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Assessing and Explaining the Proficiency of Social Media Marketing in Small Ministries

A Comparative Case Study

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Abstract

This thesis seeks to understand how small nonprofit ministries approach social media marketing, and what their strengths and weaknesses are compared to normative theory.

The research is conducted as a comparative case study on two small nonprofit Christian ministries which have several similarities but differ significantly in their approach to and success with social media marketing. In order to test this, I conducted an extensive literature review that resulted in a theoretical framework with preliminary guidelines for social media managers in nonprofit organizations. The research utilized the Flexible Pattern Matching Approach, and the theoretical components and underlying factors of this framework served as the foundation for semi-structured in-depth qualitative interviews with informants from each ministry as well as observational data.

The findings of this research establish the factors in the theoretical framework (brand infrastructure, marketing communications plan, social media marketing holistic framework and a logic model) as good indicators of success in social media marketing, chiefly emphasizing the value of gaining an awareness of and implementing a theoretical framework that is based on an up-to-date understanding of marketing and branding communications. Several new factors were discovered and shown to be of particular value for each of the major theoretical components. A couple of theoretical elements which contrasted with extant literature also emerged.

The theoretical framework and findings are useful for leadership and marketing managers in small nonprofits with a long history of using traditional forms of communication. It provides managers with an understanding of which foundational elements need to be clearly understood and implemented before they can expect lasting success through their social media marketing efforts.

To the author's knowledge, there has been no comparative case study conducted on small nonprofit media ministries that creates an overarching framework for social media marketing success factors. Also, as social media platforms are continually developing, this study serves as a needed update on previous research.

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Lastly, I wish to show my deepest gratitude to my Creator and Redeemer for giving me everything I am and hold dear. *"All things come from You, and of Your own we have given you."* 1 Chronicles 29:14b (NKJV)

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Contents

1. Introduction

1.1 Background and Problem Statement

Nonprofits in North America and Nonprofit Marketing

In the last few decades, the nonprofit sector has been experiencing significant growth. This is also the case in North America, where there are many nonprofit organizations. In the United States alone there were 1.54 million registered 501(c)(3) public charities in 2016; and though this is the largest category of charity organizations, there are still other categories (NCCS Team, 2020). Canada also has a significant number of nonprofit organizations with around 86000 charities registered with the Canadian Revenue Agency (n.d.).

The nonprofit sector has been established as heterogeneous in multiple studies (Perić et al., 2020; Guo & Saxton, 2020). This means that research within this sector needs to be handled carefully, especially in regard to generalizability. However, this leads to many opportunities for exploring the nuances that are likely to appear when researching various sub-sectors and attempting to expand theoretical frameworks.

Nonprofits often have a combination of full-time and part-time employees, as well as volunteers (Grau, 2021). Still, the majority of NPOs have relatively few employees. In 2017, 70.65% of nonprofit organizations in the U.S. had fewer than 20 employees (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2020).

Acceptance of Marketing

As the research on nonprofit marketing has grown significantly in the last couple of decades, so has the acceptance of marketing among nonprofit organizations. Nonprofit marketing used to be seen as undesirable and not worthwhile, but this attitude has changed in recent years. However, that does not mean that nonprofits suddenly know how to market efficiently. Marketing is still underexploited within the majority of nonprofit organizations (Grau, 2021). One reason for this is that though nonprofits tend to be favorable toward marketing, most of them are confused about the meaning of the term. It is often interpreted as "fundraising" and does not include communication with their other target audiences, such as clients and volunteers (Pope et al., 2009). It is difficult to successfully implement something you do not understand.

Seventh-day Adventist Church and Social Media Marketing

Overview of the Adventist Church as a Nonprofit

One such nonprofit organization is the Seventh-day Adventist Church (also the SDA Church or the Adventist Church) and is itself connected to nonprofit organizations and ministries worldwide and does work within many nonprofit subsectors. The Adventist Church was established in 1863 and is today a protestant church with 21,556,837 members worldwide and 1,262,927 members in the North American division alone. It oversees 102,630 organizations, including 4,016 institutions, worldwide per 2019 (Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2020). These comprise churches, schools from primary to university level, hospitals, publishing houses, media centers, food industries, and more (Seventh-day Adventist Church, 2020). In addition to these, there are also supporting ministries with no direct organizational affiliation with the Adventist Church, but which have strong ties to the official church and support the mission in various ways. There is also an organization called ASI (Adventist-laymen's Services & Industries) which seeks to connect lay members and supporting ministries to the church's mission and enables various entrepreneurial projects by supporting them financially and missionally (Adventist-laymen’s Services and Industries, n.d.). This further strengthens these organizations’ community around the mission of the church.

The Seventh-day Adventist Church has experienced steady growth. In 2019, the North American Division of the Adventist church saw an accession rate of 2.73% in 2019 (Medley, 2020). On the other hand, the number of Christians in the U.S. has declined over the last several decades, and the largest protestant denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention, has seen a continuous decline for 13 years in a row (Loller, 2020). Canada has also for many years seen a decline in religiosity (Csillag, 2013).

A Need for Thoughtful Communication

Compared to most mainstream protestant/evangelical church ministries, the Adventist ministries adhere to some teachings that are different from what has been traditionally taught in mainstream Christian churches (e.g., the day of rest being Saturday rather than Sunday, emphasis on a primarily plant-based diet and healthy lifestyle, prophecy/end-time seminars, etc.). These differences can make it a challenge to attract the attention of mainstream evangelicals, even though they have a lot in common due to their protestant heritage (Seventh-day Adventist Church, n.d.; Southern Baptist Convention, n.d.). This makes it a particular challenge to reach new stakeholders. The peculiarity of its teachings could be confusing or off-putting for some but could at the same time be seen as something new and exciting for others (Guo & Saxton, 2020).

At times, evangelicals find themselves in strong disagreement with certain teachings of the Adventist Church. Kellner (2003) states,

> *"Adventism, due to its differences on key points with evangelicals over the Sabbath, the state of the dead and the present ministry of Christ, was often viewed in the 1950s as a "cult" by evangelical Christians, despite Adventists' affirmation of an unwavering approach to the Scriptures, Trinity and other key Christian doctrines."*

This stigma has long been an area of frustration for the church and is still present today (Rogers, 2003). Because of this reaction to their teachings, the Adventist Church has had to be very particular about how it communicates its position to its stakeholders, including the general public.

This disagreement between evangelicals and Adventists continues to the present day. An example of this is seen in the video *"How Should Evangelicals View Seventh-Day Adventism?"* by The Master's Seminary (a YouTube channel with 66,500 subscribers) where Dr. Busenitz argues against the denomination and its teachings. Adventist Pastor Doug Batchelor responds in a video titled, *"Are Seventh Day Adventists Really a Cult? With Doug Batchelor"* (on his personal YouTube channel with 184,000 subscribers). However, the rebuttal came nearly five and a half years later and not from an official source (Master's Seminary, 2015; Batchelor, 2021).

The rise of social media has provided non-believers, evangelicals, and those from other faiths with an increased opportunity to take a closer look at the communications of the Adventist Church and its supporting ministries without having to commit to any offline relationships. This means that the church and related organizations need to be thoughtful in how they communicate through these new forms of media (in addition to the traditional mediums of books, radio, and TV programs).

Most religious nonprofits already emphasize preserving their teachings and practices against criticism, but this becomes especially relevant for ministries connected to denominations outside mainstream secular and Christian culture. This protectiveness does not necessarily hinder communication if the organization only or primarily relies on weekly sermons, public evangelistic seminars, and paid advertisements (in any channel such as TV, radio, and flyers, but also on social media). However, if the goal is to take advantage of the unique tools and opportunities social media platforms have to offer, a different approach is needed to attract and sustain attention. The possibilities of a damaged reputation might lead to a fear of social media marketing (SMM) as it tends to level the playing field and enable users to "meme-ify" an organization’s content, that is, using the content to create viral memes that might ridicule or misrepresent the organization and its teachings.

The number of users of social media is constantly growing, which in turn means that more of nonprofits' target audiences are present online (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019). Sepulcri et al. (2020, p. 659) state that social media is a tool that can help nonprofits *"build brand image and improve the relationship between nonprofit organizations and the target audience [as well as to] disseminate information about the organization, to promote sponsors, and to advertise volunteering opportunities, forms of donations, online stores and events calendars."* The Adventist church and related ministries (as well as other nonprofits struggling with similar communication issues) should seek to take proper advantage of this tool.

Coronavirus and a General Slowness to Adopt Social Media Marketing

Even though the Adventist Church has a steadily growing membership, there seems to be a struggle to attract and engage followers online. Even the most popular Adventist connected accounts on social media have far fewer followers than mega-churches worldwide (e.g., Elevation church compared with the official Adventist church and other ministries). Regarding Table 1 below, it is worth mentioning that this is primarily a selection of the more successful ministries with a solid connection to the Adventist Church, except for Elevation Church, a mega-church with strong ties to the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC Churches, n.d.). On social media, the distribution is according to the power-law and not normal distribution (Guo & Saxton, 2020). The ministries highlighted in Table 1 are therefore part of the long tail, except for NPO2.

A cursory look at the social media content put out by the most popular Adventist-related organizations shows that most of the social media accounts regularly publish new content, but there seems to be an overwhelming use of traditional forms of promotion with little use of the rich communication and collaborative features those social media platforms provide for their users. There is typically little interaction with the audience. The majority of Instagram and Facebook posts seem to consist of announcements and Bible verses primarily. These are sometimes interspersed with various video content. Posts that announce TV programs and streamed content on a ministry's website might receive a trickle of likes and a limited number of comments or shares. A couple of the organizations stand out in their approach, creating more personal and thoughtful content, and they also receive more meaningful engagement. Personal accounts for speakers generally seem to receive more comments on their posts than the organizations' accounts.

	Instagram				***Facebook***			
Account	**Followers**	**Likes**	**Comments**	**Tot. posts**	**Followers2**	**Likes2**	**Shares**	**Comments2**
NPO2	517	26.1	1	100	4476	31.5	7.8	10.1
NPO1 [parent org.]	5931	252.8	7.1	433	15299	236.6	101.9	4.7
NPO1 [speaker 1]	10600	548.9	26.7	565	13375	315.1	105.3	16.6
NPO1 [training program]	11700	398.7	9.1	890	12567	128.6	51.5	2.3
NPO3	15500	362.9	9.2	518	124025	83.7	28.8	2.6
NPO4	15700	205.1	4.7	1161	146982	67.3	13.1	3.9
NPO1 [speaker 2]	17400	455.6	56.4	3120	34590	468.7	64.7	208.1
NPO5	33500	403.1	6.7	1744	208009	301.3	172.3	17
NPO6	36500	393.9	10.5	1079	305660	183.3	52.1	18.7
NPO7 [speaker] **	66800	2596.3	64.6	256	593383	2143.7	881.9	403.9
NPO7	71700	1327.6	35.8	1912	742622	587	296.3	64.4
Official Adventist Church	116000	1309.3	40.9	1507	925958	386.6	157.9	22.4
Elevation Church	1500000	7921.8	141.9	968	1953409	3334.3	672.3	150.3

* averages based on 15 latest posts on May 4, 2021
** one extreme outlier Instagram post was replaced with a post with more normal high numbers

Table 1 - Overview of Nonprofit Ministries' Social Media Attention

The official Adventist church provides institutions and organizations with tools to help them become proficient users of social media platforms. From 2016 to 2020, the North American Division hired a Digital Strategist with a degree in marketing and several years of experience working with different organizations (Domm, n.d.). While she worked for the Social Media and Big Data Department, she developed a significant number of resources, including over 100 blog posts and tutorials to help organizations and employees connected to the Adventist Church be better equipped to create a lasting impact through their digital marketing efforts (Social Media and Big Data Services, n.d. b).

As the church experienced the global challenge of lockdowns when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world in 2020, there was a growing sense of the need to adapt and become more proficient at using available technology like social media more efficiently in order to stay connected with their members and other stakeholders and avoid losing momentum (North American Division, 2020). On November 1, the executive secretary of the North American Division said, *"What then shall we do? Where should we do from here? [...] We may need a new skill set to reach the world in effective ways, yet one thing remains unchanged — we need to keep loving God and loving our neighbor"* (Medley, 2020). This indicates an awareness of the need to adapt to the changing landscape and a simultaneous uncertainty as to what that looks like. The comment likely refers to a whole lot more than social media marketing, but the importance of adaptation can hardly be overstated in the current situation. Furthermore, the Social Media and Big Data Department currently has a separate section on their website titled, *"Resources for Churches and Ministries going Digital During COVID-19"* (Social Media and Big Data Services, n.d. a). Little is known how aware the media ministry organizations in the Adventist church are of these resources, and whether they use them and are successful in implementing them.

Small Media Ministries and Social Media Marketing

Even though the official Adventist church has realized the need to focus on setting and achieving their social media marketing goals and are making this information available online, it is uncertain how the individual nonprofit organizations are doing in this regard. How they prioritize brand management and marketing communication, the perceived value of social media marketing in reaching their goals, and the general awareness and ability to utilize the knowledge and tools they have available to them are essential to this discussion.

Holes in the Literature

The available academic literature on SMM for nonprofits has mostly focused on the popularity of social media among NPOs, that is, whether or not it is being used rather than *"the effectiveness of [their] social media usage"* (Guo & Saxton, 2020, pp. 76-77). There has also been expressed a need for more research on examining current models in different contexts than where they were originally developed. Guo & Saxton (2020, p. 142) request that the transferability of their logic model be tested on smaller NPO organizations that are not strictly focused on advocacy and operate in different geographical locations. Guo & Saxton (2020) use a very broad definition of advocacy. Still, there might be noteworthy differences between nonprofit subsectors due to differences in the cause, target audience(s), underlying values, communication styles, etc. This would likely necessitate adjustments in nonprofits' approach in order to succeed with social media marketing. Also, as most of Guo & Saxton's (2020) research is based on data from Twitter, it would be valuable to examine whether there are similar or different factors *"that drive attention on Facebook or Instagram"* (Guo & Saxton, 2020, p. 215). There have also been significant developments in social media platforms and their users since Waters et al. (2011) published their research on how nonprofits can best use videos online to reach their goals. Sepulcri et al. (2020) also emphasize the need for further research on communication strategies for nonprofit organizations in their bibliometric analysis on nonprofit branding.

It seems like a valuable endeavor to expand on prior research by investigating a specific niche within the nonprofit sector which is experiencing a set of challenges related to communicating their message to stakeholders (i.e., combination of age, size, resources, traditions, hierarchies, reputation, etc.), in order to possibly uncover consistencies, inconsistencies, and new variables that can further explain and deepen the knowledge surrounding SMM success factors for nonprofits.

Research Question

Based on this context and the need for further research within this area, the research question that will be investigated is as follows:

How do small ministries approach social media marketing, and what are the strengths and weaknesses compared to normative theory?

1.2 Thesis Outline

The thesis consists of five chapters. The introduction is followed by a literature review which provides a detailed overview of current research on critical success factors for nonprofits' social media marketing. The review simultaneously serves as a theoretical framework of preliminary guidelines for nonprofit social media marketing managers, summarized at the end of the chapter. The literature review is followed by a methodology chapter which details the research approach and research design utilized for this thesis. After this, the data collection results are systematically presented, followed by a discussion that includes implications, limitations, and suggestions for future research. The interview guide is available in full in the appendix.

2. Literature Review

This chapter presents a critical review of relevant research related to succeeding with social media marketing for nonprofits. I provide an overview of nonprofit marketing and foundational principles in order to contextualize social media marketing for nonprofits. Then I go over the primary tools available for nonprofit managers and marketers for the development of the overall marketing plan and more specifically, for social media marketing. After this, I organize these into a theoretical framework. This framework is then used as a baseline for understanding and comparing the selected cases. This approach is used to uncover conformity and deviation compared to normative theory and the potential discovery of elements/factors that might become theoretical additions through future research.

2.1 Nonprofit Marketing

Marketing is defined by the American Marketing Association (2017) as "the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large." This definition highlights several aspects of marketing that are of great importance for all businesses, including nonprofits. It shows that marketing is more than advertising and even more than just communication. It avoids excluding nonprofits by setting up the primary goal of increasing profit (Pope et al., 2009). However, for nonprofits, it is worth specifying that even though the definition does not include certain groups of nonprofits' stakeholders by the more common terms (such as beneficiaries, donors, and volunteers), these are still included. This is because an exchange is not limited to involving money but also includes time, expertise, status, attention, etc. (Grau, 2021).

Branding is defined as "a name, symbol, logo design or image, or any combination of these, which is designed to identify a product or service and distinguish it from those of their competitors" (Kotler et al., 2012, p.467). When competition increases, the difficulty of differentiating on the quality of the work increases. Therefore, in such an environment, building a brand and using it effectively can increase the competitive advantage of nonprofits. To the stakeholders, a brand provides "reliable orientation" and therefore increases loyalty to the organization (Voeth & Herbst, 2008). Branding has also been shown to lead to effective resource use (O'Cass & Voola, 2011).

Differences between non-profit and for-profit sector: Transferability of tools

There has been a lot of research on branding and marketing concepts in the for-profit sector. Many of these can have a significant impact on nonprofit organizations (Ritchie et al., 1999; Baghi & Gabrielli, 2013; Sepulcri et al., 2020). However, because nonprofits differ from for-profit organizations, it has been repeatedly emphasized that marketing tools intended for usage in the for-profit sector should not simply be applied to non-profit organizations without proper caution and care. This is because nonprofit organizations operate within a particular context and face challenges that are not seen or rare in for-profit organizations. The most obvious difference lies in the terms being used to describe these two sectors, namely nonprofit and for-profit, meaning that nonprofit organizations have other goals than simply being profitable. Since their fundamental reason for existing is different, the very definition of marketing has to be adjusted to account for this difference, as mentioned above. (Pope et al., 2009) It is worth noting that a difference in the underlying definition of a concept can skew the research and development of theories and strategies in the direction of achieving profit-driven goals rather than cause-driven ones.

Another significant difference includes nonprofits usually having more than one target audience. Some researchers focus primarily on two: donors/funders and clients/customers/beneficiaries. Others include volunteers as a third category (Pope et al., 2009), and some even add a fourth target audience: the community (Grau, 2021). The difficulty here lies in that the different audiences tend to respond differently to marketing efforts. Nonprofits also have other organizational objectives that need consideration (Grau, 2021; Voeth & Herbst, 2008; Chapleo, 2015; Pope et al., 2009).

2.1.1 Brand Infrastructure

Marketing and branding exist as essential ingredients within the organization's context as a whole, and as such, successful marketing and branding depend on certain strategic and organizational assumptions. Efficient content creators might be able to attract attention to an organization and its messages. Still, unless the proper infrastructure is in place, the results will exist in a vacuum and be short-lived with little to no impact on the organization's goals (Chapleo, 2015).

A brand infrastructure framework can help meet the challenges of implementation. The reason for this is that although many organizations already have the necessary factors required to get started with their marketing efforts, they struggle with knowing how to approach it. They are often uncertain as to whether or not they have the necessary support to market successfully (Chapleo, 2015).

The key elements of a nonprofit brand infrastructure include "support of leadership, clear mission and vision, employee buy in, effective internal verbal communications, organizational culture, management capabilities in marketing, capabilities in marketing communications, effective internal branding communications, information technology systems, marketing budgets and research capabilities" and all of these are specifically related to "branding as a concept and an activity"—i.e., not just a general sense of a supportive leadership, but in particular a "[l]eadership that understands and is supportive of branding as a concept and an activity" (Chapleo, 2015, pp. 204-205). This list shows the factors in descending order of importance from NPOs point of view. Still, additionally, a content analysis suggested internal communications as being especially important for nonprofit branding to be successful. Also, a limited budget is recognized as being a challenge, but it is not essential to the brand infrastructure (Chapleo, 2015).

2.1.2 Marketing Communications Plan

Pope et al. (2009, p.196, emphasis added) emphatically highlight the importance of implementing and using a marketing plan for nonprofits: "*All* NPOs—*regardless* of the size of their staff and budgets—*should* develop a marketing plan to reach their various target markets and include a marketing line-item in their organizational budget." One reason why this has been a challenge is the difficulty in obtaining well-researched marketing materials on tools and strategies intended for use by nonprofits. (Sepulcri et al., 2020; Guo & Saxton, 2020) However, as these are becoming more and more available, nonprofits should indeed use them to enable them to reach their goals more effectively.

A "good marketing plan […] provide[s] direction and focus for your brand, product or company" (Kotler et al., 2012, p. 949). Fundamentally, a successful marketing plan "must be straightforward, easy to implement and easy to measure." (Pope et al., 2009, p. 195) Because of the heterogenous nature of the nonprofit sector, some of these tools and elements used in the plan will have to be adjusted according to the environment and goals of the individual organization. Still, some standard and flexible tools can steer them in the right direction. Kotler et al (2012, p. 949) recommend having two plans; a business plan and a marketing plan, stating that "the marketing plan has a more limited scope than a business plan." Grau (2021) presents two separate marketing plans; the overarching Marketing Plan (which includes a complete description of the organization as well as what is commonly found in detailed marketing plans) and a Marketing Communications Plan. There is some overlap between the business plan and the overall marketing plan here. This indicates, again, the comprehensive nature of marketing and the importance of a clear strategy. That being said, due to the limited scope of this study which centers on social media marketing, I will in this section focus on the marketing communications plan.

It is worth emphasizing that because nonprofits generally do not have a proper understanding of the broad nature of marketing and do not have a marketing plan (Pope et al., 2009), they should take the time to research and implement a business plan which includes the big picture marketing elements. On top of this, they should develop a specific marketing communications plan. When the business plan or overarching marketing plan is so comprehensive, it can be desirable to have a separate marketing communications plan that details the elements which constitute successful communications for the nonprofit in question. This marketing communications plan would begin with a situational analysis, followed by the marketing objectives (related to communication objectives), then the communication, and finally, details on how to monitor and evaluate the communications (Grau, 2021).

Situation Analysis

Kotler et al. (2012, p. 950) describe the situation analysis as a "[description of] the market, the company's capability to serve targeted segments, and the competition."

Using a SWOT analysis can be helpful for nonprofits in understanding their environment, both internally and externally. SWOT is an acronym for *strengths, weaknesses, opportunities,* and *threats,* where the two first are used to examine the internal situation of the organization (what helps or hinders them concerning reaching their goals). On the other hand, opportunities and threats are used to understand the external context the organization is operating in (favorable or unfavorable situations they face). Some relevant factors to consider include trends, competitors, collaborators, and audience(s) (Grau, 2021; Kotler et al., 2012).

It might also be worth exploring opportunities for cause-related marketing as this often involves a partnership between nonprofits and for-profits that often proves beneficial for both parties. Such a partnership means a for-profit donates a percentage of its sales to a non-profit organization. This leads to “increased exposure and funding” for the nonprofit and “new […] and more engaged customers” for the business. (Grau, 2021, p. 163)

Marketing Objectives

Building on the situation analysis, the marketing objectives are decided on by the leadership of the organization which considers the perspectives of the stakeholders. These must be formulated so that the organization knows whether or not the objectives have been met. These “[g]oals should stretch the organization and be clear and concise” (Kotler et al., 2012, p. 47). Nonprofits should ensure that each of their marketing objective statements is Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Time-specific—SMART (Grau, 2021). If the nonprofit never knows whether or not the objectives are met, creating these untestable statements might increase confusion and frustration and hinder the organization rather than help it get closer to accomplishing its mission.

Communication Strategy

Audience Strategy

Because nonprofits often serve so many different audiences, it should be a high priority to reduce confusion in their communication by making sure they know who they are addressing at any given moment and taking measures to make sure that the message is getting through to who they are targeting. One way in which this can be done is to define each of their target audiences (based on demographics, psychographics, behavioral data, and the goals of the organization) and create personas (a made-up depiction of a specific audience), specifying everything, including their name, age, gender, family situation, values, likes and dislikes, typical sayings, and more. This is an excellent way for the organization to get to know their audiences and make it easier for the organization to see their target audience(s) as real people and not just numbers, in turn improving the efficacy of the marketing communications. (Grau, 2021)

Message and Creativity

The message the organization desires to communicate is directly related to the overall vision and mission statements and must be specifically crafted to reach the marketing objectives. Another vital aspect in shaping the message to increase the likelihood of having the intended effect is the organization's role in the audiences' mind. The brand positioning strategy should be set up as a part of the overall business model but is vital to keep in mind while creating a communication strategy as the nonprofit needs to know whether or not they are occupying the position they want to have (Kotler et al., 2012). This directly influences the messaging and will increase consistency in the tone and content across the organization and the audiences (Grau, 2021).

There are many ways to get the message across to the audience(s) depending on the available channels, tools, talents, skills, and other resources. Creativity can be a great aid in getting people's attention. It is crucial, however, to ensure that the messaging stays coherent with the brand positioning. There should be some form of consistency across the communications to strengthen the target audience(s)'s loyalty to the nonprofit's brand and, by extension, their cause. (Grau, 2021; Voeth & Herbst, 2008) Some valuable frameworks to improve brand positioning strategy include: clarify and utilize the nonprofit's brand personality (as a baseline, non-profits are expected to be humane, secure, spirited, persevering, and charming) (Voeth & Herbst, 2008), the overarching story the organization is telling (K. Miller, 2021; D. Miller, 2017), and which problems they are offering to help solve for each of their target audiences at any given moment (Christensen et al., 2016).

Relationship marketing can also assist in this regard as it "places a strong emphasis on building a longer-term, more intimate bond between the organization and its key customers" (Kotler et al., 2012, p. 977). In a nonprofit context, focusing on building relationships with the target audiences is often very valuable, especially when it comes to extending the lifetime value of donors and volunteers, but also for the beneficiaries who might be more or less interested in receiving what the nonprofit is offering (e.g., going to church or stopping drinking alcohol) (Grau, 2021). Sometimes organizations replace human connection points with digital efficiency to the end where the relationships suffer. This should be avoided by perceiving the wants and needs of the target audience(s), and making promises which are then kept (Kotler et al., 2012).

Media Strategy: Paid, earned, and own media

Nonprofit marketers should, just like their for-profit counterparts, coordinate their promotion efforts. After the rise of digital marketing and social media, the traditional paradigm for promotion changed. Media tactics are now typically being grouped into paid, earned, and owned media. Paid media is whenever an "[o]rganization pays for the time or space on a media channel or outlet" (Grau, 2021, p.163). Earned media is "customer-created channels" (Kotler et al., 2012, p. 517) or said another way when "[s]takeholders become the conduit of the message through word of mouth and other publicity" (Grau, 2021, p.163). Owned media is any "channels a brand controls" (Kotler et al., 2012, p. 517) or when the "[o]rganization becomes a media channel, publisher of content" (Grau, 2021, p.163).

Social media marketing fits into each of these three categories. Most social media platforms offer various ads that can be purchased and set up to reach specific demographics at various points on the platform (Newberry and McLachlan, 2020), sponsorship, and cause-related marketing which all function as paid media and can take place on social media (Grau, 2021). Word of mouth, interviews on other channels, shares, posts from events, location tags, retweets, reposts, reviews, and more are ways social media serves as earned media (Grau, 2021). Owned media is the category most obviously connected to social media. Any of the organization's profiles on any social media platform would fall into this category.

The emphasis in much of the research on social media marketing for nonprofits is on earned and owned media rather than paid media. This is useful for NPOs who tend to operate with tight budgets and are often expected (by donors and the general public) to work with minimal administrative costs relative to their program expenses (referred to as efficiency performance metrics) (Charity Navigator, 2016). This emphasis on earned and owned media is also helpful because these tend to foster a more direct and deeper connection with the audience(s). They can also be set up to be used by nonprofits as part of a listening system that allows them to tailor their communications and offerings to their various audiences. When an organization is targeting multiple audiences, this becomes increasingly important (Grau, 2021; Guo & Saxton, 2020). Because of this, I will in the next major section focus on earned and owned media pertaining to social media marketing for nonprofits.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Throughout this section on the marketing communications plan, we have highlighted the importance of making sure everything is clear, easy to implement, and measurable. The significance of this goes back to importance of maintaining consistency in the relationships with the stakeholders.

Nonprofits need to develop a 'listening system' that enables them to understand and adjust according to the conversation that surrounds their organization and external context. One way to do this as far as social media is concerned is by creating personal accounts that allow the nonprofit employees to become familiar with the platform, its functionalities, and how other people and organizations are utilizing it to connect with their audiences (Grau, 2021).

Not only will the audience(s)'s attitude toward the brand change over time, but new platforms, tools, and approaches will doubtlessly continue to appear in the years ahead, and the popularity of current marketing channels will vary. The demographics of the active users on any given platform will also continually change. Properly monitoring and evaluating, and subsequently adapting the nonprofits' marketing communications and perhaps the rest of the business model will continue to be important in the years ahead just as it has been in years past (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019; Guo & Saxton, 2020; Grau, 2021).

