

Permanently Desiring the Temporary? Snapchat, Social Media, and the Shifting Motivations of Sports Fans

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Abstract

The social media application Snapchat has ascended rapidly, quickly becoming the third most utilized platform of millennials with a valuation as high as US\$19 billion. A national survey of 125 respondents revealed that people using Snapchat to follow sports devote roughly the same amount of time to the platform as Facebook and more time than Twitter, Instagram, or Pinterest. Despite finding other platforms better for sport information seeking, relaxation, and interaction, respondents still reported using Snapchat as a main platform for facilitating sport fandom. Both sport fandom and identification bolstered likelihood of using Snapchat for sport-related interactions. Implications for communication and sport scholars and industry professionals are offered.

Keywords

social media, mobile, fan identification, second screen, Snapchat

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Finding new avenues for engaging sports fans is simultaneously byzantine and elusive. Without question, the newest manner for doing so has involved the adoption of social media (Sanderson, 2011). Various forms of social media platforms—whether websites, mobile applications, or various hybrid forms—are used by sports organizations (Sellitto, 2014), college athletes (Browning & Sanderson, 2012), and professional athletes (Lebel & Danylchuk, 2014) in an attempt to raise interactivity levels among sports fans. More recently, a new platform has entered the marketplace: Snapchat, which has risen from a startup in 2011 to being the third most used social media platform among millennials 3 years later (Perez, 2014), with a current valuation estimated to be as high as US\$19 billion (Isaac, 2015). Teams are rapidly capitalizing on the hurried growth of the application, ranging from National Football League teams sending discounts and other temporary items, to the Seattle Sounders incorporating a “Chipotle Invasion” to collectively capture game day event interests (Horowitz, 2014).

Still, Snapchat represents a major shift from virtually all other applications because of one crucial aspect: Images and videos shared are only temporary, ranging from 1 s to a maximum of 24 hr. Some view the temporary nature of Snapchat as a major disadvantage for sports fan engagement as well as marketing and sponsorship aspects; as Burns (2014) argues, “Why would I give valuable content to an app where content disappears as opposed to Facebook or Instagram where it lasts forever?” (¶ 8). Yet it is this temporary aspect that makes Snapchat appealing to many young sports fans, for two primary reasons. First, the ephemerality of the platform can be alluring. In contrast to Facebook, Twitter, or other social media platforms where a post can live forever, one “can cheer when your team scores without worrying about looking dumb if they end up losing” (Constine, 2014a, p. 1). Second, there is an urgency embedded within the temporary nature of Snapchat because the messages do not last forever, leading fans to potentially prioritize this platform over ones with archived histories (Beese, 2013). Posts on competitors’ sites will always be there, causing many fans to prioritize interacting on Snapchat. Regardless of one’s stance on the advantages of the disappearing photos and videos, there is no denying the ubiquitous growth of Snapchat; in 2013, 60 million photos disappeared daily (Watson, 2013); in 2014, people posted 700 million photos and videos per day (Shontell, 2014). The demographic most likely to participate on the platform are teens, causing McCauley (2014) to argue that “if your target audience is youthful mobile users, then Snapchat is probably worth your while” (¶ 12). Without question, the target audience for growing fandom is a part of this youth demographic.

Thus, Snapchat can potentially be a useful and integral social media application for following sports (Constine, 2014b) and is already viewed as a threat to Facebook and Twitter (Levy, 2014). However, from a scholarly perspective, little has been investigated about how sports fans use the application, particularly their motivations for engagement. This study will do so with some primary focus on a difficult to attain demographic, millennials. By contrasting these motivations with four other social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest), potential distinctiveness of the Snapchat platform can be ascertained.

