign messaging and targeting.

### *Conclusion*

In conclusion, by closely following and understanding each of the communication theories' guidelines and tactics as illustrated by the researchers, marketers can add significantly to the overall effectiveness of a campaign's communication strategy. By defining the origins and background of the internet that facilitated the invention of social media- specifically Twitter, Facebook and YouTube, it is hoped that marketers will gain a more comprehensive understanding of the medium. By better understanding the background of each of these platforms, the author hope that marketers will be able to communicate with their consumers more effectively as well as understand how to craft their messages to the mediums. Next, by documenting three recent marketing campaign cases that utilized social media at varying levels of effectiveness, the author hopes that marketers can better understand best practices as related to social media when conducting

future campaigns via Twitter, Facebook or YouTube. Finally, by examining how each of the three companies utilized the tactics and strategies involved in effective source credibility and word-of-mouth persuasive messaging, the author sought to illustrate how each of the theories' key findings could be implemented effectively in future campaigns, and to help marketers understand the limitations of both the theories and the mediums of social media.

## References

- Amos, C., Holmes, G., & Strutton, D. (2008). Exploring the relationship between celebrity endorser effects and advertising effectiveness. *International Journal of Advertising*, 27(2), 209-234. Retrieved from Business Source Complete database.
- Retrieved from  
<http://ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=32089829&site=ehost-live>
- Armstrong, H. (2009, August 28). Containing a capital letter or two [Web log post]. Retrieved from Dooce.com: <http://www.dooce.com/2009/08/28/containing-capital-letter-or-two>
- Berner, Robert. "Old Spice's Extreme Makeover." *Bloomberg Businessweek* 1 Nov. 2004: n. pag. *Bloomberg Businessweek*. Web. 28 Nov. 2011.  
<[http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/04\\_44/b3906116.htm](http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/04_44/b3906116.htm)>.
- "BWI Airport and Southwest Airlines Salute African American Aviation Pioneers." *BWI Airport*. MSS Communications, 22 Feb. 2005. Web. 28 Nov. 2011.  
<[http://web.archive.org/web/20070515071720/http://www.bwairport.com/press\\_room/press\\_releases/106/](http://web.archive.org/web/20070515071720/http://www.bwairport.com/press_room/press_releases/106/)>.
- Carlson, N. (2010, March). At last -- the full story of how facebook was founded. *Business Insider*. Retrieved from <http://www.businessinsider.com/how-facebook-was-founded-2010-3>
- Carlson, Nicolas. "Goldman to clients: Facebook has 600 million users." *MSNBC.com*. N.p., 5 Jan. 2010. Web. 21 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/40929239/ns/technology\\_and\\_science-tech\\_and\\_gadgets/#.TsssIWChMgw](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/40929239/ns/technology_and_science-tech_and_gadgets/#.TsssIWChMgw)>.
- Carl, W. (2008). The role of disclosure in organized word-of-mouth marketing programs.

*Journal of Marketing Communications*, 14(3), 225-241.

doi:10.1080/13527260701833839.

Catone, Josh. "Facebook Unveils Ad Strategy - Users Become Marketers." *Read Write Web*. N.p., 6 Nov. 2007. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <[http://rww.readwriteweb.netdna-cdn.com/archives/facebook\\_unveils\\_ad\\_strategy.php](http://rww.readwriteweb.netdna-cdn.com/archives/facebook_unveils_ad_strategy.php)>.

Catone, Josh. "Is Facebook Really Ruining Christmas?" *Read Write Web*. N.p., 21 Nov. 2007. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/facebook\\_moveon\\_beacon\\_privacy.php](http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/facebook_moveon_beacon_privacy.php)>.

Chang, Kirsten. *How Southwest Airlines Beat the Wright Amendment*. CNBC, 12 July 2011. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.cnbc.com/id/43714139/How\\_Southwest\\_Airlines\\_Beat\\_the\\_Wright\\_Amendment](http://www.cnbc.com/id/43714139/How_Southwest_Airlines_Beat_the_Wright_Amendment)>.

