Roles in Social Media:
How the Practice of Public Relations Is Evolving

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Abstract

Through two online surveys, this study found support for seven distinct social media roles assumed by public relations practitioners. Principle components analysis using varimax rotation resulted in the following roles: social media technician, social listening and analytics, online media relations, policy maker, employee recruiter, internal social media manager, and policing. The study provided evidence of gender differences in roles. Although there were no gender differences in enactment of social media management roles, women enacted the social media technician role more often than men. The traditional manager role in public relations correlated with five of the social media roles. In contrast, the traditional communication technician role was found to correlate with three of the social media roles: social media technician, policing and policy maker. The study found evidence that social media are offering opportunities for more power and influence for public relations practitioners at all levels in the organization.

Keywords: social media management, role theory, public relations, manager, communication technician, internal communication

Introduction

Public relations practice is undergoing a dramatic transformation due to the emergence of new interactive communication channels, but one question that often arises is do traditional public relations theories still apply? A core foundation of public relations scholarship has been role theory (Broom & Smith, 1979), which classifies behaviors enacted by public relations practitioners as one of two primary roles: public relations manager and communication technician (Dozier & Broom, 1995). Responsibilities typically associated with the public relations manager include counseling management, making communication policy decisions, evaluating program results, and planning public relations programs (Toth, Serini, Wright, & Emig, 1998). The second role, communication technician, is described as "a creator and disseminator of messages" (Dozier & Broom, 1995, p.22).

Some of the new responsibilities associated with social media may appear to fit the classic communications technician role (Dozier & Broom, 1995), particularly writing Facebook posts and individual tweets. Sha and Dozier (2012) explored this specific issue and conducted a survey using items measuring social media usage for both environmental scanning (manager role) and message dissemination (technician role). Using exploratory factor analysis, they found the two measures of social media use did not load onto the manager and technician factors as posited. Instead, the two conceptually distinct measures of social media emerged as a separate third factor. Additional research is needed as Sha and Dozier (2012) only examined two social media responsibilities in their study.

Some scholars have suggested that new roles should be introduced, especially following major technological advances to better reflect practitioners' tasks (Diga & Kelleher, 2009; Vieira & Grantham, 2014). Diga and Kelleher (2009) listed social media specifically as an example of duties that should be reflected in today's public relations roles. In addition, Vieira and Grantham (2014) recommended that a public relations role classification system should not only differentiate between management and technical responsibilities, but also whether or not the practitioner's focus is internal or external audiences.

Recent studies have identified multiple strategic roles associated with managing social media channels (Breakenridge, 2012; Neill & Moody, 2015) that may better align with the traditional public relations manager role than the communications technician. Breakenridge (2012) identified eight strategic roles associated with public relations' management of social media. Neill and Moody (2015) combined two of the roles from Breakenridge's study (pre-crisis doctor and reputation task force member) and identified two additional roles resulting in nine strategic roles and associated responsibilities including 1) policy maker, 2) internal collaborator, 3) technology tester, 4) communications organizer, 5) issues manager, 6) relationship analyzer, 7) master of metrics, 8) policing, and 9) employee recruiter. Limitations of the study by Neill and Moody (2015) included the use of a convenience sample and open-ended survey questions. In addition, these earlier studies did not examine internal social media channels. Scholars have previously found evidence of a general internal communicator role (Vieira & Grantham, 2014); however, that study did not specifically focus on internal social media channels. Verčič, Verčič, and Sriramesh (2012), found industry leaders ranked internal social media among the top three issues in internal communication, which provides justification for including the item in social media roles research.

The purpose of the current study is to test 11 social media roles through online survey research and principle components analysis using a national sample of public relations practitioners. This study explores the range of job responsibilities in public relations related to social media and how those new roles or duties relate to the public relations manager and communication technician roles (Dozier & Broom, 1995).

Review of the Literature

Organizational roles have been foundational to public relations scholarship for the past several decades. The following sections outline the theoretical framework as relevant to the current study including role theory both general and specific to public relations, criticisms of role theory as applied to public relations, and roles previously identified in the realm of social media.

