Twitter First: Changing TV News 140 Characters at a Time

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Abstract

The diffusion of Twitter has changed the gatekeeping process and flow of information in television news. Because of Twitter, the power of news delivery is now in the hands of newsroom employees who, in the past, were not employed as storytellers. This study qualitatively examines how Twitter has altered the "gates" and the flow of information in television newsrooms in San Antonio, Texas, the 37th largest television market, and quantitatively analyzes how stations and employees are using Twitter. The data show Twitter is currently being used primarily for another function, not as a tool to deliver breaking news.

Gatejumping: Twitter, TV News and the Delivery of Breaking News

Introduction

The increasingly familiar phrase "Web first" is a rallying cry for newspapers still trying to adapt to the digital world. It means stories are published first to the Web before they are published online. It is a reminder of the massive changes in the industry and a signifier of the differences in routines for journalists. While that particular saying may not be uttered much in television newsrooms, the mindset is still there. All journalists, no matter which medium, are reminded that news happens in real time and cannot wait until the 5, 6 or 10 p.m. newscasts or morning paper to be released to the public. For instance, when a gunman walked into the Discovery Channel headquarters in Washington, D.C. in September of 2010, the news did not wait to break on NBC, CBS, ABC, MSNBC, CNN or Fox News. It broke on Twitter – through a stream of real-time tweets from inside the Discovery building. Twitter users even captured the first picture of the gunman and the SWAT team arriving at the scene (Farhi, 2010).

Journalists are taking note of the resources citizens are using to pass along information to the public. Such examples show that the mindset of "Web first" needs to be updated with a specific destination. Indeed, Twitter has emerged as the go-to tool for journalists to provide instant dissemination of information from several different sources, both official and unofficial (Hermida, 2010).

The majority of television newsrooms across the United States are currently using Twitter with high frequency. According to a recent study by the Radio Television Digital News Association (2010), or RTDNA, and Hofstra University, 77% of television newsrooms have a Twitter account, with more than 70% saying they either use the micro-blogging service constantly or, at the very least, daily.

Many consider gatekeeping theory to be the core theory of guidance in the news business. Some, Berkowitz (1990) for instance, used gatekeeping as a predictive measure; this study, however, will use gatekeeping as a descriptive framework to explain how Twitter is affecting the news business. Previous research, Hermida (2010) for example, has alluded to the changes in gatekeeping brought about by social media. This study explains how Twitter is changing the typical flow of information, how television newsrooms are delivering the news and, in addition, which newsroom employees are delivering the news. It does so through an examination of breaking news coverage. Based on the author's decade of experience in television news, the typical flow of a breaking news story (often interchangeably called a spot news story) is as follows: an assignment editor hears about the event over a police scanner and dispatches a photographer to the scene to get initial information and shoot video and interviews; the photographer is sometimes accompanied by a reporter – if not, and the spot news event warrants it, a reporter will be sent to the scene; information is then relayed to a producer, who then writes a script for the anchorman or anchorwoman to deliver to the audience.

Brogan and Smith (2010) coined the phrase "gatejumping" to describe marketing talents on the Web. According to Brogan and Smith (2010, p.41), gatejumping is finding "a better way to do things while everyone else is too busy to notice." For instance, whereas traditional radio is a gatekeeper industry, podcasts are gatejumpers. People Magazine is a gatekeeper, while gossip

blogger Perez Hilton is a gatejumper (Brogan & Smith, 2010). This study uses the term gatejumping in a different, more literal way. Twitter allows for news to jump the traditional flow of gates and reach the audience. When Twitter is used in its most efficient and effective manner, it is possible for a newsroom employee who is traditionally only involved in the earliest of gatekeeping decisions to now have a direct relationship with the audience.

It is important to keep in mind this study documents a phenomenon that currently does not have a conclusion. Studies like this take a snapshot of current-day communication for the basis of communication history - whether Twitter remains a key role in television news or not.

