

Ethical Divergence in Social Media Engagement

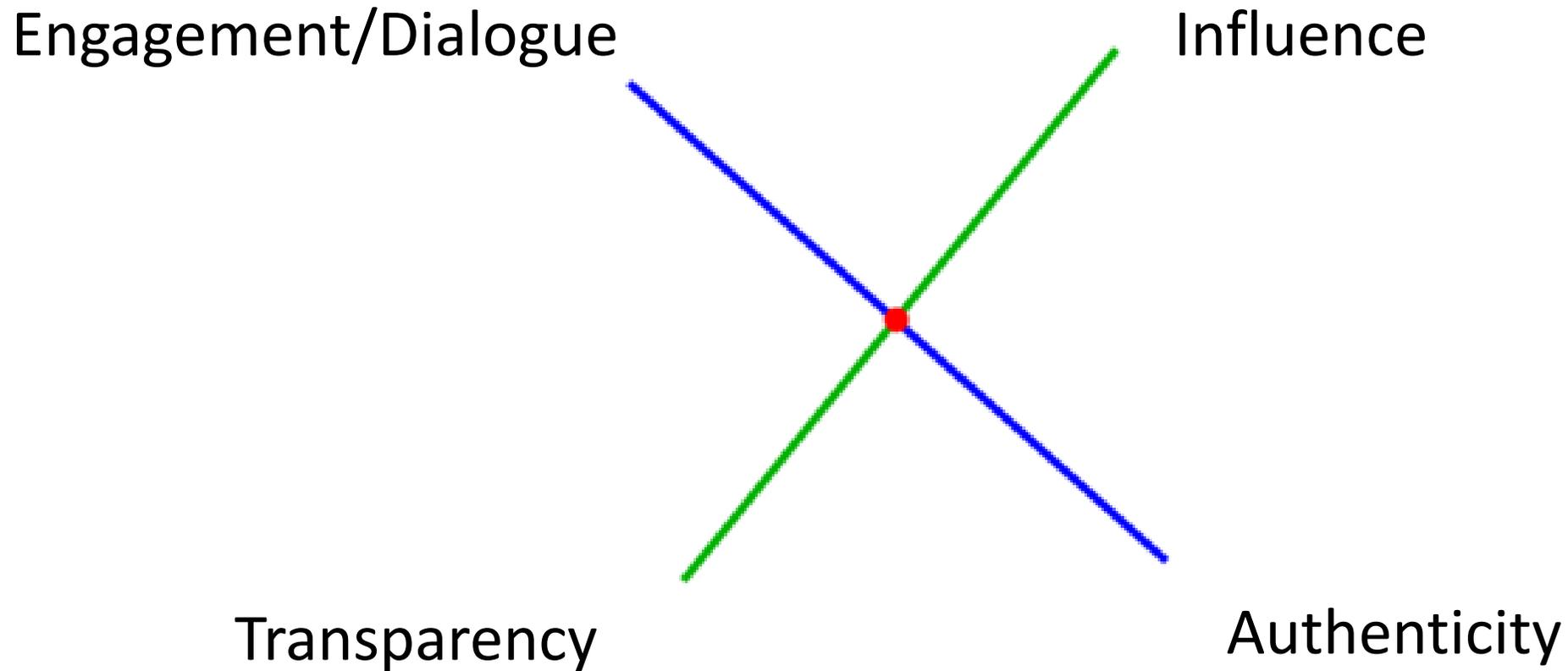
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Social Media Theories – Four Spokes



