

COLLEGE ATHLETES AND TWITTER: A STUDY OF HOW STUDENT-ATHLETES USE
TWITTER TO BUILD A PERSONAL BRAND

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DEDICATION

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The Use of Twitter to build a Personal Brand as a Student-Athlete

Chapter One: Introduction

This project stems from my interest in athletics as well as social media. I have worked in collegiate athletics for the past 4 years and have seen how social media plays a large role in athletics for both the school and the student athletes. I began this research by asking how sports and sports journalism are integrated into social media, and why athletes are now using their personal accounts to bypass the media and have a direct access to the fans. Do athletes feel the need to use social media to get their own thoughts and messages across? What does it take for an athlete to accurately portray the message they want to get across to their followers?

Over the past decade, the use and popularity of social media platforms has seen a sharp increase. Platforms such as Twitter are increasingly embedded into the structures, forms and processes of everyday communication. Journalism is among many of the social institutions that have come to terms with the changes that social media triggered in the use and production of media, especially sports media. Now that virtual acts such as “liking” and “sharing” have become part of daily human communication, journalists are forced to redefine their public task in an online environment.

Today, the level of journalism has transformed due to the rise of network-based platforms, not only large organizations but also individual journalists have the opportunity to become credible news providers online. This blurs the line of what a “journalist” is. Is a journalist someone who reports information? What separates large journalism organizations from athletes in revealing the same information?

Twitter is an appropriate platform to study this transformation. Because of its public and interactive features, the blog-like channel is convenient to find, break and share news in messages of 140 characters or less (Brems et. Al., 2016). This has led to an increase in journalists and news organizations

desiring a strong presence on the platform. Once I became familiar with the literature on Mass Communication Theory as well as Agenda Setting Theory, I became intrigued in how college athletes use Twitter to tell their side of the story. I began to question if and why athletes feel the need to voice their thoughts and messages on Twitter, and if the messages were perceived by fans in the intended way.

Recently professional or soon to be professional athletes have encountered how a tweet from years ago may resurface and cause controversy, or a tweet with good intentions may be viewed in a negative light by the consumer. Former Wyoming quarterback, Josh Allen, had racist tweets from high school resurface and cause controversy, hours before the NFL draft was set to begin. All of the tweets came at least two years before he enrolled at Wyoming, but unfortunately still remained on his profile and resurfaced at an inopportune time.

These instances, along with working with college athletics helped lead me to my research questions: How can a college athlete use Twitter to tell his/her side of a story? How effective is using Twitter in getting a specific message to the audience?

Chapter 2: Literature review

Introduction

For the purpose of this study, I examined how college athletes use Twitter as a voice to help build their brand. For this review, I looked at how college athletes use the theory of agenda setting in the content they post on Twitter. The definition of agenda setting is “the ability to influence the importance placed on the topics of the public agenda” (Freeland, 2012).

Mass Communication Theory resonates with this study because of the nature of Twitter in this research. Baran’s study examines how the athletes, in this case, use Twitter as their means of communicating to a large audience to portray a certain idea or argument (Baran, 2008).

Theoretical Framework

Mass communication is broken up into mass and communication. Communication at its root is the word community. The term communication is held to involve some form of transfer of information from one person to another or to a group of people (Berger, 1995). Communications, on the other hand, “refers not to the process but to the messages transmitted” (Berger, 1995). Berger explains how the transmission of information in communication theory, “must contain some element of uncertainty about what the source of the message will produce” (1995).

The term communication also has a root word of common. This is important to understanding the process of communication on two levels. First, the quality of the communication process is “understood to be higher among participants who have certain things in common, such as past experiences, values, and beliefs” (Berger, 1995). Second, the process of mass communication “requires encoding (by a sender, or student-athlete profile) and decoding (by a receiver, or Twitter follower), which can be achieved successfully only by participants who share a common language” (Berger, 1995). Within the realm on communication, there is

intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, small group communication, and mass communication. For this research I will focus solely on mass communication.

Mass communication involves the use of “print or electronic media, such as newspapers, magazines, film, radio, television, or social media, to communicate to large numbers of people located in various places” (Berger, 1995). Berger explains how a number of different elements make up mass communications media; images, spoken language, printed language, sound effects, music, color, lighting, and a variety of other techniques (1995). Although the term mass media is different than the process of mass communication, some put them together to talk about the “mass media of communication”. However, Berger separates the two reserving mass media for the instruments by which mass communication is achieved.

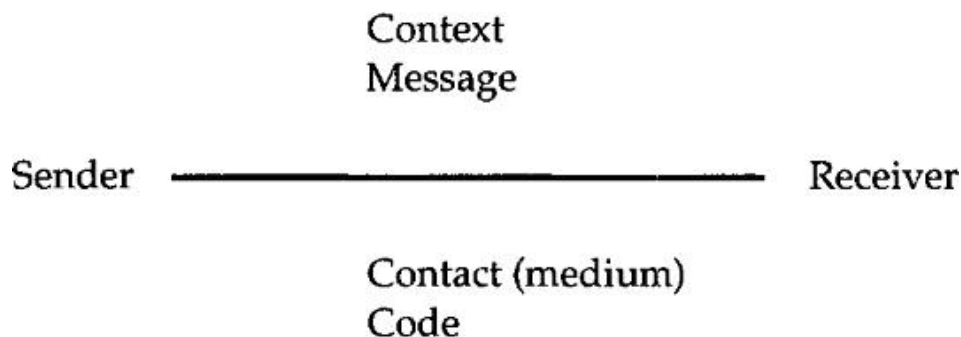


Figure 1.1: Berger, taken from Jakobson’s Six Elements of a Speech Act

According to Berger, that there are five areas of concern in dealing with mass media: artworks or texts (content of the media, in this case tweets), artists (who create work carried by the media, in this case the artists are the student athletes), audiences (who read, listen to, and see mass-mediated works, for this study this is the athlete’s Twitter followers), America or society (where the audiences are found, for this case it will be online society), and a medium (which not only carries texts but affects them, in this study this will be Twitter) (1995).

Along with mass communication theory, I also used agenda setting theory in this research. The theory of agenda setting suggests that the media sets the public agenda by telling you what to think about, although not exactly what to think (Freeland, 2012). According to Freeland, in its most basic sense, “agenda setting is the creation of public awareness and concern of salient issues by the news media” (2012). The two most basic assumptions of agenda setting are: 1) the press and the media do not reflect reality; they filter and shape it; 2) media concentration on a few issues and subjects leads the public to perceive those issues as more important than other issues (Freeland, 2012).

Agenda setting occurs through a cognitive process known as “accessibility”, which implies that the more frequently and prominently the news media covers an issue, the more that issue becomes accessible in the audience’s memory (Freeland, 2012).

There are three basic types of agenda setting: public, media and public policy. Public agenda focuses on “the audience’s agenda while media agenda setting focuses on the influence of the mass media on the audience” (Freeland, 2012). Policy agenda setting “deals with how media and public agendas might influence the decisions of elite policy makers” (Freeland, 2012).

When examining agenda setting and the media’s influence (or in this study, the athlete’s influence) on an audience, one has to “consider the audience’s predisposition to certain beliefs” (Freeland, 2012). Freeland looks at the audience effects model in mass communication agenda setting. According to the audience effects model, the media’s coverage of events and issues “interact with the audience’s pre-existing sensitivities to produce changes in issues concerns” (Freeland, 2012). This means that an audience is already highly sensitive to an issue and will be mostly affected by an issue that is given increased exposure while the same issue may have a limited effect on other groups.

Personal Branding

Personal branding, as defined by Aida Levitan of The Levitan Group, is “the process whereby people and their careers are marked as brands” (2010). The Levitan Group, Inc. provides strategic branding and marketing consulting services to companies and organizations (2010). The concept of personal branding suggests that success comes from self-packaging and includes but is not limited to the appearance and knowledge of the person. This leads to an indelible impression that is uniquely distinguishable.

The importance of personal branding is that it allows individuals, athletes for this study, the opportunity to stand out. It is merely the way one markets themselves to the world. A personal brand is what others think of you, but you can still have some influence over it. The key is to project an image that fits who you really are and how you want to be perceived. For this study, personal branding is going to come directly from the content of the tweets the athletes generate.

NCAA social media policies

Sanderson et al examined the social media policies from different Division level schools. The study used framing and communication privacy management theories to ask, “How is student-athlete’s ownership of social media content presented within social media policies?” (2015). The research also asked “What is the overall tone in social media policies towards social media usage. Are there significant differences in how social media policies are frame between Division levels?” (Sanderson et al., 2015). The results from a social media policy content analysis showed that the policies framed social media as restrictive. (Sanderson et al., 2015).

Snyder et al. asks the question “Do colleges and universities have the authority to monitor student’s social media?” (2015). Their study examines the regulation of student-athlete’s

social media usage by athletic department using case studies of the laws passed that limit the authority of universities (Snyder et al., 2015). The study found that the laws are different by state and that the NCAA needs to create clearer regulations for social media monitoring (Snyder et al., 2015).

While athletes are taking to social media to vocalize their opinions, there are many regulations set in place about social media use. Epstein gives a guide to all the regulations of social media use by college athletes by using both a content and legal analysis of social media monitoring (Epstein, 2011). The findings were that there are very strict guidelines that must be examined thoroughly in order to not infringe on the First Amendment rights of the athletes. The legal risks of monitoring social media usage have to balance the preventative actions of NCAA sanctions. (Epstein, 2011). This reveals the difficulties athletes face by voicing their opinions on Twitter, while other social media uses can post their opinions without repercussions. These restrictions are applied to all forms of communication with the media, whether that is interviews or social media, the athlete is limited to what they can say. Some schools chose to suspend players for a certain number of games, others choose to completely remove players from their team.

While the previous study examined the social media monitoring, Hopkins et al. examines the risk and benefits associated of monitoring student-athlete's social media. The journal discusses the emergence of social media and how the NCAA has approached the situation of monitoring, as well as give a legal argument against monitoring (Hopkins et al., 2013). The research questions if "social media monitoring infringes on the First, Fourth and Fourteenth Amendments" (Hopkins et. Al., 2013). Hopkins et al.'s study found that the individual universities must decide for themselves if they will monitor their athlete's social media or not but

could not dictate if the monitoring violated the amendments. There are no clear rules set forth by the NCAA and the current regulations set in place are a bit unclear. (Hopkins et.al., 2013).

Further questions Muller studied within social media monitoring are “Is the right of publicity something that should be assignable?”, “Does the NCAA athletes have the right to publicity?” (2004). Mueller’s study examined the right of publicity among college athletes and shows that the problem lies in the fact that college sports have become very commercialized. (Mueller, 2004).

With all the restrictions and guidelines being confusing, students do not have an active way to give their voice to the media. Therefore, student athletes use Twitter to bypass the media and voice their concerns and opinions.

Agenda Setting and Twitter Content

Within the context of agenda setting, Browning and Sanderson reviewed how social media has become an “unavoidable part of the current college experience” (2012). College students are very free in disclosing information via social media, and Browning and Sanderson suggested that this behavior appears to be driven by status needs (2012). The study found that student-athletes use social media to keep in contact with friends, communicate with followers and accessing information.

Narcum, Havard, and Mason studied the impacts of Twitter transgressions on an athlete’s brand. The research studied how athletes’ Twitter usage impact’s fan attitudes toward their brand. Specifically, attitudes toward one’s favorite athlete when the athlete tweeted a negative message and when the athlete tweeted a positive message were analyzed. (Narcum et. Al. 2016). The research was collected via a survey to 300 participants and were put into either a “positive” or “negative” tweet scenario.

Participants assigned to the positive tweet (inspirational) scenario read the following: Imagine that athlete X (favorite athlete) “tweets” on Twitter, a comment that you find very inspirational, while participants assigned to the negative tweet (offensive) scenario read the following: Imagine that athlete X (favorite athlete) “tweets” on Twitter, a comment that you find highly offensive. (Narcum et. Al. 2016). After viewing the scenarios, participants were asked to indicate their attitude toward the athlete with the scenario in their mind.

The study found that individuals have more negative attitudes toward their favorite athlete when the athlete posts an offensive tweet, than when the athlete posts an inspiring tweet (Narcum et. Al. 2016). The results showed that Twitter usage did not significantly explain attitudes toward the athlete, and therefore the type and manner of information an athlete posts on Twitter can significantly impact the attitudes fans have of that personality (Narcum et. Al. 2016).

Personal Branding on Twitter

In the social media world, individual journalists have become more visible than ever. Their virtual presence on social media platforms such as Twitter, offers insights in their working habits, opinions and personal activities. Presenting themselves in a packaged style, Twitter offers users (student-athletes for this study) the opportunity to attract an audience and become a hub on social media, thus increasing their “market value”.

