A Comparison of the Source, Media Format, and Sentiment in Generating Source Credibility, Information Credibility, Corporate Brand Reputation, Purchase Intention, and Social Media Engagement in a Corporate Social Responsibility Campaign Presented Via Social Media

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A COMPARISON OF THE SOURCE, MEDIA FORMAT, AND SENTIMENT IN GENERATING SOURCE CREDIBILITY, INFORMATION CREDIBILITY, CORPORATE BRAND REPUTATION, PURCHASE INTENTION, AND SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT IN A CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY CAMPAIGN PRESENTED VIA SOCIAL MEDIA

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Doctor of Philosophy
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by
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ABSTRACT

This study addresses the impact of source, media format, and sentiment in the influencing source credibility, information credibility, corporate brand reputation, purchase intention, and social media engagement in a corporate social responsibility campaign presented in a social media environment. The study utilized a 2 x 3 x 2 ANOVA to analyze results from an online survey that exposed respondents to various source, format, and sentiment combinations. The source was designated as either a corporation or a consumer. The media format was a news release, an advertisement or a news article. The sentiment was classified as either “with sentiment” or “no sentiment.” The ANOVA measured the impact of source main effect, source/format interaction effects, source/sentiment interaction effects, and source/format/sentiment interaction effects. Twenty hypotheses were posed. The results of this study found statistically significant differences in source, media format, and sentiment in stimulating aspects of source credibility, information credibility, corporate brand reputation, and purchase intention when considering source, source/format interaction, source/sentiment interaction, and source/format/sentiment interaction. Forty-six statistically significant differences were found. Of the 20 hypotheses tested, 13 were supported. A detailed description of findings is contained in this study.
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband, Reed Bolton Byrum, Sr., who provided enduring support during my doctoral studies, and my children, Bradley, Caroline, and James.
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I thank my parents, Dr. Donald and Peggy Baumgartner, for constantly underscoring the value of education in my life.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Communication precedes commerce. Contemporary corporations strive to establish meaningful relationships with key stakeholders through strategic communication. This communication will promote actions, and these actions will translate into success or failure for the company. Today, many corporations have embraced the role of corporate citizenship as a way to reach key constituencies and foster relationships that will bind customers to the organization and promote positive outcomes, including enhancement of the brand and the financial bottom line. As an emerging field of study, corporate social responsibility and communication remains a ripe area for analysis of the appropriate communication sources and formats.

Heritage

Philosophers such as Plato (Plato, 427 BCE) and theorists such as Wilbur Schramm (Schramm, 1971) and James Grunig (Grunig & Grunig, 1992) have long grappled with the notions of persuasive communication from Aristotle’s triangle to contemporary public relations models that address symmetrical communication and dialogic principles. While media and communication studies scholars study the role of the sender, implications of the media format, and the role of the audience, businesses struggle to create content that will catalyze desired outcomes among the publics amid a cacophony of advertising, news releases, and social media content that proliferates through modern media. Corporations seek to engage with stakeholders in a meaningful way. By communicating a role of “corporate citizenship,” companies propose campaigns
of corporate social responsibility that address topics of sustainability, humane treatment of workers, specific philanthropic causes, and a myriad of other corporate social responsibility programs. Corporate social responsibility is a burgeoning business responsibility as corporations face pressures from multiple stakeholders demanding greater levels of interaction with respective communities and society at large. Corporate social responsibility programs take a multitude of forms and are communicated in mediocre, adequate, and robust ways, depending on the strength of the corporate social responsibility communication function.

When a corporation decides to execute a corporate social responsibility program, immediate questions arise regarding the appropriate corporate message, the designated spokesperson, and the most effective media format. This communication challenge establishes the frame for this dissertation, a study that contemplates the questions related to the most advantageous source for carrying the CSR message and what media format should be used to prompt such positive outcomes as source credibility, information credibility, brand awareness, purchase intention, and social media engagement. Today businesses conduct corporate social responsibility communication amid an environment of social media. The pressing issue remains how corporations develop and deploy a meaningful corporate social responsibility program, and communicate in a way that will resonate with stakeholders, deliver bottom line results, and substantially contribute to society.
**Aristotelian Roots, The Corporate Citizen, and The Audience’s Role**

Contemporary scholars studying the impact of media source and media format can take lessons from the ancient roots of persuasion set forth by Aristotle. From the triangle of persuasion, to specific attributes of speaker persuasion, the ancient concepts resound today through modern communication channels, most notably social media. Aristotle articulated three modes of persuasion, including the character of the spokesperson defined as ethos, the stirring of emotion referred to as pathos and the inclusion of the logos, or a logical argument designed to persuade the audience to take appropriate action (Kennedy, 2007). The speaker gains persuasive power through practical wisdom, known as phronesis, virtue (arête), and good will (eunoia), according to Aristotelian notions. While the speakers of today may not stand in town squares to deliver messages, the Internet provides a new media format for speakers to instantaneously deliver messages to recipients in multiple geographies. Technology may empower the communicator, but the compelling need to communicate with ethos, pathos, and logos remains. Key stakeholders may not hear a corporation if the message negates the emotional appeal and logical approach. This is particularly relevant for corporate social responsibility, as appeals are made regarding broader civic issues and logical appeals address the impact of particular programs.

The three Aristotelian principles of persuasion (i.e., ethos, pathos, and logos) may be applied to a corporation that is launching a corporate social responsibility communication program. To illustrate this, a company may aspire to dominate the marketplace from a position of sound ethics by simply promoting its credible ethos,
invoke emotion among prospective customers to purchase products and exert logical arguments (logos) to persuade consumers to behave in certain ways. The following section provides a construct for persuasive communication to follow Aristotle’s rhetorical path to promote a corporation’s ethos, integrate emotion-oriented pathos, and operate in a logical system (logos) to effectuate the desired outcomes. For Aristotle, the role of “ethos” meant that the speaker was trustworthy and that his character was projected through speech. The savvy public relations professional conveys ethos through carefully designed programs, crafted messages, and creative tactics. The corporate “speaker” must communicate in a clear way that resonated with stakeholders. Public relations professionals serve a vital role in establishing corporate ethos by formulating the brand platform, articulating it through messages and activities into the marketplace, and protecting the corporate reputation moving through time.

The Aristotelian concept of pathos, an evoked emotion arising from a rhetorical persuasion, provides an appropriate framework for public relations professionals contemplating an effective corporate social responsibility campaign. By effectively stirring the emotions of key stakeholders, the corporation provokes them to action. This action may include a buying pattern, adoption of belief, incorporation of the brand essence, or instillation of brand loyalty. Aristotle stated that priming individuals to an emotional state leads them to a different frame of reference for decision-making. Pathos occurs as a mode of artistic proof when the minds of the audience are moved to emotion: they will come to a different conclusion, for example, when they are angry than when they are pleased (Kennedy, 1999). For corporations, this heightened state of awareness
provides opportunities for communication and persuasion in strategic ways. Consumers operating in a heightened state of awareness seem pre-disposed to making decisions that favor the company. While the impact of corporate social responsibility on sales, brand management, and brand loyalty is well documented, the inspiration for this phenomenon resides in the Aristotelian rhetorical principle of pathos or in what Kennedy (2007) called moods or temporary states of mind. As noted in contemporary CSR marketplaces, a corporate “citizen” may gain commendations in the marketplace, increased sales and a bevy of customers more willing to support the company’s products despite potentially higher prices. Public relations professionals may serve as the strategic coach to the corporate citizen, instructing the behemoth how to react, communicate, and evoke desired emotions for the maximum benefits to the corporation and society. By operating from a credible standpoint and evoking emotion among key publics, sound corporate social responsibility programs address the third prong of Aristotelian rhetoric – logos. Through an appeal to the logical mind, the corporation (e.g., corporate citizen) advances its goals. Familiarity with CSR behaviors on the corporate identity and purchase intention has been documented, ratifying the role of public relations professionals and agents of communication (David, Kline, & Dai, 2005). As the corporate citizen proceeds from a position of authority and speaks as a “friend” evoking emotion among its key audiences, the corporation can logically progress from intangible concepts of corporate social responsibility to specific aspects of execution. Without proper communication and the articulation of the logos of the event, the company may fall flat and fail at corporate social responsibility efforts.
The speaker, the corporation, or the “source” of the information may be losing power as the role of the audience grows amid dialogic communication. The term “user-generated content” is now recognized by corporate communicators attempting to deal with YouTube, Instagram, Facebook, and a myriad of social media outlets that allow consumers to virally share information. The phenomenon of the empowered consumer communicator invites the question: Does social media promote dialogic communication? To better understand potential answers to this question, it is necessary to understand aspects of dialogic theory and how these concepts have evolved through time. Schramm conceived the communication process model that allowed for encoding by the sender and decoding by the receiver, operating in communication loops that were influenced by context (Schramm, 1971). The traditional sender/receiver model of communications has been often criticized for its linearity. An alternative framework by Hall (1980) considers the fact that encoding and decoding may not be symmetrical and thus can lead to misunderstandings. (Hall, 1980). Misunderstandings can occur when there is a lack of equivalence between the two sides of the communicative exchange. This is important as corporations consider appeals to specific audiences and techniques to effectively communicate. Today new media studies consider the fact that the audience “decoder” is equipped with technology to rapidly deploy a message to a new audience, thus subsequently transforming them into a sender.

Kent and Taylor (1998) have argued that dialogue is a product, and not a process. They argue that it is one of a relational interaction. For a corporation then to effectively
advance a corporate social responsibility campaign, they must choose one that promotes a relationship with key stakeholders and fosters aspects of dialogic communication.

**Defining Public Relations and Corporate Social Responsibility**

To effectively analyze the intersection of corporate communications and corporate social responsibility, the definitions of specific terms must first be explored. In 2012, after more than 30 years of operating with a previous definition, the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) adopted a new definition for public relations: “A strategic communications process that allows organizations to form mutually beneficial relationships with key publics” (Public Relations Society of America, 2014). Scholars underscore the process nature of public relations and the mutually beneficial dimensions that allow an organization to experience success or failure. Public relations is more than a specific news release or a tactical program, it is a process that may be guided by dialogic principles or a two-way flow of information. The PRSA definition is one that may be accurately applied to the role of the public relations professional involved in crafting and articulating corporate social responsibility programs.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) remains an evolving paradigm with multiple definitions. Carroll (1979) has emerged as a thought leader in this area and defines corporation’s responsibilities in four major areas including legal, ethical, environmental, and philanthropic dimensions. Scholars have documented the evolution of corporate social responsibility and have attempted to examine it from multiple perspectives including business ethics and marketing. The concept has evolved and changed through the years, and today we note a cacophony of corporate social
responsibility initiatives that demonstrate how corporations engage with employees, vendors, consumers, investors, and other stakeholders. Cochran (2007), in an analysis of the evolution of corporate social responsibility, found a move from philanthropy to strategic philanthropy that included social responsible investing, social entrepreneurship, and the use of CSR to promote the bottom line.

The powerful role of communication in CSR has been studied (Coombs & Holladay, 2009), yet must be probed further in the era of social media. The social media environment has thrust open the doors for dialogic communication between corporations and multiple key stakeholders, and thus given rise to a new era of transparency that holds businesses accountable to responsible business practices. The public now looks through a vast transparent window into a corporation’s business processes and requires greater levels of responsibility in categories originally defined by Carroll. Kent and Taylor (1998) defined dialogic principles of communication such as mutuality, empathy, propinquity, risk, and commitment that can enhance the relationship between the corporation and key stakeholders. Public relations scholars have found that performance-based philanthropy can lead to added value and assert that strategic charitable giving requires a strategic plan (Mullen, 1997). Further research regarding the intersection of CSR and effective communication is required, particularly regarding the expanding role of the stakeholder as they generate and propagate social media content to influence other stakeholders.

New models of communication are evolving as user-generated content now populates the social media sphere and influences consumers susceptible to corporate
social responsibility messages. Yet the role of the audience remains a vital area for exploration as the receiver now becomes an active communicator in the social media atmosphere. Today, corporations have no choice but to consider the atmosphere of dialogic communication brought forth by the Internet and ubiquity of social media. The use of social media in a CSR campaign has been endorsed by Kesavan, Bernacchi, and Mascarenhas (2013) who indicated that social media for CSR represents a strong strategy because social media serve as an extension of interpersonal communication and social media environments possess great power for building idea and knowledge communities through rapid diffusion of ideas and messages to worldwide audiences.

The notion of CSR co-creation has been advocated by scholars, including Korschun and Du (2013), who state that this type of dialog, which is dependent on the platform and participation, leads to immediate outcomes of community participation and understanding of CSR expectations, thus resulting in behavioral outcomes such as value for the company and value for the cause (Korschun & Du, 2013). By asserting that social media fuels co-creation, they conclude co-creation of CSR improves stakeholder relationships and that stakeholder-to-stakeholder communication can convert individuals to “evangelists” for the company. Consistent with the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) of persuasion, individuals who have an interest in specific causes associated with corporate social responsibility may be persuaded through a central route while those who remain less engaged may be influenced by a peripheral route of persuasion.

The core concepts of public relations, corporate social responsibility, dialogic communication, and the elaboration likelihood model of persuasion are relevant to this
study. By examining CSR communication, this research probes the meeting point of where corporations can give birth to meaningful programs that will resonate with stakeholders and deliver rewards not only to the company, but also to society through effective communication delivered through the appropriate source and media format.

Improving Stakeholder Bond With CSR Communication

The notion of undertaking CSR programs to bind stakeholders to the organization has long been recognized by scholars in multiple disciplines including management, marketing and ethics. The role of communication in binding the stakeholder to the organization during a corporate social responsibility program requires further study. Maignan and Ferrell (2004) provide an integrative framework for the reasons why corporations devise CSR programs, dissecting them into socially-driven, stakeholder-driven, management-driven and ethical practices. They assert the CSR may bond the firm and its stakeholders, with communication stimulating interactions both with and between stakeholders. While these communications must convey meaningful attributes of the CSR initiatives to stakeholders for businesses to yield maximum outcomes, this area of research has been scant and characterized as embryonic (Maignan & Ferrell, 2004).

The concepts of philanthropy remain woven into the fabric of literature, religious doctrines, and ethics codes. It has been said that Aeschylus first suggested the word “philanthropy” in the myth of Prometheus as he bestowed fire and optimism to primitive human beings, giving them improved spiritual and material dimensions of life (Benn & Bolton, 2011). The meanings of philanthropy has morphed through thousands of years, and today corporations wrestle with the concept of corporate social responsibility (CSR)
as a strategic business dimension used to interact with multiple stakeholders. Today, chief executive officers, marketing executives, public relations professionals, and boards of directors contemplate notions of strategic philanthropy, cause marketing, a “triple bottom line,” all driven by the overarching need to engage with stakeholders. During the last 50 years, businesses have relied on traditional media formats like newspapers to convey points about CSR initiatives, but today corporate communicators face a fountainhead of media content fueled by social media.

To enlighten the discussion of CSR communication, it is important to understand the business backdrop for communication that conveys corporate goodwill and citizenship. The ability to transact relies on the seller’s ability to convey the value proposition to a prospective buyer and interpret the buyer’s acceptance or denial. Persuasion plays a vital role and the ethos of the speaker, the pathos of the appeal, and the logos of the argument vary among each transaction. The seller and buyer either arrive at an agreement in the exchange of the goods and services or retreat from the deal. Commercial communication exchanges have come a long way from ancient bartering to contemporary digital exchanges that fuel transactions 24/7 from buyers and sellers who may never meet in person but merely exchange data to promote a sale. Yet, the compelling challenge to articulate value propositions by commanding multimedia channels now at our disposal remains the same. Scholars continue to explore aspects of corporate communications by probing: Who says what to whom? Who is the most credible and trustworthy individual to carry the corporation’s CSR message? What is best media format to credibly convey information? What is the impact of CSR on purchase
intent, the brand, and social media engagement? What is the impact of testimonial sentiment on social media engagement? Corporations today remain perplexed about these dynamics as new channels for message distribution, communications influences, and vehicles for communication alter the influences on the consumer. Questions about what is said, to whom, by whom, and for what purpose continually confound the marketplace and provide a research platform for this dissertation. This study draws on the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) of persuasion to further investigate source and media format in a CSR initiative. The model asserts that the amount of “elaboration” put forth by an audience can be placed on a continuum; (Petty & Cacioppo, 1983). Researchers later used the model to suggest a structure for communicating with consumers. The structure determines the level of audience scrutinization, message design, and organization of short-term and long-term objectives (Rucker & Petty, 2006). The impact of elaboration on forming online trust has also been studied (Williams & Kitchen, 2009). The elaboration likelihood model (ELM) will be advanced further in this study of corporate social responsibility communication in an atmosphere of social media. One postulate in particular, offers relevance when analyzing media formats.

Although people want to hold correct attitudes, the amount and nature of issue-relevant elaboration in which they are willing or able to engage to evaluate a message vary with individual and situational factors. (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 5)
A frequent leader in corporate social responsibility communication has been the public relations professional. The discipline of public relations requires further investigation as a leader and participant in corporate social responsibility communication.

**Public Relations Context**

While various spokespersons may be called on to carry the corporate social responsibility message, scholars argue that the public relations professional is most advantageously positioned to handle CSR communication. The role of the public relations professional in corporate communications continues to evolve. The public relations professional has at times moved beyond a traditional press agentry role to a more advanced and strategic role as a communicator who shapes and frames communication in dialogic engagement. Various media formats have been used by public relations professionals including news releases, paid advertisements, and social media content to convey corporate information. The public relations professional may devise and deploy a corporate social responsibility campaign to assist with corporate meaning-making and sense-making for society. The arguments below include discussions about the “expert prescriber role” of the professional and the fact that public relations is a profession with an agreed-upon code of ethics. Further, the public relations professional possesses the ability to understand the needs of multiple stakeholders encompassing internal and external publics. Lastly, the public relations professional, operating under the dialogic principles of communication, may build mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics, fully delivering on the definition of public relations as set forth by the Public Relations Society of America.
Scholars cite public relations professionals as experts who have the capacity to perform a strategic role in the planning and implementation of corporate social responsibility campaigns. As expert prescribers counseling the senior management team, public relations professionals are uniquely qualified to undertake the corporate social responsibility program (Freitag, 2005). This is due in part to the ability of public relations professionals to understand, interpret, and advance stakeholder communication, based on the multiple CSR aspects including legal, ethical, environmental, and philanthropic dimensions, as defined by Carroll (1979). As active players in corporate social responsibility, public relations practitioners must foster mutually beneficial relationships with all stakeholders to achieve harmony and prevent a “legitimacy gap” from occurring when a company does not meet society’s expectations (Daugherty, 2001). Signitzer and Prexl (2008) identified the competitive advantages of the public relations discipline, pointing to the professional’s preferred role as CSR communicator rather than human resources, quality management, or sustainable divisions. The public relations professional has the following attributes that bolster a position in CSR communication: skills segmenting target audiences; personal knowledge of stakeholders; education and experience; expertise in internal communication; reacts to conflict with consensus-orientation; and has a depth of experience in sustainable communications (Signitzer & Prexl, 2008). Yet, the perception of the public relations professional remains limited by perceptions of media relations and publicity. White and Park (2010) found that public relations remains closely tied with publicity and media relations, with more than half of the respondents believing that public relations and media relations were synonymous.
(White & Park, 2010). This gap denotes the schism between the publicity agent model and the expert-prescriber model of public relations.

Other public relations scholars have called for CSR leadership by the public relations professional (Starck & Kruckeberg, 2001). The public relations practitioner should be primarily responsible for fostering and nurturing consumer communities while leveraging positive community benefits and minimizing negative outcomes to individuals, society, and the social environment (Kruckeberg, Starck, & Vujnovic, 2006). It is recognized that scholars call for the “expert prescriber” or “public relations professional,” rather than a public relations tactician (Dozier, 1995; Freitag, 2005). This distinction defines a demarcation between a strategic communicator and a tactics-based worker devoted to disseminating publicity content. The perception of the public relations professional in a one-dimensional role of publicity agent, must be shed to make way for the expanded role of the strategic communicator in corporate social responsibility.

CSR has ebbed and flowed for more than a century as management struggled to balance responsibilities to shareholders with nobler, if normative aims, but intensified scrutiny enabled by advances in communication and transportation make finding that balance increasingly imperative. Doing so will require informed and unemotional examination of carefully-developed policy possibilities, followed by high-order public discourse. Public relations managers are uniquely positioned, experienced, and qualified to guide that effort. (Freitag, 2005, p. 40)

As the role of the public relations professional is contemplated in the context of corporate social responsibility communication, it is relevant to consider additional factors
that endorse the rationale for leadership of the public relations professional in the area of CSR.

**An Expanded Argument, Misperceptions, and Evolved Role**

To solidify the argument that the public relations professional is in a prime position to communicate CSR, consider several noteworthy aspects of the profession. First, public relations meets the standards of a profession including: 1.) Specialized education system, 2.) A unique body of knowledge ground in theoretical research. 3.) Independence, 4.) Recognition by a community and, 5.) Governance by a code of ethics (Broom, 2009). These aspects of professionalism bolster the argument for the role of the public relations professional as leaders and communicators of CSR. The public relations professional is an ethical communicator, suited for the role in corporate social responsibility. The Public Relations Society of America (PRSA), the largest global professional organization of public relations practitioners, provides an ethics code that encompasses ethical values and provides conduct recommendations. The code’s values include advocacy, honesty, independence, loyalty, and fairness in the communication of messages. The conduct recommendations include protecting the free flow of information and promoting transparency. These ethical considerations guide public relations practitioners today as they undergo accreditation and practice strategic communication for organizations each day. The maturation of the discipline as a profession, the existence of the ethical code, and the incorporation of contemporary ethical theories to the profession provide a foundation for the involvement of the strategic communicator in
CSR. In a call for incorporation of the public relations professional into the CSR process, Clark cites the unique capacity of public relations professionals:

Communication managers have the ability to scan the political, social, and historical environment regarding a myriad of issues; likewise, business competitiveness rests on knowing who will be affected by a company’s decisions. Therefore, it is critical that these disciplines acknowledge their similarities and work toward combining their efforts. Furthering the understanding of relationships and the effects of communication will continue to aid researchers and practitioners in the building of bridges between CSR and corporate public relations. (Clark, 2000, p. 377)

The call has been issued and new dialogic principles have emerged, clearing the way for a newly expanded and intensified strategic communication role for the public relations professional. Public relations professionals are stepping into a new role as facilitators of electronic word of mouth, serving not only as creators and disseminators of the message, but also as conduits for community building. To better understand the strategic dimension of communication, Argenti (2005) states that a management imperative exists to incorporate communication professionals into the top levels of decision-making. Argenti interviewed CEOs of top US companies and concluded that strategic communication was a missing link, because professional communicators lacked the measurement of business outcomes. Strategic communicators must provide appropriate measurement that contributes to the business decision-making of the organization.
When senior managers recognize the value of communications, they will also see the role it can play in corporate strategy. From gaining employee buy-in to engaging customers to managing relationships with investors, corporate communication has a role to play in strategy execution. Traditionally, though, senior managers have viewed communications as a tactical function. (Argenti, 2006, p. 30)

Coombs and Holladay (2009) argue that CSR is a door to the dominant coalition of executive management and advocate that two-way communications is the best way to understand and adapt to stakeholder concerns. The pair warns against encroachment when a non-communication professional manages the communication function because power shifts away from strategic communication and, in fact, strategic communication is uniquely suited to lead corporate social responsibility efforts.

Unfortunately, many business leaders still subscribe to an outdated view of the public relations professional in one narrow role as a “publicity agent.” In a study of 173 public relations professionals who were asked to characterize their role in CSR in one of the following categories: significant management; philanthropic; value-driven, communication; and, none. Kim and Reber (2008) found that the contributions of public relations professional were limited by the acceptance of top managers to CSR. While managers may view a CSR program as significant and managerial, practitioners often lacked influence and final authority and were relegated to a publicity based communication role. This misperception stems from the publicity heritage of the profession. Benn, Todd, and Pendleton (2010) have documented this phenomenon and
have called for model of distributive leadership that allows cultures to change with the support of top management. Since the public relations industry has evolved from traditional press agentry roots, contemporary public relations professionals now have the ability to strategically communicate with multiple stakeholders. Public relations professionals choose messages, devise communication techniques, and select venues to carry corporate messages inside the organization and beyond the walls to investors, customers, society, the supply chain, government regulators, and others. It can be asserted that strategic public relations professional deftly discerns the multifaceted aspects of the stakeholders, clearly conveys messages to these diverse stakeholders, establishes two-way communication and refines message and approaches accordingly, allowing adaptation to occur.

As corporate social responsibility continues to evolve as a discipline, facing challenges that include the absence of clear, mutually agreed upon definition, the role of communication has also encountered murky interpretations about the source and message format in a corporate social responsibility campaign. The advent of new communication technologies and the transformation of consumer-to-consumer communication in the atmosphere of pervasive social media must be addressed. The role of the public relations professional remains under scrutiny by academic and corporate spheres. This dissertation articulates a new strategic role for the professional communicator. In a move from a master technician who disseminates content, the strategic communicator is one who carries messages to multiple stakeholders and fosters the development of two-way communication loops. The public relations professional thus becomes a “community
maker,” who systematically empowers the community members to articulate corporate messages. By fueling this empowerment and subsequent communication, the corporation thus reaps the benefits of enhanced communication in the consumer-to-consumer loop. Scholarly literature is denoting a shift of the public relations professional beyond the press agentry heritage to a position of the expert prescriber who builds and sustains communities around corporations by leveraging dialogic principles in the social media age.

The communitarian theory of public relations continues to evolve with the advent of new “virtual communities.” The theoretical grounding for the argument of increased public relations professional involvement is based in the communitarian theory of public relations as set forth by Starck and Kruckeberg (2001). The researchers evaluated multiple aspects of community and found that public relations practitioners (not tacticians) could serve as creators of community by helping corporations and their communities become conscious of common interests, overcome alienation, and create a sense of community (Kruckeberg, Starck, & Vujnovic, 2006). Scholars have also called for embracing communitarian theory as a “metatheory” of public relations (Leeper, 2001). Communitarian theory is relevant to contemporary scholarship because it addresses relationship building as a potential point of union between public relations and corporate social responsibility. Wilson (2001) agrees that this aspect of relationship building is a vital role of the strategic communication professional and also calls for greater involvement of the public relations professional in corporate social responsibility. Further, the advent of social media has redefined virtual communities and the word-of-
mouth function, formulating the question about the role of the public relations professional in conveying corporate information. This dissertation asserts that the public relations professional may engage in a newly evolved role as a community builder through strategic dialogic communication.

**Relevant CSR and Public Relations Theories**

*The Oxford Handbook of Corporate Social Responsibility* has indicated that CSR is not understood as a concept, a construct or a theory, but as a field of scholarship (Crane, McWilliams, Matten, Moon, & Siegel, 2008). While it has been characterized as a “field without a paradigm,” scholars often separate CSR study into areas of corporate social performance, shareholder value theory, stakeholder theory and corporate citizenship theory. Today, businesses strive to approach and enfranchise stakeholders with meaningful communication programs that will allow the organization to meet its desired business objectives and may simultaneously benefit society at large through corporate social responsibility programs. Today, it may be argued that CSR discussion in academic literature is dominated by stakeholder theory, reflecting the importance of multiple stakeholders in the value equation for business. At the same time that corporate social responsibility was evolving in the 1950s to the current formulation, the public relations field has also been undergoing discipline change and adapting to new paradigms, media formats, professional codes, and academic research. Scholars note that the public relations field has evolved into an area of applied communication based on research. The field has matured beyond simple corporate communication, and today is theoretically grounded and research based (Botan, 2006). Public relations has moved
from a functionalist perspective to a co-creation one, and the field has a dominant paradigm that publics are now becoming creators of meaning as evidenced by communitarian theory and dialogic theory (Botan, 2006). Further study is required to explore the rising power of publics as they participate in consumer-to-consumer communication, transferring information and opinions with “peer-sets” in a community. This dynamic alters the traditional corporate to consumer communication flow and requires further study.

The nexus between corporate communication and corporate social responsibility indicates a rich environment for scholarly research and scholars have called for additional research that unites corporate social responsibility and the communication process. Some have attempted to unite the two disciplines to yield insights for scholars and business executives. Clark (2000) juxtaposed Cutlip and Center’s model for public relations which encompasses fact finding, planning, action/communication with a CSR corporate social performance model of environmental assessment, stakeholder management, and issues management, thus correlating strong similarities between the public relations process and corporate social responsibility. With a similarity of the disciplines in approach and foundations, Clark called for a union of the disciplines.

This connection suggests that public relations and CSR have similar objectives: Both disciplines are seeking to enhance the quality of the relationship of the organization among key stakeholder groups. Both disciplines recognize that to do so makes good business sense. The role that communication has in building these
quality relationships is an important one; one that is largely unrecognized by CSR researchers. (Clark, 2000, pp. 376-377)

As corporations strive to solidify the stakeholder bond, communication provides a vital tool to convey information, enhance the bond, and promote key aspects of credibility, integrity, and brand loyalty.

**Corporate Social Responsibility Communication**

New technologies and the creation of dialogic communication channels like social networks alter the environment for corporations seeking to engage with stakeholders in a CSR program. Several scholars have applied this theoretical approach of dialogic communication to corporate social responsibility. Clark (2000) points to corporate social responsibility as a manifestation that business and society are intricately interwoven and that business has a responsibility to respond to society needs and pressures. Whether a CSR campaign exists in a formative roll-out stage or is moving to maturity, the communication imperative remains. Another endorsement of strategic communication is presented by Coombs and Holladay (2012) who call for the integration of communication into all phases of the corporate social responsibility process. The pair determine a model for CSR communication that encompasses scanning and monitoring of the environment to determine potential CSR programs, the undertaking of formative research, creating a program, communicating of a CSR Initiative that uses a multifaceted communication campaign and then properly evaluating and providing feedback (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). The Stakeholder Marketing Consortium, a collaborative project of the Aspen Institute’s Business and Society Program and Boston University, published insights from
the annual meeting, called for increased research about the communication between a company and its stakeholders to discern effective means to engage and inspire stakeholders (Bhattacharya & Korschun, 2008). Further study is required regarding precise insights regarding corporate social responsibility sources and the most effective media formats to communicate multiple aspects of corporate social responsibility. In particular, the social media environment as a channel for communication must be considered, along with the corresponding influence on electronic word of mouth communication.