2.2 Social Media Marketing

What an organization does on social media typically should not (and usually does not) comprise the entirety of an organization's marketing strategy. As shown, it should be a part of a well-thought-through marketing plan that is aligned with the nonprofits' overall goals and strategy, which usually go beyond mere "clicktivism." However, as the importance of social media marketing has grown and more audiences find their way online and onto different platforms, it is worth investing careful thought into how social media marketing fits into the marketing plan and what that requires from the organization in terms of input (Guo & Saxton, 2020).

Definition and purpose of social media marketing for nonprofits

Social media is defined as, "forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos)" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Sepulcri et al. (2020) refer to social media as a collection of "brand promotion channels" and also as "online branding communications." Furthermore, "e-marketing" and "virtual marketing" "new media marketing communications" are other terms that refer more broadly to all kinds of digital or online marketing (Chapleo, 2015), not just social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, Twitter) but extends to include nonprofit's websites, email newsletters, search engine optimization (SEO), Google Ad Words, etc. Felix et al. (2017, p. 123) define social media marketing as "an interdisciplinary and cross-functional concept that uses social media (often in combination with other communications channels) to achieve organizational goals by creating value for stakeholders."

Many of these terms are general enough to apply to both for-profit and non-profit organizations alike. However, a variation of the term social media marketing explicitly used in the context of nonprofits is "social media advocacy work" (Guo & Saxton, 2020). Because many nonprofit organizations do not see themselves as being involved in advocacy work, Guo & Saxton (2020) clarify that advocacy is often understood as a synonym for lobbying but maintain that not all advocacy work is lobbying. In our context, it is worth noting that religious nonprofits tend to be less involved in "direct lobbying" than organizations that are focused on environmental and health issues. Researchers have found the need to split up the definition of advocacy in two, which is done using various terms. The primary reason for this distinction is to separate the advocacy work that goes on "'inside the system' (e.g., legislative lobbying, legislative testimony)" from that which is conducted "'outside the system' (e.g., public education efforts, mass media campaigns, and protests and demonstrations)." (Guo & Saxton, 2020, p. 12) Most religious work done in North America would fall into the second category. However, there is undoubtedly plenty of advocacy work inside the system as well.

Sepulcri et al. (2020, p. 659) state that social media is a tool that can help nonprofits "build brand image and improve the relationship between nonprofit organizations and the target audience [as well as to] disseminate information about the organization, to promote sponsors, and to advertise volunteering opportunities, forms of donations, online stores and events calendars."

2.2.1 Holistic Framework

The next theoretical tool we will look at is the holistic framework for Social Media Marketing by Felix et al. (2017). It is made from a for-profit perspective, but still highlights the complexity and the necessity of social media marketing and seeks to enable managers to "position their organizations on […] four dimensions in a manner consistent with their overall corporate mission and objectives" (Felix et al., 2017, p. 118).

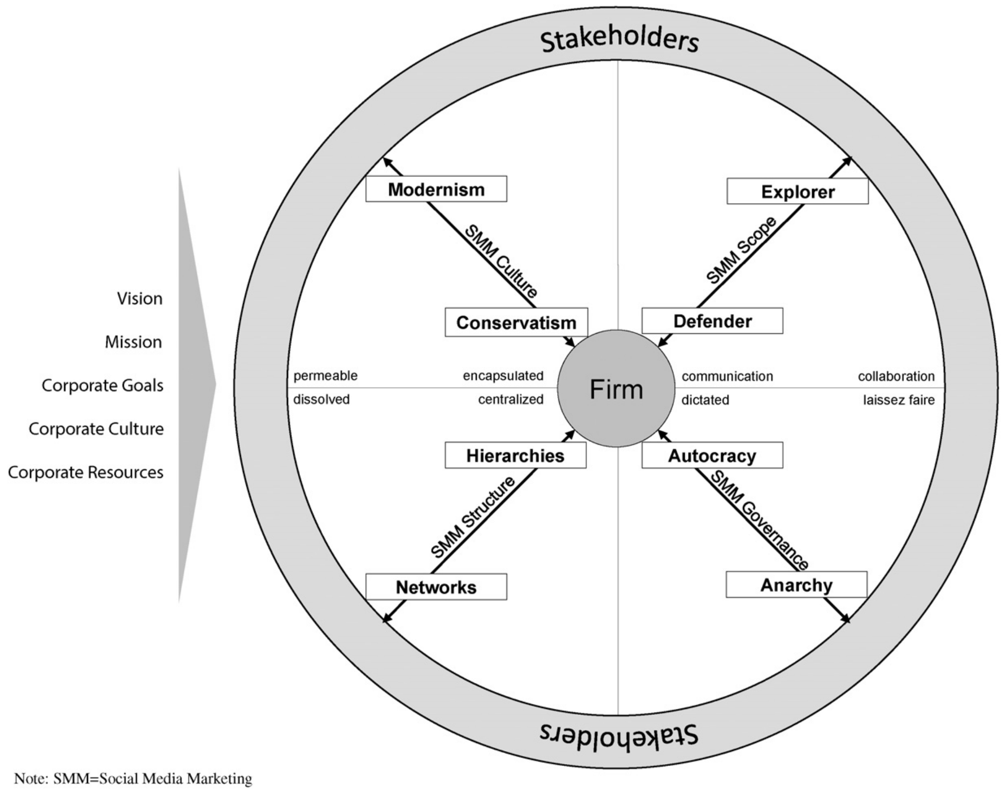

Figure 1 – "Strategic Social Media Marketing Framework" by Felix et al. (2017, p. 121)

The four dimensions are SMM Scope, SMM Culture, SMM Structure, and SMM Governance. The SMM Scope dimension has the two extremities of defenders and explorers. Defenders are caught up in communicating their message, while the explorers are looking for opportunities for collaboration. A willingness to explore and collaborate with stakeholders (two-way communication) is typically preferred to defending (one-way communication) in social media marketing (Felix et al., 2017). Walters (2007) showed that in the early ages of internet usage for nonprofits, they focused primarily on one-way communication rather than collaboration with their target audiences. This is not sufficient today.

SMM Culture navigates the tension between conservatism and modernism. Conservatism describes an encapsulated culture, whereas modernism is more permeable. The trade-offs between these need to be evaluated carefully. Social media tends to facilitate collaborations and a more permeable culture with options for reposting, commenting, and sharing content. Finding ways to take advantage of this without giving up control of the brand to the audience is challenging, particularly for organizations with a more traditional, corporate-like approach (Felix et al., 2017).

The SMM Structure attends to the extremes of hierarchies and networks. The main concern is who the organization decides to trust with the actual SMM activity (e.g., content creation, posting, sharing, commenting), whether that is a person or a department, or everyone across the organization (i.e., centralized or dissolved). There are arguments that support either approach, but 'networks' is seen as being most aligned with the nature of social media which might lead to greater success as a result (Felix et al., 2017).

Finally, SMM Governance explores the decisions around "who can or should say what in social media" (Felix et al., 2017, p. 123). This is often a part of the employees' positions within the organization and can be formulated into a set of guidelines. It is worth noting that being too rigid might lead to a loss of attention as "*[e]mployees may be better able to understand the needs of consumers and products that can meet those needs, and they can effectively advocate and promote the firm online*" (Felix et al., 2017, p. 124).

Some caution might be required as the experts interviewed and surveyed for the study were all from the for-profit sector, and the model has not been adjusted to account for nonprofit organizations. However, the four dimensions are present in all organizations. The concern is rather whether nonprofits would require another SMM dimension or whether the definition of each dimension and its subsequent approaches would need adjustment. Still, using this framework as a tool for awareness and considering their positioning can be of strategic value to any organization, including nonprofits. This helps avoid the implementation of sub-optimal strategies that go against the organization's overall strategy. Felix et al. (2017) also argue that social media has grown in importance to such a degree that it is no longer just one marketing approach. Especially after COVID-19, which brought with it lockdowns and the cancellation of a significant number of offline events (closed churches and concerts, postponed or cancelled conferences and fundraising events) for many nonprofits, the importance of digital marketing and, in particular social media, has skyrocketed as it is now one of the primary ways of staying connected to one's audience(s).

The research highlights the complexity of SMM, arguing that "social media, in practice, is too complex to be managed and executed exclusively by a single individual or even department" (Felix et al., 2017, p. 124). Knowing this, it is natural to assume that the complex nature of SMM would be more challenging for a small organization; however, this might not be the case as attention on social media does not rely on typical organizational characteristics (Guo & Saxton, 2020). Still, no matter the size, the framework serves as an effective reminder that the whole team would need to have some level of awareness and involvement with the SMM, even if it is the primary responsibility of one or a few individuals. This is also seen as a key aspect of a solid brand infrastructure as covered previously (Chapleo, 2015).

2.2.2 Logic Model

In their book, Guo & Saxton (2020) summarize and expand on their research on social media marketing for nonprofit organizations over the last decade. They primarily research nonprofit organizations devoted to advocacy work. Guo & Saxton (2020) argue that most nonprofits find themselves advocating in one way or another, and they include religious organizations among these. The book offers several helpful models (in particular, a logic model for nonprofit's SMM), which provides an overview of the causal chain, all the way from antecedent conditions (background factors) concerning the organization down to long-term/strategic outcomes which they seek to realize. In between these two, attention is seen as the central point around which there is no alternate route. The emphasis in this logic model is social media marketing as earned and owned media.

The Logic Model serves as a useful tool to specify the organization's approach in the race for attention and how they intend to utilize this to reach their long-term strategic/overall goals (Guo & Saxton, 2020). This model supplements the other tools and theories covered previously and provides a unique look at the drivers of attention and possible avenues for transforming attention to impact specifically in the light of nonprofit organizations (Guo & Saxton, 2020). The other theories and tools already covered provide the organization with necessary understanding of its overall context, goals, and positioning related to marketing and branding in general and where social media fits within, while the Logic Model helps clarify the crucial elements and activities that are needed for successful SMM on day-to-day basis with the express focus of reaching the marketing objectives and long-term goals. It helps nonprofits gain a "solid conceptual understanding of the social media context," which is very important, not least because attention is the main currency and "attention works differently" on social media than in an "offline environment" (Guo & Saxton, 2020, p. 36).

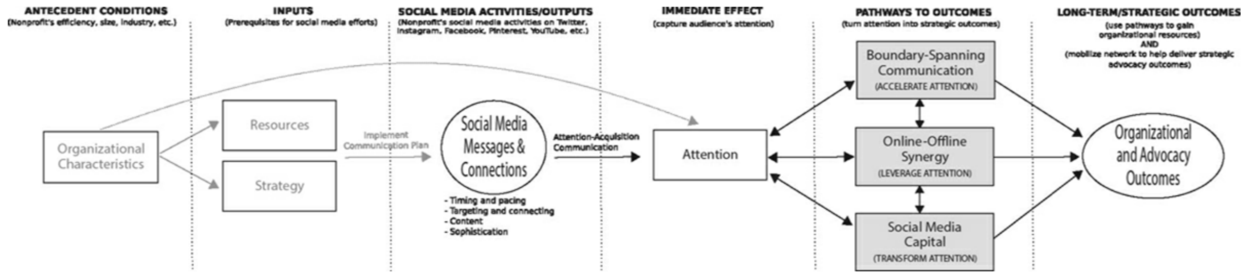

Figure 2 - "Logic Model depicting social media efforts, attention, and the pathways to strategic outcomes" by Guo & Saxton (2020, p. 200)

The Logic Model and the related research by Guo & Saxton is based on data extracted from Twitter and emphasizes nonprofits that work with advocacy. Because of this, the authors suggest that the results should be tested on different social media platforms (Guo & Saxton, 2020), and it seems desirable to apply these results to different parts of the nonprofit sector as well. The case studies in this thesis seem to be prioritizing other platforms than Twitter, although both have one or more Twitter accounts with varying amounts of activity.

Antecedent Conditions

Guo and Saxton (2020) describe the Logic Model as beginning with the organization's current state and its characteristics. However, not all parts of every organization are necessarily connected to social media advocacy work. These organizational characteristics specifically refer to factors within the organization and its context that "generally precede the decisions that are made regarding social media advocacy work" (Guo and Saxton, 2020, p.198). In particular, these are factors such as age, size, efficiency, and the sector of the given organization. These characteristics are typically related to the amount of attention an organization is able to garner through social media activity in one way or another but cannot be altered significantly and are found to be outside of the "decision matrix" (Guo and Saxton, 2020).

In social media marketing, in particular, the organizational characteristics that are not directly connected to the marketing (age, size, efficiency, etc.) have no significant bearing on the kinds and amounts of attention their messages receive on the platform. However, even though this does not directly impact the attention metrics, it is crucial to the organizations' ability to convert the attention into successful programs and loyal donors (Guo & Saxton, 2020).

Inputs

The next step in the Logic Model is 'inputs' which stems directly from the organizational characteristics. Inputs refer to the investment of resources into social media marketing and the strategy (Guo & Saxton, 2020). If there are no resources or strategy for the overall organization, there will not be anything to direct toward social media. This is all in accord with the brand infrastructure.

Resources

Creating a social media account and using the apps or websites tend to be free because nearly every social media platform is funded by primarily by advertisement revenue. However, this must not be taken to mean that social media marketing does not require any investment of resources. In order to succeed with social media marketing, nonprofits need to be willing to invest time, technical know-how, communication and network-building skills, office space, and equipment (even though any or all of these might be scarce). If not, it is improbable that the organization will see any significant results from its efforts (Guo & Saxton, 2020).

The willingness to invest resources into social media marketing is not very strong for most nonprofits. There is likely a complex set of reasons for this. Some factors include nonprofits often operating with tight budgets (Guo & Saxton, 2020), a more inwardly focused positioning (tending toward being conservative, defensive, autocratic, and hierarchical) (Felix et al., 2017), a reluctance toward branding (Voeth & Herbst, 2008), and also simply uncertainty due to newness of the media (Suddaby et al., 2015). Another reason for this hesitancy is the newness of social media marketing. For the people who have been involved in nonprofit advocacy work for years, spending time traveling from place to place and being face-to-face with beneficiaries, donors, and volunteers, there is a temptation to remain unconvinced of the benefits of social media marketing for their cause (Guo and Saxton, 2020). However, as social media use continues to rise among the general population and attention becomes harder to secure, the number of resources needed to succeed with SMM is likely to increase.

Strategy

A successful SMM strategy builds on a healthy brand infrastructure and a well-put-together marketing communications plan. Just as the general marketing objectives need to be clear and measurable, the social media marketing strategy should include specifics regarding what they seek to achieve through their social media marketing. They need to clarify which of their audience(s) they are targeting and how they can engage them. As the organization gets to know how the audience(s) react and as social media platforms continue to change, the strategy needs to be adaptable. Measuring and evaluation should be a critical part of the strategy (Grau, 2021; Guo & Saxton, 2020). A strategy is essential. It is not sufficient to create social media profiles and expect an influx in followers (Waters et al., 2009).

Social Media Activities/Outputs

Next in the Logic Model comes the nonprofit's social media activities on the various social media platforms nonprofits have decided to invest resources in, which fits their overall strategy. This is the implementation of the social media aspects from the marketing communications plan. This includes all the content output, actions, and interactions on all the platforms the nonprofit has decided to invest in.

The emphasis should be on understanding and implementing specific strategies that have been shown to attract attention to NPO's social media activities. Guo & Saxton's (2020, p. 103) results from studying advocacy nonprofits on Twitter show that the most attention-gathering activities currently include some specific activities. 1) *Grow the number of followers*. How big the organization is outside of social media marketing (antecedent conditions) and how many users the organization follows on social media is not significantly important. The more followers someone has, the more attention their messages are likely to receive (Guo & Saxton, 2020). 2) Regarding timing and scheduling, *it is recommended that the organization posts often*. The definition of "often" likely depends on the social media platform and the kind of post and content (on Twitter, these options are limited). A handful of tweets per day might be doable, but a handful of full-length documentaries on YouTube on a daily basis would not be. The expectations of audiences on different social media platforms are likely also different because of this. 3) *Participating in conversations* is another important activity. This can be done on an individual level by using direct messaging features or @USER mentioning someone, but this will typically lead to a strengthened bond with one individual and not the audience as a whole. By using hashtags, organizations can participate in conversations while making the posts discoverable for users outside of their current follower-network. Hashtags are primarily used for structuring content, but there are a number of other motivations that have been shown to drive hashtagging. These reveal opportunities for organizations to speak the language of social media users. These motivations include being “amusing, organizing, designing, conforming, trendgaging, bonding, inspiring, reaching, summarizing, and endorsing” (Rauschnabel et al., 2019, p. 473). 4) *Including visual content* is another activity that drives attention. This refers to photos and videos in addition to text (Guo & Saxton, 2020). However, this is more specific to Twitter, as some platforms are photo or video-driven. For example, if you want to post a text message on Instagram, you do so in the caption of a photo or video or within the photo or video itself (Forsey, 2021). Until recently, YouTube was a video-only platform, where if you wanted to post a picture, you would have to create a stand-still video without sound and post it as a video. Text could always be included in the title and caption of the videos, but YouTube now has Community Posts which is another way for channel owners (with over 1000 subscribers) to interact with their audience (YouTube Creators, 2019). The main point here is that richer and more life-like communication leads to an increase in attention, and that nonprofits should seek to make use features that offer rich communication if they have the necessary resources and strategy in place to do this. As another example of more life-like communication, Virtual Reality (VR) technology has been shown to be effective in nonprofit fundraising (Yoo & Drumwright, 2018). Richer communication increases a sense of telepresence, social presence, and involvement, all three of which have been shown to increase consumer brand engagement for nonprofit organizations, which in turn increases the audience(s) willingness to donate (Algharabat et al., 2018). 5) *Heavy use of values-based language.* Organizations should seek to emphasize the desirable and activate the core values of their target audience(s) through their messages (Guo & Saxton, 2020). The organization should draw directly from the audience strategy and overall brand positioning to decide which values should be prioritized.

As Guo & Saxton’s (2020) research revolves around Twitter, a mostly text-based platform, they do not have much information on beneficial strategies to increase attention through video content. Since most of the other major social media platforms today (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok and YouTube) all primarily rely on or provide extensive opportunities for use of videos, I believe it would be relevant to include advice from extant research on the topic (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019). Waters et al. (2011) researched how videos could be used to strengthen a nonprofit’s brand and identity. They summarize their findings in six points. 1) The videos must *tell a story*. The importance of story and the brand’s positioning is evident in the communications strategy and carries through here. 2) *Be brief*. This is due to the prevalence of multitasking and in order to increase retention rates. 3) *Keep the videos simple* *and narrowly focused* to retain viewers. Complex situations and several storylines will make the video confusing. 4) *Be relevant* to the audience. Perceive their needs and consider what your nonprofit can offer as a solution (Faste, 1987). 5) *Tell the viewer what you want from them* at the end of the video. A specific call to action is essential to go beyond views. 6) *Be genuine*. Because of the richness of videos, audiences have an easier time figuring out whether or not the organization and its communicators are being genuine or not. This ties directly to the personality of the brand and the importance of being warm for audiences to feel socially present (Algharabat et al., 2018).

Other more technical considerations for increasing video views include 1) *not overloading the video title with information*, leaving something to be discovered by watching, 2) being aware that *negative emotions in video titles tend to draw more views*, 3) *adding a lot of information in the video description*, and 4) *using video tags, but not more than 17* (Tafesse, 2020). Some of these might change with time, such as the ideal amount of video tags, but knowing that negative emotions draw attention is a more primal discovery. Guo & Saxton (2020) similarly point out that humans are drawn to drama and newness, and these tactics are often utilized on social media platforms. It is crucial to balance the knowledge about marketing tools with the organization's goals, as it is possible to acquire a lot of attention but at the same time come across in a way contrary to what was intended.

Another critical aspect of attracting attention is knowing which kinds of activities lead to what types of attention. Not all attention is equal. For example, some networking activities (like @USER mentions) tend to strengthen the bond between the organization and individual audience members or another organization, in contrast to other public messages, which tend to attract the general audience's attention. It is essential to strike a careful balance here to reach the marketing objectives. Some methods attract attention to the organization, and others attract more attention to a specific post. Nonprofits should be aware that certain functions like links that invite or require the user to leave the platform (e.g., shortened URLs on Twitter or “Link in bio” on Instagram) might be useful to deepen the relationship with users outside of the platform (sign-ups or additional external content), but these do not seem to increase the attention on the platform itself. This could be partly due to the algorithm, and perhaps also because of users’ hesitancy to leave the app (Guo & Saxton, 2020; Decker, 2017).

There are a number of scheduling and analytics software options with a variety of features, both paid and free. Some of these are built-in features of the social media platforms (Newberry & Mikolajczyk, 2021). These can be utilized to ease the workload and help managers stay on top of the posting, but it is not recommended to post the same content across different platforms as it is shown that this can have a negative impact on attention. This might be due to users being able to spot this. The organization must be careful to not let the scheduling tool become a replacement for time actively invested in staying engaged with the audience in general and with individual users (Guo & Saxton, 2020).

Immediate Effect: Attention

Guo & Saxton point out that, just like not all forms of output (texts, photos, videos, etc.) provide the same kind of attention, not all forms of attention are equally important. The emphasis in the literature is on what is considered more "intense or interactive" forms of attention (Guo & Saxton, 2020, p. 103). However, on some platforms (e.g., YouTube), views might carry a slightly more significant role as someone has to actively click on the video to watch it (unless they allow some AutoPlay-feature to run). This, therefore, tends to indicate that they prioritize one video over the other available options. The video views are supplemented by other measures for strong attention which include watch time, likes/dislikes, comments, and the number of followers/subscribers (YouTube Studio, n.d.).

The Logic Model hinges on attention as a scarce resource, and the underlying research assumes that all attention is good, and that more attention is better. However, the authors point out that more research is needed on this topic, as this is not always the case (Guo & Saxton, 2020).

Pathways to Outcomes: From Attention to Impact

Next in the model is a series of possible strategies to move beyond attention and into the realm of change. There are three primary strategies suggested by Guo & Saxton (2020). These include 1) *Boundary-spanning communication/coalition building*, which seeks to accelerate the attention. This is based on nonprofits' ability to network with other nonprofits, and they suggest continuing this practice online. 2) *Online-offline synergy*, which aims to leverage the attention. By recognizing that nonprofits' operations generally take place offline, this approach aims at developing the synergy between the online and offline spheres. Finally, 3) *Social Media Capital*, which seeks to transform the attention. Since building a strong and large network on social media has become a resource in and of itself, finding ways to increase this form of capital can help the organization reach its goals (Guo & Saxton, 2020).

Long-term/Strategic Outcomes

These outcomes include both the overarching vision/mission of the organization, but also the SMART marketing objectives. These have been covered previously in the brand infrastructure and marketing communications plan.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

In this section, I will summarize how the theories and guidelines from the literature review fit together to form a set of preliminary guidelines for small nonprofit organizations for succeeding with SMM. These will form the foundation of the research on two small nonprofit organizations with a long history in media and religion.

Because of the limited scope of the research topic, I decided to start at the point of the brand infrastructure and marketing communications and detail the process up to and including the plan for implementing impact-related measures based on the results of Guo & Saxton (2020) on antecedent conditions as not being a significant predictor of attention. The literature enabled me to cover this area reasonably well, though there are definite opportunities for development (Sepulcri et al., 2020). Because of the underlying similarities between the functionalities of most popular social media platforms, the overall structure of the framework likely holds. However, there is a need to uncover the differences between platforms and how new features change the usage and best practices for and across each platform, and how these predict success for nonprofits across different sectors.

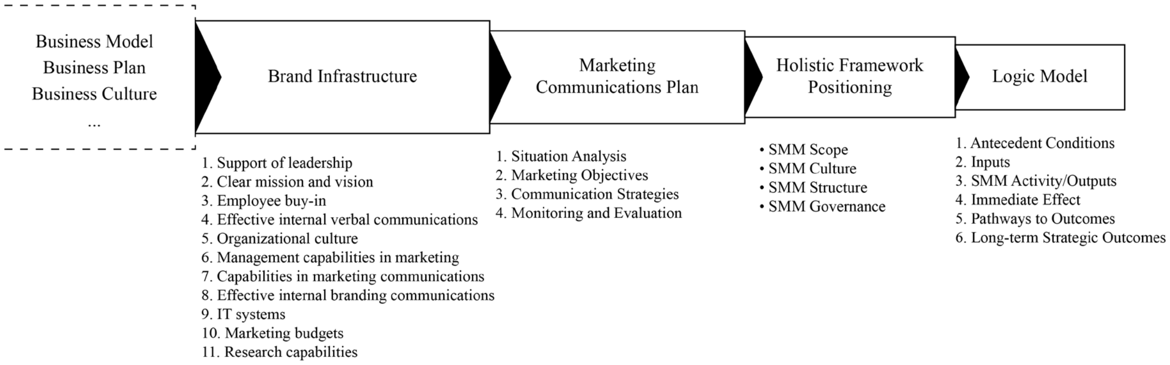

Figure 3 – Overview of the Theoretical Framework; Preliminary Guidelines for Small Nonprofit Organizations for Succeeding with SMM Based on Extant Literature.

The framework is explained in detail in the foregoing sub-chapters of the literature review, but I will summarize the overarching structure here (see Figure 3). 1) *Invest in developing a well-functioning Brand Infrastructure as described by Chapleo (2015).* A big marketing budget is not essential, so there are many opportunities for improvement in most nonprofits. 2) *Create a Marketing Communications Plan (Keller, 2012; Grau, 2021)* that is aligned with the business model and business plan. 3) *Position the organization purposefully along the four dimensions of the SMM Holistic Framework by Felix et al. (2017)*. This is key to understanding the wholistic and all-encompassing nature of social media marketing. 4) *Use Guo & Saxton's (2020) Logic Model to conceptualize and specify the social media marketing efforts*, first pursuing attention and then cultivating it for impact. Each of these theoretical elements live within the context of the previous one. This means that even though there is some overlap across the models, the recommendation would be to consider and implement them in the suggested order to ensure that no factor is overlooked. The worst approach would be to jump straight into part 3 of the Logic Model, although one would hope that the nonprofit would end up working their way backwards through the framework when they realize that they are not seeing the desired results.

3. Methodology

This section details the methodology used to conduct the research and provides the reader and other researchers with a clear overview of the approach and methods utilized to arrive at the results and findings (Saunders et al., 2019).

3.1 Research Design

The overall methodology used for this research project is the Flexible Pattern Matching Approach (FPMA) as described by Bouncken et al (2021b). It functions as the framework for the entire research process, beginning with the development and formulation of the research question, continues by generating theoretical patterns, then theoretical sampling and data collection, followed by the analysis and matching of data, and finally interpreting and theorizing; all of this while engaging in the "iteration between [the] theoretical and observational realm" (Bouncken et al., 2021b, p. 262). The approach is primarily qualitative, though supplemented with a few quantitative elements from each case's primary social media platforms as an indication of the differences in the levels of attention.

The research is a combination of exploratory and evaluative, which is well suited for casting light on a particular *"issue, problem or phenomenon"* as well as *"assessing the effectiveness"* of some part of an organization's operations (Saunders et al., 2019, p.187). There is some previous research on social media usage in nonprofits, but this research is fairly new as a result of the recent growth in social media. Research in this area often examines other parts of the nonprofit sector than the religious sub-sector, and the studies have mostly covered how nonprofits use social media, not necessarily how they should use it most effectively to reach their goals (Sepulcri et al., 2020).

3.1.1 Comparative Case Study

I decided to conduct a multiple case study as these are commonly used *"for theoretical relevance, aiming to achieve replication, diverse profiles, alternative explanations, or extension of theory"* (Bouncken et al., 2021b, p. 264). Yin (2017) states that two-case studies are typically preferable to single case studies as they open up for replications and comparisons, therefore increasing the transferability of the findings. The opportunity to replicate and compare the findings across organizations suits the nature of the research question well as it aims to uncover the strengths and weaknesses of small ministries' approach to social media marketing.

3.1.2 Selection of Cases

This thesis is conducted in collaboration with partner company NPO2, and I was also generously granted access to NPO1. These two nonprofit ministries are the cases that will be explored. The decision to explore and compare these two cases with each other and normative theory was based on a number of factors. The expected result is that the two organizations will differ significantly in their congruence with normative theory. The one with a larger following and richer engagement across multiple social media platforms and accounts (NPO1) is expected to be more in line with the success criteria from relevant theory, while NPO2 with a smaller following is expected to have a greater mismatch.

One factor that makes this comparison more sensible is that both ministries are *connected to the official Seventh-day Adventist Church,* albeit in different ways. Their long-term goals are founded on a *similar set of values and beliefs*. They both *operate with fairly small teams*, even though one is somewhat larger than the other. These factors place them within the small Christian ministry subsector of the nonprofit sector. Both ministries *operate within the North American Division* (NAD) of the global Adventist Church.

Both nonprofits emphasize *communication and the development of media programs and resources*. They also publish their *messages in English.* Because of this, they potentially have access to nearly the *same or similar audiences.* This is especially true on social media platforms where the traditional geographical borders between audiences are less relevant as almost everything online is accessible worldwide. However, the available audiences are still narrowed down somewhat due to differences in language, culture, interests, time zones, financial status, government restrictions, and other factors.

