Sport Management Review 16 (2013) 488–497

Contents lists available at SciVerse ScienceDirect

Sport Management Review

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/smr

Acceptance, motivations, and usage of social media as a marketing communications tool amongst employees of sport national governing bodies

Andrea N. Eagleman *

School of Sport and Exercise, Massey University, Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442, New Zealand

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:
Received 15 November 2012
Received in revised form 21 March 2013
Accepted 22 March 2013

Keywords:
Olympic
Sport
Social media
Marketing
Communications

ABSTRACT

National governing bodies (NGB) of sport are not-for-profit organisations that typically receive less mainstream media coverage and have much smaller marketing budgets than mainstream professional sports. Therefore, they must seek alternative methods from mainstream media and traditional marketing in order to increase brand awareness and reach fans and stakeholders. While all sport organisations stand poised to benefit from social media, NGBs seem to be a segment of the sport industry uniquely positioned to capitalise on social media's benefits. Because there is currently no known literature on NGBs' use of social media, this study examined the role that social media plays within NGBs in the United States including employees' acceptance of social media, motivations to use social media, and the organisation's current usage of social media. An online survey was distributed to NGB employees in the spring of 2012, and results revealed that contrary to studies on other sport organisations, NGB employees reported high levels of acceptance and motivation to use social media regardless of demographic factors. Additionally, NGBs seemed to use social media as a communications tool to a greater degree than as a marketing tool. Implications for international and niche sport organisations are presented in the conclusion.

© 2013 Sport Management Association of Australia and New Zealand. Published by Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

Scholarly research on social media and its marketing communications role within the sport industry is rapidly expanding. Research on this topic to date has focused on consumer responses to sport-related social media (e.g., Mahan, 2011), consumers' usage of social media (e.g., Clavio, 2011), methods utilised by sport organisations to engage fans (e.g., Ioakimidis, 2010), content on sport organisations' social media websites (e.g., Waters, Burke, Jackson, and Buning, 2010), the ways in which athletes present themselves on social media sites such as Facebook (e.g., Butts, 2008) and Twitter (e.g., Pegoraro, 2010), and social media policies for athletes (e.g., Sanderson, 2011).

Throughout the literature addressing social media's role in sport organisations, it has been identified as a valuable relationship marketing tool that has the ability to "build meaningful relationships through opportunities for communication, interaction, and value" (Williams and Chinn, 2010, p. 436). Furthermore, Ioakimidis (2010) noted that utilisation of online communities allows consumers and fans to have a virtual home where they can connect with others,

* Tel.: +64 6 350 5264; fax: +64 6 350 5781.
E-mail addresses: a.eagleman@massey.ac.nz, andrea.eagleman@gmail.com.

1441-3523/$ – see front matter © 2013 Sport Management Association of Australia and New Zealand. Published by Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.
http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.smr.2013.03.004

Elearnica Downloaded from http://www.elearnica.ir