

Gatekeeping Analysis of *The Asian Magazine*: A Case Study

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### **ABSTRACT**

As one of the most enduring theories in communication, gatekeeping suggests that stories have to move from one gate to another gate before being published. During this process, some stories are selected, while others are rejected. Previous studies heavily focus on traditional news media and explore the influence of internal and external forces on story selection. Very few studies, however, look at gatekeeping in new areas of technology. This case study extends this literature into social media. It looks at how editors at *The Asian Magazine (TAM)* select stories for its WeChat public account. Interviews with editors identify news values and news categories that these gatekeepers think are important. Results of the WeChat content analysis between May and August 2014 indicate that *TAM* editors do not strictly rely on established news values to select WeChat stories. News categories better predict story decisions. Examining which WeChat items generate the most reader engagement gives evidence of how well news content matches what attracts readers online. News category priorities closely match what readers want to read.

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## Introduction

I worked as an editorial intern at *The Asian Magazine (TAM)* in metropolitan Dallas from May to August 2014. One of my duties was to manage social networking accounts like WeChat. Everyday I edited news stories in Chinese for *TAM*'s WeChat official account, and I sent them out no later than 8 p.m. Editors, including me, met every Friday afternoon to select news stories for the coming week. This work made me play the role of gatekeeper who was responsible for deciding which news stories ought to be published and which should not. Three editors (including me) and two editors-in-chief were involved in story selection. During this gatekeeping process, I realized that various factors influenced final news selection. I started thinking of all the dynamics that influenced how *TAM* editors picked news stories. In addition, I wondered how the interactivity of the WeChat social network might affect news selection.

By using gatekeeping theory as a lens of analysis, this paper explores what influences *TAM* editors' news-selection decisions. The gatekeeper decides what shall get into a newspaper or news broadcast. Gatekeeping theory literature, therefore, literature provides an ideal theoretical framework for this paper because the theory describes and predicts how news stories are selected.

As one of the most enduring theories in communication, gatekeeping has developed for more than 70 years. Studies explore the influence of internal and external forces on story selection. Some researchers emphasize the importance of editors' subjective ideas (White, 1950). Others argue that the gatekeeping process is not simply determined by individual values. More factors should be taken into account. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) were among the first scholars to state that gatekeeping in a communication context can be studied on at least five levels of

influence: individual, communication routines, organizational, social/institutional, and social system level.

Past research has successfully shown that traditional journalists rely on a basic set of news values to determine which stories ought to be published (Berkowitz, 1990; Buckalew, 1970). Rather than focusing on traditional news media, this study investigates the decision-making process of the *TAM* gatekeepers for the WeChat account. As one of the most popular Chinese-language social network, WeChat has developed rapidly. Among the few studies on WeChat, Hou (2014) and Tang (2014) look at governments' and organizations' use. No research, so far, has focused on the newsletters that organizations send to their subscribers via WeChat.

This case study explores how *TAM* editors pick news stories for the WeChat account. Interviews with editors identified news values and news categories that these gatekeepers think are important. Analysis of WeChat content between May and August 2014 showed if these values were reflected in news items. Examining which WeChat items generated the most reader engagement provided evidence of how well news content matched what attracted readers online. Results of this research add to the body of knowledge about gatekeeping for online social networks and about WeChat use by news organizations.

### ***The Asian Magazine***

Founded April 2014 in Plano, Texas, *The Asian Magazine* is a startup company mainly targeting the Chinese community in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) metropolitan area, which includes Plano, and Chinese-speaking people in the United States (About us, n.d.). Aiming to make the target audience's life more enjoyable, *TAM* is devoted to providing information about city life via print, website, and various social media platforms, such as Weibo, WeChat, Facebook, and Twitter. The staff comprises 12 members: three editors, four salespeople, one

marketing director, two designers, and two editors-in-chief (About us, n.d.). The editorial group is all female. These women write and edit original articles for both printed magazines and social media platforms. Sometimes, *TAM* editors report on events or interview newsmakers in Dallas.

Some studies in recent years show that online editors working for magazines are more likely to be recent college graduates who are younger than the industry average (Brill, 2001; Jenkins, 2014). In *The Asian Magazine*, ages of the five editors range from 23 to 32 with a median age of 27. One editor-in-chief is a Chinese-American; all others are Chinese. Two of the three editors are graduate students who work at *TAM* as summer interns. The other editor graduated from her university in December 2013. The job at *TAM* is her first after graduation. No editor has a journalism background or much related news work experience. The two editors-in-chief have worked for several years in other areas, but the *TAM* posts are their first management positions.

The company had published two print issues as of October 2014 and had delivered the paper magazines free to Chinese families in DFW area. Each issue had 80-plus pages of original articles that cover topics such as entertainment, beauty, travel, and business (About us, n.d.). Because of the family-centered tradition of Chinese culture (Zhang, 2013), the magazine heavily focused on family-related stories such as fun family activities and education (About us, n.d.).

*The Asian Magazine* uses social media as quick and effective ways to reach its target audience. Because most of its potential readers are Chinese-speaking, *The Asian Magazine* spends most time on its WeChat accounts. This social network is very popular in China now. More than 3,000 people have subscribed to *TAM*'s official WeChat account as of October 2014. Those subscribers receive a newsletter from *TAM* each day. Three editors (included me) work on the daily WeChat newsletter. It includes one major story and one or two minor news stories. If



subscribers are interested in one article, they can click “like” at the end of the article, save it, or share it with a circle of friend within WeChat (equivalent to Facebook’s main page) and other social media platforms.

### **WeChat**

Created by Tencent, China’s largest Internet service provider, in January 2011, WeChat is one of the most popular social networks in China, especially among young people (Olson, 2013). Growth has been rapid. Just two months after the network began, the number of registered users was over 100 million (Social Media Marketing, 2013). According to Hou (2014), the total number of WeChat users worldwide reached 600 million by 2014. The network has gradually become available in many languages. Tencent figures showed that WeChat is Apple’s most downloaded mobile social-networking application in Thailand, Malaysia, and Saudi Arabia (Beattie, 2013). In January 2015, Tencent Tech released the first WeChat user and platform data report. It showed that this mobile instant-messaging app had a great social impact on daily active users. Twenty-five percent of users opened their WeChat account more than 30 times per day (WeChat impact report, 2015).