Literature Review

Extending the Uses and Gratifications Approach

Encompassing crucial questions related to reasons people select different media forms and formats, Katz, Blumler, and Gurevitch's (1973) uses and gratifications approach aids in understanding the utilization of innovative media formats. Severin and Tankard (2000) notes that the approach includes five reasons why people actively select one form of media over another, including (a) knowledge enhancement, (b) relaxation, (c) social interactions/companionship, (d) diversion, and (e) escape. At the core of uses and gratifications perspectives is the notion of the media participant being an active pursuer of optimal media selections, specifying that this quest is demonstrably different between gratification sought and gratification obtained (Blumler & Katz, 1974).

Such underpinnings are useful for understanding how sports fans select particular media platforms primarily because of its new potential applications to second-screen studies (see Wohn & Na, 2011). In the early stages of uses and gratifications development, media was viewed as a zero-sum game; one media format/platform would be selected with all else excluded. However, mobile and other user-generated media platforms now allow for many simultaneous and intermittent selections to jointly aid the quest of the optimal media gratification. Watching a sports contest at home may involve a television as the primary screen, yet second (or sometimes third) screens allow for simultaneous interactivity to provide bolstering gratifications not found within the primary selection. For instance, perhaps one selects television for relaxation and escape, yet this no longer precludes one from selecting additional options (most prominently social media) to fulfill other gratifications sought, most notably social interaction and companionship. ESPN Integrated Media Research reports that the television remains the overwhelming optimal available screen (OAS) for live sports consumption, yet also finds that the majority sports programming (62%) is consumed alone (Enoch, 2010). Consequently, the desire for interaction and companionship remains unfulfilled for nearly two thirds of all sports television viewers, providing ripe avenues for social media platforms to satisfy this additional desire.

Sport and Social Media

Deciphering how social media is informed by uses and gratifications motivations is increasingly important (Quan-Haase & Young, 2014), as a plethora of new platforms offer overlapping yet distinctive opportunities for interaction and consumption. Smock, Ellison, Lampe, and Wohn (2011) claim that similar capabilities should not be equated with similar motivations, as individual characteristics and preferences result in differential choices. However, Sundar and Limperos (2013) note that new media do not overtly change the overarching conceptions of primary motivations; instead, new media (including social media platforms) offer interactivity within different forms of media that are often concurrent in nature, including the increasingly

prevalent element of Social TV (Giglietto & Selva, 2014) in which the television is the primary screen and yet a second screen (typically using social media) is utilized for additional motivations. In essence, ungratified needs accumulate, with social media providing an opportunity for a value added to the overall mediated equation (see Wang, Tchernev, & Solloway, 2012).

Ancillary desires for gratifications beyond what a single media platform can provide have always been present, yet the advent of social media (and other mobile opportunities such as texting) has made these types of desires much more realistic. As Rowe (2014) aptly summarizes,

The experience of watching sport on television is changing with the proliferation of screens, the diversification of screen-based content, and the extension of interactive screen-facilitated communication. This 'live' performance of mediated sport spectatorship parallels in some respects 'live' mediated athletic performance, involving sharing the now and the making of digital memory. (p. 752)

A groundswell of studies (see Pegoraro, 2010; Sanderson, 2011) has addressed the phenomena of social media research within sport, sometimes within the framework of the uses and gratifications approach (Clavio & Kian, 2010). Girginova (2014), for instance, highlighted how sports fans could vent about what was perceived to be inferior Olympic media coverage while using creativity and other mechanisms to boost overall interest. However, it is important to note that the most useful of these works examines the dimensions of what a platform provides much more than focusing on any singular offering. Social media options rapidly evolve, yet the direct notion of one replacing another could be viewed as shortsighted; one could argue that MySpace beget Facebook, yet the platforms wielded more differences than similarities. Likewise, visual-based social media options are differentiated by photo versus video, duration of content, and—most pertinent to Snapchat—degree of permanency.