Significant differences in the *amount of attention* each organization currently receives on their social media pages are easily observable, in particular when considering their follower base, likes, shares, and comments (see Table 6 in section 4.5.3). The similarities and differences in the nonprofits' *history* and *advocacy approach* were other valuable factors in deciding which cases to investigate.

Because of my familiarity with the organizations and personal friendships with some of the employees, I was provided with *good access to the ministries and the informants*. This increased openness during data collection as a foundational trust had already been established. I was also granted access to some analytics data from their social media platforms. This is in harmony with Saunders et al.'s (2019) advice on establishing good access and positive rapport with the informants.

With only one semester available for the master thesis, and because I am writing it on my own, this led to the decision to select two nonprofits to perform a comparative case study on, rather than a larger sample size. The decision to sample two relatively small ministries is justified because of the power law of distribution. The majority of social media users, including nonprofit organizations, do not have a considerable following. Therefore, by selecting two ministries that are at different points but are not a part of the long tail, my research investigates a more representative sample for the majority of other nonprofit ministries (Guo & Saxton, 2020).

3.1.3 Research Approach

As the research is conducted in line with FPMA, it is both inductive and deductive (Bouncken et al., 2021b). By following an approach that is founded on the iteration between the observational and theoretical realm, I started by formulating possible research questions before settling on one that met a need in the literature. I then generated a priori patterns in the form of a theoretical framework based on extant theory. Then, I collected the data. After this I went back to adjust the scope of the literature review and expanded it where relevant. I then analyzed the data through pattern matching and constant comparison until I reached the saturation point where the research question was answered, and no further insights appeared. This happened at the same time as the interpreting and theorizing, and the findings were presented with the use of template analysis, narration, and the use of tables (Bouncken et al., 2021b).

3.2 Data Collection

Due to limitations because of the distance between the nonprofit organizations' employees and the researcher, only a limited number of options were available for qualitative data collection. The most effective approach was to conduct the primary data collection through online video interviews.

3.2.1 Semi-structured In-depth Interviews

I decided to conduct semi-structured in-depth interviews where I used an interview guide based on the normative theory from the literature review (Bouncken et al., 2021b; Saunders et al., 2019). I interviewed respectively 3 and 4 informants from each of the two nonprofit ministries. There was only one informant in each interview, with the exception of interview #2, with two informants from NPO2.

The semi-structured aspect provided a ground for comparison between the organizations and enabled me to check whether or not there was internal agreement or disagreement on various topics and approaches. Combining this with an in-depth approach also provided me with the opportunity to obtain a fuller understanding of each informant's strengths and areas of expertise and uncover details regarding their lack of knowledge and implementation. Additionally, because I have known most of the informants personally and professionally for years, it provided me with an opportunity to gain deeper access to the nonprofit's operations and the dynamics that arise throughout their workdays (Saunders et al., 2019).

Before the interviews, I prepared an Interview Guide (see appendix A) that helped me navigate the interviews, ensuring I covered the necessary topics and proceeded in a meaningful way (Saunders et al., 2019). The supervisor reviewed the interview guide prior to conducting the interviews and suggested revisions. The interview guide opened with general questions about the nonprofit's organizational background and history, the informant's role and responsibilities. It then moved on to cover the current marketing efforts and perceived value of SMM. The questions were arranged from general to more specific questions to provide the informants with opportunities to lay out their understanding of social media marketing for nonprofit ministries in their own words, revealing their unprovoked knowledge of nonprofit marketing and social media marketing in particular. Later in the interview guide, I introduced more specific questions related to the normative theory from the literature review in order to gauge their current awareness and ability to utilize their knowledge to reach their goals with social media marketing.

As the FPMA is an iterative approach, it would have been beneficial to conduct follow-up interviews with the nonprofits to gain further insights, but this was not possible due to time constraints for both the researcher and the informants. Since one of the organizations is undergoing a restructure, and the informants are continually growing in their understanding of the research topic, this might have skewed the results without time to properly integrate them into the analysis (Bouncken et al., 2021a; Saunders et al., 2019).

3.2.2 Execution of Interviews

Since I am conducting this research while located in Norway, and the organizations operate out of North America, the interviews were conducted through Zoom and Facetime. However, due to COVID restrictions around the world, many organizations are already making extended use of home office solutions. As such, everyone being interviewed was familiar and reasonably comfortable with the process of conducting meetings and interviews through video chats. This also allowed the researcher to record the interviews (video and audio), without introducing extra equipment into the situation. These factors potentially helped reduce the nervousness of some of the participants (Saunders et al., 2019). The internet connection was for the most part solid on both ends. This setup provided an environment in which clear communication could be exchanged, not too different from an in-person interview. Collecting the data in this way facilitated thorough transcription and analysis afterward (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

Each interview was scheduled to be approximately one hour long or more to allow the questions to be answered and the topics to be explored in-depth. Because of the time difference between the interviewer and the informants, the interviews were scheduled to occur before noon local time for the informants. This allowed the participants to be interviewed during regular work hours and in the late afternoon for the interviewer. I also decided to schedule one interview per day. This follows the recommendation of Saunders et al. (2019) because the taxing nature of conducting in-depth interviews and the unpredictability of interacting with organizations might lead to an interview needing to be rescheduled. This proved to be a good decision, as time zone differences, Daylight Saving Time changes, unexpected work deadlines, and technical difficulties made it necessary to reschedule about half of the interviews. Most interviews took longer than one hour due to the number of questions in the interview guide and the length of the informants' answers; however, the interviews were still short enough to be completed in one sitting.

In the interviews, the most direct and potentially sensitive questions regarding the informant's background and education were asked toward the end, in order to avoid the interview possibly coming across as an exam, thereby making them feel nervous and feel they would have to adjust their answers (as a form of interviewee bias). Instead, the interviews opened with a few remarks about the general purpose of the interview, a statement of anonymization, and clarification that it is acceptable to not answer a question or refer to another informant who might have a better answer. All of this placed the informant in a more confident and comfortable position. This established further rapport and trust with the interviewer and allowed for opportunities to ask more revealing questions later on in the interview, as well as any necessary follow-up and probing questions (Saunders et al., 2019).

The first interview with each organization was longer and more structured, and I attempted to have the informant(s) answer each question in the interview guide. The following interviews were slightly less structured and were focused more on confirming and filling out the missing pieces from the initial interview. This was also natural for the informants, as they occupy different positions in the organization and are more or less involved and interested in social media marketing.

Some of the informants seemed to utilize the interview as an opportunity to think thoroughly about nonprofit marketing and social media marketing in particular. For some this appeared to be unfamiliar territory; others already had a working knowledge of the topics and were more focused on ensuring I was provided with the answers needed for my research.

3.2.3 Secondary Data

The plan was to see if the organizations had internal social media marketing guidelines that I could examine. However, these did not exist in written form, so I had to rely on the interviews for this information. In any case, I wanted to inquire about how closely these guidelines were followed.

One organization (NPO1) offered me access to explore the social media accounts from the inside, providing me with some valuable observations, particularly regarding how they engage with users' reactions to their Instagram stories. Other data was easily observable online, such as their current status of followers/subscribers and posts on their social media platforms (see Table 1 and Table 6). Participant-observation was also played a role, as I was onboarded as a volunteer for NPO1 during a marketing campaign within the last year.

3.3 Data Analysis

This section provides a walk-through of my process of preparing, coding, and analyzing the data.

3.3.1 Preparation of Data

The interviews were transcribed using Happy Scribe's Self Transcription online in-browser editor. The benefit of transcribing the interviews manually rather than automatically with an online automatic transcription software is increased accuracy, especially in the case of varying audio quality, distracting background noises, or different accents that the software might not be able to decode thoroughly or with a high degree of accuracy (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Saunders et al., 2019).

The Self Transcription editor provides shortcuts for starting, stopping, jumping back and forward 5 seconds, speeding up or slowing down the audio—all without having to take one's eyes off of the transcribed text. When pressing 'play' to resume listening to the audio after transcribing what one has just heard, the software replays the last second of the audio. This helped connect my thoughts after pausing the audio while typing for a few seconds. The software also provides an easy way to keep track of the speaker at any moment, providing a drop-down menu to the left of the transcription where the current speaker can be named (Happy Scribe, n.d.).

Braun & Clarke (2013) formulated a system to transcribe interviews in an orthographic manner. They explain key features to be consider implementing while transcribing audio interview material for qualitative research purposes. The majority of these features have been employed, although the notation of these has been altered slightly to fit my existing system from previous subtitling and transcription work and the needs of the subsequent analysis. For example, I use brackets ([]) rather than parentheses (()) for extra notation such as laughs and pauses. Because there were usually only 2 people in the interview and never more than 3, it was easy to distinguish who was talking at any given time. Shorter, common pauses were notated with '…' at the end of a thought, whereas […] was used to denote parts which were omitted. Longer pauses that last for several seconds were typically notated with [pause]. Abbreviations and vernacular usage were maintained as far as possible. Mispronunciations or other unfinished words were cleaned up for readability where it did not seem to communicate any significant hesitation or uncertainty. “Cos/cuz/cause” have been changed to “because” for ease of reading, as it did not change the intent or meaning of what was being said. Certain non-verbal utterances are written down, in particular when the interviewee struggled to formulate sentences, or when they were looking for a specific word (Braun & Clarke, 2013).

The interviewer’s previous relationship with the informants and work experience from English speaking countries, both in person and remotely, made it easier to catch various phrases, references and idioms used throughout the interviews. My work experience also includes subtitling videos in English, further enhancing the reliability of the transcription process. Additionally, the interviewer’s familiarity with religious language and the organizations, as well as previous work experience with nonprofits, helped ensure a correct understanding of acronyms, the tools used for marketing and fundraising, as well as ministries and organizations connected to or run by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Further details on the preparation of and assessment of the quality of the data is included in section 5.3 under Credibility.

3.3.2 Template Analysis, Constant Comparison, and Narration

The analysis part followed the FPMA. The constant comparison method was actively employed as it enabled the me to pick up on patterns in the data throughout the research process (Bouncken et al., 2021b). This means that the analysis began already at the data collection stage and was carried on for the duration of the project. Furthermore, narration and heavy use of quotations was used as the primary method for interpreting and theorizing. Tables were used to summarize each major section and for comparison purposes, to highlight the differences between each of the nonprofits and the theory. A template analysis was utilized by creating an initial template based on the theoretical framework and the collected data from the first two interviews. Under each section, I present the results from each organization before summarizing and comparing them in a table (Bouncken et al., 2021b; Saunders et al., 2019).

The initial template for the template analysis:

1. Organizational Overview
    a. Background
        i. History
        ii. Employees
            1. Informants' Backgrounds
            2. Informants' Education/Primary skills
            3. Social Media Responsibility
        iii. Projects
            1. Current projects
            2. Future plans
2. Brand Infrastructure (primarily based on SMM objectives)
    a. Support of leadership
    b. Clear mission and vision
    c. Employee buy in
    d. Effective Internal communications
    e. Organizational culture
    f. Management capabilities in marketing
    g. Capabilities in marketing communications
    h. Information technology systems
    i. Marketing budgets
    j. Research capabilities
3. Marketing Communications Plan
    a. Situation Analysis
    b. Marketing Objectives
    c. Communication Strategy
        i. Audience Strategy
        ii. Message and Creativity
        iii. Media Strategy
    d. Monitoring and Evaluation
4. Social Media Marketing
    a. Holistic Framework
    b. Logic Model
        i. Antecedent Conditions
        ii. Inputs
        iii. Social Media Activities/Outputs
        iv. Immediate Effect: Attention
        v. Pathways to Outcomes
        vi. Long-term/Strategic Outcomes

3.4 Data Quality Assessment

To ensure that quality of the research is up to the required standards for a research project at the level of a Master of Science degree, the research was rooted in the four criteria which have been established as common practice for assessing qualitative research. These include credibility, dependability, transferability, and authenticity (Lincoln and Guba, 1985;

Saunders et al., 2019). The full description of the data quality assessment using these four criteria is covered under 5.3 Limitations.

3.5 Ethical Issues

All participants were informed of the purpose of the interviews and the research, the confidentiality of data and anonymity of brands and respondent's names, as well as the program of study in which the data would be utilized. This was a part of the emails sent out to schedule the interviews and was also stated at the beginning of each interview. One of the organizations is the partner company and requested exclusivity/confidentiality with one student—the writer of this thesis. Careful steps were taken throughout the collection and analysis of the data to ensure that no falsification or fabrication took place. The collected data was disposed of before the submission of this thesis. The importance of these ethical considerations is highlighted by Saunders et al. (2019).

4. Results

A Template Analysis which is initially based on the preliminary guidelines provides the underlying structure for this section. Narration throughout and extensive use of quotes from the interviews fill out and highlight findings throughout. Each section ends with a comparison. The initial theory-derived template was adjusted to include relevant insights from the respondents and better allow for comparison.

Organization	*Informant*	*Gender*	*Position/Main Responsibilities*	*Interview*
NPO1	R1	M	Founder, Speaker/Director, Writer	#3
	R2	F	Communications Assistant, Social Media Manager, Writer, Proofing	#1
	R3	M	Lead Designer, Webmaster, Project Manager	#4
NPO2	R4	M	Speaker/Director, Writer	#2
	R5	F	Speaker, Assistant Administrator	#2
	R6	M	Creative Director, Video Editor	#5
	R7	M	Director of Operations (Business/Finance Manager), Bookkeeping	#6

Table 2 - Overview of Informants

The respondents for each of the interviews, which organization they work for and what position they occupy (as well as some of their main responsibilities) are shown in the table above.

The discussion relating to each major theory or model for each organization will be covered primarily in terms of the impact it has on social media marketing. The reason for this is the thesis' focus on social media marketing. This means that there are other aspects that might be more relevant for other marketing efforts and are not covered in depth. Also, because of the overlap between some of the models in the framework, I will at times make a brief reference to the results covered in other sections.

4.1 Organizational Overview

4.1.1 NPO1 Overview

History

On the origin of the nonprofit, one of the founders explains,

> *"R1: [NPO1] started in [the 1980s]. […] It started out as a teaching and preaching ministry. It started out doing small group Bible studies in homes, and it grew exponentially. We were doing one home and then there wasn't enough space. So, we divided into two and then there wasn't enough space and we divided into three and we had about 12 small group Bible studies going on around the city. And then people began to record them and share the recordings. Then it developed into doing seminars and teaching and preaching. And my first love is writing. […] I'm a writer that preaches, I'm not a preacher that writes. So, my primary identity as a communicator is a writer. And so that means that at the beginning, as the teaching was taking place, I was creating written outlines. So, people would have the material and that led us to begin publishing. So, for example, we bought the first Apple Macintosh computer that ever came out […] and we began doing what was called back then "desktop publishing." We had an Apple Macintosh computer and a copy machine. And then that grew into an international publishing ministry where we publish in multiple languages and fill container loads of material that goes out to the world. So, it began as a small group teaching ministry, developed into preaching and teaching and public format, public seminars. And then it developed into publishing."*

I followed up to see if there had possibly been a name change along the way, *"Were you known as [NPO1] from the beginning?"* and the response was, *"Since [the 1980s]. Yes."*

A decade ago, NPO1 merged with an in-person training ministry. The training ministry remains a distinct brand after the merger but is now under NPO1's umbrella. One of the founders of the training ministry is now a speaker for NPO1. The emphasis of the training program has been to increase personal passion and advocacy for the cause on the part of every student, and not merely an acceptance of facts and a change in behavior. This is an integral part of the culture of the organization, which was merged with NPO1's culture of publishing, preaching, and presenting on religious and lifestyle topics.

Connection to the Adventist Church

The nonprofit does not have a direct organizational connection to the Adventist church, but operates as a separate entity that supports the mission through their programs, *"R1: There is no legal organizational connection at all because [NPO1] is a […] nonprofit corporation […]. So, it's a free-standing legal entity that is not connected with the Seventh-day Adventist Church legally, but, but ideologically and missionally, we're connected with the church worldwide. […] So it's a very close working relationship, but it's not an organizational or legal connection."*

Employees

Within the organization, there are about 10 full-time employees and a few part-time employees. These numbers are currently fluctuating as they are in a transitioning period where they are investing more resources into their media and marketing efforts,

"R3: I'm excited about our restructure. We're adding some new positions and we don't know what all of those positions are yet, but we've got somebody now that's in charge of hiring and firing who believes in hiring enough people to do the work. In the past, the approach was kind of, 'let's only hire people that we know because we don't want to have to fire somebody.' […]"

Personal Backgrounds and Education/Primary Skills

Each of the informants are current employees and have different backgrounds and responsibilities within the organization. R1, co-founder of the ministry, says this when asked about his education/primary skills, *"R1: Communication. Writing and teaching. Communication is the word that catches all of that."* He has authored several books and resources, is a TV-show presenter, public speaker/evangelist, and creator of online content. He is entrepreneurial and a big-picture thinker.

R2 was hired by the organization in August 2016 as a copy-editor and writer. Later on she took over the social media management, and says this regarding her current role in the organization,

"R2: I think it's something broad like 'communications assistant.' That covers a lot of stuff. Yeah, there's a lot that can fall under that. Yeah, 'communications assistant' I think is my title […] [My main tasks are] content creation, social media management and proofing and editing."

R3 has been working for NPO1 since the merger with the training ministry and says this about his role within the organization,

> *"R3: I do a lot of stuff. Definitely design—I'm the lead designer. Until, probably, about a year and a half ago, I did all of our social media stuff. But about a year and a half ago, [R2] pretty much took that over, and I was happy to let her do that. Communications... I do most of our communications stuff. Some IT... Odds and ends here and there. Project management on some projects... Yeah."*

His background includes 4 years as Communications Vice President for a large Christian conference, and he also says he is a problem solver and has *"a very analytical mind."*

These three informants were selected for the interviews because they represent different parts of the organization that all have something to do with the marketing and social media side of operations, although in different ways and varying degrees.

Social Media Responsibilities

Regarding whom is responsible for and actively involved in the social media marketing (at least on a monthly basis), one informant says,

> *"R2: Definitely myself and [R3], for sure. [The NPO1 creative director] probably too. And I guess when I'm thinking of a brand... Are you thinking of just like... I mean just because there's a lot that goes into the brand, are you thinking like the design part...? Cause if we're just talking about like design, just how our stuff looks on social media, that's just [R3] and I, basically. But then there's like... [The creative director] will give feedback too on stuff. He has sometimes in the past, but he's stepped back from that lately. I mean there's been a lot going on with like the transition and everything. Let's see here... I mean [the administrator] does a lot with [the online training ministry], but not with the social media side of things. Like, he'll ask me like, 'Hey, can you make a post about this?' But he doesn't really contribute to the design or to copy. He'll just tell me what content he needs. He helps with the support side of things, like talking to the actual students online. And [R1] contributes content-wise as far as like the vision, and [the creative director] in the same way too, but [he]... Yeah, like I said, designed stuff too in the past, just not as much, really... Yeah."*

The lead designer's answer is in harmony with R2's, and he clarifies his role in NPO1's SMM throughout the last few years,

> *"Int: So, you say [R2] is responsible for social media?*
>
> *R3: Yeah, for the most part. I mean, we strategize things together, but then the content creation, delivery schedules... She pretty much runs that all on her own. I don't have any daily interactions with social media.*
>
> *Int: I think she mentioned some things about you engaging a little bit with the comments on some of the posts?*

R3: Yeah, so... Because I did all of our social media for so many years, basically from the time that I hired on until she took it over about a year, a year and a half ago, I did all of our moderation, so during times when [R1]'s [sensitive topic] article and other articles and things that had some popularity... You get a lot of different feedback, so I just created, kind of, standards by which we could try to cultivate a positive, healthy online presence on our social media platforms."

R2 is primarily responsible for the day-to-day operations of the social media accounts, including content creation and engaging with the audience. There seems to be clear internal communications and the leadership is invested in how social media is used. R3 mentions that he typically spends a couple of hours each week browsing through comments and *"keeps his finger on the pulse"* of the feedback they get and what people are saying on several platforms and profiles.

Current Operations

NPO1 is engaged in preaching, training, printing, and the creation of various resources. They manage several different products and brands. On the question of how many brands NPO1 manages, the co-founder explains how NPO1 is the parent organization, overseeing different products or resources (which all have their own branding). These resources include the training ministry, a Bible study guide, educational videos, a local church, and a TV program. Most of these have their own websites or YouTube channels. R1 summarizes, *"I think... all of those are brands that are housed under [NPO1]."*

In spite of each of these having its own separate branding, they all seem to be driven by a similar visual and textual aesthetic. Another respondent, the one primarily responsible for social media, points out how it can be challenging to differentiate between brands, projects, and products,

"R2: Well, I guess it depends on how you're defining brand, 'cause I manage the [NPO1] and [training ministry], and [local church] social accounts. So [educational videos] and [TV program] and [Bible study guides] are projects or resources of [NPO1], so I'll feature them on there. But they have their own distinct designs, so I guess it just depends on how you're defining brand.

Int: So some of them might be products underneath certain brands?

R2: Yeah, so I- [educational videos], [Bible study guides] and [TV program]... Yeah, I guess you can throw those products underneath the [NPO1] umbrella, yeah. And [training ministry] is just like, because of the nature of it being a training program it has its own social channels."

A few years ago, NPO1 filmed the entirety of the training ministry's classroom lectures and made them available on an online video platform. There is a support team consisting of previous graduates that helps answer questions that come up as the students go through the content. This has become an important product that has helped the organization make decisions about what works and what does not work as far as their marketing goes.

Next Steps for Social Media Marketing

The founder excitedly explains what he sees as the next step for the organization,

> *"R1: The next step is to build a media production studio… and go vertical and viral. [laughs] That's good language! Yeah, that's what we're going to do. By the grace of God that's what we're going to do."*

The social media manager answers in terms of where she would like to see their social media marketing go and highlights new platforms, features and implementing more video-content, while simultaneously being well aware of the changes taking place and resource limitations in the organization at the moment,

> *"R2: […] Ok, if I was just like dreaming, and we had like, the capacity to do whatever we wanted, I'd want [our speakers] to get on TikTok, and I'd want us to put out a lot more video stuff on our platforms. And... I mean, this is just me dreaming. I don't know what actually our next step is [laughs], this is just, um... I think video would be a really good next step though as far as like content goes. And I've wondered about TikTok just because it is such an un - it's just a newer platform, and I was watching this video the other day about church social media marketing trends, and the guy was talking about how... He was talking about how like, back in 2016, Instagram rolled out Reels as like a comeback to Snapchat, and they kind of like took over Snapchat's market. […] wait no, sorry, I'm getting confused. Stories! That's what it was. They rolled out Stories, as like a competition for Snapchat, and they just sort of like bulldozed Snapchat. And then when TikTok came out, he was saying that everybody sort of expected TikTok to kind of like take a... not a nose dive, but they're, like, for Instagram to take them over. Because yeah, Reels are like their competition. But he said that hasn't happened, and TikTok has just continued to grow. And so that's made me wonder, like, "Oh, maybe it's..." like, it's not just passing phase, and so maybe it would be worthwhile to do that. But, it's just hard with, yeah. There's a lot of things going on in the ministry right now. Um. Yeah, but video's a big deal."*

R3 is focused on finding more ways to leverage attention from social media by guiding them to a deeper, more committed relationship with NPO1 and their cause,

> *"R3: Anyway, long story short, I'm looking for lead generation resources. Things we can do to create lead pages surrounding... where you give us your email address and you get a free resource in the end. […] I think people […] people in general, love infographs. […] And I think it's going to be exciting. We're building out now, now that we have the design completed, we're building out lead page campaigns surrounding it. To start creating lead funnels to generate leads where people can get this thing for free, or for making a donation, and we're going to start sourcing and tracking all of that, and so, now that we have Kindful, it's the first time I'm going to be able to get a full picture of both online and offline donations and tracking that across all of our platforms just to see how effective that is. So I'm really excited about the potential."*

Each of the informants seems to have some specific task or system that they are wanting to improve, and they seem excited about the direction they are headed.

4.1.2 NPO2 Overview

History

NPO2 has a long history as a producer of television programs and evangelistic meetings stretching back to the early 1970s. There have been a number of different speakers throughout their history, and they changed to their current brand name in 1982. They took on the name of a larger ministry in a different country, even though their operations stayed separate. When asking the current speaker/director about the organization's history, he looks up the information on their website and summarizes it, including details about the beginning of the ministry and the first speaker for the nonprofit. On the question of how many brands the organization manages, the R4, the speaker/director says,

> *"R4: The only brand we have—that I'm aware of is— is [NPO2]. Right. That is a media-based ministry as well as for the purpose of evangelism. And so they do on the ground, person-to-person evangelism as well."*

The organization has a long history with a variety of programs and speakers, and although the current speaker/director has a decent understanding of the history, it is not something he was a part of, so the details are somewhat unclear. On the follow-up question about their association and relationship with the former leadership, the speaker/director said,

> *"R4: So, the previous speaker/director […], we didn't really have a whole lot of relationship with him at all, but we were appointed by the [official church organization], and their executive committee. […] So, he [the previous speaker/director] had already left in September of 2018. The season starts in October, so they didn't have anything to put on the air because there was nothing new shot. So they just used old stuff for 2018-2019."*

When they, the current speaker/director and his wife came to the organization mid-2019, they discovered the organization had severe financial deficits. They also lost a key member of the team and had to scramble to get everything together. They describe the first year,

> *"R4: It turned out to be a good season. We limped through it. We were kinda with our hair flying back, and... You hope you're doing the right thing. And then you wake up in the middle of the night and realize, 'Oh, I've gotta do this and this and this.' It was just a lot of flying by the seat of our pants and praying that we would make it."*

These details provide a glimpse into the improvised nature of how the organization is currently operating, with hopes for more future stability. Having said that, they are on their way back to financial stability which will give them more freedom to pursue their goals,

> *"R6: We started here with a big debt. Did they [R4 and R5] tell you that?*
>
> *Int: Yeah, they said it was in the hole.*
>
> *R6: Yeah, big time! And so we're on the road to recovery, paying back someone else's debt. It's not ours. And we're paying it all back, and going the right direction."*

Connection to the Seventh-day Adventist Church

The organization has an official connection to the Adventist Church. The R4 and R5 were appointed by the official Adventist Church and their executive committee. On the structure of the organization, they explain,

> *"R4: The board is run by the [official church conference]. So a lot of the board members are employees of the church [...] Plus church members and businessmen... Laypeople... Are, are also on our board. The laypeople tend to be more active than the [church employees]. There are a couple [church employees] who are a little bit more on board with what we're doing, and at least communicate with us regularly. But most of them don't.*

Though they are employed by the church, they operate as financially independent. R4 explains, *"[The church] pay[s] our salary, but don't. We pay them to pay our salaries. So, we're financially independent. Any money we get from them, we have to pay back to them."*

Employees

The majority of the team working at NPO2 is fairly new, even though the ministry itself has a history that stretches over half a century. They currently have five full-time employees and a number of contract workers and volunteers. R7 says, *"Out of the three that you* *interviewed, I've been here the longest. But it's only been since the fall of 2018, so it hasn't been that long."*

Personal Backgrounds and Education/Primary Skills

R4 and R5 describe their background and primary skills, saying,

> *R4: My background is in theology. I studied theology. I was also a minister for the Seventh-day Adventist Church for 12 years full time. […] I worked in teaching for 12 years, but I was kind of pastoring/teaching […]. And I was in teaching [overseas] for 6 years full-time. So, 20 years of teaching, and probably similar in terms of preaching as well. So that's my background. And a writing background […]. Yup.*
>
> *R5: And mine has been mostly teaching. I taught for [about 15 years] before we came here […] So mostly teaching."*

When the new leadership arrived and soon after lost their creative director, they immediately went looking for a new one and they have been very happy with his help and productivity. A pastor for 22 years, R6 describes his previous engagement before joining the organization,

> *"R6: So, basically, I've been here for a year. […] So, the deal was - I was a media pastor for the last 10 years at the last church I was in […]. And [R4] was looking for a media guy, and […] I really wanted to go to the next level in media ministry, but I'm just a pastor. I don't have a communications degree, I don't have a master's in communications, I'm a pastor. I just got my master in pastoral ministry as I started this job. So, interesting timing. So, [R4] had other candidates that were more qualified. Very good video makers, but they didn't have that heart for ministry."*

The last informant, R7, the details his background,

> *"R7: I got a Bachelor of Science in Finance and Risk Management, and right after college I worked for about 6-7 years in construction. […] it was fun learning about construction, about building homes and it was challenging to schedule everybody and properly plan out the building process […] [When I came to this country] I did a switch back to my schooling, so I started working for the church. I worked for [an organization], doing mostly bookkeeping. It wasn't like accounting-accounting. It was just data-entry. It's a smaller organization, so preparing financial statements there is not a big task. Then I went to [another conference] and was assistant treasurer and there was a little bit more intensive, and then I came here. I was there for 5 years, and then I came here to [NPO2] as a business manager."*

We can see from this that only one employee has a background in business, and none of them are educated within marketing or communications. Still, there is some level of experience, particularly in the form of content creation. However, R6 and R7's wives each have an interest for or background in social media and online marketing, but neither are employed by NPO2.