Corporations may use CSR activities to enfranchise stakeholders and promote actions that allow the corporation to achieve desired business outcomes. Communication may be effectively utilized to promote collaboration among key stakeholders involved in a CSR campaign. Consumers may assign attributes to the corporation such as self-interest when examining a CSR program. Aspects of attribution theory remain relevant to the study of the impact of media source and format in a corporate social responsibility campaign. Sometimes corporations operating in an atmosphere of distrust may use CSR as a tool for co-creation of content, developed in a dialogic manner that promotes trust and enhances the bond between the stakeholder and the corporation. Despite the level of trust or credibility a corporation has with its stakeholders, corporate social responsibility (CSR) remains a relevant and contemporary agenda item for corporations that seek to engage in a meaningful way with the constituents that they serve. Further, with research indicating that corporate social responsibility may have a positive impact of the bottom line and promote many positive dimensions include brand reputation and product trial,
scholars and businesses seek richer knowledge about corporate social responsibility and effective means for communicating.

Research in the arena of corporate social responsibility and communication will reveal insights about the formation of relationships and dialogues between a corporation and its key publics. Further study is required to determine the effects of media format and source on the corporate social responsibility message and the perceptions regarding trust and credibility that subsequently result from the interaction. To date, scholars have examined the phenomenon of corporate social responsibility from multiple vantage points and found corporate social responsibility yields multiple effects for the consumer. Research indicates that positive perceptions of perceived corporate social responsibility influence the consumer’s purchase intention behavior and promotes corporate donations to corporate-supported nonprofit organizations (Pirsch, Shruti, & Grau, 2007). Brand benefits and other intangible, or goodwill, value may also result from corporate social responsibility (Murray & Vogel, 1997). Consumer actions that result from consumer exposure to corporate social responsibility may not be tied to a specific product, but assist with advancing the corporate brand (Brown, Broderick, & Lee, 2007). These findings require further analysis, particularly considering the social media sphere.

The corporate quest to grow the bottom line, enhance corporate reputation, and bind stakeholders to the company is now intertwined with corporate social responsibility and the ability to influence stakeholders in the social media sphere. The social media sphere presents a new environment for dialogic communication and gives consumers new distribution channels for user created content that can influence the behavior of
consumers interaction with corporations. Publicly-traded and private companies maintain active corporate social responsibility programs and often utilize social media to carry the message. For example, Starbucks maintains a corporate social responsibility program as part of its corporate ethos. The company’s activities may be viewed as a “best practice” in corporate social responsibility and serve as a model for others seeking to weave CSR values into its corporate fabric. With this in mind, the following dissertation contains a study that analyzes the impact of media format and source in a corporate social responsibility campaign. By relying on the elaboration likelihood model, the research contained in this dissertation examines the influence of message processing peripheral clues such as source and format in determinants of persuasion. Postulate 5 of ELM states:

Variables affecting message processing in a relatively biased manner can produce a positive (favorable) or negative (unfavorable) motivational and/or ability to the issue-relevant thoughts attempted. (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986, p. 5)

Guided by the tenet that a strong link between CSR and communication exists, this dissertation examines the possibilities that various media formats and sources present in generating credibility, purchase intention, brand awareness, and social media engagement. It may be asserted that the logical and planned joining of stakeholder dialogue and corporate social responsibility will generate corporate value by prompting specific consumer actions and promoting advantageous beliefs. With social media, co-creation of brands and corporate identity no longer remain solely in the hands of the corporations, but now the stakeholder audience wields a stronger role. Through communication, stakeholders are enabled to participate, engage, and transform the
corporate brand. Other researchers like Morsing and Schultz (2006) found new structures for stakeholder involvement to encompass collaboration.

Instead of imposing corporate norms for CSR initiatives on stakeholders, the invitation to participate and co-construct the corporate CSR message increases the likelihood that these stakeholders and those who identify with them will identify positively with the company. (Morsing & Schultz, 2006, p. 335)

This approach represents an evolution of the stakeholder theory to encompass stakeholder enabling:

Contained in the idea of “stakeholder enabling” is an increased focus on establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial dialogues where the organization license to operate can be established or negotiated. (Johansen & Nielsen, 2011, p. 206)

So, it can be observed that the advent of social media has created an environment whereby co-created brands and negotiated brands emerge as the norm, not the exception. By carrying increased power to create and disseminate corporate information, the focus may now be shifting to the consumer. Though corporations have multiple stakeholders, consumers represent a critical stakeholder relationship. Existing research suggests a company becomes attractive to an individual when that person can identify with the company (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). This connection resonates with the elaboration likelihood model of persuasion as audience “elaborate” on CSR messages as they integrate corporate messages with individual value systems and tend to support or reject a corporate CSR platform. This logic trajectory then extends to corporate social
responsibility programs, as companies boost their nonprofit associations, articulate programs, and educate key stakeholders to enhance firm attractiveness. This proactive approach generates a direct influence on corporate social responsibility activities. There is a positive correlation between identity attractiveness and a consumer’s positive emotional attitude toward the corporation (Marin & Ruiz, 2007). To elaborate, it was found that the presence of corporate social responsibility programs can make a company more attractive for consumers by appealing to their social identity. By accentuating values-driven concepts, the corporation enhances the consumer-company bond (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). This corporate-to-consumer bond is fragile and companies must seek to avoid “green washing” or blatant self-promotion, because such actions can precipitate a negative impact on the corporation’s brand, sales, and perception.

After a company decides to conduct a corporate social responsibility program, it is important to choose the correct one and guard against blatant, profit-driven motives. Scholarship has found that CSR initiatives that are a low “fit” with the preferences of the customer base may have a negative impact on consumer beliefs, attitudes, and intentions (Becker-Olsen, Cudmore, & Hill, 2005). Further, “high-fit” programs with a singular profit motive have the same negative impact. However, if selected and executed properly, the positive results abound as corporations advance their brand, promote sales, and solidify corporate trust. In fact, consumers assume a company is skilled at making reliable products when the business has a strong corporate social responsibility program (Kim, Song, Braynov, & Rao, 2005).
Beyond the Sender / Receiver Model

The transmission of corporate social responsibility information allows for interpretation by distinct audiences. The role of the audience must also be considered as audience members may perform an active role in creating understanding and interpreting information. Ultimately, the audience may become an active participant in the co-creation of corporate messages. While this study is not an audience reception study, contemporary scholars probe the value of the audience. Starck and Kruckeberg (2001) have pointed to the role of the audience in the creation of communities around corporations and products, while Kent and Taylor (2002) consider the role of the audience as an actor in the dialogic communication. Further, movements away from sender receiver models of communication as articulated by Hall (1980), pave the way for new concepts of sensemaking and co-creation.

Every corporate social responsibility campaign is undertaken for a specific purpose. These purposes may encompass a strategic business decisions that influence the supply chain, product development, or marketing. Further, each audience and individual audience member brings a unique perspective to the table that colors the perception of the message. Scholarly literature on corporate social responsibility addresses the audience role by considering stakeholder-driven motives (Basu & Palazzo, 2008) for undertaking a CSR program. Further, these have been categorized into stakeholder information strategies, stakeholder response strategies and stakeholder involvement strategies (Morsing & Schultz, 2006). Korschun and Du (2013) have asserted that audience co-creation in corporate social responsibility may lead to immediate outcomes of community
participation and formation of corporate social responsibility expectations. As stakeholders attempt to perceive information, they may enhance their level of scrutiny of specific messages and become less susceptible to peripheral cues (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Corporations today seeking a magic bullet for communication of corporate social responsibility communication will not find one, as each circumstance presents different variables and each audience engages in a unique way. However, practical implications for corporate communication based on the results of this study will be addressed in the final chapter.

Corporate Social Responsibility Information Sources and Media Formats

Corporations deal with issues related to source and format to convey product information and investor relations materials. However, corporate social responsibility information presents a different challenge because it can become an area of distrust if wrongly perceived by the audience. Misunderstood CSR programs can damage the brand, thus further underscoring the need for appropriate fit and attribution of goodwill instead of blatant commercialism. Communication plays a vital role in this process. Consider for example that from an academic perspective, scholars have denoted a shift from a sender-based to a receiver-based model of communication (Springston, 2001). While drowning in data and compelled by the need to understand social, economic, and political communication, individuals will form niche communities to demand and process information. In one of the most significant research studies related to this dissertation, a conceptual framework for CSR communication is provided that addresses the role of message content, the channel for communication, and stakeholder characteristics which
in turn may lead to internal and external communication outcomes (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2010).

One important avenue for future research would be to explore the mediating mechanisms that account for the effectiveness (or ineffectiveness) of CSR communication…future research can explore cognitive (e.g., trustworthiness, CSR attributions) and affective (e.g., pride, empathy) responses that are unique to CSR communication. (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2010, p. 17)

Du et al; assert that through CSR, stakeholders can become brand ambassadors and exert influence through word of mouth. They state that attribution plays a role in interpreting CSR motives and companies should seek CSR programs that demonstrate a good “fit” with important stakeholders. These researchers indicate that CSR communication via corporate sources may trigger skepticism and that companies should instead strive for unbiased media coverage and utilize social media to disseminate information about a corporate social responsibility program. These findings and assertions establish a frame for this dissertation as the effectiveness of source and media format are examined, allowing conclusions to be drawn about the substantive differences. To further explore the implications of information source on generating credibility, both business-to-consumer and consumer-to-consumer flows of information will be analyzed. To further explore the impact of media format on credibility and potential interaction effects with source, the proposed study uses three media formats presented in the environment of a social media channel.
As corporate communication is examined and the role of the public relations professional is considered, it is relevant to examine public relations scholarship. Public relations communication models set forth by Grunig (1992) inform preliminary thoughts about the role of communication in corporate social responsibility; however, communication scholars have advanced these preliminary models into the current era. Grunig’s models include a publicity model, a public information model, a two-way asymmetric model and a two-way symmetrical model (Grunig & Grunig, 1992). Grunig’s two-way symmetrical view of communications calls for an act of communication to the receiver and a subsequent return of a message to the sender from the recipient to propel dialogue and change. Scholars have stated that two-way symmetrical communication is the most ethical form of communication (Huang, 2004). Huang (2004) stated that through ethical communication, the company can communicate effectively and achieve desired outcomes that include brand building, reputation enhancement, product trial, and collaboration with communities. The incorporation of symmetrical communication into the discipline of public relations has been guided by ethical dimensions. The public relations industry creates venues for active dialogue and systems adaptation that have the capacity to transform social, economic, and political spheres. Kent and Taylor (1998) indicated that the relationship between two-way symmetrical communication and dialogic communication may be viewed as a difference between process and product. In this sense, two-way symmetrical communication provides a method of procedural means for a corporation to communicate, while dialogic communication results when a
relationship exists. Thus, dialogue is a product rather than a process (Kent & Taylor, 1998).

Scholars have called for the expansion of the ethical, symmetrical communication paradigm across the globe, as the need for transparent communication is required to establish the mutually beneficial relationships across cultures (Kruckeberg, 1996; Newsom, 2001;). Kent and Taylor (2002) indicated how to incorporate dialogue into the public relations practice by building interpersonal relationships, building mediated dialogic relationships, and developing procedures for ethical communication. The pair further set forth guidelines of dialogic communication in public relations including dimensions of mutuality, empathy, propinquity, risk, and commitment. Propinquity includes aspects of immediacy of presence and engagement while empathy encompasses the notion of communal orientation (Kent & Taylor, 2002). These aspects remain relevant in studies of CSR communication, particularly within a social media environment, allowing the corporation to depict an “immediacy of presence” and a communal orientation to a specific cause. With the myriad of issues regarding social media, relationship marketing, and the fact that individuals now broadcast preferences to consumers via their own technology devices, it may be posited that stakeholder-to-stakeholder communication will emerge as a vital research area. Other scholars agree and are calling for new stream of thought in the stakeholder model:

Much of the current thinking in stakeholder theory is still tied to the classic hub-and-spoke model, in which the stakeholders are distinct and mutually exclusive. However there is a growing consensus that a firm’s constituents are actually
embedded in interconnected networks of relationships through which the actions of a firm reverberate with both direct and indirect consequences. (Bhattacharya & Korschun, 2008, p. 113)

It is in the strength of these consumer-to-consumer relations that power resides. Corporations no longer command complete control over the messages that are disseminated about their company. The advent of online resources, the Internet and social media sites have made corporations beholden to new delicate communications relationships. The public relations professional now may function to build a community and effectively communicate. The new era of stakeholder-to-stakeholder communication underscores the role of leader, one who can create meaningful dialog and create a system for communication.

Public relations professionals operate an atmosphere of business and professional ethics. Scholars have called for the incorporation of an expanded ethical model of public relations to incorporate both personal and professional ethics into the CSR realm (Bivins, 1993; Fitzpatrick & Gauthier 2011). Daugherty (2001) also set forth a paradigm for the public relations professional in CSR, citing the communitarian theory and Grunig’s two-way symmetrical model. Public relations practitioners have also performed a self-assessment role, finding that their role is sometimes strategic but more often viewed as a tactical communicator (Kim & Reber, 2008). For corporations to yield the maximum benefit from the professional communicator, it is vital for the public relations professional to shed the perception of a singular dimension – that of the publicity agent.
Business executives have lagged in understanding this role of the strategic communicators.

CSR activities provide an opportunity for corporate brand building, reputation enhancement, and the solid formation of bonds with key stakeholders. This section addressed the impact of this research on the field of CSR, particularly as it related to communication in a CSR environment. A discussion of the impact on the public relations profession was provided, relying on contemporary principles of dialogic communications and communitarian theory to position the PR practitioner as a leader in CSR. Finally, a discussion of sources and media format was offered providing a framework for this study that tests the effectiveness of various sources and formats.

Summary

Table 0.1 Key Terms

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Social Responsibility</td>
<td>A corporation’s legal, ethical environmental, and philanthropic dimensions.</td>
<td>Carroll, 1979</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Relations</td>
<td>A strategic communications process that allows organizations to form mutually beneficial relationships with key publics.</td>
<td>Public Relations Society of America (PRSA)</td>
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<td>Dialogic Principles of Communication</td>
<td>Communication aspects of mutuality, empathy, propinquity, risk, and commitment that can be used in forming relationships.</td>
<td>Kent and Taylor, 1998</td>
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<td>Elaboration Likelihood Model</td>
<td>The amount of elaboration put forth by an audience can be placed on a</td>
<td>Petty and Cacioppo, 1986</td>
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The concepts and the theoretical frameworks reviewed in the preceding sections establish the problem area for this dissertation. CSR is an evolving field and the public relations industry may deftly intersect with CSR to promote mutual benefits for the consumer and for the corporation. This dissertation addresses the intersection of corporate communication and corporate social responsibility by providing insights regarding the impact of various sources and media formats in stimulating source credibility, information credibility, brand attitude, purchase intention, and social media engagement. Further, this dissertation proposes a strategic frame for the public relations professional as a content creator, advancing beyond the press-agentry heritage to a new platform of expert prescriber, strategist, dialogic communicator, and community builder particularly active in the sphere of corporate social responsibility. This assertion is solidified by current concepts about dialogic communication and the application of the elaboration likelihood model to CSR communication. By analyzing the effects of source, source/format, source/sentiment, and source/format/sentiment effects for corporate social responsibility information, insights may be advanced regarding the role that the public relations professional may play in advancing a corporate social responsibility program.

The following research questions guide the focus of this dissertation and the arguments advanced in Chapter 2:

**RQ1 (Source Credibility):** What is the impact of various sources (the business itself or a consumer), various media formats (news release, advertisement and
news article), and the use of sentiment in stimulating source credibility in a CSR campaign presented in a social media environment?

**RQ2 (Information Credibility):** What is the impact of various sources (the business itself or a consumer), various media formats (news release, advertisement or news article), and the use of sentiment in stimulating information credibility in a CSR campaign presented in a social media environment?

**RQ3 (Corporate Brand Reputation):** What is the impact of various sources (the business itself or a consumer), various media formats (news release, advertisement or news article), and the use of sentiment on a corporate brand reputation regarding a CSR campaign presented in a social media environment?

**RQ4 (Purchasing Intention):** What is the impact of various sources (the business itself or a consumer), various media formats (news release, advertisement or news article), and the use of sentiment in a CSR campaign presented in a social media environment in stimulating purchasing intention?

**RQ5 (Social Media Engagement):** What is the impact of various sources (the business itself or a consumer), various media formats (news release, advertisement or news article), and the use of sentiment in a CSR campaign presented in a social media environment in prompting social media engagement?
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<th>Illustrative Research</th>
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<td>Source Credibility</td>
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<td>RQ1: What is the impact of various sources, (the business itself or a consumer), various media formats (news release, advertisement, and article), and the use of sentiment in stimulating source credibility in a CSR Campaign presented in a social media environment?</td>
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<td>Word of Mouth (Coombs and Holladay).</td>
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<td>Stakeholder-centric model (Bhattacharya)</td>
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<td>Information Credibility</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>RQ2: What is the impact of various sources (the business itself or the consumer), various media formats (news release, advertisement, or news article), and the use of sentiment in stimulating information credibility in a CSR Campaign presented in a social media environment?</td>
<td>Internet information credibility (Flanagin and Metzger);</td>
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<td>Consumer Attribution (Bhattacharya, Sen, and Korschun);</td>
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<td>Corporate Brand Reputation</td>
<td>Source</td>
<td>RQ3: What is the impact of various sources (the business itself or the consumer), various media formats (news release, advertisement, or news article), and the use of sentiment in stimulating corporate social responsibility and stakeholder nexus (Vallaster, Lindgreen, and Maon)</td>
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Preview of Chapters

This chapter presented a conceptual foundation for the problem this dissertation addresses. The chapter addressed relevant literature to establish conceptual frameworks, provided definitions, and developed a platform for the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. Through a discussion of the current academic research in this area and the compelling business atmosphere, this chapter provides a rationale for this study.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of literature of relevance to corporate communication and corporate social responsibility documenting current research on corporate social responsibility, source credibility, media type credibility, corporate brand reputation, awareness, purchase intention, social media engagement, and the role of the public relations professional.

Chapter 3 offers a description of the methods used to collect, analyze, and interpret data as part of the primary study for this dissertation. The sampling method, participants, procedures, and methods of assessing source credibility, information credibility, corporate brand reputation, purchase intention, and social media engagement within a corporate social responsibility campaign are addressed.

Chapter 4 provides the results of the study. This chapter addresses the 20 hypotheses and reports the 46 statistically significant differences. Specific results are
presented regarding hypotheses involving source credibility, information credibility, corporate brand reputation, purchase intention, and social media engagement.

Chapter 5 provides a summary of findings. This chapter addresses the implications for the public relations profession and corporate social responsibility communication. A new model for CSR communication is proposed. Limitations of the study are addressed. Future research recommendations are presented and final conclusions are included.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Contemporary corporations struggle with the issues of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and its role in building a corporate brand, promoting purchase intention, and fueling social media engagement. Executives ponder questions related to the impact of the source of CSR communication and attempt to decipher which media format is the most effective at conveying information. Lastly, amid the atmosphere of social media, the use of “sentiment” is now in question as testimonials are tailored for each post. While these substantial issues remain for businesses, they occur at a time when the public relations profession is maturing from its simple press agentry heritage to an intensified leadership in strategic communication in the era of continuous connectivity. Recent scholarship in marketing, communication, and public relations attempts to discern insights regarding the changing dynamic of corporate communications today. To effectively study research questions associated with corporate social responsibility communication, bodies of literature from multiple disciplines were examined to illuminate the current state of affairs regarding corporate social responsibility, the accompanying connection with communication, and effective ways for corporations to navigate the waters of a corporate social responsibility campaign.

The purpose of this chapter is to review literature that establishes relationships between corporate social responsibility and communication, offering insights about source, media format, and sentiment in influencing source credibility, information credibility, brand attitude, purchase intention, and social media engagement. These topics
are examined within the context of the changing role of the public relations professional, and include discussions of the influence of social media and electronic word-of-mouth communication. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) has been addressed by scholars in multiple academic fields including marketing, management, business ethics, public relations, and communication. This chapter provides an overview of relevant literature and establishes a foundation for this dissertation.

The problem statement offered in Chapter One guides the selection and reporting of this literature, while stakeholder theory, the elaboration likelihood model, attribution theory, and principles of dialogic communication guide the arguments advanced in this chapter.

**Media Credibility**

Media credibility research has been classified as a complex and multidimensional construct that typically focuses on two main dimensions: source credibility and medium credibility (Golan, 2010). Research regarding source credibility has been accomplished by Hovland and Weiss (1951) and advanced by contemporary researchers who have evaluated online news information (Sundar, 1998), and online advertising information (Greer, 2003). This media credibility body of literature must be considered as it intersects with corporate social responsibility literature. Scholarly literature documents changes in the corporate sphere as enterprises undertake CSR programs. The implementation of corporate social responsibility programs presents an adaptive dynamic to the traditional communication discipline, with an empowering role for public relations professionals and a potentially greater role for consumers as they may assume an active role in attributing
the motives of the corporation and become co-creators of communication content. When corporations undertake a corporate social responsibility initiative, they may do so for a multitude of reasons, including enfranchising stakeholders, promoting the corporate brand, and stimulating purchase of goods and services. Corporate social responsibility programs provide a way for consumers to engage with a corporation that allows them to elaborate on corporate messages, thus creating a positive or negative perception.

Scholars have established models to articulate the role of CSR as a function of sensemaking and have provided frames for corporate best practices of CSR. Basu and Palazzo (2008) have set forth a tripartite model of corporate sensemaking that includes cognitive, linguistic, and conative (behavioral) dimensions, as depicted as what companies think, what firms say, and how firms tend to behave. This has been further broken down into cognitive dimensions of identity orientation and legitimacy; linguistic dimensions of justification and transparency; and conative (behavioral) dimensions of posture, consistency and commitment (Basu & Palazzo, 2008). These scholars assert that by understanding the internal processes of sensemaking, knowledge can be gained regarding the language used by a corporation to discuss corporate social responsibility and convey such information to the marketplace. For example, the linguistic dimension of CSR discussions internally often include aspects of justification solidified by legal, scientific, economic, and ethical arguments. Spangler and Pompper (2011) have indicated four key propositions for CSR theory development, and these include living corporate social responsibility from the inside out, earning trust of the public and the media, giving
back as a community citizen, and accepting that we are all in this together. Each of these approaches and theoretical frameworks assume dimensions of communications.

As corporations undertake the charge to convey the nuances of the corporate social responsibility campaign to key stakeholders, the audience enters a phase of engagement that scholars call attribution. Ellen, Webb, and Mohr (2006) characterize the engagement by the consumer as placing the CSR initiative on a “self” and “other” continuum. Specifically, consumers may respond positively to CSR efforts judged as values-driven and strategic, while they may respond negatively to ones perceived as stakeholder-driven or egoistic by the corporation (Ellen, Webb, & Mohr 2006). This approach considers attribution theory and underscores the fact that consumer’s attribution of the CSR “reason” plays a role in the response to corporate social responsibility efforts. Scholars of attribution theory view people as “naïve scientists” attempting to gain information to make a causal inference (Folkes, 1988). A “discounting principle” may emerge if an alternative attribution could account for the behavior and the communicator’s credibility may play a role in the discounting principle (Folkes, 1988). Research suggests the attribution of the reason why a corporation undertakes a CSR initiative, the media format used to articulate the information, and the source chosen to transmit information may all play a role in the effectiveness of the campaign and the acceptance by the marketplace. Dou, Walden, Lee, and Lee (2012) utilized attribution theory as a premise to investigate the role that sources play in influencing an individual’s evaluation of online information. The research concluded that the message presenter, the
visible source, influences the credibility judgment of the message originator (Dou, Walden, Lee, & Lee, 2012).

Scholars point to an attribution theory phenomenon which has become known as a “sleeper effect.” In the case of a low credibility source, when asked about the information at a later date, the recipient may recall the information but not the source, thus equalizing any priority placed on a highly credible source (Hovland & Weiss, 1951). The tenets of attribution theory extend to the elaboration likelihood model (ELM) (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). The elaboration likelihood model sets forth the notion that there are two distinct routes for information persuasion, a central route and a peripheral route (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). The amount of “elaboration,” or thinking, put forth by an audience can be placed on a continuum and that consumer motivations can be influenced by multiple variables including perceived personal relevance to an issue (Rucker & Petty, 2006). In other words, if a consumer believes in a particular cause, their elaboration will be higher as they receive communication messages. The concept of elaboration is relevant to studies of corporate social responsibility communication, because the audience may exert personal beliefs and elaboration based on the campaign issue that may include environmental or health issues. Rucker and Petty (2006) set forth a plan to evaluate risk communications by specifying a multi-step approach that calls for considering the audience elaboration level, designing and evaluating message characteristics, discerning if the message objective is designed to stimulate immediate or enduring attitude change, determining if there is a fit of audience elaboration level, message information and desired attitude change, testing the message effectiveness, and evaluating the message
effectiveness (Rucker & Petty, 2006). Thus, through these examples it is observed that the audience’s involvement place a role in determining the perceived credibility of the source in a corporate social responsibility initiative. Content class has also been studied in relation to the elaboration likelihood model, including a study of the difference between news and advertising characterized as a cue for cognitive processing of a message (Hallahan, 1999). Researchers found people with both high and low involvement were influenced by the content class (Hallahan, 1999). Further, source credibility of persuasive messages has an impact both on affective and cognitive responses of message receivers (Li, 2013).

As corporations consider strategic approaches to CSR communication, it is important to recognize the role of the source who functions as the message sender. It has been found source cues must be presented first to leverage credibility benefits (Sternthal, Dholakia, & Leavitt, 1978). Moderately credible sources can be more persuasive than highly credible ones when the source credibility cues precede the message. This research indicates credibility cues represent a vital part of persuasion in a corporate social responsibility communications plan. Research has also found that electronic word of mouth relies on source expertise as a factor in determining the effectiveness of persuasive communication (Coulter & Roggeveen, 2012). Further, corporations must consider the imperative of transparency, as it has been found that a lack of disclosure in a social media campaign may damage the organization-public relationship and the overall credibility of the organization (Sweetser, 2010). Research has shown news media are receptive to the concept of corporate social responsibility and often choose to incorporate the content into
newspapers and other media outlets (Zhang & Swanson, 2006). Thus, both the source and
the media format offer the opportunity to present cues that can influence the perception of
the corporate social responsibility program.

Corporations implementing CSR programs often seek to intensify the relationship
with a key stakeholder audience. In an examination of a utility company’s corporate
social responsibility efforts, research revealed how a corporation may demonstrate
commitment to constituents though words and images, and then attempt to link those with
behavioral relationships (Hall, 2006). This work indicates a positive correlation between
the impact of corporate philanthropy and relationships, which may in turn influence the
perceived credibility of the source. Marin and Ruiz (2007) found that corporate social
responsibility programs enhance corporate identity attractiveness in a stronger way than
they contribute to perceptions of corporate ability, thus showing the potential impact on
the consumer-company context. The study showed that CSR activities directly influence
corporate ability and that a positive affective component is necessary to solidify that
relationship (Marin & Ruiz, 2007). This is important to the analysis of source and media
format on perceived credibility because these two factors directly influence the
formulation of the consumer-company relationship and the positive or negative
perception of the relationship.

In addition to the consumer’s role in attribution and the amount of elaboration that
they put forth, it has been found that when a company is well-known to a consumer, a
CSR strategy is more effective in influencing both corporate consumer ability and
corporate social responsibility associations, which in turn lead to company and product
evaluations (Kim, 2011). Consumers may tend to assume a company is good at making reliable products when they associate the company with a strong corporate social responsibility program, thus transferring the effects of the CSR campaign into perceptions that will ultimately benefit the corporation. However, the methods a company chooses to communicate this information remain a vexing challenge as it searches for the appropriate source and media format. Further, this landscape unearths the question about the role of the public relations professional. In addition, there may be negative perceptions of corporate social responsibility if it is linked to a publicity exercise or self-promotion. Some assert a model of distributive leadership is needed in order to give communicators a role in CSR leadership that may dispel charges of self promotion (Benn, 2010).

The advent of consumer-to-consumer online media environments, including social networks such as Facebook has changed the landscape for corporate communication and altered the way information is created and disseminated by corporations, as individuals can now conduct word-of-mouth communication in a web-based environment. Corporations and individuals now have the opportunity to add “sentiment messages” that endorse a specific consumer social responsibility campaign. This study dissects the variation of three media formats – a news release, a news article, and an advertisement in stimulated perceived credibility within the context of a social media atmosphere. The news release is a common tool of the public relations industry used by corporations to relay relevant corporate happenings. A news article is a media format that readers may believe has passed through an editorial filter, allowing for an
objective, third-party analysis of the content and justification that it is in fact newsworthy. An advertisement is a paid media format that consumers may recognize as a message that is completely controlled by the corporation. This dissertation tests the three media forms and analyzes the impact of the consumer-to-consumer flow of information of the formats in contrast to the business-to-consumer flow of information.

With these factors in mind, the imperative remains that a corporation must use a credible source and appropriate media format to convey aspects of the company’s corporate social responsibility program that will in turn allow the company to harvest desired benefits.

The intersection of corporate social responsibility and communication merits further analysis in multiple aspects of source credibility. While scholars of CSR indicate that linguistic dimensions of CSR may carry dimensions of transparency and justification (Basu & Palazzo, 2008), the receiver plays a dynamic role in “attributing” the rationale for the CSR campaign. The receiver’s perception of the source credibility influences these decisions, as the receiver makes ad hoc judgments about the source credibility of the corporate social responsibility information. It stands to reason then that the differences may be observed between corporate and consumer sources. Therefore,

**H1A (Source):** There will be statistically significant differences in perceived source credibility when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.

Corporations that choose to undertake a CSR program consider the source, the media format, and the message (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). For example, both a
corporation and an individual may transmit CSR information in the form of a news release, article, or advertisement via social media. Dou, Walden, Lee, and Lee (2012) have indicated that the visible source plays a role in influencing the credibility judgment. The content class may also serve as a cue for cognitive processing of information (Hallahan, 1999). A message that originates from a corporation versus one that originates with a consumer may have differences in stimulating source credibility. This is particularly interesting as the sender chooses to transmit various media formats including a news release, article, or advertisement. As various combinations of source and format are examined, research may indicate differences in the level of source credibility, offering insights for businesses that seek to disseminate corporate social responsibility information. Thus,

**H1B (Source/Format):** There will be statistically significant differences in perceived source credibility for various source and format conditions when the source is varied from either the business or the consumer, and when the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats for corporate social responsibility information presented in an social media environment.