Consumer power: power at last. (2005, March 31). *The Economist*. Retrieved from [http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=3810230](http://www.economist.com/opinion/displaystory.cfm?story_id=3810230)

"Days of Double-Digit Growth in Social Network Users Are Over." *eMarketer*. eMarketer, 18 Mar. 2011. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://www.emarketer.com/Article.aspx?R=1008288>>.

Dichter, E. (1966, November/December). How word-of-mouth advertising works. *Harvard Business Review*, 44(6), 147-161. Retrieved from [http://sfx.lib.utexas.edu9003sfx\\_localsid=google&auinit=E&aualast=Dichter&atitle=How+word-of-mouth+advertising+works&title=Harvard+](http://sfx.lib.utexas.edu9003sfx_localsid=google&auinit=E&aualast=Dichter&atitle=How+word-of-mouth+advertising+works&title=Harvard+)

Douglas, N. (2007, March 12). Twitter blows up at SXSW Conference [Web log post]. Retrieved from Gawker: <http://gawker.com/tech/next-big-thing/twitter-blows-up-at-sxsw-conference-243634.php>

- Eagar, T. (2009). Defining the brand hero: Explorations of the impact of brand hero credibility on a brand community. *Advances in Consumer Research - North American Conference Proceedings*, 36, 488-493. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=43008803&site=ehost-live>
- “Facebook.com.” *Alexa*. Alexa, Oct. 2011. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://www.alexa.com/siteinfo/facebook.com#>>.
- Goldsmith, R. E., Lafferty, B. A., & Newell, S. J. (2000, Fall). The impact of corporate credibility and celebrity credibility on consumer reaction to advertisements and brands. *Journal of Advertising*, 29(3), 43-54.
- Gross, D. (2009, December 7). MIT wins \$40,000 prize in nationwide balloon-hunt contest. *CNN*. Retrieved from <http://www.cnn.com/2009/TECH/12/05/darpa.balloon.challenge/>
- Grossman, L. (2009, June 17). Iran protests: Twitter, the medium of the movement. *Time magazine*.
- “History of the Wright Amendment.” *Set Love Free*. N.p., Apr. 2004. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://web.archive.org/web/20050507180104/http://www.setlovetfree.com/historyofwright.html>>.
- Hopkins, Jim. “Surprise! There’s a Third YouTube Co-founder.” *USA Today* 11 Oct. 2006: n. pag. *USA Today*. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/2006-10-11-youtube-karim\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/tech/news/2006-10-11-youtube-karim_x.htm)>.
- Hovland, C. I., & Weiss, W. (1951). The influence of source credibility on communication effectiveness. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 15, 633–650.

- Hovland, C., I. L. Janis, and H. H. Kelley (1953). *Communication and Persuasion*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
- Jansen, J. (2009, November). One in five tweets is brand related . *Functional Ingredients* , (92), 33. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=44916974&site=ehost-live>
- Jacob, C. (2009, December 5). DARPA's giant red balloons officially at large [Web log post]. Retrieved from Gizmodo: <http://gizmodo.com/5419589/darpas-giant-red-balloons-officially-at-large>
- Jo, S. (2005). The effect of online media credibility on trust relationships. *Journal of Website Promotion*, 1(2), 57-78. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=a9h&AN=18830108&site=ehost-live>
- Kazeniak, Andy. "Social networks: Facebook takes over top spot, Twitter climbs." *Compete Pulse*. N.p., 9 Feb. 2009. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://blog.compete.com/2009/02/09/facebook-myspace-twitter-social-network/>>.
- Klaassen, A. (2009, September 14). Paid tweets just as healthy as organic word-of-mouth? *Advertising Age*, 80(30), 1, 45. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=44183812&site=ehost-live>
- Levy, S. (2007, April 7). Twitter: is brevity the next big thing? *Newsweek*. Retrieved from <http://www.newsweek.com/id/35289>