Role Theory

A role has been defined as "shared, normative expectations that prescribe and explain behaviors" (Biddle, 1986, p. 70); or as "the set of expected behaviors engaged in while performing the job tasks" (Tubre & Collins, 2000, p. 156). Scholars have suggested that role expectations are not limited to job descriptions, but may include "preferences with respect to specific acts and personal characteristics or styles; they may deal with what the person should do, what kind of person he should be, what he should think or believe, and how he should relate to others" (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964, p. 14). Kahn et al. (1964) described the concept of roles broadly by describing a person's role set or those who communicate role expectations as including immediate supervisors, subordinates, customers, suppliers, close friends, and family members. In public relations, a role set may include supervisors, coworkers, colleagues, and professional associations.

Role theory in public relations began with a study by Broom and Smith (1979), who conducted an experiment involving both undergraduate and graduate students to study the client relationship experience based on various role enactments. From their research emerged a typology comprised of four dominant roles. At the more advanced level were the roles of expert prescriber, communication facilitator, and problem-solving process facilitator (Broom & Smith, 1979). At the entry level is the communication technician, who is responsible for "preparing and producing communication materials" (Broom, 1982, p. 18).

Researchers have also suggested the existence of minor roles such as a media relations specialist, communication liaison (Broom & Dozier, 1986), or an agency profile (Toth et al., 1998) to describe the role of a public relations agency. Other examples of role classifications in recent years include negotiator, policy advisor, brand officer, internal communicator, and press agent (Beurer-Zullig, Fieseler, & Meckel, 2009: Vieira & Grantham, 2014); and key policy and strategic advisor, monitor and evaluator, issue management expert, trouble-shooter problem-solver, and communication technician (DeSanto, Moss, & Newman, 2007; Moss, Newman, & DeSanto, 2005).

Despite some exceptions, much of the research has centered on two of the major roles. Dozier (1983) combined three of the four major roles to form one role referred to as the public relations manager with the second role being the communication technician. The practitioner is commonly classified based on the role he or she practices predominantly. In several studies, this has been measured by asking practitioners about whether specific tasks are part of their regular job responsibilities (e.g., Diga & Kelleher, 2009; Dozier & Broom, 1995; Tindall & Holtzhausen, 2011; Toth et al., 1998).

Role theory in public relations has evolved over the years under the umbrella of excellence theory. A basic assumption of excellence theory is that organizations are interdependent with their publics or stakeholders (Bivins, 1992; Grunig et al., 2002). According to excellence theory, part of the managerial role involves environmental scanning and practicing a two-way symmetric model of public relations, which involves balancing the interests of the organization and its publics (Grunig et al., 2002). Environmental scanning and two-way symmetric communication are consistent with social media communication, which enables organizations to receive feedback and learn about their publics through social listening and data mining activities. Porter and Sallot (2003) found that public relations managers were using the Web in general for issues management and research; however, their study was conducted prior to the rise of social media platforms. The type of data readily available through social media include an audience profile that addresses where they are congregating, what issues/topics interest them, sentiment whether positive or negative, and sharing habits. Additionally, practitioners can examine the organization's share of voice in comparison to competitors, and relationships with top influencers (Breakenridge, 2012). At the same time, consumers are more empowered than ever to share their customer care experiences widely through social media channels, (Barnes, 2008), which demands that public relations practitioners pay attention and respond appropriately.

Factors Influencing the Enactment of Roles

Some of the factors that scholars have identified that can impact practitioners' enactment of the managerial role include organizational type, size, and environmental conditions, as well as a practitioner's gender and age.

Scholars have suggested that public relations' managerial role is dependent on several organizational variables. Moss, Warnaby, and Newman (2000) found public relations was more valued and influential in organizations operating in rapidly changing, extremely competitive industries, and specifically industries that are highly regulated by the government. In addition, Sha and Dozier (2012) pointed out that some organizations may have a single public relations professional who would be required to assume both managerial and technical responsibilities. Moss et al. (2005) list department size and resources as possible factors, as well as personal preference as some more senior practitioners may choose to assume some technical responsibilities.

