

THE ADOPTION OF FACEBOOK LIVE FOR INTERNET NEWS BROADCASTS BY
LOCAL TELEVISION AFFILIATES

A CREATIVE PROJECT

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Introduction

One of television broadcasting's chief advantages over print and radio has been the ability to go live with moving visuals. For decades, it remained unchallenged in this realm. But the internet has become a growing force in both video and live news production.

Facebook debuted its Live feature with a limited group of celebrities and social influencers in August of 2015 (Lasauskas, 2017), then rolled it out globally in April of 2016 (Cohen, 2016).

Facebook Live has already rocketed in popularity. In his 2017 Results conference call, founder Mark Zuckerberg noted one in every five Facebook videos was live and live broadcasts had increased by more than 400 percent in a matter of months.

Online social networks have been progressively making inroads into the news delivery business (Mahmood & Sismeiro, 2017). The explosive growth of Facebook Live contrasts with what is happening in local television news, which has “shed audience” (Pew, 2017). According to a Pew Research Center study of Nielsen rating data, viewership for local affiliate news stations fell in morning (12%), early evening (19%) and late night (31%) time slots between 2007 and 2016.

Mitchell and Holcomb (2016) stated that, while U.S. adults “often” get their news from television (46%), more than any other source, a growing number now often get their news from social networking sites (18%). Of the social networking sites, Facebook has the largest percentage of users that get at least some news from it. Facebook reaches more than two-thirds

of U.S. adults and 66% of them consume news on the site to some degree. That amounts to 44% of the general population (Gottfried & Shearer, 2016).

Social networking sites are benefitting from a change in platform habits as well. About 85% of U.S. adults get news from a mobile device (Lu, 2017). And while earlier research showed most people using mobile are younger, (94% of those ages 18 to 49 get news on mobile), the latest Pew data show a growing number of older Americans now getting news from mobile, and, in fact, the 50 to 64 age range is the fastest growing demographic (Lu 2017). Ninety percent of Facebook users access it via mobile, and the site has 934 million mobile daily active users (Lopez, 2016). And people who are on mobile are on social media at high rates. Mobile social media users grew by 30%, up 581 million in 2016 (Kemp, 2017).

Data from Pew (2017) also show that, of viewers who often get news from local television, 39% also often get news from Facebook (Gottfried & Shearer, 2016). This indicated Facebook has become a key competitor for the eyes of television news viewers. The growth of Facebook Live positions the social networking site to compete with television news broadcasting right in the wheelhouse noted above, live feeds with moving visuals.

Many local television news affiliates have decided the best way to beat this competition is to join it by doing Facebook Live feeds (Mullin, 2016). As Misri (2017, para. 17) stated, they have decided to see Facebook as “more friend than frenemy.”

The relatively rapid embrace of Facebook Live by local television news broadcasters offers an opportunity to examine how key aspects of the technology acceptance model (TAM) and the diffusion of innovations theory may relate to the use of Facebook Live.

This research will use interviews to gauge how key components of these theoretical models factor into local television news affiliates’ decision to broadcast live on Facebook. Those

components are: ease of use and perceived usefulness (TAM); and relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability (diffusions of innovation theory).

Literature Review

While the development of TAM initially stemmed from the study of management information systems in the 1980s (Davis, 1989) and diffusion of innovation theory was rooted in rural farm sociology four decades earlier (Ryan & Gross, 1943), both have been effectively utilized in the study of social media generally and Facebook, which began in 2004, in particular (Aibayrak & Yildirim, 2015; Al-Daihani, 2016; Evans et al, 2014; Kwon, Park & Kim, 2014; Lee, Hansen & Lee, J.K., 2016; Lee W., Xiong & Hu, 2012; Lin & Kim, 2016; Swasy, 2016; Loukis, Charalabidis & Androutsopoulou, 2017; Clarke, Murphy & Adler, 2016).

Davis (1989) argued people accept or reject information technology based on perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Davis defined perceived ease of use as “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort” (p. 320) and said “an application considered to be easier to use than another is more likely to be accepted by users” (p. 320). Facebook Live has been widely heralded for its ease of use (Molina, 2016).

Facebook Live was not the first platform for live video streaming by the masses on their smartphones. An app called Meerkat, which debuted in 2015, gave users the option of using their Facebook or Twitter accounts to stream directly to their followers. It gained a following after the SXSW festival featured it prominently. By late 2016, however, Meerkat had been edged out by Twitter’s live streaming app Periscope, as early Meerkat adopters moved on to the new thing (Popper, 2015). When Facebook Live was launched platform-wide eight months after Periscope’s debut, it had several clear advantages. Most important was the huge built-in audience, which at that time was nearing the 200 billion mark. Bajak and Kraft (2016) said,

“You can’t ignore the vast audience Mark Zuckerberg and company have assembled” (para. 3). Molina (2016) noted Facebook also made it easier to archive videos and allowed streaming right from the platform itself, rather than requiring a separate app.

Dahmen and Lewis (2017) pointed out broadcasting live via social media sites is considerably easier than doing so on television. They said:

“Broadcasting live video used to be a complex technical feat, requiring television cameras, trucks and satellites. Today, the ubiquity of smartphones and social media has made “going live” as simple as tapping an app. The result has been a new world of live video – documenting society’s good, bad and ugly – that challenges how we think about visual information made public in an eyewitness, even journalistic fashion” (p. 3).

In the second trait of the technology acceptance model, Davis (1989) defined perceived usefulness as “the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance his or her job performance” and for which “a user believes in the existence of a positive use-performance relationship” (p. 320).

Facebook Live may be seen as useful to local television stations because it offers a way to reach an audience beyond the shrinking numbers of those who are tuning in on their sets. In addition, the reaction of the online audience can be measured in real time, with likes and other reactions, comments, and video views. By comparison, audience reaction in terms of ratings for television viewing is often delayed by months except in the biggest of markets. Nielsen measures ratings just four times per year in all but the biggest markets.

One key factor of possible usefulness is missing however. Facebook initially paid some 140 media companies and celebrities \$50 million to produce live video content (Perlberg & Seetharamann, 2016), but seemed to be backing away from that deal (Wagner, 2017). And local

television stations currently make no direct revenue from news streamed on Facebook Live. The leader of News UK's digital efforts, Oliver Lewis, told Misri (2017) he's "confident that Facebook Live can yield meaningful revenue for publishers in the future" (para. 9). In early 2017, Facebook began beta testing what it calls "AdBreaks," which is the automatic insertion of ads into Facebook Live feeds for users who have accepted the plan. The plan would give live video streamers 55% of the ad revenue. But for now, stations are going off a largely intangible return on investment. It is difficult to know whether the efforts in Facebook Live are yielding a bigger audience for stations on their other platforms.

