

Abstract

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to investigate how hotels practice corporate social responsibility (CSR) communication through social media, including which content type and media type receive the highest level of engagement. Two major aspects are considered, namely, CSR communication activity and stakeholder engagement.

Design/methodology/approach: The analysis is conducted for Forbes 4-Star to 5-Star hotels in Hong Kong. Facebook data is extracted from the property pages of the sample hotels by Netvizz, which is a Facebook data extraction application. The data analysis includes three steps, and combines qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Findings: The results indicate that the type of information has a significant influence on engagement and has even more of an affect than the message strategy. Although the number of CSR-related posts is significantly lower than marketing-oriented posts, they achieve a comparable level of popularity and engagement. Posts encouraging CSR practices show the highest level of engagement among CSR-related posts. In terms of media and content types, video achieves the highest engagement and posts related to discounts achieve the highest engagement.

Originality/ Value: This study fills the gap in the current literature by conducting a comparison between marketing and CSR communication strategies on social media. It also provides insights on how to draft more effective CSR messages.

Introduction

Social media is transforming many corporation communication strategies because of its interactive nature. The ability of social media to facilitate two-way communication can lead to stronger stakeholder engagement (Dutot et al, 2016; Zhang and Lin, 2015). Many corporations are now using social media platforms to strengthen their communications related to both products and expertise as a way to increase stakeholder engagement (Kim et al., 2014). Given the increasing importance of corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives in corporate communication strategies (Kumar, 2014; Levy and Park, 2011; Holcomb et al., 2011), this study focuses on communication and stakeholder engagement within CSR practices on social media.

The European Commission (2001) has defined CSR as a company's voluntary integration of social and environmental concerns within their business operations and stakeholder interactions. In particular, implementing CSR initiatives has the potential to generate both short- and long-term positive effects on a hotel's financial performance (Inoue et al., 2011). Njite et al. (2011) found that promoting social responsibility helps to improve a hotel's reputation and stakeholder perceptions. While corporations can simply claim that they have implemented CSR initiatives, it is important that companies communicate their efforts to the public so that these changes can be understood and accepted (Ihlen et al., 2011). However, as Ihlen et al. (2011) argued, consumers have become critical of corporate reports and they will sometimes demand access to detailed information about the effectiveness of CSR initiatives, which has led to CSR communication. Morsing (2006, p. 171) defines CSR communication as "communication that is designed and distributed by the company itself about its CSR efforts," and which can be achieved through a number of channels, such as sustainability reports, media, or the Internet.

Apart from building trust relationships, communication with stakeholders is crucial for companies because it helps them to obtain feedback about their existing CSR practices. A recent literature review of CSR in the hospitality industry has shown that the consumer's reactions to CSR communications are an under-researched topic (Serra-Cantallops et al., 2018). Because some stakeholders may be beneficiaries of CSR practices, it is important for corporations to communicate with stakeholders and assess whether or not their goals have been achieved. For example, if corporations focus only on the initial stages of CSR efforts but then fail to evaluate their programs' effectiveness at later stages, then this could be perceived as inauthentic reputation building and the corporation may risk losing stakeholders' trust.

Despite overall increases in corporate reporting and the ease of disseminating information on the Internet, most corporations have been slow to adapt their CSR efforts to the contemporary media landscape (De Grosbois, 2012). For example, although approximately 60% of Internet users in the Asia-Pacific region are active on social media (Chan and Guillet, 2011), upwards of 40% of hotel chains use only one channel to communicate their CSR efforts—most simply publish reports as their primary CSR communication strategy (De Grosbois, 2012). In particular, Facebook is mostly used for marketing and communication purposes (Chan and Guillet, 2011).

Previous research has paid little attention to CSR communication via social media in the hospitality industry. For example, Leung et al.'s (2013) literature review of social media in the tourism and hospitality industry has revealed the lack of papers focused on CSR practices in social media. Mackenzie and Peters (2014) and Tsai et al. (2012) analyzed the CSR initiatives that were conducted by hotels in Hong Kong. However, these studies share two limitations. First, they examine CSR communication practices from a traditional CSR reporting approach. Little research has been conducted on how hotels communicate their CSR initiatives through social media and whether these new platforms may yield higher levels of stakeholder engagement. Second, these studies focus on the CSR communication practices of non-Asian consumers.

While many academics emphasize the importance of dialogic CSR communication with stakeholders, which strategy is effective for stakeholder involvement in the hospitality industry remains unclear. With a view to the understanding the significance of marketing in a hotel's Facebook usage, the engagement of marketing-oriented content of a page needs to be measured in this study to reflect the whole picture of a company's communication. The study seeks to extend stakeholder and communications theories in three ways. First, by evaluating current practices of how luxury hotels in Hong Kong engage with stakeholders on social media. Second, by analyzing the levels of engagement from both marketing-oriented content and CSR-related content. Third, by focusing on the effectiveness of messages in CSR communication on social media by investigating the public's reactions to a company's posts.

The research objectives of this study are as follows:

1. To identify the type of content and type of media that hotels post most frequently;
2. To examine how stakeholders engage with a hotel's Facebook pages in terms of the numbers of likes, comments, and shares;

3. To explore the factors that influence the level of engagement that hotel Facebook posts achieve;
4. To provide insights into how to draft more effective CSR communication messages on Facebook.