Management preference can also play a role as the CEO or president can make changes to the organizational reporting chart (Bowen, 2009; Moss et al., 2000; Neill, 2015a) by granting public relations more or less power and influence. Previous studies have described a "revolving door" of access to the C-suite with more access in times of crisis or high media attention (Bowen, 2009; Neill & Drumwright, 2012), but the access was often temporary ending when the issue was resolved.

Previous research has found gender to be correlated with role enactment. Traditionally, women have been more likely to assume both managerial and technical responsibilities even as they advance in their careers (Broom & Dozier 1986; Creedon, 1991; Toth & Grunig, 1993). Toth and Grunig (1993) found that women were fulfilling "middle or direct management activities intermingled with the more senior counseling and policy-making roles" (p. 168), but the men were conducting primarily management activities such as counseling management, making communication policy and evaluating program results.

Age and years of experience also have been correlated with enactment of the managerial role (Broom, 1982; Dozier & Broom, 1995) as the communication technician role traditionally has been

associated with entry-level jobs, and management responsibilities are assumed as practitioners advance in their careers.

All of these factors identified through earlier research on public relations roles could impact public relations practitioners' likelihood to assume management or technical roles in the social media environment.

Criticisms of Role Theory

While the roles of public relations manager and communication technician have been supported through factor analysis by numerous studies (e.g., Broom & Dozier, 1986; Diga & Kelleher, 2009; Dozier & Broom, 1995; Grunig et al., 2002), some researchers have suggested that this typology fails to fully describe the experience of women in public relations. When Broom and Dozier (1986) followed up with the original participants from a 1979 survey, they discovered that women in public relations were not advancing to management positions and that even when women were performing some managerial duties, they also engaged in more technical role activities than men. Toth and Grunig (1993) suggested what really was occurring is that women "did it all" and for less money than men (p. 153). Creedon (1991) wrote that a side effect of role theory was "the trivialization and devaluation" of a role predominately fulfilled by women (p. 69).

Another criticism lodged against role theory is theoretical justification; as Leichty and Springston (1996) wrote, "the management factor consists of eighteen items that might be labeled the everything other than technical activities factor" (p. 468) and that "a lot of meaningful information is lost by categorizing practitioners as either managers or technicians" (p. 475).

Roles in Social Media

Social media refer to Internet-based operations that build on Web 2.0 technology, which enables users to interact and exchange content and/or information (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Previous

research on social media in public relations has focused on more tactical issues, such as how practitioners utilize social networks such as Twitter, Facebook, and blogs (Porter, Sweetser, & Chung, 2009; Wright & Hinson, 2012). More recently, scholarly research has provided evidence that the rise of social media has increased public relations practitioners' power and influence in companies (Diga & Kelleher, 2009; Neill & Moody, 2015; Wright & Hinson, 2012). In a longitudinal study, Wright and Hinson (2012) found 85% of respondents reported that public relations was responsible for managing social media in their companies or organizations up from 64% in 2009.

While public relations may take the lead in online communication, some have suggested social media management requires collaboration with other departments such as information technology, marketing, and legal (Breakenridge, 2012, Neill & Moody, 2015). Through focus groups and online survey research with human resources and public relations practitioners, Neill and Moody (2015) identified nine cross-department roles associated with managing social media channels along with specific responsibilities. While the study provided a greater understanding of more strategic roles associated with social media, the authors noted that due to the use of a convenience sample, the results cannot be generalized and should be further tested using a random and larger sample (Neill & Moody, 2015).

The review of the literature leads to the following research questions and hypotheses:

- RQ1: What distinct social media roles are enacted by public relations practitioners?

- H1a: Practitioners with more years of experience are more likely to enact roles associated with social media management.

- H1b: Practitioners with fewer years of experience are more likely to enact the *Social Media Technician* role.