The body of research regarding source credibility addresses the role that source cues may play in persuading a recipient (Sternthal, Dholakia, & Leavitt, 1978). Today, the social media environment provides a new atmosphere to render source cues and proliferate electronic word of mouth. Coulter and Roggeveen (2012) found that electronic word of mouth relies on source expertise. In practice, corporate social responsibility information is often transferred with personal testimonials and opinions. Information
receivers make instantaneous judgments about source credibility and their perceptions may be influenced by personal messages conveyed via social media. This suggests that the combination of source and sentiment may be varied and measured, and this intersection requires further study. Thus,

**H1C(Source/Sentiment):** There will be statistically significant differences in perceived source credibility when the source of a corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer, and presented with or without sentiment in a social media environment.

A further evaluation of the combination of the three aspects of source, sentiment, and format may provide a more comprehensive picture of effective corporate social responsibility communication techniques. This three part evaluation considers Dou, Walden, Lee, and Lee’s (2012) assertion that the visible source influences the credibility judgment, while also considering the content class (Hallahan, 1999) and the substantive impact of electronic word of mouth that contains persuasive messages. Li (2013) has indicated that the both affective and cognitive responses may be generated by virtue of source credibility. It stands to reason that there may be differences between source, sentiment, and format in measurements of source credibility. Thus,

**H1D: (Source/Sentiment/Format)** There will be statistically significant differences in perceived source credibility when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from the business, and from the consumer, while the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats, and the content is presented with or without accompanying source sentiment.
The Influence of Source and Media Format on Information Credibility

As corporations undertake the charge to convey corporate social responsibility information to key stakeholders, multiple questions regarding information credibility surround the situation. What is the best format to communicate in a way that will stimulate information credibility? Who is the best source of this information to promote conditions of information credibility?

The believability of specific media formats has been documented in scholarly literature for decades, showing various points of view regarding the credibility of one media format over another. Newhagen and Nass (1988) developed criteria for evaluating newspaper and television news credibility, and Graziano and McGrath (1986) have developed scales for measuring newspaper credibility. The news scale was designed to measure aspects of fairness, bias, telling the complete story, accuracy, invasion of privacy, advocacy for viewer’s interest, concern with community’s well-being, separation of fact and opinion, trustworthiness, advocacy for public interest, factual nature and the existence of well-trained reporters. However, the advent of online information has led to the formation of new scales oriented to online content, including a scale by Flanagin and Metzger (2000) that tests the credibility of online information by examining its believability, accuracy, trustworthiness, bias and completeness.

In a study designed to assess credibility perceptions of Internet information compared with other media formats, research found that Internet information is found to be as credible as information obtained from television, radio, and magazines, but not as credible as newspaper information (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000).
may provide one tactic for communications, companies must pursue other media options, according to scholars (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2011; Coombs & Holladay, 2012). Scholarship on various media formats has indicated that the differences in credibility may be based on the nature of the media themselves and how information is perceived about them, leading to different information-processing strategies (Newhagen & Nass, 1988). This is particularly relevant today with social media’s role in mass media. Research has also found that media credibility and media use are not correlated (Rimmer & Weaver, 1987), because frequency measures are behavioral. In other words, consumers may expose themselves to media sources and content that may be unreliable and they may do so repeatedly, influencing their beliefs of credibility. Thus, we may observe consumers using social media for corporate and product information despite a perceived absence of credibility. Further, literature regarding the role of the audience is relevant as this dissertation examines the consumer’s willingness to engage in a social media activity such as “liking” a social media page.

**The Role of Attribution by the Receiver in Corporate Social Responsibility**

Corporate social responsibility introduces a new dynamic beyond the simple assessment of trustworthiness of the source and the format, as the audience now attempts to discern or “attribute” the reason why the corporation has undertaken the campaign. Is this campaign profit driven? What is the corporate motivation? Why is the company doing this now? These represent common questions asked by the consumer encountering information about a corporate social responsibility program.
Once a message about corporate social responsibility is communicated, information flows into the marketplace of ideas and may be interpreted by the receiver in a positive way, a negative way, or not perceived at all. Research has found that a consumer may investigate the motives of the corporation in developing a corporate social responsibility program, and this discernment can promote a positive or negative perception. Bhattacharya, Sen, and Korschun (2011) assert stakeholders respond to CSR initiatives based on their own anticipated rewards or personal benefits. The measurable benefits that can be gained indicate the nature of the stakeholder-company relationship. A stakeholder-centric model has been proposed that indicates stakeholder perceptions of CSR initiatives are based on values, psychosocial benefits, and functional benefits, leading to the formation of a stakeholder-company relationship. This relationship in turn leads to behavioral outcomes such as company directed behaviors, cause-directed behaviors, and other-stakeholder-directed behaviors (Bhattacharya, Korschun, & Sen, 2009).

The character of the individual receiving the information also plays a role in the interpretation. Giacalone, Paul, and Jurkiewicz (2005) found hopeful people embrace corporate social performance. This is revealed by a relationship between positive psychological dispositions and consumer sensitivity to corporate social performance. It has been found that increased levels of gratitude interact with levels of hope in pro-social behavior to yield increased sensitivity to corporate social performance (Giacalone, Paul, & Jurkiewicz, 2005). To further explore whether consumers’ perceptions of corporate motives influence their evaluation of corporate social responsibility efforts, Vlachos,
Tsamakos, Vrechopoulos, and Avramaidis (2009) tested four types of motives, including ego-driven, stakeholder-driven, strategic-driven, and values-driven to discern the levels of consumer suspiciousness about corporate social responsibility and the corresponding impact on consumer trust. The study found that values-driven attributions yield a positive influence on consumer trust, while ego-driven attributions diminish trust and patronage intentions (Vlachos, Tsamakos, Vrechopoulos, & Avramidis, 2009). When consumers perceive their lifestyle congruent with corporate CSR activities, they consider CSR genuine and favorable, leading to increased customer loyalty (Lee, Park, Rapert, & Newman, 2011).

Attribution of CSR motives is a common theme found in CSR literature that relates to this dissertation. Dean (2002) found that in a test of attribution theory on a corporate sponsorship program that perceptions are largely mediated through attributional constructs and that corporations are best served by creating a “perceptual fit” between the corporation and sponsor. Researchers have examined the influence of “product fit” in corporate social responsibility, and found that the degree of “fit” between products has a significant effect on consumers’ evaluations of products that carry a cause ‘brand identity’ as part of a CRM campaign (Hamlin & Wilson, 2004).

To better understand how consumers how perform credibility assessments of online information, Metzger (2007) proposes a dual process model that encompasses three phases for exposure, evaluation, and judgment. The exposure phase includes motivation to evaluate and ability to evaluate (Metzger, 2007). Research further suggests trust is a factor in ecommerce and that lack of trust can be a barrier for commercial
transactions. Trust may be enhanced by graphic design, structure design, content design, and social cue design (Metzger, 2007). Website design can also compensate for low sponsor credibility (Westerwick, 2013). The contemporary business atmosphere dictates that corporations devise and implement communication strategies that resonate with key stakeholders, establishing a platform for further study regarding the role of the corporate communicator and the tools selected to communicate corporate social responsibility messages.

The Role of the Corporate Communicator and Chosen Format

Marketing communication tools often play a major role in conveying a company’s CSR message, and corporations must choose the appropriate media format for the target audience (Jahdi & Acikdilli, 2009). Corporations striving for strategic communication must address the appropriate methods for boosting audience receptiveness and then communicate with them in the most advantageous way. Researchers have found that content class influences consumers and the amount of effort they are willing to exert to process information, thus having an impact on the level of persuasion that can be achieved (Hallahan, 1999). A study examining the influences of public relations efforts, media coverage, public opinion, and financial performance discovered a positive relationship between corporate media relations messages and corporate social responsibility, indicating that communication via public relations activities may be a preferred solution for corporations (Kiousis, Popescu, & Mitrook, 2011). When a corporation seeks to inform the desired audience about a corporate social responsibility program, researchers have found that priming and framing activities may promote
persuasive effects. Further, the preconceived notions and positions an individual holds toward the company influences the persuasive effect in each case (Wang, 2011). This phenomenon leads researchers to conclude that public relations practitioners should make strategic decisions about priming and framing, and course-correct, as appropriate:

On the one hand, public relations strategists should consider the effects of priming, framing and position in designing messages before disseminating messages to publics. On the other hand, undesirable responses to issues taken by affected publics should be resolved by defining and reframing the issues. (Wang, 2011, p. 143)

The ubiquity of social networking sites presents a new landscape for corporate social responsibility communicators. As research has indicated, companies must strive for highly credible communication to offset stakeholder criticism of CSR programs (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2011). When choosing a channel to communicate, companies must be aware of the trade-offs of complete control exercised by using their own channels and the sacrificed control that occurs by allowing external sources to convey messages.

There is likely to be a trade-off between the controllability and credibility of CR communication; the less controllable the communicator is, the more credible it is and vice versa. Stakeholders will likely perceive the company of more self-interested when they learn about its CR primarily through company sources compared to non-corporate sources. (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2011, p. 203)
Yet, despite these risks, Bhattacharya, Sen, and Korschun (2011) advocate the use of word-of-mouth communication about CSR because stakeholders are more likely to trust these messages than those sent directly from the company. Coombs and Holladay (2012) advance this argument by stating that by enfranchising all stakeholders in a CSR communication to function as message carriers in social media and word of mouth realms, an “echo” will be created that allows stakeholders to do the communicating for the corporation. This concept is based on early mass communication research by Katz and Lazarsfield (1955). They coined the two-step flow of communication that indicates mass media’s effect on people occurred through opinion leaders. This research provides a venue to explore the two-step flow of communication from the corporation to the consumer, who may ultimately decide to convey corporate information to a third party. Attribution theory also plays a role as consumers apply meaning to the information based on the media format and source. Thus, the following research hypotheses related to perceived online information credibility are advanced:

Literature regarding corporate social responsibility has indicated that stakeholders response may respond to CSR initiatives based on their own anticipated rewards or benefits (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2011), and that consumers attempt to attribute reasons why the corporation undertakes a corporate social responsibility campaign (Vlachos et al., 2009). It stands to reason then that the source (i.e., the corporation or another consumer) will play a role in the credibility of information transmitted about a corporate social responsibility campaign. Thus,
**H2A (Source):** There will be statistically significant differences in perceived information credibility when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.

Research has indicated that marketing communication tools play a major role in a company’s CSR message (Jahdi & Acikdilli, 2009) and that content class influenced the way receivers process information (Hallahan, 1999). Further, it has been suggested that corporate social responsibility information is more credible when it comes from the corporation than a stakeholder (Bhattacharyya, Sen, & Korschun, 2011). With this in mind, various combinations of the source of CSR information and the media format will influence information credibility perceptions. Therefore,

**H2B (Source/Format):** There will be statistically significant differences in perceived information credibility for various source and format conditions when the source is varied from either the business or the consumer, and when the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats for corporate social responsibility information presented in a social media environment.

Research has indicated that enfranchising stakeholders into the corporate social responsibility process allows them to function as message carriers in the social media environment and promote viral communication forms of communication (Coombs & Holladay, 2012). Metzger (2007) has suggested that credibility assessments of online information include three phases including exposure, evaluation, and judgment. The use
of persuasive messages with social media sentiment may provide personal appeals to the receiver that in essence perform a “priming” or “framing” role for corporate social responsibility communication.

**H2C(Source/Sentiment):** There will be statistically significant differences in perceived information credibility when the source of a corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer, and presented with or without sentiment in a social media environment.

In persuasive communication, research suggests that the credibility of information sources play a vital role in credibility measurements (Dou, Walden, Lee, & Lee, 2012). The chosen media format influences a receiver’s perception of information in a corporate social responsibility campaign (Kiousis, Popescu, & Mitrook, 2011). Online trust can be enhanced through social cue design in online environments (Metzger, 2007). Thus, it stands to reason that further research may indicate differences between combinations of source, format, and sentiment. Therefore,

**H2D: (Source/Sentiment/Format)** There will be statistically significant differences in perceived information credibility when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from the business, and from the consumer, while the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats, and the content is presented with or without accompanying source sentiment.
The Influence of Source and Media Format on Corporate Brand Reputation

Corporations today often utilize corporate social responsibility initiatives as a component of brand building. Systematic, well-planned, executed, and overtly communicated corporate social responsibility initiatives may contribute to the overall corporate reputation. Scholars urge companies to devise CSR programs that align with the core corporate strategy. Yet businesses navigate troubled waters when they attempt to define programs that resonate with stakeholders and do not create perceptions of “green washing” or self-promotion. Contemporary scholarship addresses strategic CSR within the context of marketing, strategic communication, and brand management. The emergence of social media has given rise to a potentially greater role for the consumer in conveying CSR information. The role of the public relations professional must be addressed as the corporate communicator faces the challenge of articulating CSR programs, enfranchising consumer stakeholders, and building a community around corporations. Porter and Kramer (2003) recommend a strategic approach to corporate social responsibility that will enhance the corporation’s marketplace position, support the corporate brand, and allow the company to achieve desired business objectives. The pair defined four elements of competitive context that should be incorporated into a corporate social responsibility program: factor conditions such as human resources and infrastructure; context for strategy and rivalry; consideration of related and supporting industries; and demand conditions (Porter & Kramer, 2003). CSR programs with a built-in strategy can help companies promote viability, reinforce facets of the organization, and make future behavior more predictable (Dowling & Moran, 2012). In an analysis of
various corporations, Dowling and Moran (2012) differentiate between “bolted on” versus “built in” corporate responsibility programs contributing to corporate reputation, indicating that a built-in program is preferable. Strategy-based reputation requires leadership and vigilance from all managers responsible for the key business function and must be integrated into corporate operations. Other scholars agree that companies can, “do well by doing good” by carefully considering the impact of corporate social responsibility programs on all stakeholders, including shareholders (Falck & Heblich, 2007). Marketing literature has addressed the role of CSR in stakeholder engagement (Bhattacharya, 2003). Scholars have attempted to categorize different types of corporate social responsibility programs, and Pirsch, Shruti, and Grau (2007) delineated between institutionalized programs and promotional programs. Institutionalized programs promoted customer loyalty, enhanced attitude toward the corporation, and decreased skepticism, while promotional ones generated purchase intent (Pirsch, Shruti, & Grau, 2007). The corporation’s point of view regarding corporate social responsibility can lead to negative or positive brand perceptions.

The CSR/Corporate Brand Reputation Nexus

Research indicates a connection between brand building and corporate social responsibility (Bhattacharya, Korschun, & Sen, 2009). Corporate social responsibility provides a business with aspects of reputation risk management and marketing prowess, if communicated accurately to key stakeholders in a way that resonates with them (Jahdi & Acikdilli, 2009; Vallaster, Lindreen, & Maon, 2012). Werther and Chandler (2005) have called CSR “global brand insurance” to protect against management lapses. Yet to
truly invest in the insurance, corporations must develop a program that resonates with stakeholders. Vallaster et al. (2012) state that corporate social responsibility activities must be based on overall brand value and incorporate a theme that resonates with all stakeholder groups. The danger of a forced incongruity of corporate social responsibility activities can result in feelings of mistrust and deception, thus damaging the brand (Vallaster et al., 2012). Corporate leadership must evaluate the nature of the industry, the company’s specific product offerings, the corporate culture, and ethos to determine a CSR program that will promote the corporate brand and reputation. Diermeier (2011) characterizes the reputational benefits of a CSR program:

The other proposed advantages are mainly reputational, whether they involve relationships with customers, investors, regulators, politicians, or the general public. The companies want these stakeholders to hold beliefs and attitudes about the company that will give it an edge in the marketplace, but these attitudes now have a very specific content. They are not about safety, quality, or reliability, but about ethical and social concerns. (Diermeier, 2011, p. 144)

Diermeier points to the fact that using a CSR approach as a reputation strategy assumes that a significant segment of stakeholders respects moral values and is willing and able to support a program. Through this support, the corporation can gain a competitive advantage by satisfying a demand for virtue. Coombs and Holladay (2012) point to CSR as a common point of reference that aligns the corporation’s identity, stakeholder identity, and institutional corporate reputation.
The presence of corporate social responsibility programs seems inextricably linked with corporate reputation. A 1990 study of 292 large corporations reveals that social responsiveness was one of eight attributes used by consumers to gather information about a company (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990). Findings indicated that publics assign higher reputations to firms that have philanthropic foundations and generously provide to charity (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990). In an analysis of 57 global brands in 10 countries, Torres, Bijnol, Tribo, and Verhoef (2012) report CSR is a primary component of brand equity and should be part of the outreach to multiple stakeholder groups. The research divides brand equity into the three parts of customer-based, company-based, and financially based, and goes on to assert CSR programs that combine visibility for customers and promote credibility with their community have a stronger effect on marketing metrics like global brand equity (Torres et al., 2012).

The brand may also face a risk from irresponsible corporate social behavior. Sweetin, Knowles, Summey, and McQueen (2013) found consumers dealing with socially irresponsible brands are more likely to punish and less likely to reward a corporation than consumers exposed to other types of brands. The study found consumers hold a more positive attitude toward a socially responsible corporate brand and that purchase intention is considerably lower for a socially irresponsible brand (Sweetin et al., 2012). In an analysis of attributes of corporate social responsibility, Lange and Washburn (2012) proposed a core model of corporate social responsibility attributions that encompasses observer assessment of corporate culpability that is based on inferences of causality and judgments of moral responsibility. The pair called for further research into
the reactions to attributions of corporate social irresponsibility because these responses may have a greater impact on the firm and its relationships. The need for further research about consumer skepticism is apparent. CSR skepticism can harm reputational equity, decrease consumer resistance to negative information, and stimulate unfavorable word-of-mouth actions (Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013). By testing for four different types of motives, including egoistic-driven, values-driven, strategic-driven, and stakeholder-driven, the researchers found that when consumers attribute the formation of a CSR campaign to egoistic or stakeholder-driven reasons, skepticism increases. However, if it is viewed as a values-driven motive, the growth of skepticism is inhibited (Skarmeas & Leonidou, 2013). This research builds on the findings by Ellen, Webb, and Mohr (2006) who found consumer attribution of stakeholder-driven CSR programs can decrease purchase intent. Further, if a company chose a high fit initiative, one that harmonized with its business and the chosen cause, it was viewed as a positive move, rather than one of excessive profiteering (Ellen, Webb, & Mohr, 2006).

**Skepticism in CSR and Impact on the Corporate Brand Reputation**

While scholarly literature indicates corporate social responsibility programs may convey corporate brand attributes (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003; Coombs & Holladay, 2012), a multitude of questions arise, particularly regarding the role of social media as a channel for conveying corporate communication messages. Further, the role of skepticism of CSR has emerged in the literature as an area of concern for brand managers who do not want to be accused of green washing or advancing CSR programs for ego or profit-driven motives. The medium a corporation uses to communicate tenets of corporate
social responsibility contributes to the success or failure of the campaign in resonating with key stakeholders. A study of online newspapers found that reader comments regarding reaction to corporate social responsibility initiatives can be viewed as cynical, if the campaign occurs immediately after a crisis (Cho & Hong, 2008). Pomering and Johnson (2009), relying on attribution theory, proposed a research agenda to investigate consumers’ responses to CSR-based corporate image advertising, calling for metrics to evaluate attitudinal and behavioral responses. Scholars assert a connection exists between image advertising and brand reputation (Pomering & Johnson, 2009). The notion of attribution directly influences the discipline of corporate social responsibility as consumers attempt to discern the reason “why” a corporation has chosen to undertake a specific CSR approach.

In an analysis of the relative impact of brand communications on brand equity through social media, as compared to traditional media, researchers found that while traditional media has a stronger impact on brand awareness, social media communications strongly influence brand image (Bruhn, Schoenmueller, & Schafer, 2012). The study, which tested the differences between user-generated social media content and company-created social media content, found user-generated media communication exerts a major influence on hedonic brand image while company-created social media has an impact on the functional brand image (Bruhn et al., 2012). This finding suggests that further research is needed about the source of CSR information and branding attitude.
The link between corporate social responsibility and communication is explored in this dissertation to uncover aspects of brand awareness achieved through corporate social responsibility programs with a social media presence. This dissertation encompasses a discussion of the role of the public relations professional, who may take a role in strengthening the corporate brand and reputation through strategic communication initiatives such as corporate social responsibility programs. Mitigating brand risks may also be managed by the public relations professional, as research has shown media attention can be a catalyst for initiating a corporate social responsibility effort (Zygglidopoulos, Geogiadis, Carroll, & Siegel, 2011). In an analysis of the relationship between public relations and its ability to influence perceived corporate reputation, Kiousis et al. (2011) call for public relations professionals to plan strategies to enhance corporate image through social citizenship.

The role of the consumer is also explored in this dissertation because corporations face a new era of brand “co-creation” catalyzed by the prevalence of social media. The door for consumer brand ambassadors is wide open based on the ubiquity of social media. The role of the corporate communicator is evolving too, as corporations come to grips with less managerial control over brand attributes and communication of CSR initiatives.

Consequently, marketers can expect that brand communication will cease to be generated solely by the company, but increasingly by the consumers themselves through so called user-generated social media communication. Therefore, it is crucial to differentiate between firm-created and user-generated social media
communication and examine the impact of these two forms of social media communication separately. (Bruhn et al., 2012, p. 771)

Scholars point to the use of social media in CSR campaigns, further supporting the approach taken in this dissertation to present content in a social media environment, revealing the CSR/brand connection, as manifested through social media.

The influence and global penetrating power of the social media industry are virtually unstoppable. The corporate world must accept this power, deploy social media for its communication strategies, and above all, use it as a CSR branding and firm branding tool and medium. CSR is no more an occasional charity service rendered to local communities, but can be a powerful brand of reaching the millions world over. (Kesavan, Bernacchi, & Mascarenhas, 2013, p. 64)

The call for additional research harmonizes with the approach of this dissertation to test various media formats. Further study is required to examine the differences between “firm-created” and “user-generated” content in corporate social responsibility communication. Gensler, Volckner, Yuping, and Wiertz (2013) assert consumers are emerging as pivotal authors of brand stories derived as they participate in consumer networks and formulate brands via social media. The current atmosphere of “participatory” media environments sets the stage for several hypotheses.

Research suggests that corporations may undertake corporate social responsibility for strategic business reasons (Porter & Kramer, 2003) and that a company can achieve a better reputation from participation in philanthropic efforts (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990), yet it has also been suggested that consumer skepticism can arise if the effort is deemed
as self-serving (Vallaster et al., 2012). These findings suggest that source of the corporate social responsibility information may influence the receiver’s perception of the corporation, and subsequently the perception of the corporate reputation and brand. Thus,

**H3A (Source):** There will be statistically significant differences in brand attitude when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.

Research suggests that consumers attempt to attribute the reason why a corporation has undertaken corporate social responsibility campaign (Pomering & Johnson, 2009). The consumer’s evaluation of the company’s reputation and brand can vary as it assesses firm generated content and user-generated content, suggesting a multitude of outcomes for brand perception (Bruhn et al., 2012). This phenomenon suggests that an analysis of source and format within a corporate social responsibility campaign delivered in an online social environment will likely yield information about the effectiveness of various sources and format conditions in enhancing brand attitude.

For example, the perceptions of advertising messages conveyed from a consumer or from the corporation may influence brand attitude in different manners. Therefore,

**H3B (Source/Format):** There will be statistically significant differences in brand attitude for various source and format conditions when the source is varied from either the business or the consumer, and when the format is varied among news release, advertisement and article formats for corporate social responsibility information presented in an social media environment.
Contemporary businesses seek to persuade stakeholders about the positive aspects of corporate social responsibility in an effort to enhance corporate and brand reputation (Diermeier, 2011). Scholars have issued a plea for businesses to use social media as a tool for corporate social branding (Kesavan, Bernacchi, & Mascarenhas, 2013). Two sources of corporate social responsibility information may be the corporation or another consumer. As they attach a supplemental message to the message, persuasive impacts may be measured by the “sentiment” exerted in a social media atmosphere. For example, the material could be viewed by the reader as credible or unreliable. This perception may be further influenced by the accompanying message that may endorse or erode the brand message conveyed via social media. Therefore, 

**H3C(Source/Sentiment):** There will be statistically significant differences in brand attitude when the source of a corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer, and presented with or without sentiment in a social media environment.

The source, format, and sentiment attached to a corporate social responsibility campaign represent a confluence of factors that can influence the way a consumer interprets the corporate brand. Research suggests that programs that harmonize with the core values of the consumer will resonate well with them and deliver positive business results (Ellen, Webb, & Mohr, 2006). Further, it has been asserted that global brand equity may be influenced by corporate social responsibility activities (Torres et al., 2012). These findings suggest that deliberate communication of the corporate social responsibility communication is required. Yet research is required to decipher the proper source,
format, and sentiment to be used in conveying these aspects for maximum benefit to the brand. Therefore,

**H3D: (Source/Sentiment/Format)** There will be statistically significant differences in brand attitude when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from the business, and from the consumer, while the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats, and the content is presented with or without accompanying source sentiment.

**The Influence of Source and Media Format on Purchase Intention**

The desire for businesses to promote top-line growth and positive bottom-line impact through corporate social responsibility programs remains a common objective (Elkington, 1997). Corporations are undertaking CSR programs to fulfill shareholder obligations in a multitude of ways, including fiduciary responsibilities and obligations to engage in society in an ethical manner. Stimulating the act of purchase requires the formation of trust, and this section explores the intervention of corporate social responsibility in the trust-building agenda. It reveals how corporate social responsibility can boost trust and, in turn, promote purchase intention, allowing the corporation to simultaneously meet corporate objectives and deliver meaningful, socially oriented programs for society at large. It is worth noting that the willingness for consumers to pay more for social features and the impact of ethics on purchasing behavior remain germane to research involving corporate communication and corporate social responsibility. Auger, Burke, Devinney, and Louviere (2003) found ethical features of a product have a substantial impact on the purchase intentions of consumers. Further, researchers
underscore the importance of communication in bridging the CSR program and purchasing intention.

For example, despite occasionally extensive media coverage afforded to ethical issues, our results show that most consumers do not understand the ethical dimensions of the products they purchase. However, it is equally obvious that some consumers could be convinced to alter their purchase patterns if relevant ethical information is presented in an adequate and effective way. (Auger, Burke, Devinney, & Louviere, 2003, p. 299)

Creyer and Ross (1996) found the ethicality of a firm’s behavior is an important consideration during the purchasing decision and that consumers will reward ethical behavior by paying higher prices (Creyer & Ross, 1996). Subsequent research has yielded different results as other scholars like Carrigan and Atalla (2001) found that consumers do not actively link corporate ethical decisions with purchase decision-making behaviors. However, the researchers call for additional modes of communication for consumers:

Depressing though it may be for us to accept that many consumers in the new millennium still have little interest in ethical behavior, as marketers, we should not be disheartened…It may be ethical information needs to be communicated in a form that breaks through the clutter, and reaches the consumer without creating any inconvenience or discomfort for them. (Carrigan & Attala, 2001, p. 573)

Consistent with the complexity of purchasing decisions as a whole, the relationship between corporate social responsibility and purchasing contains multiple influences and a multitude of factors. Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) have found that the
relationship between corporate social responsibility and influence on consumer purchase intention is a complex one. CSR can affect consumers’ intentions to purchase products both directly and indirectly. Under certain CSR domains like employee working conditions, consumers with CSR-related belief systems can be influenced by the CSR activities. Lastly, the research finds that consumers must be made to feel that the corporate social responsibility program does not detract from the company’s ability to produce quality products (Sen & Bhattacharya, 2001). Brown and Dacin (1997) examined the influences of corporate ability (CA) and corporate social responsibility (CSR), categorizing them both as corporate associations that may influence perceptions and consumer responses. They found that while CSR associations may exert influence on product evaluations, a company’s corporate ability evaluation metric may have a greater impact. Thus, a reputation based on the company’s ability carries greater power than a reputation for social responsibility (Brown & Dacin, 1997).

Moving through time from the late 1990s to the current era, a shift in the scholarly literature is noted, establishing a framework for understanding the link between CSR and purchase intention with some recognition of the role of communications. Corporate identity plays a vital role in the administration of CSR programs. The literature often bifurcates the outcomes, with marketing researchers focusing on financial outcomes and public relations researchers concentrating on less tangible variables such as goodwill and corporate relationships (David, Kline, & Dai, 2005). To bridge the gap between the two disciplines, David et al. suggest the formation of a new definition of corporate identity – one that includes two dimensions, corporate expertise and corporate social responsibility.
and proposes a model of corporate identity that encompasses both an exchange dimension, based on utility, and a citizenship dimension, characterized by social values. This approach yields a dual process model that serves as the foundation of their research, which unites a path between CSR values and purchase intention (David et al., 2005). A connection between brand familiarity and CSR behaviors also may have a significant effect on purchase intention.

The effect of familiarity with CSR behaviors on corporate identity and purchase intention is an encouraging finding for the publicity and press agentry functions of public relations. CSR familiarity had a significant effect for three of the four corporations. Even for Philip Morris, which in recent times has made a concerted effort promote its CSR initiatives, we found a positive relationship between its CSR values and purchase intention. (David et al., 2005, p. 309)

This finding is relevant to this dissertation, as various media formats are tested, including a news release, article, and advertisement. Both the news release and the article represent media formats that result from public relations activities. The publicity model of public relations, which was coined by Grunig (1992), is one of the models that apply to the communication of corporate social responsibility. Information is conveyed via a news release to a consumer in an effort to develop awareness and consumer congruency. The literature related to purchase intention and corporate social responsibility directly addresses the issue of congruence – the harmony of the specific CSR campaign with the beliefs of the consumer. David et al. (2005) found both corporate expertise and corporate social values may serve as significant predictors of purchase intention, as evidenced by a
study of four large corporations: Microsoft, Nike, Philip Morris, and Wendy’s. In an
analysis of how and why corporate social responsibility activity leads individual
stakeholders to produce company-favoring outcomes, Bhattacharya, Korschun, and Sen
(2009) found that CSR provides stakeholders with numerous types of benefits. They posit
a stakeholder-centric model for understanding CSR that reveals ways stakeholders
respond to CSR initiatives, based on how they derive personal benefits from the effort
and how the stakeholder-company relationship is influenced by the type of benefits
accrued. These researchers found the quality of the resulting stakeholder-company
relationship from a CSR program relates to the type of benefits harvested by the
stakeholder.

