Selected Class of 2015 Themes and Information

The Truth about Radio, Life, and Connection

- Meaning of media – connection to the world, life, and people.

- Media are about connecting people and conveying information in the world, rather than platforms. The perception is pretty consistent over time.

- Legacy media are seen as something that is retro, nostalgic. They are used when:
    a. The young adults have more time, want to feel relaxed, and/or be disconnected from their busy digital lives.
    b. There are major events (i.e., appointment TV).
    c. They want to socialize through the consumption setting.

- Traditional media seem to be seen as more relational than functional because many of their functions are replaced by more convenient digital distribution platforms.

- Radio is used, just not frequently. It needs to connect to people emotionally and physically.

- Physical connection or access to radio is completely dependent on three access points: cars, mobile phones, and computers. You have to be able to be where they are.

- Radio is seen as something that is tied to cars throughout the four years.

- Radio has always been a personal medium. It needs some kind of value proposition and connection with the audience.

- Country format might be more resilient because it's more lifestyle oriented. Media/content is about connection to the world. It's about one's life, not a device.

- Figure out how you would connect with an old friend and to maintain a relationship as an audio brand.

- Talent can be the connection to the students and the deliverer of messages. Talent's engagement and content can be the differentiator for radio.

- Talent discovery should not be limited by industry or media. It can be vertical discovery and from digital spaces like YouTube and other areas not thought of before. Virtual work is possible nowadays.

Facebook Grew Up

- As social media becomes more ubiquitous, it is becoming more important to look at numbers AND dig deeper qualitatively for more insights.

- Facebook was seen as email replacement and important to students as soon as they arrived on campus in year 1.

- Facebook usage patterns and engagement level have changed and decreased over time.

- Students have become less patient with irrelevant, superficial content.

- The utility of Facebook has changed over time from expression and communication with peers to more image management, work, and family oriented.

- Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter were popular in year 1; by year 4, Facebook, YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram became more popular – The preference of social media has become more visual media from year 1 to year 4.

- Visual media that serves a needed function in the students' lives provides value.

- YouTube has been used as a music discovery platform.

- YouTube was used when they want to be entertained by certain content produced by famous YouTube personalities, look at videos that have gone viral, and find videos that show them how to do something. YouTube also allows for the "binge watching" of certain content.

- The students have a love-hate relationship with Facebook and are becoming more reflective about the platform. But they cannot leave the platform because of network effect. They might try out new platforms but still keep the existing platforms.

- Buzz marketing through social media can be improved in three areas: sources, content, and format.

- Talent can be a source of music discovery/info on social media.

- Although students monitor and contribute to Facebook and other social media sites, they reveal their low tolerance for excessive or vapid posts by others, ranting, self-promotion, and the way some use social media as a source of validation.

- Over the years, the students have developed a "love-hate relationship" with social media. They are self-aware of the downside of social media and have

become more reserved in sharing content, often posting only the content that they are passionate about and even find ways to set limits on social media use.

- Acknowledging that social media is a huge part of their lives, the students are reflective of how social media might negatively impact them. However, they feel a sense of vulnerability in decreasing the dependency.

- Different social media platforms seem to serve different functions. Twitter is for immediate info, Facebook provides social connections within different relational contexts, Snapchat and Instagram are for keeping up with friends and celebrity visually, while Yik Yak is for localized info and humor.

- The use of similar social media platforms might lead to different content emphasis on each platform (e.g., Migration of mundane visuals from Instagram to Snapchat).

- While still using Facebook and Twitter, the students are migrating gradually to the more visual social media platforms like Instagram, Snapchat, Tumblr, and Pinterest, and small group messaging app like GroupMe.

- In assessing the attractiveness of mobile apps, it's important to note that it is not about the individual functions provided by each app, but what the apps repertoire can do in users' lives. For example, Snapchat and Instagram became more popular because of the visual format as people want to share more visual expression. Snapchat took off because of the "temporary" nature that many people want in their social media experience (i.e., as more users realize the tediousness and possible implications of sharing via Instagram so the temporary visual sharing of Snapchat sounds good to them).

- The students are reflective of their social and mobile media use. They are very self-aware of their dependency on these digital media. They know the negative implications of the dependency, but continue to use them because of functional dependency and network effect.

- Social media use is both negative and positive. The self-awareness means that they are open to other options if the utility of this option/experience in their lives can be presented clearly to them.

- The students have changed over time on how they use and see social media. Began with the initial excitement and need to connect and express themselves, they now exercise more control on the type and ways content is shared--with the potential audience and their self-image in mind.