- H2a: Both male and female practitioners are equally likely to assume roles associated with social media management.

- H2b: Female practitioners are more likely to enact the *Social Media Technician* role.

- RQ2: How are social media roles related to the traditional manager and technician roles?

Method

Consistent with previous research on public relations roles, this study utilized two online surveys and principle components analysis as a dimension reduction technique (DeSanto et al, 2007; Moss et al, 2005). First, the items were tested with a convenience sample of 194 public relations practitioners recruited through PRSA chapter emails and social media channels during November and December of 2014. Those results served as a pre-test of the survey questionnaire. The second survey was distributed via an email invitation from PRSA to a random sample of 4,838 members on March 7, 2015 along with a reminder email on March 15, 2015. The response rate was 3.47% (168). Both surveys were conducted through Qualtrics to ensure anonymity. As an incentive for participation, respondents were given the option to contact the researchers by email to be entered in a drawing for a $50 gift card. Those who did not work in public relations or a related field, or who did not use social media were prevented from completing the survey through screener questions. This approach reduced the sample size to 159 for the first survey and 144 for the second survey. In addition, incomplete surveys were excluded from data analysis resulting in 116 respondents for the first survey and 114 for the second survey.

Survey Constructs

A standard approach to studying roles is the development of scales and factor analysis (Rizzo, House & Lirtzman, 1970). Based on early criticisms of the wording of scale items (Tracy & Johnson, 1981), scholars using this method are encouraged to avoid positive and negative terms when describing roles in survey research (Sawyer, 1992), and the current study followed this recommendation.

The survey instrument listed 55 job duties associated with 13 roles including 11 social media roles plus the traditional communication manager and communication technician roles (See Appendix A). Participants were then asked to rate their agreement on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 indicates they never

perform the function and 7 indicates they always or almost always devote time to that responsibility. The duties were presented in random order. The items related to social media management roles were all based on empirical research including focus groups, a survey, and in-depth interviews (Neill & Moody, 2015; Neill, 2015b). The items related to social media technician were original. In addition, items from the original role theory studies (Broom & Dozier, 1986) were included to test how these newer responsibilities correlate with traditional public relations roles.

Demographic questions related to age, tenure, and gender were also included based on previous research that found that women performing managerial duties also engaged in more technical role activities than men (Broom & Dozier 1986; Creedon, 1991; Toth & Grunig, 1993), and communication technician roles were typically associated with entry level positions (Broom, 1982). These questions relate to H1a, H1b, H2a and H2b.

Participants

Consistent with industry demographics, 95 (82%) of the survey respondents to the first survey were female, and 21 (18%) were males compared to 92 (80%) females and 23 (20%) males for the second survey. The average age of the respondents for the first survey was 36.08, and the average age for the second survey was 40.5. The ages for both samples ranged from 22 to 67. The average years of experience in public relations or a related field reported by the first sample was 12.27 years and 14.75 years for the second sample.

Findings

Survey 1

Research Question 1. In order to address the research question, "What distinct social media roles are enacted by public relations practitioners?," principle components analysis using varimax rotation was used to reduce the data. The analysis yielded a nine-factor solution, which explained

71.92% of the variance in the group of 43 items. However, two of the factors only had one item each and were eliminated. The seven factors with three or more items were checked for reliability and collapsed into indices. The first factor, *Social Media Technician*, consisted of 12 items (α = .90). The second factor, *Social Listening and Analytics*, consisted of 7 items (α = .87). The third factor, *Online Media Relations,* consisted of 6 items (α = .91). The fourth factor, *Policy Maker*, consisted of 5 items, but one item was dropped to increase reliability (α = .88). The fifth factor, *Employee Recruiter*, consisted of 4 items (α = .86). The sixth factor, *Internal Social Media Manager*, consisted of 4 items (α = .85). The final factor, *Policing,* consisted of 3 items (.70). For all factor loadings, please see Table 1 (Appendix B).

