

WHAT'S ON YOUR RADIO STATION'S MIND?
HOW CONTEMPORARY CHRISTIAN MUSIC RADIO STATIONS ARE USING
FACEBOOK

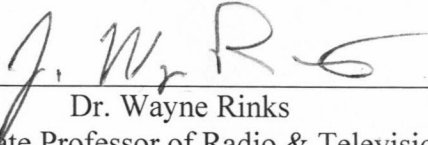
By
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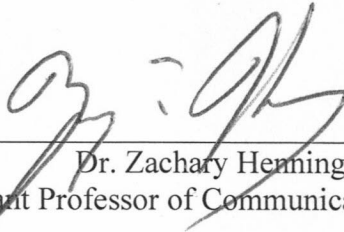
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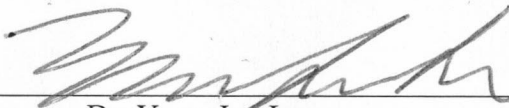
Accepted by the Graduate Faculty of the University of Southern Indiana, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of
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ABSTRACT

Bolin, Andrew F. Master of Arts in Communication, University of Southern Indiana, May 2012. What's On Your Radio Station's Mind? How Contemporary Christian Music Radio Stations Are Using Facebook. Major Professor: J. Wayne Rinks, PhD

Radio stations in the United States continue to find new and unique ways to connect with listeners through the use of modern technology. Social Media websites like Facebook are cultivating new means of communicating with others. Through status updates, users can subscribe, follow, and even comment on the statuses of other individuals as well as various organizations that post up to the minute information that includes varying forms of content such as photos, videos, and blogs. Radio stations are finding ways to use social media as a tool to interact with their audiences and encourage increased listenership. Through content analysis, the researcher examines how one of the fastest growing radio formats, Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) radio uses Facebook to interact with listeners. The analysis produced seven unique categories in which CCM radio stations use Facebook: *station promo, contest promo, event promo, local news, Bible verse, capital campaign, and general comment/question.*

Keywords: contemporary Christian music, CCM radio, Facebook, social media

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What's On Your Radio Station's Mind?

How CCM Radio Stations Are Using Facebook

Introduction

Religious radio is one of the fastest growing radio formats in America (Abelman, 2006; Gromly, 2003; Gow, 1998; Hagin, 2004; Lochte, 2007; Radwan, 2006; Wikle & Comer, 2010). Today, there are more than 2,700 radio stations in North America and nearly 2,500 radio stations in the United States that broadcast some form of religious programming (Hagin, 2004; Lochte, 2007). Such programming ranges from a variety of individual talk shows to broadcasting religious services and even 24-hour music.

In the past, researchers have studied the history of religious broadcasting, specifically the challenges and growth of the industry (Gromly, 2003; Lochte, 2007; Ward, 2009; Wilker & Comer, 2010). However, despite Gromly (2003) noting that Christian organizations in the United States are "quick to embrace media, technologies, and cultural forms of society," little research exists examining trends in religious radio's use of technology (p. 252). In this study, by employing the Uses and Gratifications Approach, the researcher will evaluate how religious radio, specifically Contemporary Christian Music radio stations, are using the social media website Facebook throughout normal day-to-day broadcasting hours. In this study, the researcher examines how radio stations view social media as a tool for broadcast radio and analyzes the various approaches stations take in utilizing new and emerging technologies such as Facebook.

The following literature review establishes the credibility of this research by first grounding this study in the communication theory of the Uses and Gratifications Approach. By explaining the purpose of Uses and Gratifications in communication research, the literature

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review offers insight into how this theory can be used to analyze the current study. The literature review contains a history of the Uses and Gratifications Approach and uses of this theory in recent research.

Second, the literature review provides a brief history of the CCM industry including its introduction into broadcast radio and current trends of the industry. The literature review also presents some of the previous research that has been conducted on the Christian music industry and explains the need for continued research on the topic. Included are recent Arbitron ratings numbers that show the increase in listenership of CCM radio and further explanation how CCM radio is on the forefront of using modern technology to connect with its audience.

Finally, a concise description of social media and a history of Facebook are also included in the literature review. This portion of the literature review explains how new and emerging technologies are affecting and challenging mass communication. The literature review describes how both individuals and organizations are using social media websites to connect and communicate with others and gather information. Previous research on this relatively new topic is highlighted and rationalization for future research is included.

Literature Review

Uses & Gratification Approach

The Uses & Gratification Approach (U&G) has been used in multiple research studies to better understand the Internet and its uses (Hanson, G., Haridakis, Cunningham, Sharma, & Ponder, 2010; Ruggiero, 2000; Urista, Qingwen, & Day, 2009). U&G seeks to understand how media and other forms of communication are used to “fulfill needs and wants” (Urista, et al., 2009, p. 218). Dating back to the 1940's, U&G originally sought to better understand how media captured and held audiences attention (Ruggiero, 2000). Overtime, U&G has shifted to seek insight into the why and how individuals, groups, as well as organizations use media and communication and what purpose it serves in the overall satisfaction of those who use such forms of media and communication. By understanding the kinds of messages sent and how CCM radio stations are utilizing social media, we can gain knowledge into how this relatively new medium is affecting radio stations, their listeners, and the future of the broadcasting industry.