Northeastern University journalism professor Dan Kennedy told Bajak and Kraft (2016), "It's hard work, but every news organization's strategy with regard to Facebook should be to drive its users to its own website and apps, where it has full control over advertising and digital subscriptions" (para. 9). It is impossible, however, to measure any direct correlation between Facebook Live viewing and either web story page views or television ratings. Mullin (2016) said, "Facebook does not currently allow publishers to monetize these videos, which means news outlets are spending energy on streaming purely for the sake of increasing their exposure" (para. 5).

In Davis' studies (1989), perceived usefulness was a better predictor of adoption, but ease of use played a role. He said, "Users are often willing to cope with some difficulty of use in a system that provides critically needed functionality" (p. 333).

In his writings on the diffusion of innovation theory, Rogers (2003) defines innovation as an "idea, practice or object perceived as new" (p. 35) and diffusion as "a process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among members of a social

system” (p. 35). In the context television stations’ adoption of Facebook Live, “innovation,” “communication channels,” and “social system” have specific meanings.

Rogers (2003) defined a social system as a set of interrelated units “engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal” (p. 37). The social system is the community of journalists at large and within individual organizations.

Communication channels, in his description, include both the industry press and word-of-mouth among colleagues and competitors. Both included individuals like themselves that provide “subjective evaluation” of the innovation. The innovation of note was the evolving presentation of news and information live on Facebook.

It is here the perceived attributes of innovation spelled out by Rogers (2003) may be helpful. These are relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability and observability. Rogers (2003) stated innovation succeeds best when it is consistent with the values, experiences and needs of those who will use it.

It would be hard to argue the relative advantage of innovation in an evolving digital world. But that was not always the case. In the early days of digital content, websites were often seen as the annoying cousin who comes to live with you – a nuisance who created extra work without providing any tangible benefits to the family. Similar attitudes developed early in the evolution of social media. But as Franklin (2013) noted, the economic contraction of legacy media, characterized by falling audiences, readership, and advertising revenue, has led many newsrooms to rethink the value of their websites. The same is true of attitudes toward social media extensions of news brands.

There are arguments, however, that Facebook Live does not present a relative advantage of television stations’ news operation, because publishing content for free, with no advertising in

place, defeats one of the key goals of any news organization, which is to make money to pay for the journalism. Facebook Live could also present direct competition against the stations' legacy product, taking away the audience's need to tune into a television broadcast.

Additionally, there are concerns that Facebook wants to actively replace television stations as a source for news. As Greenberg (2016) writes,

“For a company like Facebook, which wants you to spend as much of your time as possible on the service so it can show you more ads, there's no better way to get you to come back and stay than by promising live experiences you won't get anywhere else. In that way, Facebook wants to be your new, customizable TV, your way into a Super Bowl locker room, your peek behind the scenes at the Oscars, your opportunity to skydive, your very own live *Truman Show*—all while sitting at your desk” (para. 6).

There are conflicting opinions on whether digital news acts as a complement to or a substitute for legacy media. Morrison (2016) says Facebook has stated it doesn't see its Live push as competitive with TV. In fact, Facebook officials have noted numerous occasions in which television journalists have gone on Facebook Live after their traditional broadcast to expand on a story they were covering.

Mahmood (2017) suggested social media sites can be both, even while noting online content consumption at third-party external websites has largely been over-looked in social media studies.

Glynn, Huge, and Hoffman (2012) noted many legacy organizations use social media platforms with the intention of increasing awareness of their content and to redirect users to their websites.

Mahmood (2017) pointed out news websites have given users a reason to engage with content within social networks and have prompted users to follow their Facebook brand pages. But Muller, Schneiders, and Schafer (2016) said, when audiences feel there are being well-informed on Facebook, it makes it more likely they'll turn to Facebook over legacy outlets: "Individual who have the impression that Facebook provides them with a sufficient amount of information about what is going on in the world more strongly tend to regard Facebook as a good substitute for other news sources" (section 5, para. 1).

This is a concern because, as noted above, Facebook does not provide legacy outlets with revenue and it is in the stations' best interests to use Facebook to drive audiences to their legacy products. That leaves them with a balancing act: a significant portion of their audience uses social media and to neglect it simply because it does not provide revenue is problematic. But the return on investment is intangible.

It is impossible to measure exactly how ratings for television shows are attributable to social media. Website analytics tools make it easier to account for website traffic flow from social media, but Mitchell and Holcomb (2014) found visitors who come directly to a site via a URL or bookmark spend more time on that news site, view more pages and come back more often than those coming from Facebook: "The data also suggest that turning social media or search eyeballs into equally dedicated readers is no easy task" (para. 1).

A second attribute of innovation is compatibility. Rogers (2003) stated innovation succeeds best when fits the needs of persistent adopters, aligns with their values, and meshes with their past experiences.

Glynn et al. (2012) state traditional media outlets “are faced with the challenge of adapting their processes and procedures to best take advantage” of social media for the dissemination of news (section 7, para. 1).

One of the chief challenges for television stations is the vastly different look and feel of Facebook Live compared to highly produced television broadcasts. Stations must relax their production standards considerably when relying on smart phone video which is sometimes shaky, less than ideally focused and awkwardly framed.

How stories are told is significantly different as well, with reporters and anchors taking a more informal, “friendly” approach, which could undermine the valued notion of objectivity. Conversation and other forms of engagement with the audience are main components of what separates digital from legacy products. Instead of broadcasting information in a one-to-many model, news organizations must involve the audience in a two-way model at many stages of the production process (Hartley, 2011). This means everything from soliciting story ideas and user-generated content to responding to comments after publication. This interaction is a key part of Facebook Live feeds. Television reporters and anchors can now see and respond to audience comments during the live feed.

Social media have also influenced when television stations release their news. It is no longer acceptable to hold news until show time. News organizations are expected to use their digital platforms to report news as it happens, so that storytelling becomes a process, rather than a product (Jarvis, 2011).

The third attribute of innovation is complexity. The more complex an innovation, the more difficulty it will have becoming successful, according to Rogers (2003). It’s important to note complexity and ease of use are not necessarily analogous concepts. In their study of public

broadcaster CCMA, Mico, Masip, and Domingo. (2013), found complexity within a media company is a complicating matter, as not every individual or department incorporates a given technology at once. Attitudes and actual use range widely. While Facebook Live may seem simple to use on its surface as discussed above, navigating social media in general can be a challenge for people who are not digital natives. The age and digital experience of staff are likely to be a confounding factors in the adoption of Facebook Live. Rogers (2003) said, in the face of such challenges, opinion leaders must emerge to champion innovations. In this sense, social media managers and staff must convince legacy staff to adopt the new platform.