Bhattacharya, Korschun, and Sen (2009) indicated that an important area for
future research involves the process through which stakeholders assess CSR initiatives.
Further study is required to analyze the effect of source and media format in generating
favorable conditions for CSR evaluation, which in turn can lead to brand awareness,
purchase intention, and social media engagement. In addition to the stakeholder “gain”
that can occur in a CSR relationship, the aspect of trust plays a part in catalyzing future
actions of consumers, most notably purchase intention. Pivato, Misani, and Tencati
(2008) examined the organic food industry and found that corporate social performance
can influence consumer trust which in turn influences consumers’ subsequent actions.
They found that CSR generates trust and this trust translates into brand loyalty and the
intention to purchase products (Pivato et al., 2008).
It has also been found that personal values of consumers translate into buying decisions. In a study of consumer’s motivational orientation to promotion versus prevention in green advertising appeals, Ku, Kuo, and Wou (2013) found that prevention-focused participants were more strongly persuaded when “product-related” appeals emphasize green rather than non-green attributes. Further, the study found that product preference was enhanced by green rather than non-green appeals (Ku et al., 2012). In an analysis of fair trade consumption, Doran (2009) found a correlation between personal values and the willingness to support fair trade companies that protect integrity in a corporate supply chain so as not to take advantage of producers. In a study analyzing if a company’s social responsibility record matters to consumers and if they are willing to pay higher prices for products from socially responsible companies, Mohr and Webb (2005) found that when consumers receive information that they trust about the company’s level of social responsibility, it affects how they evaluate the company and their purchasing intentions. The study also found that a low price did not appear to compensate for low levels of social responsibility (Mohr & Webb, 2005).

How corporations choose to communicate corporate social responsibility, by designating a source and specifying a media format, may have an impact on purchase intention. Research suggests that purchase intention can be influenced if corporate ethical behavior can be properly communicated (Auger, Burke, Devinney, & Louviere, 2003). However, others have found that consumers may not make ethical decisions with purchasing behavior (Carrigan & Attala, 2001), and that the need to communicate is vital
to influencing purchasing intention. This conundrum leads to further research regarding the flow of information about CSR, therefore:

**H4A (Source):** There will be statistically significant differences in purchase intention when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment. While scholars have attempted to articulate a path of persuasion emanating from CSR values (David et al., 2005), the appropriate media format used to communicate key messages remains a future area of study. Some have called for the use of traditional public relations content as a way to build relationships with consumers, underscoring the publicity model of public relations (Grunig, 1992), while others have asserted that the stakeholder must be presented with content in a media format that naturally fosters trust between the individual and the organization (Pivato, Misani, & Tencati, 2008).

Corporations attempt to persuade consumers to purchase products and convey aspects of the corporate reputation by utilizing multiple media formats (Diermeier, 2011). Consumers may advocate for certain companies based on their preferences and value systems (Giacalone, Paul, & Jurkiewicz, 2005) and subsequently relay information contained in media formats to other consumers using social media. Corporations and consumers both have a multitude of communication choices available to them to convey corporate social responsibility information. As they make decisions regarding which media format to utilize, the outcomes for resulting purchase intention may vary. Therefore,
H4B (Source/Format): There will be statistically significant differences in purchase intention for various source and format conditions when the source is varied from either the business or the consumer, and when the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats for corporate social responsibility information presented in an social media environment.

As stated above, the aspect of trust remains an integral factor in the purchase intention equation (Pivato, Misani, & Tencati, 2008). Further, research has shown that a consumer must experience an association between their own personal values and a company that is undertaking a corporate social responsibility campaign (Doran, 2009). This level of confidence may be influenced by the source of the communication and the accompanying sentiment that endorses the activity. To illustrate this phenomenon, consumers may embrace the credibility of a corporate source for corporate social responsibility information, or they could view it as self-serving as they attempt to attribute the reason why a corporation undertakes a CSR activity (Ellen, Webb, & Mohr, 2006). A detailed note of endorsement from the corporation could exacerbate the positive or negative aspects contributing to purchase intention. Consumers may view a fellow consumer as a trusted advisor and may be persuaded to purchase by a personal message, or similar to the corporate situation defined above, they may dislike the message and thus curtail purchasing, even based on the advice of a friend. Therefore,

H4C(Source/Sentiment): There will be statistically significant differences in purchase intention when the source of a corporate social responsibility
information is varied from either the business or from the consumer, and presented with or without sentiment in a social media environment.

Contemporary marketers attempt to devise the most meaningful corporate social responsibility programs that may deliver bottom line results. Research suggests that consumers may even pay higher prices for products from socially responsible companies (Mohr & Webb, 2005). To build the required trust, corporations must devise and implement appropriate communication strategies that consider the information source, media format, and use of sentiment. Therefore,

**H4D: (Source/Sentiment/Format)** There will be statistically significant differences in purchase intention when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from the business, and from the consumer, while the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats, and the content is presented with or without accompanying source sentiment.

**The Influence of Source and Media Format to Promote Social Media Engagement**

Businesses that want to convey information about a corporate social responsibility program want to use the most effective sources and media formats to catalyze social media engagement. In an era of dialogic communication, online media formats have opened the gates to consumer-to-consumer communication, allowing for a new environment of online word of mouth. Often housed within a social media platform such as Facebook, consumers now convey their thoughts, beliefs, and opinions to followers. This provides a new dimension for corporate communication, particularly related to corporate social responsibility. Interactivity is at the center of dialogic communication.
Choosing the most effective sources and formats to communicate may create advantageous conditions for corporations conveying CSR information. However, commanding the social media environment to systematically fuel word of mouth communication has been elusive for some corporations. Social media provides opportunities for stakeholders to come forth in a two-way symmetrical communications position with the corporation, but the media format also allows for broadcasting of CSR messages to specific communities via posts, likes, and transmission of CSR content.

Scholars have examined the impact of word of mouth in both offline and online environments (Brown & Dacin, 2007; Feng & Papatla, 2011). Consumers are driven by the desire for social interaction, economic incentives, concern for other consumers, and the potential to enhance their own self-worth when they contemplate electronic word of mouth (eWOM) behavior (Hennig-Thureau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004).

Traditional word of mouth no longer takes place in a face-to-face format, but has instead been replaced by electronic word of mouth, what has been coined eWOM. Consumers and citizens use social media formats to testify to a product attribute, examine ethical behavior, or condemn a corporation for failed products or irresponsible social behavior. Worley (2007) has called the Internet a “great equalizer” in terms of relationship building. Further, in setting forth multiple categories of CSR discourse including discourse on organizational legitimacy, philanthropy responsibility, products and services responsibility, environmental responsibility, and responsibility to workers, Worley asserts that corporations must do so in an atmosphere of dialogic communication. Word of mouth is related to the concept of customer engagement, indicating customers’
comprehensive behaviors directed toward a corporation. Researchers divided customer engagement into community engagement behaviors and transactional engagement behaviors. In an analysis of customer engagement in a Facebook brand community, it was found that customer behavioral engagement positively influences relationships. Engagement activities such as writing comments and reading messages positively influences relationship benefits (Gummerus, Liklander, Weman, & Pihlstrom, 2012). In a study of the use of a social network to signal trustworthiness of an unfamiliar e-vendor, Brengman and Karimov (2012) found that simply including a social media site in the online retailer’s website the corporation successfully signaled aspects of “benevolence” and “integrity.” Kaplan and Haenlein (2011) define electronic word of mouth as “viral marketing” that a corporation can use by, “giving the right message to the right messengers in the right environment” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2011, p. 253).

As consumers engage with corporations via mediated communication, scholars must examine how consumers talk to each other and how they “talk back” to the company. It has been found that online networks are a social proxy for individual identification (Brown, Broderick, & Lee, 2007). This means that corporations have the opportunity to leverage social media networks for engagement and advance word of mouth into electronic word of mouth regarding corporate social responsibility initiatives. Lopez and Sicilia (2013) found that information diffusion of new product information is enhanced when word of mouth activities occur before advertising. Other scholars have found that increased brand advertising can be associated with reduced online word of
mouth for products, thus indicating that traditional advertising may not always be compatible with word of mouth approaches (Feng & Papatla, 2011).

Today, corporations remain in an evolving process of understanding the most beneficial ways to use these media channels and require insights of further scholarship regarding the preferred source and effective media format to promote the desired impacts on the brand, purchase intention, and social media engagement. In an analysis of corporate social responsibility websites of corporations, Capriotti and Moreno (2007) found that while corporations articulate CSR programs on websites, they often fail to promote interactivity. In an examination of corporate websites, a common communication medium used by corporate communicators, researchers found an absence of two-way reciprocal communication. Instead, many CSR corporate websites focused on “expositive information” rather than interactive resources. This phenomenon thus negates the formation of a communication loop that allows consumers to “talk back” to the corporation. Further, the absence of this channel may leave consumers seeking for other media distribution channels to transmit opinions about a corporate social responsibility campaign.

As of this writing, new communication techniques to leverage the communication power of social media outlets are being created by scholars across the globe. Scholarly findings indicate that Fortune 500 companies may strive to engage stakeholders in dialog using media formats like Twitter, but fail to authentically create an atmosphere of two-way communication (Rybalko & Seltzer, 2010). However, companies can be successful at creating relationships with consumers and enhance the brand by using interactive
communication techniques such as online blogs, if the company believes in customer
eempowerment (Singh, Veron-Jackson, & Cullinane, 2008). Jenkins (2006) has written
about the advent of a convergence culture that puts the power of social media
engagement in the hands of every smartphone user and laptop cruiser.

Media convergence is more than simply a technology shift. Convergence alters
the relationship between existing technologies, industries, markets, genres, and
audiences. Convergence alters the logic by which media industries operate and by
which media consumers process news and entertainment. Keep this in mind:
convergence refers to a process, not an end-point… Convergence involves both a
change in the way that media produces and a change in the way media is
consumed. (Jenkins, 2006, pp. 15-16)

Argenti (2009) points to the fact that technology has fueled the phenomenon of
corporations engaging stakeholders in two-way conversations about corporate social
responsibility. Consumers today seek information about green initiatives and corporate
philanthropy, allowing corporations to use a multitude of communication channels
including social media to convey messages and engage an array of stakeholders. Argenti
calls the needs for CSR “immeasurable” and states that the risks of not doing so are
“toxic.” While Grunig has posited multiple models of public relations, the press-agent model
applies to CSR information research, as does Grunig’s model regarding two-way
symmetrical communication. The advent of digital media denotes a new era of
communication that suggests a new level of efficiency for dialogic, two-way symmetrical
communication. Advocates for two-way symmetrical communication have gone so far to
say that different “stakes” condition different dialogic types, and thus businesses must link the stakes to specific dialogue forms and scripts (Johansen & Nielsen, 2011). For example, a consumer stakeholder has the interest/stake of quality, thus requiring a dialogue form of networking and a dialogue rich with experience and engagement. The investor stakeholder has the stake of a financial return and requires the dialogue form of mutual briefing and a dialogue script of balancing and ensuring (Johansen & Nielsen, 2011).

Despite criticism of the two-way symmetrical model, L’Etang (1994) states that the model may be employed by the corporation if it truly recognizes the issues brought forth by stakeholders and can balance those against pure self-interest. L’Etang argues that corporate social responsibility is a potential example of symmetrical public relations but can be re-categorized as publicity or public information if it is communicated to a third party. Despite some criticism, the Grunig symmetrical model has been used as a foundation to study corporate social responsibility communications. Morsing and Schultz (2006) unite stakeholder theory with the Grunig models and then pose three models for CSR communication: stakeholder information strategy, analogous to the Grunig model of publicity; stakeholder response strategy for two-way asymmetrical sensemaking and sensegiving; and stakeholder involvement strategy providing consideration for two-way symmetrical sensemaking and sensegiving. This approach concludes that companies will get the most benefit from facilitating “co-creation” of content. The two-way symmetrical model allows for communication of a message to a public/receiver who then transmits a message back to the sender that results in some form of adaptation or meaningful change.
The two-way symmetrical viewpoint is a systems-based model which presumes the corporation will listen to and subscribe to changes suggested by the stakeholders. Yet, this is only one part of social media engagement. The consumer has the opportunity as a content creator to pass along information of relevance to a specific community. This phenomenon is further probed in this dissertation through the examination of the consumer who relays information via a social media website.

With this evidence, the scholarly literature may suggest a changing role for the contemporary public relations professional, moving away from a traditional press agentry role to one characterized by community-building and establishment of two-way communication loops. Further insights regarding the role of the public relations professional may be gleaned by the work of Kruckeberg, Starck, and Vujnovic (2006) who address the role and ethics of community building for consumer products and services. They point to facets of a consumer community such as a continuing presence, belief of the community of the merits of the service or product, a shared culture revolving around the service or product, and a community characterized by dynamism and normative behavior in relation to the product or service. They assert the need for the public relations professional to play an integral role in consumer community development. Academic research and practical observations of social media habits reveal that the platform provides a venue for dialogic communication regarding corporate social responsibility, allowing for intensified customer engagement and relationship building. Further investigation of appropriate techniques to communicate corporate social responsibility information is required.
As corporations form relationships with consumers in the delicate stakeholder relationship, social media may serve as a fertile channel for communication. Kent and Taylor (1998) have suggested principles of dialogic communication that fuel relationships, promote communication, and could foster desired behaviors in the social media sphere. Yet that evolution of electronic word of mouth suggests an emerging and more advanced role for the consumer (Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004). A consumer who receives CSR information online will likely make judgments regarding the corporation or the consumer who transmitted the information. In turn, the receiver will make choices on whether to retransmit information or not based on the source credibility. For example, the consumer may experience a higher level of comfort participating in two-way dialogue with another consumer about a CSR program, rather than communicating with a corporation. Further, following CSR online exposure, an advocacy role may be exercised as the consumer exerts behaviors such as “likes,” “shares,” or “posts” in an online media environment. Therefore,

**H5A (Source):** There will be statistically significant differences in social media engagement when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.

Social media environments serve as channels of communication for both consumers and corporations. Corporations may use social media outlets to convey corporate messages while consumers come to social media environments to fulfill needs (Gummerus, Liljander, Weman, & Philstrom, 2012). Some researchers have
distinguished behaviors between “community engagement” and “transactional” behaviors. The prompting of social media engagement may be influenced by the information source of the media format used to convey the information. The level of engagement may be influenced by the connection between the consumer and corporation, or alternatively the consumer and another consumer. This phenomenon is informed by Kruckeberg, Starck, and Vujnovic (2006) who address the notion of a shared culture that revolves around a product or service. This concept may be applied to corporate social responsibility information. The type of media format adds a second dynamic to the equation as the receiver may discern aspects of source credibility and information credibility. For example, a consumer may be more likely to “post” information from a corporation if they feel a strong community connection and that information is presented in a credible way by using a media format such as an advertisement, article, or news release. Therefore, if a study were to be conducted, it may be found that the combination of the source and media format used in social media may vary in effectiveness of promoting social media engagement. Thus,

**H5B (Source/Format):** There will be statistically significant differences in social media engagement for various source and format conditions when the source is varied from either the business or the consumer, and when the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats for corporate social responsibility information presented in an social media environment.

Research suggests that a new atmosphere of convergence is flooding the corporate marketplace, changing the ecosystem of media consumption and media production
(Jenkins, 2006). The willingness of a consumer to engage with a corporation or another individual when presented with corporate social responsibility information may be influenced by a secondary “appeal” by the corporation or by the information. As information spreads virally via social media, personal endorsements and testimonials may attempt to persuade the individual to engage with the content by liking, sharing, or posting the information. In the social media sphere, engagement can intensify as dialogic communication occurs. Research suggests that this level of engagement may further propel electronic word of mouth (Gummerus, Liljander, Weman, & Pihlstrom, 2012). Therefore,

**H5C(Source/Sentiment):** There will be statistically significant differences in social media engagement when the source of a corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer, and presented with or without sentiment in a social media environment.

As Worley (2007) indicated, corporate social responsibility discourse must include multiple facets such as legitimacy and philanthropy, and must be conveyed through dialogic communication. By establishing atmospheres for dialogue, companies can advance corporate communication platforms. While corporations may gravitate to brand advertising as a way to communicate, this tactic may reduce word of mouth (Feng & Papatla, 2011). Further, the role of the consumer as a co-creator of content should not be discounted as Jenkins (2006) suggests. Therefore, investigation is required to determine the interaction of source, media format, and sentiment in the communication of corporate social responsibility programs. Thus,
H5D: (Source/Sentiment/Format) There will be statistically significant differences in social media engagement when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from the business, and from the consumer, while the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats, and the content is presented with or without accompanying source sentiment.
CHAPTER 3

METHOD

Participants

The sample was comprised of respondents 18 years and older who reside in the United States. Respondents from 43 different states participated in the study. The mean age for the entire sample was 32 years of age. The education level of the sample included 33% with a bachelor degree; 34% with some college but no degree; 12% with a high school degree or equivalent; 9% with a graduate degree; 11% with an associate degree; and 1% with less than a high school degree. The sample was comprised of 261 females, representing 44% of the sample and 339 men, representing 56% of the sample.

Design

This study utilized a 2 x 3 x 2 ANOVA to explore the effects of source and format and sentiment. Two types of sources (business-to-consumer and consumer-to-consumer), three media format types (news release, article, and advertisement) and two sentiment aspects (with sentiment and no sentiment) were tested. The source variable demonstrated a business-to-consumer communication (B2C) with information coming from a fictitious coffee company, in contrast to the consumer-to-consumer information coming from a female. Research indicates that 73 percent of online adults use a social networking site of some kind (Pew, 2014). A woman “consumer” author was chosen based on Pew Internet research that indicated women are likely to use Facebook, the dominant social media platform (Pew, 2014). Three media formats were presented in a social media environment: a news release, advertisement, and news article, all focused on the same
corporate social responsibility campaign, but tailored to represent the look and feel of the specific media format. The sentiment variable offered manipulations “with sentiment” or “no sentiment,” indicating the presence of positive comments from the corporation or the consumer regarding the content that was presented, or was absent of personal comments. In total, 600 surveys were filled out by residents of the United States who were 18 years of age or older.

The study involved twelve manipulation categories of 50 respondents each who were exposed to the following treatments: business-to-consumer news release with sentiment; business-to-consumer news release with no sentiment; business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment; business-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment; business-to-consumer article with sentiment; and business-to-consumer article with no sentiment; consumer-to-consumer news release with sentiment; consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment; consumer-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment; consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment; consumer-to-consumer article with sentiment and a consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment. The study surveyed 600 respondents across twelve categories, or 50 respondents in each cell. The power analysis for the full study is .99 based on an effect size of .25 and \( \alpha \) error probability of .05, performed on G*Power data analysis software (Institute for Digital Research and Education UCLA, 2014).
Manipulations

The research materials included a survey that exposed respondents to the various source, format, and sentiment combinations, and allowed them to offer responses to questions related to source credibility, information credibility, brand attitude, purchase intention, and social media engagement. The study utilized a fictitious retail coffee company, White Label Coffee Company, that was launching a reusable cup campaign as part of the company’s corporate social responsibility (CSR) program to help the environment by reducing waste. For business-to-consumer treatments, the White Label Coffee company logo was featured prominently on the social media page. For consumer-to-consumer treatments, the source was listed as Joanne Bolton, a Caucasian female.

The news release was presented in a news release format, the advertisement featured a picture of a cup and CSR message, and the article was presented as a bylined article containing verbiage about the CSR campaign. Items with sentiment contained positive messages from the source. For example, business-to-consumer manipulations contained: “Customers and fans, we have launched another program to better the environment,” and consumer-to-consumer manipulations contained: “Wow, look at this, we can contribute to the betterment of the environment every day.” The materials were presented in a social media atmosphere that resembled the graphic design and content attributes of Facebook. For the White Label mock Facebook page, a faux logo and coffee cup were presented as the main visual, while the consumer mock Facebook page displayed a cascading waterfall.
Table 0.3 Manipulations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manipulation #1</th>
<th>Business-to-consumer news release with sentiment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation #2</td>
<td>Business-to-consumer article with sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation #3</td>
<td>Business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation #4</td>
<td>Business-to-consumer news release with no sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation #5</td>
<td>Business-to-consumer article with no sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation #6</td>
<td>Business-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation #7</td>
<td>Consumer-to-consumer news release with sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation #8</td>
<td>Consumer-to-consumer article with sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation #9</td>
<td>Consumer-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation #10</td>
<td>Consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation #11</td>
<td>Consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manipulation #12</td>
<td>Consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedure

The data was collected during a three-day period in June 2014 using an online survey tool and Amazon Mechanical TURK respondent mechanism. Respondents were registered with Amazon Mechanical Turk as workers who can choose human intelligence tasks (HITS) for compensation. Respondents in this study were compensated 25 cents for each complete survey. Respondents were not allowed to answer the survey more than once. Through the online system administered by Amazon, respondents received the following recruitment message: Coffee company survey. Review social media content about a coffee company and fill out a 34-question survey offering your opinions.
IRB approval was granted on June 13, 2014. The study was found exempt under category B2 of federal regulations 45CFR46. SurveyMonkey and the Amazon Mechanical Turk data collection method were used to complete the study.

**Measures**

*Source Credibility*: To measure source credibility, the McCroskey’s (1966) 12-item semantic differential scale for source credibility was used. The scale offers two main dimensions of credibility: authoritativeness and character. The authoritativeness category is comprised of six aspects including reliable, informed, qualified, intelligent, valuable and expert. The character category is comprised of six aspects including honesty, unfriendly, pleasant, selfish, awful and virtuous. A modified semantic differential scale was developed and deployed using an online survey tool. This questionnaire allowed the respondent to rank the source’s level of authority based on a scale of 1 to 7 with “least” as a score of “1” and “most” as the score of “7.” For example, respondents were asked to respond to a statement, I believe the source’s level of authority is: 1. reliable; 2. informed; 3. qualified; 4. Intelligent; 5. Valuable; and 6. Expert. They were shown a series of seven radial buttons that from left to right indicated “least” to “most.” Cronbach’s α score for authoritativeness was .78, while the Cronbach’s α score for character was .75.

*Information Credibility*: To measure information credibility, the Flanagin and Metzger (2000) scale for online information was utilized. This scale was designed to evaluate online information credibility by looking at five items: believable; accurate; trustworthy; biased; and complete. The Flanagin and Metzger scale was chosen based on
the scale’s appropriateness to measure online content credibility. Respondents were asked, “I believe the information contained on this social media page is,” and were then asked to rank the five items based on a scale of 1 to 7 with 1 as “not at all” and 7 as “extremely.” Cronbach’s \( \alpha \) for the Flanagin and Metzger scale for online information credibility was .82.

*Corporate Brand Reputation:* To measure attitude to the fictitious coffee corporate brand reputation, the Rapp scale (2013) was selected. The scale was chosen based on its ability to measure long-term brand reputation. The scale posed five statements: This company is trustworthy; This company is reputable; This company makes honest claims; This company has a long-lasting nature. In the past, today, and in the future, the values behind this company will not change. Respondents were then asked to rank each statement on a five point scale with disagree strongly, disagree, neither agree or disagree, agree, and agree strongly. Cronbach’s \( \alpha \) for the Rapp scale (Rapp, Bietelspacher, Grewal, & Hughes, 2013) for corporate brand reputation was .89.

*Purchase Intention:* To measure purchase intention, two questions were posed to respondents, prompting them to rank their behavior on a 5-point scale from strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree or agree, agree, and strongly agree. The respondents were instructed to state their willingness to participate in the following activities: 1.) I would be willing to purchase White Label coffee; 2.) I would be willing to pay more for this product than another non, eco-friendly product. Cronbach \( \alpha \) for the two question scale was .73. A second scale was used in this section to measure environmentalism purchasing behavior. The Cervellon (2012) scale asked respondents to complete three
answers on a five point scale ranging from disagree strongly, disagree, neither disagree or agree, agree, and agree strongly. The three scale items were: I normally make a conscious effort to limit my use of products that are made of or use scare resources.; I have switched products for ecological reasons.; and, When I have a choice between two equal products, I always purchase the one that is less harmful to other people and the environment. Cronbach’s α for the Cervellon scale for environmentalism purchasing behavior was .83.

**Social Media Engagement:** To measure social media engagement, respondents were asked to state their willingness to complete the following tasks, and respond on a 5-point scale from strongly disagree, disagree, neither disagree or agree, agree, and strongly agree. The three questions stated: “I would be willing to ‘like’ this information on my social media page”; “I would be willing to ‘share’ this information with my friends on a social media page”; and, “I would be willing to ‘post’ this information on my social media page wall.” Cronbach α for the three question set was .95.

**Statistical Analyses**

The statistical analysis used 2 x 3 x 2 ANOVA. The three factors were source (two levels), media format (two levels), and sentiment (two levels). The ANOVA allowed hypotheses to be tested for the source actor’s main effect and interaction effects. For example, the source tests were: source main effect; source/format interaction; source/sentiment interaction; and sentiment/source/format interaction. Initial follow up of significant effects was based on means comparisons. ANOVAs were performed for source credibility, information credibility, brand attitude, purchase intention, and social
media engagement. If ANOVA F-stats produced $p$-values < .05, the effect was deemed statistically significant. If Fisher LS Means Differences Tests produces $p$-values < .05, the means were considered statistically significant. All calculations were performed using JMP Pro 10 statistical software.

**Table 0.4 Method Scale Summary**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Operationalization</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source Credibility</td>
<td>Authoritateness and Character scored on 12-item scale</td>
<td>McCroskey scale of source credibility (12-item semantic differential)</td>
<td>McCroskey, 1966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Information Credibility</td>
<td>Five items for believable, accurate, trustworthy, biased, and complete</td>
<td>Flanagin and Metzger online information credibility scale</td>
<td>Flanagin and Metzger (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Corporate Brand Reputation</td>
<td>Five items to measure corporate brand reputation</td>
<td>Rapp scale for corporate brand reputation</td>
<td>Rapp et al. (2013)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase Intention</td>
<td>Two items, “I would be willing to purchase,” and “Pay more.”</td>
<td>Five Point Likert scale (two questions)</td>
<td>Byrum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmentalism Purchasing Behavior</td>
<td></td>
<td>Cervellon scale for environmental purchasing behavior</td>
<td>Cervellon (2012)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Media Engagement</td>
<td>Willingness to share, like or post information</td>
<td>Five item Likert Scale (three questions)</td>
<td>Byrum</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

This study revealed 46 statistically significant differences across six scales providing insights regarding corporate social responsibility communications. One significant finding was indicated for source; 15 statistically significant differences were found for source/format; 4 differences for source/sentiment; and 26 differences for source/format/sentiment combinations. Of the 20 hypotheses posed, 13 were supported. A 2 x 3 x 2 analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted with LS Means Differences Student’s t test performed on all effects.

Source Credibility Hypotheses H1A, H1B, H1C, and H1D

A series of four hypotheses (H1A, H1B, H1C, and H1D) were posed to investigate the impact of source, source/format, source/sentiment, and sentiment/source/format, respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Hypothesis Statement</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1A (Source)</td>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in perceived source credibility when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.</td>
<td>Partially supported for source credibility (authoritativeness)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1B (Source/Format)</td>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in perceived source credibility for various source/format conditions when the source is varied from either the business or the consumer, and when the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article</td>
<td>Supported for source credibility (authoritativeness and character)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
For source, it was found that the business scores for authoritativeness ($M = 26.09$, $SD = .39$) were significantly higher than the consumer scores ($M = 25.36$, $SD = .39$), $F(1$, $588) = 7.87, p < .05$ (see Table 1.1). This finding indicates that consumers may still view corporations as authorities for information and suggests a future role for corporations in conveying corporate social responsibility information.

For source/format combinations, when considering the attribute of authoritativeness, participants perceived the business-to-consumer article ($M = 28.48$, $SD = .67$) with more authoritativeness than the consumer-to-consumer article ($M = 26.27$, $SD = .39$).
This finding suggests that consumers may instill credit in the “authoritativeness” of a corporation when transmitting an article, rather than receiving a news article retransmitted from a consumer. Further, this finding supports an argument for a press agentry function of a corporate communicator to conduct media relations. In another difference, the business-to-consumer news release \((M = 27.51, SD = .62)\) was perceived as generating more source credibility (character) attributes than the consumer-to-consumer news release \((M = 24.78, SD = .62)\), \(F(2, 588) = 5.18, \ p < .05\), (Table 1.2).

This finding suggests that consumers attach character value to a corporation that disseminates information via a news release. Further, this finding suggests the ongoing role of a public relations professional in generating this news release format and conveying it to consumers through social media. These findings provide support for Hypothesis H1B.

For source/sentiment, statistically significant differences were found for authoritativeness as the business-to-consumer communication with sentiment \((M = 27.19, SD = .54)\) was deemed more authoritative by participants than the consumer-to-consumer communication with sentiment \((M = 25.21, SD = .54)\), \(F(1,588) = .68, \ p < .05\), and more authoritative than the consumer-to-consumer communication with no sentiment \((M = 25.53, SD = .54)\), \(F(1,588) = .68, \ p < .05\). These findings suggest a role for the corporate communications officer to speak directly to the consumers using sentiment messages. For character, the consumer-to-consumer manipulations with sentiment \((M = 28.35, SD = .51)\) earned higher scores by participants than the consumer-to-consumer manipulations with no sentiment \((M = 25.75, SD = .50)\), \(F(1,588) = 4.69, \ p < .05\) (Table 1.3). These
findings suggest that consumers may adopt notions of “character” for individuals who relay information via social media, particularly if they do so by embellishing the information with a sentiment, thus speaking person-to-person. These findings provide support for Hypothesis H1C.