Brems et. Al. explained how Papacharissi analyzed the self-performance of individuals on Twitter as a “networked performance via trending hashtags” (2016). The study concluded that the self is performed by “reorganizing grammar and language conventions to fit messages in the scope of 140 characters” (2016). Brems et. Al. add that “self-presentation on Twitter is a moving process; it is word-based rather than pictorial” (2016). Personal branding on Twitter can thus be considered an ongoing, fast and intensive task with a limited number of options to present the

self. Because the platform works primarily public, viewers can expect the users to “construct versions of themselves that are strictly curated” (Brems et. Al., 2016).

In research on identity on Twitter, Marwick and Boyd claim that humans present themselves differently depending on “who we are talking to and where the conversation takes place” (Brems et. Al., 2016). Brems et. Al. conducted a study with 40 journalists who use Twitter, and did a content analysis as well as in-depth interviews to answer the research question “how do journalists present themselves on Twitter and which dilemmas do they face by branding themselves?” (2016).

When looking at Twitter, the study found that journalists seem to be carefully curating the impressions on Twitter. The results showed a clear image of the three elements that mark a personal brand: the stage, the audience and the performer (or creator). When looking at Twitter as a stage, there is as Goffman indicates “a front and a back region. The first can be identified with the public areas of Twitter, i.e. the open profile and the news feed” (Brems et. Al., 2016). The back region “takes shape in direct messages or in locked Twitter profiles” (2016).

It is in the front, the public, stage where performers try to control their image in front of an audience. By actively cultivating a stage that enlarges when people interact with you on Twitter, a user can reach more people at once. Thus, going into the second element; the audience.

Brems et. Al. study found that the @-reply was the most used type of tweet: the journalists mostly communicated with citizens, other journalists and professional contacts (2016). The results showed that Twitter is a primarily interactive platform where users and the audience actively talk or argue and participate in their personal and/or professional thought process (2016). The study also found that “journalists who discuss professional matters on

Twitter are breaking down “the fourth wall between the media and the audience and increase intimacy, essential in developing a personal brand”” (Brems et. Al., 2016).

The final element of the study is the performer, or creator. The researchers defined personal branding as “the distinctive presentation of a person’s character and capacity” (Brems et. Al., 2016). The study found that freelance journalists used Twitter significantly more in an interactive and personal way, whereas an employed journalist were shown to be loyal to the news outlet they worked for (Brems et. Al., 2016). The act of personal branding on Twitter seems to be best performed in a subtle and authentic way.

Labrecque, Markos and Milne researched the processes, challenges, and implications of online personal branding. The research was gathered by combining qualitative and quantitative methods. Digital brand audits of 12 participants were created, followed by a survey of college students to evaluate the audits, obtained written assessments of the audits by a human resource professional, and ended by conducting in-depth interviews with the 12 participants to learn about their online and personal branding behavior (Labrecque, et. Al., 2010).

The results of the study supported the idea that people both explicitly and implicitly brand themselves using content they place online. The data showed that “most participants had a branding strategy to manage their online information and were conscious of their online efforts” (Labrecque et. Al., 2010). Participants in the study revealed that they used personal social networking sites actively “as tools to construct their personal brand identity” (2010). Some participants used multiple profiles to construct their personal brand, whereas others tried to “portray the same image with everyone” for their brand identity (2010).

The final results of the study concluded highlighted how individuals’ self-brand through the use of social media and the issues they face during the process. The results concluded that

branding is “inevitable when participating in an online environment”, whether intentionally or not (Labrecque et. Al., 2010). The study found a substantial dialectic pressure between self-branding and information control. The data shows that misdirected branding “has greater implications for professional status, whereas insufficient branding (not supplying enough information), is more critical for social status” (Labrecque et. Al., 2010). The final conclusion from the study showed that in order to develop an authentic online brand, it requires an approach to transmit a “single perspective that can transcend professional versus social distinctions” (Labrecque et. Al., 2010).

Michael Green examined the impact of social networks in the development of a personal sports brand. The purpose of his study was to investigate the strategic usage of social networking websites to develop the concept of a personal brand. For his study, Green collected data via ten semi-structured interviews with international rugby union players, supplemented by analyzing Facebook, Twitter and Instagram used by all the players. A total of 1,034 publicly available posts by all players across the three platforms were collected and categorized to “examine how each player used the sites to communicate with supporters, players, sponsors and other individuals” (Green, 2016).

The findings revealed that “personal branding themes can be classified according to the following mnemonic: personality, exposure, response, follow, endorse, consistent, and target audience (PERFECT)” (Green, 2016). The study concluded that within social networking contexts, the “development of an online profile can help create differentiation for players in a highly competitive market” (Green, 2016). The research also highlights that the utilization of social networks by sports athletes “has to become part of a strategic marketing approach” (2016).

Twitter as a Means of Communication

While looking at the Mass Communication Theory, Baran and Davis questioned “How can and should we understand the role media now plays in the world?” (Baran, Davis, 2008). They found that the importance we assign to various issues may be strongly influenced by the media. This is especially true in college athletics with the importance the media puts on this subject. College athletes can impact their way of communicating by means of social media due to the importance society has put on social media.

Social Media and the College Football Audience by Clavio examines how fans of a college football team utilizes new and traditional media. The study examines the differences between the various media used and asks the questions “What are the demographic characteristics of this sample of college football fans? Do any demographic variables have a significant impact on the consumption of traditional media? Do any demographic variables have a significant impact on the consumption of social and new media?” (Clavio, 2011). The study used an online survey sent out to college football fans and the results show that there is a significant difference in relation to age and newspaper usage, talk radio, and team website views (Clavio, 2011). This shows that the social media reception of the college football fans is dependent upon their demographic information, and also shows that many fans look to social media as a way to engage with their favorite teams and players. Filo et. Al. analyzed social media in the field of sport management from a logical perspective (2015). The review found that consumers engaged with sport via social media for different reasons and motives. The review also found that gender, age, education, and sport context dictated preferences and usages of various social media platforms. (Filo et al., 2015).

The fans that interact with athletes on social media are concerned with the athlete's personal lives. Frederick et al. review examined the relationships promoted by professional athletes on Twitter. The study used the theoretical framework of para-social interaction in a content analysis of tweets in order to determine the relationships (Frederick et al., 2012). The study found that the professional athletes promoted both para-social and social relationships equally. The tweets were either general statements, or insights into their personal lives, which helps engage the fans that interact with them. (Frederick et al., 2012)

Sanderson examined how rookie athletes in the MLB, NBA, NFL, and NHL use Twitter as an identity expression tool. The research question of the study is "How do incoming professional athletes use Twitter to express identity?" (Sanderson, 2012). These "incoming professional athletes" may also be current college athletes or newly out of college athletes. Dialogical Self Theory is used in this article offers a useful framework to explain how athletes navigate between various accounts and positions as they promote their identity via social media. The Dialogical Self Theory is defined as the "mind's ability to imagine the different positions of participants in an internal dialogue, in close connection with external dialogue" (Sanderson, 2012). The study analyzed the tweets of athletes and found that the athletes use different platforms to promote or engaged with different aspects of their lives. (Sanderson, 2012).

Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh and Greenwell did a content analysis of professional athletes' tweets. A sample of tweets drawn from sportsin140.com, "a web site devoted to identifying verified athlete Twitter accounts" were used in the study (Hambrick et. Al., 2010). The total sample of accounts was broken down as follows: NBA=16, MLB=4, WNBA=10, NFL=32, NHL=4, MLS=4, golf =11, auto racing =6, minor-league baseball=2, other sports=12. The content analysis was then employed to categorize and analyze the tweets. The tweets were

coded each independently into one of six categories that were developed “based on motives predictive of online sport consumption in two previous studies” (Hambrick et. Al., 2010).

The categories were “interactivity, diversion, information sharing, content, fanship, and promotional” (Hambrick et. Al., 2010). Hambrick et. Al. defined interactivity as “direct communication with fellow athletes and fans”, diversion as “non-sports-related information”, information sharing as “insight into an athlete’s teammates, team, or sport with details about practices and training sessions or recent competitive events”, content as “includes links to pictures, videos, and other web sites”, fanship as “when athletes discuss sports other than their own teams and teammates”, and promotional as “publicity regarding sponsorships, upcoming games, and related promotions such as tickets or giveaways” (2010). The tweets were sorted into the appropriate categories by four independent raters.

The results of the study showed that the category with the most tweets was interactivity (34%), “indication that athletes use Twitter as a medium for direct interpersonal communication with friends and fans” (Hambrick et. Al., 2010). Diversion, or non-sport-related communication had the second highest rate with 28%, followed by information sharing (15%), content (13%), promotional (5%), and fanship (5%) (Hamrbick et. Al., 2010). Findings from this study suggest that “Twitter communications may be quite different from mainstream sport communications” (2010).

Online social-media applications like Twitter allow players to bypass mainstream-media outlets and interact with fans. The tweets analyzed in the study “revealed that professional athletes use Twitter for a myriad of reasons, from interacting with fellow athletes and fans to recapping their latest sports practices and performances to sharing pictures and Web sites with followers” (Hambrick et. Al., 2010).

All of these studies show that Twitter is an effective way of communicating with a fan base of college sports. Pedersen's study found that the internet has a very high influence on sports coverage in today's society (2017). Athletes are interacting on social media more so now than they have in the past and are interacting on a personal level rather than using a mediator between them and the public (Pedersen, 2017). Because of this, athletes in these studies engaged with their fans in multiple ways and could promote their identity through their own social media pages.

Conclusion

The review shows that there is no perfect medium for athletes to vocalize their opinions and must jump through the social media policies to post content on Twitter. This review also showed that the social media policies of the NCAA are confusing and unclear, often left up to each university to judge.

The main take away that this literature review showed is that athletes are indeed using social media as a means of communicating and engaging with their fans. Professional athletes are leading the way for college athletes to create their own identity on Twitter and bypass the regular media reporters. By going to Twitter, these athletes can successfully frame their ideas and messages in a way that can paint a picture in different lights to reveal different aspects of an issue.

Based on these findings, I've developed the following research questions:

RQ 1: How can a college athlete use Twitter to tell his/her side of a story?

RQ 2: How effective is using Twitter in getting a specific message to the audience?

Chapter Three: Professional Analysis

As explained in the Method section, interviews were conducted with both Jontay Porter and Nick Joos, the Mizzou Basketball Sport Information Director, and tweets were collected from Jontay Porter's personal twitter account.

Jontay Porter was used for this study because he is a high-profile athlete in a Division I school in the Southeastern Conference. Jontay Porter followed in his brother, Michael Porter, Jr.'s footsteps when he came to the University of Missouri to play basketball. Michael Porter, Jr. was the nation's No. 1 overall recruit out of high school and chose to come to the University of Missouri to play basketball. Jontay was also a highly ranked recruit coming out of high school, but being only a year younger than his brother Michael, decided to reclassify and graduate high school a year early. He then went on to follow in his brother's footsteps and commit to play basketball at the University of Missouri with his brother.

During Michael's time at the University of Missouri, he suffered a significant back injury early on in the season, that was detrimental to his college basketball career. Michael took to social media to share his thoughts and try to debunk the medias timeline of how long his injury would sideline him. Michael eventually released a video on social media, documenting his journey throughout his college basketball career: injury and all. Michael voiced on social media that there had been a lot of talk about his injury, but this was his way to get his side of the story across.

Jontay, continued to play throughout the year that Michael was injured. After the season ended, Jontay had a decision to make if he would enter the NBA draft or come back for the 2018-2019 college season. Jontay decided to continue playing at the University of Missouri for another season. However, like his brother, Jontay suffered a severe injury before the season began. The injury was then leaked by the media and put on social media before Jontay ever had an opportunity to explain what happened.

While Jontay Porter does not represent all college athletes, with him being such a high-profile college athlete, if this study applies to him, it should apply to other athletes as well.

Nick Joos was used for this study because not only of his direct connection with Jontay Porter at the University of Missouri, but also his qualifications. Joos is the Deputy Athletics Director of Communications at the University of Missouri. Prior to joining Mizzou Athletics, Joos spent time at Baylor University as the Associate Athletics Director for Media Relations/Broadcast Properties from 2003 until 2007, then became the Associate Athletics Director for External Affairs, before he was promoted to Senior Associate Athletics Director for External Affairs. Joos has spent 32 years in college athletics and is a former president for the College Sports Information Directors of America (CoSIDA) and spearheaded the organization's hybrid relationship with the National Association of Collegiate Directors of Athletics (NACDA).

Joos was a 2014 CoSIDA Hall of Fame inductee and received the organization's 2015 Arch Ward Memorial Award for outstanding achievement in athletic communications. Joos is a former NCAA Honors Committee member and continues to serve on CoSIDA's Academic All-American Committee. All of these qualifications, along with his currently role and involvement with the basketball team at a top tier Division I school in the Southeastern Conference, gives Joos the capability to represent sport information directors.