To focus on luxury hotels, only 4- and 5-star hotels are included in the sample. Limiting the scope to luxury hotels is productive for a number of reasons. First, Levy and Park (2011) studied the CSR activities of hotels in the United States and found that 25% of respondents were luxury hotels. Moreover, mid- and upscale hotels are more than 50% of the sample. This could imply that luxury hotels are more concerned with CSR practices than their counterparts. Second, Mohajerani and Miremadi (2013) found that guests staying in luxury hotels show greater concern for CSR practices and that there is a positive relationship between the guests' satisfaction toward the hotel and their perception of its CSR practices. Lastly, customers with higher environmental awareness are more willing to pay higher prices for green practices in hotels and many of the environmental CSR practices reported in the hotel industry are carried out by luxury or mid-scale hotels (Han et al., 2011).

Literature Review

CSR and Stakeholders

Many stakeholders are involved in the development and implementation of CSR initiatives. Stakeholder theory (e.g., Freeman, 1984, Mitchell et al., 1997) suggests that an organization must focus on the interests of not just shareholders but also anyone who has a stake in the organization. The groups of stakeholders can include customers, suppliers, investors, directors, employees, governments and others. Stakeholder theory emphasizes stakeholders involvement in CSR communication (Crane and Glozer, 2016) because the stakeholder dimension is of great importance in the field of CSR (Dahlsrud, 2008). Furthermore, stakeholder involvement is essential to ensuring the smooth implementation and credibility of an initiative (Crane et al., 2008). Therefore, this study applies the lens of stakeholder theory to analyze the stakeholder engagement in CSR communication.

Channels for communicating CSR initiatives include documentation in annual corporate reports or statistics reported on a hotel's corporate website. These are often considered passive forms of corporate communication (Ihlen et al., 2011). The majority of data used in studies on CSR communication are collected from corporate websites, and from annual

CSR and sustainability reports. For example, Holcomb et al. (2007), and De Grosbois (2012) collected data for their studies from corporate reports and websites. Meanwhile, Wong et al. (2015) analyzed the effectiveness of Asian hotels in communicating CSR efforts and found that communication through corporate websites could be significantly improved. Recent studies have also emphasized the importance of online CSR communication, such as via online reviews and hotels' responses (Ettinger et al., 2018).

While most corporations are actively implementing and communicating CSR practices, stakeholders may suspect that these initiatives are deliberate attempts to improve their image. Stakeholders regard CSR initiatives as credible and trustworthy when their needs are addressed and their opinions are valued (Ingenhoff and Sommer, 2011). Pavitt (2012) found that stakeholders are becoming more critical of corporate communications and are demanding a higher degree of transparency regarding CSR progress. Ihlen et al. (2011) argued that traditional corporate communication strategies, such as publishing annual reports, and distributing CSR brochures, reflect the type of information and stakeholder response strategies that Morsing and Schultz (2006) propose. These strategies are sender-oriented: stakeholder involvement is much lower than other approaches that more explicitly take stakeholder opinions and values into account. As Morsing and Schultz (2006) suggest, this imbalance could be mitigated by transforming the more common one-way communication modes to two-way dialogues with stakeholders.

While the hospitality industry has begun adopting CSR communication (De Grosbois, 2012), many hotels continue to push one-way or unidirectional CSR messaging via social media (Zizka, 2017). Engaging in two-way dialogue allows corporations to understand their stakeholders' needs and expectations, and to better integrate their concerns into CSR practices. Social media may shed light on how best to facilitate interaction between hotels and their stakeholders around CSR initiatives.

The content of CSR communication and specifically the focus of CSR activities affect stakeholder involvement. Stakeholder reactions can depend on the topics of the CSR messages (Saxton et al., 2017, Abitbol and Lee, 2017). For example, social movement posts generate higher public engagement. De Grosbois (2012) developed a framework for CSR activities based on the Global Reporting Initiative, the United Nations Environmental Programme, and the World Tourism Organization. This framework incorporates five themes:

- *Social and community action.* Providing assistance for local communities, raising awareness, and involving employees in CSR activities.

- *Environmental action.* Contributing to environmental sustainability by minimizing a company's carbon footprint, using energy efficiently, and adopting green building design and construction.
- *Employment action.* Fostering a healthy and safe workplace for employees, and ensuring fair and equitable benefits for each employee.
- *Diversity and disability-accessibility action.* Increasing diversity among customers and the workforce, and creating spaces that are accessible to a wide range of physical abilities.
- *Economic action.* Contributing to the local economy, and cooperating with industry or other institutions; for example, organizing booths for career days or implementing a management trainee program to nurture future talent.

Stakeholder Communication Strategies

Communication can be said to be the central issue of stakeholder engagement in CSR (Devin and Lane, 2014). Basic communication theory is multidisciplinary and it studies the process of creating and interpreting messages. Currently, the information processing model of communication theory is the dominant theory in the CSR literature (Crane and Glozer, 2016). In particular, CSR communication theory focuses on CSR messages and consumers reactions to those messages. In addition to stakeholder theory, to analyze the stakeholder engagement in CSR communication, this research also utilizes CSR communication theory to investigate the effectiveness of CSR messages.

There are three major strategies for stakeholder communication: stakeholder information strategy, stakeholder response strategy, and stakeholder involvement strategy. The stakeholder involvement strategy is most closely aligned with CSR communication on social media (Morsing and Schultz, 2006). Stakeholder participation is also highest when this strategy is adopted. Recent studies have also distinguished integration strategy, which implies the participation of the stakeholders not only in the CSR practices but also in initiatives and decision-making (Lane and Devin, 2017).

Stakeholder involvement encourages two-way symmetric communication. Grunig and Grunig (1992) define a two-way symmetrical communication model as allowing mutual understanding between an organization and its public. While compromise is inevitable in this type of communication, it is nevertheless beneficial to both parties (cf. Etter, 2014). Corporations that adopt this strategy actively invite stakeholders to discussions and dialogues

to better understand their concerns and they negotiate with the public when drafting CSR practices. This strategy aims to build harmonious relationships with stakeholders (Morsing and Schultz, 2006). Dialogic SCR communication encourages organizational CSR goals to be achieved by comparing them to the stakeholder's responsiveness approach (Lim and Greenwood, 2017). The interactive nature of social media can lower the barriers between corporations and the public, and it makes such two-way symmetrical communication possible.