For sentiment/source/format, for source (authoritativeness) the business-to-consumer category of manipulations containing sentiment, the article ($M = 28.94, SD = .94$) was ranked higher than the advertisement ($M = 25.12, SD = .94$), $F(2,588) = .69, p < .05$ (Table 1.4) by participants as they evaluated authoritativeness. This finding suggests that readers may view an article from the corporation about a CSR program as a more credible or authoritative media format than a corporate advertisement presented in a social media atmosphere, particularly when the content is combined with a persuasive sentiment message. A similar finding revealed that even without sentiment, the business-to-consumer article ($M = 28.02, SD = .94$) was deemed by participants as superior to the business-to-consumer advertisement ($M = 24.76, SD = .95$), $F(2,588) = .69, p < .05$ in generating feelings of source authoritativeness (Table 1.4). In the consumer-to-consumer category of manipulations without sentiment, the article ($M = 27.14, SD = .93$) instilled a greater sense of authoritativeness of the source than the advertisement ($M = 23.27, SD = .94$), $F(2,588) = .69, p < .05$ (Table 1.4), according to respondents. Participants classified the consumer-to-consumer news release without sentiment ($M = 26.18, SD = .94$) as more effective at generating source authoritativeness than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 23.27, SD = .94$), $F(2,588) = .69, p < .05$ (Table 1.4). These findings suggest that the article and news release formats remain effective
tools for conveying aspects of source authoritativeness when communicating corporate CSR platforms. For differences found for source character, respondents perceived the consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment ($M = 27.14, SD = .93$) as more effective at promoting source character than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 23.27, SD = .94$), $F(2,588) = 2.41, p < .05$ (Table 1.4). In addition, the consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment ($M = 27.14, SD = .93$) was ranked higher by participants than the consumer-to-consumer news release ($M = 26.18, SD = .94$), $F(2,588) = 2.41, p < .05$ in generating character (Table 1.4). These findings suggest that transmitting articles about CSR initiatives is an effective way to bolster source credibility (character). Source/sentiment/format findings supported Hypothesis H1D.

**Non-Significant Source Credibility Finding**

No differences were found for source character attributes for source credibility. Participants perceived the character of the corporation ($M = 27.47, SD = .36$) similarly to the character of the corporation ($M = 27.05, SD = .36$), $F(1, 588) = 4.63, p > .05$ (see Table 1.1). This finding may suggest that consumers do not discern differences between the character of corporations or individuals when conveying information. These findings indicate partial support for Hypothesis H1A.

Overall, the research findings in this section related to source credibility indicate that Hypothesis H1A (source) was partially supported for authoritativeness; Hypothesis H2A (source/format) was supported for authoritativeness and character; Hypothesis H3A (source/sentiment) was supported for authoritativeness and character; and Hypothesis
H4A (source/sentiment/format) was supported for authoritativeness and character when the analysis was completed with the 2 x 3 x 2 ANOVA.

**Information Credibility Hypotheses H2A, H2B, H2C, and H2D**

A series of four hypotheses (H2A, H2B, H2C, and H2D) were posed to investigate the impact of source, source/format effect, source/sentiment effect, and sentiment/source/format, respectively on information credibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Hypothesis Statement</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H2A (Source)</td>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in perceived information credibility when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2B (Source/Format)</td>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in perceived information credibility for various source/format conditions when the source is varied from either the business or the consumer, and when the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats for corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2C (Source/Sentiment)</td>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in perceived information credibility when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer, and presented with our without sentiment in a social media environment.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There will be statistically significant differences in perceived information credibility when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from the business, and from the consumer, while the format is varied among the news release, advertisement, and article formats, and the content is presented with or without accompanying source sentiment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H2D (Source/Sentiment/Format)</th>
<th>Supported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in perceived information credibility when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from the business, and from the consumer, while the format is varied among the news release, advertisement, and article formats, and the content is presented with or without accompanying source sentiment.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For source/format, the news release from the corporation \((M = 20.84, SD = .59)\) was deemed more credible by respondents than the news release transmitted by the consumer \((M = 19.39, SD = .59)\), \(F(2, 588) = .44, p < .05\) (Table 2.2). This suggests that viewers may respect the primacy of a news release about a CSR program disseminated originally from a corporation, rather than one that is retransmitted from another consumer. This finding supports Hypothesis H2B.

For source/sentiment, business-to-consumer manipulations with sentiment \((M = 20.29, SD = .49)\) were deemed more credible by participants than consumer-to-consumer manipulations with sentiment \((M = 18.41, SD = .48)\), \(F(1, 588) = 3.91, p < .05\) (Table 2.3). This finding suggests that a corporation speaking directly to the consumer about corporate social responsibility is more potent than consumer-to-consumer communication in boosting information credibility. This finding bolsters the argument for strategic corporate communication that allows a company to address audiences about aspects of the CSR program. This finding provides evidence to support Hypothesis H2C.
In the analysis of sentiment/source/format (Table 2.4) when considering items with sentiment, the business-to-consumer news release with sentiment ($M = 21.26, SD = .83$) was viewed by participants as having more information credibility than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment ($M = 20.0, SD = .83$), $F(2,588) = 3.05, p < .05$ (Table 2.4). This finding suggests that consumers may view the news release with sentiment as a credible communication vehicle for businesses, and believe it is more credible than an advertisement transmitted with sentiment by another consumer, more than an advertisement about CSR. Second, the business-to-consumer article with sentiment ($M = 22.30, SD = .83$) was deemed more credible by participants than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment ($M = 20.0, SD = .83$), $F(2,588) = 3.05, p < .05$ (Table 2.4). This finding suggests that the article may maintain the integrity of information credibility as it is transmitted by a corporation to consumers, and that sentiment can assist the information credibility. When considering items with no sentiment, the consumer-to-consumer news article with no sentiment ($M = 21.04, SD = .83$) stimulated more information credibility among participants than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 17.35, SD = .83$), $F(2,588) = 3.05, p < .05$ (Table 2.4). This finding suggests that when choosing between an article or an advertisement to transmit to an online peer set, the article may be viewed as more credible, and sentiment is not required to boost information credibility for the CSR campaign. These three findings support Hypothesis H2D.

**Non-Significant Information Credibility Finding**
No significant differences were found for source (Table 2.1) for information credibility. This indicates that participants viewed the business source ($M = 19.93, SD = .34$) in a similar way to the consumer source ($M = 19.00, SD = .34$), $F(2,588) = 3.93, p > .05$ (Table 2.1). This provides evidence to show that Hypothesis H2A was not supported.

Overall, the findings in this section related to information credibility indicate that Hypothesis H2A (source) was not supported; Hypothesis H2B (source/format) was supported; Hypothesis H2C (source/sentiment) was supported; and Hypothesis H2D (source/sentiment/format) was supported in the analysis of effects completed with the 2 x 3 x 2 ANOVA.

**Corporate Brand Reputation Hypotheses H3A, H3B, H3C, and H3D**

A series of four hypotheses (H3A, H3B, H3C, and H3D) were posed to investigate the impact of source, source/format effect, source/sentiment effect, and sentiment/source/format, respectively on corporate brand reputation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Hypothesis Statement</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H3A (Source)</td>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in perceived corporate brand reputation when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3B (Source/Format)</td>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in perceived corporate brand reputation when the source is varied from either the business or the consumer, and when the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats for corporate social</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.

**H3C (Source/Sentiment)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>There will be statistically significant differences in corporate brand reputation when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer, and presented with or without sentiment in a social media environment.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not supported</td>
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</table>

**H3D (Source/Sentiment/Format)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>There will be statistically significant differences in corporate brand reputation when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from the business, and from the consumer, while the format is varied among the news release, advertisement, and article formats, and the content is presented with or without accompanying source sentiment.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The source/format effect revealed that respondents found the news release disseminated by a corporation ($M = 17.27, SD = .36$) is more likely to positively influence the corporate brand reputation than an advertisement disseminated by the company ($M = 15.44, SD = .36$), $F(2,588) = .15, p < .05$ (Table 3.2). This finding suggests that the news release format provides a useful content format to convey CSR information to support the company’s reputation. Among participants, it was found that the consumer-to-consumer news release ($M = 16.78, SD = .36$) also promoted brand reputation more effectively than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement ($M = 15.25, SD = .36$), $F(2,588) = .15, p < .05$ (Table 3.2). This suggests that the news release format
maintains its strength in promoting the corporate brand reputation, even if transmitted by a consumer, when it is compared to the effectiveness of an advertisement. Participants ranked the consumer-to-consumer article ($M = 17.05, SD = .36$) as more effective at promoting corporate brand reputation than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement ($M = 15.25, SD = .36$), $F(2,588) = .15, p < .05$ (Table 3.2). These three findings support Hypothesis H3B.

When examining sentiment/source/format, it was found that when a corporate news release was transmitted with sentiment from a business ($M = 17.58, SD = .51$) respondents viewed it more effective at promoting corporate brand reputation than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment ($M = 15.50, SD = .51$), $F(2,588) = 1.09, p < .05$ (Table 3.4). When sentiment was removed, the business-to-consumer news release ($M = 16.96, SD = .51$) was still more effective according to participants at promoting corporate brand reputation than the business-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 15.38, SD = .51$), $F(2,588) = 1.09, p < .05$ (Table 3.4). These findings regarding the superiority of the news release format over the advertisement suggest corporations should continue to use news releases to communicate corporate social responsibility information and transmit them via social media as a way to promote the corporate brand reputation. The business-to-consumer article containing sentiment ($M = 17.76, SD = .51$) was deemed by participants as more effective at supporting the corporate reputation than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment ($M = 15.59, SD = .51$), $F(2,588) = 1.09, p < .05$ (Table 3.4). This finding may suggest that consumers may embrace the article format instead of the advertisement when considering
a corporate brand reputation. This further suggests that corporations may continue to pursue media relations and secure media placements regarding their corporate social responsibility programs as a way to actively communicate with consumers and generate positive corporate brand reputation. Findings suggest that consumers who want to support a corporate brand are better off retransmitting news releases than advertisements, as evidenced by the finding that the consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment ($M = 16.96, SD = .51$) was scored higher by participants as a better combination than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 14.92, SD = .50$), $F(2, 588) = 1.09, p < .05$ for generating a positive corporate brand reputation (Table 3.4). These four findings support Hypothesis H3D.

**Non-Significant Corporate Brand Reputation Findings**

No significant differences were found for source (Table 3.1) for corporate brand reputation. Participants perceived the business-to-consumer communication in influencing corporate brand reputation ($M = 16.77, SD = .21$) similarly to the influence of the consumer-to-consumer communication ($M = 16.36, SD = .21$), $F(1, 588) = 1.92, p > .05$ (see Table 3.1). This finding may suggest that consumers may not discern differences between the character of corporations or individuals when conveying information. These findings indicate that Hypothesis H3A was not supported.

When examining corporate brand reputation, no significant differences were found for source/sentiment combinations (Table 3.3). The business-to-consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 16.94, SD = .29$), the business-to-consumer communication with no sentiment ($M = 16.60, SD = .29$), the consumer-to-consumer
communication with sentiment \( M = 16.21, SD = .29 \), and the consumer-to-consumer communication with no sentiment \( M = 16.51, SD = .29 \) were all viewed by participants in a similar way that did not yield statistically significant differences \( F(1, 588) = 1.20, p > .05 \) (Table 3.3) for the evaluation of corporate brand reputation. These findings indicate that Hypotheses H3C was not supported.

Overall, the findings for corporate brand reputation effects indicate that Hypothesis H3A (Source) was not supported; Hypothesis H3B (Source/Format) was supported; Hypothesis H3C (Source/Sentiment) was not supported; and Hypothesis H3D (Source/Sentiment/Format) was supported in the analysis of effects completed with the 2 x 3 x 2 ANOVA and the LS Means Differences Student’s t test.

**Purchase Intention Hypotheses H4A, H4B, H4C, and H4D**

A series of four hypotheses (H4A, H4B, H4C, and H4D) were posed to investigate the impact of source, source/format effect, source/sentiment effect, and sentiment/source/format, respectively on purchase intention.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Hypothesis Statement</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H4A (Source)</td>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in purchase intention when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4B (Source/Format)</td>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in purchase intention when the source is varied from either the business or the consumer, and when the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats for corporate social</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H4C</th>
<th>Source/Sentiment</th>
<th>There will be statistically significant differences in purchase intention when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer, and presented with or without sentiment in a social media environment.</th>
<th>Not supported</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H4D</td>
<td>Source/Sentiment/Format</td>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in purchase intention when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from the business, and from the consumer, while the format is varied among the news release, advertisement, and article formats, and the content is presented with or without accompanying source sentiment.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were asked their willingness to “purchase” a product from the fictitious coffee company. When examining source/format, it was found that the business-to-consumer news release ($M = 3.44, SD = .10$) was viewed by participants as more effective at promoting purchase intention than the business-to-consumer advertisement ($M = 2.89, SD = .10$), $F(2,588) = .02, p < .05$ (Table 4.2). This finding suggests that corporations may use the news release as a valid communications format to persuade consumers to purchase products, and that this format is preferable to an advertisement. When the news release was transmitted via a consumer ($M = 3.37, SD = .10$) participants also viewed it as more effective at generating “willingness to purchase”
than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement ($M = 2.85, SD = .10$), $F(2,588) = .02$, $p < .05$ (Table 4.2). This finding suggests that a corporate news release retransmitted by a consumer maintains its strength to promote willingness to purchase when compared with an advertisement. These two findings support Hypothesis H4B.

For source/sentiment/format, the business-to-consumer news release ($M = 3.40$, $SD = .15$) with no sentiment was found by participants to promote willingness to purchase more effectively than the business-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 2.72$, $SD = .15$), $F(2,588) = .10$, $p < .05$ (Table 4.4). From this finding, it may be suggested that sentiment from a corporation is not required to leverage the positive impact of a news release in influencing willingness to purchase. Respondents also indicated that the consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment ($M = 3.40$, $SD = .15$) promoted willingness to purchase more than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 2.68$, $SD = .15$), $F(2,588) = .10$, $p < .05$ (Table 4.4). This finding suggests that when re-transmitting a news release from a corporation, an individual may not have to include a personal message to generate willingness to purchase. These two findings support Hypothesis H4D.

When respondents indicated if they would be willing to “pay more,” the source/format effect indicated that participants viewed the consumer-to-consumer article ($M = 3.29$, $SD = .10$) as more persuasive at convincing them to “pay more” than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement ($M = 2.87$, $SD = .10$), $F(2,588) = .34$, $p < .05$ (Table 4.2). This finding suggests the superiority of an article in promoting willingness to “pay more,” perhaps because of the depth of information that may be conveyed in an
article. This finding suggests that consumers are receptive to information from other consumers as a way to collect information and make purchasing decisions. This difference supports Hypothesis H4B.

For source/sentiment/format, the business-to-consumer article with sentiment ($M = 3.30, SD = .15$) was deemed more effective by participants at promoting a willingness to “pay more” than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment ($M = 2.80, SD = .15$), $F(2,588) = .59, p < .05$ (Table 4.4). This finding suggests that corporations that want to convince consumers to pay more for a product would benefit from transmitting articles on social media and supporting the effort with a sentiment message from the corporation or public relations professional. The consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment ($M = 3.66, SD = .15$) was ranked more effective by participants than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 2.85, SD = .10$), $F(2,588) = .59, p < .05$ (Table 4.4) in promoting willingness to pay more. This reveals that the superiority of the article over the advertisement is maintained when sent by a consumer, even if transmitted with no sentiment. These findings support Hypothesis H4D.

All of the statistically significant differences for environmental purchasing behavior were indicated in consumer-to-consumer communication. In examining source/format, it was found that survey respondents found the consumer-to-consumer article ($M = 10.82, SD = .26$) more persuasive in stimulating environmental purchase behavior than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement ($M = 9.56, SD = .10$), $F(2,588) = 1.69, p < .05$ (Table 4.6). It was also found that the consumer-to-consumer news release
($M = 10.31, SD = .26$) was deemed more effective by participants than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement ($M = 9.56, SD = .10$), $F(2, 588) = 1.69, p < .05$ (Table 4.6) in promoting environmental purchasing behavior. These findings suggest that consumers who want to persuade others to make environmentally sensitive purchasing decisions should transmit articles and news releases rather than advertisements. These findings provide further support for Hypothesis H4B.

For source/sentiment/format, the consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment ($M = 11.12, SD = .36$) was viewed as more effective than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 9.33, SD = .36$), $F(2, 588) = 1.10, p < .05$ (Table 4.8) in stimulating environmental purchasing behavior. This result indicates that the superiority of the article endures even without sentiment when a consumer is attempting to share information to influence an environmental purchasing decision. This finding provides further support for Hypothesis H4D.

**Non-Significant Purchase Intention Findings**

In the analysis of willingness to “buy,” the participants did not distinguish between the business source ($M = 3.29, SD = .06$) from the consumer source ($M = 3.25, SD = .06$) in a statistically significant way $F(1, 588) = .23, p > .05$ (Table 4.1). This finding indicates that Hypothesis H4A was not supported. When the source was combined with sentiment, the participants did not discern any difference, as the business-to-consumer communication with no sentiment ($M = 3.23, SD = .08$), the business-to-consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 3.23, SD = .08$), the consumer-to-consumer communication with no sentiment ($M = 3.24, SD = .08$) and the consumer-to-consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 3.24, SD = .08$)
consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 3.25, SD = .08$) were all viewed similarly when the ANOVA was administered $F(1,588) = .43, \ p > .05$ (Table 4.3). This finding indicates that Hypothesis H4C cannot be supported.

In the analysis of willingness to “pay more,” respondents did not indicate discernible differences between the consumer source ($M = 3.13, SD = .06$) and the business source ($M = 3.13, SD = .06$), $F(1,588) = .00, \ p > .05$ (Table 4.1). This finding provides evidence that Hypothesis H4A was supported. When the source was combined with sentiment, the participants did not discern any differences, as the business-to-consumer communication with no sentiment ($M = 3.17, SD = .08$), the business-to-consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 3.08, SD = .08$), the consumer-to-consumer communication with no sentiment ($M = 3.08, SD = .08$) and the consumer-to-consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 3.17, SD = .08$) were all viewed similarly by participants when evaluating the pay more behavior $F(1,588) = 1.01, \ p > .05$ (Table 4.3). This finding indicates that Hypothesis H4C was not supported.

In the analysis of environmental purchasing behavior, respondents did not indicate discernible differences between the consumer source ($M = 10.23, SD = .15$) and the business source ($M = 10.31, SD = .15$), $F(1,588) = .15, \ p > .05$ (Table 4.5). This finding provides evidence that Hypothesis H4A cannot be supported. In addition, when the source was combined with sentiment, no differences for environmental purchasing behavior were detected, as consumers viewed the business-to-consumer communication with no sentiment ($M = 10.37, SD = .21$), the business-to-consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 10.26, SD = .21$), the consumer-to-consumer communication with no
sentiment (M = 10.37, SD = .21) and the consumer-to-consumer communication with sentiment (M = 10.21, SD = .21) similarly when the ANOVA was administered F(1,588) = .03, p > .05 (Table 4.7). This finding indicates that Hypothesis H4C was not supported.

Overall, the findings for purchase intention indicate evidence that Hypothesis H4A (source) was not supported; Hypothesis H4B (source/format) was supported; Hypothesis H4C (source/sentiment) was not supported; and Hypothesis H3D (source/sentiment/format) was supported in the analysis of effects completed with the 2 x 3 x 2 ANOVA and the LS Means Differences Student’s t tests.

Social Media Engagement Hypotheses H5A, H5B, H5C, and H5D

A series of four hypotheses (H5A, H5B, H5C, and H5D) were posed to investigate the impact of source, source/format effect, source/sentiment effect, and sentiment/source/format, respectively.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Hypothesis Statement</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H5A (Source)</td>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in social media engagement when the source of corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5B (Source/Format)</td>
<td>There will be statistically significant differences in social media engagement when the source is varied from either the business or the consumer, and when the format is varied among news release, advertisement, and article formats for corporate social responsibility information is varied from either the business or from the consumer in a social media environment.</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Respondents were asked to indicate their willingness to “like,” “share,” and “post” corporate social responsibility information from the fictitious coffee company on their own social media site. When considering source/format, the consumer-to-consumer news release ($M = 2.82, SD = .12$) was more likely to be “liked” than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement ($M = 2.36, SD = .12$), $F(2,588) = .32, p < .05$ (Table 5.2), according to respondents. This finding suggests that consumers are more willing to like the article format than the advertisement when transmitted by another consumer. This finding demonstrates support for Hypothesis H5B.

For source/sentiment/format, it was found that the business-to-consumer news release with sentiment ($M = 3.22, SD = .17$) was more likely to be “liked” by respondents.
than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment ($M = 2.34$, $SD = .17$), $F(2,588) = 1.31, p < .05$ (Table 5.4). This suggests the superiority of the news release format, particularly when combined with a sentiment message. Participants viewed the consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment ($M = 2.86$, $SD = .17$) more favorably than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 2.27$, $SD = .17$), $F(2,588) = 1.31, p < .05$ in promoting willingness to “like” (Table 5.4). This demonstrates that a sentiment message is not necessary to promote “like” behavior when choosing a news release to affirm. Respondents indicated that the consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment ($M = 2.80$, $SD = .17$) was more likely “liked” than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 2.27$, $SD = .17$), $F(2,588) = 1.31, p < .05$ (Table 5.4). These findings suggest the superiority of the news release and article formats in generating willingness to like when compared with an advertisement. These findings support Hypotheses H5D.

In the analysis of social media engagement for “share” behavior, for source/format, it was found that the business-to-consumer news release ($M = 2.63$, $SD = .11$) is preferable for sharing than the business-to-consumer advertisement ($M = 2.17$, $SD = .11$), $F(2,588) = .47, p < .05$ (Table 5.2). This finding underscores the superiority of the news release format in comparison to an advertisement in appealing to consumers to engage in the social media environment by sharing information. This finding supports Hypothesis H5B.

For source/sentiment/format, respondents indicated that the business-to-consumer news release with sentiment ($M = 2.84$, $SD = .16$) was more likely to be “shared” than the
business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment ($M = 2.16, SD = .16), $F(2,588) = .76, p < .05$ (Table 5.2), and the business-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 2.18, SD = .16), $F(2,588) = .76, p < .05$ (Table 5.4). These findings suggest that the advertisement may fall short of being shared, both with and without sentiment, and that the news release may be preferred. These findings support Hypothesis H5D.

When the social media engagement behavior of “post” was evaluated for source/format effects, participants viewed the business-to-consumers news release ($M = 2.58, SD = .11$) as more likely to be “posted” than the business-to-consumer advertisement ($M = 2.10, SD = .11$), $F(2,588) = .65, p < .05$, (Table 5.2). This reveals that consumers are more likely to repost news release information than advertisements and suggests that public relations professionals seeking to engage consumers in posting information should relay news releases via social media. Participants also indicated that the business-to-consumer article ($M = 2.59, SD = .11$) was more likely to be posted than the business-to-consumer advertisement ($M = 2.10, SD = .11$), $F(2,588) = .65, p < .05$ (Table 5.2). These findings suggest that articles and news releases are preferable formats for corporations to transmit in effort to get recipients to post information about a corporate social responsibility campaign. These findings support Hypothesis H5B.

The differences for source/sentiment/format indicated that respondents felt more comfortable posting a business-to-consumer news release with sentiment ($M = 2.70, SD = .16$) than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment ($M = 2.06, SD = .16$), $F(2,588) = 1.27, p < .05$ (Table 5.4). For corporations, this finding suggests that news releases with sentiment messages are more potent at creating subsequent postings than
advertisements with sentiment messages. Further, participants indicated they would be more likely to post the business-to-consumer article with sentiment ($M = 2.64, SD = .11$) than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment ($M = 2.06, SD = .11$), $F(2,588) = 1.27, p < .05$ (Table 5.4). This finding suggests that corporations may deftly use articles on a corporate social responsibility program to incentivize social media postings more efficiently than using advertising. The consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment ($M = 2.60, SD = .16$) was more likely to be posted by participants than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment ($M = 2.07, SD = .16$), $F(2,588) = 1.27, p < .05$ (Table 5.4). Thus, consumers who want to share information with others who will in turn “post” it, should convey articles of interest rather than advertisements. These findings support Hypothesis H5D.

**Non-Significant Social Media Engagement Findings**

For “like” behavior, participants reported no discernible differences between the business source ($M = 2.80, SD = .07$) and the consumer source ($M = 2.62, SD = .07$), $F(1,588) = 2.88, p > .05$ (Table 5.1). This finding indicates that Hypothesis H5A cannot be supported. When source/sentiment was analyzed for “like” behavior, participants did not indicate a preference for a source/sentiment combination that was statistically superior to any other, as evidenced by the scores for business-to-consumer communication with no sentiment ($M = 2.75, SD = .10$), business-to-consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 2.84, SD = .10$), consumer-to-consumer communication with no sentiment ($M = 2.64, SD = .10$), and the consumer-to-consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 2.60, SD = .10$).
=.10), $F(1,588) = .42$, $p > .05$ (Table 5.3). This finding indicates that Hypothesis H5C cannot be supported.

For “share” behavior, participants did not indicate a meaningful difference in the source between the business sender ($M = 2.49, SD = .06$) and the consumer sender ($M = 2.40, SD = .06$), $F(1,588) = .81, p > .05$ (Table 5.1). This finding indicates that Hypothesis H5A cannot be supported. When source/sentiment was analyzed for share behavior, participants did not indicate a preference for a source/sentiment combination that was statistically superior to any other, as evidenced by the scores for business-to-consumer communication with no sentiment ($M = 2.40, SD = .09$), business-to-consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 2.58, SD = .09$), consumer-to-consumer communication with no sentiment ($M = 2.36, SD = .09$), and the consumer-to-consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 2.44, SD = .09$), $F(1,588) = .29, p > .05$ (Table 5.3). This finding indicates that Hypothesis H5C cannot be supported.

For “post” behavior, participants did not indicate a meaningful difference in the source credibility between the business sender ($M = 2.42, SD = .06$) and the consumer sender ($M = 2.38, SD = .06$), $F(1,588) = .17, p > .05$ (Table 5.1). This finding indicates that Hypothesis H5A cannot be supported. When source/sentiment was analyzed for “post” behavior, participants did not indicate a preference for a source/sentiment combination that was statistically superior to any other combination, as evidenced by the scores for business-to-consumer communication with no sentiment ($M = 2.38, SD = .09$), business-to-consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 2.46, SD = .09$), consumer-to-consumer communication with no sentiment ($M = 2.37, SD = .09$), and the consumer-to-
consumer communication with sentiment ($M = 2.38, SD = .09), $F(1,588) = .16, \ p > .05$ (Table 5.3). This finding indicates that Hypothesis H5C was not supported.

Overall, the findings for social media engagement indicate evidence that Hypothesis H5A (source) was not supported; Hypothesis H5B (source/format) was supported; Hypothesis H5C (source/sentiment) was not supported; and Hypothesis H5D (source/sentiment/format) was supported in the analysis of effects conducted with the 2 x 3 x 2 ANOVA and the LS Means Differences Student’s t tests.
Table 0.5 Summary of Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale Tested</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Source Format</th>
<th>Source Sentiment</th>
<th>Source Sentiment Format</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C2CNRNS &gt; B2CADNS</td>
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CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION

This study’s findings impact theoretical approaches for corporate social responsibility communication, public relations, and social media engagement. On the practical side, this study delivers corporate management sound advice for the communication of CSR programs and provides insights for the involvement of public relations professionals as leaders in the CSR communication domain, particularly for the creation and dissemination of content via social media networks such as the one studied in this research project.

This study analyzed the impact of source, format, and sentiment variables on source credibility, information credibility, corporate brand reputation, purchase intention, and social media engagement. For the public relations profession and for the corporate communicators charged with implementing corporate social responsibility programs, this study delivers a new roadmap for practical applications for specific sources, media formats, and the use of sentiment. The study establishes a foundation for a new best practices communication model that is not only solidified by the research findings, but also supported by an understanding of contemporary theoretical frameworks of dialogic communication, social media techniques, and public relations measurement.

For RQ1, evidence based on the participant reaction was generated to support that there is an impact of source, source/format, source/sentiment, and source/sentiment format on source credibility. Specific findings from responses associated with H1A, H1B, H1C, and H1D, offer insights for the public relations professional detailed below. For
RQ2, evidence suggests that for the condition of information credibility, source/format combinations, and source/sentiment/format combinations have an impact on participant perceptions. Further discussion of these effects and implications is provided in the public relations section below. For RQ3, evidence supports the argument that source/format combinations and source/sentiment/format combinations influence corporate brand reputation and are addressed in the corporate social responsibility section below. For RQ4, evidence indicated source/format combinations and source/sentiment combinations impact purchase intention. Details of these findings from participant responses are indicated in the corporate social responsibility section below. Lastly, evidence answers RQ5, by findings that indicate social media engagement can be influenced by source/format combinations and source/sentiment/format combinations.

Source Summary

The origin of communication presents a primary concern for corporate and individual communicators. The credibility of the source can lead to support for specific arguments or contribute to rejection of the message by the recipient. From the perspective of ancient orators, Aristotle set forth the communication triangle encompassing the pathos, logos, and ethos aspects of persuasion to explain source dynamics (Kennedy, 2007). These tenets continue to enlighten common communication challenges such as the one presented in this study. While Hovland and Weiss (1951) addressed source effectiveness and found that individuals may discount messages from untrustworthy sources, multiple perspectives of the corporate source (Argenti, 2009) and the consumer source (Kim, 2011) have emerged in the area of corporate social responsibility.
communication. This study presents a new vantage point by directly addressing the
effects of source credibility in social media, when a CSR campaign is presented. This
study, which also drew on the findings of Flanagin and Metzger (2000) regarding online
source credibility and consumer word-of-mouth activities for CSR (Kesavan, Bernacchi,
& Mascarenhas, 2013) advances the argument that a corporate source can be used to
convey CSR information. However, findings indicate in source/format and
source/sentiment/format combinations, the corporate source is not the only source that
can be used when the imperative of CSR communication exists.

This study queried the effectiveness of a business communicator in contrast to a
consumer communicator in generating source credibility. It was revealed that respondents
deemed the business communicator as more authoritative than the consumer counterpart.
This finding affirms existing research that the visible message presenter influences the
credibility judgment (Dou, Walden, Lee, & Lee, 2012). In this finding of source
superiority, it is indicated that consumers invest authoritativeness into a company because
it serves as a primary source. Respondents then appropriately elaborate on the attributes
of the corporation. The source finding of this study resonates with the elaboration
likelihood model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), which asserts that individuals receiving
messages evaluate source credibility and place it on a continuum, based on their level of
interest, in a particular issue. The application of the elaboration likelihood model is
particularly relevant to corporate social responsibility communication because the topics
often addressed include economic, social, and political concerns that engage audience
interest at various levels. This study, which focused on a coffee company’s recycling
effort, found that corporations may be viewed by respondents as a more authoritative source than another consumer when corporate social responsibility information of this kind is presented. This research affirmed the notion that corporations can be viewed as a more authoritative source for corporate social responsibility information than their consumer counterparts participating in consumer-to-consumer communication on a CSR matter.