Over the course of those interviews, I discovered insights into both how a student athlete views and uses social media, as well as how an athletic department shapes and trains their students to use social media. Mr. Joos also provided me with the training guide that Mizzou Athletics provides to all of their student athletes to help train them for how to use social media as a way to build their personal brand.

Porter's interview showed great insight into a former college athlete due to the nature that he is formerly a Mizzou Men's basketball player (2017-2019) but is no longer enrolled at Mizzou and is able to speak freely. Porter has not yet reached the realm of professional athlete, so he has not switched his social media mindset or habits and was able to speak freely in an open and honest way.

Contextual Analysis

Also, in the Method section, I explained how tweets from Jontay Porter's Twitter account would be collected and used to perform a contextual analysis. There were 45 tweets collected from Jontay Porter's Twitter, with 19 of those being original tweets. The quantitative results for those texts are below. I observed the time the tweets were made, the day, how many replies each tweet received, the number of retweets, the number of likes, and also mentioned the subject of the tweet.

Date	Time	Replies	Retweets	Likes	Subject
7/10/17	2:41pm	5	17	205	Basketball
7/21/17	10:44am	3	18	182	NBA/Basketball
7/23/17	6:43pm	1	20	170	Music
8/9/17	7:54pm	132	2,700	8,500	Mizzou Basketball with Pic
8/22/17	1:28pm	8	17	194	NBA
8/27/17	1:29pm	6	13	95	NBA
11/30/17	6:55pm	14	57	1,500	Mizzou Basketball
12/11/17	5:31pm	9	14	229	Investing
12/23/17	8:04pm	19	70	903	Unknown
2/8/18	7:24am	5	9	294	Unknown
2/22/18	12:48pm	34	547	3,000	Unknown
5/31/18	2:11pm	15	14	330	Movies
5/31/18	5:43pm	14	56	629	Unknown
6/21/18	6:32am	19	92	2,100	NBA Draft
6/21/18	3:02pm	43	221	3,100	NBA Basketball
7/2/18	2:50pm	0	31	297	Unknown
10/21/18	3:22pm	251	355	5,600	Injury
11/12/18	6:02am	50	0	76	Books, asked question

1/8/19	1:43pm	6	18	563	Mizzou Basketball
2/3/19	7:15am	15	29	460	NFL/Tom Brady

After reviewing these numbers, I found that the tweets that had a subject of basketball, specifically Mizzou basketball, had a higher number of engagements with Porter's followers. Before this research, I expected fans and followers to interact more with Porter's account during his season of play due to the high focus on the athlete and sport at that time. This was verified in my findings. Out of Porter's 19 original tweets, nine of them were during the Mizzou Basketball season. He had a higher volume during that time period and received, overall, more interaction with his tweets.

The texts of the tweets are all in a personal voice and very informal. The tweets are all 140 characters or less, but Porter often uses only a few words or a short sentence in his tweets. The tone of the tweets tell us that Porter is very informal and is creating a casual, personal touch to the audience. Often times, the tweets subjects can be inferred or there is an underlying subject, but it may not be always clear. The audience must know the background of the tweet, or other information than what is in the text itself.

Before I began my research, I set out to look at 1) What topics Porter tweets about and 2) What types of tweets get the most traction. I answered these questions by finding that Porter tweets about Mizzou, Basketball, NBA, and other "unknown" subjects. The types of tweets that get the most engagement or traction, how I originally asked, seems to be the topic of Basketball as a whole.

Key Word: Mizzou

While looking at Porter's tweets, I noticed a theme among them with a keyword "Mizzou". When Porter used this word as a subject, underlying context, or was in the text itself,

the number of engagements on the tweet skyrocketed. The one and only time Porter used a picture in his original tweet, along with the word “Mizzou”, the tweet received the highest volume of engagements among all of his original tweets. This tweet generated 132 replies, 2,700 retweets and 8,500 likes. The second highest number of engagements did not include the word “Mizzou” and generated 251 replies, 355 retweets and 5,600 likes.

Key Word: Basketball

Out of the 19 original tweets collected, nine of them had the subject of “basketball” or had that keyword in the tweet. The highest level of interaction with basketball tweets, came when the word Mizzou or NBA was also paired with the key word or theme of basketball. The specificity of basketball to Porter shows that his followers like to see information from him about what he is known most for.

Key Word: NBA (National Basketball Association)

With the 19 original tweets, five of the tweets either contained the subject NBA or “NBA” was a keyword in the tweet. The two highest interaction tweets about NBA were created on the same date and received collectively, 62 replies, 313 retweets, and 5,100 likes.

While the key words of Mizzou, Basketball, and NBA were predominate among Porter’s tweets, they were also the key words that received the highest level of fan and Twitter user engagements and interactions. The tweet with the second highest level of engagement came from Porter’s tweet about his injury. The tweet received 251 replies, the most out of all of his original tweets, 355 retweets (the third highest among all of his original tweets), and 5,600 likes (the second highest of his original tweets). While the tweet did not contain any of the key words, the underlying message of his injury and that it meant he would be out for the entire basketball season, resonated with fans enough to gain this high level of engagement.

I found that for this case, fans want to follow student athlete accounts and are interested in primarily information about the sport the athlete plays, the university or team the player is associated with, and the chance at a future organization. In my own experience working with collegiate athletes and communications departments, key words are used to generate a higher level of engagement. Twitter users showed that they care more about those topics than others that Porter tweeted about. Porter uses these keywords and trigger words so that they can be “searched” on twitter and pop up on users accounts to gain more exposure. After this study, I can conclude that a majority of Porter’s Twitter followers followed his account to gain more access to information about him and the team and want to see that information primarily via his social media account.

Twitter as a Means of Communication

While looking at the Mass Communication Theory, Baran and Davis questioned “How can and should we understand the role media now plays in the world?” (Baran, Davis, 2008). During my content analysis, it was clear to find that Twitter is very large medium for communication in society. I found that the importance the public assigns to various issues may be strongly influenced by the media, as stated previously.

While Filo et. Al., examined the relationships between athletes on Twitter and their fans, I was able to find an similar conclusion to that study. I found that the fans that interact with athletes on social media are concerned with the athlete’s personal lives, to an extent. The fans want a more personal touch, but still like to be informed about relevant information. Porter’s tweets about basketball generated a much higher engagement than his tweet about book recommendations.

When I concluded this research, It was important for me to note that Porter did not reply to any fans tweets throughout the sample period. While Twitter is a means of communication, Porter did not use it as a two-way communication channel, but rather a one-way channel. Before this study, I expected to find that players used Twitter to bypass mainstream-media outlets and interacted with fans on their own. This was partially found to be true in Porter's case. Porter used Twitter to bypass the media by getting his message across to the public on his own Twitter account, however he did not interact with fans on his own.

Training College Athletes to use Social Media

When interviewing both Joos and Porter, they both mentioned there is a type of social media training that all of the athletes at Mizzou receive at the beginning of the year. Joos went further in-depth with this by providing me the Mizzou Athletics Social Standards. Porter simply put that it was more so common sense and if you "had a good head on your shoulders" you knew what was right and wrong to post. However, these are college athletes and a simple "do what is right" is not as easy as it sounds.

After analyzing the Social Standards Mr. Joos provided to me, like he does all of the Mizzou Athletes, it is clear that Mizzou encourages their athletes to use social media. One of the quotes in the training guide states "We don't have a choice on whether we do social media, the question is how will we do it?". This emphasizes the type of weight Mizzou athletics puts on social media and encourages their athletes to use it, but in what way?

When looking over the guide, the main ideas that stuck out to me were 1) Have a consistent voice/Give your student athletes a voice, 2) Have a plan, 3) Entertain First, Inform second. While Mizzou also encourages the athletes to focus on engagement and "focus on getting retweets".

While this guide is more so a “best practices”, like Joos said, it does give pretty specific guidelines and tips on how to use social media, specifically Twitter, and what to do/not to do. Joos emphasized that while Mizzou can give the athletes a guide, they cannot tell them what they can and can’t post due to The First Amendment’s freedom of speech right that the athletes have. The guide tells the athletes to be short and concise, with simple and to the point messages being used in their tweets.

This guide does however, indicate that the athletes are highly trained in how to use social media, and molded to fit a specific brand the team and organization has as a whole. When looking at my question of “How trained is Porter by Missouri basketball sport information director?”, I would conclude that he is highly trained on what to post/what not to post. Porter even admitted to having guidance in what to post after his injury and surgery. This answers the question with a definite “highly trained” answer.

Using Twitter to Build a Personal Brand

The final results of this study aligned with the results of Labrecque et al’s study. The results concluded that branding is “inevitable when participating in an online environment”, whether intentionally or not (Labrecque et. Al., 2010). While Nick Joos said that Mizzou Athletics encourages their players to use their social media platforms to help build their personal brand, Jontay Porter said that he feels as though he did not do a good job of that. It may be that he wasn’t sure how to do that, or that he simply did not see that side of Twitter. Porter admitted to using Twitter solely for entertainment purposes and did not use it as a tool for personal branding in the future.

It is important to note, and interesting in itself, that Jontay Porter did not simply reply to a tweet during the time period that the sampling was taken. Porter created his own tweets, and

would “quote tweet” a tweet, which is when a user retweets another person’s original tweet but adds a comment above. Porter never once replied to any account or engaged in any direct replies to his tweets or others. This actually shows that the alignment of his voice and message was consistent when he was only tweeting original tweets, coming from his voice alone.

The Media Sets the Agenda for What Athletes Tweet

As stated in my research, the theory of agenda setting has a basic assumption of the press and the media do not reflect reality; they filter and shape it (Freeland, 2012). This was especially true in Porter’s case whenever he was injured for the first time. The media sent out a tweet that Porter had torn his ACL, before anyone had confirmed that information. This then shaped the reality that Mizzou fans had and ultimately led to Porter creating a tweet to validate what happened. By the injury getting leaked on social media by a member of the media, Porter then had his agenda already set for him.

When interviewing Joos, he stated that often times the media does help set the agenda for the athletes, but the athletes should be aware of that. Joos stated that the athletes should be wary of not posting any injury updates via social media, that could give the opponent team an advantage. While this doesn’t necessarily set the agenda for what the player tweets about, the lack of information the athlete provides via social media is in itself, set by the media. If an athlete does not take to social media to post injury or team updates that the media could take and inform the public with, the media is in fact altering the player’s agenda.

After concluding my interviews and content analysis of the tweets, I concluded that the media does set the agenda for reality and help shape the public’s view. If a member of the media reports an injury, game update, or other important information, that then becomes the reality for the public unless another source, such as the athlete, debunks or confirms that reality.

NCAA Social Media Policies and Monitoring Players Tweets

Epstein's study found that there are very strict guidelines that must be examined thoroughly in order to not infringe on the First Amendment rights of the athletes (Epstein, 2011). Hopkins et al. journal discusses the emergence of social media and how the NCAA has approached the situation of monitoring, as well as give a legal argument against monitoring (Hopkins et al., 2013). Mr. Joos clearly stated in his interview that, while the school can monitor the player's tweets and help guide them in a positive light, there is such thing as The First Amendment and players have the right to their own voice.

Porter confirmed this in his interview by saying that, while his accounts were monitored, it was more in a, "we have your back" type of way. Porter said the sport information directors and coaches would monitor the teams accounts to look out for them and make sure the media didn't take anything the wrong way or cause a negative impact to the player or team. These interviews showed that while the NCAA does have strict policies, the athletes do have the right to freedom of speech, but each school can implement repercussions if there is negativity.

Discussion

When beginning my research, I was interested in learning how college athletes used Twitter. Specifically, I wanted to answer the research questions of: How can a college athlete use Twitter to tell his/her side of a story? and How effective is using Twitter in getting a specific message to the audience?

While looking at Porter's tweets, some of what I found did not surprise me. It is apparent that the key words of Mizzou, Basketball and NBA generated a higher engagement among Twitter users. While Porter used Twitter to tell his side of the story when it came to his injury, the media set the stage for him. Joos said that Mizzou encourages the student athletes to utilize social media to tell their personal side of their life but to focus on what is best for the team and the institution. Porter

was able to tell his side of the story by getting the same information out to the public that the media had put out, but on his own account. The first-hand information is much more reliable to fans and college athletes can use Twitter to release important information immediately to their fans and followers. A higher profile athlete has a higher chance of getting their voice across simply due to the volume of followers they typically have, but all student athletes have the same accessibility to their fans via social media. The best way to get their voice across to the media is to be authentic and release real information that the public wants to know but is also accurate.

The social standards that Mizzou provides to their student athletes shows that the best practices the students can use is to be authentic and create original content to reach their fans best. Original content is proven to have the biggest level of engagement and credibility versus a third-party information or tweet being retweeted by the athlete. The player should use Twitter to get their message across by being authentic and honest, being short and concise, and going directly to their fans via an original tweet.