Literature Review

Gatekeeping theory is one of the oldest theories in the history of mass communication research (Shoemaker, Eichholz, Kim, & Wrigley, 2001). At its core, gatekeeping is the decision process that determines why one story makes air or print and another does not. Shoemaker et al. (2001, p. 233) defined gatekeeping as "the process by which the vast array of potential news messages are winnowed, shaped and prodded into those few that are actually transmitted by the news media." Shoemaker et al. (2001) also noted that gatekeeping involves more than simple story selection. It includes how messages are told to the public, how much time each story receives on the broadcast or how much space it receives in a newspaper and the tone of each story (Shoemaker, et al., 2001). In addition, Shoemaker et al. (2001, p. 233) defined gatekeepers as "either the individuals or the sets of routine procedures that determine whether items pass through the gates."

While gatekeeping theory is a core theory of mass communication, its initial purpose was food related. German psychologist Kurt Lewin (1947) developed gatekeeping theory in 1947

while conducting research on different factors that would entice women in Iowa to buy more meat products for their households. Lewin's (1947) original work found that women are in charge of the "gates" in the home through which decisions pass. These decisions ultimately determine which food will be grown or purchased and served at the dinner table. Lewin (1947, p. 145) noted his theory of gates "holds not only for food channels but also for the traveling of a news item through certain communication channels in a group." That idea sparked decades of research that continues today.

David Manning White took Lewin's theory of gates and applied it to newspapers. White (1964) studied the decisions of a wire editor to determine why certain stories made the next day's paper and why other stories did not. White (1964, p. 163) found the process might involve several gatekeeping steps taken by several people, from "reporter to rewrite man, through bureau chief to 'state' file editors at various press association offices" – however the final say came from the last gatekeeper, the editor. White (1964) found the editor's decision-making process to be highly subjective and based on the editor's own personal experiences and attitudes.

Berkowitz (1990) suggested a refining of gatekeeping theory as it applies to television news. He found that television gatekeeping differs from that of a "lone wire editor sitting next to a pile of stories and making decisions based on either newsworthiness or personal preferences" (Berkowitz, 1990, p. 66). Instead, Berkowitz (1990) learned television gatekeepers base decisions on gut instincts about what makes a good television newscast and gatekeeping in television is much more of a group process when compared to newspaper gatekeeping. Berkowitz (1990) found television news stories face several gates before making air. He also suggested certain types of stories could prevent other types of stories from making air. For instance, "spot news closed the gate on planned event stories" (Berkowitz, 1990, p. 66).

More recently, researchers began examining new media effects on gatekeeping theory. Singer (2001) looked at the differences in story selection between the print and online versions of newspapers. Singer (2001) found, at least in 1998 (the time of her data collection), that newspapers' online editions were much more focused on local content than the print editions. More pertinent to this study, Singer stated that online editions cause newspapers to surrender some of their traditional gatekeeping functions. According to Singer (2001, p. 66), "providing a link to 'wire.ap.org,' the online version of the Associated Press, is quite a different thing from selecting which wire stories are of such significance or interest that they merit inclusion in the day's paper." Singer (2001, p. 66) went on to note that if newspapers continue this trend online, "Mr. Gates may find himself out of a job." In other words, Singer hinted that online journalism could eventually kill the need for gatekeeping. In her 2001 work, Singer touched on two other topics important for the purposes of this study. First, she used the term 'shovelware' to describe content that appeared in the print edition of a newspaper and was simply shoveled onto the Web with no changes except for the mark-up language needed to become a part of the Web. Second, Singer (2001, p. 78) noted each Internet user "can, and does, create in essence a 'Daily Me' consisting of items important to him or her." Singer (2001, p. 78) said this "personalized world view is right at the user's fingertips, in the same medium in which the online newspaper also exists."

Bruns (2003, p. 2) expanded on this idea of news consumers going online to bypass traditional news outlets and, instead, turning "directly to first hand information providers." Bruns (2003) suggested the World Wide Web has put gatekeeping decisions in the hands of anyone with information, not just journalists. In addition, these responsibilities are also passed down to the user, who acts as a gatekeeper while surfing the World Wide Web (Bruns, 2003). Because of

the immense amount of information available online and the lack of concern over space (which is prevalent in print and television newsrooms), Bruns (2003) suggested a new approach for online news: 'gatewatching.' According to Bruns, gatewatchers are not reporters. Instead, a gatewatcher is a combination of a traditional gatekeeper and a news/information aggregator. Bruns (2003, p. 8) stated, "Gatewatchers fundamentally publicize news (by pointing to sources) rather than publish it (by compiling an apparently complete report from the available sources)."