Social Media Responsibilities

During the first interview with anyone from NPO2, I asked,

> *"Int: From what I've gathered, you two [R4 and R5] and [R6] are responsible for the social media marketing. Is that correct, or?*
>
> *R4: The marketing side of all of that has been very... We're learning, but yeah... That's true. It's mainly just [R6] and us. [R6]'s wife keeps an eye on it too, but she's not employed by us. So, we try to answer as much as we can the comments. Some weeks I don't even get to look at it. Because it's just too much. And there's just too many people responding and things like that. But sometimes [R6] will say to me, 'Oh, I noticed that this person has a serious prayer request. I think you need to answer this.' Right? And then I'll do that.*
>
> *R5: But that's not because* he *says...*
>
> *R4: No, his wife keeps an eye on it. Yeah. [laughs]"*

Even though R4 has access and sometimes goes and checks in on their social media platforms, he admits that there can go weeks with no time invested in social media. This was confirmed in the interview with R6, but he seems to feel like the main responsibility for social media marketing rests on his shoulders. When asked whether he is the one responsible or if anyone else is involved, he says,

> *"R6: I am! I'm it. And I'm like, I can't do this, because like, I'm like, '[R4], if we put out a message saying, 'Hey, we want to pray for you!' and all these prayer requests come in, I'm not going to answer that. I just... I'm not here to be a social media guy. I'll do what I can, and I think it's important for those people to have an answer. Right away.' I, I tell him. Like, my wife's very good at this. My wife - I use her account - I don't have a Facebook account. [...] I use my wife's account. So, she sees what happens, and she alerts me, '[R6], people are writing in. Tell [R4 and R5] to respond.' And it doesn't have to be [R4 and R5]. If they want to assign someone else to, that's great - but SOMEONE needs to be watching, in my opinion. So, I'm it for social media."*

R6 started enlisting the help of his wife more actively to create thumbnails for videos as well, and they are considering hiring her,

> *"R6: [...] So, so, yeah, we've talked about hiring someone... We're not in a place to hire a full-time person, but even my wife they suggested, my wife's really good at this stuff, but... I don't feel I have the time to be making thumbnails. Heh. You know, for... I enjoy it, I like to do it - it's creative. But my wife's really good at it, so I've had her do it the last few weeks."*

Neither R4, R5, or R6 mentioned R7 as being involved in the social media marketing, but he details some of his activity in the interview. He goes on Facebook and invites users who have engaged with the content but not yet followed NPO2, and he also looks at the analytics from time-to-time.

From this, we clearly see that each of the informants are only partially involved in the SMM activity/outputs, and there is very little internal communication about marketing and social media marketing in particular, and none of them seem to consider it an essential part of their job description.

Current Operations

Historically, NPO2 has had a strong emphasis on evangelistic content in the form of sermons where the speaker/director stands in front of the camera in a studio or sits down with a guest preacher for Bible study. Music has also been an important part of the programs through the years and has been reintroduced as an element into their current programs, as some of their viewers say that they enjoy this.

Due to R4 and R5's teaching backgrounds, they are bringing with them a new culture from outside of the organization where they are focusing heavily on partnerships and network-building, mostly offline with other nonprofits within the Adventist church. Most of their weekly 30-minute TV programs (which are also uploaded to YouTube and sometimes Facebook and Instagram) consist of interviews with various people who have remarkable or inspiring faith-based stories which are intended to build or reinforce the faith of the viewers. After the new creative director (R6) arrived, they have produced three times as much video content as the nonprofit used to produce in a year.

Next Steps for Social Media Marketing

Regarding the future of the SMM management, the speaker/director says,

> *"R4: The next step would be to either... I think, honestly, we need someone to do this for us. Personally. Because I don't see... We're already stretched far too thin to think that we would be able to do this. So we need to hire someone to do this for us."*

The creative director's answer harmonizes with the speaker/director's,

> *"R6: Hiring someone. [chuckles] Hiring someone to take social media to the next level. Because I don't have to time to, and it eats me up, because I'm a people-pleaser-wanting-to-do-everything-save-the-world kinda guy, but that can lead to burnout. That can lead to - so it actually bothers me that we're doing something half-heartedly, but it's twice as good as it was before I came, like, so that - that's rewarding - that we're doing something, that our audience is slowly growing on YouTube and, well, all of them, really. The audience is growing. So, it's, it's, it's nice, but I think that's the next step, is to hire someone to really take this to the next level."*

Somewhat contrasting, R7 is thinks that NPO2's current focus should be on improving some of the elements in the marketing plan,

> *"R7: Yeah, even a general plan of what are we trying to do and how... Who's the audience, just a little bit of that and being intentional with that. That would already be a lot. Some of these people, you see it on YouTube a lot... That go viral or that have a channel that just grows and grows and grows. Some of these aren't a whole team behind them. It's just a one-man show or a two-man show, and once they're 5 million subscribers, then they might hire other people and produce more content. But initially, it's just them working at it by themselves. […] So it's just improving what we already have, don't want to sound like we're not doing anything. We are doing something. But, like with our spiritual life and with life in general, we're always wanting to improve."*

In NPO2, then, there is a general sense of exhaustion in terms of marketing and branding, and SMM in particular, and most of the informants are looking to hire someone who can carry this burden for them. Still, from R7 there are some ideas about improvements that could be implemented to better support their marketing efforts.

4.1.3 Organizational Overview Comparison

There are strong similarities but also obvious differences in the background and situation of the organizations. NPO1 has mostly had the same leadership since the beginning with more changes taking place in the years after the merger, whereas NPO2's leadership has seen several changes in the last two decades after the initial speaker/director retired and passed away. Through these changes in NPO2 there has been little transference of knowledge between the leadership. NPO2 has been seen as the "little brother" or branch of their namesake-ministry since the beginning. This has had a strong influence on the brand, possibly in both positive and negative ways. NPO1, on the other hand, has built its own separate brand since 1985, and joined forces with another strong brand in 2011. The compatibility of these two brands and cultures increased the strength of both brands and expanded the audience.

Both organizations operate with a small team and are actively producing content. However, NPO1 has more full-time employees in general and have more resources (e.g., time, tech know-how, and marketing skills) dedicated to marketing and communications than NPO2.

Both organizations have a lot of current projects going on, but NPO1 is going through a more significant restructuring at the moment. NPO2 has put a heavy emphasis on creating content and increasing the quality of their output and have also sought to establish and restore partnerships with other related ministry and relief organizations.

Regarding their future plans for social media marketing, they are situated very differently. NPO1 is looking to expand on what they consider to be already successful efforts, strengthening elements of the brand infrastructure. NPO2 is for the most part feeling worn out and are eager to off-load the burden of social media marketing by outsourcing it or by hiring someone who is capable or willing to learn and whose main responsibility would be social media management. There was one informant from NPO2 who did not think the initial step should include hiring someone, but for the team to work on clarifying and improving elements from their marketing communications plan.

4.2 Brand Infrastructure

4.2.1 NPO1 and Brand Infrastructure

Support of Leadership and Employee Buy-in

The co-founder, R1, is actively involved with marketing himself, creating content for his accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter and sometimes engaging with other content. He also appears in video content on YouTube. He considers social media marketing extremely important. He also says he is willing to learn from those who are responsible for the official accounts to improve the effectiveness of various tools and tactics. However, there is still an effort from other employees to further convince the leadership/speakers of the importance of specific strategies and campaigns, and R3 underscores the importance of leadership support/employee buy-in when he says, *“R3: We were just on an […] conference call with the team, […], and [one public speaker] mentioned the impact that his [social media marketing campaign] has been having online in social media and growing his following, he said he's just blown away by the impact of social media and that you can have a presence there... And you know, I'm happy for that, but I'm also frustrated because we've been telling him this for a decade, and he's just like, ‘Yeaah, whatever... You know, just gonna go preach at this church with 200 people’ when he could be preaching on a platform reaching 30,000 people, you know. But I'm glad... You know, it is better late than never. […]*

“We've been on a plateau for a while, and slowly inclining, but I think we're about to take off. As these guys become increasingly convinced of the value of social media, and as we become more focused on it and more intentional about the content that we produce and speak to our audiences on social, I think it's going to continue to grow and our influence there will continue to increase, so...”

The lead designer (still R3) also speaks to his struggle for increased leadership support and employee buy-in concerning the visual identity of the organization and its brand(s),

“R3: Umm, [maintaining control over the brand/organizations' image] to me is fairly important. I would say it's probably on my top 10 list of things to do. But at the same time, it's been an uphill battle since I got here because the organization pre-dated me, and there wasn't really a brand management, and so everyone... Just, like, they had their own signatures, for e-mails, and they used their own favorite font, and nobody was using Comic Sans, so I didn't fight them on it. But there were things that to this day still haven't been resolved. Like, we have what are called NCP's (New Client Packets) that whenever somebody made a purchase for the first time or made a donation for the first time, we would send them this NCP that just had a bunch of resources from [NPO1] and cool stuff and just helped them discover a little bit more about what this organization is and what we do and what's available to them. And some of the stuff was just, like, print-outs on orange paper and cut into little 2 inch by 3 inch things that were slipped into the package, and it was just awful!

“And I tried and tried and tried to get us to stop using those things and to redesign those and to use different ones and... You know, it just depended on who was packing the packets as to whether they just created something themselves and threw in there, or if they would come to me and say, ‘Hey! We'd like something that's designed and branded.’ And not even that I have to design it, but just that I can approve it or make suggestions since it's going to be client-facing or donor-facing stuff. And so I've tried really hard for years to achieve that, and now we have... We're doing a restructuring, and the person that's overseeing […] that stuff in the office is in my corner on that and they're like, ‘Yes, let's get the brand management shored up.’ So, it's important to me, but it's been a losing battle for a decade, and I feel like, because of our web presence and social media presence and email presence... Most of our major touch points, like, I was able to brand manage, so I feel like it wasn't too terrible.”

There has been what R3 perceives as a slow but increased support for brand management as a concept and activity among the leadership and fellow employees.

Vision and Mission Statement

NPO1 has recently updated their mission statement and that seems to have made it clearer and easier to apply. The social media manager says,

> *"R2: Actually, they just revisited the mission statement! Made it better, in my opinion. I think... What is it? [laughs] I think they simplified it down to, 'Our mission as a ministry, as an organization, is to vindicate the beauty of God's character.' So, yeah. That's the goal. […]*
>
> *Int: […] Do you know how to use it or apply it?*
>
> *R2: It's getting clearer. Before this, […] it was not super clear. But that I believe has helped a lot and it does encapsulate, I think, what NPO1 is about."*

R3 clarifies their process around developing their mission statement,

> *"R3: Yeah, we actually just sat down a month ago and rewrote our mission statement. I can't remember exactly what it is, but it's something to the effect of... 'To vindicate God's character of love.' And it's on [the about-section of the NPO1 website]. […] I think it's already been in our message for a while, and that's kind of how we ended up with the revision of the mission statement. It was like, what have we already been doing successfully? Well, this is what we've been doing successfully, so let's just make that our mission statement."*

Not all organizations are going in the direction they want and seeing positive results from it, so this exact process might not work for all organizations. However, a useful starting point would be to seek to understand what unspoken vision or mission they have been guided by, if any, and then make necessary adjustments.

Effective Internal Communications

Concerning internal verbal communications, these seem to be efficient and clear. As noted in the earlier statements from R2 and R3, there is an openness and cooperative spirit across the functions, and there is a fairly high awareness of how the brand is being perceived by the target audience(s) and how the employees understand each other. The value of branding and the surrounding internal communication has grown and is likely to continue in this direction as a result of the restructuring.

While volunteering with the team during the spring and summer of 2020 (as a result of a significant increase in clients/users after a free-offer marketing campaign), I engaged in participant-observation of the internal communications regarding both internal verbal communications and also how they talked about the brand. As their online community grew, they implemented measures to clarify communication protocols both within the team and on their own media platforms.

Organizational Culture

The general tenor from the informants in NPO1 seems to express a fairly solid understanding of branding and marketing as a concept and activity, and they see it as an integral part of their work. NPO1 has maintained its brand name since its foundation in 1985, and the training ministry's brand was already strong and well-established when the merger took place. In addition to this, each of the resources and platforms have developed a strong visual identity that creates a sense of cohesion across the organization's activities. However, as R3 mentioned earlier, the visual component of the brand management is something he has worked hard to implement throughout his years in the organization.

This factor and how it relates to SMM is covered in further detail under the section Findings in Light of the Holistic Framework.

Management Capabilities in Marketing

The co-founder, R1, conveys the underlying mission of the ministry in his content creation and in the internal communications within the team,

> *"R1: I have tried to educate, teach, and preach the theological "character of God"-orientation. That's the content and the substance of what we're about. Right? So I, I try to, you know, make sure that everybody that works for [NPO1] understands that's what we're about, but they've all bought into it through that teaching and preaching and writing and so on and so forth."*

As far as the systems for marketing, as seen previously, R3 has worked hard to develop a brand management, and has been collaborating with other team members to set up platforms, funnels, and landing page resources.

Last year, NPO1 launched a major social media marketing campaign which had a very big impact on the organization and their social media network. This led to an incredible number of conversions, higher than their total number of followers on any one account. Their ability to set this up and handle the influx of users tells in favor of their marketing management skills.

> *"R3: It was overwhelming, but we were able to handle it. Would we want to do that again? Sure. Every week? No. [laughs] You know?*
>
> *Int: Yeah.*
>
> *R3: I do feel like we need more supporting structures to properly handle something like that, but I don't feel like we really dropped the ball with that one either. We could've done better, but I was surprised with how well we did, given our lack of preparedness for it."*

Capabilities in Marketing Communications

Throughout each of the interviews, informants from NPO1 consistently provided answers that embraced the broad nature of marketing, including everything from the detailed process of creating social media posts to the overall marketing strategy.

There are different ways to measure the capabilities in marketing communications. The primary way would be to look at their overall engagement online and determine whether or not they are seeing results and reaching their goals. NPO1 are seeing results in terms of increased followers and comments and are fairly close to maxing out their current resources. As far as the specific details in communication is concerned, these are covered under the Findings in Light of the Logic Model, under Social Media Activities/Outputs.

IT Systems

NPO1 have the necessary IT systems in place. However, their previous challenges of trying to keep track of all contacts and donations were attributed to not having a proper IT system including an understandable and useable CRM. This has recently been fixed,

> *"R3: My goal has been to increase online donations. And just because of the way our systems work, like, when it comes to offline donations, until this year, we haven't had a way to really track offline donations. Meaning, donations that were given in any way other than through the web portal. We use a software called MPX to track it, but it was kind of a black hole where data went in, but no one really knew how to generate reports, it was depreciated software, not everything worked, reports were difficult to get, so I just never saw data. So now we're using a web-based platform called Kindful and we're able to track all of it. But my goal up to this point has been to just track the online donations, because that was something I could watch from start to finish. […] [N]ow that we have Kindful, it's the first time I'm going to be able to get a full picture of both online and offline donations and tracking that across all of our platforms just to see how effective that is. So I'm really excited about the potential."*

Marketing Budgets

I was not able to get access to the marketing budget for the nonprofit, but the hours dedicated to social media marketing can be used as a proxy for how much they invest in it. However, it is extremely difficult to track the exact amounts of time, as the social media marketing activity is so interspersed between all the other work tasks, like creating a text-based post or answering a comment. R2 attempts to estimate the time spent on social media marketing,

> *"R2: I probably spend... That's hard, right. I'm terrible at estimating things, but maybe like... It varies. [...] I want to say like, I'm guessing maybe a third of my time?! But I'm not sure. It varies, because sometimes, like... I always start my day with checking up on, like, answering comments and checking DM's and responding to things, and sometimes that can take me as little as 15 minutes in the morning and that's not like creating content. That's just, just like checking stuff. And then it can take like an hour or two depending [on] what I posted. Like, if I posted a story on Instagram that asks a question, I have to respond to a bunch of stuff... Yea, maybe like a third of my time? But it might be more sometimes, depending on the week. [I work 30 hours per week.]*
>
> *Int: Ok, so about 10 hours [per week] maybe?*
>
> *R2: Something like that. That's really rough-rough."*

The last informant provides an estimate of hours per week dedicated to social media,

> *"R3: Oh man. In the last few weeks, none. I've been focused on other projects. Typically, um, since [R2]'s taken over creating the content, we'll have huddles once in a while where we're kind of like, 'Ok, let's review what's working, what's not...' On those weeks where we have huddles, it'd probably be 4-6 hours of work for me, in regard to social media. Otherwise, I would say it's maybe... 2 [hours] a week."*

It is difficult to draw any numerical conclusions based on these answers, but we can see that marketing is a priority and a fairly regular part of the informants' work, and therefore a certain percentage of the marketing costs are associated with the labor costs. The organization does not do a lot of paid advertisements, so the marketing budget is likely primarily directed toward other efforts such as labor costs and IT systems.

Research Capabilities

Usage of Adventist Church SMM Materials

Because the organization is a supportive ministry of the Adventist Church, I asked how much help they had received from the Adventist church's official materials on social media marketing. They all answered along the lines of, *"None."* R2 and R3 expound, *“R2: I didn't know they had official materials on social media marketing […] Adventist ministries usually aren't that great with social media marketing.”*

“R3: Didn't even know they had any. […] I haven't been too impressed with communications in the Adventist church. I do think it's improving a little bit. I appreciate the fact that they've started branding […] I love what they're doing [some designer friends who have done some branding work for the church], and I'm super supportive of it and I think they're headed in the right direction, but yeah, it's definitely... There's room to grow there, and the Adventist church has not historically done a very good job in that regard.”

There seems to be a sense that they are unable to find the help they require to further their growth by looking to the Adventist church’s materials, so even though they are very supportive of the mission of the church, they look elsewhere to find resources to help them succeed with social media marketing.

Learning Process

The fact that NPO1 employees do not learn from the Adventist church’s materials on social media marketing begs the question, “How do they learn?” R2 explains how this has been a challenge in some ways, saying, *“I... don't have formal training in this, and so I haven't always been sure which voices of authority to listen to [laughs] as I'm learning.”* In spite of this, R2 learns from successful communicators and social media marketers in her network, courses, books, YouTube videos, popular church-related profiles (various denominations), and organizations that aim at helping churches. She also mentions the limits of studying marketing principles that are not specifically adapted to nonprofits, and in particular, religious organizations,

“R2: […] Obviously I'm not trained in social media, like officially through any school of anything, and so I've just done research on YouTube. […] I recently […] got a couple of new books. [A professor in communication] did a breakout session for the society of Adventist Communicators Conference. I didn't really listen to the rest of the conference, but I listened to her session, and that was actually really, really, really good. She talked about a couple books. Oh, and I've also met with her online. She did a ZOOM session with me which was really nice of her to... And she, again, she's just from the whole idea of giving, give to your audience. So she had recommended these books. This is a textbook, so it looks really scary. ‘Social Media Marketing’ by Tracy Tuten. I'm kinda skeptical about a textbook […] Social media evolves and changes so quickly, so how could you put out a textbook that would actually stay relevant? But, I trust her, she does really good stuff on Twitter, so I was like, well it's worth a shot.”

> *"R2: I watch videos on YouTube from other influencers. […] I started out just watching different videos from influencers that weren't in our niche, like as far as religion goes at all, and so that could only be helpful to a certain extent. And then [the creative director] showed me a guy named Brady Shearer, and he has an organization [Pro Church Tools] that helps - his whole focus is on helping churches navigate the shift with social media management and knowing how to communicate on there. Cause churches are generally slow to do that. And, his materials have been really helpful, super helpful, yeah. And then, I mean, there's the books that I read sometimes. Some of the books are more helpful than others. And yea, just listening to people like [the communications professor]. And then sometimes watching what other people do. Like, looking at, following different church accounts. There's a bunch of different church accounts that I follow on Instagram. So...*
>
> *Int: Mm, and that's outside of, not just Adventism that you...*
>
> *R2: Yea, no that's outside. Yeah, Adventist churches are not really the model for what you want to… [laughs]."*

She points out that big ideas can be helpful in establishing one's overall mentality, but the successful implementation of the big-picture ideas is a constant challenge. Specifically, she attended a marketing workshop, but had mixed thoughts about the practical benefit of it,

> *"R2: [I]t gave me a better philosophy for how we should be positioning ourselves as an organization. As far as the nitty gritty day-to-day stuff, it wasn't as helpful. I mean, it kind of was, but it wasn't... with some of my day-to-day questions, I still feel like I struggle a lot with marketing. But as far as how to position yourself as a organization, that was helpful, because it... You can do the best marketing when you're trying to just be selfless […] So, [the previous administrator] and I went through StoryBrand together and we were both like, 'This is really helpful!' But we... the way we both came about practically applying what we learned was completely different. And we butted heads on it a lot. And it caused a lot of friction actually. So […] knowing how to apply [marketing principles] in the best way for your audience, […] I get frustrated sometimes because I feel like I don't understand, and I […] wish I knew how to apply them better."*

While explaining his learning process, R3 emphasized the value of listening to professional experts, being a problem solver and data driven. He has little trust in what academics might say about social media marketing,

> *"R3: Mostly just through reading. I mean, that's kind of how everybody is learning everything about social media right now, about social media marketing anyway. It's so new on the scene. Anybody that's doing it effectively didn't really go to college to learn it, and if you did, by the time you graduate, the scene is already changed so much from what your professor, who was probably old and a digital immigrant himself... It's a very changing landscape, so I think the only way to really know what's going on and what's happening is to stay tuned in to announcements, newsletters, through Facebook, developers' stuff, through YouTube. There's a lot of people on YouTube that are really staying on top of it and know what you can do, and they create great content for marketers to know and understand the tools at their disposal and how to integrate those tools in creating best practices. And then a lot of blogs. Advertising, marketing, and branding/design blogs that talk about things related to social media marketing.*

> *"[…] I'm a bit of a problem solver, […] I have to know why and how it's working and how it's benefitting. So when it comes to that, I ask a lot of questions, […] Just in the process of understanding the 'why' you learn a lot of the 'how to do it' and how to integrate what you can do, what's the limitations of what you're trying to accomplish. I find all that stuff fascinating.*

R1 tends to learn from his own social media activity by paying close attention to how people respond to various kinds of content.

4.2.2 NPO2 and Brand Infrastructure

Support of Leadership and Employee Buy-in

In email exchanges prior to conducting the interviews, R4 communicated that they *"desperately desire*" to improve their work *"every day."* He communicated the main points that guide his work for the organization, and all of this signals a strong desire and willingness to have an effective system set up which will help them learn and improve. However, even though there is a positive attitude toward branding and marketing from both leadership and employees, the interviews revealed that there is limited knowledge about what that means and how to approach it. The one with the most understanding is R7. When talking about his ideas for working on the branding and developing a social media marketing plan, R7 says,

> *"R7: I don't think anybody is opposed to it. I don't think [R4] would say, 'No, that's a horrible idea,' or [R6] would say, 'No, that's a horrible idea let's not do that.' I think everybody would be happy if... They would all be for it. But it would be kind of like, Ok, I don't have time to dedicate to that. So somebody else has to do that."*

Vision and Mission Statement

R6 says that NPO2 does have a mission statement *"nicely written down [...] somewhere",* but the challenge is in keeping it front and center in the minds of the employees and successfully implementing it into the work. He explains,

> *"R6: Yeah, we have a plan, we have a mission. We have that written down, but I think we suffer when it comes to the application... [...] We have it all nicely written down... Um, I've got it here somewhere, probably in my drawer here. [...] Ok, here's my job description. [...] And then at the bottom of it, and I'm not sure why they put it on the job description, because this - the mission statement's got nothing to do with my job description, but they just tacked it on there. 'Our mission is to connect [our fellow citizens] to the abundant life found in Jesus in a way that is personal and relevant.' It's a little bit long if you ask me. Uh, and then there's a statement of values... But um, I think we struggle where a lot of people struggle, and that's implementation of the mission and vision, right."*

Internal Communications

As far as the internal communications go for NPO2, R6 says, *"We don't have regular meetings about how we're doing [with marketing]."* He also says, *"[pause] We haven't really talked about this. We haven't sat down and said, 'Who do we want to reach and who are we targeting?'"* This also came across in the interview with R4 and R5, that they were unfamiliar with a lot of the available tools and strategies for marketing and branding and therefore did not talk much about it with the rest of the team. Considering how they have not been in the organization for very long and how much effort they have invested into content creation, it is natural for certain things to be more or less overlooked in the internal communications.

However, there is some communication regarding changes they are making (with the purpose of improving the content), but these changes are not planned out in advance or necessarily made as a part of a strategic marketing plan. The results of these changes are not systematically tracked.

Organizational Culture

There is some understanding of the value of branding in NPO2, but precisely what that looks like and how it is implemented into the nonprofit's daily operations seems more unclear. Having inherited the name of another ministry as the brand name over 35 years ago with only minor tweaks to suggest the country of operation, and not having an in-house designer or a set of branding guidelines, it seems as if the need to develop and maintain a distinct and clear brand has been more or less overlooked. Where branding does show up in the organizational culture is in the content creation process, where they discuss the message which they want to communicate through their programs.

This factor and how it relates to SMM is covered in further detail under the section Findings in Light of the Holistic Framework.

Management Capabilities in Marketing

Because of the lack of understanding of branding and marketing as concepts and activities, as well as the outsourcing of negotiating deals with TV channels, there is also a clear lack of management capabilities as far as marketing is concerned. R7 has a background in management and a decent understanding of marketing, but it is currently not being utilized due to resource constraints.

Capabilities in Marketing Communications

When asking informants from NPO2 questions about marketing, their responses indicate a narrow definition of marketing that centers around advertisement and promotion. For example, 'marketing campaigns' are interpreted as paid advertisement campaigns, and the 'marketing budget' is translated to 'advertising budget.' This suboptimal definition limits the thinking and discussion surrounding branding and marketing and therefore also the marketing communications.

It is understandable then, that NPO2's capabilities in marketing communications are not very high, even though the production quality of their content is increasing. At some point halfway through the interview, R4 admits that there are a lot of factors he has not considered and resources he is unaware of. He says, *"This is telling me a lot. It's telling me that I don't know enough about what I'm doing."* However, this is not to say that there is no knowledge at all about marketing communications. For example, R4 says, *"[W]hen we first came, there wasn't a real call to action in the newsletter. So I made that intentional, to say, 'This is our purpose, and if you'd like to contribute to this...'"*

IT Systems

NPO2 does have access to IT systems required for most branding and marketing work, including high-quality equipment for content creation. They do not, as of yet, however, have a comprehensive system to track donations. Part of this is because the traditional audience is older and is generally unfamiliar with computers. R4 says, *"We get a lot of letters. People* *write. There's a lot of mail that comes in here. So, you'd know from that that that's an older audience."* R5 expounds,

> *"R5: Our stakeholders and our older donors that have been donating to the ministry for years, some of them don't even... I mean, we're talking about people who are in their 70s, 80s and 90s. Like, they don't have a computer, they don't do the internet, they don't do online."*

Marketing Budgets

As for the social media marketing budget, R7 says,

> *"R7: We haven't really sat down and made a plan of, 'OK, this is how much we're going to spend.' We have an overall advertising budget, and out of that there's a portion that goes to social media. [...] [The budget for our TV airtime] is [quarter of our total budget] per year, so compare that to [social media expenses], you're talking like 1%."*

It is worth noting how this is said to be the budget specifically for advertising and not marketing in general. This is another indicator that NPO2 considers social media platforms as another form of mass media and does not as of yet see the unique potential for building a community and collaborating with the audience(s). There is a significant amount of funding invested into content creation (most of R4, R5 and R6's time is spent on this) and airtime on TV, but there is a lack of inputs for social media marketing.

Research Capabilities

Usage of Adventist Church SMM Materials

Even though NPO2 has official organizational connections to the Adventist church, they have not been aware of the church's resources on marketing and social media marketing in particular. When asked how much help they have received from these resources, R4 says, *"Zero. [laughs] That's honestly the truth, because we don't even know that there is such a thing. I didn't know that there was such a resource."* The follow-up comments indicate an eagerness and slight frustration, *"R4: So, you're saying that the Seventh-day Adventist Church has a social media resource? [...] Where is it?"*

Learning Process

R6 has a similar answer but explains how he has to seek help if he needs it,

> *"R6: The church's official materials - like logo? Or what do you mean by official materials?*
>
> *Int: Um, any kinds of instruction, guidance... tools... theories.*

> *R6: [pause] Nothing. From the official church? […] The only - well, I have gone to colleagues and asked them. 'Hey, what do you guys do for this?' So, [the local state/province] conference is right next door, right. […] and there's some younger guys there that are really good at social media, and all this stuff, […] so we did a virtual [funding event] last year […] So, I had questions about how they would advertise it and how they would - because they're really good. […] Um, I wasn't brought on primarily for social media. Obviously. It's a part of it, but I was brought on as creative director to film and to edit. So, I don't know much about it, and again, just a time thing. I don't desire to become an expert in it, so let someone else do it. Let's hire someone else to do that. But that's it. It's me asking colleagues how this works. Or me, yeah, and they happen to work for the [local] conference. So, church support? Is it there? Probably, but I'd have to go seek—I'd have to go ask for it."*

Because of their location, they can go next door and ask those who work with social media marketing for the conference, but R6 does not see it as his responsibility as he was not brought on as a marketer.