Nonetheless, these studies offer useful heuristics for understanding the motivations sports fans have for accessing various social media options. Scholars have uncovered the degree in which social media is utilized to manage and shape fan identity (Sanderson, 2013), promote formal and informal networks (Hambrick, 2012), facilitate fan–athlete interactions (Sanderson & Kassing, 2014), and replace and/or displace traditional forms of sports news (Hull & Lewis, 2014). Without question, social media platforms—most prominently Twitter—are concluded to be “causing paradigm shift in the management of sport media relations and flattening the sport media hierarchy” (Gibbs & Haynes, 2013, p. 405). Thus, branding and overall social media strategies have become central in the overall aims of athletes, teams, leagues, and organizations (Ballouli & Hutchinson, 2010).

In contrast to the work of Williams and Chinn (2010), who found that different online options offer varying utility for sports fans—some facilitating information gathering with others prioritizing interaction—recent scholarship has differentiated

how certain social media platforms excel more than others at given desires of sports fans. Witkemper, Lim, and Waldburger (2012) found that motivation and constraint were primary predictors of sports fandom-related Twitter use.

These works have also explored the reasons for seeking out new media options within an already established sports consumption palate. For instance, using a survey methodology, Clavio and Frederick (2014) sought to discover motivations behind fans of college sports' decision to use traditional as well as location-based social media regarding sporting events. They found that the largest factor could be collectively framed as a desire to promote their team and form or strengthen existing bonds with fellow fans. Studies have found an informational component to social media use, yet interactivity seemingly trumps many of these desires. For instance, those utilizing a Twitter feed do so for primarily interactive or informational reasons—though much preferring traditional media for the latter (Clavio & Walsh, 2014).

Moreover, distinctions between social and parasocial dynamics have been uncovered, with people seeking both of these elements for information, yet with relationships becoming primary for both groups, albeit in contrasting manners. For instance, followers of the social viewed social media as a way of maintaining a relationship with the person while followers of the parasocial viewed social media as a way of maintaining a relationship with fellow fans (i.e., it promoted their fandom; Frederick, Lim, Clavio, & Walsh, 2012). Thus, without question, people seek out different social media platforms for different reasons pertaining to personality traits, motivational desires, and gratifications sought.

Snapchat and Sports Fandom

Even with early social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) quickly garnering corners of the sports marketplace, Snapchat has been a fairly aggressive entrant into a crowded environment. Maurer (2013) notes the simplicity of the design: "Snapchat is the fastest way to share a moment with friends. You control how long your friends can view your message—simply set the timer ... [and] they'll have that long to view your message and then it disappears forever" (p. 2528). Given the ephemerality of most sports competitions, whose outcome seems to be of utmost importance at the time but whose content is largely forgotten soon thereafter, Snapchat can provide similar temporarily heightened interaction for fans.

Burns (2014) notes distinctive features present in Snapchat that are not directly offered through other platforms, while Jordan (2014) writes of the new Snapchat feature, *My Story*, which puts sport fans' Snapchats together to share among users. Constone (2014b) believes such a concept is genius, as it allows for someone to personalize a collective experience without memorializing it in the manner a platform such as Instagram would offer. Teams also can utilize the app to establish connections to fans who feel more personal than other social media competitors. New Orleans Saints New Media/Social Media Director Alex Restrepo believes the most significant takeaway he has gleaned through Snapchat has been the fans' perception

of the Snaps as personal messages from their favorite team: “You see people saying, ‘The Saints snapchatted me.’ We’re not really Snapchatting them; we’re just adding it to the story, and they’re seeing the story. But they see Snapchat as a personal messaging app, as opposed to being a social media outlet” (in Silverman, 2014, p. 1).

Because of this personalized and timely nature of the platform, the content being offered by teams and organizations is typically different from traditional sports media. Han (2014) notes that Snapchat is often viewed as the optimal medium not only for promoting coming to games but also for revealing behind-the-scenes photos and videos of favorite athletes and teams. Thus far, sports teams appear to be embracing the opportunities Snapchat provides. Brian Srabian, San Francisco Giants Social Media Director, reports that the “reaction has been way better than I thought we’d see. It’s semi-hard to promote, because . . . you can’t send them a link to a page. It’s all been word of mouth promotion” (“Beyond the Selfie,” 2014). Thus, even in its relatively early stages, Snapchat appears to be fulfilling needs of the modern sports fan.