This partial finding for source credibility supports efforts by corporations to conduct strategic communication for CSR initiatives. The absence of source findings in the other areas of information credibility, corporate brand reputation, purchase intention, and social media engagement may indicate a blurring of the distinction between a business source and a consumer source. The inability of the respondents to discern differences in the source between a corporation and a consumer requires further study.

Source/Format Summary

This study intersects academic research of online information credibility (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000) with content class (Hallahan, 1999) research by evaluating the use of various sources and three traditional media formats in an online social media environment. As the news release, advertisement, and article were disseminated by both the corporation and by the consumer, various effects were noted. The testing of the traditional formats in a social media environment yields practical insights for communication that is pervasive in business communication. Bhattacharya, Sen, and Korschun (2011) have advocated a stakeholder-centric view of corporate social responsibility communication. However, for this to be effective, the appropriate source
and format must be chosen, and communication messages delivered in a way that will resonate with stakeholders. This study yields findings that address appropriate source/format combinations for the business realm of corporate social responsibility communication.

In the analysis of source/format, it was found that participants viewed the business-to-consumer news release as a more effective communication vehicle than the business-to-consumer advertisement in four aspects: corporate brand reputation; purchase intention to “buy”; social media engagement to “share”; and social media engagement to “post.” The consumer-to-consumer news release also was viewed by participants more positively than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement in four aspects: corporate brand reputation; willingness to “buy”; environmental purchase behavior; and willingness to “like” on a social media platform. The consumer-to-consumer article was ranked higher by participants than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement in three aspects: corporate brand reputation; willingness to pay “more”; and environmental purchasing behavior. When they viewed the business-to-consumer news release, participants felt it was more effective than the consumer-to-consumer news release in two aspects, source credibility (character) and information credibility. The source/format findings also indicated that the business-to-consumer article was preferable for producing source credibility (authority) than the consumer-to-consumer article, according to participants. The results further indicated that participants were more likely to “post” the business-to-consumer article than the business-to-consumer advertisement.
The findings for source/format indicate that in order for a corporation to foster source credibility and information credibility in a corporate social responsibility initiative, corporations should transmit articles and news releases. These media formats are generated from an active public relations program that includes the publicity function of the public relations professional, as coined by Grunig and Grunig (1992). By conveying CSR material in these formats, a corporation can yield stronger benefits than are experienced when a consumer transmits advertisements and news releases in a source/format combination. Flanagin and Metzger’s (2000) research indicated that respondents often consider information on the Internet to be as credible as information from television, radio, and magazines, but not as credible as newspaper information.

Based on evidence gained in this study, to build a corporate reputation, a corporation can send news releases directly to consumers and encourage consumers to retransmit news releases and articles. By encouraging consumers to share news release and article information via social media, the corporation may then leverages the online word of mouth. These source/format combinations were deemed by participants as more advantageous than when the company transmits advertisements directly or when consumers relay advertising via social media. This suggests that, when viewing the content class, respondents disregarded the credibility of paid advertising media, but instead accepted the corporate news release and an objective third-party article as credible information.

RQ4 queried the impact of various sources, various formats, and sentiment in stimulating purchasing intention within the context of a corporate social responsibility
campaign. The emergence of consumer advocacy for corporate social responsibility is documented in this study, along with accompanying support for purchase intention activities. Scholars have grappled with the issue of consumer engagement in the corporate social responsibility equation, as found in Bhattacharya, Korschun, and Sen (2009), who indicated that the stakeholder bond can be strengthened through corporate social responsibility programs. Beyond the somewhat intangible “bond,” it is the subsequent action that consumers take to purchase products that may define success for a CSR program. The actions that consumers take to inform others about a corporate social responsibility campaign and to encourage others to join in a “community” are directly addressed in this study. The findings advance work by Morsing and Schultz (2006) who advocated for CSR co-creation between a corporation and its consumers, Starck and Kruckeberg’s (2001) discussion of community formation for corporations, and lastly, stakeholder centrism as measured by social media engagement, advancing the work of Coulter and Roggeveen (2012), who addressed the phenomenon of consumer “like” behavior in online social networks.

When it comes to purchase intention, responses revealed the consumer communicator who transmits news releases and articles, rather than advertisements, can have a substantive impact on promoting willingness to “buy,” “pay more,” and on exhibiting environmental purchase behavior. However, it may also be noted that the business-to-consumer news release performed better among respondents than the business-to-business advertisement in promoting willingness to “buy.” The consumer also plays a larger role in aspects of persuasion to promote willingness to “buy,” “pay
more,” and to persuade environmental purchasing behavior because the consumers were viewed more favorably when transmitting articles and news releases than when they transmitted advertisements. This source/format finding suggests that consumer-to-consumer communication is a factor in influencing purchasing decisions within the context of a corporate social responsibility program. Further, consumers preferably should transmit articles and news releases.

RQ5 queried the impact of various sources, three formats, and use of sentiment in promoting social media engagement. In this study, for the aspect of social media engagement, responses indicated that the news releases and articles, transmitted by both corporations and other consumers, are superior formats to advertisements transmitted from corporations or other consumers to promote activities of “like,” “share,” or “post.” For managerial purposes, this finding suggests a viable public relations program that is designed to generate news releases and conduct news media relations is a pivotal aspect of a corporate social responsibility campaign, because the content can be disseminated via social media and virally shared. This finding further indicates the compelling role for the public relations professional in CSR planning, as has been advocated by Freitag (2005). Further arguments for the active role of the public relations professional have been advocated by Coombs and Holladay (2009) and Freitag (2005).

**Source/Sentiment Summary**

When a source presents content in a social media environment, the opportunity exists to merely transmit with no sentiment or elaborate on the message by including a personal sentiment message. This study utilized three manipulations with sentiment from
a corporation and three manipulations with sentiment from an individual. This study found several source/sentiment combinations yielded advantages for both business sources and consumer sources. While contemporary scholarship of source credibility is informed by Hovland and Weiss (1951), the inclusion of online sentiment messages allows for a new tactical technique to bolster credibility for both a corporate sender and a consumer sender. The effective combination of a credible source and a sentiment message unites two aspects that engender Grunig’s concept of two-way symmetrical communication (1992) that allows for a corporation’s direct communication with a consumer, and for the consumer’s active reply. A second aspect that the source/sentiment combination facilitates is an expression of Kent and Taylor’s (1998) notion of building dialogic relationships through facets such as propinquity and empathy that allow the source to elaborate on messages. Yet, while a corporation may be driven to establish source credibility for profit motives, brand building, or advancement of the CSR program, consumers may be driven by a different motive. It has been indicated that consumers fulfill their own desires through electronic word of mouth activities (Hennig-Thurrau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004) and the sentiment messages employed by this research study provide a new avenue for communication that can match desires for promoting their own self worth.

This study has yielded insights regarding the source/sentiment combinations on source credibility and information credibility, thus addressing RQ1 and RQ2. It was found that business-to-consumer communication with sentiment was viewed by participants as more advantageous than consumer-to-consumer communication with
sentiment in two aspects, source credibility (authoritativeness) and information credibility. These source/sentiment findings suggest that corporations should include sentiment when attempting to gain recognition as an authoritative source and to garner credibility for the transmitted corporate social responsibility information. By incorporating the sentiment message, the corporation may simultaneously advance the company’s status as trustworthy and position the information as more credible in an online environment. This phenomenon may be accomplished through the sentiment message, which attaches human aspects to the depersonalized online environment, advancing concepts of online information credibility set forth by Flanagin and Metzger (2000). By combining these sentiment messages with credible information, the company may successfully meet what has been called the “consumer demand for virtue” by Diermeier (2011). Further, these sentiment messages may be a way to further solidify corporate trust in a corporate social responsibility program, which has already been deemed as a credible way for a corporation to boost trust (Pivato, Misani, & Tencati, 2008).

Participants also deemed the business-to-consumer communication with sentiment as more effective than the consumer-to-consumer communication with no sentiment in driving source credibility (authoritativeness). This further supports the corporation’s need to include a sentiment message to be seen as authoritative. When companies insert messages directing viewers to content and convey “person-to-person” aspects of communication, they can endorse specific ideas, products, and corporate social responsibility programs. Thus, the company spokesperson can not only leverage the
corporate authoritativeness, but may also experience advanced personal credibility. This may occur when an individual representative (spokesperson) relays the message as a consumer, not just as a corporate spokesperson. Although Spangler and Pompper (2011) have warned against the use of a non-credible spokesperson, the finding revealed in this study suggests that the corporate communicator may effectively undertake a role in CSR communication.

Lastly, when participants evaluated the consumer-to-consumer communication with sentiment, they found it more effective at promoting source (character) than the consumer-to-consumer communication with no sentiment. This source/sentiment finding suggests that consumers seeking to gain recognition as a credible source with “character” should make an extra effort to include personal sentiment messages when transmitting information about a corporate social responsibility program. By integrating person-to-person messages, the consumer thus energizes the word-of-mouth and positions himself or herself as an individual with “character,” one who may be trusted to convey useful and reliable information. This activity typifies aspects of stakeholder engagement that have been called for by Coombs and Holladay (2012) and Korschun and Du (2013). Further, this study demonstrates that co-creation of content with the corporation can be effective and dialogic principles (Kent & Taylor, 2002) applied in CSR communication situations.

Source/Sentiment/Format Summary

In this study, the variables of source/sentiment and format were combined into 12 different manipulations that respondents evaluated for impact on five factors. This study revealed the consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment was viewed by participants
more favorably than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment, as found in the results for source credibility (authoritativeness); source credibility (character); willingness to “pay more”; environmental purchase behavior; and willingness to “post” and “like.” These source/sentiment/format findings suggest that consumers seeking to be seen as an authoritative and credible source who want to the convince others to pay more, buy environmentally friendly products, and retransmit information via social media should use the article format instead of an advertisement, and, further, they do not need to include a sentiment message. While consumers may satisfy their own desires by relaying information (Hennig-Thurrau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004), this finding indicates that the consumer is a key influencer for buying decisions. While a dual-process model of CSR for corporate identity and purchase intention has been formulated (David, Kline, & Dai, 2009), the source/sentiment/format findings indicate a burgeoning role for the consumer that extends beyond the corporate communication to consumer communication. The consumer role has also been validated by Korschun and Du (2013) who have indicated the value of the consumer dialogs to promote value for the corporation and value for the CSR cause.

The business-to-consumer news release with sentiment was viewed more favorably by participants than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment in the categories of information credibility; corporate brand reputation; and the social media engagement aspects of “like,” “post,” and “share.” These source/sentiment/format findings suggest a corporation seeking to convey credible information, promote its brand, and facilitate social media engagement should utilize the news release with a sentiment
message rather than transmit an advertising message with sentiment. It has been well recognized that CSR communication can function as a branding tool for global brands (Torres, Bijmolt, Tribo, & Verhoef, 2012). This source/sentiment/format finding indicates that the corporate news release format with sentiment is a preferred combination in articulating this brand attributes to a wider audience. Just as Vallaster, Lindgreen, and Moan (2012) have advocated for the inclusion of both primary and secondary stakeholders in the CSR communication process, the social media engagement findings indicate that the consumer may become a brand ambassador, as indicated by Du, Bhattacharya, and Sen (2010). For management, this source/sentiment/format finding underscores the need for an active corporate social responsibility public relations program that may be transmitted via social media with an accompanying sentiment message. The inclusion of sentiment adds a personal dimension to the communication that may underscore the agenda-setting function of the corporate communicator in proliferating the corporate brand reputation, as previously indicated by Kiousis, Propescu, and Mitrook (2011).

The business-to-consumer article with sentiment was deemed more effective by participants than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment in the aspects of source credibility (authoritativeness); information credibility; corporate brand reputation; willingness to “pay more”; and willingness to “post.” These source/sentiment/format findings indicate, that when a business is considering a communication program, articles transmitted with sentiment are more likely to be perceived in a way that positions the company as authoritative and credible, while this also helps to build the brand reputation,
promote consumer willingness to “pay more,” and facilitate the willingness to “post,” than when an advertising message is sent with sentiment. This finding echoes Hallahan (1999) who suggested that individuals are predisposed to process news in a more favorable way than advertising. For management, this finding underscores the need for an active news media relations effort to generate news media placements that can be disseminated via social media with an accompanying sentiment message. This subsequently endorses the inclusion of the public relations professional at the decision-making table and positions them as chief communication officers, as articulated by Coombs and Holladay (2012). The distribution of news releases and articles was found to be more persuasive than corporate advertising sent with sentiment in the five categories mentioned, indicating that advertising is a low-priority medium for disseminating corporate social responsibility program information. This finding resonates with Jahdi and Acikdilli (2009) who have warned that advertising messages are sometimes reviewed in a jaded way by audiences, and thus they warn against marketing materials that actively self promote a corporation and “green wash” an issue.

The consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment was perceived more favorable by participants than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment for source credibility (authoritativeness); corporate brand reputation; willingness to “buy”; and willingness to “like” on a social media platform. These source/sentiment/format results indicate that a consumer who wishes to be viewed as an authority can support a corporate brand, persuade others to buy, and facilitate social media engagement for a corporate social responsibility campaign by transmitting articles
rather than advertisements, and, further, no sentiment is required in the transmission. The active participation of the consumer demonstrates the act of co-creation that generates valuable dialogue networks (Korschun & Du, 2013). Consumers in the contemporary media atmosphere can take on an active role of content creation, this study’s findings indicate.

The business-to-consumer news release with no sentiment was more effective, according to participants, than the business-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment for corporate brand reputation; willingness to “buy”; and willingness to “share” on a social media platform. This source/sentiment/format finding suggests that a corporation seeking to build reputation, promote purchase behavior, and facilitate social media engagement should send news releases instead of advertisements in these cases, and that sentiment is not required. The news release format is a traditional public relations vehicle, and, while some literature of CSR has taken a stance to criticize publicity for a CSR program (Benn, Todd, & Pendleton, 2010) by characterizing it as blatantly self-promotional, this finding suggests that news releases from the corporation still serve as a valid media format for conveying CSR information.

For source credibility (authoritativeness), participants indicated that the business-to-consumer article with no sentiment was more effective than a business-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment, suggesting that a corporation can bolster authority by transmitting articles instead of advertisements, and that sentiment is not required. The article format, which has received a third-party endorsement, thus bolsters the credibility of the message. This finding resonates with research by Dou, Walden, Lee,
and Lee (2010) that indicates that a third-party source can lead to greater source credibility and message persuasiveness.

Participants indicated the consumer-to-consumer articles with no sentiment were more effective than the consumer-to-consumer advertisements with no sentiment in boosting information credibility. This finding reveals consumers seeking to send credible information should opt for the article format instead of advertising format and do not need to include sentiment. Thus, the context cue of the news article seems to be outperforming the advertising, as suggested by Hallahan (1999).

For source credibility (character), participants responded that the consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment was more effective than the consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment. This finding indicates that for a consumer to be viewed as a source with character, he or she can achieve better results by transmitting articles rather than news releases and does not need to include sentiment. This represents a superiority of the third-party testimonial in the article format over the corporate news release and positions the individual sending the message as a “thought leader.” This finding accentuates the call by Bhattacharya, Sen, and Korschun (2011) for involvement of stakeholders in the CSR communication process and reveals a specific technique that may be used.

Theoretical Implications

This research underscores the stakeholder theory of corporate communication. Without enfranchising stakeholders to engage with the corporation, both as a receiver and “relayer” of corporate communication, the corporation misses an opportunity for dynamic
communication. Bhattacharya, Korschun, and Sen (2009) and Vallaster, Lindgreen, and Maon (2012) have pointed to the imperative for stakeholder involvement. This study advances those tenets by providing specific insights regarding the role of source, format, and sentiment in creating fertile communications environments for CSR programs. If completed properly, these communication programs can help the company succeed, or conversely they may fail if communicated ineffectively.

The contemporary business atmosphere hums with noise about green advertising messages, the feasibility of corporate social responsibility programs, and the impact of CSR programs on business results. The success or failure of these programs relies on the company’s ability to communicate with stakeholders in a meaningful way that fortifies the stakeholder bond. While Carroll (1979) defined corporate social responsibility as a corporation’s legal, ethical, environmental, and philanthropic dimensions, communication is ever-present in these four factors. For example, to accurately communicate these dimensions in an effort to drive corporate brand reputation and promote purchase intention, companies may transmit public relations content and incentivize consumers to convey information. This research indicates that corporate social responsibility can be a branding tool, as previously reported by Kesavan, Bernacchi, and Mascarenhas (2013), and news releases and articles with sentiment are valid ways for a company to convey CSR information to drive the brand. For purchase intention, this research advances communication approaches to build upon the stakeholder-centric model of communication (Bhattacharya, Korschun, & Sen, 2009) by revealing specific public relations communications techniques that can be used to
promote purchase intention. This research indicates that consumers are playing a more active role in influencing purchasing decisions and that transmitting articles and news releases to consumers, even without a personal sentiment message, can influence the purchasing decision of others. This monitors the evolution into dialogic communication advocated by Kent and Taylor (2002) and demonstrates the involvement of stakeholders in the entire CSR communication process, as advocated by Coombs and Holladay (2012). While businesses may still perform a primary role in conveying corporate information and use corporate spokespeople like the chief executive or a public relations professional, the communication environment allows for the creation of consumer corporate advocates who may use the social media environment for brand advocacy and persuasion of purchasing intention. These findings advance a concept set forth by Marin and Ruiz (2007), who found that CSR propels positive affective, cognitive, and behavioral consumers’ responses and that the affective component binds the relationship between the consumer and the corporation.

While corporate social responsibility communication may span multiple disciplines such as marketing, business ethics, and communication studies, this research points to the appropriate engagement of the public relations professional in the corporate social responsibility equation. For public relations professionals to play a powerful role in the communication of corporate social responsibility, they must have access to the decision-making table and leadership for the strategic planning of corporate social responsibility programs. Access to this dominant coalition has been advocated by Broom (2009) and is relevant to the discussion of the role of the public relations professional in
corporate social responsibility communication. Coombs and Holladay (2009) have warned that CSR information from another corporate department can be characterized as “encroachment” of a primary business function, and that the role of the public relations professional is paramount. Public relations professionals must have direct access to the chief executive officer and chief operating officer during the formulation of corporate social responsibility initiatives, because public relations executives are keenly aware of the nuances of the various stakeholders. This depth of knowledge and understanding allows public relations professionals to fortify the stakeholder bond through the communication of a prospective corporate social responsibility program. Public relations professionals may combine a multitude of sources, formats, and sentiments to convey information and are likely to utilize the social media sphere to influence stakeholders on corporate social responsibility programs. Today, the public relations industry participates in an environment of engaged, dialogic communication, and practitioners become facilitators of co-creation. Public relations professionals devise messages, select sources, and blend source/format combinations, source/sentiment combinations, and source/sentiment/format combinations to harmonize with the business objectives of the corporation. While public relations practitioners remain as original content creators of news releases and perform the publicity function for the corporation, as articulated by Grunig (1992), they now must perform in a newly evolved role of community builder and facilitator of dialogic co-creation. Public relations professionals may stand on tenets of ethics and community building set forth by Kruckeberg, Starck, and Vujnovic (2006). Through this new role, public relations professionals address and enfranchise the newly
empowered consumers to co-create and influence others. The co-creation role, advocated by Korschun and Du (2013), has been shown to reside at the center of stakeholder-centric communication (Bhattacharya, Korschun, & Sen, 2009). This finding shows that co-creation can be accomplished by creating dialog networks and institutionalizing of dialogic communication in corporate social responsibility programs.

With the solid foundation of ethics in the profession and accreditation, the public relations industry may provide communication leadership in this new era of co-creation. Further, as individuals, they too can articulate person-to-person communication that leverages the news releases and articles created on behalf of the corporation. Thus, while the public relations professional may still serve as an original content creator, to be effective, he or she must deftly re-use and re-disseminate traditional media formats of news releases and articles in the social media environment. For determining media credibility, this research affirms concepts of the elaboration likelihood model (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986) that asserts consumers are susceptible to peripheral processing cues. As the postulate on peripheral cues states, these cues take on more importance in processing arguments when motivation is low. The findings contained in this research help public relations practitioners determine effective media sources and formats. While Hallahan (1999) discussed content class as a context clue for information processing when comparing publicity versus advertising, this research advances the discussion by evaluating the social media environment within the context of a corporate social responsibility program. In addition, the effect of sentiment is also evaluated in communication processing.
This study’s findings for social media engagement endorse the existing schools of thought about social media engagement. Morsing and Schultz (2006) called for involving CSR stakeholders in the communication process. This research provides specific techniques for a corporation to convey information and reveals source/sentiment formats that are likely to be used in the social media environment. While consumers in the social media environment may be driven by the desire for social interaction, economic incentives, concern for other customers, and concern for self-worth (Hennig-Thureau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler, 2004), this research sheds new light on the formats that they may be willing to transmit via social media. For example, participants demonstrated that consumers are likely to transmit news articles and news releases more than advertisements. Source/sentiment/format results reveal consumers play a role in corporate brand reputation and purchase intention as they transmitted information. These findings underscore the imperative of stakeholder engagement in a corporate social responsibility program as indicated by Argenti (2009). By enfranchising the stakeholder, the corporation can further maximize communication of the CSR program. In sum, the implications for corporate social responsibility communication, the public relations profession, and institutional social media engagement require a new model for CSR communication.

**Practical Implications**

This research has yielded multiple implications for corporate management as the role of the public relations professional is clarified and endorsed through this research. Further, the role of social media for corporate social responsibility is explored and results
indicate specific findings about social media engagement. The total consideration of the findings and the theoretical foundations allow for the creation of a new model of Corporate Social Responsibility Communication. A five-phase approach to Corporate Social Responsibility Communication is proposed.

Businesses undertaking corporate social responsibility do so for a variety of business reasons. As Porter and Kramer (2006) suggested, the development of a corporate social responsibility program must be a strategic undertaking that incorporates core business dimensions. Pirsch, Shruti, and Grau (2007) have indicated that institutionalized CSR programs can influence purchase intentions. In a similar vein, Vallaster, Lindgreen, and Maon (2012) have indicated that a corporate brand is best served by having an engrained attitude to corporate social responsibility rather than a “bolted on” approach. Specific business dimensions explored in this study were corporate brand reputation and purchase intention with further insights regarding effective communication approaches provided.

**Corporate Brand Reputation Impact**

For corporate brand reputation, there were three findings for source/format and four findings for source/sentiment/format. The results of this study produce key insights for corporate social responsibility communication by considering source, format, and sentiment effects. Participants viewed the business-to-consumer news release as a better corporate brand reputation vehicle than the business-to-consumer advertisement. Further, it was found that the consumer-to-consumer article and the consumer-to-consumer news release were more effective at engendering feelings of corporate brand reputation among
participants than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement. Overall, these results indicate that both the business and the consumer may play a role in endorsing the corporate brand reputation in a corporate social responsibility initiative and that the news release is a preferred format for the corporation. Further, both news releases and articles can be used by the consumer to bolster the corporate brand reputation. This finding suggests that corporations require an active public relations program to generate news releases and engage in news media relations to articulate aspects of a corporate social responsibility program that will enhance the brand. This finding is consistent with Diermeier (2011) and Argenti (2009) who point to strategic communication as a vital aspect of brand building. Du, Bhattacharya, and Sen (2010) have indicated that consumer involvement in communication can diminish aspects of skepticism in a CSR program, but instead can deliver an “amplifier effect” for the corporate social responsibility program.

For source/sentiment format, participants found the business-to-consumer release with sentiment more effective at promoting corporate brand reputation than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment. Respondents indicated that the business-to-consumer article with sentiment was more effective than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment for corporate brand reputation. The business-to-consumer news release with no sentiment was ranked better than the business-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment for corporate brand reputation, and the consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment produced more favorable scores by participants than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment for corporate brand reputation. These findings suggest that sentiment is an option for the corporation when
publishing a news release and that the consumer transmitting a news release does not need to incorporate sentiment in order to garner the effect of positive corporate brand reputation. These findings indicate, therefore, that a business can positively influence reputation by incorporating sentiment messages that will enhance the consumer-company identification that is needed in corporate social responsibility, supporting Bhattacharya and Sen’s (2003) framework for consumer relationships. Further, it demonstrates the use of corporate sentiment in a corporate social responsibility program that shows human involvement by individuals who may serve as brand ambassadors.

RQ3 queried the impact of source, format, and sentiment on corporate brand reputation. Thus, it can be concluded that source/format combinations may make a difference in corporate brand reputation, and the addition of sentiment in specific cases can bolster corporate reputation, as indicated by the source/format/sentiment findings. The source/sentiment/format findings in this report suggest that to enhance a corporate brand, companies should transmit a corporate news release with sentiment, communicate a corporate article with sentiment, and incentivize consumers to transmit news releases and articles with no sentiment. For corporate reputation purposes, these findings suggest that the news release and article formats are more advantageous, as they provide context clues which are amenable to recipients. This supports Hallahan’s notion of context cue processing for publicity messages, but advances the study of this topic by presenting the formats in a social media environment and measuring effectiveness on multiple scales.
**Purchase Intention Impact**

Purchase intention is another core business purpose of a corporate social responsibility campaign. The results in this study yield insights about CSR communication that contribute to the formulation of a best practice for CSR purchase intention. To promote “buy” behavior with source/format combinations, the business-to-consumer news release was perceived by participants as more effective than the business-to-consumer advertisement, and the consumer-to-consumer news release was perceived more effective than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement. Pirsch et al. (2007) have stated that institutional public relations programs promote purchase intention, and David et al. (2005) indicated that corporate social values, such as those found in CSR programs, represent predictors of purchase intention. The active communication of corporate social responsibility programs with credible communications, as indicated in this study, gives corporations supplemental information regarding the proper source, format, and sentiments to be used to influence the purchase decision process.

To promote environmental purchase behavior, the consumer-to-consumer news release was also deemed more effective by participants than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement. These findings suggest the superiority of the news release format and imply that corporations should disseminate news releases, and companies should encourage their consumer base to do so. This finding brings the public relations industry news release to the forefront, in contrast to the use of green advertising to support purchase behavior as conducted by Ku, Kuo, Wu, and Wu (2013). The news release is a credible format that is embraced more readily than the advertising when examining the
results for willingness to “pay more,” and promotes environmental purchase behavior. Source/format results indicated that participants perceived the consumer-to-consumer article more favorably than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement. These findings suggest that consumers may play a dynamic role in promoting purchasing behaviors and can influence their behaviors by transmitting articles. This finding suggests that companies with an active corporate social responsibility campaign are gaining what Kim (2011) has called “synergistic effects” of corporate ability, both for product quality and corporate reputation, as evidenced by the consumer relay of information. In essence, the consumers view the company and the specific products more favorably.

When source/sentiment/format combinations for purchase intention were evaluated for the willingness to “buy” behavior, the business-to-consumer news release with no sentiment was perceived better by participants than the business-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment. Participants found the consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment more appealing than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment to support buy behavior. These findings indicate that sentiment is not required to leverage the positive benefit of the business and consumer transmissions to persuade buying behavior when a news release is transmitted. To promote the behavior to “pay more,” it was found that the business-to-consumer article with sentiment was classified by participants as more effective than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment, and the consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment was deemed more favorable than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment. These source/sentiment/format findings imply that a corporation should include sentiment when
transmitting an article, but a consumer does not have to include sentiment in order to boost the purchase behavior of “pay more.” This finding offers an insight regarding premium brands and requires further study.

Lastly, participants designated the consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment as a better vehicle to support environmental purchase behavior than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment. This source/sentiment/format finding solidifies the position that consumers relaying corporate social responsibility information in the form of an article do not need to incorporate sentiment. This finding also suggests that consumers have confidence in the article format that has been vetted by a third party. Zhang and Swanson (2006) have indicated that media are amenable to covering corporate social responsibility programs.

RQ4 queried the impact of source, format and sentiment on purchase intention. Thus, it can be concluded that source/format combinations may make a difference in purchase intention, and the addition of sentiment in specific cases can bolster purchasing intention, according to source/sentiment/format findings. The findings suggest that to enhance purchase intention, companies should transmit a corporate news release without sentiment, transmit a corporate article with sentiment, and incentivize consumers to transmit news releases and articles with no sentiment.

The findings in this section contribute to a CSR Communication Best Practice:
Practical Implications for CSR Communication Best Practice:

Impact on the Role of the Public Relations Professional

Contemporary public relations professionals remain concerned about communicating with key publics in the most effective way. Effective communication influences the success or failure of a CSR program. The imperative to persuade is paramount in the atmosphere of dialogic communication that considers the sender and the receiver and of the dynamic dialogue that occurs over multiple channels using multiple sources, formats, and source/format combinations. Source credibility and information credibility comprise two key facets of this equation.

Source Impact for Public Relations Professional

It was found that for source (credibility), the business-to-consumer communication was deemed by participants a more credible attribute (authoritativeness) than the consumer-to-consumer communication. This source finding bodes well for the future of strategic corporate communications efforts that accommodate the transmission of messages by a corporation. This finding suggests that the corporation’s spokesperson must be a credible and authoritative figure to carry the corporate message.

For source/format effects for source credibility (authoritativeness), the business-to-consumer article was perceived by participants as more positive than the consumer-to-
This demonstrates that an article transmitted by a corporation allows the corporation to be viewed as an authoritative resource in a more expedient fashion than the consumer-to-consumer article. This source/format finding suggests corporations should undertake a media relations program to secure placements that can be retransmitted via social media. For the public relations professional, this means active creation of news concepts, tip sheets, fact sheets, news releases, corporate backgrounders, and other materials that can be used to generate media placements regarding a corporate social responsibility campaign. The second source/format finding for source credibility (character) revealed that the business-to-consumer news release was also viewed by participants more favorably than the consumer-to-consumer news release. To implement this strategy, corporations should develop an active public relations program that generates news releases to convey corporate social responsibility information. Lastly, for information credibility, participants found the business-to-consumer news release more credible than the consumer-to-consumer news release. This source/format finding accentuates the notion that the business-to-consumer news release is seen as a credible information format. Public relations professionals utilize this format to articulate corporate information accurately and in a timely manner. This research suggests that the news release format withstands scrutiny in the online environment and may be used by corporations. Even though the news release is a content format controlled by the corporation, it is still viewed as having aspects of credibility.