Transparency

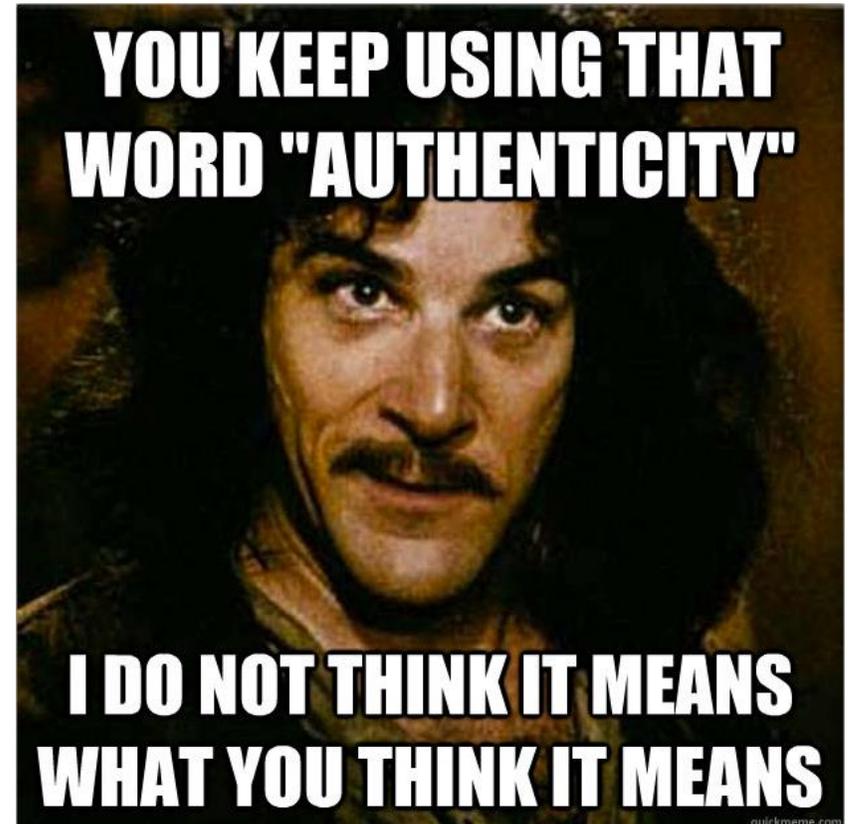
Rawlins (1999) defined transparency as,

“The deliberate attempt to make all legally releasable information—whether positive or negative in nature—in a manner that is accurate, timely, balanced, and unequivocal, for the purpose of enhancing the reasoning ability of publics and holding organizations accountable for their actions, policies, and practices.”

Research has found transparency increases credibility and trust!

Authenticity

- Gilmore and Pine (2007) define authenticity as something that is “real, original, genuine, sincere is not fake”
- A survey of Twitter users found an individual’s authenticity is reported to be in direct opposition to strategic self-promotion (Marwick & Boyd, 2010).



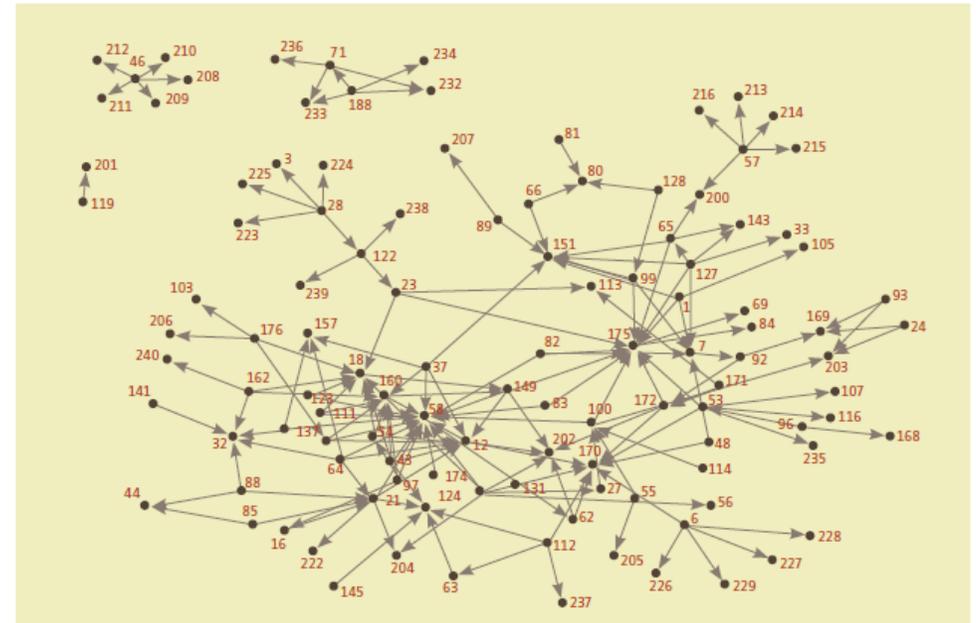
Influence

- Companies are investing into influencer programs based on followers, Klout scores, and popularity
- Sociometric techniques to identify opinion leaders are more valid
 - Self-reports or metrics of visibility like publication or blogging activity are not without problems. In this case, self-reports were more likely to measure self-confidence rather than true influence.