Research Questions

Given the increasingly high penetration rate Snapchat is securing, it is clear that the application has become a major influence within the crowded social media universe. Popular press studies reveal that fans, teams, and organizations are capitalizing on the appeal of Snapchat, yet, from a scholarly perspective, little is known about the motivations for using the application. Moreover, scholars have not yet uncovered whether Snapchat represents a gratification sought more commonly than a gratification obtained. As such, the following research questions have been developed to offer an initial exploration of Snapchat, as it relates to sports within a younger population:

Research Question 1: How frequently will respondents report using Snapchat within sports environments in comparison to other social media platforms?

Research Question 2a: How will information-seeking motivations for using Snapchat within sports environments differ in comparison to other social media platforms?

Research Question 2b: How will relaxation motivations for using Snapchat within sports environments differ in comparison to other social media platforms?

Research Question 2c: How will social interaction motivations for using Snapchat within sports environments differ in comparison to other social media platforms?

Research Question 2d: How will escape motivations for using Snapchat within sports environments differ in comparison to other social media platforms?

Research Question 3: What do respondents report to be the primary advantages of using Snapchat within sports environments?

Research Question 4: Does the degree of self-reported sports fandom alter how respondents use Snapchat?

Research Question 5: Does the degree of self-reported sports identification alter how respondents use Snapchat?

Method

To assess the research questions proposed in this study, a survey was employed online through the use of the software, Qualtrics. Sampling was achieved through two methods: social media recruitment and Amazon Mechanical Turk, ensuring a diverse sample generally representative of a variety of Snapchat users. Respondents were recruited on social media through postings on Twitter and Facebook; Amazon Mechanical Turk—a service through Amazon which allows researchers to reimburse respondents for their time—was used to ensure the appropriate number of respondents, with approximately two dollars being offered to respondents in exchange for survey participation. The use of Amazon Mechanical Turk has become commonplace within survey research, including mainstream media journals (see Stavrositu, 2014) because of its relative strengths (see Mason & Suri, 2012) as it “can be used to obtain high-quality data inexpensively and rapidly” (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011, p. 4).

After respondents had agreed to participate in the survey, they were asked to respond on a five-point scale to the question “Do you think you are a sports fan?” Respondents who answered *strongly disagree* or *disagree* were thanked for their time and directed to exit the survey in order to include only sports fans in the sample. Next, respondents were asked if they had used Snapchat in the last month. Respondents answering “no” were excluded from the sample.

The first set of questions that each respondent was exposed to regarded questions about Snapchat usage. To evaluate each respondent’s time spent on Snapchat following sports, respondents were presented with a free-response box and asked “how many hours in an average week would you say you use Snapchat to follow sports?” Next, motivations for using Snapchat were assessed with diversion excluded as Snapchat, as it relates to sports fandom is inherently diverting, leaving four testable measures: information seeking, relaxation, social interaction, and escape. Scales from Smock et al. (2011) were utilized and adapted with four questions used to measure information seeking, five used to measure relaxation, two used to measure social interaction, and four used to measure escape. Questions in these scales included “I use Snapchat because it is a good way to keep in touch with family and friends to talk about sports” and “I use Snapchat to follow sports because it is enjoyable.”

Subsequently, questions were presented to respondents about their behavioral intentions of using Snapchat. Questions included, “I use Snapchat to follow my favorite players” and “I use Snapchat to follow my favorite teams,” with a 5-point Likert-type scale used to collect responses. Finally, in an attempt to

determine the central drivers to selecting one platform over another, respondents were asked to choose the three primary reasons that they followed sports on Snapchat, in order to assess the advantages of using Snapchat within the sports environment. Possible responses included “the sport-related content on Snapchat is exciting” and “Snapchat is a great place to socialize.”