For source/sentiment, for source credibility (authoritativeness), the effect showed that the business-to-consumer communication with sentiment was deemed more effective
by participants than both the consumer-to-consumer with sentiment and the consumer-to-
consumer information with no sentiment. These source/sentiment findings indicate that
for a corporation to be viewed as an authoritative source, public relations professionals
should incorporate sentiment messages in communication, thus gaining more source
credibility than a consumer communicating with or without sentiment. As a practical
matter, this means that public relations professionals can have the opportunity to
incorporate their own “voice” into corporate communication and leverage their own
channels of social media communication on behalf of the corporation.

For source credibility (character), participants indicated that the consumer-to-
consumer communication with sentiment was a better vehicle for boosting source
character than the consumer-to-consumer communication with no sentiment. This
source/sentiment finding indicates that consumers may remain receptive to personal
messages from other consumers and that they, in fact, attach attributes of “character” to
the individual transmitting the message. For the public relations industry, this finding
suggests that strategic communication with thought-leaders is a potent way to advance a
corporate message. By reaching the thought leaders and persuading them regarding the
benefits of a CSR program, then they may subsequently transmit the message to others.

For information credibility, the source/sentiment effect showed that business-to-
consumer communication with sentiment was perceived more favorably than the
consumer-to-consumer communication with sentiment. This significant source/sentiment
finding denotes that corporations were viewed by participants as purveyors of credible
information, when compared to that of consumers, and that a sentiment message may add
to the appeal. This finding suggests that corporate communicators have a vital role in the core business and therefore merit a seat at the decision-making table regarding corporate social responsibility, a position advocated by Freitag (2005), who has stated that public relations managers are ideally positioned to pursue CSR communication programs.

For source/sentiment/format findings for source credibility (authoritativeness), it was found that business-to-consumer article with sentiment was perceived as more authoritative than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment. This source/sentiment/format finding points to the perceived superiority of the article format in conveying corporate social responsibility information, and that a value may be gained by adding sentiment. The business-to-consumer article with no sentiment was better than the business-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment in formulating aspects of source credibility (authoritativeness) among participants, thus showcasing the inferiority of the advertising format. Other findings for source credibility (authoritativeness) source/format/sentiment effects showed that both the consumer to-consumer news release with no sentiment and the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment were perceived as a more credible source than when the respondent was exposed to a consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment. These source/sentiment/format findings offer insights into the role of the consumer communicator in the corporate social responsibility equation, and that to be viewed as a credible authority, consumers should transmit news releases and articles, and they do not need to include sentiment. For source credibility (character), the consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment was perceived as coming from a more credible source than both the consumer-to-consumer
advertisement with no sentiment and the consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment. Thus, for a consumer to be viewed with character, sending articles to other consumers is more appropriate than sending news releases or advertisements. From this finding, it can be concluded that the article format is still processed by consumers in a more positive way than advertising and can be used to transmit core messages about corporate social responsibility. This finding affirms previous research by Hallahan (1999) regarding information processing of various media formats.

**Information Credibility Impact for Public Relations Professional**

Public relations professionals seeking to communicate with credible information may appreciate benefits from the information credibility findings in this study. To build feelings of information credibility, the business-to-consumer news release with sentiment was designated by participants as a better communication vehicle than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment. This finding suggests the continued use of news releases to convey corporate information. This source/sentiment finding indicates that corporations should send news releases and may include a sentiment message to promote information credibility. This further endorses the notion of the corporate spokesperson coming from behind the corporate veil to speak directly to consumers. Another way to communicate information credibly, findings indicated, is for businesses to send articles to consumers with sentiment rather than transmitting articles with no sentiment. This source/sentiment finding demonstrates that businesses should transmit articles about corporate social responsibility programs and may incorporate a sentiment message. The availability of articles is contingent on an active public relations program that includes
media relations with online, print and broadcast media. The findings contained in this
dissertation suggest that a public relations program should be conducted before, during,
and after a CSR program to monitor changes in perception, marketplace adaptations, and
message resonance with consumers. Source/sentiment results also indicate that
corporations should not transmit advertisements with sentiment because respondents
viewed them less favorably. When examining the marketing mix, therefore, corporations
can place a higher priority on the public relations program and a lower priority on the
paid advertising found in marketing departments. Further, these findings suggest that
management should include public relations professionals in the CSR decision-making
process. Lastly, participants perceived the consumer-to-consumer article with no
sentiment as more effective than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no
sentiment, indicating that consumers can send credible information in the form of an
article and do not need to include sentiment. For the public relations professional, this
finding denotes that the public relations program should transmit articles to consumers,
which can in turn be shared with others, allowing for viral communication. These
findings suggest a best practice for corporate social responsibility communication
administered by the public relations professional.
Practical Implications for Public Relations Best Practice for CSR

Communication:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Credibility</th>
<th>Information Credibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Transmit articles (with or without sentiment)</td>
<td>• Transmit news releases and articles with sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Incentivize consumers to transmit news releases and articles with no sentiment</td>
<td>• Incentivize consumers to transmit articles with no sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(article preferred)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These implications pave the way for a deeper understanding of the role of the public relations professional in formulating and executing a strategic communication program for corporate social responsibility initiatives. This research indicates that, as the public relations industry moves beyond traditional sender and receiver models to a new era of dialogic communication, the consumer plays a more active role. Worley (2007) has suggested that the Internet has become a great “equalizer” for person-to-person communication. To effectively communicate with consumers and incentivize them to engage in the corporate social responsibility program, public relations professionals can subscribe to the tenets of communitarian theory set forth by Starck and Kruckeberg (2001). Specifically, it theorizes that corporations can be both moral and profitable at the same time, and that communication plays a significant role in building stakeholder relationships. In addition, by incorporating dialogic principles advocated by Kent and Taylor (1998), the public relations professional can conduct a strategic communications process that allows organizations to form mutually beneficial relationships with key publics, as stated in the definition of public relations (PRSA, 2014).
Implications for Corporate Communication in the Social Media Sphere

The advent of new social media channels has marked a new era of dialogic communication that mandates advanced mastery for corporations seeking to articulate corporate social responsibility information. This study itemizes potential techniques for corporate social responsibility communication in social media by examining the impact of source, format, and sentiment.

In the examination of “like” for source/format, it was found that participants were more inclined to “like” the consumer-to-consumer news release than the consumer-to-consumer advertising. For source/sentiment/format effects, the business-to-consumer news release with sentiment was “liked” more by participants than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment. Participants were more inclined to like the consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment. Lastly, the consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment was more likely to be “liked” than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment, according to participant responses. The consumer act of “liking” information allows for the proliferation of corporate information. Therefore, these findings indicate that news releases and articles are preferable formats and can in fact lead to greater awareness of a corporate social responsibility initiative.

In an examination of “share” for source/format, it was found that participants were more likely to “share” the business-to-consumer news release than the business-to-consumer advertisement. For source/sentiment/format, participants were more likely to “share” the business-to-consumer news release with sentiment than both the business-to-
consumer advertisement with sentiment and the business-to-consumer advertising with no sentiment. Therefore, to fuel electronic word-of-mouth, news releases are preferable to advertising because consumers invest more credibility into the format than the advertising format, which can be viewed as corporate self-promotion. This finding suggests that consumers want to ally themselves with credible information as they share information with others regarding a corporate social responsibility campaign.

For the “post” results for source/format, it was found that the business-to-consumer news release was more likely to be “posted” than the business-to-consumer advertisement. This finding suggests that, as an individual becomes a thought leader, he or she is confident in posting a news release directly from a corporation because it may indicate primacy of knowledge. In addition, the business-to-consumer article was more likely to be posted than the business-to-consumer advertisement. Once again, this showcases the preference for the third-party endorsement when sharing information with others. For source/sentiment/format effects, the business-to-consumer news release with sentiment was more likely to be “posted” than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment. The business-to-consumer article with sentiment was more likely be “posted” by participants than the business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment. Therefore, it can be concluded that the incorporation of a sentiment message does not dissuade the consumer from ultimately posting information about a CSR program. The source/sentiment/format findings revealed the consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment was more likely to be posted than the consumer-to-consumer advertisement
with no sentiment. These findings suggest practical implications for a corporation seeking to adopt a robust social media program for corporate social responsibility.

Respondents did not indicate differences between business versus consumer senders, and they did not indicate differences among source/sentiment combinations. The source/format and source/sentiment/format findings for social media engagement offer corporations and public relations professionals specific implications for a best practice for corporate social responsibility communication.

Practical Implications for Social Media Engagement:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Willingness to &quot;Like&quot;</th>
<th>Willingness to &quot;Share&quot;</th>
<th>Willingness to &quot;Post&quot;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Transmit news releases with sentiment  
• Incentivize consumers to transmit news releases and articles with no sentiment | • Transmit news release with sentiment | • Transmit news release and articles with sentiment  
• Incentivize consumers to send articles with no sentiment |

A New Model for Corporate Social Responsibility Communication

The intersection of corporate social responsibility and communication is a topic that has been addressed by scholars who have posed suggestions for corporate communication techniques (Coombs & Holladay, 2012), recommendations for co-creation of content with users (Korschun & Du, 2013), and pleas to incorporate stakeholders into the communication process (Bhattacharya, Sen, & Korschun, 2011). In light of the findings contained in this document, a new five-phase model for CSR communication is proposed that includes: Phase 1: Strategic CSR Investigation and Program Creation; Phase 2: Communications Planning (SFS Equation); Phase 3: Communication Deployment; Phase 4: Co-Creation with Audience; and Phase 5:
Communication Measurement. This model advances a previous CSR Process model created by Coombs and Holladay (2012) that called for scanning and monitoring, formative research, creation of CSR initiative, communication of the CSR initiative, evaluation, and feedback. The new model presented in this study considers communication of the CSR program in greater detail and addresses the contemporary social media environment, where dialogic communication and co-creation can occur to influence consumer perceptions of corporate social responsibility. The structure of the new model also advances the management process of public relations set forth by Broom (2009) that calls for four phases: defining public relations problems; planning and programming; taking action and communicating; and evaluating the program. Lastly, the model integrates a communication measurement phase that subscribes to the globally accepted Barcelona Principles, the international guidelines for public relations measurement.
Phase 1: Strategic CSR Investigation and Program Creation

With a seat in the dominant coalition, the public relations professional has a voice in the creation of a corporate social responsibility initiative. Coombs and Holladay (2009) have suggested that the incorporation of the public relations professional at this level is a way to institutionalize the practice into corporate social responsibility. Public relations professionals deliver a keen familiarity of the stakeholder base to the planning process and offer strategic input about the formation and structure of a CSR program. Further, as Bivins (1987) indicates, the public relations professional is in the most favorable position to effect change. As Porter and Kramer (2006) suggested, the formation of a meaningful
CSR program must adequately address business results and be founded on a core process of the company. The investigation of the appropriate CSR program requires an analysis of the core business to determine the desired impact on the corporation. For example, a business may be seeking to enhance the corporate reputation, stimulate purchase intention, or achieve another business objective. The program’s structure will reflect the business objectives. As Elkington (1997) has stated, corporations today are cognizant of people, planet, and profits, what has come to be known as the “triple bottom line.” It has also been suggested that CSR programs can fall along a continuum from institutionalized programs and promotions (Pirsch, Gupta, & Grau, 2007). Further, when considered as a long-range plan of action, CSR programs offer a way for both companies and society to prosper (Falck & Heblich, 2007). The strategic planning for CSR program planning requires an in-depth analysis of the business objectives and the specific stakeholders that will be reached by the program.

**Phase 2: Communication Planning (SFS Equation)**

Once a decision has been made about the structure of a corporate social responsibility program, communication planning may commence. This planning must include the evaluation of source, format, and sentiment (SFS) equation. As Basu and Palazzo (2008) have suggested, corporate social responsibility can lend itself to aspects of corporate sensemaking through linguistic dimensions. The selection of the appropriate source, format, and use of sentiment may play a role in the success of the CSR program. The visible source plays a role in influencing the credibility judgment (Dou et al., 2012) and the content class may also serve as a cognitive cue for processing of information
(Hallahan, 1999). The research contained in this study provides specific findings about the effects of source, format, and sentiment combinations. This model calls for the consideration of these variables and appropriate planning. It has been found corporations that want to enhance the corporate brand reputation, promote purchase, and be viewed as credible source conveying credible information that can be shared via social media should opt for transmitting news releases with sentiment, sending articles with sentiment, and incentivizing customers to transmit news releases with no sentiment. This research indicates corporations should avoid transmitting advertising, because as it is less effective at achieving desired effects. Thus, these findings suggest that an active role for the public relations professional is desirable, as the professionals can develop news releases and perform a media relations function with the print, broadcast, and online media outlets that cover the company and its corporate social responsibility program. An important role for the SFS equation is to determine the source, format, and sentiment, but the message must also be developed appropriately so that it resonates with stakeholder audiences. During the planning of the SFS equation, the public relations executive may work closely with senior management and serve as a liaison with other divisions such as finance and operations to create the structure for the implementation of the corporate social responsibility program.

**Phase 3: Communication Deployment**

After appropriate source, sentiment and format planning, a strategic corporate communication program can commence considering the corporate objectives, the key stakeholders, and the recommended tactical approaches. The public relations professional
playing an active role in content creation of news releases may perform the publicity function for the business, allowing the “story” of the company’s corporate social responsibility program to be told in print (newspapers and magazines), broadcast (television and radio), and online media outlets (social media outlets and blogs).

Daugherty (2001) has indicated that public relations practitioners must foster mutually beneficial relationships with all stakeholders to achieve harmony. She warns against the formation of a legitimacy gap that can occur when a company doesn’t meet society’s expectations and thus companies function best when they merge their interest with those of stakeholders. But the company must not only merge the interests, the corporations must communicate the actions taken to inform and persuade stakeholders.

A robust public relations program should be developed and implemented over time. This program may include news media relations, special events, and development of online and social media materials to convey the CSR program and involvement of key stakeholders. Management may not expect instant results in changing perceptions of the corporate brand reputation or purchase intention, but rather may expect a moving of the needle when audiences receive information about the corporate social responsibility program. It has been suggested by Freitag (2005) that the public relations professional address Carroll’s pyramid structure of CSR encompassing legal, economic, ethical, and philanthropic initiatives, by formulating CSR programs and appropriate strategies. While this study addressed CSR in the social media sphere, channel planning for a CSR program must fully investigate the media habits of stakeholders. For example, a shareholder investor may receive information in a different content form than an
environmental activist consumer. Ongoing monitoring is required to ensure that the communication program is achieving desired objectives. Through careful observation, the corporation can determine if a relationship between the corporation and the consumer is being adequately developed, as this was found advantageous for CSR communications (Hall, 2006). As a primary sculptor of the CSR message, the public relations professional operating in this phase updates senior management and provides recommendations for campaign changes.

**Phase 4: Co-Creation with Audience**

Once corporate social responsibility information is communicated to the audience, the stage is set for co-creation. Corporations can incentivize consumers to transmit news releases and articles by sending a personal message to them. This activity fuels electronic word-of-mouth, engages the stakeholder, and strengthens the bond of constituencies involved in the corporate social responsibility program. This dialogic aspect of corporate social responsibility communication has been made possible by the social media channels that proliferate content via engagement activities such as “liking,” “sharing,” and “posting.” This research has found that consumers are willing to “like,” “share,” and “post” news releases with sentiment and that they also may be willing to “post” articles with sentiment.

While corporations remain as primary advocates of their own CSR message, the research underscores the stakeholder theory of corporate communication. Without enfranchising stakeholders to engage with the corporation, both as a receiver and relayer of information, the corporation misses an opportunity for dynamic communication.
Morsing (2006) has indicated that companies benefit most from co-creation of corporate social responsibility, as he advocated a stakeholder involvement strategy that allows for “sensemaking” and “sensegiving.” Korschun and Du (2012) have provided a framework for CSR dialog in the social media sphere leads to immediate outcomes of community participation and formation of a CSR expectation that can lead to behavioral outcomes of value for the company. They assert social media fuels co-creation and by uniting social media theory and CSR theory, stakeholder relationships can be improved.

**Phase 5: Communication Measurement**

Effective measurement of communication outcomes for the corporate social responsibility program is imperative. As Argenti (2006) has stated, corporate communications must measure and quantify business results, so it is not viewed as an amorphous activity. To strengthen the measurement of corporate social responsibility communication, this model subscribes to the Barcelona Principles of Measurement (2010). These principles call for seven core provisions: The importance of goal-setting and measurement; Media measurement requires quantity and quality; Advertising value equivalencies are not the value of public relations; Social media can and should be measured; Measuring outcomes is preferred to measuring media results; Business results can and should be measured where possible; and Transparency and Replicability are paramount to sound measurement (Institute for Public Relations, 2010). A best practice for implementing the Barcelona Principles in a corporate social responsibility program allows for corporate goal setting that unites the business objective with stakeholder communication. Media measurement may be conducted that involves quality and
quantity by employing both internal and external measurement techniques. For example, a business may form a relationship with an external monitoring company to determine levels of coverage, conduct focus group research with key stakeholders and establish an internal operating framework that includes active review of materials for effectiveness. According to the Barcelona Principles, advertising value equivalencies are not a sound method for monitoring public relations effectiveness. This study has further shown that that advertising is not a preferable media format for conveying CSR information in the social media environment. For measurement of social media, a company may undertake an active listening approach and employ a third-party vendor for scanning of public conversations about the corporation or can purchase software that would allow the monitoring to occur in real time. The public relations industry has endured criticism for measuring outputs often in the form of a news release, media interview, special event or other activity. While monitoring of this type is important for management, the measurement of outcomes is more important as it ties back to corporate goals. For example, a business can measure the products sold as a result of a CSR campaign or measure the change in corporate brand reputation that occurs during and after the implementation of a CSR program. The imperative remains for corporate communicators to directly document the impact of communication on business results. The precise nature of online communication allows this type of business impact substantiation to be more readily available to executives making decisions about CSR programs. Lastly, as the Barcelona Principles state that measurement must be transparent and replicable, corporations conducting CSR programs can develop internal best practices for
measurement and adopt a culture of replication that allows for sustaining corporate social responsibility programs though years. By measuring corporate social responsibility communication with these robust standards, companies can identify gaps and re-tool programs to effectively resonate with stakeholders.

**Methodological Implications**

Despite the theoretical and managerial implications of this research, the current study has limitations and unveils some key opportunities for future research. This research was limited by the use of a fictional brand, while in the future other authentic brands may be explored. This research has been limited to one social media environment that simulated Facebook. Other social media environments should be tested and explored. While this research involved a static social media page that did not allow for interactivity, future research may allow for testing of specific web navigation and behavioral patterns of “like,” “share,” or “post.” The research was limited to participants living in the United States, focused on one food-and-beverage retailer, and was conducted in one industry category. Global studies may be undertaken at a later date, and other industries explored. Cross cultural comparisons can be analyzed as various economies value corporate social responsibility to different degrees. As these studies are undertaken, the appropriate channels must be selected to confirm that they are actually used by the stakeholders. For example, it may be found that a specific industry has a preferred social media or that environmentalists rely on a specific social media channel to relay information. The research focused on a CSR initiative that addressed one environmental aspect of recycling, while other types of CSR programs may be tested in a similar way. Social
media engagement was limited to “like,” “share,” or “post,” and these variables may represent a limited view of social media engagement. Other aspects of content creation such as the number of posts or the number of followers may also be explored. Lastly, while audience response to the variables of source, format, and sentiment may be studied in an attempt to formulate a best practice for communication, the audience still maintains power to attach meaning to a communication. Thus, corporations cannot devise a “magic bullet” for communication but rather must adapt to changing circumstances, changing media channels, and emerging media formats when communicating corporate social responsibility information. Further, the proclivity of consumers to adopt CSR messages may also be compared between consumers who identify themselves as environmentalists and those who do not. Corporate stakeholders will fall into different categories, and further study regarding communication with investors is required to determine their willingness to invest in a company with an active corporate social responsibility program, and how they like to receive information in a way that generates willingness to invest. This may include further studies of the source, format, and sentiment with testing of the chief executive officer spokesperson when compared with the chief financial officer spokesperson, or an investor relations professional.

This study involved a relatively educated audience, with 67 percent reporting some college or a bachelor’s degree. Future research may focus on different subgroups, including those that are less educated, and those with advanced degrees in an effort to discern differences between the groups. Gender differences may also be analyzed in
greater detail to determine differences between acceptance of credible sources and media formats when presented with corporate social responsibility campaigns.

**Future Research**

Future research in corporate social responsibility communication will deliver insights to corporate management and academia. Future research may focus on the area of source, format, and sentiment. Further, aspects of source credibility, information credibility, corporate brand reputation, purchase intention, and social media engagement require further analysis in the context of corporate social responsibility communication. This research study utilized a social media scale devised by the author that inquired about the willingness to “like,” “post,” and “share” the social media information. This scale achieved a .95 Cronbach alpha score and indicates future applicability to social media engagement studies. An enhanced social media engagement scale could be developed that integrates aspects of source credibility with the willingness to post. When evaluating purchasing intention, a two-question scale was developed by the author that included questions regarding willingness to "buy” and willingness to “pay more.” This scale achieved a .73 Cronbach alpha score and indicates future applicability to purchase intention research. Lastly, a corporate social responsibility effectiveness scale may be developed to poll respondents on whether the corporation is creating a program that is believable, contributes to the welfare of society, and delivers positive brand attributes to the corporation.

Future research in the area of source, source/format, source/sentiment, and source/sentiment/format may focus on other social media outlets beyond the Facebook
medium to generate additional information about corporate social responsibility
communication. Other social media environments that may be analyzed include Twitter
and YouTube. Further, global studies of perceptions of the source, source/format,
source/sentiment, and source/sentiment format could yield insights about varying points
of view regarding aspects of source credibility, information credibility, corporate brand
reputation, purchase intention, and social media engagement across multiple cultures.
Other retailers, such as those in apparel, electronics, or other consumer-oriented
industries, may be studied in a similar fashion and may reveal differences across specific
industry categories, giving industry leaders valuable information about the best practices
for CSR communication in specific vertical industries. The use of actual brands actively
communicating a CSR program would allow for testing of the impact of source,
source/format, source/sentiment, and source/sentiment/format in generating desired brand
aspects. In addition, as environmental purchasing behavior is analyzed, the influence of
premium brands and environmentally-friendly products should be explored. Consistent
with burgeoning environmentalism, “green products,” and consumer sensitivity to
ecological issues, further study is required to analyze the perception of corporate social
responsibility programs as corporations attempt to appeal to these consumer
constituencies. Specific research may be conducted about various aspects of corporate
social responsibility, including environmentally friendly supply chains, carbon footprints,
or ethical treatment of workers. Another interesting line of study would be to focus on
annual reports published by public companies to determine commonalities of language,
source, media format, and sentiment use when corporate social responsibility information is communicated.

With regard to media format studies moving through time, this study may be repeated to reveal changes that may occur in the perceptions of specific media formats that are used to present corporate social responsibility information. In addition, new media formats could be explored and compared, including emerging social media environments that publish corporate social responsibility information from both consumers and corporations. The notion of sentiment requires future study. Specific endorsements in social media from both the business and the consumer may be analyzed to determine effectiveness of the message in promoting various aspects of source credibility, information credibility, corporate brand reputation, purchase intention, and social media engagement.

For source credibility, further study is required to analyze the differences between the consumer source and corporate source for transmitting corporate social responsibility information. This dimension lends itself to future study about the role of the corporate spokesperson, testing of the effectiveness of the corporate chief executive officer as the spokesperson, and the use of third-party endorsers to articulate CSR information. Future research may also address the role of the consumer in finer detail to itemize characteristics of source credibility and thought leadership for corporate social responsibility communication. Specific aspects like consumer gender, age, or political affiliation may be explored to determine the demographic profile of the most advantageous carriers of corporate social responsibility information.
For information credibility, further study is required to address the article media format, subsequently probing for information about the role of objectivity and the integrity of news media outlets as they publish corporate social responsibility information. The news release format, with a lengthy heritage in the public relations industry, requires further study and analysis could be expanded with a study of video news releases, audio news releases, and multimedia news releases disseminated by corporations to communicate corporate social responsibility information. Further, the use of online advertising to convey CSR information may be studied across multiple social media platforms in an effort to determine ways to make the format more effective.

Corporate brand reputation is a vital concern for businesses and requires future study to determine techniques to bolster reputation through a CSR communication approach. While this study found that articles and news releases were valuable tools for building corporate reputation, specific messages, and programs may be evaluated. The deployment of various CSR programs may also be contrasted to determine which approach yields the highest brand boost in recognition for the corporation. For example, a company may contrast a corporate recycling initiative and a corporate philanthropic program.

Promoting and stimulating purchase intention is a core business function, and the impact of the variables contained in this study provides useful information. Future research may further investigate the impact of consumer-to-consumer communication in stimulating purchase intention within the context of a corporate social responsibility program. The research could focus on the key influencers who persuade through
communication. A better understanding of these communication dynamics will provide insights for purchase intention. Businesses seeking to decipher the purchase intention equation grapple with a multi-faceted challenge. The nexus of communication and corporate social responsibility programs provides a dynamic area for future research as aspects of cause promotion, cause marketing, and other CSR approaches that may be studied in further detail to measure the impact of these programs on purchasing intention.

Social media engagement resides at the center of dialogic communication in the current business environment. Corporations seeking to engage with consumers may appeal to them through a myriad of social media channels. Aspects of social media engagement require future study, particularly in the realm of corporate social responsibility. Specific research is required about the role of social media engagement in formulation of corporate brand communities, corporate social responsibility activism, the influence on purchasing decisions, and the persuasive dimensions required to form favorable opinions about a corporation’s corporate social responsibility program that empowers the consumer to transmit information.

Conclusion

As stated in the first chapter, “Communication precedes commerce.” This dissertation has analyzed the use of communication for conveying corporate social responsibility information. Five research questions were posed with 20 unique hypotheses in an effort to probe areas of source credibility, information credibility, corporate brand reputation, purchase intention, and social media engagement. This research comes at a time when corporations are facing pressures to devise and implement
corporate social responsibility programs. From multinational corporations to small independent retailers, businesses are facing increasing CSR pressures as consumers become more demanding for social programs that allow for greater interactivity between the corporation and the community. The ubiquity of social media has added a new ingredient for corporate communicators who want to broadcast the elements of a corporate social responsibility program. While Carroll (1979) has called CSR a company’s economic, legal, ethical, and philanthropic responsibility, CSR communication is now conducted in a landscape of social media where co-creation with the audience occurs 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

How companies choose to communicate with their key stakeholders may mean the difference between success or failure of a specific program. If the appropriate source, format, and sentiment are used, then the corporation may be able to enhance its corporate brand reputation or impact the bottom line by promoting purchasing intention. Yet, the issues of source credibility and information credibility remain. This dissertation was designed to poll the effectiveness of the source in conveying corporate social responsibility information. Findings have indicated that the business source is still an authoritative source for CSR information, but that information from another consumer may also influence others for corporate brand reputation and purchase intention. Of the 46 unique findings, the superiority of the news release and article format was indicated, giving these media formats distinct advantages over the advertising format. The use of sentiment was also found as a valuable tool for corporations who want to form the
stakeholder bond with corporations, a relationship deemed valuable in the commercial realm (Marin & Ruiz, 2007).

Public relations professionals, the primary message framers who maintain intimate knowledge of a corporation’s primary and secondary stakeholders, remain aptly poised to lead corporate CSR communication. This dissertation underscores the imperative for an active public relations campaign that generates news releases, and supports the notion of a media relations campaign. Yet, public relations professionals must go beyond the traditional press agentry role to a strategic framer of the corporation’s corporate social responsibility messages. This expanded role for the public relations professional has been endorsed by scholars (Daugherty, 2001; Freitag, 2005), and this research advances these argument for the public relations professional’s active involvement in conveying contents in the social media environment. This dissertation paves the way for a deeper understanding of the role of the public relations professional in formulating, executing, and measuring a strategic communication program for corporate social responsibility.

This research indicates that as the industry continues its evolution in the dialogic era, the public relations professional has the opportunity to become a maestro of communication, characterized as one who can inspire other consumer users to carry the message in a powerful electronic word of mouth channel. Public relations executives must frame the message, conduct media relations, counsel the chief executives, and communicate as an individual using appropriate social media vehicles. By engaging consumers and helping them to form a community around a corporation or a cause, the
public relations professional will truly conduct a strategic communication process that will allow the organization to form a mutually beneficial relationship with their key publics, as the Public Relations Society of America definition of public relations states (PRSA, 2014). This research indicated that online advertising was not as an effective media format as the news release and the article for credibly conveying CSR information. This suggests a management movement away from the marketing department toward the public relations department when devising a corporate social responsibility communication effort. Consumer skepticism and cynicism can erupt if the company is viewed as too self-serving or promotional with its communication approach (Pomering & Johnson, 2009). Yet the public relations professional, with a keen sense of the stakeholder base, and bound by a strong sense of professional ethics, can navigate the formation and execution of a corporate social responsibility communication program. The research presented offers implications for corporate social responsibility communication and theory, as a new era of dialogic communication pervades the marketplace and dictates that corporations utilize the social media channels to convey information and engage with stakeholders. For the public relations industry, this dissertation articulates a valid argument for the public relations professional at the highest level of strategic planning and leader of implementation. The public relations professional may serve as a primary creator of corporate CSR communication, with research finding that the corporation can derive significant benefits of corporate brand reputation, purchase intention, source credibility, information credibility, and social media engagement by transmitting news releases and articles through social media
outlets. Further, the public relations professional can form an active role in fueling co-creation of CSR content by inviting consumers to “like,” “post,” and “share” news releases and articles about a company’s corporate social responsibility. A five-phase Corporate Social Responsibility Communication Model is proposed that presents a contemporary framework for businesses to apply best practices for CSR communication.