- Forget the superficial follow me on Facebook, unless your brand reinforce their image or provide some desirable experiences.

- It's all about image building and sharing in the world of social media. Public association with a brand means something significant to these young people. It's like an endorsement. They are becoming much more cautious in such eWOM moves.

- Being authentic and know what the young people you want to target want to be seen like.

- The students use social media to optimize the functions and occasions the specific platforms serve in their lives. Therefore, an existing platform can be easily replaced or relegated to perform a relevant but different function if a new platform can provide a similar function that is more reflective of the students' current life preferences (providing the network effect is in place quickly). In other words, the Millennials adjust their use of social media platforms continuously to serve self-expression needs and exercise control of content shared with others. E.g., after the arrival of Snapchat, students changed their Instagram usage behavior, using Snapchat for things that are of more fleeting nature and to protect their self-images. Instagram became the platform for other content that is more filtered.

News Discovery does not Begin with Legacy Media

- Social media is the first step of news discovery. Facebook and Twitter are important news sources. Talents from media organizations that they follow on Twitter are importance sources of information and breaking news.

- The students consume news and information in very different ways than previous generations. The content discovery process for them is much more continuous and integrated into their daily lives. The content is part of how they connect to the world, so they mix news and information with social connection and entertainment.

- Young people get news from social platforms. News/talks personnel have to be on social platforms to provide the hook to pull them to the news source. This is a good point to think hard about. What would be the value of news/talk radio station/content in young people's lives? It has to be in some way linked to mobility and social platforms, at least in promotions.

Life Starts with Mobile

- About 80% had smartphones in year 1. In year 4, it's 100%.

- Smartphone began to replace computer in year 1.

- Mobile phones play a critical role in the lives of the participants. They begin and manage their day with their mobile phones. They cannot function without their phones.

- Smartphones serve in all kinds of functions, from practical uses like bus systems and calendars to spiritual uses like Bible reading. Smartphones are the conduct to their lives.

- The students are reflective about how mobile phones have changed their lives, and that their attachment to mobile phones has resulted in less face-to-face interaction, lack of engagement with people, and a greater propensity to ignore their surroundings.

Create Value and Habit

- The students do place value on certain services and are willing to pay when you find a pricing sweet spot. The key is in the perceived value of the service.

- Pandora was the early frontrunner of streaming service in year 1 because of the specific type of music they could choose from.

- Spotify provides more flexibility in terms of being able to switch to another genre, skip songs, and develop playlist with more control. The playlist function provides best control and it also helps them discover new music.

- The students place value on Spotify's playlist and customization features which give them a sense of control.

- Services like Spotify and Netflix grew quickly in the four-year period. Students have integrated these services into their lives and it would be hard for them to change their behaviors when they graduate. Therefore, it is likely that they would continue to pay even if the price is increased.

- 25% used Netflix in year 1. In year 4, it's 90%.

- So the process is: begin with "value creation" and then integrate deeply into the students' lives (i.e., engage them and encourage them to invest in it such as creating playlist), which would become difficult for them to change even if the offer condition changes.

- Where does value come from for these students:
  - Something that reflects or shapes their identity and matches their lifestyle
  - Something that provides useful, interesting/new, and entertaining/funny content.

- People don't buy "free." People buy something of value.

- It is no longer about media or content type, it's about the value something can deliver in their major life events and lifestyle. Most are tied to digital media because they possess

all the important qualities such as convenience, integration, etc. So what do legacy media have that is of value? In what venue should legacy media meet the audience that connects with their lifestyle?

Be Authentic and Judicious

- Like us on Facebook is a waste of time and resources.

- Your message should provide value by being useful, interesting/new, or/and entertaining/funny.

- You need to provide value or you will get tuned off. Worse yet, they might be irritated.

- Talking too much is negative because they have low tolerance for useless gibbers. They are already over stimulated so they are skillful in tuning things out.

- The students have matured over time on how they see mobile and social media. They became more reflective and are able to see the social implications of such media dependency on interpersonal relationships and communications. They also see how social media are used by people as a means of expression and they have strong feelings about the superficial nature of such expressions.

- Authenticity is the key to connection.

Do Something and Know What Happened

- Need to experiment but no need to chase the new digital platforms all the time. Focus on the main platforms but experiment with new ones.

- No use to keep doing things without knowing what worked and what didn't.

- Need to invest in the feedback loop by thinking outside of the box within limited resources.

- Form partnerships with educational institutions. Find people to translate the digital analytics to audience insight useful for decision making. The feedback loop provides information to remain relevant.