WeChat offers two account categories: personal and public. Most people use personal WeChat accounts for a free instant-messaging service. Individual can chat with friends, share photos and locations, update status, and even manage money online. Moreover, WeChat has created innovative geo-social location-based features (Lin & Li, 2014). Through “shake,” “look around,” and “drift bottle” functions, users can randomly select mobile phone contacts of strangers in nearby areas and build interpersonal relationships with them. For instance, when I shake my cellphone and some people near me shake theirs at the same time, those people’s profile information will appear on my WeChat account. Then I can send friend requests to them

if I am interested. One advantage of WeChat is the great privacy protection. WeChat friends have no idea of who a user's other friends are. Friends cannot see comments by others (if they are not WeChat friends) below a user's online status.

However, WeChat is much more than just an instant-messaging application. It is a mobile news reading app, a blogging platform, and even a new online storefront (Horwitz, 2014). Organizations and businesses use WeChat public accounts for marketing, delivering services, and providing information. According to Hou (2014), the total number of WeChat public accounts had reached 2 million by early 2012. The number has been increasing by 8,000 public accounts everyday. Public account fall into two categories: service account and subscription account. Each type has different functions. Service accounts aim at providing services to users (Social media marketing, 2013). For instance, Gap employs a service account to provide shopping services to followers. People can scan Gap's new arrival or on-sale products on its public service account. News organizations, like *TAM*, use subscription accounts to share information, communicate with readers, and even promote their online and print contents. The account sends its subscribers a newsletter that covers several stories everyday. Appendix A is the screenshots of one newsletter and one news story on *TAM* WeChat official account.

Few researchers have studied WeChat (Hou, 2014; Tang, 2014). For example, Hou (2014) described how the Chinese government used WeChat to update breaking news during natural disasters. Using a model of consumer behaviors, the media scholar Tang (2014) explored the business use of WeChat as a marketing tool to capture people's attention. No research has been found that looks at the gatekeeping process in a WeChat newsletter. This case study tries to fill this gap.

## Literature Review

### Gatekeeping

Gatekeeping is one of the most enduring theories in mass communication research. The term was first coined by psychologist Kurt Lewin in 1947. It was used to describe how a mother or wife decided which foods ended up on the family's dinner table during World War II (Lewin, 1947). David Manning White (1950) applied Lewin's gatekeeping concept to journalism. He specifically looked at the news-selection process of one experienced wire editor at a non-metropolitan newspaper. According to White (1950), stories had to move from one gate to another gate before being published. During this process, some stories were selected, while others were discarded. White's case study found that the wire editors' opinions, experience, and attitudes influenced news decision-making.

Paul Snider replicated the White study in 1967. Snider worked with the same wire editor for a week and found some changes in this editor's attitudes toward news after 17 years (Snider, 1967). For instance, the wire editor chose international war news most often in 1966. Human-interest news was picked frequently in 1949.

Unlike White, who emphasizes the agency of individual gatekeepers, other researchers, like Walt Gieber, introduced more variables into the analysis of gatekeeping (Robert, 2005). By expanding White's early study to a group of newspaper telegraph editors, Gieber (1956) argued that rather than relying on individual likes or dislike, editors attempted "to select items containing information that would interest segments of their reader audience" (Gieber, 1956, p. 430).

After Gieber (1956), a large number of gatekeeping studies have introduced more variables into the analysis. Pamela J. Shoemaker is among those later researchers. She is known

as “today’s keeper of gatekeeping theory” (Roberts, 2005). With Stephen Reese, Shoemaker introduced the hierarchical model of news influence in 1996 (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996).

Thirteen years later, Shoemaker worked with Tim P. Vos to expand the model. They published *Gatekeeping Theory* in 2009. The book (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009) conceptualized gatekeeping in the 21st century.

According to Shoemaker and Reese (1996), gatekeeping in a communication context can be studied on at least five levels of influence (a) individual, (b) communication routines, (c) organizational, (d) social/institutional, and (e) social system. All these forces can affect news decisions simultaneously. Each force competes with the others.

The individual gatekeeping force is similar to White’s (1950) argument that decision-making is based on a gatekeeper’s likes and dislikes. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) studied how personal backgrounds, experience, and attitudes affected gatekeeping. They emphasized the direct influence of professional roles and ethics on news content decisions.

Shoemaker and Reese (1996) defined communication routine as “those patterned, routinized, repeated practice and forms that media workers use to do their jobs” (p. 100). These routines, to some degree, help news organizations manage news decisions in a predictable way. A cohesive set of rules helps editors makes news decisions under deadline pressure. The influence of routine is seen during interactions with peers and supervisors as well as when editors consider reader interests. Editors rely on routine “news values” that they believe will help stories they select “appeal to their target audience” (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009, p. 53).

On the organizational level of analysis, Shoemaker and Reese (1996) concentrate on how the profit-motive influences news decisions. An organization has ability to hire gatekeepers and make rules (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009). On the other hand, it can fire people who failed to make

contributions to its profit. If a television station has close connections with real estate developers, for example, it would prefer to select more stories about this industry to catch readers' attentions.

The social institutional level of analysis looks at forces "outside of media organizations, such as advertisers and their audiences, governments, and interest groups" (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009, p. 32). For instance, when a news organization finds that most potential advertisers are in the real-estate business, gatekeepers tend to choose news stories about housing taxes and housing prices to capture advertisers' attention. The social system level considers how a country's culture, political, military, and economic conditions affect news-selection decisions (Shoemaker & Reese, 1996).