R7 has a degree in business and is more curious about how these things work than most of his co-workers. For instance, he paid close attention to their fundraising consultant and his approach. He initially thought the consultant would primarily cover specific practical steps to improve their results, but he says,

> *"R7: The majority of the time spent with this person was strategic planning. 'What's the purpose of your ministry? What do you want to accomplish? Who are you trying to help? What's your main mission?' All of those components, to then build on, because otherwise, you don't have a solid foundation."*

He has also asked others in his network who work with social media, and tries to see which steps NPO2 can take on their own,

> *"R7: We all want to see it grow, we all want to have it do better. How much in detail have they thought about it? Maybe not as much as me, but maybe that's just because of a different personality, because I'm thinking more analytically. It's just a matter of time and setting your time so you can concentrate on that. Which... I'm hoping to start doing soon. We're going to be hiring someone to help with more of the bookkeeping aspects and that'll take some responsibility away."*

It appears that he has a desire to try out his marketing ideas whenever he can offload some of his current responsibilities.

4.2.3 Brand Infrastructure Comparison

Brand Infrastructure Elements	*NPO1*	*NPO2*
Support of Leadership	Yes, strong	Somewhat, growing
Employee buy-in	Yes, growing	Somewhat
Clear vision and mission statement	Yes	Somewhat
Effective internal communications (verbal and brand)	Yes	Somewhat
Organizational culture	Yes	No
Management capabilities in marketing	Yes, growing	No, not utilized
Capabilities in marketing communications	Yes, growing	No, not utilized
IT systems	Yes	Partial
Marketing budgets	Yes, but tight	Yes, but tight
Research capabilities	Yes	Somewhat
Overall brand infrastructure	**Strong, growing**	**Weak**

Table 3 - Brand Infrastructure Comparison for NPO1 and NPO2

4.3 Marketing Communications Plans

4.3.1 NPO1 and Marketing Communications Plan

Situation Analysis

Because the concept of competition is often unclear for nonprofits, and their reason for existing is complementary rather than competitive, I thought it would be enlightening to explore the nonprofit's understanding of competition and who their competitors might be. In the instances when an informant seemed to understand competition to mean something like "mean-spirited rivalry" which would exclude any sort of collaboration with competitors, I suggested they answer more along the lines of, *"others who are vying for the same attention"*. R1 had an interesting and perhaps counter-cultural take (amidst religious nonprofits),

> *"R1: Our competition is Hollywood. Pop culture. Pop culture is the overwhelming attraction. And even addiction of young adults. It is their constant. It's the ocean they swim in. It's what's surrounding them continually, and we're no match for it. We don't have the money. We don't have the sheer financial ability to compete. But what we do have is... We have meaning and significance and beauty that has the capacity to attract those who are attracted […] to Hollywood and pop culture.*
>
> *Int: […] Other Christian ministries... Would you consider them competition, or no?*
>
> *R1: No. Christianity is fading. Nobody in the demographic I'm talking about really is attracted to it. Christianity is, is more and more a parody of religion that is not attractive at all. Mainstream evangelical Christianity is still thinking that the way you do evangelism is with authority rather than attraction. If I were to summarize what I am saying... I'm saying that attraction is the new authority. So they still think that that... 'The Bible is the word of God. Therefore, you should listen. The Bible says, the Bible says! How dare you! God is sovereign. Do what God says!' Authority, authority, authority, authority. Well, that is completely ineffective in attracting anybody in our current Western secular young adult demographic. Just, it's just not going to happen there. They're just like, 'We're done with that. We're over it. […]' So I believe that what we're trying to do is to make rational, emotional, and relational sense of God. I don't think what we're trying to do is to make people feel bound or obligated to God by virtue of the fact that God is bigger than them and more powerful than them and... […] 'The Bible says, the Bible says, therefore, you OUGHT! Therefore, you SHOULD! Therefore, you BETTER! Because the Bible says!' No. None of that's powerful. That's the weakest form of communication. That's operating at the level of a 10-year-old in a culture that is beyond that level of maturity, in some ways. It's just not effective. It's not even a smart approach. […] It's not even an intelligent approach. If you're just going to study marketing, that's just a bad approach."*

When asked about NPO1's competitors, the social media manager, R2, mentioned some of her personal options for Christian training programs, and how she decided to attend NPO1's training ministry over a different one. Still, she explains how she reposts and engages with the content from other ministries and does not try to stay closed off from other ministries. She also mentions how NPO1's speakers share messages at other ministries' online and offline events.

Finally, R3 shared some profound insights regarding who he perceives to be their competitors, and also how they might actually be fighting against themselves, *“R3: That's tough. I hate the idea that other ministries are competition for us. And honestly, I don't see them as competition because [of] the way that we're ministering to Adventists... A lot of churches aren't targeting those on the fringe. They're targeting, either through evangelism those outside of the church, or they're talking to the inside-crowd. And because I feel like each ministry has its own voice, and is valid in what it's saying in the way that it's ministering to various groups in society or groups within the Adventist church or, wherever... […] Take [large media ministry], for example. I wouldn't say, ‘Oh, you know what? We need to have evangelists that go around and preach to different churches because [large media ministry]...’ No, that's not our thing. They're doing that. […] There's a market for that. So, do it. But we're not going to do that. That's not our market, that's not our ministry. So in that regard, I don't see them as competition.*

“And I don't really look at the dollars as a limited thing, just because all of us are barely scratching the surface of the available dollars within the Adventist church in terms of fundraising and donors’ capacity to give and whatnot. Like, the church is not running out of money because donors are giving all their money to the church and don't have anything to live on. People will have money to give if they believe in your cause. And so I look at it more as we've got to be more effective in communicating our cause to our potential donor-base. That's kind of on the donor front.

“On the ministry front, I think our biggest competition would be... One thing that stands out to me is [the online training program], and social media culture, the fact that people are used to relating in a certain way, that's very dysfunctional and unhealthy online. And so, how do we shift that? How do we change that? We can't just ban the people that don't get it, because they're the people we're ministering to. […] People’s short attention spans, people not communicating and engaging with the [the online training program] platform in a productive, healthy, growth-oriented way. So, I would say that's one of our biggest competitions, just like, social media culture and pop culture entertainment. […] So, like, how do you compete with pop culture? That's a challenge.

“And then... The last one, I would say, and it's maybe overall the biggest... It's ourselves. Man, we like to dream up all these great ideas, and we can't say no to anything, and we bite off way more than we can chew, and we do nothing great. We do a lot of things. And in a lot of people's minds we do well. But we could do so much better if we did less. So, I see our biggest competition not being [this large ministry] or [that large ministry], not being the dollars and cents that are being directed to those ministries […] It is a factor and a challenge that we have to overcome for attention among our audience and users, but our biggest challenge and competition is our own ideas. Our own short attention spans that get distracted and want to go for another project or another whatever, you know.

> *"[…] [W]e just haven't sat down and really thought through the implications of what we're doing and what we could be doing and the potential [of just emphasizing one branch of our ministry]. […] When we offered [the online training program] for free, and then we said, 'Hey, if you'd like to donate, you can,' money poured in. Like, tons of untapped resources. There's no shortage of money out there if we need it. We just haven't been effectively communicating with our donors and giving them value and reason to donate to us and give it to us. Again, it's our own fault in our communication, because we're spread too thin and we can't effectively reach our audience, and we don't build effective strategies and we're not intentional about what we're saying in our communication with our potential donors. We're our own worst enemy."*

These insights from R3 reveal an insightful understanding of NPO1's internal and external situation similar to what could be achieved through a SWOT analysis. However, it is not clear whether these perspectives represent the views of the organization as a whole.

Marketing Objectives

NPO1 did not share the specific details of their marketing objectives but stated that they regularly have meetings and huddles where they set and refine their goals. R2 does not know exactly how much she wants NPO1's social media marketing to grow at the moment, because she perceives that they are nearing the edge of what the organization can handle with the current resources. Similarly, R3 does not want social media to grow much more yet as they have not gone through the necessary restructuring changes yet to handle it all, but *"[o]nce we're settled, we would definitely want more than we have, and we're going to be working towards expanding that."* It seems as if a significant aspect of the restructuring is going to involve revising and expanding their brand infrastructure and marketing communications plan to make the most of their resources.

R3 pointed out several times the importance of being able to measure the results their activities, and not just going with something because of a gut-feeling. This shows that he is a driver for SMART marketing objectives, which makes it easier for NPO1 to monitor and evaluate the results of their efforts.

Communication Strategy

Audience Strategy

When asked about their *current* audience, R1 says the ministry has historically reached believers. R2 agrees when she says, *"Our audience is still mostly Adventist."* At the same time, on their Instagram account they receive public comments and private messages from skeptics or unbelievers who found their content engaging in some way.

In contrast, R3 explains who he sees as the *target* audience for NPO1,

> *"R3: It would be those who are outward facing from Adventism, and by that I mean, they're kind of on the fringes, they're headed away from the church. Maybe they were born into Adventism, but for whatever reason now they're skeptical, their faith is diminishing, they have doubts... Maybe they were wounded by the church, maybe they're still wanting to be a part of the church and maybe they're not. But they're definitely on the fringes, and they don't feel like they fit, so to speak, in church. […] we're really trying to speak to them, so... Having something that feels relevant, and not just relevant to the church, but relevant to the world. So, we try to maintain a high design-standard that you would see in secular circles as well. Not just stuff that looks 'churchy.'"*

Further, he explains how the donors and beneficiaries are similar demographically but are differentiated primarily based on the psychographics of the population. That means the differentiation is mostly related to the people's perception of the ministry and its values rather than markers like their financial wealth (which would be more typical in relief work, for example),

> *"R3: The two [donors and beneficiaries] kind of become the same, because a lot our donors have been benefited by the ministry […] Like, for example, with the [marketing campaign for the online training program]... A lot of those people were onboarded as users, beneficiaries, so to speak. But at the end of that, we said, 'Hey, if you've appreciated this, and it's been a blessing to you, you can donate.' And so they became donors.*
>
> *"And we found that there's a reciprocal relationship there between beneficiaries and donors, and that one of the biggest, most effective steps, for someone to transition, from just someone who follows the ministry to […] a customer of the ministry, to someone who donates and expects nothing in return... Is that they've been blessed by it. So, a lot of our donors are beneficiaries. I would say, almost all of our donors are beneficiaries. I'm sure that we have some that [aren't]... I don't know what their motivation would be, but maybe they're supposed to, or family did, or who knows what, right? But the majority have been beneficiaries."*

Compared to R3, the co-founder, R1, has a different take on who their target audience is,

> *"R1: Our target audience […] is, the Western young adult. […] But I can be more specific in saying that we are aiming for the Western semi-secular young adult. Now, here's where it's nuanced. You might say at that point, well, aren't you also talking to believers, to Christians, to people who are not secular? Yes. But only secondarily. We're tailoring our language and our ethos for the Western unbeliever young adult. And then we believe that tailoring our language and our ethos for that demographic is also reaching the larger demographic of young adults who are believers, but need to hear their faith contextualized within the secular framework. […] You need to speak the Western young adult, secular orientation, if you want the largest possible audience. […] [T]hat's the philosophy that drives the audience that I'm targeting."*

However, R3 does not consider the *"western young semi-secular adult"* the target audience, even though he thinks they can benefit from their resources. He says, *"That could be people who aren't in the church at all, though they're not our target audience... Our target audience is those that are outward facing from the church […]."*

When asked if they use personas for their target audience(s), R2 says they have discussed it, and continues, *"it would probably be good if we did that [laughs]."* R3 expands,

> *"R3: We've done that, but because we haven't built out a lot of different ad campaigns... We'll generally just run one broad campaign, so I don't know how effective the personas that we've tried to create and develop and speak to have been."*

When asked if there is there a difference between the current audience and the ideal (target) audience, they answer,

> *"R2: That's tricky, because, like you want everybody to hear the gospel, but then like, it's not totally the way marketing works. Like, if you aim for everybody then you don't really get anybody, but if you aim for a certain person […] then you can do that really, really well. So that's been a struggle for me, I mean not just for me but for [R3] too, to know how we should approach that."*

> *"R1: [Our audience has historically been] [b]elievers. People who already believe in Jesus and have some kind of biblical literacy. The Bible matters to them. They think, 'Oh, the Bible is the word of God.' Well, we're trying to talk to people who don't believe that. That's not an assumption for them […] They're not hostile. They're just ignorant. […] The Bible is not an assumption for them. […] So, you can't just stand up with a Bible in your hand as an authority figure with a pulpit and reach those people and say, 'The Bible says, the Bible says, the Bible says.' They're like, 'Well, who cares what the Bible says? Shakespeare says. Leo Tolstoy says. Who cares?'"*

Here, R1 indicates that their historical audience is believers, but their ideal audience is unbelievers who are not hostile toward exploring the concept of God. Because NPO1's historical audience has primarily come from the Adventist church, I ask if there has been a shift taking place,

> *"R1: For some people in our organization. I've always been aiming for that audience because that's who I am. I was not raised a believer. I was not raised a Christian. I wasn't raised with the Bible. So you could say that evangelistically, I'm aiming for who I used to be as a secular post-modern young person in the world who doesn't know whether God exists or not, who doesn't know what the Bible is. I'm aiming for who I used to be."*

Lastly, in relation to volunteers as a target audience, these are not specifically targeted through NPO1's social media marketing. Because social media is "a very public platform," as R3 puts it, it is not used much for fundraising and neither for recruiting of volunteers. As most of the suitable volunteers would have attended their training program in-person or online, these are instead reached through email or other forms of communication as they are already a part of NPO1's network. Still, many of them continue to engage with NPO1's social media content, but more as advocates than as the primary target audience.

Message and Creativity

In response to the question regarding what role they want NPO1 and its related brands to have to their target audience(s), R1 seeks to invite the audience to be a part of a larger story. He says,

> *"R1: I want it to have a role that introduces unbelievers to the idea that God is more beautiful than they have yet realized or encountered. So if they find themselves pushing away from religion because it makes God ugly, I'm essentially trying to say, 'Hey, what would you think if God was better than all of that? What would you think of God was more beautiful than what you're pushing back on—what you're resistant to? You're resisting something that I would affirm you in resisting. You should reject that ugly picture of God in favor of a more beautiful... But what if God is more beautiful than what you're rejecting?' So the purpose of [NPO1] is to introduce people to a vision or a picture of the character of God that would cause them to reconsider the possibility that God is better than they have been taught or they have imagined, or that they have encountered."*

R3 shows his awareness of the importance of consistency in the message and brand positioning. He has heard that the ministry holds a relevant role in the audience(s) lives, and he highlights some of the elements which contribute to this, *"R3: I think the consistent thing that we've heard is relevance of the ministry. So we try, in everything from the design to the voice and tone of our copywriting, to speak a message that people who aren't necessarily committed Adventists would find relevant to themselves and to their worldview. […] We just try to be relevant. And that means more than just design, but that obviously means the words that we use, how we write, our theological content, how our videos are produced... We try to maintain some consistency across the board there."*

R2 explains NPO1's role which they seek to establish in the minds of their target audience(s) on social media,

"R2: [T]he idea is then to build relationships with our audience […] [T]he relationship that we establish with our audience is that they see us as an authority source on […] that topic, and they come to trust what we say. And then when we feel like we have something we want to offer them, […] then there's already a relationship there and [that] makes it easier to sell it to them. [laughs] But to actually, I mean, in a religious context, it's cool to actually be a blessing to and be able […] to positively impact someone's life through social media."

On NPO1's personality and character traits, R1 mentions characteristics that invoke each of the major dimensions on the Brand Personality Scale for Non-Profits by Voeth & Herbst (2008). He says,

"R1: I would say that the attributes that I would aspire to for it, not necessarily that are fully developed, but that I would aspire to for it would be empathetic, charismatic, generous, free spirited, intelligent, and articulate.

Int: Which ones do you feel like is currently lacking the most out of those?

R1: Probably where we need to grow the most is in the area of articulation. We need to grow in our linguistic approach so that people don't feel put off or threatened by strongly religious language that would make them feel like they've stepped into a room that they don't belong in. We're pretty good at it. We're getting better at it, but you know, we're trying, we're growing."

When describing the distinct personality and character traits of NPO1 and the training ministry, R2 says that they are both *"really passionate about keeping the gospel and Jesus at the center of everything."* She says neither of them are afraid to use humor, but that NPO1 is more professional while the training ministry is more casual. She uses their clothing as imagery to convey this when she says, *"[NPO1] is always well dressed. [laughs] and [the training ministry] is getting there."* To determine whether these characteristics are a part of their conscious message and brand positioning, I asked whether they use the concept of brand personality in their SMM. She was unfamiliar with the term, but says, *"R2: Yeah. [I]n* *the characteristics and personality traits there's that... Um... vibe of... […] being humble, but a humble authoritative source."*

Media Strategy

Paid, Earned and Owned Media

Most of NPO1's social media marketing strategy centers around owned and earned media. Having noticed this in the Facebook and Instagram analytics, I asked about paid advertisement.

> *"R3: Hm! We've struggled with paid advertising. Largely because... Until we had [the training ministry online], we didn't really have anything to measure conversion with. Most of our [communication regarding] events […] were going to in-house people. And so there wasn't a big need to promote that on social media. We didn't do online registration for watching it live online, so there wasn't a conversion metric to measure, whether or not... 'Ok, we ran this ad to these, did these people register?' There's no way to really measure the conversion. We started doing some paid advertising with [the online training program], and for [training ministry] intensives that we've run. And we've met with moderate success there, but the last paid campaign we ran was for the [product marketing campaign]. Out of the [incredibly high number of] people that signed up […], 99.9% of them came from organic leads. We paid, I want to say, $500 or $1000 in marketing, and we got like, 200 people back. So it wasn't even great. And we could've built a better campaign and you could say, maybe it was eclipsed, or maybe those... I don't know. […]*
>
> *"I've not had the time to really build the infrastructure to really know whether or not we're gaining our money's worth. And then […] I have friends who have built multi-million-dollar marketing advertising networks on social media and have paid millions of dollars, hundreds of thousands of dollars on ad campaigns, and then it just goes away overnight [because Facebook changed an algorithm]. So I've been a little hesitant to invest money into social media because I don't want to become dependent or reliant on it. Though I'm not opposed to it. If we had the infrastructure and could say, 'Oh yeah, this is paying itself off,' I think that […] we would be open to using it more, but we would probably need somebody to be able to create those ads, because none of us have the capacity to be able to do that."*

Hesitancy to lean heavily into the advertising opportunities on social media platforms is informed by the experience of personal friends and also by current discussions that are going on both politically and between large companies such as Apple and Facebook (Wagner & Gurman, 2021). There is still the possibility of using it more, but it would have to be part of a strategy that is measurable and shows a clear return on investment. The infrastructure would also have to be in place.

The educational, learning-environment from the training ministry seems to provide NPO1 with a large enough amount of earned media to make it easier to not prioritize paid media. Previous attendees and volunteers become advocates and engage with their marketing (social media and otherwise) as they have already built a relationship with the brand and its instructors through their products. This might explain why NPO1 feel little need to invest much in paid ads on social media and instead relies on owned and earned media.

Value of Social Media Compared to Other Marketing Efforts

To determine how much the organization priorities social media marketing over their other marketing efforts, I asked the informants how they would rate it on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being not important and 5 being very important. R1 says, *"Five."* I follow up on how long it has been a five, and he expounds,

> *"R1: Oh, it's probably been a five for the last, like five to six years. It's ramped up. […] Not just for [NPO1], but social media... I mean, you could ask the same question to the whole world. How long has social media been a five? And I think everybody would say about the last five to seven years, because it has become an omnipresent medium that nobody who's doing anything significant can ignore.*
>
> *"There's no way that you can ignore social media and really be on anybody's radar anymore. You're either using social media or you are vanishing. Those are your options. And the church doesn't understand this. The [Adventist] denomination, I mean."*

He then states his opinion on the future importance of social media,

> *"R1: […] I will tell you a secret. You may know this, so it's not a secret. Um, even mainstream television is passing away. In five to ten years, there will be no such thing as television networks. They won't exist anymore. The ONLY thing right now that matters is staying in step with social media. The only thing. If you're a communicator, the only thing that matters is that you keep step with the trajectory of social media, because all other mediums of communication are, are becoming obsolete. […]"*

The other informants respond similarly on the importance of social media, saying,

> *"R2: Since COVID, probably like a 5, especially because [our main speakers]... None of them were going out and doing speaking their speaking events. It was all cancelled. So, definitely with COVID it's been probably like a 5. And I think we saw that specifically with [a marketing campaign]..."*

> *"R3: I think it's pretty high, I'd say. That's probably the source of a lot of our growth. A lot of that has probably been through social media. Yeah. In part because that's where we focus our attention, and I think in part because that's just where people are right now. […]"*

Prioritization of Social Media Platforms

In regard to which social media platforms they prioritize, R2 specifies Instagram as their main focus. Facebook and Twitter are regularly updated, but there is not as much engagement with comments unless they ask specific questions. She says,

> *"R2: I wish we would pick one. [laughs] […] Facebook and Instagram. Yeah, those two. […] If I had to pick between one... Probably Instagram, just because that's the one where I actually focus on audience engagement. […] Just because right now we don't have the capacity. I don't have the capacity to maintain, answering comments on Facebook as well as Instagram or Twitter."*

The speaker/director is active on his own accounts on Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook, and these are strictly for public communication. *"R1: I use [social media] as a marketing mechanism. […] I don't have any 'personal' social media accounts."*

Monitoring and Evaluating

This section functions as a continuation of the section on research capabilities as a part of a nonprofit's brand infrastructure. As mentioned, NPO1 learns actively through their listening systems, meetings and continually striving to create systems that provide better understanding of the data.

By being actively involved in the content creation and communication process, R2 as the social media manager, is developing an understanding of how the target audience(s) are responding to the various brands and content. She evaluates and develops these impressions based on amount and types of views, likes, reposts, and comments etc. as well as her own intuition from using social media. Additionally, through effective internal communications, she receives input and advice from others who work in different parts of the organization.

R3 is constantly learning about new ways to monitor and evaluate their marketing. He reads up on and implements tracking codes and other systems to improve their efficiency. Explaining how he settles on the best approach for marketing, he says,

> *"R3: […] I'm also really driven by data. I have a very analytical mind, […] so I'm constantly just searching for more accurate data, more accurate ways of measuring what's happening with our audience, so that we can make intelligent decisions that are based on real data, and not just ideas, whims, and what we're feeling because we had pizza late last night before we went to sleep or something."*

In seeking to monitor and evaluate the results, it can be a temptation for some to micro-manage fellow employees. R3 warns against this, and explains his approach,

> *"R3: And at the end of the day, there is no one size fits all. We do establish and try to follow best practices, but that's more just so we can have consistency across the board for multiple people doing the job, but I try to give people liberty. You know, [R2]'s like, 'Hey, should I post this? Or should I say it this way?' And unless I see a clear benefit or a reason not to say something, I'll just say, 'Yeah, try either one or both and see which one performs better.' And I try to inspire her to look into the data as well to see what's working, what's not, what's speaking to our audience. Because I think when she understands that, she'll write content that's more relevant to our audience, rather than just saying, 'Well, this is what we write, and this is the best practice, and just do what you're told to do.'"*

He also mentions how it can be beneficial to have access to what feels like limitless amounts of data, but also sees the dangers of this, unless there is a solid system and necessary resources in place to understand and make use of it,

> *"R3: [O]ne of the challenges that we've encountered with this whole thing [marketing and fundraising plan] is just drowning in data. And that is that you can get so much data that, yes, it's all useful, if you have a team to analyze and to break the data down and to study it. But without the time to really understand the data, too much data can just become noise and can actually make you less effective at achieving goals. And because you're spending time collecting data and trying to analyze pieces of data but not getting the full picture […] it can become […] self-defeating, or counterproductive, […] capturing too much data and trying to measure everything, you know."*

R1 and the other main speaker both monitor and evaluate their marketing efforts, but more through talking with their audience(s) and by immersing themselves by using their personal accounts on social media as a listening/feedback system. They also engage with some of the comments and messages on their accounts as well as other users' content.

4.3.2 NPO2 and Marketing Communications Plan

Situation Analysis

On whom their competition is on social media, NPO2's speaker/director, R4, answers, *"I don't know. I don't think we have any competition. [laughs] I don't know."* He then continues detailing a couple of tools used to increase the likelihood of someone clicking on a video, before he rounds off by saying, *"That is the extent of my understanding when it comes to competition. It's that there are other people who are putting out similar content, or at least similar ideas. I don't know who they are."*

His wife then adds, *"I don't think that [R4] and I have viewed any other ministry as competition..."* R4 explains, *"I never saw it as competition anyway because we're such a small entity [...]. If there's another Seventh-day Adventist doing the work, I mean, go for it."* R5 then summarizes why they are wary of competition,

> *"R5: There shouldn't be a reason for us competing because we all have the same goal. We all want to go home. We're all working together to spread the gospel and to help people realize that your life will be so much more abundant if you have Jesus in it, and if you have that relationship. That's the aim, you know. So, since [R4] and I have come, and that's another thing that's changed. Not just the format and that there's more of an online presence now, but we are creating partnerships."*

From these answers it is clear that their understanding of competition involves a negative attitude and warring against, rather than simply a race for scarce resources, such as the attention of social media users. I attempted to clarify this and brought up the similarity of their brand name to another larger ministry which could be reducing NPO2's online and visibility. In answer to this, they provided an example of how both of their TV programs were on the same TV channel, and the larger ministry's program was supposed to go on air, but the TV channel ran NPO2's content instead, by mistake. R4 and R5 then say,

> *"R4: [I]f someone on that level who is receiving money from us and from them confuses our program with their program, then going online, definitely people are going to... I mean, I had no idea the difference between [the larger namesake ministry] and [NPO2] until I started working here. And why would I know? If I don't work here, I wouldn't know. So, our intention has been [to emphasize the uniqueness of us and our content] as much as we can within all of our programs.*

R5: Having said that with the competition you're referring to, Stein. If someone types in [the general brand name online] and they don't [write NPO2's brand name exactly], they will be redirected straight to [the other ministry]. Like, we won't feature […].”

This is a significant issue for the brand recognition among the target audience(s) when they are so easily confused with someone else within the same general niche. The business manager points out the value of figuring out what you can do well and seeing if there is a niche market for that in order to avoid unnecessary competition,

“R7: But you have to be mindful that, what I've always believed is, we're a small media organization within our church. There's a ton of other organizations that are bigger, have been around longer, and everybody kind of has a little niche that they pick, right? So, being smaller to me, it makes sense not to try to compete or do a similar product to what the others are already doing, unless we can do it better.”

However, when the brand recognition is so easily confused with another, larger ministry, it becomes very difficult to grow, in particular online where geographical borders are less important. It does not seem like NPO2 recognizes the potential downsides to this, even though there are certainly potential benefits as well, especially, as R7 says, *“I think it's a benefit. It's a benefit in that they're doing a lot of great things. It's a benefit so far as, as long as they keep doing the things that they're doing and there's no controversy with them.”*

Fascinatingly, while talking about the ideal audience with R6, he says, *“it's a tough one, man, because we're competing with Hollywood. Like, who's going to watch a sermon when - you know what I mean? So, it's hard to get those kinds of people.”* After hearing him point out Hollywood as a competition, I decided to ask what his further thoughts were on competition,

“R6: Competition. Yeah, I mean... Competition. I don't like that name. But, I suppose it is if we're competing with trying to get people to watch us...

Int: Well, you just used it for Hollywood, so I thought… [laughing]

R6: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. No, it's true! So I brought that up, eh? Competition. Um, because it's not. We're not competing... Are we competing? I'm just thinking about this, thinking out loud here. Are we competing to get - I guess we are, we are competing with other broadcasts, we're competing - there's many, many channels on a TV, right? And, so, and there's many things people can watch on YouTube. So I guess... I guess it is competing with those other channels. Uh, so, yeah, so, the original question?

Int: Who's your competition?

> *R6: Yeah, I guess it would be... Just... All the other things out there, all the other content, all the other channels... Um, you know... Anyone that's putting out content, I suppose. [...] So I think it makes it challenging for us, because our product is not anything like [Hollywood's], and that's what most people are used to watching. The stuff that grabs the senses, and, you know, and so, that's what makes it hard for us to be interesting and people want to watch us, because they're used to fast-paced action movie, shoot 'em up, right, and then it's like 2 people or 4 people talking in a studio, it's, it's [laughs] very different, right, than Hollywood, so yeah."*

When pushing for specifics regarding their competition, they were able to provide some fairly insightful answers, but it is worth noting that very few of these answers came easily for the informants. Most of them are reluctant to talk or think about competition and prefer focusing on their own content creation process and opportunities for partnerships with other ministries.