The fourth attribute of innovation is trialability, the “degree to which an innovation may be experimented with on a limited basis” (p.16). Just like Ryan and Gross (1943) found farmers preferred to experiment with hybrid corn before converting to it. Live streaming news is still, by its nature, experimental. Stations must be willing to try, and, in some cases, fail, to see what works with its needs and values. But experimentation is vital. Perry (2014) said, “Anyone working in digital media will struggle to capture and maintain attention. It requires constant experimentation, iteration, and continued refocus to build engagement capabilities into content operations” (p. 2). Speaking about the New York Times’ foray into Facebook Live, The Times’ top editor, Dean Baquet, said mistakes are the price of innovation: “Have we done some stuff that’s not so pretty? Yes. But the newsroom needs to get comfortable using their imaginative brains to tell stories in different ways” (Spayd, 2016, p. 15).

The fifth attribute of innovation is observability. The power of Facebook Live to reach enormous audiences was clear from the start. On the day after the tool launched, comedian Ricky Gervais went live from his bathtub and more than 800,000 people watched. Just a few months

later a mother from Texas went live trying on a Chewbacca mask and quickly became a viral sensation, amassing more than 161 million times. Lazauskas (2016) said:

“With Live, Facebook had an instantly valuable product. The videos were exclusive because users had to access the platform to create them. Since streams were live, the content was timely. And there was also an inherent interactivity to them, since people could comment as they watched” (para. 21).

There is also internal observability that can be credited with TV stations’ desire to retain its focus on Facebook Live. Facebook offers extensive analytics, known as Insights, that allow users to see in detail how a live video is performing. A user can see how many views a video has had both while it is live and when it is archived. Insights gives a frame-by-frame view of average view time, showing when audience falls off. They show how many reactions a video gets (likes, loves, laughs, wows, etc.). Insights also shows how many people have commented on a video. And the comments themselves allow a station to monitor how people are talking about the video.

Social media are a “development of consequence for the future of journalism (Franklin, 2013). The rise of reader comments and user-generated content have changed the audience’s perception of itself from passive consumer to active participant. This particular evolution in journalism has “changed the relationship between news producers and consumers” (Kolodzy, Grant, DeMars & Wilkinson, 2014), breaking down geographical boundaries that define communities. The rise of Facebook Live also removes time as a factor, allowing communities to experience news as a shared real-time cultural touchstone.

“Real time” and “cultural touchstone” are both factors that come into play when considering Facebook Live from the uses and gratifications perspective. Local television stations must consider the needs and desires of its audience on both legacy media and digital platforms.

Local television stations must work in a fractured media landscape filled with hundreds of television channels and millions of websites that can siphon off viewers, creating the shrinking audience. Facebook, on the other hand, is gaining audience at a rapid pace, in part, because it is a common gathering place. Glynn et al. (2012) said, “In the present era of continuing media specialization, customization, and audience fragmentation, Facebook may be the last remnant of the common cultural media outlet” (section 7.1, para. 1). Conlin, Billings, and Averset (2016, p. 1) noted viewers are drawn to live video in part by their fear of missing out, which involves the feeling that missing a program or some other event could result in being “excluded from a cultural conversation or seminal moment” (p. 1).

Before the proliferation of cable channels, the big three U.S. television networks often fed the same live visuals from virtually the same perspectives. Their cameras tended to be in the same general area for big events and they routinely covered the same events. The U.S. audience, for the most part, got mediated views of the events that were virtually identical. That allowed for “water-cooler conversations,” the ability to discuss the events with others who had seen it.

The advent of more partisan networks meant viewers could choose which messages it wanted to get from live video feeds. In the one-to-many style of legacy television, it could be more difficult to find a significant number of others who had seen the exact same message to hold those on-the-spot conversations with. By condensing geographical space, Facebook makes it possible to find and talk with like-minded others.

On the matter of “real time,” social media have some advantages over television, the most important of which is convenience as noted above.

Dimmick (2003) found digital forms of media that contract time and space increase the user's sense of gratification significantly more than more legacy forms of media, and it is clear Facebook understands this.

It has altered its complex algorithm so that videos would more likely appear in a user's feed while the broadcast was actually live as opposed to once it had been archived (Kant & Xu, 2017).

Facebook found people spend more than three times longer watching a live feed compared to when the video is no longer live. Kant and Xu (2017) said, "This is because Facebook Live videos are more interesting in the moment than after the fact" (para. 4).

Peters (2001) said, "The love of liveness relates to the power of real time" (p. 719). Watching an event live positions the viewer as a witness. Peters was writing about broadcast television, but his comments retain their veracity when related to the internet. The user wants to "be involved in history (the happening), not the historiography (the recording)" (p. 719). Facebook Live allows users to hold that history in their hands.

Glynn et al. (2012) state social media sites are unlikely to replace legacy media any time soon, but notes "they will certainly have an impact on how news and information is shared in years to come."

As Kolodzy et al. (2014) noted, new technologies in production and presentation will bring about more disruption, requiring journalists at legacy media and digital natives alike to think about adopting and evolving in a sustainable way. The challenge will be to adapt to changes while "preserving the qualities that make journalism unique among content forms." Downie and Schudson (2009) pointed out newspapers and broadcast news are not going away in the near future, but "will play diminished roles in an emerging and still rapidly changing world

of digital journalism” (para. 2). The adoption of Facebook Live could give local television news stations a new platform to mitigate this diminishing role.

Journalist Steve Yelvington (2011) said staying agile in the face of digital media’s growing importance “requires restructuring all your priorities. Not just when you do it, but what you do and how you do it” (para. 5). Journalist Steve Buttry (2011) offered similar advice, breaking down those priorities into six points: “work and think first for digital platforms; experiment and take risks; try new tools and techniques; cover news live; join, stimulate, curate and lead the community conversation; engage the community in your coverage” (para. 10).

Facebook’s Fidji Simo, who oversees Live video said the future of media will be about being people-centric: "When we think about Facebook Live, it's thinking about, how do we make it so that people can interact?" (Morrison, 2016, para. 4). So, not only is Facebook matching television stations’ ability to go live with moving visuals, it adds the additional component of instant audience participation.

Legacy media practitioners can be less than eager to harness the power of new media, instead favoring predictable and incremental change for the sake of stability (Nguyen, 2008). Given the power and wide reach of Facebook, there is no question stations will have to adapt in some manner to the use of live video on social media. What remains to be answered is how stations will proceed and at what pace.

Research questions

This researcher found no previous scholarly work on Facebook Live, perhaps unsurprising given the newness of the tool, and believes this study will help found the body of knowledge on this impactful media transformation.

The purpose of this study is to gauge how the adoption of Facebook Live by local television stations' can be framed within the technology acceptance model and the diffusion of innovation theory.

The purpose of the interviews is to qualitatively determine whether stations find Facebook Live easy to use, both technically and culturally; whether they find Facebook Live useful to their dual missions of informing viewers while earning revenue; whether they believe Facebook Live offers a relative advantage over keeping live video feeds strictly contained to their legacy platform; whether Facebook Live is compatible with the stations' values, experiences and needs; whether Facebook Live offers the ability to experiment without undue impact on reputation; and whether they are satisfied with their ability to observe the effects of Facebook Live on their audience and growth.