While I originally set out to find how effective Twitter is in getting a message across, I found that this research question was no longer relevant to the study. I intended to collect a large sample of tweets that had a clear message, but instead found a small sample of tweets with a large portion having an unclear subject or message. Since I did not perform a focus group to study the interpretation of the tweets themselves by outside viewers, research question number two is no longer relevant to this study.

Throughout the study, I ended up asking myself how college athletic departments could help their athletes utilize social media to gain an audience and a voice. It is in the best interest of the athletic department to encourage their players to build an online voice because this is another

avenue for fans to interact and make the team visible. This could mean more revenue and a growth in fanbase if players can help grow their brand and fanbase on social media.

When interviewing Nick Joos, I discovered that while there is a social media training process set in place for Mizzou athletes, the athletes are often left alone to make their own decisions, with the athletic department helping out retroactively. Jontay Porter confirmed this in his interview when he noted that there were times “when some dudes go out and put something on their story, we’d always get a call the next day like you need to take that off”. This retroactive monitoring is tough to manage, but proactive monitoring also has its limitations with the athletes First Amendment rights.

During my time spent working with college athletic communications departments, I learned that often times, even the coach’s personal Twitter account is run by the Sport Information Director, or merely given the seal of approval prior to sending a tweet. In this case, Cuonzo Martin’s personal twitter account’s tweets are either generated by the Sport Information Director themselves, or edited and given the seal of approval to hit “tweet” beforehand.

Conclusion

After looking at Porter’s tweets and the engagement he received from specific messages and themes, I found that if athletes use certain key words they can gain a larger audience and engagement online. Athletic departments, specifically the communications director and sport information director, should advise their athletes that tweets that contain keywords of their sport and university receive a higher engagement online. This will help the athlete to gain a larger audience and have their message seen by more people. Athletes social media accounts can also serve as an avenue for team related news and events, without having to be publicized through the media.

As noted before, Jontay Porter did not simply reply to a tweet during the time period that the sampling was taken. Porter never once replied to any account or engaged in any direct replies to his tweets or others. In contrast, Tua Tagovailoa, the quarterback for the University of Alabama, suffered a season ending injury as well. Tagovailoa posted about his injury on social media, but unlike Porter, Tagovailoa has replied to users on his personal twitter account. Something even as simple as a “Thank you guys! Roll Tide!” reply to a user wishing him a get well, shows Tagovailoa interacts with his fans more than Porter.

This is interesting to note, but all of Tagovailoa’s replies are positive and filled with gratitude. Interestingly enough, Porter’s teammate during the 2017-2018 season, Kevin Puryear, replied to users on his personal twitter during basketball season. Puryear’s replies were generally a “thank you” or some type of gratitude in response to fans congratulating him or the team on an accomplishment. While Puryear was healthy and did play throughout the season, Porter opted to not engage with fans throughout his injury during the season.

Porter took a different approach and did not reply to any comments on twitter. In my experience, Porter did this not to avoid interacting with fans, but rather to keep from stirring up any negative replies that could come. While there were many fans wishing Porter a get well, there were also users that did not have the nicest things to say to Porter. For Porter, it was a matter of blocking out all of the noise, both good and bad, and thus he made the decision to not reply to anyone. Porter did not see the replies as beneficial to his account or his brand at the time.

In Browning and Sanderson’s publication, they found that student-athletes perceived critical tweets in varied ways. Some reported that the critical tweets had no effect on them, some reported the tweets bothered them, and others reported that they used the tweets as motivation to excel in their next performance. One athlete in their study shared that “Sometimes I did respond

to them and in a negative way and I'd tweet back to the world and I'd apologize for being upset; I should've handled it a little better you know and people would say "we understand – they don't have a right to say that to you." So really, I'd just block them (on twitter) when they say something negative."

This can be a good indication of why Porter did not reply to any tweets. He could have been trying to not let his emotions get the best of him and make any tweets that he would later regret sending. He could also be just trying to stay away from the critical tweets in general and not look at, as he calls it "noise". This wasn't something that was per say taught by the social media training, it was more so a choice by Porter. The social media training that is done, gives the student-athletes a list of how to generate a larger following and build a brand.

While the social standards Mizzou has included best practices for social media, with their retroactive monitoring policy, it would be wise to put what type of content is generally preferred vs what is generally asked to take down. This would help the athletes to monitor the posts on their own before they even create it and can potentially save the reputation of an athlete. When I concluded my research, I was able to answer the question of "How can college athletic departments help their athletes utilize social media to gain an audience and a voice?".

College athletic departments can:

- 1) encourage their athletes to use social media as a way to build their brand
- 2) encourage athletes to be authentic on Twitter
- 3) give a guide for what type of content is appropriate vs what is not seen as favorable
- 4) advise student-athletes to utilize keywords of their sport and their university

All of these things will help grow the student athlete's presence on social media, helping them gain a voice and avenue for getting their message out to fans. With Twitter being used as a

means of communication, the media can and will set the agenda for what the public wants to know from the athletes. The athlete can use this to their advantage by giving the audience what type of content they want via keywords that the followers want to learn about. This will help the athlete get their message out and their own voice, with the help of their athletic department as well.

With Porter being a reluctant high-profile athlete, someone who did not want the spotlight on them but was simply forced into it, this study was able to find how a similar athlete can handle themselves on social media. Porter was able to tell his side of the story by using his Twitter account, and able to generate a brand and build a following for himself in the future. In the training guide Porter was given, it states “We don’t have a choice on whether we do social media, the question is how will we do it?”. As a high-profile athlete, many athletes want the spotlight on them, Porter did not but gives an example for how all college-athletes can use social media to benefit themselves.

Professionally moving forward, this research has allowed me insight into how I can personally utilize social media in my professional endeavors to gain a following and voice in my own social media. I will also be able to take my knowledge to any other professional or collegiate organizations I work for or with and give them insight on how they can brand their social media and give their athletes an avenue to voice their side of the story.

Appendix A: Field Notes

Week 1 Field Notes

On day one, Tuesday, I arrived to Kauffman stadium and was welcomed by Travis and Cireena who took me on a tour of the stadium and introduced me to my co-workers that would be in the same office as me. After we talked for a bit and I got more familiar with the office, I began getting all of my login accounts and passwords for the websites I would be using to monitor social media.

I was told I would be using satisfi labs to assist with the Kansas City Royals department in the MLB app. I also got all of the logins for the Twitter accounts and for spreadfast which allowed me to have multiple Twitter channels open and see all of the mentions, hashtags, etc. I then was introduced to mlb.olkta.com which is the MLB's website to monitor texts that may come in to the Kansas City Royals. I then also received my email access, access to the fan feedback email, as well as the guest services email accounts.

On Wednesday, I came back in to the office to become more familiar with the websites and use them myself. I wanted to make sure I knew a little more about how to operate each one before I had to use them on Opening Day.

On Thursday, the day was a lot more hectic. It was opening day of the MLB season and fans were already very active on social media. There were tons of questions I had to field on social media about gate times, player autographs, rain delays etc. I never expected so many people to have questions at such an early time in the morning. As the day went on, the questions began to dwindle a bit during the game. I spent the entire day at my desk answering questions in a "strategic communication" way by responding to rude and snarky questions in a polite, and

“royal” like way. I spent all day doing this, ended up being almost a 15-hour work day for the first day of season. Because of this, I did not come in on Friday, and there was no home game.

On Saturday, I began my routine of opening up all social media channels and checking to see what the fans had questions about and what type of content was planned for the day. I didn't have a lot of say in the pictures/video content that was put out, but I had a large say in how the “voice” of the social media channels was portrayed. These first couple of days were just a whirlwind in the office because my supervisor was busy with his own duties, and I did not have all the training I needed but was thrown into the wolves for opening series.

Sunday morning, I came back into the office and performed my regular check of all social media accounts. Nothing was too crazy. It was a pretty similar day to Saturday and was a good first home series for the season.

I came back in on Tuesday and Wednesday for a home series against the Minnesota Twins. Things had calmed down on social media quite a bit. My boss said this was how week day games would be, there weren't as many fans at the game and so there wouldn't be as much fan interaction online. I finished out both days a lot more confident about my job.

Week 2 Field Notes

I was hoping week 2 would be a little calmer than week 1, and it was. Opening day was a whole season in and of itself it seemed like. Having that under my belt, I felt a lot more confident in my role and how I would handle to digital channels moving forward during the season.

On Monday, I came in to work in the afternoon for an evening game that the Royals had against the Seattle Mariners. Today I worked alongside Cireena more, and learned about the guest services side a little more. I was able to learn how my job online helped both Cireena and Travis in the physical side of guest services. I helped field complaints guests had about food,

services, or other general issues and would then put on my “strategic communications” hat and respond in a way that best represented the Kansas City Royals but also allowed guest services to address the issue in person.

I learned and implemented this more on Tuesday and Wednesday. Both days were very similar to Monday. Once Thursday came around, the game was a little busier than the week day games. The weekend games of Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday were now far busier and more made my job more interesting.

I would get to the stadium about 3-4 hours before the game was set to start on game-days and would answer all emails and tweets fans had left while I was away from the office. The general content that I put out on social media this week was more so of what my supervisor wanted but he would let me ease into posting my own content.

During week 2 of my time at the Kansas City Royals, a position with Event Presentation and Production opened up. I spoke with Don Costante, Senior Director of Event Presentation and Production about the possibility of transferring to this position, but we eventually decided it was not the best fit and I should stay in my current role. However, I was able to shadow Don and learn more about the production side of the Kansas City Royals and make great connections. I spoke with Joel Goldberg about broadcasting and got to ask him questions about the industry and get any advice he had for me.

Week 3 Field Notes

On Friday, I came into the stadium and went to my office to check all of the social media platforms, emails, and app notifications that I had. I began to realize this job was pretty redundant from day to day in terms of my general tasks.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday all ran smoothly. Monday, I came into the office with a new mindset since it was a new series. But nothing out of the ordinary happened. I was able to post more on my own and given a bit more creative freedom on how to respond to fans and guests on social media.

On Tuesday, my day was pretty hectic. The weather called for rain and when there is rain in the forecast, the public has more questions on social media. I was pretty active fielding all questions and posting updates from the Royals Twitter account on updates on the game. The Royals ended up post-poning Tuesday's game to Wednesday.

Wednesday, I came in earlier because of the double header, and now there were more questions than before. Since Tuesday's game was postponed to today, there were questions about how ticketing would work. I was able to post the press release that explained how the ticketing to both games would work.

I came back into work on Thursday, and I was pretty drained from the long week already. I've also begun to notice that what the Royals post for content can be a bit redundant.

Week 4 Field Notes

On Friday I came into the office for the series against the Philadelphia Phillies. I looked over the event notes for the weekend series to see if we had anything special happening that I should be aware of. I saw that this was the first Friday night fireworks and buck night promotion, so I knew to be aware of those for questions, as well as I should make a post about these on social media. I collaborated with my supervisor on a post to push out about the fireworks and the buck night promotion ahead of the game.

Saturday, I had a more difficult time running social media simply because the Royals lost 0-7, and it makes it hard to produce a lot of content when the team is not playing well. This

taught me how the Royals handle things whenever the team is not performing well. The same thing happened on Sunday, so I was able to learn what the Royals do. They tend to focus on the little positives in the game, whether that is a hitting streak one of the players has or general statistics that each player is doing well at. This was cool to see how they handle a poor position within the team losing but turn it into little positives on social media.

I did not come in to the office on Monday. On Tuesday, the Royals had the opposite type of play happen. The Royals won 11-5 so there was a lot of content that could be produced. I was able to observe and learn how to make each positive thing exciting without making it repetitive. With 11 runs, it can easily get repetitive, so I was able to learn how the Royals handle this type of success and still make it creative and original.

Wednesday and Thursday there was not a lot of fan interaction online, and it was quiet in the office. The Royals lost both days and on Thursday the team lost 16-1. This again went back to how I was able to learn how the social team handles such a brutal loss.

Week 5 Field Notes

On Friday I started coming to the office earlier so that I could watch and observe the Royals in-house broadcast show and better learn that department and how its operated. Don Costante was really great about answering any questions and letting me learn. My supervisor, Travis Bryant was very helpful in allowing me to learn different aspects of the Royals game-day environment. After the pre-game show, I then went back to my computer to work with the digital side of the guest's experience.

Saturday was the busiest day I have had since opening day. With the Yankees being in town, the Royals fans came out in abundance. With more fans in the stadium, comes more online

presence by fans as well. Today I spent a lot of time at my desk simply answering and responding to tweets that my supervisor could not get to since there were so many.

Sunday, there were again a lot of fans. But on Sunday's the Royals have family fun day, so there are a lot of kids out. I learned how the Royals provide a family friendly atmosphere not only in the stadium, but also in their online social media presence. We used a lot of pop culture references in tweets today such as baby shark lyrics, Star Wars, and other current event things.

I did not come in to the office on Monday. Tuesday was a new series with the Red Sox. I again came in early to watch the pre-game broadcast show and observe how things ran. I also got to observe the Fox Sports pregame show instead of just the Royals in-house broadcast.