Stakeholder engagement on social media can be assessed according to a set of metrics. For example, Bonsón and Ratkai (2013) developed metrics to assess interactivity, dialogic communication, and stakeholder engagement in terms of popularity, commitment, and virality. Popularity is measured in terms of numbers of likes, commitment is measured in terms of the number of comments, and virality is measured in terms of number of shares, as summarized in Table 1. As corroborated by a number of other studies, Bonsón and Ratkai's (2013) metrics are applicable to assess a wide range of communication strategies on Facebook. For example, Bonsón et al. (2015) applied the same metrics to analyze Spanish hotel chains' use of Facebook from the perspective of stakeholder engagement. Consequently, the present study adopts these metrics.

Please place Table 1 here

Social Media and CSR Communication

Social media can be an effective tool for corporations who wish to understand their customers' needs and expectations when drafting CSR initiatives. Social media are Web 2.0 platforms that enable Internet users from across the world to interact, communicate, and share ideas, content, thoughts, experiences, perspectives, information, and relationships (Chan and Guillet, 2011). Distaso and McCorkindale (2013) identified user participation and engagement as the crucial distinctions between traditional media and social media. Traditional media, such as magazines and company reports, only allow for a one-way transmission of information and the response channels are limited (Kasavana, 2008).

Social media are also characterized by their potential for real-time interactions. When used for corporate communication, social media helps companies to better engage with their customers through real-time interactions, which facilitate a sense of proximity and connection between companies and their customers. This could likewise be applied to a cause emphasizing social responsibility (Curley and Noormohamed, 2014). Vadivu and Neelamalar (2015)

describe the following four ways that stakeholders can interact with Facebook brand pages: posts, likes, comments, and shares. Posts occur when users place content or opinions directly on their page. Likes refer to users clicking the *Like* button on a post. Comments allow users to post content or opinions related to the post in the *Comments* section. Lastly, shares describe the users' ability to link the post on their own profile timeline.

The type of media that companies post on social media should complement the message to most effectively communicate content. A proper combination of visual and text content can lead to effective user engagement (Brubaker and Wilson, 2018). Daft and Lengel (1986) developed media richness theory, which argues that different types of media (i.e., photograph, video, etc.) can enhance the richness of content. This makes content more appealing to audiences, which leads to more effective communication. Therefore, it is important to analyze CSR and marketing communications together with the use of multimedia and Facebook features. For example, Facebook users may be more attracted to straightforward posts containing photographs, as opposed to those that require clicking on a link or taking time to watch a video (Kwok and Yu, 2013). Therefore, straightforward media messages may be more suitable for posts that aim to capture customer attention.

Although the content of a Facebook brand page can be edited by both the page's owners and by its users (Rieder, 2013), the Facebook pages of the hotels that were included in this study's sample do not allow the stakeholders to edit the content on the page content. As such, only Bonsón and Ratkai's (2013) metrics are considered.

Methodology

Our methodology includes three steps, and it combines qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Sample and Data Collection

The Forbes Star Award system is used for hotel classification in this study because it is internationally recognized. We classify hotels with 4- or 5-Star Forbes ratings as luxury hotels. A total of 13 hotels in Hong Kong meet this criterion, which are:

- Four Seasons Hotel Hong Kong,
- InterContinental Hong Kong,
- Island Shangri-La, Hong Kong,
- Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong,
- The Landmark Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong,

- The Langham, Hong Kong,
- The Peninsula Hong Kong,
- The Ritz-Carlton, Hong Kong,
- Conrad Hong Kong,
- Grand Hyatt Hong Kong,
- Hotel Icon,
- Kowloon Shangri-La, Hong Kong,
- The Upper House.

This study limits its social media platform analysis to Facebook and it does not include Twitter because the hotels that were included in the sample have a significantly lower reach on their Twitter pages than on their Facebook pages. Netvizz is a Facebook application developed by the Digital Methods Initiative and is adopted in this study to extract Facebook data. Netvizz was initially developed for research purposes. It mines Facebook pages for data and meta-data for posts, including the post's author, the time of the post's publication, the format of media presentation (photograph or video), and engagement metrics—as understood in terms of numbers of likes, comments, and shares. Because none of the hotels included in the sample allow external Facebook users to post on their timelines, only posts made by the page's owners will be used for analysis.

To obtain sufficient data for analysis, a one-year period is selected for our study. Netvizz was used to mine all of the posts and comments published on each hotel Facebook page between January 1 and December 31, 2016.

Data Coding

A content analysis was carried out after the data were extracted from the Facebook pages. As mentioned in the literature review, there are two predominant types of content in this study: CSR-related posts and marketing-oriented posts. Kim et al. (2015) three types of content orientations are adopted for both types of content, resulting in a total of six content orientations—three for each content type. Table 2 provides a summary of the six content types that have been adopted in this study.

An attachment in a post is automatically classified by Netvizz during the data extraction process. Media classification includes not only one-way media, such as photographs or videos, but also the interactive features of Facebook pages. For instance, one of the functions that a page's owners could create is an *Event*, which allows customers to express interest or indicate their intention to participate in the event. Another example of a function is an *Offer*, which usually consists of discounts on products for a specified period. Customers can claim an offer

or indicate their participation in a campaign through the Facebook page. Events and offers are distinct from other media types, such as a photograph or a shared link, because they encourage two-way interaction between a hotel and its customers on the hotel's Facebook page.