After answering questions about Snapchat use, respondents were shown four different sets of questions, one each for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest. Like Snapchat, respondents were asked to indicate “how many hours in an average week do you use [social media platform] to follow sports?” If the respondent indicated they did not use the social media platform, they were directed to the next set of questions for the next social media platform. For each social media platform, respondents were asked questions about the four motivations (information seeking, relaxation, social interaction, and escape) as well as behavioral intentions of using each social media platform to follow sports. These questions were identical other than the name of the social media platform, matching the same questions that were used in the Snapchat set of questions.

At the end of the survey, respondents were asked demographic questions including age, sex, and race. Respondents also answered questions on a scale for self-reported sports identification using questions from Wann and Branscombe (1993; e.g., how strongly do you see yourself as a fan or your favorite team?), as well as self-reported sports fandom using questions from Wann (2002; e.g., “my friends see me as a sport fan”). Finally, respondents were thanked for their time and participation.

Results

Through purification of missing values in which only complete surveys were included, 125 respondents were obtained (40 [32%] via social media recruitment, 85 [68%] via Amazon Mechanical Turk recruitment). Of the people indicating their gender, 64.5% were male and 35.5% were female. Average respondent age was 28.26 years ($SD = 5.57$), largely matching the profile of a Snapchat user. Because it was used as a filtering question, all 125 respondents reported that they used Snapchat to follow sports.

Research Question 1 explored the frequency of using other social media platforms for sports media consumption in addition to using Snapchat. The categorical variable was media platform, consisting of five levels: Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest. Time spent on Snapchat and the other four platforms served as the continuous outcome variable in the current study. Likely a function of the filtering mechanism, time spent on Snapchat and the other four platforms was not normally distributed. After log transformation, the time spent on these five platforms still did not yield a normal distribution. Therefore, a series of nonparametric Kruskal–Wallis tests were conducted to explore this research question, with the results offered in Table 1.

Table 1. Kruskal–Wallis Test Results.

Variable	Social Media Platforms	N	Mean Rank	χ^2	Significance
Time spent	Snapchat	125	139.37	9.56	.002
	Twitter	125	111.63		
	Snapchat	125	166.36	87.99	.000
	Instagram	125	84.64		
	Snapchat	125	175.70	139.87	.000
	Pinterest	125	75.30		

As witnessed in Table 1, the time spent on Snapchat was not significantly different than Facebook but was significantly different between Snapchat and other three tested platforms, all favoring Snapchat use over the other predominant platforms. More specifically, people spent significantly more time using Snapchat for following sports than spent time on Twitter, $H(1) = 9.56, p < .05$; the mean rank for the time spent on Snapchat was 139.37, while the mean rank for the time spent on Twitter was 111.63. Moreover, time spent on Snapchat for following sports was significantly more than the time spent on Instagram, $H(1) = 87.99, p < .001$; the mean rank for the time spent on Snapchat was 166.36, while the mean rank for the time spent on Instagram was 84.64. Furthermore, the time spent on Snapchat for following sports was significantly more than the time spent on Pinterest, $H(1) = 139.87, p < .001$; the mean rank for the time spent on Snapchat was 175.70, while the mean rank for the time spent on Pinterest was 75.30. Research Question 1 is answered in that, among Snapchat users, the platform proved to be more desirable for consuming sport content than Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest, while being a statistical equivalent to Facebook.

Research Question 2a–d investigated respondent motivations for using Snapchat within a sports environment in comparison to other social media platforms. Again the categorical variable was media platform consisting of the five levels/forms of social media: Snapchat, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Pinterest. The four motivations (information seeking, relaxation, social interaction, and escape) served as the four continuous outcome variables in the current study. Skewness and kurtosis values of all outcome variables were within -2 to 2 , satisfying the requirement for reasonably normal distribution (Bachman, 2004). Therefore, one-way analysis of variance was applied to explore this research question, with results offered in Table 2 and the descriptive data for all five platforms offered in Table 3.