The scales developed from survey 1 were utilized for survey 2 and with the exception of *Policing* (.65), they were found to once again be reliable. The reliability coefficients for survey 2 were: *Social Media Technician* (α = .92), *Listening and Analytics* (α = .83), *Online Media Relations* (α = .88), *Policy Maker* (α = .84), *Employee Recruiter* (α = .88), and *Internal Social Media Manager* (α = .85).

Survey 2

Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 1a predicted that practitioners with more years of experience are more likely to enact roles associated with social media management. Simple linear regression was used to test the relationship between years of experience and enactment of each role. Years of experience did not predict enactment of any of the management roles. Hypothesis 1a was not supported.

Hypothesis 1b predicted that practitioners with fewer years of experience are more likely to enact the *Social Media Technician* role. Simple linear regression was used to test the relationship between years of experience and enactment of the *Social Media Technician* role. Years of experience was found to significantly predict *Social Media Technician* enactment (R^2 = .04, $F(1, 109)$ = 4.76, p = .03). As years of experience increased, *Social Media Technician* enactment decreased (β = -.21, p = .03).

Hypothesis 2. Hypothesis 2a stated that both male and female practitioners are equally likely to

assume roles associated with social media management. To test this hypothesis, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted to compare men and women for enactment of each of the social media manager roles. No significant differences were found. Thus, H2a was confirmed.

Hypothesis 2b posited that female practitioners are more likely to enact the *Social Media Technician* role. To test this hypothesis, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted to determine if men or women enacted the *Social Media Technician* role more often. The test revealed that women (*M* = 5.80, *SD* = 1.38) enact the social media technician role significantly more often than men (*M* = 4.71, *SD* = 1.51), *t*(110) = -3.34, *p* = .001. H2b was confirmed.

Research Question 2. In order to address Research Question 2, Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to test the relationship between the traditional public relations manager and communication technician roles and the new social media roles identified in survey 1. Results indicated a statistically significant (p < .05) relationship between the *Public Relations Manager* role and five of the seven social media roles: *Social Media Technician*, *Listening and Analytics*, *Online Media Relations*, *Policy Maker*, and *Policing*. The correlation coefficients for the *Public Relations Manager* role ranged from .25 to .31. For the full correlation matrix, please see Table 2 (Appendix B). The *Communication Technician* was correlated with the *Social Media Technician*, *r* (114) = .41, *p* < .001, *Policy Maker*, *r* (114) = .23, *p* = .016 and *Policing*, *r* (114) = .27, *p* = .004.

Discussion

This study provides evidence of seven social media roles and associated responsibilities assumed by public relations practitioners. One contribution of this study was the results provided evidence of a new role, *Internal Social Media Manager*. Five of these new roles were correlated with the traditional public relations manager role, but only three of them (social media technician, policy maker and policing manager) with the communication technician role. This finding suggests that senior public relations practitioners are performing both strategic and technical responsibilities, which is

consistent with earlier studies (Dozier & Broom, 1995; Moss et al. 2005). This reality could be due to gender differences as more women reported assuming both strategic and tactical activities in the social realm. As other scholars have pointed out, (Moss et al., 2005; Sha & Dozier, 2012) organizational size could also be a factor as employees working in smaller organizations have to assume a broader range of job responsibilities. Practitioner preference could also play a role meaning senior practitioners are choosing to engage in social media technical responsibilities.

It is important to note that the *Social Media Technician* role that emerged encompasses more tasks than simply writing and posting social media content. Items related to planning and choosing social media tools were also associated with this role. This suggests that those performing hands-on social media tasks are not separated from the decision-making process.

Another key finding was that the communication technician was associated with three social media roles: *Social Media Technician*, *Policing*, and *Policy Maker*. While many of the tasks associated with these three social media roles are consistent with traditional tactical responsibilities such as writing and editing, a few management-oriented duties were also in this domain such as environmental scanning both internally and externally, and recommending what new technology tools to adopt. This finding also may help explain why the two social media items tested by Sha and Dozier (2012) emerged as one factor as social media technicians in this study were found to assume both of the responsibilities: environmental scanning and message dissemination. Somewhat surprising findings include that policing and policy maker are correlated with the communication technician. However, some of the associated duties with both the social media technician and policing roles are consistent with environmental scanning such as "I monitor how employees represent my organization's brand on social media" and "I monitor conversations on my client(s)/organization's social media channels." It may be that because younger practitioners are perceived as the social media experts that they are being consulted when companies are developing or revising their social media policies.