Contemporary Christian Music

Contemporary Christian Music (CCM) radio is a specific radio format in the United States that broadcasts mainly pro-religious, Christian views. CCM radio is broken down into two large sub-formats, news/talk and music. In *Radio Today*, Arbitron (2010) stated that CCM radio reached more than 16 million listeners in Fall 2009, an increase for the second year in a row (p. 59). CCM radio has seen year-over-year growth in many demographics and has continued to hold steady in the key female 25-54 demographic, ranking second only to Adult Contemporary radio (Arbitron, 2010).

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Emerging as an alternative to other forms of pop-culture radio formats, CCM radio exists to “inspire and reinforce belief for its audience” (Radwan, 2006, p.2). Abelman (2006) stated that this “commitment to a distinct ideology and moral stance distinguishes it from other types of station[s]” (p. 212). Pro-Christian audiences are choosing to listen to CCM radio stations that promote similar ideologies and beliefs through content that is pro-Christian in music and dialogue. This devotion to its listeners allows CCM radio to reach a wider audience through the use of both talk and music-driven radio formats (Lochte, 2007). The unique way CCM radio has adapted its programming to promote these beliefs through modern music and talk radio could be one of the many reasons why CCM has experienced rapid growth in the nation. CCM has grown into various sub-formats that allow radio stations to be specific with their programming. Gow (1998) stated that CCM as a music industry (including CD sales, radio play, and other forms of media) “has been called the fastest growing form of popular music in the United States today” (p. 183).

Over the last forty years, CCM radio stations have also experienced incredible growth. Lochte (2007) traced the origin of religious broadcast radio to the beginning of radio itself, stating that in radio’s infancy “preachers could be heard preaching” on the airwaves (p. 115). However, through consolidation, various policy changes from the FCC, and the evolution of the industry as a whole, religious broadcasting nearly ceased to exist by the 1960s (Lochte, 2007). Since then, CCM has reinvented itself and has become the sixth most popular radio format in America (Gormly, 2003).

The rebirth of CCM is due in part to various social movements of the 1960s-70s. One of the most notable movements during this time period was the “Jesus Movement” which consisted of predominately young adults who turned away from counter-cultural values and focused on

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fundamentalist Christian beliefs (Simmonds, Richardson, & Harder, 1976). Many followers in the "Jesus Movement" wrote music, known as "Jesus Music," to voice their opinions and rally others with similar beliefs. Some of CCM's earliest artists such as Phil Keggy, Keith Green, and Barry McGuire were birthed from the "Jesus Music" era. Through various societal shifts of the 1960s and 70s, much of the music at this time was folk in nature and focused on varying ideologies (Radwan, 2006).

Through the 1980s and 90s, CCM mirrored the popular music genre of that time (Gow, 1998; Radwan, 2006). The 1980s saw heavy metal bands such as Stryper and Petra come on the scene with hits such as "To Hell With the Devil" and "God Gave Rock and Roll to You." The musical styles of such bands echoed that of mainstream 80s Hair Metal bands such as Foreigner, Styx, Journey, The Eagles, Lynyrd Skynyrd, and Kansas. Over the two next decades, numerous bands such as dcTalk, Jars of Clay, Audio Adrenaline, and the Newsboys influenced the genre and had lasting effects on the industry. Most notable would be the era of the "Jesus Freak" brought on by dcTalk's same title single. After its 1995 debut, "Jesus Freak" went on to sell more than 1,245,000 units, reigniting an audience for Christian music. Jesus Freak also became a name for a publishing series which consisted of a variety of Christian books including the best seller *Jesus Freaks: dc Talk and the Voice of the Martyrs – Stories of Those Who Stood for Jesus, the Ultimate Jesus Freaks* (Radwan, 2006). Since the 1990s, the CCM industry has continued to see increase profits.

CCM does not only consist of rock bands such as dcTalk and Audio Adrenaline, but also Adult Contemporary music. Artists such as Amy Grant, Carmen, and Michael W. Smith entered the scene in the 1980s and 90s and defined their version of CCM radio. With musical styles

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comparable to those heard on Adult Contemporary Hit Radio stations, CCM is able to broaden their audience reach with multiple musical styles that target a variety of demographics.

Today, due to its growth and acceptance in popular culture, CCM as Hagin (2004) described “has splintered into fifteen different sub categories” including Contemporary Hit Radio, Adult Contemporary Hit Radio, Inspirational, Gospel, Worship, as well as Country, Rock, and even Hip-Hop (p. 384). Gow (1998) added that CCM’s “sound” has taken cues from “secular styles...to reach a much larger and more mainstream audience” (p. 183). Many artists have entered the music industry as Christian bands/artists and have successfully made the crossover to mainstream radio. Notable Adult Contemporary Hit artists such as Amy Grant, Michael W. Smith, and Steven Curtis Chapman, have songs played on both mainstream and religious radio stations. Rock bands such as The Almost, Relient K, Red, Switchfoot, and Skillet have songs included on both BDS Radio’s Rock Chart and Christian Rock Chart (Radio Info, n.d.).

Despite this recent surge in acceptance, listenership, and growth in modern culture, little research exists concerning CCM radio outside of that which groups within religious media publish, such as the main organization that serves such radio stations, National Religious Broadcasters (Lotche, 2007). Abelman (2006) stated that “CCM is one of the fastest growing programming formats in radio...and [these] stations have quickly gained prominence over the last few years” (p. 209). CCM radio is not only significant to research due to its incredible growth over the past few decades, but also due to the significant audience CCM radio generates.