In their study of bloggers, Hayes, Singer and Ceppos (2007) said this trend toward news aggregation on the Web is a double-edged sword. According to the study (Hayes, Singer & Ceppos, 2007, p. 270), aggregation "excludes as well as includes, and much of what is excluded may be valuable to civic knowledge." They acknowledged that the same is true of journalists, saying, "Aggregation is, in essence, a gatekeeping role" (Hayes et al., 2007 p. 270).

As for the ethics of online journalism, Singer (2003) noted the current lack of a rulebook. She found many journalists believe the Web needs its own guidelines, while others think traditional rules can and should be enforced upon the online world. Singer (2003) mentioned two particular issues as the biggest ethical dilemmas of online journalism, one of which is particularly relevant to Twitter: the capacity for speed. Singer (2003, p. 152) noted critics of online journalism believe it to be "untrustworthy because of its emphasis on getting information fast rather than getting it right." Without gatekeepers for quality control, Singer (2003, p. 153) said some believe "the quantity of the news product increases, but its quality is likely to be diluted." On the other hand, "the potential for speed makes professional judgment regarding the news more vital than ever" (Singer, 2003, p. 153). Singer found the new journalist helps the audience make sense of the news that exists while not deciding what they should or should not know.

Definition of Twitter

Twitter is on an astonishing four-year ride. Evan Williams and Biz Stone launched the free service in August 2006 (Farhi, 2009). However, it was not until its exposure at the South By Southwest Interactive Festival in March 2007 in Austin, Texas when Twitter skyrocketed onto the national (and international) scene.

Twitter is classified as a micro-blog, as well as a "new media technology that enables and extends our ability to communicate, sharing some similarities with broadcast" (Hermida, 2010, p. 298). Users are able to send messages, called tweets, with a maximum of 140 characters to the people who choose to follow them. Many tweets contain links to articles, videos or other media. Twitter also allows users to reply to others (in public and, if the other user is following you, in private via a direct message, or DM) and search for real-time information. By September 2010, Twitter surpassed 145 million registered users (Van Grove, 2010). The service unofficially hit the 20-billion tweet mark in July 2010 (Ostrow, 2010) and a recent Pew Center poll found 85% of Americans knew of Twitter ("Political Knowledge," 2010).

Recent numbers show Twitter tends to skew toward an older audience. More than 40% of its users are 35-49 years old (Farhi, 2009). Those users are prime viewers of news and information. In fact, analysts say Twitter users are "two to three times more likely to visit a leading news Web site than the average person" (Farhi, 2009, p. 30).

Media personalities use Twitter as a source of delivering news and opinion, sharing links and interacting with viewers. And there is quite the audience available. Rachel Maddow (@Maddow), host of MSNBC's "The Rachel Maddow Show," currently has 1.7 million followers on Twitter. More than 149,000 people subscribe to tweets from "CBS Evening News" host Katie Couric (@KatieCouric). Even local news anchors and reporters develop decent-sized

followings. Kim Fischer (@TxNewsGirl), a reporter at KXAS in Dallas, has 3,900 followers. However, one of the most prolific journalist-tweeters works behind the camera. Jim Long (@NewMediaJim) is a photographer for NBC News. On average, he delivers 40 tweets a day to his 41,000+ followers. Most of his tweets are replies to people who follow him.

In its brief history, Twitter has already contributed in breaking several huge stories. Reports of Michael Jackson's death comprised 30% of tweets in the hours following on June 25, 2009 (Cashmore, 2009). When a US Airways jet crashed into the Hudson River, news reached the public through a tweet and a picture from a Twitter user 15 minutes before mainstream media were on the airwaves (Beaumont, 2009). Iranian citizens protesting 2009 election results used Twitter as a voice that reached millions around the world (Morozov, 2009).