The findings of this study revealed a solid foundation for the proposed CSR communication model. The model considers the contemporary communication environment that is characterized by a blending of content creation, giving non-corporate speakers new channels for instantaneous communication. This is particularly relevant for the study of corporate social responsibility, as consumer citizens become watchdogs, brand advocates, and critics of CSR programs. We live in an interconnected world where business, politics and economics overlap for the welfare of nations and the world. Communication resides at the center of these paradigms and elements of persuasion must be considered as the source, the media format, and the use of sentiment is employed. This work contributes to the body of knowledge of corporate social responsibility communication and offers a direct call for public relations professionals to take the helm with senior executives.
APPENDICES
Appendix A

Tables for Source Credibility

Table 1.1: *Descriptive Statistics for Source Credibility for Source Conditions (Hypothesis H1A) (McCroskey scale)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Condition</th>
<th>Business-to-Consumer</th>
<th>Consumer-to-Consumer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritativeness</td>
<td>$M = 26.09_a$ $SD = .39$ $n = 180$</td>
<td>$M = 25.36_b$ $SD = .39$ $n = 180$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>$M = 27.47$ $SD = .36$ $n = 180$</td>
<td>$M = 27.05$ $SD = .36$ $n = 180$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at $p <.05$. 
Table 1.2: Descriptive Statistics for Source Credibility for Source and Format Effects (Hypothesis H1B)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>News Release</th>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Advertisement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Authoritativeness</td>
<td>M = 27.29&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>M = 26.18&lt;sub&gt;bc&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>M = 28.48&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD = .67</td>
<td>SD = .67</td>
<td>SD = .67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>M = 27.51&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>M = 24.78&lt;sub&gt;c&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>M = 28.10&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD = .62</td>
<td>SD = .62</td>
<td>SD = .62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p < .05.
Table 1.3: *Descriptive Statistics for Source Credibility Comparing Means for Source and Sentiment Variable on McCroskey Scale.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Business-to-Consumer</th>
<th>Consumer-to-Consumer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With Sentiment</td>
<td>No Sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Authoritiveness</strong></td>
<td>$M = 27.19_a$</td>
<td>$M = 26.61_{ab}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = .54$</td>
<td>$SD = .54$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Character</strong></td>
<td>$M = 27.67_{a}$</td>
<td>$M = 27.28_{a}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = .60$</td>
<td>$SD = .50$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1.4: *Descriptive Statistics for Source Credibility Comparing Means for Sentiment, Source, Format*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>With Sentiment</th>
<th>No Sentiment</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritativeness</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>AD</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>AD</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>AD</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>AR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>27.52&lt;sub&gt;abc&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>28.94&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>25.12&lt;sub&gt;cdef&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>26.218&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>25.40&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>24.04&lt;sub&gt;ef&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>27.06&lt;sub&gt;abcd&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>28.02&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>24.76&lt;sub&gt;def&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>26.18&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>27.14&lt;sub&gt;abcd&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Character | M               | M               | M               | M               | M               | M               | M               | M               | M               | M               | M               |
|          | 28.04<sub>abc</sub> | 28.44<sub>abc</sub> | 26.52<sub>b</sub> | 27.52<sub>abc</sub> | 28.96<sub>b</sub> | 28.57<sub>ab</sub> | 26.98<sub>abc</sub> | 27.76<sub>abc</sub> | 27.10<sub>ab</sub> | 22.04<sub>d</sub> | 29.14<sub>a</sub> | 26.07<sub>c</sub> |
|          | .88            | .88           | .88              | .88            | .88            | .88              | .88            | .88            | .88              | .88            | .88            | .88              |
| n               | 30             | 30            | 30               | 30             | 30            | 30               | 30             | 30            | 30               | 30             | 30            | 30               |

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.
### Appendix B

#### Tables for Information Credibility

**Table 2.1: Descriptive Statistics of For Online Information Credibility for Source (Hypothesis H2A)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Type</th>
<th>Information Credibility</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>$M = 19.93$ $SD = .34$</td>
<td>$n = 180$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
<td>$M = 19.00$ $SD = .45$</td>
<td>$n = 180$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 2.2: Descriptive Statistics For Online Information Credibility for Source and Format (Hypothesis H2B)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Type</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Information Credibility</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>News Release B2C</td>
<td>$M = 20.84_{ab}$ $SD = .59$</td>
<td>$n = 60$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C2C</td>
<td>$M = 19.39_{bc}$ $SD = .59$</td>
<td>$n = 60$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Article B2C</td>
<td>$M = 21.10_{a}$ $SD = .59$</td>
<td>$n = 60$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C2C</td>
<td>$M = 20.12_{ab}$ $SD = .59$</td>
<td>$n = 60$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advertisement B2C</td>
<td>$M = 17.85_{cd}$ $SD = .59$</td>
<td>$n = 60$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C2C</td>
<td>$M = 17.51_{d}$ $SD = .59$</td>
<td>$n = 60$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at $p<.05$.

**Table 2.3: Descriptive Statistics for Information Credibility Comparing Means for Source and Sentiment (Hypothesis H2C)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source Type</th>
<th>With Sentiment</th>
<th>No Sentiment</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Information Credibility</td>
<td>$M = 20.29_{a}$ $SD = .48$</td>
<td>$n = 90$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Information Credibility</td>
<td>$M = 19.56_{ab}$ $SD = .48$</td>
<td>$n = 90$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$M = 18.41_{b}$ $SD = .48$</td>
<td>$n = 90$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$M = 19.60_{ab}$ $SD = .48$</td>
<td>$n = 90$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2.4: *Descriptive Statistics for Information Credibility Comparing Means for Sentiment, Source, Format (Hypothesis H2D)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>With Sentiment</th>
<th></th>
<th>No Sentiment</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>AD</td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>AR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
<td><strong>M</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.26&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>22.30&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>20.0&lt;sub&gt;d&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>22.59&lt;sub&gt;abcd&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>19.20&lt;sub&gt;bcde&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>SD</strong></td>
<td><strong>SD</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
<td><strong>n</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.
## Appendix C

### Tables for Corporate Brand Reputation

**Table 3.1: Descriptive Statistics For Corporate Brand Reputation for Source (Hypothesis H3A)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B2C</td>
<td>16.77</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2C</td>
<td>16.36</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.

**Table 3.2: Descriptive Statistics For Corporate Brand Attitude for Source and Format (Hypothesis H3B)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B2C</td>
<td>News Release</td>
<td>17.27</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2C</td>
<td></td>
<td>16.78</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2C</td>
<td>Article</td>
<td>17.61</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advertisement</td>
<td>17.05</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2C</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.44</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2C</td>
<td></td>
<td>15.25</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.

**Table 3.3: Descriptive Statistics for Corporate Brand Reputation Comparing Means for Source and Sentiment (Hypothesis H3C)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Sentiment</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>With Sentiment</td>
<td>16.94</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Sentiment</td>
<td>16.60</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
<td>With Sentiment</td>
<td>16.321</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No Sentiment</td>
<td>16.51</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.
Table 3.4: Descriptive Statistics for Corporate Brand Reputation Comparing Means for Source and Sentiment and Format (Hypothesis H4C)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>With Sentiment</th>
<th>Consumer-to-Consumer</th>
<th>No Sentiment</th>
<th>Consumer-to-Consumer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR</td>
<td>M = 17.58&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 17.76&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 15.50&lt;sup&gt;cd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 16.60&lt;sup&gt;abc&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>M = 16.60&lt;sup&gt;abc&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 16.44&lt;sup&gt;abc&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 15.59&lt;sup&gt;bcd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 16.96&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD</td>
<td>M = 15.50&lt;sup&gt;cd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 15.38&lt;sup&gt;cd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 14.92&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 15.38&lt;sup&gt;cd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NR</td>
<td>M = 15.59&lt;sup&gt;bcd&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 16.96&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 16.96&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 16.96&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>M = 16.96&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 17.46&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 17.66&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 17.46&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AD</td>
<td>M = 17.66&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 16.96&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 16.96&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>M = 16.96&lt;sup&gt;ab&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.
Appendix D

Tables for Purchase Intention

Table 4.1: *Descriptive Statistics For Purchase Intention for Source (Hypothesis H4A)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Willing to Purchase</th>
<th>Willing to pay more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>B2C</strong></td>
<td>M = 3.29, SD = .06, n = 180</td>
<td>M = 3.13, SD = .06, n = 180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>C2C</strong></td>
<td>M = 3.25, SD = .06, n = 180</td>
<td>M = 3.13, SD = .06, n = 180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.

Table 4.2: *Descriptive Statistics For Purchase Intention for Source and Format (Hypothesis H4B)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Format</th>
<th>Willing to Purchase</th>
<th>Willing to pay more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>News Release</strong></td>
<td>M = 3.44&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;, SD = .10, n = 60</td>
<td>M = 3.15&lt;sub&gt;abc&lt;/sub&gt;, SD = .10, n = 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Article</strong></td>
<td>M = 3.37&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;, SD = .10, n = 60</td>
<td>M = 3.24&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;, SD = .10, n = 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advertisement</strong></td>
<td>M = 3.55&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;, SD = .10, n = 60</td>
<td>M = 3.28&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;, SD = .10, n = 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.

Table 4.3: *Descriptive Statistics for Purchase Intention Comparing Means for Source and Sentiment (Hypothesis H4C)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source and Sentiment</th>
<th>Business-to-Consumer</th>
<th>Consumer-to-Consumer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>With Sentiment</strong></td>
<td>M = 3.35, SD = .08, n = 90</td>
<td>M = 3.46, SD = .08, n = 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>No Sentiment</strong></td>
<td>M = 3.23, SD = .08, n = 90</td>
<td>M = 3.24, SD = .08, n = 90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.

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Table 4.4: *Descriptive Statistics for Purchase Intention Comparing Means for Source, Sentiment and Format (Hypothesis H4D)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Sentiment</th>
<th>With Sentiment</th>
<th>No Sentiment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>AR</td>
<td>AD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Buy</strong></td>
<td>M = 3.48&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>M = 3.06&lt;sub&gt;abc&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>M = 3.40&lt;sub&gt;abc&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD = .15</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pay More</strong></td>
<td>M = 3.16&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>M = 2.80&lt;sub&gt;b&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>M = 3.28&lt;sub&gt;a&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD = .15</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Table 4.5: *Descriptive Statistics For Environmentalism Purchase Behavior (Hypothesis H4A)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B2C</th>
<th>C2C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>10.31</td>
<td>10.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$n$</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at $p<.05$. 
Table 4.6: *Descriptive Statistics For Environmentalism Purchase Behavior Comparing Means for Source and Format (Hypothesis H4B)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source/Format</th>
<th>News Release</th>
<th>Article</th>
<th>Advertisement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmentalism Purchase Behavior</td>
<td>M = 10.33&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; SD = .26</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>M = 10.31&lt;sup&gt;a&lt;/sup&gt; SD = .26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.
Table 4.7: Descriptive Statistics for Environmentalism Purchase Behavior Comparing Means for Source and Sentiment (Hypothesis H4C)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Business-to-Consumer</th>
<th>Consumer-to-Consumer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>With Sentiment</td>
<td>No Sentiment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmentalism Purchase Behavior</td>
<td>M = 10.26</td>
<td>M = 10.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD = .21</td>
<td>SD = .21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.

Table 4.8: Descriptive Statistics for Environmentalism Purchase Behavior Comparing Means for Source, Sentiment and Format (Hypothesis H4D)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>With Sentiment</th>
<th>Consumer-to-Consumer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>AR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 10.36&lt;sub&gt;abc&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>M = 10.48&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD = .36</td>
<td>SD = .36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No Sentiment</th>
<th>Consumer-to-Consumer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Business-to-Consumer</td>
<td>Consumer-to-Consumer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>NR</td>
<td>AR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>M = 10.30&lt;sub&gt;abc&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
<td>M = 10.44&lt;sub&gt;ab&lt;/sub&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD = .36</td>
<td>SD = .36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.
Appendix E

Tables for Social Media Engagement

Table 5.1: Descriptive Statistics For Social Media Engagement for Source (Hypothesis H5A)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>B2C</th>
<th></th>
<th>C2C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>M = 2.80</td>
<td>SD = .07</td>
<td>M = 2.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 180</td>
<td></td>
<td>n = 180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>M = 2.49</td>
<td>SD = .06</td>
<td>M = 2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 180</td>
<td></td>
<td>n = 180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>M = 2.42</td>
<td>SD = .06</td>
<td>M = 2.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 180</td>
<td></td>
<td>n = 180</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.

Table 5.2: Descriptive Statistics For Social Media Engagement for Source and Format (Hypothesis H5B)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>News Release</th>
<th></th>
<th>Article</th>
<th></th>
<th>Advertisement</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Like</td>
<td>M = 3.04a</td>
<td>M = 2.82a</td>
<td>M = 2.94a</td>
<td>M = 2.69ab</td>
<td>M = 2.42b</td>
<td>M = 2.36b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD = .12</td>
<td>SD = .12</td>
<td>SD = .12</td>
<td>SD = .12</td>
<td>SD = .12</td>
<td>SD = .12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share</td>
<td>M = 2.63a</td>
<td>M = 2.50ab</td>
<td>M = 2.68a</td>
<td>M = 2.48abc</td>
<td>M = 2.17c</td>
<td>M = 2.24bc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD = .11</td>
<td>SD = .11</td>
<td>SD = .11</td>
<td>SD = .11</td>
<td>SD = .11</td>
<td>SD = .11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post</td>
<td>M = 2.58a</td>
<td>M = 2.45ab</td>
<td>M = 2.59a</td>
<td>M = 2.49ab</td>
<td>M = 2.10c</td>
<td>M = 2.21bc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD = .11</td>
<td>SD = .11</td>
<td>SD = .11</td>
<td>SD = .11</td>
<td>SD = .11</td>
<td>SD = .11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
<td>n = 60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Means not connected by the same letter are significantly different at p<.05.
### Table 5.3: Descriptive Statistics for Social Media Engagement Comparing Means for Source and Sentiment (Hypothesis H5C)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source-Consumer</th>
<th>Source-Consumer</th>
<th>Destination-Consumer</th>
<th>Destination-Consumer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Like</strong></td>
<td><strong>Share</strong></td>
<td><strong>Post</strong></td>
<td><strong>Like</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M = 2.84</td>
<td>M = 2.58</td>
<td>M = 2.46</td>
<td>M = 2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD = .10</td>
<td>SD = .09</td>
<td>SD = .09</td>
<td>SD = .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M = 2.75</td>
<td>M = 2.40</td>
<td>M = 2.38</td>
<td>M = 2.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD = .10</td>
<td>SD = .09</td>
<td>SD = .09</td>
<td>SD = .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M = 2.60</td>
<td>M = 2.44</td>
<td>M = 2.38</td>
<td>M = 2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD = .10</td>
<td>SD = .09</td>
<td>SD = .09</td>
<td>SD = .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M = 2.64</td>
<td>M = 2.36</td>
<td>M = 2.37</td>
<td>M = 2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD = .10</td>
<td>SD = .09</td>
<td>SD = .09</td>
<td>SD = .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
<td>n = 90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5.4: Descriptive Statistics for Social Media Engagement Comparing Means for Source, Sentiment and Format (Hypothesis H5C)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source-Consumer</th>
<th>Source-Consumer</th>
<th>Destination-Consumer</th>
<th>Destination-Consumer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Like</strong></td>
<td><strong>Share</strong></td>
<td><strong>Post</strong></td>
<td><strong>Like</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M = 3.22a</td>
<td>M = 2.98ab</td>
<td>M = 2.70a</td>
<td>M = 2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD = .17</td>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M = 2.98ab</td>
<td>M = 2.76a</td>
<td>M = 2.64a</td>
<td>M = 2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD = .17</td>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M = 2.70a</td>
<td>M = 2.44ab</td>
<td>M = 2.38ab</td>
<td>M = 2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M = 2.64a</td>
<td>M = 2.36a</td>
<td>M = 2.37</td>
<td>M = 2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M = 2.70a</td>
<td>M = 2.44ab</td>
<td>M = 2.38ab</td>
<td>M = 2.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .16</td>
<td>SD = .10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
<td>n = 30</td>
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Appendix F

Manipulations

Manipulation 1: Business-to-consumer news release with sentiment

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Manipulation 1: Business-to-consumer news release with sentiment

We brew great coffee with great ethical!

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Recent Posts by Others on White Label

- Victoria Bolton
  - My kitty loves White Label, too!
  - 28 minutes ago

- Maxie Baumgartner
  - THANK YOU WHITE LABEL FOR THE OPTION OF SODA MILK 😊
  - 28 minutes ago

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White Label Coffee Company

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 15, 2013

WHITE LABEL COFFEE COMPANY Launches REUSABLE CUP PROGRAM

For further information Public Relations Agency
SAN FRANCISCO, November 15, 2013—White Label Coffee, which blends good coffee with good business ethics, announces today another step toward serving our environment with a socially responsible reusable cup program. WE CUP, the name of the Company’s Reusable Cup program, represents one more platform in White Label’s globally recognized corporate social responsibility program. Other programs include ethical coffee procurement, LEED building standards for retail outlets, bans to single-use plastic, and water and power conservation programs. “Our goal is to set a standard for environmentally sensitive consumers and for society,” says Vang White Label reusable tumblers, we hope to dramatically reduce paper waste and offer our customers a personal way of contributing to the betterment of our environment every day,” said Loly Bolan, President and CEO of White Label Coffee. “This WE CUP program is also a way to show our customers and the world that we care about the environment.”

White Label Coffee has established a goal of converting 15% of its customers by 2015 to ownership of White Label tumblers that are sold by individuals. White Label hopes to eliminate all but 15 million paper cups by 2015 essentially without disruption to customers who want to make an individual contribution to a better environment. These 15 million paper cups amount to almost 4 million pounds of paper waste from businesses across North America and Europe. We hope the socially responsible actions of White Label Coffee help to inspire customers to engage in our reusable tumbler program.”

Bolan said: “We believe our customers will easily adapt to a daily routine of carrying their personal tumblers into our retail outlets and receiving a great cup of coffee and the satisfaction of contributing to the environment. We hope the socially responsible actions of White Label Coffee helps to inspire customers to engage in our reusable tumbler program.”

About White Label Coffee

White Label Coffee (WDC-PAVSIA) is an organic coffee distributor and retailer of ethically responsible products in North America and Europe. It is an industry leader in setting the standards for corporate social responsibility in sourcing, collection, roasting and distribution of coffee and cocoa products.
Manipulation 2: Business-to-consumer article with sentiment

Customers and Fans: We have just launched another new program to better the environment, and the newspapers are writing about it. Read this and then go to your nearest retail outlet, so you can buy your $1 reusable RECUP tumblers! - White Label

Reusable Cup Program Debuts at Coffee Retailer
By Charlotte Miller
Staff Reporter

White Label Coffee, a San Francisco-based coffee distributor and retailer, has announced a reusable coffee cup program that it hopes will reduce paper that could eliminate about five percent of the number of coffee cups it sells on a daily basis. White Label, which says it "serves good coffee with good business ethics," could eliminate up to five percent of its annual store costs, and analysts expect a positive impact of the company's share price when trading for WCAF opens today on the NASDAQ Exchange. Reusable tumblers would reduce water, soap, power and waste by retail outlets, which will minimize impact on the environment.

The name of the Company's reusable cup program is RECUP. "Our goal is to set a standard for environmentally sensitive consumers and for society. By offering White Label reusable tumblers, we hope to dramatically reduce paper waste and to offer our customers a personal way of contributing to the betterment of our environment every day," Larry H. Bolton, president and CEO of White Label Coffee, said.

The RECUP tumblers go on sale today for $1 at White Label owned and franchise retail stores and at White Label coffee bars, located at brand name retailers like Barnes and Noble and Macy's.

White Label hopes to eliminate about 115 million paper cups by 2015 essentially without exception to customers who want to make an individual contribution to a better environment. The RECUP program represents one more platform in White Label's globally recognized corporate social responsibility program. Other programs include ethical coffee procurement, LEED building standards for retail outlets, loans to Third World growers, and water and power conservation programs.

Victoria Bolton
My kitty loves White Label, too!
28 minutes ago

Macle Baumgartner
THANK YOU WHITE LABEL FOR THE OPTION OF SOWA MILK!
29 minutes ago
Manipulation 3: Business-to-consumer advertisement with sentiment

We brew great coffee with great ethics!

November 15

Customers and Fans:
White Label Coffee Company has started another program to better the environment—see our ad below. We hope you like this and participate! Get out there and buy your RECLIP reusable tumbler for $1 — White Label.

We brew great coffee with great ethics!

White Label Coffee introduces its reusable tumbler RECLIP to make a contribution to the environment every day! Now on sale at your local White Label retail store for just $1. A small price to pay for a big contribution to tomorrow!

Recent Posts by Others on White Label

- Victoria Bolton
  My kitty loves White Label, too!
  28 minutes ago

- Macie Baumgartner
  THANK YOU WHITE LABEL FOR THE OPTION OF SOYA MILK 😊
  29 minutes ago
Manipulation 4: Business–to-consumer news release with no sentiment

WHITE LABEL COFFEE COMPANY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
For Further Information
November 11, 2013
Public Relations

NEWS RELEASE

WHITE LABEL COFFEE LAUNCHES REUSABLE CUP PROGRAM

Part of White Label's Corporate Social Responsibility Program to Help Society SAN FRANCISCO, November 10, 2013—White Label Coffee, which blends good coffee with good business ethics, announces today another step forward in its commitment to protect the environment with the launch of its new RECUP program.

RECURP, the name of the Company’s Reusable Cup program, represents one more platform in White Label's globally recognized corporate social responsibility program. Other programs include ethical coffee procurement, LEED building standards for retail outlets, loans to third world growers, and water and power conservation programs.

"Our goal is to sell a standard for environmentally sensitive customers and for society. By offering White Label reusable tumblers, we hope to dramatically reduce paper waste and to offer our customers a personal way of contributing to the protection of our environment every day," Larry H. Bolton, President and CEO of White Label Coffee, said. "Our RECURP program again demonstrates the commitment of White Label and its employees to have a positive impact on our global society. Reusable tumblers means reduced water, soap, power and waste by our retail outlets, and that translates into minimal negative impact on the environment."

White Label Coffee has established a goal of converting five percent of its customers by 2015 to ownership of White Label tumblers that are owned by individuals. White Label hopes to eliminate about 115 million paper cups by 2015 essentially without disruption to customers who went to make an individual contribution to a better environment. Those 115 million paper cups eliminate about five million pounds of paper waste from landfills across North America and Europe.

"We hope the socially responsible actions of White Label Coffee help to inspire customers to engage in our reusable tumbler program," Bolton said. "We believe our customers will easily adapt to a daily routine of carrying their personal tumblers into our retail outlets and receiving a great cup of coffee and the satisfaction of contributing to the environment. The RECURP Tumblers go on sale today for $1 at White Label owned and franchise retail stores and at White Label coffee bars, located a brand name retailers like Barnes and Noble and Macy's. White Label already uses recycled paper and cardboard products within its retail stores for its..."
Manipulation 5: Business-to—consumer article with no sentiment

Reusuable Cup Program Debuts at Coffee Retailer
By Charlotte Miller
Staff Reporter

White Label Coffee, a San Francisco-based coffee distributor and retailer, has announced a reusable cup program that it hopes will reduce paper that could eliminate about five million pounds a year. That is about five percent of the number of coffee cups it sells on a daily basis.

White Label, which says it "blends good coffee with good business ethics," could eliminate one to five percent of its annual store costs, and analysts expect a positive impact of the company's share price when trading for WCAF opens today on the NASDAQ Exchange. Reusable tumblers would reduce water, soap, power and waste by retail outlets, which will minimize impact on the environment.

The name of the Company's reusable cup program is RECUP. "Our goal is to set a standard for environmentally sensitive customers and for society. By offering White Label reusable tumblers, we hope to dramatically reduce paper waste and to offer our customers a personal way of contributing to the bottom line of our environment every day," Larry H. Bolton, president and CEO of White Label Coffee, said.

The RECUP tumblers go on sale today for $1 at White Label-owned and franchise retail stores and at White Label coffee bars, located at Banana Republic and Macy's.

Tumbler
White Label hopes to eliminate about 115 million paper cups by 2015 essentially without disruption to customers who want to make an individual contribution to a better environment. The RECUP program represents one more platform in White Label's globally recognized corporate social responsibility program. Other programs include efficient coffee procurement, LEED building standards for retail outlets, loans for Third World growers, and water and power conservation programs.
Manipulation 6: Business-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment

White Label Coffee introduces its reusable tumbler RECUP to make a contribution to the environment every day! Now on sale at your local White Label retail store for just $1. A small price to pay for a big contribution to tomorrow!

Recent Posts by Others on White Label

- Victoria Bolton
  My kitty loves White Label, too!
  28 minutes ago

- Macie Baumgartner
  THANK YOU WHITE LABEL FOR THE OPTION OF SOYA MILK 😊
  29 minutes ago
Manipulation 7: Consumer-to-consumer news release with sentiment

WHITE LABEL COFFEE COMPANY

NEWS RELEASE

December 4, 2013

WHITE LABEL COFFEE LAUNCHES REUSABLE CUP PROGRAM

As part of its Corporate Social Responsibility Program to help society, San Francisco, November 10, 2013—White Label Coffee, which的理念是 good coffee with good business ethics, announces today another step toward saving our environment with a socially responsible reusable cup program.

REUSCUP, the name of the Company’s Reusable Cup program, represents one more platform in White Label’s globally recognized corporate social responsibility program. Other programs include ethical coffee procurement, LSE2013 standards for retail outlets, loans to third-world growers, and water and power conservation programs.

“Our goal is to set a standard for environmentally conscious customers and for society. By offering White Label reusable tumblers, we hope to dramatically reduce paper waste and to offer our customers a personal way to contributing to the betterment of our environment every day,” Larry H. Bolton, President and CEO of White Label Coffee, said. “Our REUSCUP program again demonstrates the commitment of White Label and its employees to have a positive impact on our global society. Reusable tumblers means reduced water, soap, power and waste by our retail outlets, and that translates into minimal negative impact.”

White Label Coffee has established a goal of converting five percent of its customers by 2015 to ownership of White Label tumblers that are owned by individuals. White Label hopes to eliminate about 115 million paper cups by 2015 essentially without disruption to customers who want to make an individual contribution to a better environment. Those 115 million paper cups eliminate about two million pounds of paper waste from landfills across North America and Europe.

We hope the socially responsible actions of White Label Coffee help our customers to engage in our socially responsible cup program. Bolton said, “We believe our customers will easily adapt to a daily routine of carrying their personal tumblers into our retail outlets and returning a great cup of coffee and the satisfaction of contributing to the environment.” The REUSCUP Tumblers go on sale today for $1 at White Label owned and franchise retail stores and at White Label collections, located in major transportation hubs, business centers, and retail locations.

White Label already uses recycled paper and cardboard products within its retail stores for its cups, cup bands, napkins and volume coffee containers.

About White Label Coffee

White Label Coffee (RLC) is a leading coffee distributor and retailer of socially responsible products in North America and Europe, it is an industry leader in setting the standards for corporate social responsibility in sourcing, collection, recycling and distribution of coffee and coffee products.
Manipulation 8: Consumer-to-consumer article with sentiment

Reusable Cup Program Debuts at Coffee Retailer
By Charlotte Miller
Staff Reporter

White Label Coffee, a San Francisco-based coffee distributor and retailer, has announced a reusable coffee cup program that it hopes will reduce paper that could eliminate about five million pounds a year.

That is about five percent of the number of coffee cups it sells on a daily basis. White Label, which says it "blends good coffee with good business ethics," could eliminate up to five percent of its annual store costs, and analysts expect a positive impact on the company's share price when trading for UCX, opens today on the NASDAQ Exchange. Reusable tumblers would reduce water, soap, power and waste by retail outlets, which would increase impact on the environment.

The name of the company's reusable cup program is RECUP. "Our goal is to set a standard for environmentally sensitive customers and for society. By offering White Label reusable tumblers, we hope to dramatically reduce paper waste and to offer our customers a personal way of contributing to the betterment of our environment every day," Larry H. Bolton, president and CEO of White Label Coffee, said.

The RECUP tumblers go on sale today for $1 at White Label owned and franchise retail stores and at White Label coffee bars, located a brand name retailers like Barnes & Noble and Macy's.

Tumbler

White Label hopes to eliminate about 115 million paper cups by 2015 essentially without disruption to customers who want to make an individual contribution to a better environment. The RECUP program represents one more platform in White Label's globally recognized corporate social responsibility program. Other programs include ethical coffee procurement, LEED building standards for retail outlets, loans to Third World growers, and water and power conservation programs.
Manipulation 9: Consumer–to-consumer advertisement with sentiment
Manipulation 10: Consumer-to-consumer news release with no sentiment
Manipulation 11: Consumer-to-consumer article with no sentiment

Reusable Cup Program Debuts at Coffee Retailer
By Charlotte Miller
Staff Reporter
White Label Coffee, a San Francisco-based coffee distributor and retailer, has announced a reusable coffee cup program that it hopes will reduce paper that could eliminate about five million pounds a year. That is about five percent of the number of coffee cups it sells on a daily basis. White Label, which says it "friends good coffee with good business ethics," could eliminate up to five percent of its annual store costs, and analysts expect a positive impact on the company's share price when trading for WCAF opens today on the NASDAQ Exchange. Reusable tumblers would reduce water, soap, power and waste by retail outlets, which will minimize impact on the environment. The name of the Company's reusable cup program is RECUP. "Our goal is to set a standard for environmentally sensitive customers and for society. By offering White Label reusable tumblers, we hope to dramatically reduce paper waste and to offer our customers a personal way of contributing to the betterment of our environment every day," Larry H. Bolton, president and CEO of White Label Coffee, said. The RECUP Tumblers go on sale today for $1 at White Label owned and franchise retail stores and at White Label coffee bars, located a brand name retailers like Barnes and Noble and Macy's.

Tumbler
White Label hopes to eliminate about 115 million paper cups by 2015 essentially without disruption to customers who want to make an individual contribution to a better environment. The RECUP program represents one more platform in White Label's globally recognized corporate social responsibility program. Other programs include ethical coffee procurement, LEED building standards for retail outlets, loans to Third World growers, and water and power conservation programs.
Manipulation 12: Consumer-to-consumer advertisement with no sentiment
REFERENCES


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