This study also provided evidence of gender differences in the performance of social media

roles. Women were more likely to participate in active social media communication despite no differences between men and women in terms of how often they engage in managerial activities associated with social media. This finding is consistent with previous research on public relations roles that has indicated that women "do it all" (Broom & Dozier, 1986; Toth & Grunig, 1993, p. 168).

Years of professional experience were not correlated with social media management roles. These findings may be due to the fact that younger generations tend to be more tech savvy and early adopters of these technologies — a finding that is consistent with earlier research in this area (Sha & Dozier, 2012). Due to younger generations' understanding of social media, job titles and hierarchy may matter less than their understanding and expertise in this realm, opening the door to more influence. Another explanation is that social media can be time-consuming and clients are still unwilling to invest in senior practitioners for these tasks (Lee, Sha, Dozier, & Sargent, 2015). Regardless of the cause, the finding that experience is not associated with social media management roles has real-world implications. This reality indicates that social media may provide an opportunity for practitioners to enact management roles and hone strategic thinking skills earlier in their careers. However, as social media continue to have real-world consequences for organizations, leaving these management tasks to inexperienced professionals may prove unwise.

Limitations and Direction for Future Research

While this study provided new evidence of social media roles, participant recruitment presented a challenge. Although the study used both a convenience sample for pre-testing and refining the survey questionnaire followed by a national random sample for hypothesis testing, response rates were low with less than 4% for the random sample. The low response rate limited the ability to conduct additional statistical testing such as confirmatory factor analysis, which required a suggested minimum sample size of 400, given the number of manifest variables that must be included in the measurement model. The questionnaire should be tested among a sample of international practitioners as further validation.

Future researchers studying roles in social media also may want to explore public relations' involvement in paid strategies as more and more social media platforms such as Twitter and Facebook require sponsored content to reach audiences. Paid communication traditionally has been associated with advertising but that may be changing in the online environment, which may mean a change in public relations roles and responsibilities.

Conclusion

The job of public relations practitioner is evolving due to technological advances such as the emergence of social media platforms. One of the newest developments is the role of internal social media manager. Those who aspire to succeed in public relations careers must develop the competencies identified in this study as well as new ones that will emerge as the industry continues to progress in response to new technologies. Finally, it is encouraging to see how social media have opened the opportunities for more power and influence for public relations practitioners at all levels in the organization.

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Appendix A: Survey 1 Questionnaire

Screener questions:

Do you currently work in a public relations, communications or related function?

      ❐ Yes ❐ No (If not, end survey)

Do your job responsibilities include social media?

      ❐ Yes ❐ No (If not, end survey)

Section 1: Job Responsibilities.

For the following items, participants will be asked to rate their agreement on a scale of 1 to 7, where 1 indicates they never perform the function and 7 indicates they always or almost always devote time to that responsibility. (The items will be presented in random order).

Policy maker
1. I develop policies for how employees use social media.
2. I create guidelines for employees regarding what they are allowed to post on social media.
3. I collaborate with other departments (e.g. legal, HR, IT) to create and update our social media policy.

Technology tester
1. I am among the first employees in my organization to try new social media tools.
2. I have strong influence in the decision-making process regarding whether our organization should adopt new social media tools.
3. I make recommendations to my organization about which social media tools to adopt.

Communications organizer
1. I plan what topics my organization or client(s) will post about on social media.
2. I develop or modify my client(s)/organization's social media campaigns/plans.
3. I create my client(s)/organization's social media editorial calendar.
4. I monitor conversations on my client(s)/organization's social media channels.
5. I respond to comments and questions on my client(s)/organization's social media channels.