CCM radio stations boast high listener loyalty, ranking in the top five in Time Spent Listening (Arbitron, 2010). The demographic CCM radio stations are targeting is what makes such research important. CCM radio listeners tend to be “among the most station-loyal”

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(Abelman, 2006, p. 210). This means that despite new and emerging media and radio formats, people who listen to Christian radio, once they find a station they enjoy, will be less likely to hit the “seek” button on the radio. This could be due in part to not only the music found on CCM radio stations, but also the messages being shared. The topics disc jockeys discuss and the inclusion of special programming supporting pro-Christian beliefs found on such radio stations leads to continued listener support. As Gormly (2003) illustrated “media provides a powerful influence through expressing, shaping, and maintaining community values” (p. 257). These values are perhaps one driving force behind such strong loyalty among listeners.

CCM radio is also important due to its target demographic. As Lotche (2007) noted, “nearly half of the Christian radio audience is in the important women 25-54 demographic” (p. 113). This is significant because CCM listeners are among the most educated in the country and rank seventh in income annually (Arbitron, 2010). It is important for the industry to understand how these stations sustain listener loyalty.

By investigating the use of multiple formats and modern technology within CCM, researchers can seek to better understand how CCM radio stations attempt to stay connected to their audiences, encouraging both overall Average Quarter-Hour Persons (AQH) as well as Cume Persons. Arbitron (2012a) defined AQH Persons as “the average number of person listening to a particular station for at least five minutes during a fifteen-minute period” (p.1). Cume is defined as “the total number of *different* persons who tune to a radio station during the course of a daypart for at least five minutes” (Arbitron, 2012a, p.1).

CCM radio is no stranger to new technologies. Previous researchers have analyzed how religious entities have used various forms of media (e.g., radio, television, internet) to interact with other religious individuals as well as to share their values and beliefs (Gromly, 2003; Hagin,

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2004; Lochte, 2007; Radwan, 2006). Radwan (2006) stated “people will find spiritual ideas relevant to their own experience when they are expressed in a form and style that is familiar and socially valued” (p. 18). Through the means of radio, CCM has done just that. CCM radio has been able to connect to its audience and has grown as a result. Gormly (2003) added, that Christians “use mass [media] to gain a better sense of how to interact with the world” (p. 260). Through his research, Abelman (2006) has seen this first hand with the use of CCM radio websites. “Managers at radio stations...viewed their sites as a means of enhancing communication between their stations and their audiences” (Abelman, 2006, p. 214). It is important to understand how such radio stations are incorporating new and emerging technology. Gormly (2003) noted that religious organizations are “being redefined via [new] technologies” (p. 258). With the relatively forthright adoption of such technologies, CCM radio makes an ideal subject for research into the usage of radio stations and their Facebook pages.

Social Media/Facebook

Social media websites such as Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, and YouTube have seen an increasing amount of inquiry from researchers over the last few years (Besley, 2011; Boyd & Ellison, 2007; Cheong, 2011; Decarie, 2010; Hayes & Graybeal, 2011; Hutton & Fosdick, 2011; Kushin, 2009; Perez-Latre, Blanco, & Sanchez, 2011; Smith, 2009; Stassen, 2010; Stefanon, Lackaff, & Rosen, 2010; Waters, Tindall, & Morton, 2010). This new technology and new way of communication has garnered interest from a wide variety of researchers wanting to understand how individuals and organizations are using social media to interact with others.

Social media is defined as “web-based services that allow users to build public [forums]...with shared relationships and observe others within the system” (Perez-Latre, et al., 2011, p. 64). Previous researchers have often sought to understand how individuals are using

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social media by studying the various messages on such sites. However, little research exists from an organizational viewpoint, especially concerning the use of new media and technology in mass communication.

Kushin (2009) stated that most individuals are using this form of new technology to “interact” with others (p. 26). In other words, individuals as well as various companies and organizations see social media as a new form of communication, a way to initiate and continue conversations with other people and potential consumers. Social media allows for such interactions due to these websites being user-generated and content driven. User-generated content such as status updates, pictures, videos, blogs and other forms of communication are shaping today's modern websites and defining the scope of social networks. Smith (2009) stated that in recent years, the Internet has moved to a much more user-content platform, meaning websites such as Facebook and YouTube, as well as blogs and other social media sites have increased in popularity because users choose to post and share their own content (e.g., photos, videos, status updates, blogs) through a variety of online tools. Due to the importance of users uploading content, social media websites are successful large in part to the daily habits of individuals. With social media, participants must continually update blogs, statuses, photos, videos, etc. to remain relevant and drive viewers. Potter (2002) added, “the World Wide Web holds promising opportunities as an outlet for programming content” (p. 369). Many individuals are using social networking websites to stay informed on many issues such as politics and world events (Kushin, 2009). This explosion in popularity, as Stefanone, et al., (2010) described of social media is one reason for continuous and varying research to occur. Strassen (2010) argued that social media is “transforming the way in which people receive and share information” (p. 5).

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Facebook is one of the largest social media websites in the world. Decarie (2010) stated that Facebook has “emerged as the dominant” source for social networking (p. 450). Mark Zuckerberg launched Facebook in the early 2000s as an online directory of sorts for Harvard University students, and the website quickly became a staple for Internet users. By March of 2010, Facebook generated more than 400 million users worldwide and was estimated to reach nearly 600 million users by year’s end (Perez-Latre, et al., 2011). Hayes & Graybel (2011) suggest that the social media giant could be worth as much as \$15 billion. Facebook is comprised of many users; about half of the users are younger than 25, while women older than 55 are the fastest demographic to adopt the social network site (Decarie, 2010). It is important to note that Facebook not only consists of individual profiles, but also of many large corporations and organizations that are utilizing Facebook to connect with their audiences. Previous researchers suggested that the decline in company and brand websites could be attributed to the development of corporate social media sites such as Facebook (Hutton, 2011).