- Lipsman, A. (2009, September 2). What Ashton vs. CNN foretold about the changing demographics of twitter [Web log post]. Retrieved from ComScore:  
[http://blog.comscore.com/2009/09/changing\\_demographics\\_of\\_twitter.html](http://blog.comscore.com/2009/09/changing_demographics_of_twitter.html)
- Lisco, C. (2010, March 2). Twitter Stats Galore [Web log post]. Retrieved from Prose and Conrad: <http://proseandconrad.com/twitter-stats-galore>
- Lord, K., & Putrevu, S. (2009). The effects of informational and transformational motivations on responses toward celebrity endorsements. *Advances in Consumer Research: Asia-Pacific Conference Proceedings*, 8, 291-293. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=43492305&site=ehost-live>
- Malik, O. (2009, February 1). A brief history of Twitter [Web log post]. Retrieved from Gigaom: <http://gigaom.com/2009/02/01/a-brief-history-of-twitter/>
- Marketing budgets spiral towards social. (2010, March 2). *eMarketer*. Retrieved from <http://www.emarketer.com/Article.aspx?R=1007540>
- McNeill, Christi. "Not So Silent Bob." *Nuts About Southwest*. Southwest Airlines, 14 Feb. 2010. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://www.blogsouthwest.com/blog/not-so-silent-bob>>.
- Metz, Cade. "Facebook turns out light on Beacon." *The Register*. N.p., 23 Sept. 2009. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.theregister.co.uk/2009/09/23/facebook\\_beacon\\_dies/](http://www.theregister.co.uk/2009/09/23/facebook_beacon_dies/)>.
- Morgan, J. (2009, March 5). Twitter demographics [Web log post]. Retrieved from Social Media Today: <http://www.socialmediatoday.com/SMC/78505>

- Morozov, E. (2009, June 17). Iran elections: a Twitter revolution? *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/discussion/2009/06/17/DI2009061702232.html>
- Morrissey, B. (2010, February 15). Does social sell? *Brandweek* , 51(7), 8-9. Retrieved from <http://ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/login?url=http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=bth&AN=48190829&site=ehost-live>
- Ohanian, R. (1991). The impact of celebrity spokespersons' perceived image on consumers' intention to purchase. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 31(1), 46-54. Retrieved from Business Source Complete database.
- "Old Spice." *P&G*. Proctor & Gamble, 2010. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.pg.com/en\\_CA/product\\_card/pb\\_oldspice.shtml](http://www.pg.com/en_CA/product_card/pb_oldspice.shtml)>.
- "Old Spice: Responses Case Study." *Creativity-Online*. N.p., 4 Aug. 2010. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://creativity-online.com/work/old-spice-responses-case-study/20896>>.
- Olson, P. (2009, September 2). A Twitterati calls out Whirlpool . *Forbes*. Retrieved from <http://www.forbes.com/2009/09/02/twitter-dooce-maytag-markets-equities-whirlpool.html>
- Pilon, M. (2009, February 23). Better living through Twitter? [Web log post]. Retrieved from The Wallet: <http://blogs.wsj.com/wallet/2009/02/23/better-living-through-twitter/>
- Protesters rally for Mousavi in election dispute* [Television broadcast]. (2009, June 15). MSNBC. Retrieved from [http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/31365097/ns/world\\_news-mideastn\\_africa/page/2/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/31365097/ns/world_news-mideastn_africa/page/2/)

- Rosmarin, Rachel. "Open Facebook." *Forbes* 11 Sept. 2006: n. pag. *Forbes.com*. Web. 21 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.forbes.com/2006/09/11/facebook-opens-up-cx\\_rr\\_0911facebook.html](http://www.forbes.com/2006/09/11/facebook-opens-up-cx_rr_0911facebook.html)>.
- Sagolla, D. (2009, January 30). How Twitter Was Born [Web log post]. Retrieved from 140 Characters: <http://www.140characters.com/2009/01/30/how-twitter-was-born/>
- Schonfeld, Erick. "Liveblogging Facebook Advertising Announcement (Social Ads + Beacon + Insights)." *Tech Crunch*. N.p., 6 Nov. 2007. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://techcrunch.com/2007/11/06/liveblogging-facebook-advertising-announcement/>>.
- Schonfeld, Erick. "Old Spice Man Answers Tweets On YouTube—Ropes In Kevin Rose, Alyssa Milano, And Justine Bateman." *Tech Crunch*. N.p., 13 July 2010. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://techcrunch.com/2010/07/13/old-spice-tweets-youtube/>>.
- Small, Simon. "Old Spice Campaign Case Study." *Who Is In Control of Your Brand*. N.p., 12 Aug. 2010. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://from.simontsmall.com/index.php/2010/08/12/old-spice-campaign-case-study/>>.
- Smith, Gene. "Culture is the key at Southwest Airlines." *Emerald Insight for Managers*. N.p., Feb. 2005. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://managers.emeraldinsight.com/quality/articles/pdf/southwest.pdf>>.
- Smith, Kevin. "Smodcast #106: Go Fuck Yourself, Southwest Airlines." *Smodcast*. N.p., 13 Feb. 2010. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://smodcast.com/episodes/go-fuck-yourself-southwest-airlines/>>.