Marketing Objectives

NPO2's marketing objectives are along the same lines as the vision and mission statements detailed under their brand infrastructure. There are certain big-picture ideas and visions, with a definite desire to grow, but the objectives are not clearly stated according to the SMART acronym. We see this in their answer about their goals or long-term strategic outcomes through social media,

> *"R4: That's a good question. Definitely to increase viewership. A wider audience. Specifics on that... If we could grow that audience by 100% per year, that'd be great, and I don't think it's impossible, I just think that we don't know how to do that.*
>
> *R5: We don't have the resources.*
>
> *R4: If we grew by 15% that'd be great, too. Like, how to do that is..."*

On NPO2's reason for being on social media, R6 says, "*Grow the audience, make a difference in people's lives, you know."* R7 echoes the same sentiment when he says that the long-term goal of their social media marketing is to use it as, *"Just a different venue to reach a different demographic."*

Communication Strategy

Audience Strategy

Regarding whom their *current* audience is, R4 and R5 say,

> *"R4: Oh, who's our audience. Ok. I think our audience would go back to those who are in that 35-65+ category, majority women, and that tends to be our support base.*
>
> *R5: Our stakeholders and our older donors that have been donating to the ministry for years, some of them don't even... I mean, we're talking about people who are in their 70s, 80s and 90s. Like, they don't have a computer, they don't do the internet, they don't do online. So, they are the ones that are supporting because of [national TV channel]."*

When inquiring about which audience R4 has in mind when he creates content for videos and magazine articles, he says, *"Adventists. And mostly people with children. But not only—exclusively."*

R6 explains who the majority of their online audience is and has some idea of why that might be. He also wants to reach different demographics,

> *"R6: Who's watching now is old ladies. [laughs] It's - the stats are pretty clear. […] Facebook's become an older audience, right. So, our Facebook stats - I haven't really gone into the stats and stuff. But I'm just going to go to the ad center on Facebook. […] it shows like who's watching and stuff, and it's like, basically from [age] 40 up to 80 and females are like 72% of it. So, that's what I get from Facebook. […] It seems to me like overall it's an older audience. That's because the style [NPO2] was done in! For decades! What [R4]'s doing now is - we're totally changing it up. I don't know if you ever watched [NPO2] before and seen it now. We are going with documentaries, and contemporary stories and young people and um, you know, so, we're trying to get that age level lower. So, in the future, we'd like to see more variety. We'd like to see men watching it more, we'd like to see younger people watching it."*

When asking R6 about the *ideal* audience, he stops for a few seconds, then says,

> *"R6: We haven't really talked about this. We haven't sat down and said, 'Who do we want to reach and who are we targeting?' Right now we're just doing our thing. Casting our net and hoping to catch people."*

NPO2 inherited an audience from the previous employees, but R7 still thinks they are currently targeting the same audience, even though it might be unintentional,

> *"R7: Whether that's intentional on the content that is produced, I don't know that [R4] has intentionally targeted that audience, but it's hard to not do that when his age is already... He's in his 50's. And he's not a teenager or younger or millennial or a college student. So obviously whatever he's thinking, his life experiences and so on are going to dictate what content is being produced […]*

"And the same with [R6]. [R6]'s a little bit older, so the content that is being created, the script, and then the video production is coming from an older person. So the people that are watching, the majority of the audience is going to be an older, similar to who they are... Unless we were intentionally saying, you know, we're going to make the videos like the popular YouTubers are doing. […] unless you are purposefully saying, 'OK, I'm going to write to a younger audience. I'm going to write to, very specific, between the ages of 25-35 and I'm going to do some research on that demographic... […] He's writing from his life experiences and where he's at in life. So, naturally, that's going to speak to a certain audience. So there isn't any specific targeted..."

On whom their ideal audience might be, R4 identifies them according to their psychographics and explains how he has been trying to appeal to them,

"R4: I think ideally, we'd like to reach unreached people, but we're really talking to people who kind of understand the language. That's why I try to simplify it to a level that is not 'church talk.' So, when we put in a Bible verse, it's very sparingly and few, and I try to eliminate church language as much as possible. So, any church language that I use, I try to explain it as I use it. So, yeah, is [our current audience] the ideal audience? No. But I don't know. It might be the ideal audience, but I don't know that it is."

R4 proceeds to tell a story about the difficulty of determining the psychographics of the young people in the church, whether or not they are "reached" or "unreached" and how to capture their attention for the sake of the message, and he concludes,

"R4: So, to answer your question then, we're not reaching an ideal audience. Because we're not reaching the unreached. Because we're not addressing their need. We don't have the right hook for that group. And it might be our age. That might be a factor in it. And how to speak that language. So, that's something I definitely wrestle with."

They have a desire to reach everyone, because they consider the message as being something everyone needs. However, they struggle to figure out how to make "everyone" realize this,

"R4: When we put [content] on Instagram, we try to make something that is for everybody, right? So it's a simple message […] I mean, if you look at the one we just did... It was about loneliness. […] I think that's the greatest need of everyone, but how to market that... Maybe I'm not doing that the right way. So, I'm certainly open to suggestions of how to do that."

In answering another question, he expands on the ideal reach and how it is driven by the vision of the cause,

> *"R4: Yeah, I mean, I pray daily that the Lord will use my life to reach a million people. Right? That a million souls will be in His kingdom because of God's influence in my life. And that He won't only do that for me, but He'll do that for my wife, for my children, for you, Stein [...] I can touch their lives, that they will multiply through them, too. That they themselves will be the conduit for another million souls. So, for me, how many? Everyone! Right? You can't leave anyone out, because I don't think Jesus will be happy with anyone being lost. I know He'll be weeping at the end. Like, how do you wipe away His tears? He didn't create a place for anyone that will be left unoccupied."*

This answer highlights the difficulty for evangelistically minded nonprofits in narrowing down their audience and setting up measurable and time-specific objectives. When the vision is so grand, it can be difficult to answer the question, "Who should we target?" because this leads to conflicting thoughts, such as, "How can we possibly leave out anyone? If we target some, aren't we leaving out others? How do we properly measure a 'reached soul'?"

Without discussing this with the rest of the team, R6 has similar thoughts to R4 on reaching unbelievers,

> *"R6: [...] so here's something I'm leaving out, that's so crucial is, you know: the unchurched. That's who we should be reaching and trying to reach, but we're not. Our style is so Adventist."*

Still, R7 understands the importance of specifying the target audience and seeing what you can provide that is unique rather than trying to be everything for everyone,

> *"R7: [...] we all like to, especially with religious organizations, say, 'Everybody is!' Right? But [...] it makes sense not to try to compete or do a similar product to what the others are already doing, unless we can do it better. [...] If you cast your net too wide, you're going to catch less, versus just focusing on an audience, right, as narrow as you can make it without being too restrictive. Because you could say, women between the ages of 30 and 35 and there goes the other... But I think there's still room to narrow it down and see who's responding to our videos. And if you already have an audience there, [...] then we need to figure out whether we want to concentrate on that, and we already have a natural appeal to that, and just grow that, or maybe spread it a little bit [...]"*

When discussing the differences between their beneficiaries and donors, there seemed to be a consensus that these overlap significantly, which the informants find less than ideal.

It is evident that NPO2's audience strategy is still unsettled. They mostly run with the audience they have inherited and naturally cater to, rather than defining exactly who they want to reach.

Message and Creativity

NPO2's new leadership has been focusing on creating content that appeals to the patriotic feelings of the population in line with the unique aspects of their brand name. The speaker/director combines the Christian message with inspiring interviews and stories about national heroes and special events. This is a new development since the new speaker/director arrived. He explains the emphasis on storytelling,

> *"R4: So, the messages, for example, are about how God has changed my life, and using that as a starting place. And the reason for that is Jesus first of all told stories, so telling stories seems to be an easy way of breaking down barriers and getting people to follow what you're saying. And then using vulnerability in being able to vulnerably share, so then authenticity comes across, and that, I think, breaks down barriers of age, so that people can read it and say, 'Ah, I get that.' So, telling story is very important."*

However, as already noted, there is a lack of audience strategy (as well as brand infrastructure). This directly influences the brand positioning, increasing the likelihood of a mismatch between the message and the audience. This, in turn, may lead to a lack of clarity for the receiving audience. R6 explains how there has been a change in the way they present their message, but it is slow and might lack direction,

> *"R6: Like, I come from a church that's very community oriented the last 10 years […] And we're in a very secular – [North American city]. So, I come from that. And then I come in here, and I just see how quite Adventist we are presenting. And I think, [R4]'s doing a good job at doing the ch[ange] […] It's going to be a slow change. You can't just, you know, change directions. We've done quite a bit of that with the format. Just with documentary style instead of all these sermons. There might've been 7-8 sermons over the 32-34 episodes. It's more now, 'How is God working in your life?' And I think that's what will reach more people that are unchurched, are testimony and story and people's lives changed than just preaching an evangelistic series, you know. So, yeah. We're changing things here."*

When asked to describe the brand with personality and character traits, R4 and R5 say, *"The heart of a teacher. I think that's who we are."* They also mention characteristics such as approachable, team player, facilitator, personal, directional, understanding, understandable, compassionate, clear communication, and family-person. R4 summarizes,

> *"I think we connect with those who are in need, so if you came there in turmoil, you would have hope. […] The main thing that I've been told is, 'Your messages are clear and easy to follow. It's not complex.'"*

When R6 thinks aloud in the interview, he describes the brand personality of NPO2 in this way,

> *"R6: I would hope it would be creative. Creative and outspoken… Informative… Inspirational kind of a person, you know. Yeah, informative, learning new things, not being shy, being extroverted... […] When it comes to the emotional side... caring, loving, sincere, considerate - this is the kind of thing, because with [R4] and [R5], they're not just speakers giving a message. When you see them meeting with people, they're so people-oriented, so I guess I covered that with the extroverted. So, they, like, when we get prayer-requests, often they'll call those people and say, 'Hey, we're praying for you' and have a half hour conversation. Do they have the time for that? No. But they make it, because this is not just a TV show. This is a ministry. And so, I believe this organization is loving and caring and sincere and not just, not just looking to promote self. This is about others. This is ministry this! Isn't just a TV show. This is ministry! This is helping other people. That's what I see in [R4] and [R5]. Willing to take time to make a difference in people's lives."*

These self-reported personality and character traits align well with the descriptors for *"social competence and trust"* but are somewhat lacking in *"emotion and assertiveness"* as well as *"sophistication"* on the *"Brand Personality Scale for the Non-profit Sector"* (Voeth & Herbst, 2008, p. 91).

Media Strategy

Since the beginning of the ministry, NPO2 has had to purchase airtime from TV channels to get their content out to the masses. The schedule and pricing for most of the programs that go live on TV are taken care of by a media agent who lives on the opposite side of the country, and this process is outside of their control. This pattern of relying on paid media carries over to social media marketing. The language used throughout the interviews with NPO2 consistently refers to marketing activities as "promotions" and "advertising" even though they have a website and accounts on several different social media platforms.

While checking out some of NPO1's content on social media recently, R7 saw that the speaker was talking about how his Facebook account had been taken down. He points out that the unpredictability of social media platforms moderating guidelines is a possible threat to their own future marketing operations. He says, *“R7: […] all it takes is Facebook seeing something that you posted that they don't agree with and saying, ‘There goes your channel, we're blocking you.’ And then... I don't know if you've been following [NPO1’s speaker]. And he […] kept on mentioning in several of his [Instagram and YouTube] uploads […] how he had gotten banned from Facebook. He didn't understand why. He reached out to them, they told [him] they had taken his account off, and they said they were going to permanently delete it, and he was saying, like, ‘I didn't post anything... There must be a mis[understanding]... Something [must’ve] happened, because I rarely use it, but I've been trying to reach them, and I haven't been able to get to them.’*

“So, here's somebody that could be us, that did nothing wrong, absolutely nothing wrong. Might've been a mistake. Let's say he has 20 000 followers on Facebook. And then they just go and delete it, and they figure out, ‘Oh, yeah. That was a mistake. OK, we can't give you back those 20 000, so you've got to start from scratch.’ So, that could happen […] because of something that you did wrong, or whether something that accidentally got labelled wrong... Somebody that doesn't like you could 've just reported you and said, ‘That guy is just spewing hate’ or whatever. And the algorithm that Facebook has says, ‘OK, we received a complaint, and the system automatically puts it to the next step or they're gonna block that person […]. So, that's why it's important to have those contacts in their own database if something like that was to happen. You'd still have a way of reaching them.”

Even though R7 recognizes the unpredictability of social media platforms’ moderating behavior, he still believes paid media is a worthwhile approach, as long as you can get a hold of the audience’s contact info (e.g., email address).

Value of Social Media Compared to Other Marketing Efforts

The perceived value of social media marketing is high across the organization. When asked about how they would rate the importance of social media marketing compared to other marketing efforts on a scale from 1 to 5 (1 = not important, 5 = very important), R4 and R5 say,

“R4: I would say it's very important, but we're not giving it the attention that it should receive. Because, this exercise alone, just talking to you, is making me aware of the fact that our emphasis has been on producing content and not marketing.

R5: Yeah, and it's good content, but it's just not getting out there.

Int: So, you'd say maybe that you want it to be a 5? In the future?

R4: Correct. That is the importance of it. We see it as a valuable tool, but we're not using it the way we should.”

Time is a scarce resource in the organization because they just have a few full-time employees. R5 explains how she sometimes gets a letter or a phone call and invests a lot of time into reaching out and ministering to individual people. She then ties this to her difficulties in prioritizing social media,

> *"R5: […] It's the same with this whole social media online concept. In order to do it well, it doesn't just take an hour. Even if I'm looking at Facebook or Instagram, more than an hour will go by. And I don't even realize that. That's why, like, there are some days here that I really can't afford to even put my phone on. And if I do have it on, it's on silent. It takes time to make connections and follow up."*

R6 details how they have improved their production and content creation skills since he arrived and how they have focused more on social media,

> *"R6: We're getting better at what we do, the quality of the productions are going up, financially, things are really looking up. So, things are on an upward trend. And then, I know you're dealing with social media. When I came, there was hardly anything happening. […] And, you know, a lot more improvement can be made, obviously. […] The social media has gotten a lot better. When I came here, they dropped the odd thing on Instagram and threw something up on Facebook, but there was nothing - there was no plan. Now we have a plan - somewhat of a plan, and I'm guessing you'll help us out, maybe suggest more of a plan."*

Prioritization of Social Media Platforms

On how NPO2 ended up prioritizing certain social media platforms, R6 describes it as if YouTube was the natural choice because they create video content for TV, and it was easy to upload videos to their channel. They also decided to paste the YouTube link on their Facebook accounts and create 2-minute videos for Instagram. R6 ranges the social media platforms in order of perceived importance for NPO2, *"YouTube, Facebook, podcast, Instagram."* He also says that if they hire someone as a social media manager, they might prioritize Instagram more. R7 believes that their primary focus is Facebook. He also mentions that they have an inactive Twitter account. R5 confirms this while saying that they do not have time for any other platforms,

> *"R5: But a lot of people are using TikTok to post their stuff, right? And I don't know. But there's no way we can add something else. Since we've come, we haven't even touched the Twitter account. I don't even know what's happening with Twitter."*

NPO2 has attempted to become active on social media, but they have only managed to do the bare minimum due to constraints on resources and strategy.

Monitoring and Evaluating

R4 and R6 try to look at the social media analytics from time to time, but they do not know how to interpret the data since the objectives are not specific enough to be measured and evaluated. They are also not trained to look for key performance indicators and turn these into actionable steps. The mystery of how certain things do well while others do not is puzzling to R4. He says, *"I don't really know how that is that people will all of a sudden... watch one video and it will just get a whole lot of attention. [laughs] Why is that?!"*

R6's wife (not employed by NPO2) looks at the social media activity and tries to get the informants to engage with the comments and messages. R5 is overwhelmed and very busy with other administrative and interpersonal tasks. She is overwhelmed by social media and does not try to use it much for work purposes. However, personally she is a more active user of social media than R4, and she uses it to stay connected to her family, though she does not post a lot. She uses it to listen to her own network, but this is not necessarily NPO2's target audience(s) (which are still unclear).

R7 knows that a systematic approach to measuring is necessary to be able to evaluate anything in such a way that it becomes helpful, but he does not have time and has not been in conversation with the team about this,

> *"R7: […] figuring out all those questions, the who, what, where, […] then it's the task of figuring out how to measure it and how to make the improvements on those. And yeah, the basics of social media targeting and analyzing it […] I've done a little bit of research, and it's like, 'OK, that makes sense. You don't look at those numbers, you look at these.' From there on, you can […] analyze a little bit […] and properly tweak your engagement to be more effective. […] We have enough both time and resources and money to get started, and then just continue. Because […] it's already growing. It's just taking that to the next level […]. It's constant improvement."*

As they do not have clearly defined marketing objectives in general or for social media in particular, there is a tendency to skim through the analytics without knowing exactly what they are looking at or for. Still, R7 seems capable of doing this, but he does not have the time to invest into it.

4.3.3 Marketing Communications Plan Comparison

MCP Elements	*NPO1*	*NPO2*
Situation Analysis	Yes, somewhat	Somewhat
Marketing Objectives	Yes, somewhat	No
Communication Strategy	Yes	Somewhat
- Audience Strategy	Yes, mostly	Somewhat
- Message and Creativity	Yes	Somewhat
- Media Strategy	Yes	Not much
Monitoring and Evaluating	Yes, growing	No
Overall MCP	**Strong**	**Weak, growing**

Table 4 - Marketing Communications Plan Comparison for NPO1 and NPO2

4.4 Findings in Light of the Holistic Framework

4.4.1 NPO1's SMM Positioning

SMM Scope

Informants from NPO1 see themselves as tending toward being defenders in general, though they know the value of collaborating and exploring. They do this to some extent on Instagram, but less so on other platforms,

> *R2: [We mostly c]ommunicate. […] We should collaborate more though. […] I guess when I think of communicate, we're mostly creating, like taking our content and putting it out there and speaking to people. […] There's not as much conversation […]. I wish I had the capacity to do more, listening to our audience, or like engaging with them in the comments on Twitter and Facebook. [On] Instagram there's a little bit more of a collaboration like connecting with the audience, or even sharing other ministries' stuff. […] when other people tag us in posts, I always try to reshare them, and tag them in it. That kind of thing. So ideally there'd be more collaboration though. […] It feels probably more like defending, especially with the mission statement like, 'We want to vindicate the beauty of God's character.'"*

R1 echoes these thoughts, while simultaneously showing that he is aware of the potential risks of collaboration in the current online environment,

> *"R1: We primarily communicate, but [...] we need to become more skilled at collaborating. It's challenging because there's a dimension of social media that is difficult to navigate because it has become an ideological battle ground. So, it's difficult to collaborate without finding yourself in the midst of some kind of argument somebody is having. So, it's challenging."*

The challenge of navigating opinions, discussions, and disagreements on social media, many of them politically motivated, is something that has been a point of contention for many more or less prominent figures (Peterson, 2021). This challenge is also heightened when social media platforms approach moderation of content in a way that is perceived as controversial (Bet-David, 2021).

SMM Culture

On whether or not the informants consider themselves and the organization risk-averse or risk-seeking, R1 says,

> *"R1: I'm more risk-taking but people I work with are more risk averse, so they're constantly warning me and trying to reign me in. And I'm constantly trying to obey their, you know, cautions."*

R3 has the opposite understanding of R1,

> *"R3: [R1] is a little more cautious, but I push him and encourage him, like, 'No, let's say it! We mean it. Let's not do something just for shock and attention, but if we mean it, then by all means let's say it.'"*

This difference in opinion illustrates a challenge that came up during the interviews as the informants tried to assess their willingness or averseness toward risk without a set of measurements or definitions. They also struggled to balance their personal attitude toward risk and the positioning of the overall organization. However, R2 provided some insights into the orientation of the organization on social media, showing how it depends on the organization's situation, audience, and resources,

> *"R2: [long pause] ... I don't know, I feel like risk is relative. [...] Because some ministries that maybe are more conservative religiously would think that some of the things we say are risky, but we try to be [...] responsible in that. But overall, there's more than one way to take risks. We're probably... probably not super risky... But I think that's partly because right now... I'm the one creating the bulk of the content, and it's hard to be risky when you're just trying to keep up [laughs]."*

The difficulty of knowing how risky something is, how it will come across to the different audiences of the nonprofit, and whether or not it is worth the "price" is something that frequently leads to conversations within the organization,

> *"R2: Maybe it's just a matter of being calculated with our risks? Cause there's been times where I like, I referenced [laughs] like, [a church-related controversy] in a caption, and [R3] was like, "Hey, I took that down" - or he didn't take it down, he just like, edited it. So, he took that part out just because he said people are going crazy. But there's been other times when I've referenced it in like, blog posts, and I've showed them to [the creative director] and he's like, "Yea, it's fine." So there's a desire to stir the pot, but... in helpful ways [laughs]. If it's an unnecessary risk […] why do that […]*
>
> *"Sometimes, you just have to pick your battles. I see that come up in our Instagram posts where I get people who are […] from both sides of the liberal and conservative spectrum who don't understand what you're saying. At least, I feel like I've seen that in the comments. Yeah. So, calculated risks."*

R3 details his approach to risk management on behalf of the organization,

> *"R3: Oh, with social media I'm not sure. I'm naturally myself risk-averse, so that, I'm sure, comes through in our social media approach, but we've taken some gambles sometimes, and I would say... It depends what you mean by 'risk-taking' and 'risk-averse'... [Content wise,] perhaps we're risk-takers, because we'll say what we believe, […] [I've learned] that even bad publicity is good publicity, and so I don't really care what the press is surrounding something. We'll say what we need to say, and even if it ruffles feathers, it's got people talking. It's good publicity. It works positively for us. That's how I see it. […] And my experience is that it's been positive. I can't think of any time when we've made a move on social media that was risky content-wise, that had […] a net negative impact [on us]. We've definitely lost donors over [specific church issue] and other stuff, you know, but I think on the whole, even though we did lose donors, we gained more donors and a larger following as a result that was a net positive."*

SMM Structure

When asked about the risk management as described under SMM Culture, the structure and governance elements were frequently incorporated into the answers. This indicates that there are effective internal communications concerning how the brand is perceived, and that these parts of the organization are tightly woven together.

When asked who has the primary responsibility to post and interact on social media, R2 simply answers, *"Me."* The co-founder explains the how they decide who to give this responsibility, *“R1: Well, we just, we just have super smart people that understand what we're trying to do. They understand the target audience. Because we've talked about it and we've reinforced it. […] So, people like [R3] and [the creative director] and [R2], they just know what they're doing. […] They're teaching me, you know, how best to utilize these social media channels of communication. How do we pick them? […] I have tried to educate, teach, and preach the theological “character of God”-orientation. That's the content and the substance of what we're about. Right? So I, I try to make sure that everybody that works for [NPO1] understands that's what we're about […]*

“[Those employees who are] active on those accounts… well, we're ideologically lined up. They believe what I believe. I believe what they believe. We've sufficiently communicated and cross pollinated [so] that we're a single organism. So I trust them.

“For example, we have language that we use at [NPO1]. Like, [R2] or [R3], they know how to write in my voice. That's the language we use. ‘How do we write in [R1]’s voice?’ They write in my voice, by which we mean, they understand the theology and the ethos and the approach. Right? So, [R2] can write things that are harmonious with what she knows I would agree with. In a tone that I would agree with. She knows how to do that. She's very good at it, in fact. Same with [R3]. They understand what we're trying to do. And I'm not imposing any of this on them. They just agree with it. They believe it. That's why I said we're like a single organism, in the sense that we're on the same page. I'm not forcing them and saying, ‘HEYY, I want you to do it this way!’ They just know how to do it, because they're of the same orientation and perspective.

Int: In one way it's more a network than a hierarchy?

R1: For sure. Absolutely. I don't dictate anything to them.”

R2 has picked up on R1’s perspective on structure, mentioning in a side-comment that, *“He's not a huge fan of hierarchy.”* A flatter, networks-based structure seems to work well for NPO1, and as long as the internal communication is clear and the trust is deep, they are able to move forward in harmony with the overall strategy. R2 gives her view of how she ended up with the primary responsibility of managing the social media channels,

“R2: I think I do a decent job at communication, and if you have to communicate regularly, and articulate stuff frequently, um, yeah, they trust me to do a good job with that.”

She also points out the difficulty of escaping hierarchy completely and how reality is more like a blend of hierarchy and networks, based on people’s availability, reliability, and skill,

> *"R2: [R1] doesn't have the time or capability to answer all the emails, so in that sense, maybe there's a hierarchy that way, but like... […] when you say, "How do you know, how does the organization decide who answers in communication?" It kind of sounds like, "Ok, who's the boss, and what are they looking for?" […] You can't totally escape hierarchy, I guess. But there's not a super formal process. Like sometimes [the administrator] will answer questions on our Instagram. Or [R3] will as well. But it's for the most part me. […] Yeah, they're more just looking for like, "Ok, who do we trust that can understand the gospel and what we're about, and then who can communicate it effectively?" Also, punctuation and mechanical writing skills, that's a thing."*

SMM Governance

In line with the previous comments about a general dislike of hierarchy and the importance of trust, cooperation, and like-mindedness, R1 answers the question of whether NPO1 is more of an autocracy or an anarchy in this way,

> *"R1: I would say it's an oligarchy. Yeah. It's a group that all understand the same vibe. So, they're not in anarchy against me or I against them. And there's no monarchy. I don't dictate anything. I just don't think that's a helpful way of being a human. So, it's more of an oligarchy. It's a team of people. And also, you're asking me about me, but the same is true with regards to [another NPO1 speaker]. We're on the same page […]"*

We can see from the informants' answers throughout the previous dimensions that several of the employees are involved in communicating through the official channels. I have also observed some of them using their own personal channels to voice their support for the cause and their products and resources.

Concerning community and moderation guidelines, R3 shares the process of mapping these out and finding a solution that works for their particular organization,

> *"R3: Because I did all of our social media for so many years, basically from the time that I hired on until [R2] took it over about a year and a half ago, I did all of our moderation, so during times when [certain articles] had some popularity, you get a lot of different feedback. So, I just created standards by which we could try to cultivate a positive, healthy online presence on our social media platforms. Just answering questions like, 'What's the purpose of our platform?' and 'At what point does your platform become someone else's platform depending on the content, whether it's comments or responses,' and 'How do you relate to that?'*

> *"It is our platform, it's our following... Is that the appropriate place for someone that disagrees with your article to write a counter-article? Or is it a place for questions? Is it a place for arguments, or is it a place for dialogue? What do those things look like, and how do you objectively moderate that so that everyone gets a fair shake, and you're not just approving comments of the people that agree with you, but you're also not giving a platform to people who... You know, people follow your platform not because they want to hear from your followers, but because they want to hear from you, you know? So, how do you maintain that balance? Yeah, so just community guidelines, moderation guidelines and what that looks like. As well as... On top of that, just... Unfortunately, Christian community isn't always healthy online. So, how do we model and preserve a safe and Christian environment for people to interact and connect with us?"*

R3 then shared his thoughts on the level of willingness to let social media users talk negatively about the organization,

> *"R3: I would say it depends on the tone... […] I think the main thing is that if people are genuine and respectful in their comments, even if it's negative. If it's in a dissenting voice, I actually... People say, 'Oh, you just delete the comments that disagree' but I actually would say that I lean the opposite. I want as much dissent as possible to be present, so that that isn't the tone, that we only have the people that agree with us. So, I'm probably a little bit more forgiving with negative comments than I should be, but... as long as they're respectful, and they rightly represent the staff, I'm fine with it."*

The co-founder, R1, opens up about his reactions to other social media users talking negatively about NPO1 on their own channels (NPO1's earned media),

> *"R1: If somebody made a parody account […] and they were trying to be funny, I would just ignore it. It wouldn't trouble me at all. If somebody became malicious and was saying, 'Yeah, those people over at [NPO1], they believe A, B, and C,' and it's not true, I would put forth an effort to inform them and correct it."*

And finally, R1's approach to moderating the comment sections on their own channels is highly consistent with R3's answer and also with the primary target audience covered earlier for NPO1,

> *"R1: There are things that we do delete that I'm in favor of deleting. Because our audience is evangelistic… On some of our social media accounts you'll have an Adventist start going all vertical with Adventism, in a way that is going to cause the audience we're aiming for to say, 'Oh, what is this?!' […] Cause that has the potential to repel the audience we're aiming for. […] But you have somebody who's not an Adventist... An atheist, for example, [who] is offering some kind of critique or challenge... I would leave that."*

4.4.2 NPO2's SMM Positioning

SMM Scope

The informants from NPO2 strictly communicate in their social media marketing. After explaining this dimension to them, they answer,

> *"R4: We post it and we leave it. That's communicating.*
>
> *R5: We're not collaborating. So, we're defending... We're just putting out our product. We're not exploring other avenues or looking at different things. We're just working with what we have right now. We're not exploring. [...] No collaboration. No exploration."*

R4 reveals his interest in learning more about SMM while simultaneously showing only a surface understanding of the possibilities that exist when he asks, *"But how would you collaborate with someone else online?"*

When elaborating on the purpose of social media marketing for NPO2, R7 says,

> *"R7: I would say keeping up with content delivery and building a community of a... Community is the wrong word. Like, expanding our reach, so... of people that wouldn't know of us..."*

This shows that NPO2's main strategy is to use social media in a similar way as they use traditional media to reach people, but not as a collaborative and community-building tool.