Radio and New Technology

Broadcast radio has continued to battle new and emerging technologies in an effort to remain relevant to its audience (Albarran, Horst, Khalaf, Lay, McCracken, Mott, & Guo, 2007). Previous researchers have conducted studies to examine how radio has adapted to modern technologies such as the Internet (e.g. Greer & Phipps, 2003; Jackson Pitts & Harms, 2003; Potter, 2002; Ren & Chan-Olmstead, 2004) but few researchers have conducted such studies about social media. Researchers have found that many radio stations choose to develop and update station websites to promote the station and the disc jockeys, interact with the listener, post information about the station and contests, as well as allow for online listening and song requests (Jackson Pitts & Harms, 2003; Potter, 2002). Jackson Pitts and Harms (2003) stated that in this

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ongoing battle for audience's attention, radio not only has to compete with television, movies, and games, but also now has to utilize the Internet. Social network sites such as Facebook provide opportunities for radio stations to reach their audiences through another medium. This researcher will examine how radio stations in the United States use social media, specifically Facebook to reach their audience.

One of the biggest challenges facing the radio industry today is competition from new technologies and the subsequent loss of younger listeners (Albarran, et al., 2007). Kushin (2009) insisted that younger generations are no longer turning to newspapers, radio, or even television for information; rather, younger audiences are obtaining their knowledge and entertainment from the Internet. By developing and updating social media sites such as Facebook, radio stations can be a source of information and promote continued connectedness with the audience. Perez-Latre, et al. (2011) stated, "social networks serve a need to reinforce existing relationships" (p. 67). For the purpose of this study, the researcher assumes radio stations use Facebook in order to connect and maintain relationships with its listeners, meaning radio stations establish and update a presence online using social media to increase the flow of information to its audience.

Religious groups tend to quickly adopt new forms of technology, especially new *media* forms of technology, in an effort to build community and reach the masses (Cheong, 2011). There are over 2,000 AM and FM religious radio stations in the United States, and these stations face many of the same challenges other non-religious stations encounter such as "competition and market share" (Greer & Phipps, 2003, p. 18). Radio stations can utilize not only their own websites but also Facebook as a tool for increased revenue. Jackson Pitts and Harms (2003) stated that through the added use of websites, radio "can better serve their audiences...and

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provide information to the user for the advertiser” (p. 272). Radio stations have perceived the Internet as a tool many can use, rather than another form of competition.

Ren and Chan-Olmstead (2004) stated that radio, as a medium itself, is “local” and “personable” to the audience (p. 6). Radio stations’ Facebook pages can enhance such localism by allowing the radio station to promote local events, concerts, and station contests. Facebook also provides opportunities for the audience to connect with the station itself. It is important to study the content of social media posts by CCM radio stations because of the connection with the audience and the potential for added revenue by providing yet another outlet for advertisers Facebook provides.

This researcher sought to find out how CCM radio stations were using Facebook to connect with their audience. Because of the increase in popularity of the social media site, the researcher wanted to observe if CCM radio stations were adopting this new technology and what content was being generated on the stations’ Facebook page.

RQ1: What is the content of CCM Facebook posts?

The researcher also sought to determine if there are any immediate differences in the way large, medium, and small market radio stations use Facebook. Previous researchers have analyzed how various market sizes use station websites and the Internet (Jackson Pitts & Harms, 2003; Ren & Chan-Olmsted, 2004). Hamula and Williams Jr. (2003) found that in many small market radio stations, websites were a means of both station promotion and a way to promote local events as well as news. Hamula and Williams Jr. (2003) stated that detailed information on concerts and community events has been a frequent addition to small market radio stations.

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RQ2: Are there any major differences in how large, medium, and small markets use Facebook?

The researcher sought to understand not only how the use of Facebook has changed the way radio stations communicate with their audience but, but also to delve into the specific format, CCM, that other researchers have scarcely studied. Greer and Phipps (2003) alluded to the need of such research by asserting that while many researchers have conducted studies on the continued use of the Internet by the radio industry as a whole, they have given little interest to the growing format of non-commercial religious radio. Lochte (2007) added CCM radio is a growing and highly focused radio format; more researchers should target this field.

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Method

Population

The researcher used a content analysis approach analyzing the status updates on CCM radio stations' Facebook pages. The researcher selected radio stations from the United States using a stratified random sample based on market size. For this study, the researcher divided markets into three categories based on the size of the 12+ age population: *small*, *medium*, and *large* markets. Large markets (markets numbered 1-53) have a 12+ population of 1-million and greater; medium markets (markets numbered 54-194) have a population of 200,000 – 999,999; and small markets (markets numbered 195-284) have a population of 64,000 -199,999 (Arbitron, 2012b).

The total number of radio stations the researcher used in this study was 100. The breakdown based on market size is as follows: large market ($n = 24$), medium market ($n = 36$), and small market ($n = 40$). This research sample is analogous with the total potential population of 599 radio stations which the researcher identified through the use of the industry website hisair.net. The market breakdown for the total population consists of large market (24%), medium market (36%), and small market (40%) (His Air, n.d.).