Among those five forces of news selection, media routines give the clearest insights into the day-to-day news decision-making. To date, several researchers have looked at the influence of routine on gatekeeping. Each has defined routine differently (Shoemaker, Eichholz, Kim, & Wrigley, 2001; Cassidy, 2006). By using congressional bills as the unit of analysis, Shoemaker et al. (2001) found a positive relationship between the quantity of bill coverage and editors' ratings of bills' newsworthiness. The higher newsworthy ratings a bill gets from editors, the more coverage the bill received. Cassidy's study (2006) classified routine as "peers on staff, supervisors, journalistic training, sources, prestige, local competitors, and wire service budgets" (p. 16). According to Shoemaker and Reese (1996), three sources affect media routine: audience-oriented, media organization, and external sources. Each represents a different kind of routine or pattern. These routines adapted in Cassidy's study (2006) are apparently influenced by the organization and external sources.

The gender of the editor is another variable. Craft and Wanta's study (2004) was interested in whether editors' gender influence issue agendas at newspapers. By looking at

articles from the websites of 30 U.S. newspapers, the authors found that female-dominated newsrooms were more likely to publish positive news. Newspapers with a higher percentage of men in management positions covered conflict and negative materials more frequently than those with women in management.

This paper looks at the influence of audience-oriented routine in terms of “news values.” Shoemaker and Reese (1996) wrote: “News judgment is the ability to evaluate stories based on an agreed set of news values, which provide a yardstick of newsworthiness and constitute an audience-oriented routine” (p. 106). In other words, the news values journalists rely on reflect what they consider their audience’s values.

### **News Values**

News values are general factors employed by media outlets like newspaper to determine how much prominence to give to a story (Spencer-Thomas, n.d.). They are considered as essential elements of every good news story. In 1965, media researchers Johan Galtung and Marie Holmboe Ruge analyzed foreign news content from four Norwegian newspapers. The researchers suggested that journalists employed twelve characteristics of news content to determine which events were newsworthy (Galtung & Ruge, 1965). Specifically, the list of values fell into three categories—impact, audience identification, and pragmatics of media coverage. The study supported the hypothesis that “the more factors an event satisfies, the higher the probability that it become news” (p. 90). After Galtung and Ruge’s publication (1965), researchers used different numbers and dimensions of news in their studies (Dennis & Ismach, 1981; Conley, 2002). For instance, Conley’s study (2002) showed eight standard news values: “impact, conflict, timeliness, proximity, prominence, currency, human interest, and the unusual” (p. 42).

Prior research defined news value differently (Conley, 2002; Schaudt & Carpenter, 2009; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996; Berkowitz, 1990). Some definitions shared common elements. Some had markedly different concepts. For instance, Schaudt and Carpenter (2009) coded a story as human interest if it “involved a more personal look at average people” (p. 21). Conley (2002), however, argued that the human-interest news value means anything that interests humans. In other words, the story had more of an entertainment factor. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) held that prominence was equivalent to impact. In Conley’s study (2002), prominence was an independent measure of news value. Prominence “relates to a person who is highly recognizable on a local, state, national or international basis” (p. 50). In addition to different definitions, some researchers used different terms to express the same news values. Conley’s (2002) “impact,” Berkowitz (1990)’s “significance,” and Schaudt and Carpenter (2009)’s “magnitude” referred to the same news values that a story can affect a large number of people. After considering these differences, I have decided to define news values in this study as those characteristics of a story that make it interesting to readers, listeners or viewers.

Past studies successfully showed that traditional journalists adhere to a basic set of news values to determine which stories ought to be published (Buckalew, 1970; Berkowitz, 1990). For instance, Berkowitz (1990) attempted to determine if local television gatekeepers followed a systematic pattern in the selection of potential news content. He analyzed potential news contents in four ways: types of stories, event-related stories, story topics categories, and specific news values. Results showed that news value was an important consideration in news selection, although the significance of the relationship was relatively low. For instance, timeliness and significance were the best predictors of stories used by local television stations.

To date, little research has looked at online news values. Based on the 150 most-viewed stories on azcentral.com, Schaudt and Carpenter (2009) examined the preference of online readers by measuring news values, news topic, and hard/soft news. Researchers classified news value in stories as conflict, human interest, magnitude, unusual nature, prominence, proximity, tragedy, and timeliness. Results showed that proximity was the most present news value in the sample (76%). Editors working in small markets might prefer to select proximate stories because of a more focused sense of community (Buckalew, 1970).

Additionally, researchers found that stories with the greater number of news values received more clicks (Schaudt & Carpenter, 2009). The result implies that “readers prefer to click stories with multiple angles or news values” (p. 23). Schaudt and Carpenter (2009) was the first study that creatively analyzed online news values and the reader preference in the context of online news.

### **News Categories**

Unlike news values, news categories classify stories according to topic, not characteristics. Considering story categories is another way to examine gatekeeping (Berkowitz, 1990). Different media outlets classify news categories differently. Newspapers like *The New York Times* classify news content into categories such as international, national, and New York. A city magazine like *D Magazine*, however, focuses more on local news and divides stories into entertainment, fashion, restaurants, and business categories. *TAM* is positioned as a local lifestyle Chinese magazine in Dallas. Readers may perceive *TAM* as a comprehensive lifestyle guide but not a strong or authoritative source for national political or regional news. Therefore, the printed edition of *TAM* mainly covers news categories such as business, entertainment, event, and restaurants listings.



Previous studies demonstrate differences between news categories in traditional media and online channels (Berkowitz, 1990; Schaudt & Carpenter, 2009). Berkowitz's study (1990) finds a strong presence of government/politics, accidents/disasters, and crime news in a local television. Schaudt and Carpenter (2009), however, indicate that business is present more frequently than other categories on 15 community websites.

Wu and Bechtel's (2002) study on website use and news topic is among the first to focus on online news consumers' preference in news topics. By classifying 3,288 news stories from ABC and CNN into 19 news topic categories, the researchers found that some news topics had positive correlations with visits to *The New York Times* website. Users of *The New York Times* on the Web were very interested in stories pertaining to international politics. A common critique of this news-topic research is that researchers use news content from two broadcast operations to represent each day's news but look at news consumer's preference on one newspaper website. This approach, to some degree, decreases validity. This paper seeks to mitigate this problem by looking at the news stories on *TAM* WeChat official account, not the stories from other sources. *TAM* subscribers' engagement on the same social-media platform will be analyzed simultaneously.