Data Analysis Design

The data analysis includes three steps. The first step provides descriptive statistics for all of the posts included in our sample. Popularity, commitment, virality, and engagement levels for all posts are examined based on the Facebook stakeholder engagement metrics (Bonsón and Ratkai, 2013). After categorizing posts by content and media type, the numbers of each type of post are analyzed. The second step adopts a qualitative approach to more deeply examine the content of both CSR- and marketing-oriented posts. The final step applies a quantitative approach to scrutinize levels of engagement. It then provides an analysis of the likes, shares, and comments for all media and content types.

Please place Table 2 here

Results and Discussion

In this section, the results for each step of the data analysis are presented. First, the numbers of posts, fans, and levels of engagement are analyzed based on their descriptive statistics. Second, CSR-related and marketing-oriented posts are content analyzed. Third, the relationship between media type, content type, and level of engagement is analyzed using a quantitative approach.

Descriptive Statistics

All of the sample hotels were active on Facebook. The descriptive statistics for activity on each hotel's Facebook page are summarized in Table 3. Netvizz extracted 4,498 posts from the 13 official hotel pages. Despite the fact that all of the hotels that we included in our sample were rated as either 4- or 5-Stars by Forbes Star Travel Guide (Forbes, 2015), the number of fans varied across the sample. The difference between the minimum and maximum thresholds is close to tenfold. The number of posts that hotels uploaded during the period under study was also uneven. Some hotels posted multiple times per day throughout the specified period, while others only posted once every few days. In contrast, engagement levels do not vary significantly, with the exception of one extreme value at 8.74.

Please place Table 3 here

All of the posts collected were liked, while 72.8% (V1) of posts were shared and only 52.3% (C1) of the posts received comments. There are dramatic differences between the average number of posts liked (P2) and the average number of posts shared and commented on (V2 and C2, respectively). Each post received 102 likes on average, while the average number of comments and shares is only around six. Finally, popularity is expressed in relative terms based on the number of fans that a hotel Facebook page has: popularity equals 3.2 (P3), commitment is 0.28 (C3), and virality is 0.57. These results clearly indicate that the highest level of customer participation in Facebook is achieved through popularity measures, while commitment represents the lowest level of participation.

Media type and content type. Generally, on Hong Kong hotels' Facebook pages, the most frequently used media type is photographs. Around 83% of the posts attached a photograph. Table 4 summarizes the content analysis and media type of all posts that were included in the sample. The difference between the inclusion of photographs relative to other media types is larger than those reported by Bonsón et al. (2015), and by Kim et al. (2015). Moreover, the rate at which links were included was even higher than videos. Qualitative analysis shows that links were used most often when the hotels included restaurant reviews by a renowned magazine or when they were introducing new features. This suggests that hotels use their Facebook page for information-sharing. The results also indicate that the use of interactive features, such as events and offers, remains low. Paris et al. (2010) found that the users' responses to Facebook event invitations can influence their actual intention to participate in the event. This may imply that hotels are not fully exploiting the potential of customer engagement through Facebook's interactive features.

Please place Table 4 here

Most of the communication between hotels and their customers on Facebook is marketing-oriented. Together, task-oriented posts (MKT1) and interaction-oriented posts (MKT2) account for over 80% of all posts, while the three content orientation types for CSR-related posts accounted for less than 5%. Social-related CSR activities are usually one-off events, as reflected in their minimal recurrence. Because the presence of CSR-related posts is minimal, CSR activities are classified into only three categories to ensure statistical significance: social-related, environmental-related, and those that encourage CSR behavior.

Photographs are the most commonly used media type across all six types of CSR-related content (nearly 90%), while other media types appear only minimally. Moreover, the interactive event feature is rarely used.

These results have two major implications. First, hotels may not be motivated to produce video or use multimedia to record CSR activities if they do not believe that they will see significant returns from CSR communication on social media. Levy and Park (2011) found that hoteliers perceive cost savings as the most important benefit of implementing CSR activities. Because video production is more costly and complicated than other types of media, hotels may reduce their use of video to communicate CSR, with the exception of those messages that require more context. Second, most activities, especially those encouraging CSR behavior, are one-off events. However, hotels seldom use the interactive events feature to engage customers in their campaigns to encourage socially and environmentally responsible behaviors. This might indicate that hotels have not taken full advantage of Facebook's interactive functions.

The number of posts related to social causes is much higher than those related to environmental protection or encouraging CSR. This result diverges from previous studies' findings that CSR activities in the hotel industry mostly focus on environmental protection (Levy and Park, 2011; Kumar, 2014, Ettinger et al., 2018). The lower frequency of environmental-related posts does not necessarily imply that hotels spend less effort on environmental protections. There are two possible explanations for this lower frequency. First, most hotels in Hong Kong demonstrate environmental commitments by implementing environmental management systems. These internal practices are usually invisible to the public and the context is highly complicated, which makes these efforts difficult to communicate through social media (Du and Vieira Jr, 2012). Second, activities related to social causes are usually one-off events, which means that the context is less complicated and, therefore, more comprehensible to customers. If the customers find it easier to understand the content of posts at first glance, then they are more likely to read the posts and this increases the likelihood that it will leave a good impression on the customers' brand perceptions (Choi et al., 2016). This leads hotels to communicate straightforward social-related activities more often than complex environmental efforts.