The researcher conducted a frequency test on the number of followers (individual Facebook users choosing to join the radio station's online community) each station had on Facebook. The number of followers ranged from 66 to 72,303 ($M = 6754.16$, $SD = 10823.43$, $Mdn = 2,319$). One station did not show the number of followers and had to be omitted, which left a total of 99 stations reporting the total number of followers.

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A test of frequency was also measured on the total number of Facebook posts or status updates the radio station uploaded. The number of posts ranged from one to five per day for each station for a total of 239 posts. Most of the radio stations posted two statuses on Facebook

Procedures

The researcher identified the list of potential radio stations to be used in this research through the online directory of an industry site, www.hisair.net. This website provides a detailed list of CCM radio stations including their call letters, frequency position, city of license, specific format (e.g., Adult Contemporary, Christian Rock, Gospel, etc.), and station website. The primary investigator factored the population size by corresponding the radio stations' city of license with Arbitron's market rankings. The researcher found a potential of 599 radio stations to be used in this study when first accessed for this research study on January 11, 2012.

The researcher randomly selected a total of 100 radio stations for the use of this study on February 24, 2012. As previously mentioned, the breakdown of the 100 radio stations selected for this study is proportionate to the whole population of 599. The researcher omitted radio stations that played primarily talk or sermons. Stations that were part of a network (i.e. AFR, K-Love, WayFM, etc.) were selected only if an individual station provided its own Facebook account on their website. Once the population was identified, their websites were visited to identify a presence on the social media site, Facebook.

After compiling the list of the 100 radio stations to be used in this research, the primary investigator took screen captures of the radio stations' Facebook pages on Friday, March 16, 2012. While it is impossible to capture all 100 radio stations' Facebook pages simultaneously, the same criteria were used to ensure an accurate data analysis. The researcher was able to take

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screen captures by using the Grab software on the investigator's computer. This program captures any window on the screen and allows the image to be saved for later use.

Criteria. To ensure the data to be used for this research to be analogous the following data was collected on all Facebook sites: *daypart, content of station status updates, number of stations updates, number of likes, number of comments.*

Daypart. A radio daypart is "a consecutive block of time in which a certain program is broadcast and of which receivers can be characterized by a demographic homogeneity" (Beyers, 2004, p. 67). In other words, radio stations divide their broadcasting hours into certain allotted times that are congruent with specific on-air personalities and shows.

Newell, Pilotta, and Thomas (2008) listed the following times for radio dayparts: *morning drive, 6 a.m. – 10 p.m.; mid-day drive, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.; afternoon, 12 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.; afternoon drive, 4:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.; primetime, 7:30 p.m. – 11 p.m.; late fringe 11 p.m. – 1 a.m.; and overnight, 1 a.m. – 6 a.m.*

For this research, only the morning drive daypart was considered. According to bid4spots.com (2004), morning drive will typically generate the largest potential for audience reach and is to be more "interactive and upfront" (p. 1). Morning drive is also the premium time for radio advertisers, as this is the time when audiences are listening to their radios on their way to work in the morning.

Status Updates. Page (2010) described status updates as "a standardized template" in which the user is prompted to share information (p. 425). This update then appears on the users profile page and is shown in the news feed of their connected users. Radio stations can update their status at any time with practically any information they want to share. Any user that is "friends" (or connected) with the radio station will be able to read and comment on any status

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update. Users can also choose to “like” a comment. This shows that a user agrees with a status update by displaying a thumbs-up icon underneath the original status.

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Results

Research question one examined the content of the CCM radio posts. First the researcher conducted a content analysis analyzing all Facebook posts ($n = 239$) in order to form categories to code the posts. Upon the completion of the analysis, seven distinct categories emerged including: *station promo*, *contest promo*, *event promo*, *local news*, *Bible verse*, *capital campaign*, and *general comment/question*. The primary investigator then input the posts using SPSS and categorized the posts individually.

Next, the researcher conducted a frequency test. This test showed the majority of the Facebook posts contained content that consisted of general comments or questions posed by station staff or DJ's, *Comment/Question* (47.3%), vs. *Capital Campaign* (2.5%) which was the least amount of the content posts. (See Table 1.)

Table 1 *Classification and Frequencies of Posts*

Classification	N	Percent
Station Promo	33	13.8%
Contest Promo	22	9.2%
Event Promo	34	14.2%
Local News	7	2.9%
Bible Verse	24	10.0%
Capital Campaign	6	2.5%
Comment/Question	113	47.3%

Research question two sought to identify if there were any differences in how market sizes use Facebook. To test this research question, the primary investigator input the Facebook

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posts into SPSS on the criteria of market size (1 = *Small*, 2 = *Medium*, 3 = *Large*), and classification of post (1 = *Station Promo*, 2 = *Contest Promo*, 3 = *Event Promo*, 4 = *Local News*, 5 = *Bible Verse*, 6 = *Capital Campaign*, 7 = *Comment/Question*). This data was then cross-tabulated (classification of post compared with market size) and calculated using chi-square to measure if a relationship existed between the market size and the classification of post. The research was supported obtaining a level of significance (chi-square = 22.417, $df = 12$, $p < .05$) (See Appendix A).

