

WHARTON MARKETING CAMP

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Wendy Moe is Professor of Marketing and Director of the Masters of Science in Marketing Analytics at the University of Maryland's Robert H. Smith School of Business. She is an expert in online and social media marketing with a focus on analytics and intelligence. Professor Moe is a highly published academic with her research appearing in numerous leading business journals. She is also the author of Social Media Intelligence (Cambridge: 2014).

Professor Moe has been recognized by the *American Marketing Association* and the *Marketing Science Institute* as a leading scholar in her field with the Howard Award, the Young Scholar Award, the Erin Anderson Award and the Buzzell Award. She serves on the Board of Trustees for the *Marketing Science Institute*, the advisory board for the *Wharton Customer Analytics Initiative*, and the editorial boards of *Journal of Marketing Research*, *Marketing Science*, *Journal of Marketing*, *Journal of Interactive Marketing* and *International Journal of Research in Marketing*.

Professor Moe has been on the faculty at the University of Maryland since 2004. Prior to that, she was on the faculty at the University of Texas at Austin. She holds a PhD, MA and BS from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania as well as an MBA from Georgetown University.

Bias on Your Brand Page? Measuring and Identifying Bias in Your Social Media Community

Abstract: Brands invest in and cultivate social media communities in an effort to promote to and engage with consumers. This allows marketers both to facilitate word-of-mouth effects and to extract consumer insights. However, research has shown that online word-of-mouth appearing on social media is often subject to bias. Typically, this bias is negative and, if word-of-mouth affects brand performance, has the potential to damage the brand. In this paper, we analyze the behavior of 170 million unique users pertaining to the Facebook fan pages of more than 3000 brands to measure bias and identify factors associated with the presence of bias. We present methodology that measures latent brand favorability based on observed likes and comments on the brand's Facebook page, adjusting for any positivity (or negativity) bias exhibited by individual users based on their behavior across brands. Research has shown that users vary in their tendencies to express positive opinions. This variation in users' positivity can be a source of bias in the brand's social media community. We validate our brand favorability measure against

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Millward Brown's BrandZ rankings, which is based on both the financial performance of brands and traditional brand tracking surveys. We then measure bias as the difference between observed social media sentiment and our proposed brand favorability measure and examine how bias differs across brand pages. We specifically consider the effects of various factors related to the quality of the brand community (e.g., number of followers, number of comments and likes, variance in sentiment), brand traits (e.g., industry sector, size of firm, general popularity), and brand activity (e.g., posting behavior, news mentions). We find that smaller brand communities with limited opinion variance are positively biased. This poses challenges for brands in terms of how they can leverage their brand communities.