Iyengar: Physician 175 Profile

- Not an outgoing, high-profile doctor with academic credentials
- He was a humble, self-effacing and clinically active physician
- Highly respected by the local community because of his vast experience and knowledge in treating the disease

FIGURE 2:
The Network of Discussion
in San Francisco



Dialogic communication is defined as “any negotiated exchange of ideas and opinions”¹

“Dialogue must be ethical, honest and forthright in terms of transparency, as well as authenticity”²

1. Kent and Taylor, 1998

Sample of Dialogic Communication Studies

- Kent & Taylor (1998), Building dialogic relationships through the World Wide Web, *Public Relations Review*, 24(3), 321-334.
- Waters, Burnett, Lamm, & Lucas. (2009). Engaging stakeholders through social networking: How nonprofit organizations are using Facebook. *Public Relations Review*, 35.
- Bortree & Seltzer (2009). Dialogic strategies and outcomes: An analysis of environmental advocacy groups' Facebook profiles, *Public Relations Review*, 35(3).
- McCorkindale & Morgoch. (2013). An analysis of the mobile readiness and dialogic principles on Fortune 500 mobile websites. *Public Relations Review*, 39(3).

Engagement

- Social Media Measurement Standards Conclave defined as “some action beyond exposure, and implies an interaction between two or more parties”
- Studies have investigated dialogue among stakeholders with companies and nonprofits, and how mobile devices encourage dialogic communication.
- Best practices for engagement



Brian Solis contends organizations must...

ENGAGE OR DIE

as monologue has given way to dialogue

“Dialogue must be ethical, honest and forthright in terms of transparency, as well as authenticity”²

DiStaso & McCorkindale (2013)

- 52% of companies with content in a two-week period used a dialogic loop in at least one of their social media platforms
- Willingness to engage: likes, follows, subscriptions on YouTube

Ethics in social media engagement

- Smudde (2005) suggested companies should reduce “ethical equivocality,” ensuring companies communicate ethically and aspire to the ideal ethic of dialogue or two-way communication.
- Stoker and Tusinski (2006) recommended balancing dialogue is the most ethical approach because demanding a quid pro quo relationship by asking stakeholders to participate may be unethical.

Therefore.....

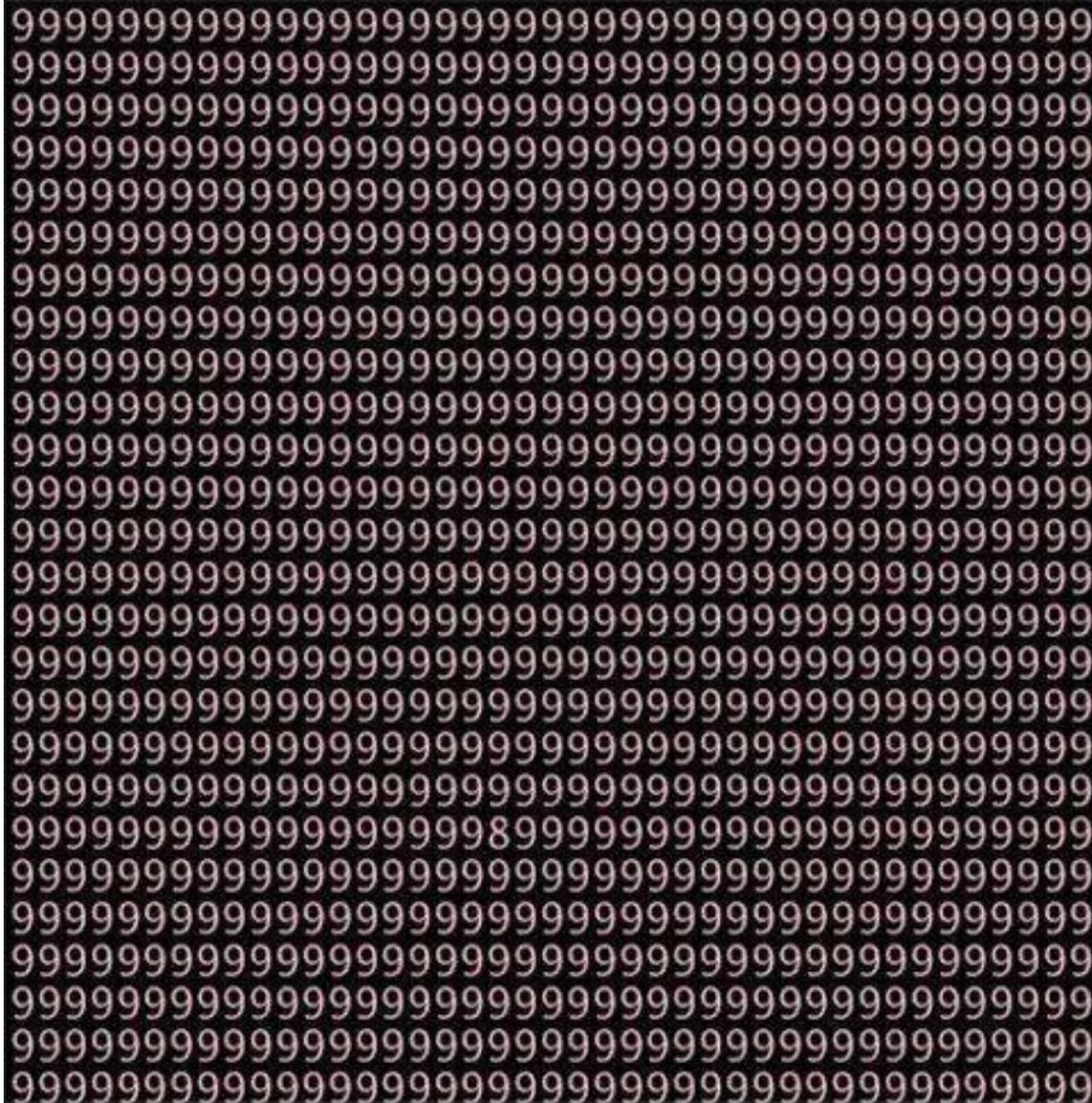
Communicating on social media sites should be akin to having a conversation where both listening and conversing are employed without having ulterior motives.