RQ 1: In what circumstances are local television stations using Facebook live if at all?

RQ 2a: What benefits do local television stations perceive with Facebook Live?

RQ 2b: What drawbacks with Facebook Live do local television stations perceive?

RQ 3a: How do local television measure and assess the performance of Facebook Live?

RQ3b: How do local television stations define success based on those measurements and assessments?

RQ 4a: How do local television stations define their values, experiences, and needs in regards to the live presentation of news?

RQ 4b: To what extent do local television stations believe Facebook Live aligns with those values, experiences and needs?

RQ 5: How do local television stations perceive the effort-to-reward ratio of Facebook Live?

RQ 5a: What resources are being dedicated to Facebook Live?

RQ 5b: Are those resources diverted from elsewhere in the organization in terms of labor hours and budget?

RQ 5c: What is the perceived return on investment of Facebook Live?

RQ 6: To what extent has Facebook Live become routinized at local television stations?

RQ 6a: Is the size of the station a factor?

RQ 6b: Is the employees' comfort level and experience with social media and their attitudes towards it a factor?

RQ 6c: Is the perceived ease of use of Facebook Live a factor?

Method

To understand how local television news affiliates are utilizing Facebook Live and how that use can be framed by TAM and the diffusion of innovation theory, the researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with the digital managers of eight network affiliates in a wide range of market sizes. The goal was to get a representative sample across the range of market sizes and prospective participants were approached with that goal in mind, utilizing a contact list of digital

and social media managers at stations around the country. Participants were sent an email asking them to participate and outlining the purpose of the project. Five of the eight final participants work in small to medium market stations, while three work large market stations.

The researcher protected the confidentiality of participants by assigning them random numbers and removing any identifying factors from the data presented here. This was deemed the best method to overcome a key challenge: that managers of local television stations are reluctant to share their inner workings in a way that may give their competitors any insight into their operations.

Questions were designed to gauge the station's adoption of Facebook Live using the criteria spelled out by TAM and the diffusion of innovation theory: perceived use of use, perceived usefulness, relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, friability, and observability.

Demographics questions addressed position title, years of experience, years in current position, gender and age.

Some stations had very distinct titles for the person who oversaw Facebook Live and other digital/social operations. For the purpose of retaining confidentiality, no specific titles will be mentioned here and instead the generic "digital manager" will be used.

Despite their level of responsibility, six of the participants had five or fewer years of industry experience. The other two, one in a very small market and the other in a very large market, each had 15 years of experience. The least experienced participant had been in the industry less than two years.

Half of the sample were men and half were women. Ages ranged from 23-40 years old, with a majority of the participants being 26-28.

Semi-structured interviews have been used before to study social media (Sways, 2016; Wang, 2012). They are an appropriate method of research for this project because they yielded qualitative data that can be used to compare and contrast stations' reaction to Facebook live, their rate of use, their type of use, and their measurements of success or failures.

Results

RQ 1: In what circumstances are local television stations using Facebook Live if at all?

Each of the eight stations surveyed are using Facebook Live to some extent. (See RQ 6 for a closer examination of the level of routinization.)

Based on the participant's responses, content can be broken down into five categories: weather (forecasts and breaking), spot news, behind the scenes features, supplemental reporting and entertainment.

Weather. Several of the digital managers said their station's meteorologists were the first to utilize Facebook Live. It seemed a natural fit, highly useful information provided immediately. Seven of the eight participants specifically noted their weather coverage has received high engagement.

One common use is breaking storm news. Facebook Live allows the meteorologists to interact directly with viewers and answer questions as they come up in the comments. But the meteorologists are not always involved. Some stations will feed out a looping radar image or simply set up a camera outside to capture the storm.

Spot News. Reporters on the scene in breaking news situations is one of the most commonly cited uses of Facebook Live. Situations such as fires, building collapses, protests, plane crashes, rocket launches, and crime scenes give television stations an opportunity to provide unfiltered, real-time experiences to viewers. These types of Facebook Lives are subject to quality issues, however, depending on the cell phone's camera and the availability of a strong Wi-Fi signal (see RQ 2b for more).

Behind the scenes. Every station profiled has done some sort of look behind the scenes for Facebook Live. Five continue to do this type of Facebook Live regularly and say they do well, largely because they put a human face on the station. Several of the participants used the word authentic or authenticity to describe the effect of behind the scenes reporting.

In its simplest form, it's just an anchor or reporter talking to the audience about what's happening that day or what will be in the show. As with weather, the key is interaction with the audience. A few stations are having the anchors and reporters do the Facebook Live from their professional pages and then sharing on the main page. Participant One said her large market station tries to do one every day. "People seem to like it and it boosts numbers," they said. Three of the managers said they've seen some anchors and reporters get good social lift – or increased audience on their professional pages.

But there are countering opinions, as well. Participant 8 said, "I just don't think that's good content. I want streams to be interesting. Even the bear cam is better." Participant 5 said their station uses behind the scenes segments "sparingly." Two digital managers it was "kind of a fad," with one saying it is "oversaturated" and another saying "people are sick of it."

Supplement reporting. Several of the stations featured have found success with using Facebook Live to dive deeper into its enterprise and investigative reporting (with one winning a

national major award for it). Some of these involve a reporter interviewing a source live. Others are behind the scenes looks at how the reporting was done. Sometimes the above Facebook Live are specifically created to drive the audience to a specific newscast featuring the report. In some instances, anchors or reporters have developed a niche expertise and uses Facebook Lives to delve into the topic as a standalone, without pushing to a newscast, to develop that person's relationship with the audience.

Entertainment. Often, the Facebook Lives aren't news related at all, but are simply for the entertainment of the audience. Half of the digital managers cited animal-related Lives, such as the viral feed of April the pregnant giraffe or the wildlife cam of bears catching salmon in an Alaskan river. Two managers mentioned pet segments. Three said their station uses "beauty shots" of sunsets or skylines. Other content included designated national days or months and charity events.

RQ 2a: What benefits do local television stations perceive with Facebook Live?

The main perceived benefits of Facebook Live are: increasing audience size, fostering relationships with viewers, building reputation, and expanding the brand, with a particular emphasis on driving viewers to legacy newscasts and websites, which generates revenue.

Increasing audience size. Every digital manager interviewed said the biggest benefit of Facebook Live was also their biggest influence for adopting it: the ability to reach a large audience. The power of Facebook as a content aggregator becomes evident here. Facebook heavily emphasizes live videos by putting them in more feeds. Participant 2 said, "it was clear Facebook's algorithm was prioritizing live video." They said that, in order to get bigger

numbers, the station “had to do what Facebook wanted.” Participant 8 said she disliked Facebook Live at first because it was one more thing that needed to be done that ultimately benefited Facebook more than the station. They said their initial reaction was, “yuck,” but that ultimately, it was hard to ignore the numbers. Participant 5 said of Facebook, “It’s reach is undeniable.”