Technologies such as Twitter have created new means for news organizations to communicate with viewers or readers. Picard (2010), however, viewed this as a double-edged sword for the news organization itself. Picard (2010, para. 15) said "the content that news organizations produce (at a cost) is distributed by others, thus removing the need or desire for many people to seek out the original sources of the information." Picard believed this could eventually have a disastrous effect on moneymaking efforts of the news organization. Picard (2010) also noted that, as of now, social media tools like Twitter appear to be more valuable to news organizations in large, metropolitan areas than small-town news outlets.

While examining press coverage of Twitter, Arceneaux and Schmitz Weiss (2010, p. 2) noted Twitter is still at a stage where it could turn out to be the "app de jour that will fade from the limelight, or it could become a staple of daily life." Their study found speed of delivery to be one of the repeated messages of Twitter press coverage (Arceneaux & Schmitz Weiss, 2010). As quoted by Arceneaux and Schmitz Weiss (2010, p. 7), Associated Press writer Sam Dolnick said

the "lightning-quick updates" available via Twitter provide "further evidence of a sea change in how people gather their information in an increasingly Internet-savvy world."

In addition, Hermida (2010, p. 300) found "indications that journalism norms are bending as professional practices adapt to social media tools such as micro-blogging." Using the Iranian elections mentioned above as an example, Hermida (2010) noted that news organizations were promoting minute-by-minute blogs that contained a mixture of Twitter messages, unverified information and traditional news accounts of what was happening in Iran. Hermida (2010, p. 300) also noted that a few months before the Iranian elections, the BBC included "unverified tweets filtered by journalists" as part of its breaking news coverage of the Mumbai terror attacks. The network said it was merely monitoring and passing along information as quickly as it could. Hermida (2010) concluded this process of filtration only maintains and enforces the traditional gatekeeping role of journalists, even when applied to new media like Twitter.

Based on previous research and the author's personal experiences in the television news industry, this study proposes the following research questions:

- RQ1: How has Twitter changed the levels of gates and allowed non-anchor and non-reporter newsroom employees to become *de facto* reporters, particularly during spot news situations?
- RQ2: What are the main functions of Twitter accounts in television newsrooms?

Methodology

To answer the first research question, this study used a qualitative case study approach. A day with major breaking news in San Antonio, Texas, the 37th largest television market in the

country, was qualitatively selected to highlight the effectiveness and efficiency of Twitter in a breaking situation.

To answer the second research question, data were collected from one market (San Antonio) and quantitatively analyzed, much like Berkowitz' (1990) gatekeeping study. Accounts of all known working journalists in the newsroom (anchors, management, producers, reporters, photographers, assignment editors), weather (meteorologists, producers), traffic and web editors and official station accounts from San Antonio were selected for this study. Accounts were found via a combination of personal knowledge, lists on station websites, Twitter lists established by Twitter users and conversations with newsroom employees. As a last resort, a simple scroll-through of the "following" lists of each user turned up a few accounts. A cut-off date of September 23, 2010 was established to finalize the list. A total of 60 accounts were followed: 24 from KSAT, 22 from WOAI, seven from KENS and seven from KABB.

In addition, some journalists had their accounts set to private and did not respond to requests to follow them. They were not included in this study.

Next, Twitter lists for each of the four stations were created and each journalist's Twitter account was attached to its respective station list. Though not an essential step, this helped eliminate confusion and speeded up the coding process.

Ten days worth of tweets were selected for coding. A website called "random.org" was used for date selection. September 1, 2010 and October 15, 2010 were chosen as the start and end dates for possible selection. Random.org generated the following dates for coding: September 2, September 9, September 15, September 17, September 21, September 23, September 28, October 8, October 11 and October 13. In all, 2,293 tweets were collected for analysis.