As highlighted in Table 2 and further delineated in terms of means within Table 3, in terms of information seeking (Research Question 2a), the results showed that a significant difference was found among groups, $F(4, 322) = 16.68, p < .001$. Tukey's honest significant difference (HSD) was employed to further distinguish the differences between groups. Snapchat ($M = 3.25, SD = 1.05$) generated less motivation for information seeking than both Facebook ($M = 3.81, SD = .76, p < .001$) and Twitter ($M = 4.17, SD = .81, p < .001$). No significant difference was found

Table 2. One-Way ANOVA Test Results.

Motivations	Social Media Platforms	N	M	SD	Significance
Information seeking	Snapchat	125	3.25	1.05	.000
	Facebook	88	3.81	.76	
	Snapchat	125	3.25	1.05	.000
	Twitter	69	4.17	.81	
Relaxation	Snapchat	125	3.27	1.02	.035
	Twitter	69	3.67	.79	
Social interaction	Snapchat	125	3.56	1.01	.032
	Facebook	88	3.95	.86	
	Snapchat	125	3.56	1.01	.002
	Pinterest	14	2.54	1.05	

Note. ANOVA = analysis of variance.

Table 3. Descriptive Results for Five Platforms.

Motivations	Social Media Platforms	N	M	SD
Information seeking	Snapchat	125	3.25	1.05
	Facebook	88	3.81	.76
	Twitter	69	4.17	.81
	Instagram	31	3.37	.91
	Pinterest	14	2.64	1.09
Relaxation	Snapchat	125	3.27	1.02
	Facebook	88	3.54	.79
	Twitter	69	3.67	.94
	Instagram	31	3.47	.91
	Pinterest	14	2.63	1.07
Social interaction	Snapchat	125	3.56	1.01
	Facebook	88	3.95	.86
	Twitter	69	3.47	1.03
	Instagram	31	3.26	.96
	Pinterest	14	2.54	1.05
Escape	Snapchat	125	3.04	1.05
	Facebook	88	3.22	.90
	Twitter	69	3.17	.97
	Instagram	31	3.17	1.01
	Pinterest	14	2.55	.88

between Snapchat and other media platforms. Research Question 2a is answered in that compared with Facebook and Twitter, Snapchat was less likely to be used for seeking sport-related information, yet Snapchat was a rough statistical equivalent to Instagram and Pinterest within this sport-related motivation.

In terms of relaxation (Research Question 2b), a significant difference was found among groups, $F(4, 322) = 4.94$, $p < .05$. Tukey's HSD was employed to further

distinguish the differences between groups. Results showed that Snapchat ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 1.02$) generated less motivation for relaxation than Twitter ($M = 3.67$, $SD = .94$, $p < .05$) with no other significant difference found between Snapchat and other media platforms. In answering Research Question 2b, Snapchat was less likely than Twitter to be used for sport-related relaxation and was a rough statistical equivalent with Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest.

In terms of social interaction (Research Question 2c), results showed that a significant difference existed among groups, $F(4, 322) = 8.26$, $p < .001$. Tukey's HSD was employed to further distinguish differences between groups. Results showed that Snapchat ($M = 3.56$, $SD = 1.01$) generated less motivation for sport-related social interaction than Facebook ($M = 3.95$, $SD = .86$, $p < .05$) while generating significantly more motivation for social interaction than Pinterest ($M = 2.54$, $SD = 1.05$, $p < .05$). No significant difference was found between Snapchat and other media platforms. In answering Research Question 2c, Snapchat generated less social interaction than Facebook, more social interaction than Pinterest, and was a statistical equivalent with sport-related social interaction on both Twitter and Instagram.

In terms of escape (Research Question 2d), no significant difference was found among groups, $F(4, 322) = 1.63$, $p > .05$, answering the research question in that all five platforms generated similar motivation of sport-related escape for users.