Wednesday and Thursday, I came in early both days again to watch the pre-game shows. Both days were pretty slow on social media and I was starting to notice how the team losing games impacted how fans acted on social media. We started receiving more negative and rude comments on Twitter, which I learned that sometimes not every comment deserves a response. This was another thing I learned in the strategic communication realm of this job, you have to pick what battles you want to fight.

Week 6 Field Notes

On Friday, I came into work and really noticed that things were becoming very repetitive. I continued to look for other things to do and learn, as well as other departments to learn from. I was able to interact with one of my coworkers, Jenn a lot. She is over most of the game-day staff so I began to learn more of that department just to get an overall sense of the organization.

Saturday and Sunday both were pretty repetitive with losses on both days. I am starting to see how hard it is to maintain a positive on-line presence when everyone around the team is feeling the losses. It's really hard to maintain a positive attitude and look at the positive side of

the team whenever the fans are complaining all of the time on social media and the losses don't stop. This started to show me just how difficult it is to be in this type of position when a team is not performing well.

Tuesday, I helped plan tweets and social activity that we would send out whenever the team played in Omaha this week. I also had to interact with a lot of fans with questions about tickets to the Omaha game and how that would all work. This was a busier day because this was the first time the MLB team would play in Omaha so there were a lot of questions to be answered. I spent the afternoon and evening planning how things would be executed from a social standpoint with the team technically being "home" but not being in Kansas City.

Tuesday was also a T-shirt give away and there were a lot of questions about how fans could get the t shirts or if they got the wrong size etc. I quickly had to learn all of the answers to these t-shirt questions that I would be asked for the rest of the season.

Week 7 Field Notes

On Thursday the Minnesota Twins came to Kansas City for a series for the weekend. This was the second to last series before the all-star game, which meant that the all-star ballot voting was almost active. A lot of the social media content we put out was encouraging fans to vote for Royals players that were considered for the all-star game. We used a lot of bitly websites in order to track if the link was actually being used that we sent out on social media.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday I continued to help push the all-star voting with fans. It was our primarily focus besides the in-game updates. I noticed there was a lot more positivity during this time, and fans began to rally behind players on the Royals team that they thought should be an all-star. It was a nice change of pace from the hateful comments we had been receiving. I was

able to learn how this marketing campaign was phased out and the steps it took to promote voting for these players via social media.

Tuesday and Wednesday, I learned how the Royals handle birthday and other special occasion requests on social media. We would get some requests throughout the season about doing special shout outs on social media for a guest or fan's birthday. I learned how to redirect the fans on social media to the guest experience department and there they would provide a gift bag and birthday or anniversary certificate.

Week 8 Field Notes

On Friday, I came to the office for the second half of the season now that the All-Star game had been held and break was over. I really began to notice how repetitive my job has become, and how the fans slowly stopped engaging with the team's social media accounts as much. Some days I would feel like I was not doing much, but it is hard to post or interact with fans when there is not a lot of content to post.

Saturday, I started learning about how the Royals social media team handles the trade deadline that the MLB has. With players being traded, released, signed, etc. every day, the social media team has a lot of responsibility to make sure the fans are aware of these changes within the team. I observed how on the fly, the graphic designers would have to make a graphic, sometimes in the middle of the game, if a player got traded or released. I began to see how this job really has changing priorities and deadlines all the time.

Sunday, the Royals had characters from Sesame Street at the stadium, so we utilized that a lot in social media. I learned how little activities or special events throughout the stadium can help spice up the social media scene, even whenever the team isn't performing as well on the field.

Monday, I started learning how to create gifs for Twitter and utilizing them in the creative process. This was a lot of fun for me because I enjoy visuals on social media so seeing how they are made was really cool. The Royals starting pitcher, Jake Junis had 10 strike outs, so we highlighted that and I was able to create gifs and cut video clips of him on the field.

On Tuesday I came in to the office and performed my regular checks of all social media accounts. During the game, one of the players hit the fastest inside-the-park home run of the season. This was really cool because now I could use what I had learned on Monday with pulling video clips and use them for this on social media.

Wednesday and Thursday were pretty similar. I didn't learn anything new on these days and just stuck to my normal routine of answering questions on social media and helping post content. There were a lot more positive fans on social media now that the team had been winning some and it felt a lot more inviting to get on social media.

Week 9 Field Notes

On Friday through Sunday the Cleveland Indians were in town and I began to observe online how their social media team interacts with fans online. I noticed that their social media is a lot more personalized and the Indians accounts often times is sarcastic and makes jokes on social media. This was a totally different concept and image of what the Royals portray on social media and it was really interesting to see the difference between the two organizations, even with how they covered the same game.

Sunday, an incident occurred during the game where one of the Indians pitchers was angry and threw the ball over the wall in centerfield. Fans instantly took to social media to post about this, and it was really interesting to see how the Indians v how the Royals responded and posted about this.

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday the attendance was really low for an MLB game. I was actually a little bored during these games simply because we were losing all of them, there wasn't a lot of content to tweet about and there were not a lot of fans interacting. It really opened my eyes to how different each series is within baseball and how much content can vary from day to day. It is definitely a field that takes a lot of creativity on how to keep things exciting during the down times.

Week 10 Field Notes

I did not come in to the office Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday because I was over hours. When I came back on Monday I had to prepare for the home series against the St. Louis Cardinals. Monday, I came in for a few hours to answer all questions fans had. Since St. Louis is one of the bigger series, there were a lot of questions, but I did not post any creative content on Monday.

When I came in on Tuesday there were a lot of notifications on my computer. I read over the event notes for the series against the Cardinals today and tomorrow. I noticed we had a lot of large groups coming to the game and that there was a higher number of expected attendances at these two games than had been at mid-week games prior. Tuesday was one of those days where there isn't a lot of content to put out because the team did not score a run. Wednesday went the same way as well. Not much excitement.

Friday, I began again by watching the pre-game broadcast to see if much had changed since I watched it before. I took little notes on how the hosts engaged with each other but overall did not see many changes. Once the game started, I began answering questions again and helping with the content production.

Saturday and Sunday were a battle mentally. I had become bored and felt like I wasn't learning much more than what I had at the beginning of the season. I liked that my supervisor wasn't micromanaging me and allowed me to do my duties, but I was also becoming very tired of the repetitiveness and the lack of interaction on the social media channels. I felt like sometimes when there wasn't much content, I wasn't doing much good there.

Week 11 Field Notes

On Monday my supervisor had me create an excel spreadsheet of all of the special occasions and birthday requests we had received so far in the season. This took me most of my shift to finish. I also had to make a spreadsheet of any accommodations we had done for guests with disabilities that had reached out to us via social media.

Tuesday, I spent a lot of time working in the MLB app. For the majority of the season, the MLB app had a "bot" that would answer the questions fans asked it.. But now the app was not working properly so I had to jump in and help with the MLB app and engage with fans that the bot would normally engage with.

Wednesday and Thursday were very low attended games. School was now back in session and there were not many fans at the games at all. The social media was pretty quiet and my job had become very easy, simply because there was not a lot for me to do these days

Friday was one of those days where there wasn't a lot of content because we were losing so bad. I stuck primarily to answering questions and making sure MLB app worked properly to field questions coming in that way. There were definitely times I wanted to respond to people with a sarcastic comment whenever they asked a sarcastic question, but I had to maintain my professionalism and realize I was representing the Royals and their voice.

Saturday, I got to use more of the video clip cutting that I had learned before to show a highlight play that one of the players had. Most of the content that is pulled is from the broadcast and isn't new angles, which I think should be done.

Sunday was pretty standard. We had another family Funday Sunday, so most of the content was geared more towards kids or families. I spent majority of the day monitoring social media but took a little bit of time to watch the Fox Sports announcers and how they cover the game from the booth. After the game when I was done with my duties, I went to watch the post-game show that Fox Sports put on.

Week 12 Field Notes

I came in for the last series of the season on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. I could really tell everyone in the office was ready for the season to be over. The social media presence had dwindled a lot and fans were no longer really interacting online. The content that we put out was still very standard, and a bit stale, in my opinion. I spent most of the time helping my co-workers wrap up their final duties for the season and get all the content we needed to out there.

This was pretty standard stuff such as final statistics for each player etc. I didn't learn anything new this week.



March 12, 2019

Michaela Bennett

Dear Michaela,

Congratulations on your decision to accept our seasonal part-time offer of employment as Digital Guest Services Representative with the Kansas City Royals beginning March 18th, 2019. Your wage will be \$14.75 an hour and is paid bi-weekly.

Your employment will also be governed by and subject to the Kansas City Royals personnel policies and procedures which the Royals reserve the right to implement and modify at any time without notice. One such policy concerns your obligation to keep confidential the proprietary, non-public and/or confidential information that you will be given access to as an employee of the Royals.

Again, welcome aboard. We are excited to have you join the Royals family!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Miriam Maiden".

Miriam Maiden
Director-Human Resources

Appendix B: Self-Evaluation

When I started at the Kansas City Royals, I was really excited. I had worked in professional sports before with the Kansas City Chiefs but I had never worked in baseball or for a professional organization during the season. I did not know entirely what this job would entail day to day but I knew with sports each day is different and that excited me. My supervisors, Travis Bryant and Cireena White, allowed me to make the job what I wanted it to be. I was able to learn from both of them and then take my own creativity and run with it as well.

I did not expect to be working with fans and guests as much as I was, but it allowed me to grow a deeper understanding of how strategic communication is used in many different areas of sports. I learned how every aspect of a company is expected to act and communicate in a certain way. While I was primarily working on social media with guest experience, I was also interacting with fans on all of the Kansas City Royals social media platforms. I was able to gain knowledge of how to keep a uniform voice and online presence throughout all channels and maintain the standard that the Kansas City Royals place on their company and image. I wish I would've had more freedom to post my creative content ideas or that the Royals would stray from the norm a little more.

During my time at the Kansas City Royals, I gained valuable experience in strategic communications and also made important connections within the organization. As the season was winding down, I began to reach out to these connections I had made to discuss more career options. I was very fortunate in finding Mr. Don Costante who is the Senior Director of Event Presentation and Production with the Kansas City Royals. Mr. Costante has taken me under his wing and been a great mentor in my sports journalism career. He continues to help me on a daily basis with networking, job opportunities, and personal growth. Overall, this job taught me many

different aspects of strategic communication and social media, but also allowed me to gain valuable connections that I will use for years to come in my career; and I think that is something that is very valuable, especially in this industry.

Appendix C: Project Proposal

Method

For this study I used a qualitative analysis approach involving content analysis and semi-structured interviews. Sonia Ospina defines qualitative research as “a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning” (Ospina, 2004). Systematic for this definition means “planned, ordered and public”, empirical means that this type of inquiry is “grounded in the world of experience”, and inquiry into meaning says, “researchers try to understand how others make sense of their experience” (Ospina, 2004). Qualitative researchers “study things in their natural setting, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (2004).

There are several reasons that student-athletes were chosen for this study. First, unlike their professional counterparts, student-athletes have much stricter monitoring by the NCAA and their athletic departments, and consequences attached to their Twitter use (Sanderson, 2012). Whereas professional athletes are fined and censured for perceivably inappropriate tweets, they still maintain their ability to play – yet with one tweet a student-athlete can have a much different outcome.

Texas Tech University football player Marlon Williams lost his social media privileges and was punished by school officials after tweeting “wonder why I’m still in this meeting room when the head coach can’t even be on time to his on meeting” (Twitter). A bit more excessive was Courtney Fortson from the University of Arkansas basketball team who tweeted “Im getting it at workouts like a dude who doesn’t understand the word no from a drunk girl lol” (Twitter). This tweet got him suspended indefinitely by the team. Another example is University of Northern Alabama football player Bradley Patterson, who tweeted “Take that n**** off the tv,

we wanna watch football!” in regard to a speech by President Obama (Twitter). The team was swift to kick him off and his account was later deleted.

Ohio State University Football player Cardale Jones tweeted “Why should we have to go to class if we came here to play FOOTBALL, we aint come to play SCHOOL, classes are POINTLESS” (Twitter). This tweet resulted in the quarterback being sidelined for the next game. Another player sidelined after a tweet was Western Kentucky University football player Antonio Andrews who tweeted “Same ppl who said we suck and will never win a game are the same mf trying party wit us and saying we knew y’all could do it! #FallBack” (Twitter). And when Elon College football player Jamal Shuman took to Twitter to rant about his lack of playing time, he was suspended indefinitely.

Secondly, student-athletes are college students, a demographic in which inappropriate social-media postings have often become viral and praised due to their “humor” or “fame”. When student-athletes tweet something that is perceived as inappropriate by athletic department personnel, the athlete may fail to understand why there is a problem. This is often a result from athletic departments’ failing to define what constitutes and “inappropriate” social-media message (Sanderson, 2012).

