

Chapter 84

Tweeting About Business and Society: A Case Study of an Indian Woman CEO

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ABSTRACT

This chapter examines the social media content posted by a woman Indian chief executive officer (CEO) on Twitter. The active involvement of CEO in communication activities influences the business effectiveness, performance, and standing of the business headed by her. Rstudio and Nvivo, two analytical tools, were used for different analysis such as tweets extraction and content analysis. The findings show the various themes in CEO communication which are categorized in different sectors in terms of her personal views (feelings and status updates), political views, and social concerns (ranging from education, women empowerment, governance, and policy support). The chapter extends the theoretical and empirical arguments for the importance of CEOs' social media communications. Finally, this research suggests that with a well-planned and strategic social media use, CEOs can create value for themselves and their businesses.

INTRODUCTION

Today people find themselves surrounded by multiple communication channels. The traditional mediums of communication like a newspaper, television are proven methods to disseminate information. There is a one-way sharing of information which lacks interpersonal capabilities ingrained in the way Internet

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-9020-1.ch084

lets us communicate (Steyn, 2004). Moreover, the interaction through social media tends to be more informal. It revolutionizes the way people shop, pay bills, communicates, etc. E-mail, blogs, social networking sites like Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn etc. could be described as some of these interactive media which make information available on fingertips (Rybalko & Seltzer, 2010; Rathore & Ilavarasan, 2018). In this way, social media can become the source of information to businesses (Rathore et al., 2016). The trend of social communication via twitter exploded in 2008-09 when various companies around the world started to experiment with the application (BRAND fog, 2014).

Though, slowly and with a lot of suspicions, the top level executives of the organizations have adopted this unique media into the personal medium of communication. They are directly linked to their associated businesses, so the information shared with the audience on social media is bound to be, at least implicitly, associated with the brand the senior executive represents. There is a strong and positive connection between CEOs communication quality and responsiveness because of their social media presence (Men, 2015). It affects the behaviour of external and internal stakeholders as well. As CEO represents the higher level corporate spokesperson, their participation in communication programme influences the different public relation activities and the organizational standing. CEO plays an important role by managing effective communication system which shapes the culture and the character of organization (Hutton et al., 2001). This reshaped structure of organization includes the various relationships among communities based on communication hierarchies (Men, 2014b).

It is amply clear that social existence and the communication made by CEO straddles the borderline between what could be personal and professional space. Unlike their predecessors, memo, meetings, press releases, conference calls, Twitter or to say any social media offers a unique and supposedly unfiltered and participatory access well as strengthen existing relationships with various stakeholders to CEOs (Karaduman, 2013). CEO and C-suite participation in social media mean good things for the business such as the organization's values, shape its reputation, and enhance its brand image (PwC Report, 2013). Further, it also helps their leadership respond better in times of crisis. Therefore, the analysis of CEO's personal communication is an enigmatic space (Porter et al., 2015). And from an academic standpoint, CEOs interacting online or tweeting on social media needs to be further explored.

This study examined the social media content through Twitter on cognitive and attitudinal aspects, particularly focusing on the use of Twitter by a woman Indian chief executive officer. The paper extends the theoretical and empirical arguments for the importance of her social media communications. In next section, a review of literature is discussed highlighting stats of CEOs presence on Twitter and their public relations.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

CEOs Presence on Twitter

Global CEOs have embraced social media communication through the growth seems to be lagging far behind compared to the general public (Social CEO Report, 2013). The two social networks, Twitter and LinkedIn, though stand out in terms of respectable growth rate in the number of CEOs embracing the new space. Twitter is a micro-blogging social media platform which is used to obtain breaking news; communicate with friends, celebrities, and companies; follow the latest score of sporting events; etc. Users post "tweets" or mini-posts up to 140 characters in length via mobile texting, instant messaging,

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