Research Question 3 explored the primary advantages of using Snapchat within a sporting environment. Based on the frequencies test, the most cited advantage respondents rendered consuming sport on Snapchat is that they believe such platform is a great place to socialize ($N = 58$, 46.4%). The second most prominent reason was that it was good source "for enjoying the moment of team activities captured by teams that I usually do not experience" ($N = 55$, 44%), followed by the creativity featured within the platform ($N = 52$, 41.6%). These three primary responses provide an answer to Research Question 3.

Research Question 4 explored whether degree of sports fandom might alter how respondents use Snapchat. Degree of self-reported sports fandom served as the continuous predictor and respondent behavioral intention of using Snapchat served as the continuous outcome. Skewness and kurtosis values of self-reported sports fandom and respondents' behavioral intention of using Snapchat were within the range of -2 and 2 , fulfilling the requirement of reasonably normal distribution. Therefore, linear regression analysis was employed, with results shown in Table 4.

As illuminated in Table 4, behavioral intention of using Snapchat was significantly impacted by self-reported sports fandom ($\beta = .45$, $p < .05$). The greater the sports fandom reported, the more likely a respondent would be to use Snapchat to follow sports, answering Research Question 4.

The final research question, Research Question 5, examined whether the degree of self-reported sports identification might alter how respondents use Snapchat. Degree of self-reported sports identification served as the continuous predictor and respondents' behavioral intention of using Snapchat served as the continuous outcome. Skewness and kurtosis values of self-reported sports identification and

Table 4. Linear Regression Results.

Predictors	Outcome	β	SE	Significance
Sports Fandom	Behavioral intention of using Snapchat	.45	.14	.002
Sports identification	Behavioral intention of using Snapchat	.33	.13	.015

respondents’ behavioral intention of using Snapchat were within the range of -2 and 2 , fulfilling the requirement of reasonably normal distribution. Linear regression analysis was applied, as outlined in Table 4. As shown within that table, the behavioral intention of using Snapchat was significantly impacted by self-reported sports identification ($\beta = .33, p < .05$). The greater the sports identification reported, the more likely a respondent would be to use Snapchat to follow sports, answering Research Question 5.

Discussion

The results of this study regarding the rapidly escalating use of the social media platform, Snapchat, reveal considerable insight into how it is currently being used within the landscape of sport fandom. Overall, it appears that Snapchat is popular enough among its dedicated constituency; this seemingly reveals a loyalty to the platform even while people find that Snapchat does not possess the overarching structures to ably facilitate sport fandom.

Within this sample of Snapchat users, the only platform exceeding Snapchat for total amount of time spent with sport-related content was Facebook, meaning that even when compared to the platform of Twitter, which has received much scholarly attention (Hambrick & Sanderson, 2013; Kassing & Sanderson, 2010; Sellitto, 2014), Snapchat users use the platform at a rate roughly equivalent to Twitter. Given that Twitter is a forum in which many athletes directly interact with fans (Browning & Sanderson, 2012), this is a noteworthy finding, as the primacy of the platform, particularly among younger social media users, seemingly trumps any lack of established structures that would aid the escalation of sport-related interactions.

Findings pertaining to motivations apparently continue the theme of Snapchat being a platform that can be powerful enough to overcome any perceived shortcomings. As evidenced in the quartet of motivations within Research Question 2, Snapchat did not compare favorably to other platforms in a number of ways; it was not as good for information seeking as both Facebook and Twitter, not as good for relaxation as Twitter, and not as good for overall interaction as Facebook. The sole favorable comparison was regarding interaction in relation to sport-related interactions on Pinterest. Such findings are collectively interesting, as it appears people use Snapchat to consume sport even when the platform is not as optimal as other options, likely because the majority of one’s social group makes the platform a preferred social medium of choice, with sport fandom simply being shoehorned into the overall dynamic.