The use of media on marketing-oriented posts is more scattered than for CSR-related posts. Photographs are the most commonly used media in marketing-oriented posts. However, differences exist between the use of video and links across marketing-oriented posts. The more

common use of links may be related to the nature of task-oriented content, which aims to introduce users to new hotel products or promotional campaigns. The longer it takes a customer to understand the content of a post, the less likely it is that he or she will look into the content (Su et al., 2015). Because the time for comprehending a passage could be shorter than watching a video, hotels would prefer to use links to ensure that posts gain maximum reach. The use of offers is also highest in task-oriented posts, as the majority of these relate to discounts and promotions. At the same time, for interaction-oriented (MKT2) and self-oriented posts (MKT3), the frequencies for videos and links are similar. Because self-oriented posts promote the hotel's information or the employees' stories, they tend to be content rich. Therefore, the use of information-based media, such as video and links, aligns with this purpose. The purpose of interaction-oriented posts is to engage customers by encouraging them to like the page, leave comments, or share. Straightforward posts with photographs and links account for the majority of the posts. These results indicate that hotels in Hong Kong follow implicit rules that align a post's media type with its purpose.

Content Analysis

The second step of the data analysis investigates the content of CSR-related and marketing-oriented posts. The most common activities and examples of these are specified in the following subsections.

CSR-related posts. Regarding CSR activities for social causes (CSR1), many hotels posted photographs of their employees participating in fund-raising activities or organizing campaigns, often in cooperation with local charity organizations. Concerning activities for environmental causes, most upscale hotels reported environmentally friendly activities by participating in food donation programs or fund-raising activities. However, while hotels do commonly encourage socially and environmentally friendly behavior (CSR3), most activities are directly related to the consumption of hotel products or services. No posts encouraging followers to suggest initiatives on CSR activities for the hotel were found.

Customers may perceive messages that promote environmentally friendly behavior as a marketing tactic to increase a restaurant's sales or bookings rather than showing genuine care for society and the environment. The legitimacy of CSR communication may thus be lowered. An example would be a hotel that encourages the public to behave in an environmentally friendly way by dining at their restaurant and then donating the proceeds to a local charity. Colleoni (2013) found that CSR communication on social media is still conceived as marketing practice, even though many hotels try to engage customers in a dialogue instead of a one-way

disclosure of information. Therefore, customers may conceive CSR communication as another marketing practice.

The absence of posts encouraging the stakeholders' integration in CSR practices at the hotels makes the stakeholders question their involvement in decision-making in CSR-related issues. Consequently, many hotels prefer an involvement strategy to an integration strategy. Although many scholars have recognized that incorporating the stakeholders into the decision-making process is a significant contribution to stakeholder engagement and sustainable decision-making process (Lane and Devin, 2017), this communication may be difficult for hotels. For example, the content of their posts can fail to include a response to the stakeholders' concerns and, therefore, fail to meet the stakeholders' expectations. Furthermore, the stakeholders may interpret this absence of content about the CSR communication itself as unclear and this will make them doubt the legitimacy of the process of engagement (Devin and Lane, 2014). This topic requires additional research.

Marketing-oriented posts. Task-oriented posts (MKT1) include those that aim to introduce a product or launch a campaign to increase a hotel's popularity. These accounted for nearly 40% of the total posts. This result is consistent with previous research findings, which suggest that Facebook is most often used for marketing purposes (Chan and Guillet, 2011). However, one would not expect to find that the proportion of interaction-oriented posts (MKT2) is equal to or even slightly higher than the proportion of task-oriented posts, as was the case with the present sample. This finding may indicate that Hong Kong's luxury hotels have started to recognize the value of interactive communication in building long-term customer relationships instead of merely marketing on Facebook (Zhang and Lin, 2015). The majority of self-oriented posts (MKT3) on hotel pages are photographs or videos of its employees, management, or staff, followed by information about a campaign that the company is sponsoring. This accounts for the smallest proportion of marketing-oriented posts, which may be due to the recognition that customers are not interested in posts that do not provide product information or news (Heller Baird and Parasnis, 2011).

Quantitative Analysis

For hotels to achieve higher levels of engagement, it is essential that they understand how different media and content types affect engagement levels in terms of likes, comments, and shares. Engagement levels could be affected by numerous factors aside from media and content type. Scholars have investigated customer personality traits (Kabadayi and Price,

2014), the utility of Facebook functions (Tsai and Men, 2013), activity levels, the size of a page's audience (fans), and the number of rooms in the hotel (Bonsón et al., 2015). To increase the credibility of this study, the relationship between audience size and engagement level is assessed. The results indicate that there is no significant relationship between the two variables. The number of rooms is not considered as a variable, because the number of rooms across the 13 hotels does not vary widely.

Engagement and media type. Customer reactions to posts change substantially depending on media type, which, in turn, affects the average level of engagement. There is a drastic difference between the number of likes and the number of comments or shares received across each post. Table 5 summarizes the main descriptive statistics of these relationships. In general, photograph- and video-posts receive the highest number of likes, comments, and shares. Posts with photographs receive the highest number of likes. However, videos receive the most comments and shares among the six media types, and thus generate the highest level of engagement (94.84+10.52+16.44). This is followed by photographs (104.83+5.46+5.72). Among the three media types that generate the lowest engagement on average (i.e., offers, event, and status updates), status updates generate a relatively higher level of engagement (22+3.75+5.25), despite the fact that they provide the least amount of information about the hotel itself. There are no records of event shares for the 4,498 posts analyzed. Events generate the lowest level of engagement (25.18+.0.36). The low engagement level of events and offers might indicate that both the hotels and their customers are not fully aware of the interactive function offered on Facebook. Furthermore, the results show that despite video's high engagement levels, it only accounts for around 7% of total posts, whereas photographs accounted for 82.8% and links account for 9.8%. This result is different from the recent general trend of refocusing of brand content strategy and posting more videos than images (Brubaker and Wilson, 2018). This indicates that throughout the one-year period, these hotels did not take the best advantage of the media type that generated the highest levels of engagement.