Compared to editors at newspapers, magazines and broadcast-news operations, online editors get more chances to receive direct feedback from readers and estimate their interest accurately (Bernt, Fee, Gifford, & Stempel, 2000). Take WeChat as an example. Editors can easily know the number of "likes" and "shares" a particular article earns. In addition to a detailed analytical report of online activity, editors can receive readers' comments via the WeChat account conversation column. Those messages are not open to the public. They are seen only by news workers in the organization.

Inspired by Schaudt and Carpenter (2009)'s study, this case study attempts to understand if news values and news categories play as important a role in WeChat newsletters as they do in traditional media, or has reader interest become a more important factor in online news decisions?

In light of the current literature, this study asks the following six research questions:

RQ1: Which news values do *TAM* editors say they rely on most to produce WeChat newsletters?

RQ2: Which news categories do *TAM* editors say they rely on most to produce WeChat newsletters?

RQ3: Which news values are present most often in *TAM* WeChat newsletters?

RQ4: Which news categories are present most often in *TAM* WeChat newsletters?

RQ5: How closely do news-value priorities in *TAM* WeChat newsletters match the readers' preference as indicated by number of "reads" and "shares"?

RQ6: How closely do news-category priorities in *TAM* WeChat newsletters match the readers' preference as indicated by number of "reads" and "shares"?

### **Method**

To answer these six research questions, this project combined qualitative and quantitative methods. Telephone interviews collected information to address RQs 1 and 2. A content analysis of *TAM* WeChat newsletters over three months provided data to explore RQs 3 and 4. A comparison of findings from the content analysis to reader-engagement data from *TAM* offered insights into RQs 5 and 6.

### **Phone Interviews**

Individual telephone interviews were conducted with 2 editors and 2 editors-in-chief in January 2015. Questions (Appendix B) explored how they selected news stories for *TAM*'s WeChat public account. Everything was spoken in Chinese during the interviews. At the beginning of each call, I obtained verbal consent from each participant to proceed with and audio record the interview contents. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes. When interviewing editor-in-chief Wu, I took notes by hand because the recording equipment did not work well. Otherwise, all conversations were recorded on MP3 files.

Interviews followed the same pattern. But depending on the situation or editor responses, the question sequence in each interview could change a little bit. For instance, I did not ask the two editors "why did you begin this magazine?" because they were not involved in starting *TAM*. In the interview with editor-in-chief Luo, Questions 1, 3, and 4 were merged to one question, "Why did you start this Chinese magazine in Dallas?"

After the interviews, I listened to the recordings twice and transcribed the conversations between the participants and me. All interview contents were translated by me from Chinese to English (the English version of interview content can be found in Appendix C). Because Interview Questions 6 and 7 asked about editors' reliance on news values and news categories, I directly used their responses to address RQs1 and 2. Other interview results were used to shape and interpret the analysis of *TAM* WeChat content later.

### **Content Analysis**

Because I worked as an editorial intern at this company from May 23 to August 14, 2014, I analyzed the WeChat newsletters delivered during that period. Each newsletter, written in Chinese, has one major story along with several minor stories. The individual news stories were

the unit of analysis. Because some minor news stories appeared more than one time, those items were coded only once, when they initially appeared. In addition, “Weekend to Do” was the major story on *TAM*’s WeChat every Thursday. Although the headlines were the same, these stories had different content every week. All “Weekend to Do” articles published during this period were collected. Hence, the total number of news stories analyzed in this study was 114. The English version of all story headlines and URLs can be found in Appendix D.

The objective of content analysis was to see which news values and news categories were present most often in *TAM*’s WeChat news stories. This study used six measures of news values derived from prior research (Conley, 2002; Schaudt & Carpenter, 2009) as well as one *utility* news value created by me based on familiarity with *TAM* coverage. Each news value was coded 1 if it was present in a story. Otherwise, it was coded as 0 for “not present.” The seven news values are shown in Table 1.

Table 1

*Codebook for News Values Presence in TAM's WeChat News Stories*

| Code                  | Definition   | Example/Include if  |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| <i>Proximity</i>      | The story is takes place in the Dallas/DFW area or Texas.  | The story’s event occurs in the Dallas/DFW area and Texas. Or the story content emphasizes this community.                |
| <i>Timeliness</i>     | “The story’s primary event occurred within 24 hours of when the article was posted online” (Schaudt & Carpenter, 2009).                            | A timely news story involves Dallas Area Rapid Transit expansion to DFW airport when this event happened within 24 hours. |
| <i>Human Interest</i> | Discussing people in an emotional way. “Stories inspire individuals’ empathy, spark curiosity, or arouse community concern” (Conley, 2002, p. 53). | Exclusive interviews or stories that talks about one individual’s personal experience.                                    |

|                   |   |  |
|-------------------|---|--|
| <i>Impact</i>     | “The stories are likely to have a direct effect—immediately or long term—on a large portion of the viewing audience” (Berkowitz, 1990). | Stories that relates to policy change, natural disaster, housing price. For instance, a story about an expansion on the Dallas Area Rapid Transit Orange Line affects a large number of people living in the DFW area. |
| <i>Currency</i>   | Stories tie in with another topic that is currently being discussed in the media (Conley, 2002).  | Stories pertaining to issues or topics that are in the spotlight of public concern like the Ebola virus or iPhone 6 releases for example.  |
| <i>Prominence</i> | Stories involve highly recognizable figures.  | Stories that interview or relate to a celebrity or public figure.  |
| <i>Utility</i>    | News you can use. Stories recommend or guide people to try something.   | Stories that recommend best restaurants, zoos, and waterparks. Stories that teach the audience how to cook, select schools.  |

Eight news categories were employed in this study. Among them, four categories (*business, entertainment, family/children, and fashion/beauty*) are topics used in the printed edition of *The Asian Magazine*. Based on my analysis of the magazine’s brand identity, I created four additional categories: *product recommendation, place recommendation, tips, and Weekend to Do*. Each news category was coded 1 if a story related to one of the topics. Otherwise, it was code 0 for “not present.” The eight news categories are shown in Table 2. A coding sheet based on this codebook can be found in Appendix E.