Analysis and Implications of Results

Uses and Gratifications Approach. This research was based on the theoretical concepts of the Uses and Gratifications approach. Previous research grounded on this theory have analyzed how U&G pertains to the individual engaged in various forms of communication however, this study looks to broaden the scope of the theory and apply its concepts to the perceived gratifications and uses of communication of organizations in the business world. By using U&G, researchers can gain insight into the various uses and gratifications varying methods of communication organizations perceive to be the most cost effective and beneficial.

Two research questions were posed in this research concerning CCM radio stations and their use of the social media website, Facebook. To further explain the research questions and the findings of this study, the results will be interpreted and implications will be stated.

Research Question One: What is the content of CCM Facebook posts? Through the use of a content analysis as previously mentioned, seven unique categories of Facebook posts emerged from CCM radio stations: *station promo, contest promo, event promo, local news, Bible verse, capital campaign, and general comment/question.*

Facebook Allows Rapport With Audience. The most common form of CCM radio Facebook use was the posing of a question or comment (47.3%), which encouraged other users to respond and even raise further points of discussion. This type of communication is unique to the Internet and especially to Facebook in that it allows for the potential of group communication without the need of everyone being at the same place at the same time. A user can post a comment or question and over time, others can see the initial post, include their input, and view and respond to others' comments.

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One medium sized market posed a very intriguing question asking listeners if they “would convert for love?” This question led to twenty-two different responses in which listeners of the morning show were able to react to the question and interact with the hosts and others. Responses ranged from long paragraphs to a simply stated “yes” or “no.” A large market radio station posted a comment about a special guest the morning show hosted. The comment consisted of a brief synopsis of the guest’s life and how through the struggles of his/her life, he/she was able to find Christ and use their story to help others. This post resulted in multiple fans “liking” this status and adding their own similar stories of everyday struggles and what being a Christian meant to them.

By using Facebook to encourage “conversations” online, radio stations have the potential to communicate with virtually any of their fans who connect with them via the Internet. This poses a unique experience in which radio stations can use comments from their followers on-air and offer more ways to discuss topics and raise questions with their listeners.

Radio Stations Can Use Facebook for Promotional Purposes. The second most popular form of Facebook post was promoting a local event (14.2%). Here, radio stations would often post statuses that encouraged their followers to attend a local church service, concert, or other community function. As most CCM radio stations are non-profit and find it difficult to advertise local events on-air, posting information about local concerts such as times and particularly the cost of admission to the event can be beneficial.

One large market radio station posted a comment about a pre-screening of a new movie coming to the area. The post contained the location, time, and that “seating was first come, first serve.” A small market radio station used Facebook to promote a special cruise with various Christian artists. The post stated that there is an “\$89 per month special on 10 cabins...sign up

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now and receive a goodie bag!” Another small market radio station promoted a local air show event in which the station invited the listener “to stop by our booth and say hello!”

Radio stations, especially non-profit, religious stations can use Facebook as a tool to advertise local events and businesses, and give up to date information on upcoming events. The user can view this information through the Facebook Newsfeed, and can be archived to view at a later time. Rather than having to rely solely on radio promotional advertising, stations are using Facebook as a means to distribute information about local events.

CCM radio stations also used Facebook to promote the station itself (13.8%). This type of status update consisted of upcoming radio shows, station tags/bylines, and the promotion of DJs and other radio station staff. A medium sized radio station used Facebook to promote upcoming shows and topics the DJ would be covering, stating, “the 9 o’clock nugget of the show is all about Joy!” Then the station encouraged fans to comment on the joys of their life. Another station used Facebook to promote “Lots of Big things in the works,” and stated that the radio station had “an awesome week,” persuading fans to continue listening to hear what had been happening.

Another way CCM radio station used Facebook for promotional purposes, was to promote station contests (9.2%). Much like station promotion updates and local event updates, radio stations can use Facebook to drive audiences to listen to the radio at a specific time for a contest. One small market radio station encouraged listeners who wanted to “WIN every CD the Newsboys have ever recorded...Listen for details.” A medium market radio station posted how to “win 2 tix [sic] to WINTERJAM,” a big Christian concert. The station posed the rules and details on how to win the tickets.

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Radio stations must continue to reinforce their identity to their listener. This is accomplished through terrestrial radio by playing station IDs and station promos intermingled through the music. Online, radio stations can use Facebook to promote the station, upcoming shows, DJ's, and encourage audiences to listen in.

Facebook Allows Stations to Post Local News. Some of the radio stations also used Facebook as a way to relay local news and information (2.9%). Most of the stations to use Facebook as a means to post local news were small market radio stations (2 out of 3). This is not surprising as small market radio stations typically service a small audience and have the potential to reach more of their audiences versus other markets. Most of the local news statuses were weather related. One small market radio station posted information about early dismissals from schools while a large market radio station posted about an accident on a heavily trafficked road urging drivers to use caution if heading that direction.

CCM Radio Stations Can Use Facebook to Post Christian Content. Bible verses make up another way Facebook was used by CCM radio stations (10%). As previously mentioned, CCM radio stations differ from other formats in that one of the sole purposes of CCM radio is to encourage Christian theology. This can be accomplished by using Scripture and discussing the Bible through Facebook.

One large radio station has "A Verse of the Day" using Facebook to post the Bible passage and encouraging listeners to comment. Another radio station's Facebook page included Scripture because, as the DJ posted, "this was my devotional today. Hope it speaks to you like it did to me."