Please place Table 5 here

To assess whether the differences can be considered significant, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov z-test was conducted to assess the normality of the distribution. No variables were distributed normally ($p < 0.05$) and, therefore, a non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis H-test was applied (Table 5). The results show significant relationships between media type and stakeholders' reactions. Hence, 4- to 5-Star hotels in Hong Kong obtain higher engagement by

posting videos and photographs. This corroborates the findings of Brubaker and Wilson (2018), who found that visual content has a significant impact on stakeholder engagement in social media. However, this result differs from those obtained by Bonsón et al. (2015) and Kim et al. (2015), both of whom found that photographs achieve the highest engagement levels.

Engagement and content type. Table 6 summarizes the relationship between content type and the average levels of engagement. The results show that marketing-oriented posts generated higher engagement levels. The level of popularity achieved by various types of content does not vary significantly. The only exception are posts related to environmental CSR, which achieved the lowest engagement levels. As Table 4 shows, marketing-oriented posts (MK1, MK2, and MK3 together) constitute over 80% of total posts and they generate the highest levels of engagement. To contrast these relationships, the Kruskal-Wallis *H*-test was again applied (Table 6). The results show significant relationships between content type and stakeholder reaction. This may indicate that task-oriented posts generate the highest levels of engagement.

Please place Table 6 here

Despite the low presence of posts encouraging CSR behavior (CSR3 = 0.5%, Table 4), this content type achieved the highest level of engagement among the three CSR-related posts (96.79+1.67+6.42) and a level of popularity similar to its marketing-oriented counterparts. This indicates the importance of this type of content for the stakeholders. Although Colleoni (2013) found that CSR communication on social media tends to be perceived as a marketing practice, this is not demonstrated in lower engagement levels for this type of content. The higher level of engagement for posts encouraging CSR behavior corresponds with findings that public engagement is effective when the topics are congruent with a company's business or products (Abitbol and Lee, 2017). Customers imagine that they are contributing to society while consuming hotel services and products (Schmeltz, 2012). The engagement levels for posts related to social causes (CSR1) are significantly higher than those related to environmental protection. There are two possible reasons for this phenomenon. First, as seen in Table 4, environment-related posts (CSR2) account for only 1% of the total posts, which may reflect that it is difficult for hotels to communicate internal environmental practices. This, in turn, may result in less engagement. Second, as Schmeltz (2012) reported, customers generally favor CSR practices that are related to a company's own employees or to social aspects. Abitbol and Lee (2017) also find that employee- and workplace-related content has

the most significant attention from the followers. This is evident in the higher engagement levels for social-related posts, as shown in Table 6. This result differs Saxton et al. (2017), who found that the highest level of public resonance is generated by posts about the environment.

Task-oriented marketing posts (MKT1) achieved the highest level of engagement. This indicates that one of the major reasons that customers interact with companies on Facebook is to take advantage of available discounts. This finding is similar to those of Heller Baird and Parasnis (2011), who found that around 60% of customers and companies agree that discounts are the main reason why they interact with social media. At the same time, interaction-oriented posts (MKT2) achieved similar rates to self-oriented posts (MKT3). Because the primary purpose of interaction-oriented posts is to encourage customer engagement, these could also be a good way to connect with customers and build an online community; as such, one would expect engagement levels to be higher. As seen in Table 4, interaction-oriented posts (MKT2) accounted for 42.5% of total posts, which is the highest among all six content types. This may reflect that the main reason why hotels in Hong Kong post on Facebook is to connect with their customers and build an online community. However, the fact that task-oriented posts (MKT1) had the highest engagement levels indicates that customers interact on social media to obtain a discount or new product information, not to feel connected or be part of a community. Consequently, there may be a perception gap between Hong Kong hotels and their customers regarding the use of Facebook.

Conclusions and Implications

This study provides several insights into how upscale Hong Kong hotels use Facebook in their communication strategies and how more effective CSR messages could be drafted for stakeholder engagement. Our investigation included an analysis of the frequencies of hotels' post with different media and content types, a content analysis, and a quantitative analysis of the levels of engagement for different media and content types, for both marketing-oriented and CSR-oriented posts. This study contributes to the existing CSR communication theories with the exploration of factors that increase the effectiveness of messages in terms of public reactions in social media. In particular, the types of content and types of media are examined. Moreover, this study contributes to the stakeholder theory with the identification of the effective strategic approaches to stakeholder engagement on social media based on the examination of current hotels' strategies and their effectiveness.

Our results show that these hotels adopt an involvement strategy for stakeholder communication in social media. Although this strategy encourages two-way communication, an integration strategy may be more beneficial for stakeholder engagement in more dynamic relationships (Lane and Devin, 2017). It is, therefore, recommended that these hotels consider collaborating with their stakeholders in the determination of key CSR issues to meet stakeholders' expectations.

Most of the communications between the hotels and their customers is marketing-oriented. CSR-related communication is minimal and accounts for only 5% of the total posts. This is also reflected on the hotel's websites (Wong et al., 2015). However, the popularity of CSR posts that were social-related is not significantly lower than marketing-oriented counterparts. The popularity of posts encouraging CSR behavior is also comparable with marketing-oriented posts. This may imply that these 4- to 5-Star hotels in Hong Kong have underestimated the significance of communicating CSR practices on social media from a stakeholder perspective. Consequently, it is recommended that hotels' communication managers consider incorporating more CSR-related content in the future.

