

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	V
Brief Contents	VII
List of Figures	XIII
List of Tables	XV
List of Abbreviations	XVII
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Research Context and Significance	1
1.2 Research Issue and Objectives	4
1.3 Thesis Structure	8
1.4 Contribution to Literature	10
2 Contextual Background	13
2.1 Social Media	13
2.2 Corporate Weblogs	18
3 Related Literature	21
4 Hypotheses Development	25
4.1 Conceptual Framework	25
4.2 Source of Information: Author Hierarchy Level	27
4.3 Presentation of Information: Storytelling and Sensory Elements	29
4.3.1 Post Content Narrativeness	29
4.3.2 Post Content Vividness	31
4.4 Interaction with Information: Participants, Sentiments, and Conversations	32
4.4.1 Commentator Concentration	32
4.4.2 Comments Valence	33
4.4.3 Commenting Activity	34
4.4.4 Conversational Activity	35
4.4.5 Conversational Involvement	37
4.4.6 Conversational Perishability	38
4.5 Overview of Testable Hypotheses	40

5	Data Description and Modeling Preview.....	43
5.1	Data.....	43
5.2	Modeling Preview.....	46
6	Variable Definitions, Measurements, and Checks.....	49
6.1	Variables and Measures.....	49
6.1.1	Dependent Variable.....	49
6.1.2	Focal Independent Variables.....	49
6.1.2.1	Post Author-Related Characteristic: Hierarchical Status.....	49
6.1.2.2	Post Content-Related Characteristics.....	50
6.1.2.2.1	Content Narrativeness.....	50
6.1.2.2.2	Content Vividness.....	51
6.1.2.3	Post Comments-Related Characteristics.....	52
6.1.2.3.1	Commenting Activity.....	52
6.1.2.3.2	Commentator Concentration.....	52
6.1.2.3.3	Comments Valence.....	54
6.1.2.3.4	Conversational Activity.....	55
6.1.2.3.4.1	Operational Definition of Conversations.....	55
6.1.2.3.4.2	Identification and Coding of Conversations.....	57
6.1.2.3.4.3	Measurement of Conversational Activity.....	58
6.1.2.3.5	Conversational Involvement.....	59
6.1.2.3.6	Conversational Perishability.....	59
6.1.3	Control Variables.....	60
6.1.3.1	Author Gender.....	60
6.1.3.2	Author Posting Account.....	61
6.1.3.3	Post Text Length.....	62
6.1.3.4	Post Age.....	63
6.1.3.5	Blog Maturity.....	63
6.2	Robustness Check: Alternative Specification.....	64
6.2.1	Underlying Rationale.....	64
6.2.2	Variable and Measurement Redefinitions.....	66
6.2.2.1	Commenting Activity at Blog Level.....	66
6.2.2.2	Conversational Activity at Blog Level.....	67
6.2.2.3	Conversational Involvement at Blog Level.....	67
6.2.2.4	Conversational Perishability at Blog Level.....	68
6.2.3	Reformulation of Testable Hypotheses.....	68
6.3	Variable Recap and Summary Statistics.....	70

7	Empirical Model	71
7.1	Data Challenges and Modeling Approach	71
7.1.1	Overdispersed Count Data	72
7.1.2	Clustered Data	74
7.1.3	Autocorrelation	74
7.2	Model Specification	75
7.2.1	Model with Focus on Conversational Activity	76
7.2.2	Model with Focus on Conversational Involvement and Conversational Perishability	77
7.3	Model Extension	77
7.3.1	Comments Stock Model with Focus on Conversational Activity	77
7.3.2	Comments Stock Model with Focus on Conversational Involvement and Conversational Perishability	78
8	Model Estimation and Discussion	79
8.1	Estimation Strategy	79
8.2	Regression Results	79
8.3	Interpretation of Coefficients	81
8.4	Detailed Analytical Insights and Discussion	83
8.4.1	Focal Effects	83
8.4.1.1	Hypothesis 1: Hierarchy	83
8.4.1.2	Hypothesis 2: Narrativeness	86
8.4.1.3	Hypothesis 3: Vividness	86
8.4.1.4	Hypothesis 4: Concentration	87
8.4.1.5	Hypothesis 5: Valence	89
8.4.1.6	Hypothesis 6: Comments	90
8.4.1.7	Hypothesis 7: Conversations	90
8.4.1.8	Hypothesis 8: Involvement	91
8.4.1.9	Hypothesis 9: Perishability	93
8.4.2	Other Effects	94
9	Conclusion	97
9.1	Summary of Findings and Managerial Implications	97
9.2	Research Limitations and Future Research Directions	103
9.3	Concluding Remarks	106

Appendices 109

 Appendix A Additional Descriptive Statistics 109

 Appendix B Additional Figures 112

References.....115