Table 2

*Codebook for News Categories Presence in TAM's WeChat News Stories*

| Code            | Definition  | Example/Include if  |
|-----------------|---|---|
| <i>Business</i> | Stories relate to investment, real estate, career development, banking, and entrepreneurship. | Stories relate to the impact of oil price on economy, investment immigration. |

|                               |  |   |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| <i>Entertainment</i>          | Stories involve movies, television programs, travel, theater, food, and nightlife. | Reviews of new movies in theater; Nightlife events in bars and clubs.   |
| <i>Family/Children</i>        | Stories involve family life, child development, and education.                     | Stories relate to school selection for children, common problems in family medicine.  |
| <i>Fashion/Beauty</i>         | Stories involve trends in clothes, make-up skills, hair design, etc.               | Stories relate to taking care of your hair, workplace makeup.   |
| <i>Product Recommendation</i> | Specific products are recommended in stories.                                      | Story that recommends Omega watches, on-sale products online, etc. Stories with purchasing links should be included.            |
| <i>Place Recommendation</i>   | One or more specific places are recommended in stories.                            | Story that recommends new opening restaurants, popular zoos, waterparks etc. Stories with places' addresses should be included. |
| <i>Tips</i>                   | Stories provide useful information to let people know something better.            | Stories that relates to travel guide, property tax tips, food receipt, etc.   |
| <i>Weekend to Do</i>          | Weekend events are recommended in stories.   | Only the story titled "Weekend to Do" should be included.   |

### **Coding Procedures**

I and another coder independently read all WeChat stories from May 23 to August 14. We coded stories for news values and news categories. Individual stories could include more than one value or fit into more than one category. Coding reflected all values or categories present in each story. We are Chinese, have subscribed to *TAM*'s WeChat official account for several months, and are familiar with *TAM* and the news contents on its WeChat account. The data coded by the other coder were used only for testing reliability. Two Excel forms were created for recording data from me and the other coder. Because the "reads" and "shares" data were directly provided by *TAM*, we just needed to copy the data in Excel. There are seven news values and eight news categories being listed by columns. Each news value or news category was

coded 1 in the cell if it were present in a story. Otherwise, it was coded as 0 for “not present.”

The coding processes lasted four hours on average.

Our codings were put in the statistics software JMP for computing intercoder reliability. The agreement statistic in JMP presented the Kappa coefficient for each news value and news category. The intercoder reliability results are shown in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3

*Intercoder Reliability of News Value Variables*

| News Value            | Intercoder Reliability (Kappa=) |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Proximity</i>      | .844                            |
| <i>Timeliness</i>     | .931                            |
| <i>Human Interest</i> | 1.000                           |
| <i>Impact</i>         | .865                            |
| <i>Currency</i>       | .759                            |
| <i>Prominence</i>     | .824                            |
| <i>Utility</i>        | .919                            |

Table 4

*Intercoder Reliability of News Category Variables*

| News Category                 | Intercoder Reliability (Kappa=) |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Business</i>               | .931                            |
| <i>Entertainment</i>          | .867                            |
| <i>Family/Children</i>        | .924                            |
| <i>Fashion/Beauty</i>         | .879                            |
| <i>Product Recommendation</i> | .966                            |
| <i>Place Recommendation</i>   | .944                            |
| <i>Tips</i>                   | .895                            |
| <i>Weekend to Do</i>          | 1.000                           |

Cohen’s Kappa ranges generally from 0 to 1.00. As a rule of thumb, values of Kappa from .40 to .59 are considered moderate, .60 to .79 substantial, and .80 to 1.00 outstanding (Landis & Koch, 1977). Results in this study showed that the intercoder reliability of each

variable was more than  $Kappa = .70$ . Therefore, the results meet the requirement to be considered substantially reliable.

### **Reader Engagement**

Based on the content analysis of *TAM* WeChat newsletters, I correlated the presence of seven news values and eight news categories in the 114 articles with the readers' daily engagement data provided by *TAM*. News values and news categories served as independent variables for examining how their presence in news stories affected readers' preference, the dependent variable. The objective was to see if items with the most news values or stories in certain category got the most clicks. The analysis considered "reads" and "shares." "Reads" represented the number of times that readers clicked one specific article. The number of "shares" was the total number of times that readers shared one specific article with friends via the conversation column, the WeChat page, or other social media sites. For example, if a reader shared one article with his or her circle of friends on WeChat and on his/her Weibo account, the total number of "shares" would be two.

Because a story could present more than one news value or news category and all these indicators interacted with each other, I built multiple linear regression models to examine the relationships between readers' response (reads or shares) and at least one of the predictors (news values or news categories). In these regression models, "reads" and "shares" were observations. The seven news values and eight news categories were predictors.

The distribution of "reads" and "shares" in the 114 stories was highly skewed. Some stories got a large number of clicks and "shares," while others had extremely few. For example, when I looked at the distribution of "reads" (Figure 1), almost all the points were far away from the sloped straight line on the Normal Quantile Plot. This pattern meant that the distribution of



“reads” data were skewed. Therefore, log transformation was used to reduce skew and make patterns more visible. After log-transformation of “reads,” the plotted points were closer to the straight line. The “reads” distribution became closer to normal, although some outliers still existed.