Issues manager
1. I use social media to scan for issues that may be of importance to my organization or client.
2. I recommend strategies for responding to negative comments on social media.
3. I use social media to help detect and prevent potential crises.
4. I have developed protocols for responding to issues that arise on social media.

Relationship analyzer
1. I use social media to identify influencers relevant to my organization/client(s).
2. I use social media to develop relationships with influencers relevant to my organization/client(s).
3. I use social media to learn about journalists that may report on my organization/client(s).
4. I use social media to develop relationships with journalists.
5. I use social media to pitch journalists.
6. I use social media to pitch or reach out to bloggers.

Master of metrics
1. I measure the success of my client(s)/organization's social media efforts.
2. I track my client(s)/organization's social media analytics.
3. I use analytics to justify the use of social media to clients/organization management.
4. I make recommendations regarding budgetary expenses for social media analytic services.

Employee recruiter
1. I use social media to recruit new employees.
2. I create social media content with the goal of attracting potential employees.
3. I post social media content that will make my organization seem like an appealing place to work.
4. I use social media to screen potential employees.
5. I use social media to identify diverse candidates for jobs at our company/organization.

Policing
1. I educate employees about my organization's social media policies.
2. I notify employees when they use social media in an inappropriate manner.
3. I monitor how employees represent my organization's brand on social media.
4. I limit employee's access to social media at work.
5. I monitor and control the number of official social media accounts our organization has on various social media platforms.

Internal collaborator
1. I coordinate with other departments in my organization to manage social media communication.
2. I serve on a cross-departmental management team that oversees our social media communication.
3. I share social media responsibilities with other departments in my organization.
4. I listen to feedback from other departments in my organization about our social media efforts.
5. I consult with other departments (such as legal or HR) in my organization when issues arise on social media.

Internal Social Media Manager
1. I write the social media posts for my organization's intranet or internal social media channels (e.g. SharePoint, Yammer, Chatter)
2. I monitor employee responses to internal social media channels such as comments, likes, and shares.
3. I track metrics related to employee engagement with our intranet and internal social media channels.
4. I plan the editorial calendar for intranet and internal social media content.

Social Media Technician
1. I write the social media posts for my client(s)/organization.
2. I take photos that are posted to my client's/organization's social media channels.
3. I am the one to actually post or schedule social media posts.
4. I take press releases or other traditional press materials and modify them for social media.

Communication Technician
1. I produce brochures, pamphlets and other publications.
2. I am the person who writes communication materials.
3. I do photography and graphics for communication and public relations materials.
4. I edit for spelling and grammar the materials written by others in the organization.

Communication Manager
1. I make communication policy decisions.
2. I take responsibility for the success or failure of my organization's communication or public relations programs.
3. Because of my experience and training, others consider me the organization's expert in solving communication or public relations problems.

Section 2: Demographic Questions

Gender: ❏ Male ❏ Female

Age (in years): _____

What is the highest level of education you have completed?
❏ Grammar school ❏ High school or equivalent ❏ Vocational/technical school ❏ Some college ❏ Bachelor's degree ❏ Master's degree ❏ Doctoral degree ❏ Professional degree (MD, JD, etc.)

Did you major in public relations?
❏ Yes ❏ No, but I majored in a related field (i.e., journalism, communication, marketing, advertising) ❏ No, my major was not closely related to public relations

What department do you work in?

❏ Marketing ❏ Public Relations ❏Communications ❏Advertising ❏Development

❏Other_____

Years of experience in public relations or related field (enter exact years):_____

In which sector do you currently work?

❏ Corporate ❏ Nonprofit ❏ Government/Military ❏ Education ❏ Agency/Consultant

❏Other: _____

Appendix B: Tables

Table 1. Principle components loadings using varimax rotation.

