



## 2013 North American Society for Sport Management Conference (NASSM 2013)

way communication messages, (2) Community--messages written to engage followers in a dialogue and (3) Action--messages asking followers to support the organization by doing something. Each function originally was divided into four subcategories; however, we combined some categories and used a more parsimonious three subcategories for each function. The researchers modified the subcategories within Lovejoy and Saxton's (2012) three functions of communication based on a review of tweets by sport-for-development organizations gathered in the data collection. The Information function consisted of (a) general program information, (b) world news and facts, and (c) retweets. The Community function was subdivided into tweets focused on (a) sports, (b) interaction, and (c) promotion of other social media platforms. The Action function consisted of messages focused on (a) promoting an event, (b) donation appeal, and (c) call for engagement.

The researchers conducted a pilot study examining 364 tweets (approximately 10% of each organization's tweets) to examine the codebook and increase inter-rater reliability in the full data sample. All non-English tweets (n=36) were eliminated for a final sample of 328 tweets. The researchers used Cohen's kappa statistic in SPSS 20.0 to analyze inter-rater reliability. The independent coding in the pilot study resulted in a kappa value of .813. Kappa values greater than .80 are deemed "acceptable in most situations" (Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002, p. 600.) For the remaining differences, the researchers discussed their individual coding until 100% agreement was reached.

Preliminary findings from the pilot study indicate Information was the most prevalent function of communication via Twitter with 188 tweets (57%). General program information (n=92) and retweets (n=79) represented the majority of tweets in this category compared to world news and facts (n=17). Community was the second most prevalent function of communication with 109 tweets (33%). The majority of these tweets were focused on interaction (n=80) rather than promotion of other social media platforms (n=16) or sports (n=13). Action was the least prevalent function of communication with 31 tweets (10%). These messages were focused on promoting an event (n=12), donation appeal (n=11), and call for engagement (n=8).

These preliminary findings suggest sport-for-development organizations have done a better job of engaging followers in dialogue to build social capital with stakeholders compared to the nonprofits examined by Lovejoy and Saxton (2012). The sport-for-development organizations analyzed in this study were, however, less likely to encourage their followers to take action. The lack of action-oriented tweets (i.e., promoting an event, donation appeal, or call for engagement) raises concerns since sport-for-development organizations have been characterized by a lack of funding and increased competition over resources (e.g. Black, 2010; Giulianotti, 2011; Hayhurst et al., 2011; Kidd, 2008, 2011). The results of the final study will provide a better understanding of how sport-for-development organizations use Twitter for communication with stakeholders. Recommendations will then be determined to provide organizations with knowledge of how to improve communication with stakeholders since online social media can be a cost-effective tool for non-governmental organizations to overcome a lack of resources (Briones, Kuch, Liu, & Jin, 2011).