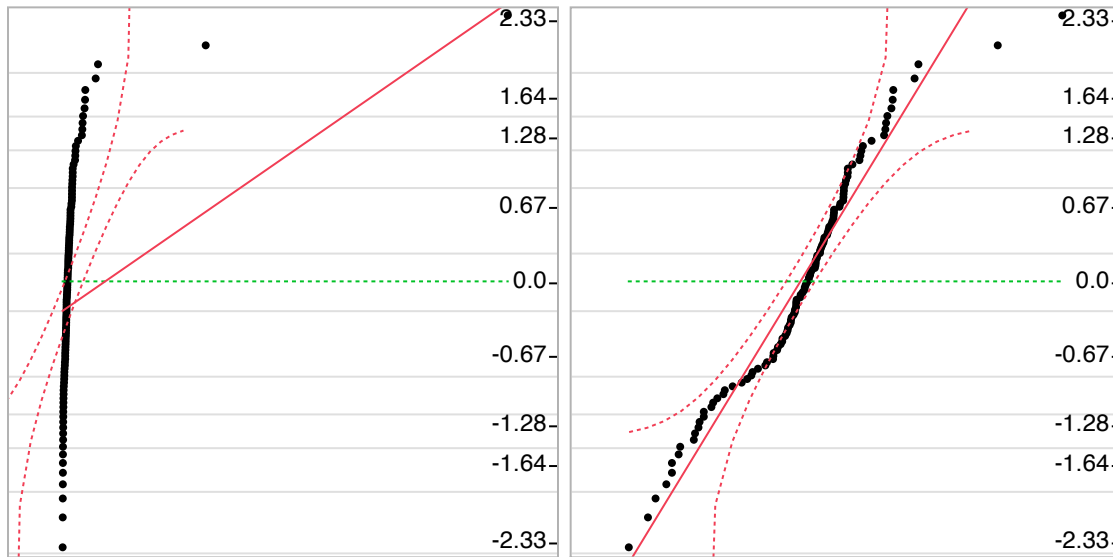


Figure 1. Normal Q-Q Plots—Reads vs. Log (reads)

## Results

**News values reliance.** RQ1 asked which news values *TAM* editors said they relied on most to produce WeChat newsletters. The interview answers from the interviewees showed that the top news values were *utility*, *timeliness*, *proximity*, and *impact*.

All editors chose *utility* as one of the news values they rely on frequently. Among editors, Yue and Li put *utility* in the first place. Yue highlighted *TAM*'s marketing positioning and mission:

“Our goal is to provide readers useful information for daily life. Instead of focusing on in-depth discussion and incisive analysis, our WeChat articles try to recommend readers to try

something new or go to some amazing places. Therefore, it is not hard to find that many of our WeChat articles talk about restaurant week, upcoming movies, outdoor activities, etc.”

*Proximity* was considered the second important news value. Three editors relied on *proximity* often when they selected *TAM*'s WeChat news stories. Editor-in-chief Luo explained this point:

“So far, I prefer to define *TAM* as a city or regional magazine. Its contents focus on information about city life as well as dining, travel, and entertainment. We highlight anything that has a close connection with Chinese community in Dallas. Therefore, *proximity* and *utility* news value undoubtedly have great significance to us.”

Li agreed with Luo's opinions:

“Since *TAM* is a start-up company, we selected more local stories than national one at the beginning. After August, we gradually expand the geographical category and try to reach more readers. In addition, our target markets are Chinese young people and Chinese families in Dallas. The stories we selected should be closely related to their daily life.”

*Timeliness* is almost equally important as *proximity* in the eyes of the four interviewees. Editor-in-chief Wu especially mentioned that *timeliness* influenced her story selections most:

“I am more likely to select WeChat stories with *timeliness* news value because this media platform is online. People online always want to know something new, something they never know before. ”

In addition to *utility*, *proximity*, and *timeliness*, *impact* was important in story decision-making. Among the four interviewees, editor-in-chief Wu and editor Li chose stories that could affect a large number of people or stories that talked about a current issue. Wu explained this point:

“Those stories like policy change or Ebola virus protection can reach bunch of people and get their attentions. To some degree, stories with large impact are more possible to be aired.”

**News categories reliance.** RQ2 asked which news categories *TAM* editors relied on most to produce WeChat newsletters. Interview answers showed that *entertainment*, *place recommendation*, and *family* topped the list.

Three editors put *entertainment* in the first place. Editor Li described the definition of *entertainment* this way:

“*Entertainment* is actually a broad category, which can include restaurant recommendations, introduction of upcoming movies, etc. Those topics are all closely related to people’s daily life. In other words, our company’s brand identity needs editors to cover more entertainment lifestyle news stories.”

*Family* was another important news category. Editor Yue suggested that gatekeepers especially rely on local family topic when they select news stories for the WeChat account:

“Many of our followers on WeChat are Chinese families in Dallas. The family-centered tradition in Chinese families makes us realize the importance of selecting *family* news topics like how to spend summer break with your children.”

In addition to *entertainment* and *family*, the two editors-in-chief relied on *place recommendation* stories often. Luo suggested that providing useful information to readers was a very essential part of WeChat content. She particularly pointed out the importance of restaurant recommendation:

“Why do you want to share a WeChat article to your friend circle? One is because the article is funny. Another possibility is it is useful. We hope to provide our subscribers useful guide information. For example, when subscribers receive a Sushi restaurant recommendation

article from *TAM*'s WeChat account, they might scan it first and then save or even share to their friends. Next time when they want to eat out, they can re-read this Sushi article again and get helpful information to make a decision.”

**News values present.** RQ3 asked which news values were present most often in *TAM* WeChat newsletters. Table 5 shows results. Of the 114 *TAM*'s WeChat news stories, more than half was coded “*utility*” (67.54%, n=77) and “*proximity*” (64.04%, n=73). Other variables like *timeliness* (14.04%, n=16), *impact* (10.53%, n=12), and *currency* (8.77%, n=10) were presented less often. Few stories contained *prominence* (5.26%, n=6) and *human-interest* (3.51%, n=4) news values.

Table 5

*News Values Presence in TAM's WeChat News Stories*

| News Value            | Frequency<br>(N=114) | %     |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-------|
| <i>Utility</i>        | 77                   | 67.54 |
| <i>Proximity</i>      | 73                   | 64.04 |
| <i>Timeliness</i>     | 16                   | 14.04 |
| <i>Impact</i>         | 12                   | 10.53 |
| <i>Currency</i>       | 10                   | 8.77  |
| <i>Prominence</i>     | 6                    | 5.26  |
| <i>Human Interest</i> | 4                    | 3.51  |

**News categories present.** RQ4 asked which news categories were present most often in *TAM* WeChat newsletters. Table 6 shows results. *Entertainment* (26.32%, n=30), *tips* (22.81%, n=26), *family/children* (21.93%, n=25), and *place recommendation* (18.42%, n=21) appeared most often in news stories.