SMM Culture

Similarly to NPO1, the informants from NPO2 struggle to define the concept of risk and how it manifests in the organization's social media activities. However, they point out a willingness to try new things in order to continually learn. R4 says, *"I mean, we're trying new stuff. We don't know how it works all the time. So, it's an education that we're definitely needing."* He then explains how he is not particularly concerned about reactions from the audience with regards to taking risks with different approaches to SMM (e.g., choice of platform, types of media). However, presentation wise and content wise, they started creating content on recent and sensitive events, in particular a mass shooting. This was positively received, and they received a significant number of views, although they did pay to promote the post. R5 says,

> *"R5: And that's where [R6] was good when he first came [...] and started with the social media. He was like, when that shooting happened [...], 'OK, you guys need to do something about that.' After that it was Easter that was coming up. 'OK, you need to create an Easter message.' 'You need to create one for [a holiday], for Mother's Day, for Father's Day, like... We need to keep on top of current things.'"*

R4 describes the importance of maintaining control over NPO2's brand image online. However, R4 is not averse to all negative attention,

> *"R4: Sometimes I think it's a good thing to get attention. Even if it's negative attention. It's not the best thing but think about it. Like, any attention is good attention, especially for a bad kid. We're not completely averse to it, because it's gonna happen, but I don't think it's the best [...] You know, you want to maintain an image. Certainly. And I think that's part of being proud of what you do, and what you're standing for. [...]*

They are aware that they are speaking to a mostly conservative audience, but they also know that they cannot please all viewers,

> *"R5: [...] There was even criticism about me wearing sleeveless shirts. And not wearing a ring. We should be wearing rings because we're a married couple. There'd probably be a lot more if we did wear rings.*
>
> *R4: Comments? Yeah, I think that's an important part of it that we're aware of, that there is a conservative audience watching us."*

Furthermore, the informants explained how it is a significant part of their culture to invest a lot of time engaging with individuals who call in or send letters. However, this personal level of engagement has not been integrated into their SMM. R4 says*, "Oh, [engaging with stakeholders online is] important. But it does get overlooked, because of our resources. It's a time issue."*

SMM Structure

The social media responsibility was covered under NPO2's organizational overview. Each of the informants are involved in some way, but there is no clear structure for the social media management. Only the content creation process has a structure. Considering how well the current SMM structure fits with the organization's marketing strategy, R4 says,

> *"R4: It's not fitting in ideally, because we need to be more efficient. And more effective. We're efficient in getting the job done that we know we have to do, but we're not efficient in getting the job done that we know we need to do. It's not effective or efficient in doing that job."*

SMM Governance

The employees are for the most part not active on their own personal social media accounts, and they do not use them to promote the work of the nonprofit. On how NPO2 decides who should have the responsibility to communicate on the organization's social media platforms, R4 says,

> *"R4: Well, I make those decisions. [R6] will look at it, but he'll say, 'I don't have time to look at it and you have to take a look at it.' His wife will look at it because she has access to it and she's very, very interested in that. But any of the religious stuff, if someone has a spiritual question, she doesn't feel confident in responding to that. And she's also not being paid by us, so I don't think she feels like it's her job to do it, and so she doesn't respond. Sometimes she'll just give someone a thumbs up, or say 'Thank you for watching' or 'Thank you for your comment' or something like that. It's very neutral kind of stuff. But any of the real questions, I have to deal with those. Some of them drop through the cracks, though."*

R4 says he provides the employees with the freedom to reply to comments. However, he prefers to operate in a collaborative environment and stay in touch with what is going on. R4 says, *"[R6] tends to check in with me on most things. Just because we collaborate on almost anything."* NPO2 does not have any specific guidelines for how they should operate on social media and who has the responsibility to do what. There is also little comment moderation, which is partly due to the small number of comments.

4.4.3 Social Media Marketing Positioning Comparison

SMM dimensions	***NPO1***	***NPO2***
Scope (defenders-explorers)	Explorer, somewhat	Defender
Culture (conservatism-modernism)	Modernism, somewhat	Conservative
Structure (hierarchy-networks)	Networks, mostly	Hierarchy, somewhat
Governance (autocracy-anarchy)	"Oligarchy", somewhat	Anarchy, somewhat
Overall SMM Positioning	**Stakeholder-oriented (Somewhat)**	**Firm-oriented (Strongly)**

Table 5 - SMM Holistic Framework Comparison for NPO1 and NPO2

It is worth noting that because of the integrated nature of most small organizations, in particular, these dimensions are thoroughly blended and share many of the same aspects.

However, the dimensions are still a helpful aid in seeking to understand the overall positioning of the organization across these dimensions.

4.5 Findings in Light of the SMM Logic Model

The most relevant antecedent conditions of each organization have been covered previously under the Organizational Overview, including some organizational factors that are within the "causal" loop. The long-term/strategic outcomes are also covered under Brand Infrastructure (Vision and Mission Statement) and also under Marketing Communications Plan (Marketing Objectives). These will not be discussed at length in this section.

4.5.1 NPO1 and the Logic Model

Informants from NPO1 demonstrated that they have an overall understanding of their social media marketing program and the necessary factors, similar to Guo & Saxton's (2020) Logic Model. They are aware that attention is a scarce resource and that this is the central point in the model, without which it is impossible to achieve the organization's goals through SMM. They have also developed strategies and invested resources in order to accomplish this.

Inputs

On the risks necessary to succeed with social media marketing, R2 talks about the constantly changing nature of social media platforms and the difficulty in predicting how users will respond. She says,

> *"R2: Social media is this evolving beast. Instagram is always throwing out new features […] It's changing so much, and so quickly. Like, the shelf life of any technique you learn isn't […] very long. Not any technique, but lots of things... it changes a lot. And so […] sometimes you can put effort into creating a piece of content, and you think it's going to be awesome, and then you're just like, 'Oh, that didn't really stick to the wall.' And then other times, you don't really put a lot of effort, or maybe it's just like a normal average day, and a piece of content blows up and everybody loves it. So, yeah, the risks would be that it's not easy to predict. Or at least, for me, maybe I just don't know enough yet. […]*

> *"Trying new things […] can be scary […] I'm not a Gen Z-er. Like, sometimes [the creative director] will accuse me of being an old grandma, because I'm not a super techy person, so it feels a little ironic that I'm in the role that I'm in. But yeah, being willing to try things. […] Reels was a new one, Instagram reels, we started doing those. I haven't done them consistently, but when we did a sale, I put out several of them […]. It felt weird because I'm not used to this form of content specifically."*

Regarding the commitments necessary to succeed, she says,

> *"R2: It involves a lot of consistency. You have to be really present for your audience, and I don't feel like I do that as well as I want to or wish that I would want to. […] I had watched some YouTube video a long time ago about this one girl […] She was just talking about how, 'Well, the algorithm will boost your content if you respond to comments in like 30 seconds or less because then it shows that your content is popular and so Instagram will show it to more people.' But that's hard! Especially when you have an international audience, and people are commenting in the middle of the night. And you have to have a life too. So, yea, the commitment is being present for your audience to answer their questions, in a somewhat timely way and respond to comments. […]*
>
> *"[L]ike Donald Miller talks about, […] he says for business, your organization is always the guide. You're not the hero of the story. And so, establishing, it takes a lot of commitment to consistently put content out every day so that you establish yourself as a guide for people […] So for [NPO1], 'If I know that I want to know God better, I want to understand who He is better, I know that I can always trust [NPO1] to always point me in that direction.' And […] you just have to keep doing it every day. And sometimes it's just, 'Oh my goodness, this feels like the same old thing' But […] it means a lot to people, and you see that in the comments."*

Resources and Strategy

The resources that NPO1 has invested into marketing and social media marketing are described under the organizational overview and the brand infrastructure results. The SMM strategy is outlined as a part of the media strategy under the marketing communications plan results. This also includes the prioritization of social media platforms and more.

Social Media Activities/Outputs

NPO1 overlooks or manages about five accounts on each social media platform they are on, including Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. They are not on TikTok or other platforms that are currently rising in popularity (Ortiz-Ospina, 2019), as mentioned in the section on Prioritization of Social Media Platforms.

Content Creation Process

R2 describes her foundational approach to being successful on social media, which is strongly rooted in relationship marketing,

> *"R2: The theory I found to be the most helpful is [...] a biblical principle of giving to others. And give more than you take. [...] And yeah, what I heard over and over again is the ratio of... Some of them will say 5 out of every 7 posts should always be giving to your audience. Some people say 80/20 or whatever. There's different ratios. But basically, you always, always, always give to your audience. And give way more than you take. So that's the theory that I found to be the most successful."*

She details her content creation process, how she has found a way to re-use old content from the organization's main speakers that is already available in a different format online. This is a significant time-saver. She explains,

> *"R2: This is one thing that [NPO1] has going for it, the fact that they've been doing ministry for a long time, and [R1] and [another NPO1 speaker] are quite long-winded to put it bluntly. They speak a lot. And we have a bunch of their content already on YouTube, so my process is that I'll pull the SRT files from YouTube—so the transcript with timestamps. I copy and paste it into a document and then I read through the whole thing... Sometimes I'll skim certain parts if I can just tell they're telling a story and it's not actually going to be helpful for me. But I'll read through the whole thing and highlight in different colors for quotes or sometimes if it's a longer section that I want to turn into a carousel post for Instagram [...] We haven't done as much video as I would like to do. But if it's video, then yeah, you can do longer sections for that as well.*
>
> *"So, I'm not having to create a bunch of content, which is really nice, because then I can just focus on quoting it, which is a process in and of itself. It takes forever. [...] [S]ometimes you'll find sermons that have tons of things that are really thoughtful, meaningful one-liners and sentences that are tweetable, or you can post it, and then other times I'll read through a whole sermon and get like two sentences. [laughs] And that can be really frustrating.*
>
> *"[This process] saves me buttloads of time, I used to just read through their Twitter feeds, and I thought that was painful. I mean, not horrible, but it's just like, cumbersome and annoying, and it wasn't sustainable long term. So, this is really helpful, because there's just a lot to go through, between all of the resources they produce and speaking events they go to, sermons they preach. So that's like a core thing for me, as for collecting content"*

This content is also implemented slightly differently for NPO1's different brands' social media accounts in order to keep them from overlapping too much. She is also seeking out new kinds of content to keep each brand distinct and highlight the work that they do so the target audience(s) is being educated through various forms of content (text, pictures, and video). From these explanations, there is a sense of constant effort to monitor and evaluate the process in order to improve the content creation process and communication in order to educate the audience about the nonprofit’s activities. R2 says,

> *“R2: At first I didn't [distinguish between the brands’ social media accounts], and then over the last year I've tried to separate them a bit better. So, at first the goal was just like, ‘Okay, we just need to consistently put out good content for our audience every day.’ That was the goal. And then once we got there, […] then [R3] and I sat down and talked about how we could separate the brands more. […] I'm not a designer, so our content on the different channels… it looked kind of all the same. And not just the same design-wise, but also content-wise. It was the same type of content. […] I haven't gotten there yet, fully, where it's in a really good rhythm […]. [S]o separating that way content-wise too, that's been a more recent thing, trying to strengthen that because it's not super great.”*

In addition to this, the informants also mentioned times when they create memes or other content to jump on the viral bandwagon and connect with the audience by providing some light-hearted entertainment (e.g., a “Bernie Sanders mittens”-meme post around the time of the 2020 U.S. presidential election).

R1 is on several platforms under his own name and posts regularly. As a writer, R1 is used to working with text. It requires less technical proficiency and can be posted on different social media platforms. This influences his output and pacing,

> *“R1: Well, text is something you can do on a daily basis, very quick and easy. So, I post nearly every day. Some kind of text, some kind of concept, some kind of idea, some kind of perspective for people to contemplate or feel.”*

Networking Characteristics

As far as commenting strategies go, R2’s approach depends on the platform, but there is a certain threshold of activity that she strives to maintain across all platforms. This is due to a lack of resources, which does not represent an ideal scenario, but shows how it is vital to have a strategy and prioritize how to use the available resources to maximize the results,

> *"R2: [On] Instagram, […] I actually focus on audience engagement. […] I don't have the capacity to maintain, answering comments on [Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter]. So, Twitter [and Facebook] sadly gets the leftovers. I post content on there and basically just leave it. If somebody has a specific question about a resource or about something we're doing I'll answer that, but other than that I leave it because I don't have the ability to do that right now. And [R3] doesn't either. […] If there's a question about a specific resource, then we answer those, but other than that... […] I don't know... You know, sometimes the Spirit moves you and someone seems like they're really in need and we might answer it. But generally, no. [On] Instagram I try to respond to comments and DMs and engage with the audience more. […]"*

Providing an example of how she prioritizes which comments she replies to and which ones she leaves unanswered, as well as how she engages with the network using platform-specific tools like Instagram's question sticker, R2 says,

> *"If someone on Facebook just says, like, 'This is awesome. Thanks so much for this!' I won't respond to that. But if someone says that on Instagram, I try to respond. I don't always make it. But I'll respond, 'Glad you liked it!' So I'll answer questions, but also just respond to the comments. And people ask us questions in our DMs as well. Also, we'll post things on our stories too, that promote user/audience engagement... Like, you know, the question sticker, and we'll ask if people have prayer requests and then, yeah, I'll pray for those and respond to each person."*

R3 also keeps an eye on the comment sections to see how things are playing out,

> *"R3: [I'm] kind of browsing through comments […] You know, there's always the people that don't understand how social media works, and they're like, 'Hey [speaker], please give me a call, I haven't talked to you in a while. My number is...' you know? Or somebody saying, 'Hey, I'd like to donate. My grandmother died and she has an estate worth $700 million dollars that we want to give to [NPO1].' So stuff like that. I try to kind of keep my finger on the pulse of the feedback we're getting, what people are saying, yeah."*

Post-specific Strategies to Increase Attention

Message-level Tactics

NPO1's social media accounts (Instagram and Facebook), as compared to other Adventist-supporting ministries, typically see more meaningful comments on their posts. This suggests that their content leads to more engagement and discussion. Most other popular Adventist-supporting accounts have a greater ratio of comments/followers than NPO1 (see Table 1). They achieve this by utilizing engagement tactics such as writing captions along the lines of, *"write where you're from in the comments"* or by posting a Bible verse and getting mostly *"amen"*-type comments. R2 weighs the pros and cons of this kind of approach,

> *"R2: [C]ertain people […] encourage me to try some techniques, and they worked, but even though they worked, I don't love the look of it. So for example, there was one person we talked to […] and he's like 'To boost engagement in your posts, just... do the thing where you tell people to drop a, like their favorite emoji if they agree with it' or that kind of thing, or 'leave a heart if you whatever...' And, I did that, and it does work. But I don't love it. I don't love the look of it, and the feel of it […] I stopped doing that. In my own personal feed, when I see that I just kind of cringe and I ignore it and I move on. […] Just because I wouldn't respond to it, doesn't mean it's not a good idea […] Maybe it just feels too close to the people who would say things like 'Share this if you agree' and it's like, 'No, I don't have to share this if I agree. Like, I can just agree.' Um, so, anyway. I have done that, and it has worked, but I've moved away from that."*

Interestingly enough, R7 from NPO2, unprompted, shared these thoughts about NPO1's content from an outsider's perspective,

> *"R7: [NPO1] have good content that they put out. Thoughtful. Like, on Instagram, you know. Intriguing posts, that create discussion and that engages the audience. It's not just, like a lot of the conferences and a lot of the churches will just do, like, a 'Happy Sabbath!' on Friday evenings, right. It's nice to look at and it's nice to see their posts, but it doesn't create engagement. When you post something and it's thoughtful, it's good to listen to or to read, but it [also] motivates you to comment. 'Oh, that's great.' 'Oh, that's awesome.' Or 'This is what I think...' and you want positive engagement, but sometimes you know, other people do it by posting controversial stuff, and then you get a lot of engagement that way too, but it might not be what you're looking for. I think they do a good job with selecting whatever thoughts they're sharing that creates engagement. Obviously, they're being intentional with that, and I think the people that they have working there are good writers and able to pick those up."*

Rather than using these "drop an [emoji] in the comments"-tactics to increase the amount of attention individual messages receive, R2 shares her approach. Because she invests most time on Instagram, a lot of these tactics are likely Instagram-specific, although there may be some overlap with other platforms that are owned by the same company (e.g., Facebook owns Instagram) or have similar features and users. She says,

> *"R2: If you share a post to your stories it does seem to get more traction, and I think that's just because people see, people spend more time on stories than they do on their actual feed."*

She also says that it is possible to use Instagram posts as microblogs that answer questions on topics that people have shown an interest in. However, this is a very time-consuming approach, and it can be easy to fall behind and end up with less consistent output.

Furthermore, she works on writing good captions and tries to include questions toward the end for the audience to engage with. She says,

> *"R2: I've tried in the past sometimes to write some longer captions, or ask questions at the end, on the specific topic, but that hasn't always... I've seen other people do it well, and I haven't been able to do it successfully, and... I'm not exactly sure why. But um, it may be that I'm comparing myself with accounts that are, just, way too large, and so, you know the comparison isn't accurate."*

The next factor she brings out is making sure that the content is value-based, but says this is a challenge,

> *"R2: I mean, it's just about the content itself. Is it really good? Is it something that's really gonna strike people in a deep way? That's hard. I'm finding that it's just hard to predict what people will resonate with sometimes."*

A format that has shown itself to provide deeper engagement is carousel posts. It is unique in that it allows the organization to communicate long-form content which has more lasting value for the target audience,

> *"R2: One format of content that I found tends to have more engagement is carousel posts. […] I think it may just be because Instagram has become so saturated, with like, everybody's trying to be an influencer, and there's all these sound bites floating around. And you can only pack so much knowledge or wisdom into a quote, but a carousel post allows you to actually flesh out ideas. […] And we did one for [NPO1] recently […] Typically, comments on [NPO1]'s posts are [on average] anywhere from 6 to 10 comments […] And this one got, 25 or 30-something comments. So yeah, it was a significant increase as far as engagement that way."*

She has heard it recommended that content creators should emphasize richer forms of attention. She says,

> *"R2: You know they say right now, "You should write for saves, not for likes or comments"... Yeah, carousel posts always seem to do more with the saves. And I think it may just have to do with the longer form content […] It gives you a space to say something that's more meaningful in a carousel post."*

As far as using links on social media, R2 says she learned from a communications professor that, *"Facebook doesn't like it when you share a link because it takes people off of their app, and takes them somewhere else, and […] they'll take you down in the algorithm if you do that a lot."* She then explains how she used links extensively for a campaign, but that their posts did not do as well comparatively. She speculates that the algorithms might have something to do with this.

Regarding hashtags, R2 says she uses them, but not very strategically. She points out their usefulness, especially as Instagram, she says, *“has changed now so that people follow hashtags. I follow hashtags just on my own personal feed, and so, [hashtagging is] just a smart thing to do.”* She mentions a software solution which she has considered trying out named Later. Later is a scheduling tool with a feature which suggests well-performing hashtags for your post (Later, n.d.).

Organization-level Tactics

NPO1 takes steps toward differentiating the brands’ accounts on social media to increase organization-level attention,

> *“R2: "What do [this brand’s] posts look like? What do [this brand’s] posts' look like?" And yea, granted we don't have the capacity to make the design look as fabulous for each one as we want. So, we try to keep it pretty simple but still separate them […] Anyways so just like simple [visual differences] like that. I think as far as style goes, that connects I think to the organization. […] The consistency is seen more and the logos are connected more, [and] then people will associate the organization with the branding. When they see that branding they'll associate it with the organization. And then content-wise too, I think we consistently post content […] about the gospel, but in a way that Adventists often forget. And so […] I think our content sounds a little different than what you hear a lot of times.”*

Again, R7 from NPO2 mentions how he thinks NPO1 has been able to develop a strong visual identity that is recognizable across their brands and on different social media platforms,

> *“R7: [T]he branding of [NPO1] and the design... That's one of my favorites. And you can see how they intentionally carry it to Facebook and Instagram, and they have, without even their name on it, you can identify... ‘Ok, that's gotta be [NPO1].’ And the association there, you automatically… The font that they use and so on, the color schemes... Obviously it's the same person doing it so they can carry it [through]. I think it helps to build the brand, because then you can automatically, just by looking at it go, ‘Oh, that's them.’ I think they've done a really good job with it.”*

In spite of the growth, it can still be tiring and perplexing to work with social media. R2 ends her thoughts on post-specific strategies by saying,

> *"R2: I get overwhelmed sometimes because I feel like there's so many factors that contribute to how a social media post performs, and so it's a little hard to keep track of. And I'm not like a super analytical person as it is, so it's tricky to figure out."*

Scheduling and Analytics Tools

R2 explains how she uses free scheduling and analytics tools for Instagram, Facebook and Twitter and she says they are a necessity, *"I do. Yeah, I schedule. I wouldn't not be able to survive if I didn't have a scheduling thing, because there's just too much."* However, as we have seen, this does not become a replacement for staying active on the platform to engage with comments and earned media.

Immediate Effect: Attention

Ideal Amount of Attention

Regarding how much attention they would consider ideal and what they would be able to handle, R2 says, *"I've never thought about that. [...] In some ways we're topped out now, just because it's mostly me and [R3]."* R3 and R1 explain further,

> *"R3: I would say, right now, we're going through a massive internal restructuring and stuff, so I'm not looking for more exposure. Once we're settled, we would definitely want more than we have, and we're going to be working towards expanding that.*
>
> *"R1: Um, well, we're short staffed, and we are in the process of trying to grow and expand, but that requires money, so we're engaged in a plan that is attempting to handle more so we don't burn out with the few people we have."*

Pathways to Outcomes

R1 is well-aware of the need for pathways to outcomes and emphasizes that this is an area of importance and growth for them,

> *"R1: We're not super good at it yet. We're very conscious of it, and we're going to try to perfect this. The way you go from attention to impact is creating mechanisms for engagement. So, you're not just saying something, you're saying something and giving a way for them to respond, interact, do something. We're saying something, so we want them to do something. You need to provide mechanisms for response."*

He uses a three-step process to explain how they lead the audience into a closer relationship with the organization. The goal is to avoid "clicktivism" and move into the realm of impact, *"R1: [Number 1 would be a]dditional ways for them to engage with material that we offer to expand their growth, their understanding, their development. […]. Number 2 would be to provide ways for them to enter into forums of communication. […] And number 3 would be to put their money where their mouth is. If you like what you're hearing, would you like to be a part of what we're doing by getting behind it financially so we can communicate this beautiful message to more people?"*

R3 stresses the importance and value of going from attention to impact, and also explains that he's still a big fan of getting people's email addresses due to it seeming like a more secure approach. This is consistent with advice from Grau (2021) about email still being highly useful. He then summarizes by describing the details of transforming someone from just being an observer on social media to someone who supports the cause financially,

"R3: The main thing is to lower the barrier to entry as much as possible. So, social media is great, but you need to generate either followers on social media or capture their email address. […] Even though a lot of people in the social media world think that email is dead, I'm still a big fan of email. And I have multiple of friends I can point to who built... some of them, million-dollar social media platforms where they're dealing with hundreds of thousands of dollars of ad revenue every month, and then Facebook changes an algorithm, and they're dead in the water. Over night. Versus when you own an email address, you know. If your email platform shuts down, you can go to the next guy in line, and continue to deliver to your audience. So, I'm a big advocate of getting their contact information and that usually happens with a free offer, and it usually happens outside of social media. So, you'd have a campaign on social media that would run to a lead page, that would offer a free e-book in exchange for their email address. Once you have their email address, then you start offering other free offers, free resources, newsletters, stuff like that, and then build your following from there.

"We offer a lot of the same content on both email as we do on social media, so that funnel could really happen on either one of them. But it starts with a low barrier to entry, something free, in exchange for a little bit more of their trust. And that's really what you're doing. You're building their confidence in your organization to the point that they're willing to... You know, step 1 would be 'give you information,' step 2 would be 'make a purchase in exchange for a product,' and then step 3, which is the highest of all, is 'make a donation in exchange for absolutely nothing.'"

The reason for not just maintaining and growing the audience on social media, but also guiding them off the platform, is due to a need to segment the audience,

"R3: We're in the process of building conversion funnels where we identify people's commitment level to [NPO1], and then we target them more specifically with calls to action."

Providing a specific example, he says,

> *"R3: If you go the website, the website is fairly sparse. It doesn't give you a lot of detail, because we're not banking on the website selling the product. We're banking on social media selling the product. So we do all of our product demos, the little snippets of classroom time, the quotes from the classes... You know, things like that we do on social media. We point people to the website, which is a lead page. The website gets them to sign up. Now they've become a customer because they've made a monetary exchange. But now they're on a member platform. And as you go through the member platform, at various points we're building out emails that when you finish a chapter, it says, 'Hey! Was this chapter a blessing to you? This is the vision of [the training ministry], this is what we want to do. Would you consider becoming a donor?' Right? So that's not happening on a public platform [...]"*

This is seen as a part of the overall SMM strategy, and also ties into the Marketing Communications Plan with their audience strategy and brand positioning,

> *"R3: So, we don't use our channel a lot for fundraising. At the end of the year, we'll make an appeal, say something... Sometimes in passing we'll mention it, but for the most part, that doesn't happen on social media, because social media is a very public platform. [...] [T]his is in being consistent with the idea that our audience is outward facing from Adventism. So when you start asking people who are skeptical of the church for money, you fall into pre-conceived stereotypes in their mind where, 'Oh, you're just after our money. You're just greedy. You're just another church organization.' So we don't do a lot of fundraising publicly. We will mention it a couple of times during our year-end fundraising, like, 'Hey, if you've been blessed, you can donate.' or 'Hey, this is our goal...' You know. We do them very seldom. Maybe once or twice a year. As in, one or two posts a year. [...] We do our fundraising more in-house with people that we've already established rapport with, and we're not generating cold leads there."*

Based on this, it is clear that NPO1 actively uses social media marketing but does not see it as an end in itself. They are very focused on developing pathways to outcomes which go beyond social media; instead, they let social media function as a public forum to introduce new beneficiaries and subsequently invite them into a deeper relationship with the organization and the resources it offers.

4.5.2 NPO2 and the Logic Model

Overall Understanding of 'Logic Model' Elements

NPO2 does not currently operate with a clear understanding of their SMM along the lines of a logic model. However, some of the informants have more of an understanding than others, even though this has not yet led to specific changes in their SMM.

Inputs

Resources and Strategy

Because of their history of paying for airtime on TV and radio, it is a natural part of NPO2's marketing strategy to spend money on advertisements, and this extends to social media ads. This is good in that the organization is already familiar with running advertisements and are likely to know what kinds of results they can expect (depending on their ability and willingness to experiment and analyze their results). However, because social media has provided organizations with *"a more participatory and collaborative and decentralized and communicative context"* (Guo and Saxton, 2020, p. 36), it also means that they are missing out on significant amounts of attention and impact.

After having talked at length about various parts of elements from the marketing communications plan and parts of the logic model with very little prompts from the interviewer, R7 says,

> *"R7: So, [these elements are] kind of obvious to me, and then the question is, 'Well, why aren't you doing that?' Unfortunately, it is a small team. [...] And, I don't know that the other people in the team are as interested in analyzing the data and working that out. I think that kind of falls on me being the one who is more interested in it, and I think everyone else is on board, but it's not their thing. [...] That would be a waste time if they didn't know how to properly do that. So, that's been the main reason. Just not enough time and effort to look into that. But we are making some changes, and hopefully that'll make give me a little bit more time to sit down and devise a proper social media plan. And at least improve our targeting and be able to measure, [...] and see how it's growing. [...]*
>
> *"It is a full-time job. But, [...] just starting with the first steps is doable. And [...] it would make sense to put more money into it as you're seeing results. Obviously, there's going to be a time where it's going to be a full-time job, but by that time [...] your funding should've already increased to justify that."*

It is evident that there is currently a lack of inputs in order for NPO2's SMM to be successful. While there are some valuable resources in the organization already, it is clear that NPO2 is restricted by a lack of other resources. This is partly due to a small team and a disproportionate emphasis on content creation.

Social Media Activities/Outputs

NPO2 manages social media accounts on a few different platforms: YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and also a podcast. They are somewhat active on all of them, except for Twitter, on which there has been no activity for a few years.