Third, student-athletes are in the spotlight and have to interact with fans, media, and other personnel unlike other college students. Through social media sites such as Twitter, fans can interact with student-athletes in both positive and hostile ways. The desire for fandom may overpower the realization that the target of the attack is an amateur, but it is plausible that student-athletes are quote cognizant of what is being said about them via social media (Browning and Sanderson, 2012).

To answer the research questions, I looked at Jontay Porter, formerly of the Missouri men's basketball team of 2017-2019 Twitter account, and do a content analysis. A content analysis is appropriate for this study because it is "a research technique used to make replicable and valid inferences by interpreting and coding textual material" (Ospina, 2004).

Jontay Porter from the Missouri men's basketball team was used as the sample because of the high-profile Twitter content that he generated. Porter came to Missouri after reclassifying to graduate high school a year early and enroll at the university to play alongside his brother Michael Porter, Jr.

As a top NBA recruit, Michael Porter, Jr., was sidelined in the 2017-2018 season due to a hip injury. Porter, Jr., then took to social media to debunk rumors of how long he would be out for. The online presence by him generated a large amount of content based off of his tweets alone, since neither him nor the Missouri athletic department would speak to the media about his injury.

Jontay Porter had a similar situation for the 2018-2019 season. As a top NBA recruit, Jontay withdrew from the 2018 NBA draft in order to return to Missouri for another season. However, during a pre-season scrimmage, Porter tore his ACL and MCL, sidelining him for the remainder of the 2018-2019 season.

The 18-month period was chosen for this study because it was the time period that Porter was with Mizzou Basketball and provides a high volume of data during this time. Fans and followers tend to interact more with player accounts during their season of play due to the high focus on the athlete and sport at that time, so I expect a higher volume during those months.

The purpose of this research is to determine how college athletes can use Twitter to portray their thoughts and voice their side of the story. With student-athletes taking to their own

social media outlets to release personal news and information, the content they put out highly influences their brand. I collected tweets from Jontay Porter of the University of Missouri basketball team to analyze how he used Twitter and agenda setting to accurately tell his side of the story.

In addition to an overall qualitative assessment, I performed a small quantitative assessment of Porter's tweets. I looked at his tweets, the time of day the tweet was created, the number of likes it received, the number of retweets it received, and the number of replies the tweet received.

I used both a qualitative and quantitative assessment to answer the following questions: How trained is he by Missouri basketball sport information director? What are the topics he tweets about? What types of tweets get the most traction? From the tweets collected during the 18-month period I coded them for themes that arose throughout the contextual analysis.

After the tweets were collected, I then conducted two semi-structured interviews. One with the Missouri basketball sport information director to find out what type and to what extent the players are trained on social media; and the other with Jontay Porter himself. This type of interview "has a rigorous set of questions which does not allow one to divert, is open, and allows new ideas to be brought up during the interview as a result of the interviewee answers" (Ospina, 2004).

I conducted these interviews over the phone. Throughout the interviews, I tried to maintain a level of comfort with both subjects, so that they would feel comfortable sharing information and personal thoughts with me. This type of semi-structured interview allowed me the freedom to tailor my questions to the interview context or situation and to the answers that the subjects provided me with.

From this research, I will be able to determine how student athletes can use Twitter to gain a voice. This could then be published and given to Missouri sport information directors to allow them insight on how their student athletes utilize their training, and what they can do to further help their athletes.

Coding

-Quantitative: I looked at of number of likes, comments, retweets of Porter's individual tweets.

-Qualitative: I identified keywords before and during data collection for the content analysis. I analyzed the interviews with both subjects.

Keywords: basketball, mizzou, nba

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Appendix E: Mizzou Athletics Social Standards



THE POWER OF SOCIAL MEDIA

- ▼ 3.2 billion users worldwide (42% of world's population is on social media). Below is a breakdown of percentage of generations that are active on social media:
 - 90.4% of Millennials
 - 77.5% of Generation X
 - 48.2% of Baby Boomers
- ▼ 2:22 - the average time per user spent on social media per day. To put that mark into perspective, in 2015, the average American watched 4:52 hours of television. As social media has continued to emerge, television viewership has decreased by nearly an hour to 3:58 in 2018. That's because people spend more time on social media.
- ▼ The average American scrolls through 300 feet of social media content per day.
- ▼ 73% of marketers believe that social media marketing has been somewhat effective or very effective for their business (Buffer, 2019).
- ▼ 54% of social browsers use social media to research products (GlobalWebIndex, 2018).
- ▼ 71% of consumers who have positive interactions with a brand on social will recommend that brand to a friend.
- ▼ IG stories are the largest trend in social media right now. More than 500 million IG stories are posted per day in 2019, up from 150 millions just three years ago.
- ▼ 91% of social media users access social channels via a mobile device. 80% of time on social sites is via mobile.
- ▼ 8 seconds: The average attention span of a social media user. How do you stand out and captivate in that eight seconds?

KEY METRICS TO MONITOR

- ▼ There is a lot of data to sift through when looking at the performance of a social media post or account. Here are some key tips to gauge your success:
- ▼ **Measure the Reach of Your Post:** All three major platforms can break this down for you by post. See which of your posts reach a wide audience and which ones don't. Design your social plan around which posts perform well!
- ▼ **Interaction Rate %:** This is the percentage of your follower base that engages in each of your posts. This is how your content appears on other timelines. If this number is low, re-think your content or messaging. If you have a high engagement rate, you are more like to connect with your fans and engage your audience.
- ▼ **Growth Rate %:** This is how fast your account is growing in comparison to your total follower base. This is not to be confused with the total number of new followers. For example - 125 new followers for an account that has 100,000 followers isn't very impressive. But, 125 new followers to an account that has 4,500 followers is a big deal. This number varies by platform, but is important to monitor. The larger your growth rate, the larger your audience.

AS SOCIAL MEDIA EVOLVES INTO THE PRIMARY WAY THAT INSTITUTIONS COMMUNICATE, HERE ARE SOME HELPFUL POINTERS TO REMEMBER:

SOCIAL GUIDELINES
(official accounts)

WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE ON WHETHER WE DO SOCIAL MEDIA, THE QUESTION IS HOW WELL WE DO IT?

REPRESENT & PROTECT MIZZOU'S BRAND

- ▼ #Mizzou nearly every time we mention our teams, programs, etc.
 - No Tigers, we, ours, ladies, etc.
 - We are #Mizzou – use the hashtag
- ▼ Use the Tiger emoji
- ▼ Brand Your Pictures with official logos
- ▼ Share content from official Mizzou Athletics sources - limit sharing of outside stakeholders. Let Mizzou own the message
- ▼ Every piece of content should meet the brand policies created by our design team.

HAVE A CONSISTENT MESSAGE

- ▼ Have a message that matches the voice of your head coaches and be intentional with that message and how you communicate it.

GIVE YOUR STUDENT-ATHLETES A VOICE

- ▼ The best people to tell our student-athletes' stories are the student-athletes themselves. Let them talk into the camera, let them be the voice of the content

HAVE A PLAN!

- ▼ When it comes to social media, we must be forward-thinking and be proactive about a dissemination plan. Many of our main account managers have social media plans that go extend weeks out. This helps content creators plan their weeks and prioritize projects while eliminating last-minute asks that tend to hamper creativity.

DON'T JUST SAY 'CAN WE GET THIS OUT?'

- ▼ Who are you trying to reach? What is the best platform for that reach? What assets do you need created to reach those consumers? What time of day should this be posted. All of these things matter and it's not as easy as requesting 'can you get this out?'
- ▼ You reach a different audience on each platform (IG, Twitter, Facebook) so identify who you are trying to reach first.
- ▼ Develop assets based on the desired audience – for example: if it is an Instagram post, you should have content sized to fill the feed and the story. For Facebook, the video should be 16x9 and longform. For Twitter, it's best to develop short-engaging clips.

ENTERTAIN FIRST. INFORM SECOND.

- ▼ This one is simple. We need to entertain our fans on social media. Engage your community and connect to them emotionally. The monetization will come from that.

USE MICRO-STORYTELLING

- ▼ How can you tell what used to a five-minute story in 45 seconds or less? This will maximize engagement while ensuring that people get the whole story.

SOCIAL STANDARDS



@MIZZOUATHLETICS   

TWITTER

- ▼ Twitter holds a large share of today's social media footprint. No social media platform has the ability to bring live reaction from across the world right to your phone, tablet or computer. It is the best platform for fans to follow during games as it captures the moment more instantly than any of the major three platforms.
- ▼ More than any of the three platforms, Twitter is still the premier platform for real-time content. That means we will always have a need to put dynamic, engaging, eye-catching content on Twitter while capitalizing on the moment. Here are some things to keep in mind when using Twitter:
 - ▼ **Share Relevant Content:** Don't just tweet to tweet - have something to say.
 - ▼ **Focus On Getting RTd:** 78% of consumer engagement with major brands is through RTs. Design your tweets to be retweetable. In order to do that you must...
 - ▼ **Think About Your Content:** In order to get RTd, your content must be worthy of your social community sharing on their channels. The success of any Twitter account is about the quality of content going out on the account.
 - ▼ **Focus on Engagement:** Find a voice that relates to who you are trying to reach, create an emotional connection, and create relationships with your coaches and student-athletes to make content that engages your stakeholders (ticket holders, donors, recruits, etc.).
 - ▼ **Learn About Twitter Analytics:** Every account has this - use it to maximize the reach of your tweets. The dashboard breaks down every post on your accounts. Use the data and make a plan. Again, the key areas you should analyze are interaction rate, growth rate and total impressions.
 - ▼ **Pay attention to trends:** Is there a social media trend going around that day? If so, and it's getting great engagement on other accounts - capitalize on it and do something creative!

THE STRENGTH OF MIZZOU'S SOCIAL MEDIA WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE STRENGTH OF OUR CONTENT.

FAQ: HOW DO I TAKE VIDEO FROM A TWEET ON ANOTHER ACCOUNT AND TWEET IT ON MY TIMELINE NATIVELY?

A: If you see a video on an account that you would like to put on yours, click and hold the video until options to share the video pop up on the bottom. Then click 'Tweet Video' and it will pop up in your compose window. Type your caption and tweet it. *Use this sparingly* as you don't want to rip off too many other account's content too often.

TWITTER IS THE BEST PLATFORM FOR TIMELY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND INFORMING MEDIA. IT ALSO NEEDS TO BE A SPACE WHERE WE ENTERTAIN FIRST, THEN INFORM SECOND.

**BEST
TWITTER
PRACTICES**

BE SHORT AND CONCISE

- ▼ Just because you have 280 characters, you don't have to use all of them
 - Simple
 - To the point
 - Talk in bullets
 - Keep text on graphics to a minimum

BE CREATIVE WITH THE CAPTION

- ▼ No matter how good the content is, a bad caption can turn people away from the tweet.
- ▼ The caption should give folks a reason to click the content - tease it.
- ▼ Use emojis.
- ▼ If tweeting a graphic, the caption should be different from text on graphic.

WHEN LIVE TWEETING, REMEMBER TO LIMIT THE AMOUNT

- ▼ Over-tweeting and play-by-play can get people to unfollow you.
- ▼ Protect the consumer - they don't want to see 50 tweets in a row on their timeline. Tweet the highlights. Tweet content.

LET VIDEO LIVE NATIVELY

- ▼ Upload video directly to Twitter - no YouTube Links, etc.

TRY NOT TO OVER-POST

- ▼ Focus on the content driving engagement. You want a great interaction rate on your posts, so over-posting is not the way to go. How can you tell your story in one post that is engaging for your fan base?

DON'T RT EVERYTHING

- ▼ OWN YOUR MESSAGE. Quote tweets maximize the engagement on YOUR accounts. Posting the video link to your account increases your engagement, not the other account's engagement.

PROOFREAD!

- ▼ There is no 'edit' button, so Tweet carefully.

SOCIAL STANDARDS



@MIZZOUATHLETICS   

INSTAGRAM

- ▶ Instagram currently has the most momentum of any of the three major social media accounts. It is a hit with Millennials due to its mobile-friendly platform, its image-first approach and its overall easiness of use. Twitter and Facebook all started as a 'caption-based' platform - Instagram started as an 'image-based' platform focusing on dynamic visuals.
- ▶ Instagram followers are more of a *community* than an *audience*. Therefore, engagement opportunities are plentiful on Instagram. For a major brand like Mizzou, as many as half of our entire community will engage in a single post.
- ▶ Instagram stories are one of the most popular trends in social media currently. More than 500 million were posted last year alone on the platform. As a major brand, these stories provide a private space for your community to engage with you, away from all of the comments and negativity that have led to people fleeing Facebook and Twitter for the IG space. **Use the stories to own your message!**
- ▶ Instagram is the ultimate recruiting tool to reach the younger generation. It has the energy of Facebook back when it was limited to just college users. It has a novelty that the other platforms lack. Use it to build a community.
- ▶ At the bottom of the page are some quality examples of telling stories through visual content. Looking at all three, there is more to each than just the image. It's a great glimpse of micro-storytelling through imagery/video.