Some digital managers were on the fence. Participant 3 said they were interested but cautious. Participant 4 used the words excited but nervous. The remaining digital managers had more positive reactions. Their first thoughts included: “pretty cool,” “awesome,” and “this is the future.” Participant 6 said, “it was a pretty big deal in social media circles.” Participant 2 said, “I knew there was a desire for raw, unfiltered news.”

Reactions were mixed, but leaned toward the positive. And the across the board prediction that Facebook Live would increase their audience proved correct. Participant 4 said the station saw “huge spikes” in the analytics. Participant 1 said their station’s Facebook page picks up about 100 followers every time it goes live. Participant 3 said their station is getting “views in the hundreds of thousands at the drop of a hat.” They said, “Those numbers will make you immediately take note.”

Fostering relations with viewers. Another key benefit of Facebook Live cited by every digital manager is the ability to connect with the audience through comments, reactions, and shares. The word engagement was said 22 times over the eight interviews. Participant 7 said, “I like the instant engagement you get from hearing from and talking to people.” Participant 8 said there is a big plus to “being a real person to viewers.”

Participant 4 said it’s not just about talking to viewers, it’s about telling their stories. They said Facebook Live comments often lead to story ideas and compelling characters to report on. However, they cautioned Facebook Live should not be seen as just an “engagement grab,”

but recognized as a public service as well, giving viewers what they need to know, when they need to know it.

Building reputation. All eight digital managers said Facebook Live has a good influence on reputation overall, despite its raw nature and the occasional misfire. Again and again, the words authentic and authenticity showed up.

Participant 1 said the relationships formed between viewers and the station's reporters and anchors is "unbeatable." Participant 6 said Facebook Lives bring the audience closer to talent "as someone who cares about the community and the people in it." Participant 4 said Facebook Live shows the station is "covering all the cross sections of what goes on in our community or our country."

Facebook Live also offers transparency, a way for the audience to see how the news is gathered. This is done through the behind the scenes segments mentioned above.

Expanding the brand. The eight digital managers interviewed view Facebook as more of a "supplemental experience" than a direct competitor with the legacy newscast. Participant 3 said Facebook Live is "part of the family" while being its own thing. Participant 8 said "emphatically" believes Facebook Live helps push people to on-air products that may not be familiar with the station on that platform.

Several of the digital managers interviewed mentioned the immediacy of Facebook Live and how that dovetails with the legacy product's emphasis on in-the-moment coverage. Participant 5 said, "Facebook Live allows us to jump into mix with the first strike on a daily basis. The audience expects it now." Participant 3 said Facebook Live allows the station to show "we're on this right now, and in half an hour we'll have more." Participant 7 said when there is a

Facebook Live from a breaking news scene “viewers understand it’s the very beginning of the story” and will turn into the TV broadcast to get more details.

Beyond the four main categories above, the digital managers listed these benefits:

- It makes social media easier for anchors and reporters who might say they are “used to talking, not to writing.”
- Television reporters and anchors already have live skills and Facebook Live gives them a way to reach out to people outside the newscast with less pressure than a TV live shot.
- The key technology for watching Facebook Live is mobile. The device is in the viewer’s pocket and through the push notifications that come with live feeds, the station can prompt someone to pick up their device and look at it.
- It can be easier to break into coverage with a Facebook Live than on TV, which requires extensive equipment.
- It is often the fastest way to get information out and can work even during power outages, like those that occur during major storms.
- Facebook Live provides instant feedback in the form of comments, reactions, and shares.

RQ 2b: What drawbacks with Facebook Live do local television stations perceive?

The digital managers collectively cited three major drawbacks to Facebook Live: workflow pressures, rawness, and economic impact.

Workflow. Many of the managers said Facebook Live is not always about a single reporter in the field using a cell phone and the app. It often involves people in the newsroom doing planning and even some production. Participant 4 called Facebook Live a “time suck,” and

said “it does take time away from our enterprise reporting.” They also noted it is typically newsroom staff who are devoted to moderating all of the comments on a Facebook Live.

Participant 2 said it is an added burden for reporters, even if they are doing a simple point and shoot with their cell phones. “It’s hard when you’re on breaking news to have to add that to all of the other stuff,” they said.

Rawness. Several of the digital managers noted the quality of cell phone cameras do not always meet the production standards seen in a television newscast. Participant 8 said live feeds can sometimes be “cheap looking.”

Another concern is the inability to filter what is happening before it is seen by viewers. Participant 7 said, it’s problematic “if something goes wrong or somebody says something bad, inappropriate, not accurate.” Participant 2 said it “puts a lot of pressure” on the crews in the field because they have to be careful with what they say and not speculate at the same time as staying face.

Economic impact. As of now, Facebook Live does not offer any revenue stream. Participant 1 said doing live feeds is “giving content away for free.” They wonder if that is setting stations up to lose more dollars down the road by giving viewers information on a platform that doesn’t pay. Participant 5 said there is a real fear that people will get the information they need to know and have no reason to go to the station’s newscast or website. “If no one is going to the website, that’s big trouble,” they said. RQ 5 explores the revenue issue more in depth.

RQ 3a: How do local television measure and assess the performance of Facebook Live?

All eight digital managers said they rely on key metrics provided by Facebook itself, known as Insights. There are five components: reach, reactions (such as likes, loves, and wows), shares, comments, and video views.

Reach is an indicator of how many users are exposed to a given piece of content in their newsfeed. Views are the most passive metric, requiring a user to merely stop and watch. Reactions require the user to interact with the material by clicking an icon. Sharing also requires two clicks – one on the share button and then one to select “share now” or “write post.” The most interaction comes from comments, which require time and effort to type.

The number of reactions, shares, comments, and views are all calculated as part of Facebook’s complex algorithm. The more there are, the more the algorithm will interpret it as “good” content and surface it into more news feeds, thus increasing the reach.

RQ3b: How do local television stations define success based on those measurements and assessments?

Which of the above measures matters most depends on who you’re asking. Five of the eight managers mentioned reach as an important measure but said it is only one factor of many. Participant 8 said they look more closely at video views – not only how many there are, but how long people watched. Participant 7 said they do a comparative analysis between the duration of a video and the number of comments it receives. Participants 5 and 6 said they mostly look at the number of comments. Participants 1 and 4 said they make particular note of reactions. Participant 2 said they weigh success based on overall interactions. Participant 3 said their focus is “engagement with the audience.”

RQ 4a: A How do local television stations define their values, experiences and needs in regards to the live presentation of news?