Table 6

*News Categories Presence in TAM's WeChat News Stories*

| News Category | Frequency<br>(N=114) | % |
|---------------|----------------------|---|
|---------------|----------------------|---|

|                               |    |       |
|-------------------------------|----|-------|
| <i>Entertainment</i>          | 30 | 26.32 |
| <i>Tips</i>                   | 26 | 22.81 |
| <i>Family/Children</i>        | 25 | 21.93 |
| <i>Place Recommendation</i>   | 21 | 18.42 |
| <i>Business</i>               | 18 | 15.79 |
| <i>Product Recommendation</i> | 18 | 15.79 |
| <i>Weekend to Do</i>          | 14 | 12.28 |
| <i>Fashion/Beauty</i>         | 8  | 7.02  |

**Relationship between news value and readers' preference.** RQ5 asked how closely news-value priorities in *TAM* WeChat newsletters matched the readers' preference as indicated by number of "reads" and "shares." Tables 7 and 8 show results. Analysis examined which news values had significant relationships with readers' engagement and whether they were consistent with the most present news values. The mean number of reads per article is 796.

Table 7

*Multiple Linear Regression for News Values Predicting Log (reads)*

|                       | <i>B</i> |
|-----------------------|----------|
| <i>Proximity</i>      | .01      |
| <i>Timeliness</i>     | 1.07**   |
| <i>Human Interest</i> | .89      |
| <i>Impact</i>         | 1.17**   |
| <i>Currency</i>       | .24      |
| <i>Prominence</i>     | -.25     |
| <i>Utility</i>        | 1.25***  |

$F(7,106) = 3.46$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .13$ ,  $p < .01$

\* $P < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

This multiple linear regression model (Table 7) was employed to explore the relationship between these seven news values and log (reads). Overall, this model was significant  $F(7,106) = 3.46$ ,  $p < .01$ . The Adjusted  $R^2 = .13$  is low. Generally, statisticians look for low  $p$  and high Adjusted  $R^2$  values. A high Adjusted  $R^2$  indicates that the model explains a high percentage of response variability. In situations involving human behavior, however, Adjusted  $R^2$  values lower

the 50% can be acceptable (Frost, 2014). Human's actions are harder to predict than mathematical relationships. Therefore, models with low Adjusted  $R^2$  and low  $p$  values can show significant relationships.

*Timeliness*, *impact*, and *utility* were revealed as significant predictors in this model. For a story with *timeliness*, I expected the log (reads) to increase by  $B_{timeliness} = 1.07$  on average, while holding all remaining regression constant. If *impact* or *utility* were present in a news story, the log (reads) increased by  $B_{impact} = 1.17$  and  $B_{utility} = 1.25$ , respectively. Therefore, *timeliness*, *impact*, and *utility* influence readership in a positive way. Other predictors failed to have significant relationships with "reads."

The relationship between news values and log (shares) were tested in the same way. Because some stories had no "shares," the study added one "shares" for each story to make sure each log (shares) was defined. The mean number of shares per news story is 108.

Table 8

*Multiple Linear Regression for News Values Predicting Log (shares)*

|                       | <i>B</i> |
|-----------------------|----------|
| <i>Proximity</i>      | -.07     |
| <i>Timeliness</i>     | .96      |
| <i>Human Interest</i> | .93      |
| <i>Impact</i>         | 1.56**   |
| <i>Currency</i>       | .06      |
| <i>Prominence</i>     | .003     |
| <i>Utility</i>        | 1.6***   |

$F(7, 106) = 3.39$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .13$ ,  $p < .01$

\* $P < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

A second multiple linear regression model (Table 8) was fitted to examine the relationship between news values and log (shares). The model was significant with  $F(7, 106) = 3.39$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .13$ ,  $p < .01$ . Among the seven predictors, stories with *impact* or *utility*

affect the number of “shares” in a positive way. When a story contains *impact*, I expected the average log (shares) to increase  $B_{impact} = 1.56$ . The log (shares) for a story with *utility* went up by  $B_{utility} = 1.6$ .

**Relationship between news category and readers’ preference.** The last research question (RQ6) asked how closely news-category priorities in *TAM* WeChat newsletters matched readers’ preference, as indicated by the number of “reads” and “shares.” Table 9 and 10 show results.

Table 9

*Multiple Linear Regression for News Categories Predicting Log (reads)*

|                               | <i>B</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| <i>Business</i>               | 1.11***  |
| <i>Entertainment</i>          | -.68*    |
| <i>Family/Children</i>        | .24      |
| <i>Fashion/Beauty</i>         | -.46     |
| <i>Product Recommendation</i> | .38      |
| <i>Place Recommendation</i>   | 1.19***  |
| <i>Tips</i>                   | .47      |
| <i>Weekend to Do</i>          | 1.32***  |

$F(8, 105) = 5.73$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .25$ ,  $p < .001$

\* $P < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

The third multiple linear regression model (Table 9) indicates the relationship between news categories and log (reads). The model was significant  $F(8, 105) = 5.73$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .25$ ,  $p < .001$ . To be specific, the number of “reads” is influenced by *business*, *entertainment*, *place recommendation*, and *Weekend to Do*. For a story with *business*, *place recommendation*, or *Weekend to Do*, I expected the log (reads) to increase by  $B_{business} = 1.11$ ,  $B_{place\ recommendation} = 1.19$ , and  $B_{Weekend\ to\ Do} = 1.32$ , respectively. When the *entertainment* variable is present in a news story, however, the average log (reads) reduces by  $B_{entertainment} = -.68$ . In other words, the presence of *entertainment* in an article impacts readership in a negative way.