Ethical Considerations



“Content for content's sake is one of the biggest problems in social media marketing today”

- Patricio Robles (econsultancy)



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Adrian Astle ipostparcels web site running that slow i cannot use it

Like · Reply · 22 hrs



ipostparcels.com Hi, I do apologise as the website was down due to maintenance. I have been advised this has been resolved now. Thanks^CR



Cesar Canine Cuisine

5 minutes ago

“Bow-wow.” “Woof.” How would you spell the unique sound your dog makes when he barks?



Timeline Photos



Condescending Corporate Brand Page

March 27

Please engage with this post. Thanks.

Angelica Lee, Car Cornelio, Kamala Shanti and 47 others like this.

1 share

Rebecca Jones My dog sounds like he's calling everyone a cunt. He's usually right.
28 · March 27 at 8:48am

Chris Hogan Is this a quiz based on piss-poor non-science and clickbait? If not, I'm just not interested.
5 · March 27 at 8:30am

Daniel Walker
A guy has a talking dog. He brings it to a talent scout. "This dog can speak English," he claims to the unimpressed agent. "Okay, Sport," the guys says to the dog, "what's on the top of a house?" "Roof!" the dog replies.

"Oh, come on..." the talent ag... [See More](#)
7 · March 27 at 8:38am

Jim Kos thats a weird looking cat
5 · March 27 at 8:04am

Neeme Oja
A guy and his dog go to a talent scout

Dog vs. Cat debate



Ethic of Care is necessary!

- Coombs and Holladay (2013) consider ethic of care to guide ethical-decision making to build a nurturing web of relationship in terms of being compassionate and caring of others.
- Ethic of care focuses on interdependence, mutuality, and reciprocity.
- Also, we cannot choose to ignore a relationship because it is simply not important to an organization.

“Dissemination can be just and dialogue can be unjust. More important than the mode of communication is the morality of communicators and their willingness to recognize and reconcile differences. Finding truth becomes much more important than achieving agreement, and change is motivated by a commitment to character rather than a desire to manage reputation and consensus.”

- Stoker & Tusinski-Berg, 2006

Ethical Social Media Engagement

- Through a 2 x 3 x 5 experiment with 1,623 participants, we analyze differences between “most” and “least” ethical companies on social media for content about CSR, employees, financial, innovation, and unrelated.

		Most Ethical	Least Ethical	
Cognitive	$\alpha=.75$	$M=3.20$ $SD=0.93, N=602$	$M=2.24$ $SD=0.91, N=604$	$F(1, 1205) = 331.88, p<.001$
Emotional	$\alpha=.84$	$M=3.49$ $SD=0.90, N=602$	$M=2.06$ $SD=0.92, N=604$	$F(1, 1205) = 744.60, p<.001$
Online Behavior	$\alpha=.91$	$M=2.68$ $SD=0.95, N=602$	$M=1.56$ $SD=0.71, N=604$	$F(1, 1205) = 539.73, p<.001$
Offline Behavior	$\alpha=.91$	$M=3.19$ $SD=0.93, N=602$	$M=1.66$ $SD=0.75, N=604$	$F(1, 1205) = 972.16, p<.001$