The data were coded using a variation of guidelines developed by University of Texas professor Dominic Lasorsa ("Social Media," 2010). Lasorsa (2010) outlined five categories he and his students use to code tweets for classroom exercises:

- Breaking news (alerts or updates as news happens)

- Self-promotion (publicizing a story on that particular station)

- Lifecasting (daily chitchat about personal issues)

- Seeking information (a request for story tips or updates)

- Retweet (someone else's message that is forwarded to others)

After an email conversation with Lasorsa, his guidelines were modified for the purpose of this paper. Each tweet was coded into one of five categories. These categories are essentially the same as Lasorsa uses, except for the replacement of one category. New names were applied to some of the categories:

- Breaking News (alerts or updates as news happens)

- Promotion (publicizing a story on that particular station or the website)

- Daily Chatter (chitchat about personal issues)

- Viewer Participation (a request for story tips, photos or updates)

- Non-breaking news (news items that are pertinent to the moment, but not breaking)

A total of 2,293 tweets were collected for analysis. Two graduate students performed a coding sample of 230 tweets, or 10 percent, with 98 percent reliability. One of the graduate students then solely coded the remaining 2,063 tweets.

Statistical tests were not run on these data since inferences are not being made on other markets. These data merely paint a picture of what is happening specifically in San Antonio. Other markets should be able to look at this study and compare and contrast their own practices, however. There is also reason to think this may affect a national standard because the people employed in markets often come from markets around the country. In San Antonio's case, each television stations is a national company which have their own rules and standards they apply to their properties around the United States. This is a rule-based, tradition-driven industry and discipline. So while there is no defined national population on which to base an inferential statistics, it is reasonable to think these stations employ patterns and practices used by other stations across the United States.

Results

As stated above, a case study approach was used for the purposes of this paper. A date with significant breaking news was selected to highlight the effectiveness of Twitter in terms of real-time news delivery from a variety of sources.

On the night of July 28, 2010, the San Antonio Police Department responded to a triple-murder suicide on the city's northwest side. The shooting happened around 8:30 pm, an hour and a half before the late-evening newscasts. However, the city of San Antonio, or at least those following the accounts of pertinent journalists, learned of the story on Twitter.

At 8:32 pm, KABB's assignment desk (@KABBDesk) sent the first tweet with a mention of it, citing police scanner chatter of a shooting.

"SAPD scanners say officers are heading out to the 17000 block of Fawn Crossing for a multiple shooting scene." - @KABBDesk

This information was delivered 28 minutes before KABB was on the air with its 9 pm newscast. At 9:04 pm, four minutes after the newscast started, KABB reporter Grace White (@Grace__White) announced on Twitter that she just arrived and provided the first picture of the crime scene. Move ahead sixteen minutes to 9:20 pm and KSAT photographer Johnny Garcia (@DoublePunching) arrived. Forty minutes before KSAT's newscast was to go on the air, Garcia provided two more pictures and a link to a map of the crime scene.

"On scene at shooting in The Woods of Deerfield subdivision http://twitpic.com/29l9h6"
- @Grace__White

"BREAKING: Shooting at Woods of Deerfield neighborhood. Location:
http://j.mp/9QGaxD http://twitpic.com/29ldij" - @doublepunching

One minute later, the KSAT station account (@KSATNews) sent Garcia's pictures to its followers, but did not use the retweet function. At 9:23 pm, KENS anchorwoman Sarah Lucero (@SarahLuceroKENS) asked her followers if anyone knew what was going on at the Villages of Deerfield, the neighborhood where the crime scene was located. Lucero said there was word four

people were shot – the first details to emerge via Twitter. Another two minutes later, at 9:25 pm, KENS anchorman Jeff Vaughn (@JeffVaughn) cited "early reports" (i.e., chatter on the police scanner or unconfirmed information from the scene) that four people were shot in the home.

"What's going on in the Woods of Deerfield neighborhood off Bitters & Huebner…4 pple (SIC) said to be shot" - @SarahLuceroKENS

"Breaking: Shooting in North #SA, near Bitters & Huebner. Early reporters are 4 victims inside Deerfield home. Latest on @KENS5 @ 10." - @JeffVaughn

KSAT's station account then tweeted a link to a web story at 9:26 pm, saying four people had been shot and promising full coverage on the 10 pm newscast. All of this happened more than a half hour before the 10 pm newscasts went on the air.