This study also contributes to the understanding of CSR communication theories by comparing CSR-related posts to marketing-oriented content. Hotels' effectiveness in stakeholder engagement via Facebook pages is examined in terms of numbers of likes, comments, and shares. Generally, popularity (measured by numbers of likes) was a much more common form of user engagement than commitment (measured by numbers of comments) and virality (measured by numbers of shares). Although the CSR literature notes the skepticism of CSR communication on social media because it could be considered to be a marketing practice (Colleoni, 2013), our results fail to show evidence of this. Despite the significantly lower number of CSR-related posts, their level of engagement is comparable to the marketing-oriented posts.

Engagement level is found to be affected by the type of information communicated rather than message strategy. For CSR-related posts, content related to a company's business or products has the highest level of engagement, followed by social-related content. Social-related posts account for the highest proportion of CSR posts. However, posts that encourage CSR behavior have also achieved a high level of popularity, despite their low prevalence. For marketing-oriented posts, interaction-oriented posts account for the highest proportion but they did not achieve engagement levels that were as high as might be expected. The highest level of engagement is achieved by posts about discounts. Self-oriented marketing posts also reach

high levels of participation in terms of commitment and virality, especially when compared to its relatively low prevalence among all content types. This also supports the notion that the information conveyed exerts a greater influence on engagement levels than message strategy.

In terms of media type, our findings demonstrate the importance of visual content and videos especially. Hotels use photographs most often to communicate on Facebook. Despite the fact that videos require more time to consume and demand a higher cognitive effort from stakeholders, posts with videos had the highest engagement levels. Considering the common shift in content strategy from photographs to video (Brubaker and Wilson, 2018), it is recommended that these hotels consider attaching more videos to their CSR posts to increase the effectiveness of their stakeholder engagement.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Because upscale and luxury hotels tend to be more invested in social media marketing and active on Facebook than lower or mid-scale hotels, only 4- to 5-Star hotels were selected. Moreover, upscale and luxury hotels are more likely to expend resources when implementing CSR initiatives. Further research could be conducted to examine differences in communication strategies between upscale and mid-scale hotels. Second, only data extracted from a hotel property's Facebook page was analyzed and not the chain itself. For example, there may be CSR initiatives that are communicated on corporate pages, which we did not capture in our sample. Research could be conducted to compare CSR communication on specific hotel property pages and corporate pages. Third, because the aim of this study is to investigate how hotels communicate CSR in terms of media and content type, the sample excluded comments on posts because they did not contribute significantly to the findings. Consequently, research could be conducted to examine the mood and content of comments and hotel responsiveness. Finally, Facebook has recently launched a few more emoticons for customers to express their opinions beyond mere likes. It would be interesting to explore the effect of these emoticons on CSR communication in the future because this type of communication is controversial. Furthermore, future research may explore the possibility of strengthening communication through video to increase engagement. Because the primary purpose of customers interacting with companies on Facebook is to obtain information and discounts, media that is information-rich could encourage more engagement from the stakeholders. As mentioned, some CSR initiatives' context may be high; multimedia could improve communication according to media

richness theory (Daft and Lengel, 1986) because videos could help explain the rationale and process behind CSR initiatives, thus increasing the effectiveness of CSR communication.

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Table 1 Metrics for stakeholder engagement on Facebook by Bonson and Ratkai (2013)

<i>Popularity</i>	
P1 Number of posts liked/total posts	Percentage of posts that have been liked
P2 Total likes/total number of posts	Average number of likes per post
P3 (P2/number of fans)×1,000	Average number of likes per post per 1,000 fans
<i>Commitment</i>	
C1 Number of posts commented on/total posts	Percentage of posts that have been commented on
C2 Total comments/total number of posts	Average number of comments per post
C3 (C2/number of fans)×1,000	Average number of comments per post per 1,000 fans
<i>Virality</i>	
V1 Number of posts shared/total posts	Percentage of posts that have been shared
V2 Total shares/total number of posts	Average number of shares per post
V3 (V2/number of fans)×1,000	Average number of shares per post per 1,000 fans
<i>Engagement</i>	
E = P3+C3+V3	Stakeholder engagement index

Table 2 Summary of six content types for content analysis

Sign	Measures	Example
CSR1	Social causes / community care Keywords: community, care, fundraising	<i>“Are you strolling along the harbour promenade in Tsim Sha Tsui? Cheer on our colleagues who are now jogging to raise funds for Children’s Heart Foundation.”</i>
CSR2	Environmental protection / sustainable environment Keywords: green, sustainable, clean	<i>“We are working together for a cleaner #HongKong... #MOpeople volunteered to go #beachcleaning at #CheungChau #beach. ... spread awareness and encourage everyone to help make Hong Kong a cleaner home for all of us. Remember to always recycle!#FANofHK #cleanhongkong #CSR #FANofMO #besthotelhk #volunteerwork”</i>
CSR3	Encouraging public participation and raise awareness on social and environmental causes	<i>“Celebrate Good France #French #gastronomy with diners and chefs across the globe for a healthy high-quality and environmentally responsible cuisine using less fat, sugar and salt at Amber at The Landmark Mandarin Oriental...5% of proceeds will be donated to Feeding Hong Kong in support of its mission to fight hunger in #HongKong. #Michelin #Amberhk #LandmarkMandarinOriental #MOfoodies #FeedingHK”</i>
MKT1 ^a	Advertising a certain brand or product with persuasive messages A new product or service announcement Online coupons, discounts, contests and sweepstakes	<i>“Chef Richard Ekkebus has crafted a delectable duo of dining temptations for Valentine’s Day at Amber at The Landmark Mandarin Oriental_ Hong Kong. #Michelin #Amberhk #LandmarkMandarinOriental #ValentinesDay”</i>
MKT2 ^a	A picture, image, or video not directly related to the brand A personal statement, proverb, or maxim celebrating a special day, event or person Asking the user to like, comment or share the post Asking the user to answer a question, vote, fill in the blank, or visit a link A picture(s) or video of its consumers, fans, brand users, or event participants	<i>“Share your FANtastic travel moment with us for a chance to win a trip from New York to Hong Kong and back aboard #CathayPacific Airways_ and more! 1. HEAD ON OVER TO INSTAGRAM 2. FOLLOW @CATHAYPACIFIC_ @MO_HKG_ @MO_NEWYORK 3. GRAM YOUR FAVORITE TRAVEL MOMENT FROM 2015 (SO FAR) 4. #MOxCATHAY 5. YOU ENTERED TO WIN YOUR NEXT GREAT TRAVEL ADVENTURE FROM NEW YORK CITY TO HONG KONG ? Terms and Conditions apply. ”</i>
MKT3 ^a	News, information or story about the company or its products An event, program or campaign sponsored by the company A picture(s) or video of its employees, management, or staff	<i>Welcome Chris & Team! Our team is thrilled to have attended the All Team Member Meeting_ led by Hilton Worldwide’s President & CEO Chris Nassetta_ LIVE in the hotel</i>