Story, Louise. "To Aim Ads, Web Is Keeping Closer Eye on You." *The New York Times*

10 Mar. 2008: n. pag. *The New York Times*. Web. 28 Nov. 2011.

<[http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/10/technology/10privacy.html?\\_r=1&adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1322535774-C0/pN9fySK0NjsoKv3bsQw](http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/10/technology/10privacy.html?_r=1&adxnnl=1&adxnnlx=1322535774-C0/pN9fySK0NjsoKv3bsQw)>.

Tabak, Alan J. "Hundreds register for new facebook website." *The Harvard Crimson* 9

Feb. 2004: n. pag. *The Harvard Crimson*. Web. 21 Nov. 2011.

<<http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2004/2/9/hundreds-register-for-new-facebook-website/>>.

Tapscott, Don, and Anthony D. Williams. *Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything*. New York: Penguin, 2007. Print.

Twitter registers 1,500 per cent growth in users. (2010, March 4). *New Statesman*. Retrieved from <http://www.newstatesman.com/digital/2010/03/twitter-registered-created>

Van Grove, J. (2009, January 21). 40 of the best Twitter brands and the people behind them [Web log post]. Retrieved from Mashable: <http://mashable.com/2009/01/21/best-twitter-brands/>

Weber, H. (2009, October 12). Low-cost airlines all a-twitter with customers. In *ABC News* [News article]. Retrieved from <http://abcnews.go.com/Travel/wirestory?id=8811383&page=2>

Wells, Roy. "41.6% of the US Population Has a Facebook Account." *Social Media Today*. N.p., 8 Aug. 2010. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://socialmediatoday.com/index.php?q=roywells1/158020/416-us-population-has-facebook-account>>.

“With Low Cost Business Model, Southwest Airlines Is Poised for Growth.” *Seeking Alpha*. N.p., 19 May 2011. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://seekingalpha.com/article/270840-with-low-cost-business-model-southwest-airlines-is-poised-for-growth>>.

Wolverton, Troy. “Amazon Opens Web Services Shop.” *CNet*. N.p., 17 July 2002. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <[http://news.cnet.com/Amazon-opens-Web-services-shop/2100-1017\\_3-944541.html](http://news.cnet.com/Amazon-opens-Web-services-shop/2100-1017_3-944541.html)>.

“Wright Amendment Reform Act of 2006 Enacted Into Law; Southwest Airlines Offers Customers \$99 One-Way Fares and Increased Travel Options From Dallas Love Field.” *PRNewswire*. N.p., 17 Oct. 2006. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://phx.corporate-ir.net/phoenix.zhtml?c=92562&p=irol-newsArticle&ID=917522&highlight=>>>.

Yadav, Sid. “Facebook – the complete biography.” *Mashable*. N.p., 25 Aug. 2006. Web. 21 Nov. 2011. <<http://mashable.com/2006/08/25/facebook-profile/>>.

*YouTube*. Google, 2011. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <[http://www.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=the+man+your+man+could+smell+like+parody&aq=1&oq=the+man+your+man+cow](http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=the+man+your+man+could+smell+like+parody&aq=1&oq=the+man+your+man+cow)>.

*YouTube.com*. Google, Oct. 2011. Web. 28 Nov. 2011. <<http://www.youtube.com>>.