Three common themes emerged here: balance, journalistic standards, and high production values. There is often more time available to devote to ensuring information that Participant 5 said must be “verified and credible,” Participant 2 said television broadcasts allow the journalists to put things in context as they happen. “More time makes the journalism better,” they said. Participant 4 noted TV is “beautiful, high gloss,” and the audience has high standards and tend to be “very unforgiving.”

RQ 4b: To what extent do local television stations believe Facebook Live aligns with those values, experiences and needs?

The consensus here is that the goal for journalistic standards remain the same, but in practice that can be problematic. Participant 2 said there is sometimes a “large gulf” in journalistic standards between Facebook Live and legacy broadcasts.

Consider balance. Because Facebook Live is in the moment, there is usually only an opportunity to interview a single source. Or in cases of protests and counter protests, the journalist might be with one side at a time. Because of Facebook’s algorithm, which does not always surface content to the same people, viewers might see one side, but not the other.

Another concern is accuracy. Participant 5 noted Facebook Live cuts out any editor in the reporting process. Participant 2 said, with TV broadcasts, journalists often know all of the facts first. It’s a lot harder to “filter and contextualize on Facebook Live,” they said, adding “a lot of important journalism that can only be done after Facebook Live ends.” In addition, Facebook Lives benefit from journalists doing their homework beforehand, said Participant 5.

On the issue of production values, Facebook Live has decidedly different standards when shot in the field. Cell phone cameras do not always allow for optimal framing and lighting. Shots can be shaky at times. Reception is not always ideal, causing pixelated video or lag time. There's simply less "production polish," according to Participant 2. Participant 4 said Facebook users, perhaps especially the younger, ones understand it's a raw feed and are more accepting of flaws. But many stations are producing TV quality feeds on Facebook Live, utilizing hardware and software to route in satellite signals, produce reports from webcams, and add in graphics and titles. Four of the eight digital managers said their newsroom is using Open Broadcaster Software (OBS), which bills itself as free and open source. Others are utilizing Wirecast software or Teradek hardware, or otherwise using connected routers and/or technology already in place for the TV live feeds.

RQ 5: How do local television stations perceive the effort to reward ratio of Facebook Live?

Given Facebook's commitment to live video feeds and its algorithm's spread of such feeds, all of the digital managers indicated it is worth the efforts required to do them. "What it does is open the pipe for you," said Participant 3.

RQ 5a: What resources are being dedicated to Facebook Live?

There is a wide range in the number of people at the station who are devoted to social media in general. At one station, the digital manager was the only one tasked to coordinate Facebook Lives, although there are "digital expectations" across the staff. At the high end, two of the digital managers said six people are regularly involved in producing and coordinating Facebook Lives, with anchors and reporters playing a role as needed.

RQ 5b: Are those resources diverted from elsewhere in the organization in terms of labor hours and budget?

None of the digital managers have someone devoted primarily to Facebook Live. Coordinating, producing, and reporting are all done on top of regular duties.

RQ 5c: What is the perceived return on investment (ROI) of Facebook Live?

The key issue here is that Facebook Live, at the time of this project, offered no revenue stream to TV stations. But every digital manager interviewed said they see a significant return on investment because Facebook Live exposes the brand to so many people. “You want people to see your journalism,” said Participant 4. Participant 7 said, “I don’t see it as giving anything away for free.”

Digital managers also see Facebook Live as particularly valuable because it allows interaction with viewers. “Engagement with audience is return on investment in and of itself,” said Participant 3.

Several of the managers used the words promotion and branding. Participant 6 said that, while sometimes it can be hard to quantify the ROI, it’s powerful anytime the station can grow its Facebook page, exposing more people to the brand and the reporters and anchors.

Participants 6 and 8 said they use the social metrics provided by Facebook, the Insights, as key performance indicators (KPIs).

But money is the lifeblood of any TV news operation, and Facebook Live does offer an opportunity for indirect revenue. Participant 5 said it would be a misstep not to think about monetization and the best practice is to push people to TV broadcasts and websites where the stations do generate revenue. Participant 6 said, “More Facebook fans means more website

traffic.” Measurement tools such as Chartbeat, Parse.ly, and Google Analytics allow stations to see just how many people come to a website via Facebook. Participant 6 said the numbers are significant. Participant 8 said Facebook Lives can drive people to TV broadcasts as well, offering growth with people “not familiar with us on that platform.” However, it is extremely difficult to measure the link between Facebook Lives and TV ratings. Most local television stations are measured through paper diaries rather than TV connected devices, so they cannot make the direct correlation.

Facebook’s Ad Breaks could change things significantly for TV stations. But some of the digital managers were skeptical. Participant 4 said commercials may make people mad, which is bad for the brand. They likened Facebook to the websites where news organizations for a long time offered content for free then got pushback when they asked people to buy subscriptions. “People don’t really care that it costs money to run a newsroom,” they said.

RQ 6: To what extent has Facebook Live become routinized at local television stations?

It’s clear from the responses that Facebook Live has become a regular part of the workflow at most of the stations studied. All but two digital managers said their stations do a Facebook Live at least once daily and often more.

RQ 6a: Is the size of the station a factor?

Station size is a clear determining factor of how often a station does Facebook Live. The two smaller stations studied do the fewest. One of those digital managers said their station only did it 2-3 times per week and the other said their station only does it when something is topical or breaking. The largest station studied did as many as 10 per day, including those done on

anchor and reporting pages in addition to the main page. There is a bit of variation in the middle range, with some stations doing Facebook Live 2-3 times per day and other 4-5 times per day.

Station size seems to have no bearing on the technology used in terms of software or hardware. But it did make a difference in the number of people available to take part in Facebook Lives. See RQ 5a.

RQ 6b: Is the employees' comfort level and experience with social media and their attitudes towards it a factor?

The answer to this question is both yes and no – a phrase used by two of the digital managers and echoed in substance by several more. Participant 5 said it's a case by case scenario, while Participant 8 said, "it depends on the person." They said they've had some surprises. For instance, one meteorologist who refused to get a cell phone "because it was the devil," is now "fabulous" at Facebook Live, while some digital natives "can't seem to figure out" how to make it part of their routine even though they're on the phone all day. Participant 3 said some of the reporters and anchors doing the Facebook live "the best and most often" are veterans.

Participant 4 said, "There's a tendency when people are tired or overworked to fall back on attitude of 'I'm a TV reporter,' don't make me do the digital work." Participant 6, however, said they haven't seen much resistance, except for some complaints about the extra time it takes.

RQ 6c: Is the perceived ease of use of Facebook Live a factor?

Going Live on Facebook is, at heart, a very easy process. You open the app, write some copy, click a button that says Go Live, aim your cell phone, and shoot. Compare that with what's

required to do the industry standard television live shot: drive a special truck with an operator to a scene with a big, often bulky camera, a tripod, a microphone, and whatever else equipment is needed, coordinate signals with the control room, and stay in contact with a producer who will cue you then clear you.