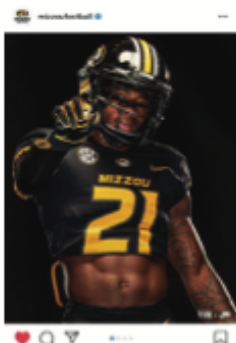
AS A MAJOR BRAND, HOW CAN WE USE INSTAGRAM TO ESTABLISH A COMMUNITY AND CONNECT WITH OUR STAKEHOLDERS?

**ENGAGING
CONTENT
EXAMPLES**

BEST INSTAGRAM PRACTICES

1. Use high quality images and engaging visuals. This can include pictures, graphics and video - but keep it image and video heavy. Also, when picking a thumbnail for your video, be sure to pick one that reflects the content in the video.
2. Know your audience and post the content they want. Tell engaging stories with your visual content through micro-storytelling. A dynamic photo is a perfect example of micro-storytelling - how can you tell your brand's story in a single image? **Share an Experience!**
3. Resize your images to fit the platform - 16x9 is not best. Try cropping your images to 4x5, 4x4 or the story size (1080x1920 pixels).
4. Find the right balance between inspirational vs. promotional content. We all want to sell tickets and reach different stakeholders, but IG is about creating a connection. IG is so popular because it is a space where people feel they are not constantly being marketed to, but rather creating an emotional connection to a brand. Create that connection with dynamic content, then pick your places to market. Remember - entertain, then inform. **Appeal to Emotion!**
5. Be active in the comments. Engage your community, especially those who are consistently posting positive things in your comments. Remember, 71% of consumers who have a positive interaction with a brand on social will recommend it to a friend.
6. Use Stories! There is no better way to tell your real-live story on IG than stories - and consumers look at them more than your feed. The opportunities are endless, and it is a safer space to share your best content.

IN THE WORLD OF BUSINESS, A.B.C. HAS STOOD FOR ALWAYS BE CLOSING. IN SOCIAL MEDIA IT MEANS: ALWAYS BE CONNECTING.



SOCIAL STANDARDS



@MIZZOUATHLETICS   

FACEBOOK

- ▼ Facebook still holds the lion's share of the world's social media users. While IG has more momentum and Twitter has the luxury of being the best real-time social space, Facebook holds the title of the largest audience.
- ▼ 1.49 billion people use Facebook per day and nearly half of those access it via mobile only.
- ▼ Facebook.com, despite being used primarily on mobile, is still the world's third-most visited website.
- ▼ 68% of Americans use Facebook while the next-highest social platform is Instagram at 35%. That means you have the chance of reaching the most people on Facebook.
- ▼ Despite the fact that the majority of Americans use Facebook, only 35% of Facebook's ad audience is under the age of 25. That means you are reaching a much older demographic on Facebook than you are on Instagram and Twitter. You need to cater your content around an older audience.
- ▼ 41% of Americans age 65 or older use Facebook. That number has doubled since 2012. In addition, just two years ago, 71% of American teens were using Facebook. That number has declined to just 50% this year - Facebook is trending to older audiences.
- ▼ There are 80 million small- to medium-sized business pages on Facebook. How are you going to stand out?
- ▼ The average time someone spends looking at a video post on Facebook is five times longer than a static or photo post! Video sells on Facebook.
- ▼ Facebook lost a tremendous amount of 'trust' in its community by selling consumer info to developers and other companies. In fact, one survey by Statista suggests that nearly 40% of Facebook users don't trust Facebook; the next-closest social app on the survey checked in at just 8%. As a brand, you need to be aware of that distrust and keep the consumer in mind.

ONLINE IS OLD NEWS. ONLINE IN SOCIAL MEDIA IS TODAY'S NEWS. SOCIAL MEDIA IS NOT A SUBSET OF THE INTERNET - IT IS THE INTERNET.

FAQ: IS IT OKAY TO POST THE SAME CAPTION TO ALL THREE MAJOR PLATFORMS?

A: Do you have a post that is going out on all three major social media platforms? That's fine - just know that the caption for each post should be something to consider. It doesn't always pay to copy and paste the same caption across all three platforms. On Facebook, it's okay to expand upon what is a simpler caption on Twitter. And of course, IG does not allow links in posts, so don't use them. Take the extra time to make the copy specific to each channel you are posting on.

FACEBOOK IS A POWERFUL LEAD-GENERATION TOOL THAT IS ESSENTIAL FOR MONETIZING OUR SOCIAL MEDIA REACH:

BEST FACEBOOK PRACTICES

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

- ▼ Facebook does a great job of informing you on the demographics of your follower base. Look at that and decide the type of content that works best on your page.

CREATE A CAPTIVATING PROFILE AND USE THE 'ABOUT' SECTION OF YOUR PROFILE

- ▼ That means fill out everything on there to make your profile as legit as possible. Don't leave areas unfilled. Take the time to make your profile look like someone who cares greatly about their page - much like many of the traditional Facebook users do. This will make your page very relevant to users.

USE YOUR CALL-TO-ACTION BUTTON

- ▼ This is a big tool as we look to sell tickets. On any page, it's located right below the cover photo on the left side of the page. A great practice is to click the 'Shop Now' option and link to your ticket page. There are other options, so find which one works best for you page, and use it.

USE VIDEO TO TELL STORIES

- ▼ Video is the most popular post on Facebook and retention rate is very high for Facebook's demographic. That being said, use the platform to tell your best, traditional stories, features or other moving content that will connect you to your fans.

TAKE THE TIME TO CAPTION EACH PHOTO

- ▼ When you post multiple images or create a gallery - take the extra step to caption each photo and let the consumer know which student-athletes are in the photo.

USE EVENTS TO MARKET GAMES, ETC.

- ▼ Have you ever received an invite to an event via Facebook? Most people have. Marketers should use this tool for every event for their assigned teams. These generate buzz about your game or event, so use them.

NEVER SPAM YOUR FOLLOWERS

- ▼ While Facebook is the best for targeted marketing, you must not spam your customers. Remember, it's a community first. Connect with them first.

SOCIAL STANDARDS



SOCIAL POLICIES

1. FOR ANY POST – PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU ARE USING MIZZOU’S CONTENT CREATORS -OR- THE BRANDING GUIDELINES THAT THE BRANDING TEAM HAVE PUT TOGETHER.

- The University of Missouri Athletics brand is distinguished by a simple philosophy: to foster a premier championship athletics program. This concept creates a cohesive identity system that not only respects university traditions, but also looks ahead to the promise of a great future. Mizzou's branding guidelines can be found at MUTigers.com/BrandIdentity.

2. WHEN ASKING FOR SOMETHING TO BE POSTED, ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE THE FOLLOWING INCLUDED:

- What is the intent of the post and does it align with our social media goals (entertain, connect, engage) or does it fall into the inform category?
 - If it falls into the 'inform' category – how can you create an engaging post that protects the consumer.
- Intended audience: Who are you trying to reach?
- Do you have the assets: Do you have graphics, video, etc., that meet the dimensions of the platform you are hoping to utilize? If the message is to live on all three platforms, do you have assets that will fit all three? Remember – what's good for Facebook is not best for IG or Twitter.
- When would you like the post to go out?
- Is there a call to action on the post? If so, what is the link you would like included?

3. THINK ABOUT THE PRIORITY AND IMPORTANCE OF YOUR POST.

- Everyone thinks that the project that they are working on specifically is the most important thing. In the world of social media, we need to take time to think about how the message you are looking to communicate meshes with the messaging on the channels you are trying to use.
 - Does the message align with the main goals of that channel?
 - Are we posting this message with the best interest of the social community in mind or the best interest of our department?
 - Are we posting just to post to say it's out there and check a box?
- **PROTECT THE CONSUMER.**

4. GIVE TIME FOR PLANNING AND SCHEDULING

- Social media for a brand is different from your personal accounts – you don't just post as you think about it. When we have multiple different external areas, 20 different sports and 500-plus student-athletes, it is important to be proactive when asking for a post. Again – think about how it fits into the social plan for the major accounts and when would be the best time to post. The more time we have to work ahead, the better content we can create and the broader of an audience we can reach.
- This ensures that we can fit your post in the social plan.

5. NEVER USE YOUR PERSONAL ACCOUNTS TO POST CONTENT THAT SHOULD BE LIVING ON OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS

- Does your post give inside access to something that hasn't been shared on an official channel? **WELL DON'T POST IT – SHARE IT WITH THE SOCIAL TEAM!**
- We want to grow our official accounts, so we should never miss an opportunity to post those things on the official accounts.
- This takes planning – make sure content creators and the social media team are in the loop for these things and we can add it to the coverage schedule.

SOCIAL STANDARDS

Appendix F: Interview Transcripts

A) Subject: Nick Joos

ME: I know the NCAA has their own social media policies, but how does each school dictate their own policies?

SUBJECT: Good question, we have policies that we have established. I can send them to you and share them with you.

ME: That would be great.

SUBJECT: That that would probably help answer a lot of questions. Hang on just a second and I will send them to you now... okay I just sent them to you.

ME: Got them, thank you. I just have a couple more questions then. Obviously there has been players from various schools that lash out on Twitter. If a player does that, what are the consequences of that or does it vary by school?

SUBJECT: I think it varies by school. I think that you have to be, you got to be a little careful. First of all, I would have the strat comm people or staff talk to the student athletes and try to get them to A) remove the post. Especially depending upon how visible they are and things like that. But there is a good chance that that could find its way to the media, which wouldn't be the greatest thing in the world. I think you talk to them. We obviously do training with them at the start of the year, some teams more than others. So you hope that all of your efforts are not in vain and that they wouldn't do that. But, you know at some point, depending on how bad the damage is and depending on what was said, I suppose it could rise to a level of suspension or something along those lines.

ME: With the training that you said you guys do with each team, is it more just this is what we expect of you or obviously you give them the guidelines, but is it a this is what you can and can't post or what does the training consist of?

SUBJECT: A combination. We'll never tell them what they can and can't post. I mean there is a thing called the First Amendment. So we would just try to give them the best practices. And we try to take it more from a positive standpoint of: it's a great platform to build your personal brand for the future. Rather than, and to communicate and build the brand of the program you're representing and the institute.

ME: So would you say you encourage the players more to build their personal brand?

SUBJECT: Mhm.

ME: How do you handle when players go on their social media to talk about their injuries when they contradict what the media is saying just to get their voice out there?

SUBJECT: We work with the student athletes when they're injured or there's issues and try to encourage them to save the company line, you don't want to reveal information that could be used to help the opponent. Injury information, kind of a protect the team mentality if you will.

ME: So is there someone that monitors the tweets? Does each SID monitor the team?

SUBJECT: They do, yep. I will also get the coaches involved if we have to.

ME: Is it more just a general monitor or things, or do they monitor when there are student athletes posting a lot at specific times?

SUBJECT: I would say just a general monitoring.

ME: From a personal standpoint, obviously you said you encourage players to help build their personal brand, do you think social media helps or hurts athletes more?

SUBJECT: Wow, great question. I think at the end of the day, it helps them. But I also think that it can, depending on how your season is going and your performance individually or as a team, I think that it is never as good or as bad as what it may perceive to be on social media. If that makes sense. So I think you have to be very careful, and this is anybody, administrator, student-athlete, coach. Getting too much into it either way, because you have to be able to tune out the noise. Even if it's good noise, you got to be able to tune out or the bad noise. So I think that's what is really important. I know a lot of programs, not so much here, but they'll have more standards on facebooking or tweeting or anything like that. That's not a bad idea. It can be a distraction, but again, I also think it's a way to build your brand and to grow personally and help yourself down the road.

B) Subject: Jontay Porter

ME: Whenever you first came to Mizzou, did your sport information director tell you these are the rules with social media or how did they handle that?

SUBJECT: Yeah, we had a couple training. Like quote on quote training sessions before the season. Mostly with interviews and PR and everything because all of that can get on social media. So most of us, you know, had a good head on our shoulders and kind of knew what's right to say and what's not okay to say. And that was the case with me. So I didn't really ever say anything outlandish online or anything like that. But after interviews, they would just tell us to say answers that point back to the team, and don't come off as all about me. So that was the main thing for us, kind of reflect attention on everyone else besides you. We didn't do too much with it, that was more of an unspoken truth.

ME: Did they monitor your online posts and was anyone ever like hey don't do this or take this down or was it just left up to you?

SUBJECT: Nah, they did that for sure. Especially like when some dudes go out and put something on their story, we'd always get a call the next day like you need to take that off. Or you didn't catch this but in the corner it shows you drinking or something like that. So they were always monitoring because obviously they're not like parents, they can't tell us to take it down, but they would just kind of have our backs when it came to social media and let us know if something would come across negatively to the media.