Content Creation Process

NPO2's content creation process has changed significantly since the new speakers arrived,

> *"R4: The look of the program changed, yeah. We also had a new way of filming that they didn't have before. Before, everything was done in a studio. We did a lot of it on the road, but we also did it in an in-house studio. They never used that before because they didn't have it. [...] What they used to do was film—over a week or two weeks—the whole season. And then the rest of the year they would be on the road doing evangelism and whatever else they had to do. So, everything would be filmed in a chunk."*

Now, they film new content throughout the year, which enables them to include stories from different places as well as recent events. R4 also says he has been working on his writing, *"I enjoy writing. So that has also been featured more."*

R6 explains how R4 and R5 create most of the video content, either in the form of a sermon or an interview. They also create two-minute videos, and the podcast is an audio version of those. He continues,

> *"So it all stems from [R4] and [R5] being on screen, whether it's just them, or whether they're interviewing a guest. I'm not opposed to doing episodes that are just people telling their story without [R4] and [R5] interviewing them. But they seem to really like the interview process, so, I just let it slide, but I don't think they need to be on there all the time, personally. I think people telling their story is powerful enough. And then, you know, they always do the intro, they do an outro, they do a free offer."*

Furthermore, R6 describes how he asked his wife to create thumbnails for the various TV programs, and that once he has uploaded them online, he does not monitor the activity.

Networking Characteristics

R7 details how he invites those who respond with a like or a comment to follow the organization's profile,

> *"R7: [...] So what I like doing is whenever they post a video I'll go and if somebody makes a comment [on Facebook], I'll go and like their comment. That's an easy way of adding to the conversation, just liking it. And when I see people that have liked the video or have made a comment about the video [...], I go in and invite them to like our page. So I just go and click invite, invite, invite. And I'd say 95% of the time [...] if you invite them, that's all it takes. [...] That's mainly what I deal with. Just going in there and trying to get people to follow us.'"*

Post-specific Strategies to Increase Attention

R4 explains how he has learned to pay careful attention to the headlines of NPO2's videos after learning about the importance of this from R7's wife. He also explains certain factors such as emotional and power words which increase the number of clicks on the video, and the importance of not letting videos be too long,

> *"R4: I use something for my titles. I can't even remember what it's called. It's called 'Headline Analyzers.' Because at first, I would put out a headline, and then [R7]'s wife who used to be an online marketer, she had a business doing this type of thing. So she was checking out my headlines, and they were getting very low scores, which... I mean, how did I know?! I was just an English teacher. So I was just putting out a headline that for me was artistic. But it's no good for social media. So I was getting a low score. So then I started using this thing to just punch in my headlines, but then they wanted to upgrade... […]*
>
> *"Then I started realizing that there's other people using the same type of headlines as what I'm using, and how they're getting higher scores, and why they're getting higher scores, and so then I realized that there are other people doing what we're doing, but they're getting more viewers. And so your headline, I think, is a huge part of it. What kinds of words do you use? Emotional words, power words, questioning words and addressing the individual. Very strong positive message or very negative message are better than a neutral message. […] And I'm not the only one who fights with that. Our creative director fights with it as well, because he's like, 'That's such a long title.' You know, like, 'What does healthy self-talk look like?' That's a title. Right? Like, why don't you just call it, 'Self-talk.' Well, that's nice for a book, and it may be nice for an article, but it's not good online, because people are gonna look at that title before they click, because there's a lot of other things to click on. They're also going to look at how long [the video] is. So, you want to keep that short."*

By interacting with the available tools and trying to increase attention to the content, R4 reveals that he is learning more about competition and how to get more engagement from social media users.

Scheduling and Analytics Tools

NPO2 does not schedule their posts using a dedicated software. R4 says,

> *"R4: No, we don't use any software to do that, but we schedule it to go out either on a Thursday or Friday, once a week. We put it out once a week, but we don't schedule it with any software thing, we just put it out on our platforms, and advertise it through our emails that we send out."*

As far as analytics go, they usually do not know what they are looking at or looking for, other than just noticing the trends around holidays or other special occasions. R4 explains, *"I* *don't know how to make that work to our advantage. In other words, how to read that and how to boost it and how to target the right people with our content. I wish I knew how to do that."*

Immediate Effect: Attention

Ideal Amount of Attention

When asked how much attention NPO2 would want, R4 answers, *"As much as we can garner for the sake of the message."*

At the moment, NPO2 does not receive enough attention to be forced into considering what would be required if the attention suddenly exploded, so the ideals are naturally quite high and in line with the assumptions from Guo & Saxton (2020), that more attention is always a good thing. However, when asked about when the amount of attention would start hindering their work, R4 came with some fascinating insights,

> *"R4: I mean, in the life of Jesus it started hindering His work when He became popular, but people weren't [listening]... When popularity goes beyond people who actually hear you. So, you're popular and you're known, but they don't ever hear you. [...] That can create more misunderstanding than understanding, and more division than unity. So, what are you known for? And are you just known because you're popular, right? Is there a discerning popularity? Is there an awareness of what you're really doing? [...] Can it get beyond where you want it to be? Yeah.*
>
> *Int: That's quite a ways ahead for you?*
>
> *R4: Yeah, I don't even know that we should aim for that. [...] I think there's a certain integrity you have to have about your message. And what you're comfortable with, in terms of 'what is your identity.' And I think that is the number one thing for me that keeps on coming up. It's... You have to know who you are before you can work with others."*

So, even though NPO2 is looking for more attention at the moment, it is not looking for unlimited amounts of attention, even if there was a proper infrastructure in place to handle it.

Pathways to Outcomes

The general understanding of how to go from attention to impact through social media marketing in NPO2 seems to be that having people be exposed to the content is good enough. This likely stems from the traditional TV ministry mentality. There are calls to action at the end of their 30-minute programs, and these lead to some conversions. However, there is not a scalable system in place to manage this. Due to the teaching and pastoral background of the leadership, they are aware that more than listening is required for change to take place. They work to build partnerships with other nonprofits, and they trust local churches to take over where their program ends, but most of this takes place offline and not as an extension of their SMM. R7 noted that part of a future social media marketing plan would include acquiring email addresses for continued contact, but little details were offered as to how this would be done.

4.5.3 Logic Model Comparison

	Instagram				*Facebook*			
Account	**Followers**	**Likes**	**Comments**	**Tot. posts**	**Followers2**	**Likes2**	**Shares**	**Comments2**
NPO1 [parent org.]	5931	252.8	7.1	433	15299	236.6	101.9	4.7
NPO1 [training program]	11700	398.7	9.1	890	12567	128.6	51.5	2.3
NPO1 [speaker 1]	10600	548.9	26.7	565	13375	315.1	105.3	16.6
NPO1 [speaker 2]	17400	455.6	56.4	3120	34590	468.7	64.7	208.1
NPO2	517	26.1	1	100	4476	31.5	7.8	10.1

*averages based on 15 latest posts on May 4, 2021

Table 6 - Overview of NPO1 and NPO2's Social Media Attention

Logic Model Components	***NPO1***	***NPO2***
Antecedent conditions	[covered previously in section 4.1]	
Inputs		
- Resources	Moderate, growing	Lacking
- Strategy	Moderate, flexible	Lacking
SM Activities/Outputs		
- Network characteristics	Moderate, growing, engaged	Low, growing, unengaged
- Communication strategy	Moderate, some collaboration	Low, no collaboration
Immediate Effect/Attention	Approaching max, enlarging	Outgrown infrastructure
Pathways to Outcome	Mentoring/funnel mentality, system in place, growing	Mass media mentality, no system, guesswork
Long-term strategic outcomes	[covered previously in sections 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3]	
Logic Model Summary	**Moderate causal chain, growing**	**Lacking causal chain**

Table 7 - Logic Model Comparison for NPO1 and NPO2

5. Discussion

By systematically following the same structure used to outline the results for each organization, which is based on the template analysis and relies heavily on narration and tables to present the findings, the detailed comparison of the cases has been made clear and comprehensive. A conclusive, overall comparison of the organizations with each other and normative theory, according to each major theoretical component, is summarized in Table 8.

	SECTION	NPO1	NPO2
4.1	**Organizational Overview**	- Est. 1980s with the merger in the early 2010s - Invested actively in SMM development for about 1.5 years	- Est. 1970s, shares brand name with larger, unconnected NPO - New leadership 1.5-2 years ago, minimal SM activity
4.2	**Brand Infrastructure**	- Strong brand infrastructure - Actively improving and growing the most important key elements	- Weak brand infrastructure - Low awareness of key elements and order of importance
4.3	**Marketing Communications Plan**	- Clear and actionable MCP - Well-developed brand identity - Overly focused on new projects - Regularly revisited and tweaked for improvements	- No defined MCP - Operating with inherited audience - Adjusting brand positioning
4.4	**SMM Holistic Framework**	- Somewhat stakeholder-oriented - Flat and outwardly focused positioning - Experimenting with content and platforms	- Strongly firm-oriented - Willing to experiment with content but conservative with marketing
4.5	**Logic Model**	- Clear understanding and implementation of causal chain - Constant improvement of SMM activities and pathways to outcomes	- Little to no causal chain - Overly focused on content creation - Minimal focus on SMM inputs, activities, and no pathways to outcomes
	CONCLUSION	**- Experiencing SMM success** **- Wholistic focus and leadership** **- Too many projects for the amount of infrastructure** **- Restructuring to expand reach**	**- Limited SMM attention** **- Traditional, narrow view of marketing** **- Limited infrastructure and inputs** **- Overly focused on content creation rather than marketing and branding**

Table 8 - Overall Comparison of NPO1 and NPO2's SMM

5.1 Theoretical Implications

Throughout the analysis and the presentation of the results, the value of the preliminary theoretical framework became apparent. The findings are, in general, consistent with extant theory, with only a few contrasting elements uncovered. However, a number of new factors/elements emerged throughout the research. All of these are covered in Table 9.

This research shows that the case study research combined with the FPMA is useful in assessing and explaining the factors that influence social media marketing proficiency in small ministries. The more nonprofit organizations invest in building out the foundational elements of good marketing and brand management, the easier it is to attain success with social media marketing.

THEORY	FINDINGS CONSISTENT WITH THEORY	NEW FACTORS/ELEMENTS	FINDINGS IN CONTRAST WITH THEORY
Brand Infrastructure	- The Brand Infrastructure provides the bedrock foundation that ensures success or failure in branding and marketing. The order of importance seems mostly accurate.	- Hire employees who are adept at marketing and branding, not those who *only* have a passion for the cause, particularly if the core brand infrastructure is missing.	- Research capabilities are of higher importance than in the list provided by Chapleo (2015) due to the limited research available and the constant changes of available platforms and tools online.
Marketing Communications Plan	- A Marketing Communications Plan that is aligned with the Business Model, is based on a broad definition of marketing, and prioritizes owned and earned media is essential for success with SMM.	- The tendency to make the target audience and brand personality “who you are or who you were” is not ideal unless it is a part of the overall strategy. - Prioritization of specific social media platform(s) should be done in accordance with available inputs, audience strategy and the organization’s message and creative style. - NPO’s main figure(s) being active on ‘personal’ SM accounts is beneficial to grow the network and brand personality/identity of the organization’s official SM account(s). This is likely due to the ‘personal’ nature and design of SM platforms. - Monitoring and evaluating can be beneficial if a good system in place; organizations need easy-to-use tools to avoid “drowning in data.”	
SMM Holistic Framework	- The SMM Holistic Framework is useful to analyze and adjust the positioning of the organization to be aligned with the organization’s overall goals and structure.	- Regarding SMM Governance, the descriptors ‘anarchy’ and ‘autocracy’ might be insufficient for small nonprofits. Adding another descriptor such as ‘oligarchy’ might be helpful.	
Logic Model	- An understanding and implementation of a logic model is essential to succeeding with SMM, especially when the organization manages several accounts on a number of SM platforms. It helps the organization consider ways to go beyond the immediate effect (attention).	- Special attention and research abilities are required due to the evolving nature of SM platforms and their available features. - Give far more than you take. Establishing the NPO as a consistent provider of valuable and engaging content will make the calls to action more effective. - NPOs need to adapt content and communication style to each SM platform. They should learn the strengths and weaknesses of each platform.	- In small ministries it is difficult to find antecedent conditions that are truly outside of the causal loop of SMM. Chapleo’s (2015) Brand infrastructure and Felix et al.’s (2017) SMM Holistic Framework support this by covering the pervasive nature of SMM.

Logic Model (continued)	- Re-purposing content (i.e., from video to audio, or video to text) across platforms can be useful if done in a way that is consistent with the brand identity and does not disrupt network characteristics. - NPOs should consider the type and amount of attention they are pursuing and seek to keep this in line with their strategy. Negative attention can get in the way of the work of nonprofits, but too much positive attention can also be a hindrance in reaching the desired goals if the audience does not 'hear' the message, and also because it depletes the resources required to operate and meet objectives and might distract them from their strategy. - Social media platforms behave unpredictably; algorithms change, and moderation rules are ambiguous. This is hotly debated, and the outcome is yet to be determined. - Leveraging attention can be done, not just through online-offline synergies, but through online-online synergies; for example, by going from a social media platform to a less 'public' and more 'secure' form of communication, such as email newsletters or closed online communities/forums.

Table 9 - Theoretical Implications Based on Results

5.2 Managerial Implications

This research has shown itself to be relevant for managers of small nonprofit organizations who have traditionally not prioritized social media marketing. It provides them with the necessary theories and tools to help them become relevant on social media platforms and use this attention to reach their organizational goals. It is also likely that these findings will be useful for larger nonprofit organizations as they have more moving parts to keep track of.

Managers working for nonprofit organizations should perform an audit of their organization's marketing and branding efforts using the theoretical framework outlined in the literature review (preliminary guidelines for small nonprofit organizations for succeeding with SMM). They should also consider the *"new elements/factors"* and *"findings in contrast with theory"* outlined in Table 9. This process will aid them in uncovering their strengths and weaknesses and give them an idea of their possibilities and the changes that need to be made.

This research shows a trend of nonprofits being brilliant at coming up with new projects and ideas for content creation. This is due to the nature of nonprofits, as they are driven by and attract visionaries who are passionate about meeting needs and resolving societal issues. This is valuable for generating new ideas, but in order to increase the efficiency, scalability, and longevity of their operations, this affinity for new ideas needs to be balanced by an infrastructure that enables them to reach their goals.

Small nonprofits need to be willing to invest in the development of a proper infrastructure and strategy that reaches all the way from the business model/plan/culture to social media marketing to the long-term strategic outcomes/goals. This might require more resources than they think are available, but by reconsidering their current investment in project development and traditional marketing expenditures, they might achieve greater results by directing some of this towards SMM (as more and more of their audiences move online), even if this seems new and daunting. Even if the more foundational parts of the framework are in not in place, it is still possible to generate attention on social media; however, there will be challenges related to consistency (e.g., tone of the communications and output over time).

If the main figure(s) of a nonprofit have personal social media accounts and are active on those, then this works positively to attract attention to the nonprofit. This would be in addition to the nonprofit's main account(s). This underscores the brand's identity and personality. These personal accounts might also serve to increase leadership support for the value of social media marketing, leading to a more solid brand infrastructure. Social media managers and content developers can of course assist the leaders in creating engaging content and staying on top of users' comments and other SMM activities, but the account should retain a distinctly personal feel.

The results of specific social media activities on the different platforms were difficult to specify. One reason for this is that the algorithms that determine the visibility of content in the main feed are constantly changing, and another reason is that the new features that are implemented influence how users interact with the content on the platform(s).

The unpredictability of SMM is a constant challenge for both organizations in this study. They struggle to know which activities and outputs will receive a lot of attention and which will not. However, the organization which performs better does so by having a strategic framework in place, publishing content often (without draining the resources), and using their listening system to monitor and evaluate other organizations' SMM activity/output and their audiences' reaction to their own SMM activity/output. They also diversify by using multiple accounts for their different brands, allowing for more experimentation.

5.3 Limitations

After conducting an initial interview late fall of 2020 with the partner company (NPO2), we decided that I would write my Master Thesis on a topic relevant to the organization's operations. In the conversation, I was able to get an overview of their primary activities and what they perceived to be their current needs. I then discussed the topic with my supervisor. Several options were explored, and I settled on assessing and explaining the proficiency of SMM in small ministries. This was done through a comparative case study of two small nonprofit organizations that are both connected to the same worldwide church organization.

The boundaries of the case were further determined on a basis of limited time and the necessity of negotiating access to nonprofit organizations' employees. I had already developed trust with most of the participants through previous work and social activities, which enabled me to focus on the rest of the research rather than spending more time negotiating access to other organizations. Due to the in-depth nature of the qualitative interviews and the additional time constraints, an additional quantitative comparison analysis proved difficult, which might have led to other valuable findings. However, with the semi-structured in-depth interviews and access to the social media pages of some accounts, I was provided with enough data to answer the research question satisfactorily.

Yin (2017) mentions addressing rival explanations as a fundamental approach to strengthening the findings of a case study. This will be accomplished using the four assessment criteria—credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability—as is common for qualitative studies (Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Saunders et al., 2019).

Credibility

The research makes use of triangulation to establish the credibility of the findings. Triangulation of sources was accomplished by interviewing more than one informant from each organization as well as using observational data from their SM activities/outputs on various platforms. This was done to verify and supplement the information from each source. The employees had different roles within the company, so their answers approached the subjects from several angles and helped fill out the picture. Some interviewees were partly familiar with the other organization and freely shared their perspectives on that organization's marketing and branding efforts (Saunders et al., 2019).

Through frequent consultations with the supervisor, as a form of peer briefing, I was exposed to someone outside of the research process which provided disinterested feedback and guidance (Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Saunders et al., 2019).

Throughout the interviews, I made use of various kinds of questions. Open questions were actively employed for the majority of the interview and especially at the start, to help avoid biased answers. Probing questions were used at times to uncover the depth of the informant's understanding of a topic or incident or to gather more data about a particular topic that seemed especially relevant. Specific and closed questions were used more toward the end of the interviews to investigate the informants' familiarity with specific theoretical concepts. When informants misheard or did not understand the question, I restated it clearly, then rephrased it while making an effort to explain it in such a way that the 'desired answer' was not apparent (Saunders et al., 2019).

By being asked to partake in research and by being interviewed, the informants were partially educated on the subject, at least concerning the potential value of SMM for nonprofits and their lack of awareness and utilization of available tools. The influence of this on the research was limited by only conducting one interview with each informant and by beginning each interview with open questions (Saunders et al., 2019). The interviews were all conducted within a time span of two weeks, with only one interview scheduled per day, so that the interviewer would be able to recall the answers given by other informants within the same organization and could ask clarifying questions to corroborate or challenge the statements made by other informants (Saunders et al., 2019).

The interviews were transcribed within the space of two weeks, beginning soon after the first interviews were completed. This ensured accuracy in the transcriptions, as the interviews were still fresh in my memory. Transcribing most of the interviews myself was time-consuming, but it helped familiarize me deeply with the data (Saunders et al., 2019). When a word or a phrase was challenging to hear, the video files were helpful as they made it possible to make sense of the somewhat unclear audio (due to pronunciation or technical glitches). Also, because the interviews were conducted in English and the thesis is written in English, there was no need for translation. (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Saunders et al., 2019)

For the first interview, I also enlisted the help of a native English speaker for the transcription process, who also has strong connections to the informants. The process of discussing the transcription process and comparing the transcriptions further ensured the thoroughness of the transcriptions. This provided an element of investigator triangulation (Yin, 2017). The fact that she is familiar with the context, having worked with small ministries for years and knowing most of the informants personally, enabled her to accurately collect the data and interpret the meaning of what was being communicated (Pratt, 2009).

The first interview with each organization followed the interview guide carefully in order to provide a foundation for comparison. The subsequent interviews also relied on the interview guide, but they were less specific about the order of the questions to let the informants' answers lead and fill in what might have been missing from the initial interviews (Saunders et al., 2019). The interview guide was created based on established theory as described in the literature review. The rest of the research resulted from pattern matching between the theoretical and observational realms. This further establishes the credibility of the findings (Bouncken et al, 2021a; Sinkovics et al., 2008).

Transferability

The research process has been described in detail. The analysis used thick descriptive data, including narration and direct quotes from the informants and tables for summary purposes. The data collection results were constructed by using a template analysis based on a theoretical framework constructed from the literature review. This process served as an effective way to identify the relevant factors and which effect they had on the findings. Therefore, others should be able to use the findings from this research elsewhere (Lincoln & Guba, 1986; Saunders et al., 2019).

Dependability

Because of the existing relationship and similar religious-cultural background between the interviewer and several interviewees, it might prove challenging for other researchers to repeat the exact findings from this research. Both participation bias and response bias could prove to be a hindrance in this regard. Additionally, the research is intended to provide an accurate representation of the organizations in question at the time of the interviews. These are subsequent to change, particularly since one organization is undergoing a restructure, and the other organization is developing a willingness to invest more in their SMM efforts. However, the dependability of the research is still reasonably strong, as the research method and results are described in-depth and analyzed using well-established theories and approaches. The findings were also discussed at length with a native English speaker, who helped with the transcription and proofreading process and knew several employees and the specific religious culture well (Saunders et al., 2019).

Confirmability

Throughout the research project, I utilized the skill of reflexivity as an essential part of the process in identifying the best research methodology, researching and creating the literature review, collecting data, and throughout the analysis and writing of the thesis. I also employed reflexive journaling as an additional tool to assist in enhancing the confirmability of the research. This was important due to the nature of qualitative research and in-depth interviews, during which the *"researcher is generally [...] not [...] independent from those researched"* (Saunders et al., 2019, p. 180). This was particularly true since I have previous connections to several informants and am personally invested in their cause. The triangulation of sources also positively impacts the confirmability of the research (Forero et al., 2018).

5.4 Future Research

As this thesis is exploratory and evaluative in nature, the emphasis has been on establishing the relevance and reliability of previous research for a specific nonprofit subsector. I also uncovered new and contrasting factors/elements that served to augment the research on nonprofits' communication efforts.

Further research is needed on the connections and overlap between the elements in the theoretical framework presented in this thesis and how these can be improved to predict success in social media marketing for nonprofits. Another worthwhile line of investigation would be the adoption of the framework to nonprofits of various ages, sizes, sectors, and causes, as well as the adaptation of such a framework over time. Additionally, research on the advantages and disadvantages of using paid advertising on social media marketing for nonprofits and how they would impact this research would be helpful.

Finally, there is a need for regularly updated research on the currently popular and future social media platforms and how their features can be used to increase attention to an organization and its messages. The uncertainty of how to manage social media marketing efforts in practical day-to-day work was said to be a large point of frustration for both organizations. As one of the informants said, *"Social media is this evolving beast. [...] It's changing so much, and so quickly."* It would be of immense value for nonprofits and other organizations to have access to a database that tracks where the "beast" goes and how it continues to evolve, and provide suggestions about how to best use it to reach long-term strategic goals.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Interview Guide

This interview is conducted as a part of the collection of primary data for my master's thesis in Marketing and Brand Management at the Norwegian School of Economics. This data will play a central role as I gain knowledge of the proficiency of social media marketing in small ministries.

The answers are aimed at understanding how the organization/brand(s) operate when it comes to social media in general, and Facebook and Instagram in particular. If the answers depend based on the social media platform, seek clarification for Instagram in particular.

All names and brands will be anonymized in the published thesis, but I might refer to people and brands as Informant A1, Informant A2 for Brand A or similarly.

If you don't know or don't want to answer an answer question, that's completely fine. If you know who in the organization might be able to answer the question, I'd be happy to ask them instead.

(NOTE: Some of these questions include phrases that are quoted directly from articles cited in references and covered in the literature review.)

A) Antecedent Conditions/Inputs (Resources & Strategy) and Long-term Strategic Outcomes

1. Please tell me ***about the organization/brand(s)*** (age, size, sector, etc.):
    a. ***How old*** is the brand/organization?
    b. ***How many brands*** does it manage?
    c. What is the organizations ***connection to the Seventh-day Adventist Church?***
    d. How many ***current employees***?
    e. How ***long have you*** been there?
    f. What is ***your role*** within the organization?
    g. How has the organization ***changed*** since you got there?
    h. Who's ***responsible*** for social media marketing?
2. ***How*** does your organization ***use social media***?

3. If the organization has multiple brands, are the ***brands managed differently***? How? What reasons (why)?
4. How many people are involved with ***maintaining*** the social media channels?
5. ***Rate the importance*** of social media for your organization compared to other marketing and communication efforts on a scale from 1-5 *(1 = not important, 5 = very important)*.
6. What role does social media have ***compared to other marketing efforts?***
7. Why is your organization on social media? What's the ***purpose*** of your organization's social media presence? What ***goals/long-term strategic outcomes*** do you want to realize through social media? What (strategic) ***main goals*** do you have for the organization/brand? What's the ***organization's social media marketing strategy***?
    a. Larger audience (who?)
    b. More attention (from who?)
    c. More impact (what does that look like?)
    d. What timeframe(s) are you working with?
    e. Examples: image building, increase activity on website/other platforms, increase sales/donations, etc.
8. Does your organization have a clear ***vision/mission*** statement? Do you know how to use/apply it?
9. How many ***hours per week*** does the organization invest in social media marketing?
10. What is your ***budget*** for social media marketing? (amount/percentage)
11. What amount/percentage of the **total marketing budget** is spent on social media marketing?
12. Which social media ***platform*** is your organization investing the most in currently? Why?

B) Awareness of available/existing channels, tools, and techniques

13. Which ***options*** (channels, tools, and techniques) are you ***aware*** of when it comes to online marketing?
14. What do you see as the ***biggest challenge*** with social media marketing? Where do you feel like you ***struggle*** the most?
15. What are the risks involved and commitments necessary to succeed with ***social media marketing?***
16. How did you ***learn*** about social media marketing?
17. How much ***help*** have you received from the Adventist Church's official materials on social media marketing? Any ***direct*** training and guidance?

18. Who is your ***audience?***
    a. Different stakeholder groups?
    b. Do you work with a set of personas?
    c. Is your current audience your ideal audience?
    d. Who's your future audience?
19. What ***role*** does the brand/organization represent ***to its stakeholders***? What role do you want it to have? (thought/opinion leader, curator, convener/community builder, information source, market builder)
20. Who's your ***competition?*** (on social media, specifically)

C) Utilization of available/existing channels, tools, and techniques

21. What ***research*** have you done to support these strategic decisions? ***How do you learn*** what to do and what not to do?
22. Do you do any **paid advertisements**? Why? How? Budget? Retargeting?
23. Do you use a ***scheduling and analytics platform*** for social media? Hootsuite, Hubspot etc. How? Why?
24. What's your ***process when creating*** a post/message, and ***what do you do after*** it's posted? Is the process ***different*** for posts, stories, reels or IGTV?
25. Do you run any ***marketing campaigns,*** and if so, what is that process like?

BRAND IDENTITY/PERSONALITY

26. If your organization's brand(s) was a person, ***how would you describe it?*** (Character attributes/personality traits)
27. ***Do you use the concept of brand personality*** in your social media marketing? If so, how?

HOLISTIC FRAMEWORK

Scope (Defenders vs Explorers)

28. Do you primarily ***communicate*** or ***collaborate*** on social media?
29. Do you focus on communication on social media, and if so, how?
30. Do you focus on collaboration on social media, and if so, how?

Culture (Conservatism vs. Modernism)

31. Are you ***risk-averse*** or ***risk-taking*** on social media? / in your marketing approach?
32. How important is it to you to ***maintain control*** over the brand/organization's image?
33. How ***willing*** are you to let social media users ***talk negatively*** about the organization?

34. How important is it to ***engage*** with the stakeholders?

Structure (Hierarchies to Networks)

35. Who has the ***responsibility to post and interact*** on social media?
36. How does this fit with the organizations overarching strategies?

Governance (Autocracy to Anarchy)

37. How does the organization determine who can or should say what in social media?

LOGIC MODEL
(Antecedent Conditions, Inputs and Long-term/Strategic Outcomes answered earlier)

SM Activities/Outputs (Messages and Connections)

38. How do you use Instagram to ***connect*** with your stakeholders?
39. How do you compose your messages to attract attention to the ***organization?***
40. How do you compose a message to attract attention to that ***particular message?***
41. How do you decide if and when to use ***videos, images, and text?***
42. Hashtags? @USER mentions? Link in bio? ***What are the benefits of these?***

Immediate Effect (Attention)

43. Do you attempt to make the users feel like they're ***present*** with the organization? How?
44. Do you attempt to make the users feel like they're ***involved*** with the organization? How?
45. ***How much*** attention do you actually want? What would happen if your social media disappeared?

Pathways to Outcomes (Accelerate attention, leverage attention, transform attention)

46. ***What do you do with the attention*** you receive through social media marketing? How do you go ***from attention to impact?*** *(Accelerate, transform or leverage attention)*

D) Informant's Background

47. What is your ***personal background?*** What is your ***education/primary skills?***
48. Do you have ***personal social media accounts****?* Which platform(s) do you prioritize?
49. Is it primarily for ***friends/family*** or for ***publicity work*** (career, personal brand, evangelism)?

E) Conclusion

50. What's the ***next step*** for the organization's marketing efforts?
51. Is there anything you want to mention that we ***haven't covered***?