Facebook Can Be Used to Generate Revenue. The final way CCM radio stations used Facebook was to encourage listeners to support the station through means of a capital campaign

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(2.5%). One of the ways in which CCM radio is distinctive from other radio stations is that the majority of its finances are supplied from listeners in the area. CCM radio stations encourage their listeners to support the station financially by donating money to help pay for fees, staff, and other expenses, as most stations cannot generate revenue by means of advertising. One station posted updates on their financial goal stating, "we're only \$2,000 away!"

There are a number of ways radio stations can use social media to connect with their audiences; from encouraging individuals to listen to posing a question and using the responses on-air, Facebook is changing how radio connects and interacts with its audience. Listeners in various market sizes interact with CCM radio stations differently. The second research question sought to understand how market size might result in different uses of Facebook.

Research Question Two: Are there any major differences in how large, medium, and small markets use Facebook? Previous researchers have alluded to the fact that market size can influence how radio stations use technology. Hamula and Williams Jr. (2003) found that many small market radio stations used their websites as a means to promote both the station and local events.

By using a chi-square analysis, the researcher was able to determine a level of significance ($\chi^2 = 22.417$, $df = 12$, $p < .05$) in how different CCM radio market sizes use Facebook. The research showed that the majority of posts about local news (6 of 7) were generated from small markets with a single post from a large market station. The majority of the posts on capital campaign (5 of 6) were also generated from small markets with a single post coming from a large market station. This is consistent with previous research stating that small market radio stations use the Internet to communicate information about local news.

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The other five categories for Facebook posts were evenly distributed with no significant difference between the three market sizes: *station promo* (12 small, 12 medium, 9 large), *contest promo* (11 small, 5 medium, 6 large), *event promo* (18 small, 7 medium, 9 small), and *Bible verse* (11 small, 8 medium, 5 large).

Discussion

Radio stations continue to find new ways to interact with their listeners on a daily and sometimes hourly basis. The use of social media websites such as Facebook allows for such a connection to occur. Radio stations have continued to see the Internet and its functions as a tool rather than a means of competition when it comes to the potential to increase overall audience size and audience involvement. Guided by Uses and Gratifications Theory, this research demonstrated that CCM radio stations use the Internet and social media to connect, interact, and communicate with their audiences. This research extends the boundary conditions of the theory by examining the content CCM radio stations disseminate to their audiences through social media.

Similarities and Differences of CCM and Mainstream Radio's Use of Facebook

CCM radio stations are unique in that most of the content heard on the radio and viewed on their respective Internet websites and Facebook pages revolve around the central concept of reinforcing Christianity, its beliefs, values, and norms. This is evident in the content of the posts seen on Facebook. Out of the 239 total Facebook posts, nearly half of the posts contained either a Bible verse or a comment/question related to Christianity. These posts are distinctive to religious radio stations.

CCM radio stations and mainstream radio have similarities when it comes to the use of social media, however. Ferguson and Greer (2011) in a similar study using Twitter updates found that music radio stations were more likely to post tweets containing some form of promotional information and that radio stations whose programming was mostly news/talk were more likely to post tweets concerned with news. The current study is consistent with Ferguson and Greer's (2011) findings in that over one-third of the 239 total Facebook posts from CCM

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radio stations contained some form of promotional information be it station, contest, or local event. Social media appears to be a convenient way that radio stations can promote events to their audience without individuals actually listening to that station. However, this does not mean that radio stations cannot use social media to increase audiences' time spent listening.

Many of the radio stations the researcher analyzed posted statuses encouraging listeners to "tune in" or "continue listening" to win a prize or to hear a special on-air guest. Radio stations, even non-profit religious radio, continuously have to find ways to persuade audiences to listen to their station and keep listening. Despite CCM's audience getting older, the format continues to attract audiences from all demographics ranking seventh with teens and coming in the top 10 with adults ages 55 and older (Arbitron, 2010). Continuing to have a presence with new technology helps CCM radio remain relevant with the audience and allows for more opportunities to reach listeners.

Ways CCM Radio Uses Facebook

One way small market CCM radio stations were able to connect with their audience was the use of Facebook to post local news and information. Social media in general has become a place where individuals can stay informed with the latest news stories and get updates on breaking news. Small market radio stations were more likely to post information concerning news than other markets. Content analysis revealed that CCM radio stations posted updates including weather information, school closings and road conditions and accidents on their Facebook pages. Small market radio stations that serve as a source for local news in their community can post real-time information on their Facebook page and in turn drive users to their website and their station.

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The average number of followers for the CCM radio stations the researcher analyzed was 6,754. The least amount of users following a radio station was 66 while the greatest amount of individuals following a single radio station was 72,303. This shows that radio stations on Facebook have the potential to reach numerous people simultaneously and any person who sees a post can respond in real time. Unlike other more limited forms of communication between the audience and the radio station, social media, provides stations the opportunity to connect with their audience on a wider scale.

Many of the status updates the radio stations posted contained comments from users connected to the station. This means that not only are individuals seeing the status updates and being reminded of the radio station, but that the audience is also communicating with the station by providing feedback to comments and questions, and even participating for a chance to win a prize. Facebook allows radio stations another way to communicate with their audience and even respond to the audience with suggestions and questions. This allows the opportunity for stations to build a certain rapport with listeners that was never possible before social media.