Notes: ^a Three types of content orientation developed by Kim et al. (2015).

Table 3 Descriptive statistics

	Min	Max	Average	SD
Fans	9536.00	94874.00	31937.0000	22950.82485
Number of posts	151.00	870.00	346.2308	183.81701
P1*	1.00	1.00	1.0000	.00000
P2*	25.74	394.88	101.9517	95.30332
P3*	1.82	5.83	3.2092	1.20957
C1*	.25	.76	.5253	.14434
C2*	.74	18.55	5.7851	5.45799
C3*	.05	1.95	.2781	.51215
V1*	.53	.95	.7280	.13280
V2*	1.42	20.70	6.3329	5.08923
V3 *	.08	4.46	.5691	1.19148
Engagement Level*	2.51	8.74	4.0564	1.82390

Note: * Metrics for stakeholder engagement on Facebook by Bonson and Ratkai (2013)

Table 4 Content and media type analysis

Content type	Media Type						Total (% of posts)
	Photo	Event	Video	Link	Offer	Status	
CSR1	90	1	5	8	0	0	104 (2.3)
CSR2	41	0	5	1	0	0	47 (1.0)
CSR3	19	1	3	1	0	0	24 (0.5)
MKT1	1472	4	91	227	7	0	1800(40.0)
MKT2	1614	1	148	146	2	2	1913(42.5)
MKT3	487	4	58	56	1	2	608 (13.5)
Total (% of post)	3723(82.8)	11(0.2)	310 (6.9)	440(9.8)	10(0.2)	4 (~0.1)	4498 (100)

Table 5 Descriptive statistics for media type and engagement, and Kruskal-Wallis H-test results

Media Type	Mean ^a (SD)	Average	Kruskal-Wallis H-test results		
			χ^2	df	Significance (p)
<i>Likes</i>			220.56	5	< 0.001
Photo	104.83 (273.50)	2347.02			
Event	25.18 (27.17)	853.73			
Video	94.84 (105.80)	2336.29			
Link	43.67 (56.35)	1439.74			
Offer	25.90 (14.72)	1019.50			
Status	22.00 (21.56)	740.50			
Total	97.72 (251.70)				
<i>Comments</i>			58.92	5	< 0.001
Photo	5.46 (38.87)	2292.42			
Event	.36 (.92)	1405.14			
Video	10.52 (52.67)	2337.45			
Link	1.03 (2.50)	1846.35			
Offer	1.20 (1.398)	2217.90			
Status	3.75 (6.85)	2233.88			
Total	5.35 (38.02)				
<i>Shares</i>			89.68	5	< 0.001
Photo	5.72 (23.18)	2251.93			
Video	16.44 (49.08)	582.50			
Link	2.29 (2.90)	2732.55			
Offer	2.30 (2.00)	2110.65			
Status	5.25 (10.50)	1522.00			
Total	6.10 (24.90)				

Notes: ^a Calculated with media type total (Table II last row).

Table 6 Descriptive statistics for content type and engagement, and Kruskal-Wallis H-test results

Media Type	Mean ^a (SD)	Average	Kruskal-Wallis H-test results		
			χ^2	df	Significance (p)
<i>Likes</i>			46.330	5	< 0.001
CSR1	80.88 (84.71)	2213.31			
CSR2	57.57 (40.49)	1978.90			
CSR3	96.79 (94.88)	2405.33			
MKT1	104.46 (355.35)	2103.54			
MKT2	95.02 (142.75)	2385.33			
MKT3	92.45 (168.89)	2268.36			
Total	97.73 (257.72)				
<i>Comments</i>			54.615	5	< 0.001
CSR1	2.58 (13.93)	2115.87			
CSR2	.51 (1.00)	1582.67			
CSR3	1.67 (2.67)	2051.25			
MKT1	9.02 (57.45)	2123.89			
MKT2	2.73 (10.38)	2348.57			
MKT3	3.76 (21.91)	2385.34			
Total	5.36 (38.03)				
<i>Shares</i>			25.669	5	< 0.001
CSR1	3.32 (5.97)	1883.74			
CSR2	2.23 (2.84)	1821.07			
CSR3	6.42 (11.30)	2569.46			
MKT1	8.34 (34.12)	2327.30			
MKT2	4.40 (10.05)	2230.60			
MKT3	5.59 (28.04)	2153.71			
Total	6.10 (24.91)				

Notes: ^a Calculated with content type total (Table II last column).