Questionnaire Items	Factor Loadings
Factor 1 *Social Media Technician* (13.45% of Variance) *M* = 5.71, *SD* = 1.23, *α* = .90	
I write the social media posts for my client(s)/organization.	.83
I take photos that are posted to my client's/organization's social media channels.	.80
I am the one to actually post or schedule social media posts.	.67
I plan what topics my organization or client(s) will post about on social media.	.66
I develop or modify my client(s)/organization's social media campaigns/plans.	.64
I create my client(s)/organization's social media editorial calendar.	.63
I monitor conversations on my client(s)/organization's social media channels.	.61
I respond to comments and questions on my client(s)/organization's social media channels.	.60

I am among the first employees in my organization to try new social media tools. .60

I have strong influence in the decision-making process regarding whether our organization should adopt new social media tools. .52

I make recommendations to my organization about which social media tools to adopt. .51

I monitor and control the number of official social media accounts our organization has on various social media platforms. .50

Factor 2 *Listening and Analytics* **(10.71% of Variance)** *M* = **5.28,** *SD* = **1.49,** *α* = **.87**

I measure the success of my client(s)/organization's social media efforts. .73

I track my client(s)/organization's social media analytics. .73

I use analytics to justify the use of social media to clients/organization management. .68

I use social media to scan for issues that may be of importance to my organization or client. .66

I recommend strategies for responding to negative comments on social media. .61

I use social media to help detect and prevent potential crises. .61

I have developed protocols for responding to issues that arise on social media. .60

Factor 3 *Online Media Relations* **(10.61% of Variance)** *M* = **4.33,** *SD* = **1.80,** *α* = **.91**

I use social media to identify influencers relevant to my organization/client(s). .86

I use social media to develop relationships with influencers relevant to my organization/client(s). .84

I use social media to learn about journalists that may report on my organization/client(s). .80

I use social media to develop relationships with journalists. .75

I use social media to pitch journalists. .71

I use social media to pitch or reach out to bloggers. .59

Factor 4 *Policy Maker* **(10.03% of Variance)** *M* = **4.18,** *SD* = **1.89,** *α* = **.88**

I develop policies for how employees use social media. .81

I create guidelines for employees regarding what they are allowed to post on social media. .79

I collaborate with other departments (e.g. legal, HR, IT) to create and update our social media policy. .68

I educate employees about my organization's social media policies. .66

Factor 5 *Employee Recruiter* **(8.06% of Variance)** *M* = **3.43,** *SD* = **1.82,** *α* = **.86**

I use social media to recruit new employees. .84

I create social media content with the goal of attracting potential employees. .78

I post social media content that will make my organization seem like an appealing place to work. .77

I use social media to identify diverse candidates for jobs at our company/organization. .64

Factor 6 *Internal Social Media* **(7.76% of Variance)** *M* = **3.23,** *SD* = **2.03,** *α* = **.85**

I write the social media posts for my organization's intranet or internal social media channels (e.g. SharePoint, Yammer, Chatter). .84

I monitor employee responses to internal social media channels such as comments, likes, and shares. .83

I track metrics related to employee engagement with our intranet and internal social media channels. .79

I plan the editorial calendar for intranet and internal social media content. .67

Factor 7 *Policing* **(4.73% of Variance)** *M* = **2.96,** *SD* = **1.71,** *α* = **.70**

I notify employees when they use social media in an inappropriate manner.	.55
I monitor how employees represent my organization's brand on social media.	.53
I limit employee's access to social media at work.	.51

Table 2. Pearson correlation coefficients for traditional and social media roles.

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. PR Manager									
2. Communication Tech	.52**								
3. SM Technician	.25**	.41**							
4. Social Listening	.31**	.16	.69**						
5. Online Media Relations	.31**	.07	.32**	.47**					
6. Policy Maker	.29**	.23*	.36**	.59**	.30**				
7. Employee Recruiter	.03	.06	.23*	.29**	.24**	.35**			
8. Internal SM	.10	.12	.17	.33**	.20*	.49**	.58**		
9. Policing	.31	.27	.20*	.32**	.13	.59**	.42**	.51**	

* Correlation is significant at the .05 level (2-tailed); ** Correlation is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).