Localism in Social Media

The biggest difference the researcher noticed in how market sizes use Facebook is the posting of local news in small market radio stations. With a large emphasis for radio stations to provide local content, Facebook provides another avenue of getting immediate and relevant information to their audiences. In a 2011 study on localism, Saffran (2011) found that most respondents turned to the Internet (34.6%) for their daily news and up to date information of a crisis vs. radio (18.1%), which came in last of mass media sources. As radio stations compete with other forms of media to reach local audiences it becomes increasingly important that radio stations have an online presence and utilize this technology to connect with their audience.

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Radio stations can use Facebook to promote localism by providing information on local events and by giving up to the minute information on breaking news.

Limitations and Future Research

The first limitation of this study to consider is the possibility of conducting a more in-depth content analysis. While seven unique categories emerged and established a broad scope for research, more specialized analysis into the content of the comments and questions raised by the radio stations could reveal additional categories and prove to be beneficial for research.

Another limitation of this study is the incomplete list of exactly how many CCM radio stations exist and what specifically constitutes a CCM radio station. Stations that do not play 24-hour music can be classified as a CCM radio station despite being a multi-format radio station. The industry website used for this study did provide a list of 599 unique radio stations, multiple resources state that there are more than 2,000 Christian radio stations in the United States (Hagin, 2004; Lochte, 2007). A better-defined population would be beneficial for research on this topic.

Research question two resulted in a significant outcome however, a larger sample than 100 would ultimately provide more accurate results. This outcome was limited due to the population being 100 and running a 3x7 chi-square model on the data. A larger data set could yield to a more complete chi-square model, which may produce a more precise answer.

Another potential limitation is the day of the week the researcher chose to collect data. Unlike the significance of radio dayparts, at this time, there is no significant research that states if a particular day of the week is better for collecting data on Facebook. The researcher chose Friday, as it is the final day of the workweek and could have the most worthy information available.

Despite the limitations of this study, this research reveals opportunities for future research. The growth in popularity and market share, as well as increased listenership

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establishes CCM radio as worthy of future research. Scholars should note the differences and similarities CCM radio has with its mainstream counterparts and should encourage further inquires of comparison.

Second, future researchers might consider adapting this research to form a case study. Future researchers could conduct interviews with station staff, particularly the station manager, department managers, and the website director on the various approaches each individual radio station takes when using social media. Future researchers could complete studies on a single radio station, a particular market, or perhaps, on a larger scale, an entire format such as CCM. A case study could lead to an improved understanding of the specific kinds of statuses radio stations post and the type of feedback radio stations receive from audiences. These interviews could go beyond the stations themselves to engage with the audiences to gain insight into the uses and gratifications individuals receive when connected with radio stations on Facebook. Questions from a case study might present answers to the question *why* stations choose certain topics to post on Facebook and what uses and gratifications the stations perceive by using social media to connect with listeners.

Third, while social media has seen a dramatic increase in research over the last few years, research has only scratched the surface of this new way of communication. Specifically, this researcher analyzed radio's usage of social media. Future researchers should consider other implications social media has on the impact of this medium. Radio has embraced this new technology and is continuing to find new ways to connect with its audience.

Future researchers should also look to understand how other radio formats are using Facebook and social media. CCM is only one of a multitude of formats on the radio and there may be differences in how these formats use social media. Other forms of mass communication

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such as television, newspapers, etc. should also be the focus of research on the use of social media.

Future researchers should also conduct studies on the audiences' reactions to social media updates. How do audiences respond to particular posts, pictures, videos, blogs, etc.? Individuals as well as some of the largest corporations are using social media. Scholars could provide more insight into how mass communication is using this technology and how people are responding.

Finally, with new technology emerging at a rapid pace, it would be beneficial for scholars to understand lasting implications new technology has on mass communication. We have seen both the positive and negative effects modern technology can have on such forms of mass communication such as the decline of newspapers, the merging of radio stations, and the merging of television stations. Research concerning the ways in which mass communication collaborates with such technology would provide evidence on how technology has impacted the industry as a whole.

Conclusion

In this study, the researcher sought to understand how CCM radio stations are using Facebook as a means to connect with their audience. CCM radio is distinctive from other radio formats in that the content generated by the station is usually focused on reaffirming the beliefs of Christianity. This study showed that many of the status updates by CCM radio stations contained content related to Christianity through the use of Bible passages and general comments and questions raised by the station staff.

This study also showed that CCM radio stations use Facebook mostly to communicate to listeners by posting comments and questions online encouraging the audience to listen to the radio station and post their response to the status. The research also illustrates how CCM radio stations use Facebook to promote the station and events.

Finally, this study explained how small market CCM radio stations use Facebook to post information about breaking and local news to their listeners. Small market radio stations are seen as a source for local news in their community. Small market radio stations can get messages out to their listeners quickly and efficiently by using Facebook.

This research showed various ways in which CCM radio uses Facebook to connect and grow its audience. CCM radio continues to grow in popularity in the United States. CCM radio stations can communicate with their audience and encourage continued listenership and support through the use of social media sites like Facebook. It is important to understand how mass communication is using new technology in order to reach and cultivate its audience.

Appendix A

Market Size and Classification of Posts Cross Tabulation (N = 239)

Market Size	Classification of Post							
	Station Promo	Contest Promo	Event Promo	Local News	Bible Verse	Capital Campaign	Comment/Question	
Small	12	11	18	6	11	5	39	
Medium	12	5	7	0	8	0	53	
Large	9	6	9	1	5	1	21	

Note. (chi-square = 22.417, df = 12, p < .05)

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