Despite the relative ease of use, Facebook Live created some challenges in the beginning. Newsroom managers and staff had to sort out best practices and establish routines – should the station standard be vertical or horizontal, is it better to go solo or involved another person who can read and reply to comments, who will coordinate what kind and how many should be done? Participant 1 said they “used to get so freaked out about it.” Participant 5 said their station was “winging it.”

Participants 6 and 7 both said, “It’s gotten easier.” Participant 2 said, “Everything was hard at first, but at this point I can do it in my sleep.” Participant 1 said, “It’s a breeze.” Participant 7 said everyone they work with has a station phone with the app. They said everyone can go live from everywhere as long as they have the bandwidth and battery life.

But there is a confounding factor. As TV stations try to improve the production value of Facebook Live, it becomes more complex. Using the hardware and software described in RQ4b requires more people and specialized knowledge. Participant 4 said these “back door” entry points to Facebook Live make it technologically more difficult. Participant 8 said it required changing workflow at the station. Participant 2 said there is a direct correlation between the ease of a post and the quality of it. “The more complicated it is, the higher the production value,” they said.

Discussion

It is clear from the findings that both the diffusion of innovation theory (relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trialability, and observability) and the technology acceptance model (perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness) are good predictors for the rapid and robust embrace of Facebook Live by local television stations.

The digital managers interviewed spoke often of the relative advantage of adopting Facebook Live, seeing it more as a complement than a competitor. They believe it allows their stations to connect more fully with their audiences than the typical one-to-many broadcast model of their legacy product. That connection, they say, builds trust and investment in the brand. As participant 8 said, Facebook Live improves reputation and “can only build brand loyalty” by offering ways to engage with viewers.

Facebook Live is highly compatible with the values, experiences and the needs of the stations. They are using Facebook live to bolster the station’s reputation and connect with current and new audiences while maintaining journalistic standards. Participant 7 noted that, as brands, TV stations are in the business of doing video and, “the more we do that the more we’re fulfilling our mission.”

The moderately low complexity works to the stations’ advantage as well. While there are a (very) few laggards among staff, most personnel are comfortable with the technology. Some workflows have had to change, which has meant shifting more work onto some staffers, but the managers generally agree the effort is paying off.

Facebook Live has afforded substantial trialability. As Participate 4 said, the audience understands the raw nature of Facebook Live, which allows stations more room to experiment

with both topic and styles. Every digital manager interviewed said they had seen some Lives fail, but considered each instance a learning opportunity that did not carry much risk.

Analytics provided by Facebook allow for high observability. Stations may differ in whether they put more emphasis on views, comments, shares or reach, but all the digital managers said they are able to see marked success with Facebook Live.

There is a significant perceived ease of use overall. For some there was a slight learning curve initially, but for most, the aim, click-and-talk simplicity made Facebook Live easy to adopt. More advanced technology designed to include the overall production value of Facebook Live has required more knowledge and more people, but not to the extent of making effort overshadow reward.

Finally, there can be no denying the overwhelming sense of Facebook Live's usefulness. The digital managers interviewed agreed on the importance of utilizing Facebook's broad reach to extend their stations' brand and engage with viewers. Participant 6 said Facebook Live allows stations to have an "instant connection to viewers." Participant 5 said, "The draw for continuing with Facebook Live is, as long as audience is there and as long as Facebook rolls out features the audience likes, the more we have to be there."

Limitations

The main limitation of this study is the sample size. While a broad range of market sizes were included, there were no top ten markets and only one below market 100. Also, only digital managers were interviewed, which could limit the understanding of how the station as a whole (newsroom leaders and staff) are adopting to Facebook Live. Finally, the interviews focused

solely on Facebook Live for news and did not cover how it may be being utilized by sales and promotional departments.

Future Research

The body of knowledge on Facebook Live would be significantly improved with case studies on how specific stations are utilizing the technology. In depth interviews with general managers, news directors, reporters, anchors, and producers would offer a fuller picture work flow and attitudes.

Also helpful would be an examination of how live TV news and Facebook Live differ in terms of audience uses and gratification. As made clear by the interviews here, the content of these station's Facebook Live meet three key elements of news and social media uses and gratification: information (breaking news, supplemental storytelling), interaction (comments, reactions, and shares), and entertainment (bear cams, beauty shots) as outlined by Poindexter (2016, p. 18).

Appendix A

Interview Questions

Demographic details:

- Age
- Gender
- Title
- Years in digital management
- Years in current position

Questions:

- What is the size of your news staff
- How many people would be considered devoted primarily to social media?
- How would you generally describe the social media duties of different news staff members?
- How many news staff members regularly take part in Facebook Live?
- What are their primary roles in the production of Facebook Live?
- When did you first become aware of Facebook Live?
- What was your initial reaction?
- When did you first use Facebook Live at your station?
- What type of content was it?
- What were the key influences that led you to try Facebook Live?
- How has your use of Facebook Live evolved since then?
- What were the key influences that prompted you to keep doing Facebook Live?

- How have you experimented with Facebook Live?
- What has worked and what has failed?
- What kinds of content do you post live?
- What is the ratio of news events to behind the scenes content?
- How often do you post Facebook Live?
- What do you see as the benefits of Facebook Live?
- What do you see as the drawbacks of Facebook Live?
- How do you measure the effectiveness of individual live feeds and Facebook Live as a whole?
- How would you rate the ease or difficulty of Facebook Live when you first started?
- How has your perception on ease or difficulty of use evolved?
- How would you define your station's values, experiences and needs in terms of Facebook Live and traditional television newscasts?
- How do you perceive the return on investment for using Facebook Live?
- How do you reconcile the need for revenue generation with Facebook Live's lack of monetization?
- How do you believe Facebook Live functions in relationship to your live broadcasts?
- How do you believe Facebook Live functions as an extension of your brand?
- Do you believe Facebook Live helps build your broadcast television audience?
- How do you believe Facebook Live affects your reputation as a news source?
- How have your anchors and reporters adapted to Facebook Live?
- Do you see differences in age and social media experience?

Appendix B

Professional Component

Article for industry publication

TV stations around the U.S. are rapidly adopting Facebook Live as a way to expand their brand through the world's largest social network, to engage with audiences in ways not possible with legacy television and to build trust and loyalty as a news provider. The value of Facebook Live can be summed up in three words: reach, relationships, and reputation.

In a series of interviews, digital managers from eight TV stations in a wide variety of market sizes shared their thoughts on why legacy operations should adopt Facebook Live and how they should optimize it.

First, the why.

Reach: Over the course of approximately ten hours of conversation, there were 24 instances in which the digital managers brought up the concept of reach as defined as increased exposure to audience, but existing viewers and new.

Relationships: Time and again, the digital managers said the key advantage of Facebook Live over legacy television is the ability to talk directly to members of the audience in real time and respond to comments and questions.