ME: Okay that makes sense. So obviously whenever you first got hurt, did you feel the need to put something on Twitter? Or was that kind of your way of putting it out there since the media had already put it out or what was your motive?

SUBJECT: Yeah, so my advisor, he thought it would be a good idea to put something out there. Just to let people know that my surgery was successful and I wasn't just falling off the face of the planet. I think the first time I got hurt, it got leaked, idk I get them mixed up. But I think somebody else reported it before I really even told anyone, I don't know how that happened. So I was pretty upset cuz they just put it out there like Jontay Porter tears his ACL. And instantly it was like oh no, the world is ending, whatever. But we had a plan for what we were going to put out after surgery. The plan was to post after surgery so that we could say it was successful and we're on the road to recovery and all that. So it didn't work out that way but my advisor said it would be a good idea to put something out to kind of let people know I was in good spirits.

ME: I'm pretty sure your injury got leaked the first time, and I know you put something out after, did you feel like you needed to because you weren't the first to say what really happened? Or were you just wanting to clear the air?

SUBJECT: I think I really more so just wanted to clear the air and let people know kind of what happened and give an update on me. I think it's better coming from the person himself, in this case it was me. And like you said, it did get leaked and it was kind of blunt: Jontay Porter tears his ACL. But, with the advice of my advisor, I thought it would be a good idea to put it out there and clear the air. And let everyone know I was doing okay.

ME: I know you weren't like huge on Twitter whenever you played at Mizzou, but whenever you did go on Twitter, was there a motive you had? Like did you want to engage with fans, or was it kind of like, I know they put a big emphasis on building your personal brand so was that in the back of your mind or did you get on Twitter just to use it?

SUBJECT: Yeah, I wish I had done a little more of that. I didn't do the best job of, like you said, it's very encouraged to build your brand. Especially in college, but more so in the NBA. Just

because you know, fans love to see that stuff and they love to get updates. So I didn't do the best job of that, they did encourage that but whenever I did get on Twitter it was more so for my personal entertainment. I didn't post that much, but I would follow people and look at all that. Looking back, I probably should've done a better job but they did all they could to help me, so I'm thankful for them.

ME: As a former college athlete, do you think social media helps or hurts athletes more?

SUBJECT: I think it really depends on the athlete. If they are thick skinned, it can be really great because everything is digital nowadays, and having that platform is just amazing for fans to interact with you. So on that aspect it's good, but people that are sensitive or they look for validation from others, I think it could be hurtful. Just because if you have one bad game or you miss a bad shot, air-ball or something, it's going on Twitter. Even if people aren't @-ing you, they're saying stuff about you. A lot of athletes look up their name to see what people are tweeting about them. And when they see that, that can really shape your whole view of yourself and I don't think that's healthy. So for me, I tried not to look at that stuff. Or like, look up my name or anything. Because I know that even if I tell myself that it doesn't change me, I know that it really does deep down inside me. So overall, I think it is a good thing, social media is here to stay and there's many benefits to it. But at the same time, you should be aware of not putting too much weight into other people's opinions.

Appendix G: Tweets Collected



Jontay Porter ✓

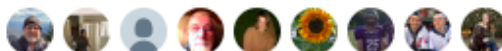
@JontayPorter

Follow

After all the pain he's caused me I don't know why, but I'm rooting for Tom Brady tonight

7:15 AM - 3 Feb 2019

29 Retweets 460 Likes



15 29 460



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow

Big one tonight!! Let's get it fellas 🐾🐾

1:47 PM - 8 Jan 2019

18 Retweets 563 Likes



6 18 563



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Any good book suggestions for this trip back home??

6:02 AM - 12 Nov 2018

76 Likes



50



76



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Thanks to everyone who reached out! It's hard to stay positive in the midst of something like this but everything happens for a reason.

3:22 PM - 21 Oct 2018

355 Retweets 5,587 Likes



251



355

5.6K





Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



I'm appalled

2:55 PM - 2 Jul 2018 from Missouri, USA

31 Retweets 297 Likes



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



I officially have a new favorite team 🤘🤘🤘 🤘

3:02 PM - 21 Jun 2018

221 Retweets 3,147 Likes



43 221 3.1K



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Draft day for my brother! Been dreaming about this day our whole lives.

6:32 AM - 21 Jun 2018

92 Retweets 2,074 Likes



19 92 2.1K



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

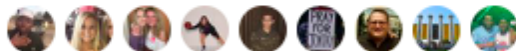
Follow



I'm upset

5:43 PM - 31 May 2018

56 Retweets 629 Likes



14 56 629



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Why is "Warriors in 3" trending.. 🤔

2:11 PM - 31 May 2018

14 Retweets 330 Likes



15 14 330



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



12:48 PM - 22 Feb 2018

547 Retweets 2,973 Likes



34 547 3.0K



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Wow...

7:24 AM - 8 Feb 2018

9 Retweets 294 Likes



5 9 294



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Never too high never too low..

8:04 PM - 23 Dec 2017

70 Retweets 903 Likes



19 70 903



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Investing in litecoin has already payed off..
bought a ton at \$80 per coin and it's now at
\$250 pc 😎😎

5:31 PM - 11 Dec 2017

JR25

14 Retweets 229 Likes



9 14 229



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Great TEAM win with my brothers!

6:55 PM - 30 Nov 2017

57 Retweets 1,452 Likes



14 57 1.5K



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Don't get me wrong I love IT but the Cavs had a brotherhood.. it's all over now.

1:29 PM - 22 Aug 2017

13 Retweets 95 Likes



6

13

95



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



I'm absolutely heartbroken. How could Kyrie betray me like this?

1:28 PM - 22 Aug 2017

17 Retweets 194 Likes



8

17

194





Jontay Porter  @JontayPorter · 9 Aug 2017

Class of '17 here I come 😎



 132  2.7K  8.5K 




Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Lecrae is the 

6:43 PM - 23 Jul 2017

20 Retweets 170 Likes



1 20 170



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



I already committed to Mizzou!!

The Antlers @The_Antlers

Three football commits in one day has us thinking about basketball recruitment, @JontayPorter do you have anything to tell us??

1:43 PM - 23 Jul 2017

66 Retweets 1,159 Likes



16 66 1.2K



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Kyrie leaving will be a chain reaction.. LeBron out of there asap too

10:44 AM - 21 Jul 2017

18 Retweets 182 Likes



3 18 182



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Peach Jam ✈️

2:41 PM - 10 Jul 2017

17 Retweets 205 Likes



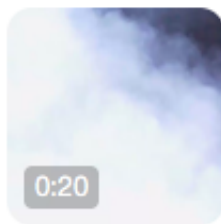
5 17 205





Jontay Porter @JontayPorter · 29 Dec 2018

The walking bucket is back 🤔🤔



Robin Pingeton @CoachPingeton

Welcome back... 😊

5 26 834



Jontay Porter @JontayPorter · 6 Dec 2018

Gah lee 🤔



Mike Singer @msinger

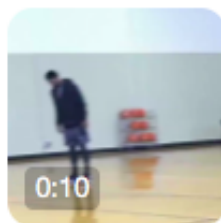
MPJ raining 3-pointers at this morning's shootaround.

6 21 354



Jontay Porter @JontayPorter · 23 Nov 2018

🤔🤔 what the



ESPN @espn

Ummm ... what, @Kyrielrving? 🤔🤔🤔

3 18 233



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



So proud of you Mike!!!



Michael Porter Jr ✓ @MPJr

People have been telling their version of my story my entire life.

This is my version. #GodsPlan

@PlayersTribune

4:13 AM - 10 Oct 2018

126 Retweets 1,284 Likes



7 126 1.3K



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Yeahhh



Mario McKinney Jr./ HoodieRio.. 🎧 @Boog341

AV, Stank, Sauce.. This for you. 🙏

!!! COMMITTED !!!

1:40 PM - 24 Sep 2018

40 Retweets 634 Likes



2 40 634



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Yeahhhhhh



Christian Braun. @Ballin25Braun

Blessed to receive an offer from Missouri!

4:33 PM - 3 Aug 2018 from [Missouri, USA](#)

14 Retweets 312 Likes



↻ 14



312



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Free \$ for anyone in Denver!!

Michael Porter Jr ✓ @MPJr

Who in Denver wanna play 2k for the 💰

3:01 PM - 31 Jul 2018 from [Missouri, USA](#)

100 Retweets 1,619 Likes



16



100



1.6K





Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Wow...this is getting ridiculous

2:54 PM - 2 Jul 2018 from [Missouri, USA](#)

20 Retweets 318 Likes



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Yanny...

What do you hear?!

YANNY LAUREL

Cloe Feldman ✓ @CloeCouture
What do you hear?! Yanny or Laurel
[Show this thread](#)

VOTE
0:03

7:07 AM - 16 May 2018

18 Retweets 287 Likes



15

18

287





Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



No

 **Torrence Watson** @TorrenceWatson
Bounce????

0:02

4:22 PM - 10 May 2018

Anthony Virdure

3 Retweets 141 Likes



12 3 141



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



The streak is over 🙄 Keep killin boy!
@Freddy_III

 **LeftCoastRecruiting** @LC_Recruiting
Final: Puyallup 74, Nathan Hale 62. @Freddy_III with 31 pts for Hale to lead all scorers.

7:12 PM - 28 Nov 2017

3 Retweets 84 Likes



3 84



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Lecrae ✓ @lecræ

My new album 'All Things Work Together' is out now everywhere 🙏 #ATWT smarturl.it/ATWTAlbum

Show this thread

6:29 PM - 21 Sep 2017

4 Retweets 48 Likes



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow

I don't even watch baseball but this is crazy what they're doing.



Cleveland Indians ✓ @Indians

WILL THE STREAK END TONIGHT?

22 STRAIGHT!

#WWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWWIndians

4:36 PM - 14 Sep 2017

5 Retweets 115 Likes





Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Yessir!!! Can't wait to hoop with you again bro



Torrence Watson @TorrenceWatson

Home 🏀 🍷

2:37 PM - 8 Sep 2017

93 Retweets 826 Likes



5 93 826



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



I pray it's not true but I heard it sucks... we'll see bro

Kyle J Guy @kylejguy5

Now it's officially better than doba. (Pending taste test) twitter.com/barstoolsports...

4:42 PM - 6 Sep 2017

19 Likes



2



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



When IT showed up 😂😂

 **Mark Phillips** @SupremeDreams_1
How LeBron Reacted To Kyrie Being Traded To The Celtics
1:39

5:24 PM - 22 Aug 2017

8 Retweets 63 Likes



↻ 8

♥ 63



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



No. It's a bucket

Ballislife.com ✓ @Ballislife
Is this a travel? [twitter.com/ballislife/sta...](https://twitter.com/ballislife/status/900000000000000000)

12:31 PM - 20 Aug 2017

12 Retweets 107 Likes



💬 1

↻ 12

♥ 107





Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Who's trying to go to a concert w me???



Lecrae ✓ @lecræ

My album is dropping in September. Tour in October. 🙌🙌 It's lit!

3:05 PM - 14 Aug 2017

2 Retweets 93 Likes



8 2 93



Jontay Porter ✓ @JontayPorter · 7 Aug 2017

Sheesh who's # 33? 🍷🍷



Stephen Curry ✓ @StephenCurry30

#BayArea come 🌐 the Top H.S. players in the 🌐 at Kezar Pavilion tmrw at 6PM. The Showcase airs live @9PM EST #ESPNU. #SC30Select

2 14 310



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Put on a show Mike P!

Jamal Crawford ✓ @JCrossover
 Yooo, Just got word that the young phenom Michael Porter Jr will be making his @thecrawsover debut tomorrow! Be there!!

7:40 PM - 29 Jul 2017

Alissa Curtis

26 Retweets 248 Likes



2 26 248



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



😂tuff

Coban Porter @CswaggyP
 5, 4, 3, 2, 1..... You name it, Tay Tay can play it 😏😏 twitter.com/kennyocker/sta...

12:25 PM - 29 Jul 2017

5 Retweets 117 Likes



5 5 117



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



This will most definitely be me if LeBron leaves 😂

TJ @TJftbl
LeBron fans moving to their next team like vine.co/v/eeYDwXheXuO
Show this thread

10:40 AM - 22 Jul 2017

158 Retweets 400 Likes



2 158 400



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



I love Kevin Love

Kevin Love ✓ @kevinlove
Life is amazing. No complaints. Things are a little peculiar. But no complaints. Now go kick some rocks 🙌🏻 twitter.com/insidehoops/st...

12:04 PM - 21 Jul 2017

2 Retweets 67 Likes



2 67



Jontay Porter ✓

@JontayPorter

Follow



Yessir!!!



Justin Ahrens @ahrensjustin12
Blessed to receive an offer from the University of Missouri !
#GoTigers #SEC 🐅

6:18 PM - 17 Jul 2017

16 Retweets 354 Likes



4

16

354