The journalists' Twitter accounts went silent until 10:17 pm, when KABB's White began tweeting information from a police news conference held at the scene. A few minutes later at 10:26 pm, WOAI reporter Leila Walsh (@Leila_Walsh) submitted the first tweets from a WOAI employee about the shooting. Walsh tweeted details that emerged from the news conference until 10:34 pm.

"Police: children of one of the victims were playing outside when they heard gunshots. Kids went indoors and saw shooter with gun." - @LeilaWalsh

Finally, between 10:43 – 11:04 pm, the KABB, KENS and WOAI station accounts tweeted links to web stories with more information about the event. By this point, police were clearing the scene and reporters went home. The story was considered over for the night, until follow-up angles were pursued the next day.

Data for the second research question were collected from the 60 accounts of journalists (including the four station accounts) for quantitative analysis. A total of 2,293 tweets were selected for coding over a random sample of ten days. Coding results are illustrated in Figure 1.

INSERT FIGURE 1 HERE

Tweets from the four official station accounts were isolated and analyzed for comparison as part of the second research question. A total of 851 tweets from these four accounts (@KABBFOX29, @KENS5, @NEWS4WOAI and @KSATNews) were coded for purposes of this study. All numbers in Figure 2 represent just the four accounts that are the official representations of the individual stations.

INSERT FIGURE 2 HERE

Discussion

The above case study perfectly illustrates the potential of Twitter as a device to deliver information in a breaking news situation. It also shows how information on Twitter does not pass through the traditional flow of "gates" before reaching the audience. Under the traditional flow

of information, newsroom employees like assignment editors, photographers and reporters are all early gatekeepers in standard newsroom operations. If the norm holds true, they collect information that is approved by other newsroom employees before it is delivered to the audience. The majority of the time, the information is also delivered to the public by a higher-level gatekeeper, i.e. an anchor. However in the triple-murder suicide, it was the traditionally early gatekeepers who were responsible for delivering the majority of information on Twitter to the public. An assignment editor broke the story, a reporter and photographer both provided the first pictures and maps from the scene, and reporters also tweeted details from the official police news conference. Conversely, the only time any late gatekeepers joined the process, when both anchors from KENS tweeted, it was to show they *did not* know what was going on by asking if the public had any information. It should also be noted that the most powerful gatekeepers in a traditional newsroom setting, management, did not issue one tweet during this breaking news situation. With Twitter, any newsroom employee involved in the process delivers news. Therefore, each individual employee is just as important a gatekeeper as the next. The pecking order of traditional gatekeeping is irrelevant to a Twitter audience.

The case study shows that news is delivered to viewers in real time, if viewers want to receive it in that method. The thousands of people following Twitter accounts of the four San Antonio television stations (KSAT: 6,500, WOAI: 5,200, KENS: 1,950 and KABB: 1,300) are discovering the news in their city as it happens. One may argue that the news delivered via Twitter is oftentimes incomplete and disorganized, but critics have issued those same complaints about the television news product itself for years. On this particular night, for someone living in the Villages of Deerfield neighborhood, the scene of the triple murder-suicide mentioned in this study, Twitter was a quick and effective means of knowing what was going on down the street.

Even if one does not live in that neighborhood, many news viewers want to know what is happening in their city. Twitter again delivered toward that goal. Hermida (2010) uses the term "awareness system" to describe the phenomenon of knowing what is going on everywhere, without being everywhere.

While the case study details an example of how Twitter can affect the flow of information, it would be foolish to suggest this is what happens on a daily basis in television newsrooms. In fact, data analyzed for this paper show the case study, while a shining example of Twitter's potential, is far from the norm.

On the ten days selected for coding, only 14 percent of the tweets of journalists in San Antonio were coded as breaking news. The greatest number of tweets, 43 percent, was coded as daily chit-chat, which is to be expected on a social medium like Twitter. However, the large number of promotional tweets needs to be examined closely. Those tweets, which accounted for 38 percent of the total number, were mainly from a service called "Twitterfeed," which newsrooms use to automatically generate a link that is sent to their Twitter followers any time a story is published on their station websites. In other words, these tweets are issued without a station employee using Twitter or one of its platforms. Some newsrooms would likely argue these Twitterfeed tweets are informational, since they do contain the headline and first couple of words of the published story. Oftentimes the words are cut off in mid-sentence though, which is a common complaint.

