

Public Abstract

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Graduation Term:FS 2017

Department:Journalism

Degree:MA

Title:PLAYERS IN THE PARASOCIAL: ATHLETES IMPACT ON ADVERTISING THROUGH PARASOCIAL INTERACTIONS

This research focuses on the social-media-driven convention of advertising in order to analyze the parasocial interactions between athlete endorsers and audiences on Facebook. Wardell Stephen Curry II will be the focus of this study due to his placement on Forbes list of The NBA Endorsement All-Stars in 2016. A content analysis including posts and comments from Curry's verified Facebook page during the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 regular NBA seasons will be used to analyze the type of advertising messages and the effectiveness of the athlete/audience interactions. The goal of this study is to establish whether parasocial interaction can serve as an effective advertising tool. The results of this study could imply that advertisers will benefit from encouraging their endorsers to interact with audiences or use parasocial techniques to foster a sense of personalization in communication about the brand on social media in order to enhance sales and the overall success of the brand.