Results pertaining to what Snapchat does well within the social media realm seem to echo why Snapchat has rapidly ascended (see Beese, 2013): It is perceived to be superior for socialization, creativity, and for experiencing a moment in a given point in time (as opposed to memorializing a moment in some sort of archival sense). Thus, the sense of urgency and focus of the temporary loss of the here and now (Morse, 1990) causes Snapchat to become an idealized place for timely discussions, as the platform inherently thwarts chronicled longevity of discussions over a longer period of time.

In a post hoc analysis of comments solicited regarding what Snapchat did not do well, the most-mentioned reason was that they did not know how to follow my favorite teams or athletes on Snapchat, followed generalized feelings that other types of social media are better for following sport and that the video or picture I share on Snapchat did not properly facilitate self-expression. Taken collectively, the aspects that respondents indicated they did not like about the Snapchat platform seemingly dovetailed with the newness of the application, as respondents did not believe sports teams utilized it to facilitate conversations specifically about their team. Because of these perceived inefficiencies, possibilities abound for entities within the sports industry, as people appear to be using the platform considerably as a mechanism for sports fandom and identification, despite potential easy remedies to make Snapchat a more optimal place for the exhibition of one's sport fandom. Awareness of options such as the previously mentioned "My Story" for facilitating sport fandom could bolster use of the application by a notable margin.

From a theoretical point of view, Severin and Tankard's (2000) delineation of five reasons for selection of a given media over another format still appear pertinent, yet are more primary in determining overarching abilities for a platform (in this case, Snapchat) to fulfill these five aims than for any specific advantages offered in a specified subrealm of media consumption (in this case, sports fandom). Put simply, if a social media platform is dubbed both worthy of inclusion within one's social media palate and primary within one's overarching social structure, it appears people are more likely to make primary structures work for them in other contexts than they are to widen their social media account usage. Thus, one may opt to use Facebook for picture sharing even if another option is better, just as they may opt for Twitter for news generation even if more sophisticated options exist and, certainly, opt for Snapchat for exhibition of sports fandom all while admitting that other platforms are better at achieving their motivations as sports fans. Future studies should explore how Snapchat is adapting to its growing role in the marketplace, as well as whether sport industry leaders are migrating content to this new, decidedly young social media offering.

Another theoretical contribution is offered in the notion that people used Snapchat as a second screen even when it appeared to be far from ESPN's conception of "OAS," even as a secondary function to either watching the game on television or in person. Subsequent scholarship should explore whether uses and gratifications-based decisions are demonstrably different when selecting a second screen, as opposed to the well-established trends people typically adopt when deciding upon a first screen for media consumption.

In terms of limitations, this study does employ two different methods of sampling, each lacking in some manner in terms of having a truly generalizable sample. The results of this study can be termed as being derived from a national sample, yet not a national generalizable sample; as such, future research should endeavor to secure more generalizability. Moreover, inferential statistics would have increased power if a larger sample is secured, so subsequent works should pursue more participants than are present in the current design.

Conclusion

This study surveyed sports fans who use Snapchat, seeking to determine whether the application is becoming a primary destination for the modern sports fan who is continually seeking new ways to adopt second-screen technologies. Results indicated that within this growing sector, Snapchat trails only Facebook in terms of overall use for sport media content. Moreover, Snapchat was found to be deficient in comparison to other counterparts concerning the achievement of desired motivations. Although the pessimist could claim this means, Snapchat will quickly be marginalized within a hypercompetitive marketplace, the optimist could also argue that Snapchat continues to secure a larger share of both the social media market and the more specified sport media landscape, meaning that segments of the sport industry are more likely to adopt Snapchat-friendly policies to attain fandom within the most attractive demographic for advertisers. Future research should endeavor to uncover how these trends unfold over the course of time, yet the preliminary findings from this study indicate that Snapchat has emerged as a primary player in the mediated reflection of sports fandom.

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