This issue is even more striking when only the tweets of the official station accounts are analyzed (Figure 2). The data show all four station primarily use Twitter for one reason: to promote an upcoming newscast or a story on a station website. One station, WOAI, had 100 percent of its tweets coded as promotional. This station does not have an employee who

contributes to the official account or interacts with viewers in any way. A second station, KENS, had only one tweet from its station account not listed as promotional. However, even that one tweet contained a plug for the station's website. KSAT and KABB were both much better in utilizing Twitter as a tool for breaking news, but the percentages were not significantly different from WOAI and KENS. This is a major area of improvement for a station looking to gain a stranglehold on the Twitter market in San Antonio.

Conclusion

The diffusion of Twitter has the potential to change the entire process of news delivery. It has put the power of news delivery in the hands of many different newsroom employees, thus altering the flow of information and gatekeeping procedures. The "Web first" mentality is no longer good enough. The hunger for real-time news delivery is out there, so stations must adapt to "Twitter first." However, this study also shows stations have much work to do in using Twitter as a tool to deliver breaking news and allowing their employees to become gatejumpers, instead of using it purely for promotional purposes. After sharing these results with Mark Briggs, author of *Journalism 2.0* and *Journalism Next*, Briggs said (via Twitter, of course), "The key is to respect the relationship with users. I like the 80/20 rule, where 80% of time you add value, 20% you promote." Briggs said he considers linking to a story on a station website as "adding value," but clarified that automated services like Twitterfeed chip away from that value. In the end, his 80/20 rule could be the standard stations use as they begin to truly embrace Twitter as a platform for content delivery.

This analysis is not without limitations. The largest, perhaps, is the nature of the topic. There is a possibility Twitter will fall out of favor and journalists will move on to the next big

thing in social media. This is listed as a limitation, but research like this will still be valuable since the "next big thing" will likely build on Twitter's momentum. Also, several of the days selected as part of the random sample were Fridays, where content typically focuses on weekend plans, movies, concerts, etc. Future research would limit random selection of days to Monday through Thursday to correct this.

It is my recommendation that future researchers on this topic focus on the power of social media, be it Twitter or other technologies. Will these social media help television news avoid the mistakes of newspapers, which fought and resisted the digital world until it was nearly too late? How can television newsrooms build brand loyalty through these social media? Will training be done to help all newsroom employees understand the power of gatekeeping? These are questions that will shape the future of television news.

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Figure 1

Station	Breaking	Promotional	Chit-Chat	Participation	Non-Breaking
KABB	70 (27%)	134 (52%)	20 (8%)	2 (1%)	32 (12%)
KENS	24 (8%)	122 (38%)	164 (52%)	2 (1%)	5 (1%)
WOAI	11 (3%)	308 (72%)	83 (19%)	2 (1%)	23 (5%)
KSAT	219 (17%)	297 (23%)	728 (56%)	11 (1%)	36 (3%)
Overall	324 (14%)	861 (38%)	995 (43%)	17 (1%)	96 (4%)

Figure 1: Results of data coding of tweets from San Antonio journalists over a ten-day period, broken down by five categories.

Figure 2

Station	Breaking	Promotional	Chit-Chat	Participation	Non-Breaking
KABB	26 (17%)	122 (81%)	1 (1%)	0	1 (1%)
KENS	1 (1%)	104 (99%)	0	0	0
WOAI	0	296 (100%)	0	0	0
KSAT	36 (12%)	257 (86%)	4 (1%)	2 (1%)	1 (0%)
Overall	63 (7%)	779 (92%)	5 (1%)	2 (0%)	2 (0%)

Figure 2: Results of data coding of tweets from the official station accounts of the four San

Antonio television stations over a ten-day period, broken down by five categories.