Reputation: The digital managers interviewed all agreed Facebook Live offers increased value to the audience by providing an additional avenue for reporting. That combined with increased engagement provide more touch points for the viewer, bolstering their opinion of the station.

Now for the how.

Several strategies emerged from the interviews. The digital managers, in various ways, outlined five core tenants, listed below.

Be authentic: The conversations allowed by Facebook Live allow journalists to become “real people” in the eyes of the audience. Nurturing is required, however. Reporters and anchors (or their producers) must respond to questions and comments as they come up in real time, or shortly thereafter. Otherwise, the viewer may feel ignored and less likely to engage again.

Have a reason: Don’t go live just for the sake of it. Have an action plan. Is the purpose to inform, to entertain, to connect? Stations should consider making Facebook Live planning a part of their story meetings.

Vary style and content: Doing only one type of Facebook Live can cause viewer fatigue. In addition to the raw, breaking news from the scene Lives, a station’s portfolio should include weather forecasts, behind the scenes content, supplemental reporting (including in depth interviews), beauty shots, and animal cams or similar entertainment content.

Experiment: Social media audiences tend to be more forgiving than legacy news viewers. Trying new things on Facebook Live is low in risk and cost.

Push to legacy platforms: There is not, of yet, a way to directly monetize Facebook Live. Stations should steer viewers to their TV newscasts and give them a specific content promise of what they’ll get there that’s not available during the Facebook Live. They should also include links to the website – specific stories or the live web stream – within the text that accompanies the live feed.

The digital managers interviewed said succeeding on Facebook Live is absolutely vital. It offers legacy local TV stations a unique opportunity to play to its strength (live, moving pictures) on a platform used by two billion people globally.

Appendix C

Paper Review 1

Evaluation of Lenora Anne Hammock Creative Project

Evaluator: Stacey Woelfel, Ph.D., Professor, Missouri School of Journalism

Brief discussion of evaluator's credentials: I have been on the faculty at the Missouri School of Journalism for 31 years, teaching broadcast news and documentary journalism. I was the news director of the newsroom at KOMU-TV, the school's NBC affiliate, for 24 years.

Relationship to the student and subject matter: I was the student's newsroom supervisor and colleague at KOMU-TV. I now serve in the same faculty group as the student.

Evaluation of the topic as appropriate for the creative endeavor: The subject matter of the research is of supreme interest to television stations and their newsrooms as they work to maintain audiences at a time of severe fragmentation. Now that live, streaming video can be found on Facebook, it is up to these stations to use this new tool to keep audiences with their verified journalistic product and not allow those audiences get inferior information in less reliable ways.

Evaluation of the student's approach: Due to the general lack of research on this topic, the student's approach seems appropriate to begin a line of study. Though the cited literature originates from a time before the advent of Facebook Live, the student does an excellent job of applying its principles to this new research area. Her grasp of the literature is strong and she has thoroughly considered many different approaches to reach the proper mix for this research. Ultimately, I feel she has moved the research discussion forward by taking this approach to a field of study that is very new and constantly changing.

Evaluation of the body of the project: The student takes her approach and, in a methodical and consistent manner, very thoroughly works through the process and results of station use of Facebook Live. The project is most successful in the breadth of its coverage, yielding what I believe is a comprehensive analysis of nearly all the ways the medium is being used in newsrooms at the current time. Because of this breadth, the depth into each single use leaves room for more research. That works here because I consider this to be a survey showing what is happening in newsroom, rather than an extensive case study of all that is happening in newsrooms. That is best left for multiple additional research works that can individually go further to provide that depth. I found the body of the work to be ideal for this time in the research trajectory concerning Facebook Live. We are all just now understanding how this medium is being integrated into news delivery. This research does a great deal to extend that knowledge and give it a framework for future work.

Evaluation of the student's work as contributing to the field: I find this research to be an important contribution to the nascent area of study around live video on social media and its

impact on the news delivery process. This is a particularly fertile area for research, as the future of news media depends on the adoption of the right platforms—and the rejection of the wrong ones. I can see this research being a foundation upon which future research can be built to more finely examine individual uses of Facebook Live and competing technologies. Because of the competitive nature of television news companies, information like this is often proprietary and secret. If other researchers can use this work as a jumping-off point for how they can approach this subject matter but still assure the competitive landscape can remain in place, it will move academic and professional knowledge forward a great deal.

Appendix D

Paper Review 2

Melissa Luck

Assistant News Director, KXLY-TV

I am a veteran journalist who has spent the last 10 years managing a newsroom of 35 full-time employees. I manage content across all platforms, including TV, web and social media. I've been our Director of Social Media and assisted at the corporate level in rolling out social media initiatives. I've also instructed several classes and online workshops about Facebook Live.

I know the student through online connections and have spoken to her class on the topic of Facebook Live.

The subject matter is one of great relevance and importance in the landscape of news delivery. Facebook Live is more than just the “hot new thing” when it comes to serving an audience hungry for news. As Facebook continues to grow, that's where we will find our news audience. Facebook Live allows us to deliver content to them in the most immediate way. It's also a lot cheaper and more convenient than rolling a traditional microwave truck to a breaking news event. But, the questions raised in this research are the ones all newsrooms need to be exploring, including whether or not we're giving something up to Facebook by eliminating or side-stepping the more traditional revenue that comes with TV news and even our station websites.

I think the student's approach is the right one. Because it can be hard to determine the exact ROI for Facebook Live for newsrooms, talking to those who oversee its execution is the most reliable way to see if it's working. By talking to the people who are directly involved in producing Facebook Live content, you better understand how the platform has evolved and how stations have evolved along with it. You can see in their answers that the comfort curve is not a steep one; once reporters and anchors have tried it a few times, it becomes very easy to use. And, as Facebook continues to place more value on its own product, you can read in the answers here how stations have increased their commitment to providing the content.

The quality of the research here is broad and relevant. I can appreciate the student finding the balance between serving both missions of newsrooms – to deliver content *and* to generate the revenue that allows for that content to be produced. I believe if the sample size was widened even further, you wouldn't find many differences in the answers. Most newsrooms are still finding their way when it comes to this relatively new platform. I would caution the repeated

assertion, though, that Facebook Live cannot independently generate revenue. Our station's sales department, for example, is selling sponsored Facebook Live content at an increasingly fast clip. Clients understand the product and want to be seen in that space. So, while it's still a work in progress, there is a great potential for revenue through sponsored content, along with AdBreaks (which the author does address.)

I believe the author's work can have great contribution to the field. Especially because Facebook Live is still, relatively speaking, an emerging technology. More important, even, than the answers to the questions are the questions themselves. They are questions broadcasters need to ask themselves before slamming their followers with Facebook Live for the sake of Facebook Live. The research here raises important questions about content delivery and viability and the answers discovered are worth our industry continuing to examine.

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