Table 10

*Multiple Linear Regression for News Categories Predicting Log (shares)*

|                               | <i>B</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------|
| <i>Business</i>               | 1.46***  |
| <i>Entertainment</i>          | -.51     |
| <i>Family/Children</i>        | .36      |
| <i>Fashion/Beauty</i>         | -.44     |
| <i>Product Recommendation</i> | .38      |
| <i>Place Recommendation</i>   | 1.47***  |
| <i>Tips</i>                   | .99**    |
| <i>Weekend to Do</i>          | 1.69***  |

$F(8,105) = 5.6$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .25$ ,  $p < .001$

\* $P < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$

The fourth multiple linear regression model (Table 10) was employed to explore the relationship between news categories and log (shares). The model was significant with  $F(8, 105) = 5.6$ , Adjusted  $R^2 = .25$ ,  $p < .001$ . *Business*, *place recommendation*, *tips*, and *Weekend to Do* were revealed as significant predictors in this model. When the *business* variable was present in a story, the log (shares) increased by  $B_{business} = 1.46$ . The presence of *place recommendation* helped the log (shares) to go up  $B_{place\ recommendation} = 1.47$ ; the presence of *tips* helped the log (shares) to go up  $B_{tips} = .99$ , and the presence of *Weekend to Do* helped the log (shares) to go up  $B_{Weekend\ to\ Do} = 1.69$ . Among them, *Weekend to Do* was most closely associated with shares.

### Discussion

This case study provides a snapshot of news operations at *TAM* during 2014 through the lens of gatekeeping theory. By interviewing editors and analyzing *TAM*'s WeChat stories from May to August 2014, this study examined how *TAM* editors relied on news values or news categories to determine which stories were newsworthy. Data on reader engagement with each story gave evidence of how well news choices matched reader interests. This discussion is



divided into two parts: (a) the role of news values in news selection and the relationship of these values to readers' engagement (RQs1, 3, & 5), and (b) the role of news categories in the same process (RQs 2, 4, & 6).

**News values.** Interviews in this study showed that people in *TAM*'s editorial department relied on *utility*, *proximity*, *timeliness*, and *impact* when they selected WeChat stories (RQ1). The content analysis found that more than half of *TAM*'s WeChat news stories reflected *utility* and *proximity* (RQ3). The frequent presence of *proximity* falls in line with a previous study on online news values (Schaudt & Carpenter, 2009). Schaudt and Carpenter (2009) found that *proximity* was the most present news values in about 75% stories on 15 community Web sites. Schaudt and Carpenter showed that regional media preferred to select stories about local people and events. According to Buckalew (1970), editors working in small markets preferred to select local stories because those editors had a more focused sense of community. They were more likely to have a greater involvement in their communities than editors in larger markets. To meet people's demand for local information, *TAM* seemed to pay more attention to what was happening in the DFW area.

*TAM*'s marketing positioning may help explain the large number of *utility* stories. As a Chinese-language magazine in DFW area, *TAM* is devoted to providing useful lifestyle information to readers. For instance, *TAM* editors selected lots of stories like "restaurant of the week," not only for the printed edition but also for the WeChat account. Previous research found that articles with *human-interest* news value were most likely to be picked (White, 1950). But the research looked at the news-selection process of one experienced wire editor at a non-metropolitan newspaper. This difference may explain the varied findings.

Even though *TAM* editors said they relied on *timeliness* and *impact* when they picked stories, these two news values did not appear much in WeChat stories. Editors' statements about news value were inconsistent with their actions. There are several possible explanations for this inconsistency. First, all WeChat articles in this study were edited from May to August 2014. The editor interviews, however, were completed in January 2015. The editors' reliance on news values might have changed over time. Second, *TAM* was a start-up company in the summer of 2014. Editors lacked working experience at that time. They did not clearly know what they should edit every week, which group they should target, and which newsworthiness criteria they should abide by when picking news stories. In the earlier period, editors tried as much as possible to see which stories got the most feedback from readers. According to editor Yue, "Editors here had no idea which news value works effectively. The only thing we can do is to try everything we can and find the best way."

RQ5 tries to explore how closely news-value priorities in *TAM* WeChat newsletters matched the readers' preferences. In this study, the number of "reads" and "shares" indicated reader engagement. The finding showed that the average number of "reads" for *TAM* news stories was higher than "shares." Readers can easily click an article on social media sites. However, clicking does not mean that readers will finish the article (Manjoo, n.d.). Sharing an article or video on one's homepage indicates the person's opinions on issues. Stronger desire and interest are likely to motivate readers to share information with others.

The positive influence of *utility* on reads and shares matched the frequent presence of *utility* in WeChat stories. This connection indicates that *TAM* editors successfully predicted that their readers wanted to read informative stories. In addition to *utility*, *impact* has a significantly positive relationship with readers' preference. This variable, however, did not appear in WeChat

content as often as editors asserted. During editor interviews, editor-in-chief Wu emphasized her reliance on *impact* because she preferred to choose stories that could affect a large number of people. But she was not the primary person making news-selection decision for *TAM* WeChat content. This situation contradicts previous research. Shoemaker and Reese (1996) found that the higher position a gatekeeper had within the organization, the more influence he/she had on final decisions. In its start-up period, particularly in May and June, the two editors-in-chief mainly spent their time on the print magazine to make sure one print edition would be published every two months. Although Wu and Luo still had influential decision-making authority, they gave WeChat editors freedom to make daily news decisions.

The content analysis showed that *proximity* was the second most present news value. However, it had no significant correlation with readers' preferences. The skewed distribution of sample data could be one explanation. During the coding process, I found that some articles with *proximity* got a large number of "reads," while others had only a few. This big gap finally led to the insignificant relationship between the *proximity* variable and the number of "reads" and "shares."

Shoemaker and Vos (2009) suggested that "When routines are more important, we should see uniformity in selection decision across gatekeepers" (p. 51). Individual *TAM* editors relied on different news values. Therefore, they did not follow specific news-value rules to produce contents. Individual gatekeepers' experience and the characteristic of *TAM*'s markets affected the gatekeeping process. In addition, the phone interviews indicated that editors cared more about what readers wanted to read. "A good editor needs to know the market instead of locking herself in a room and writing whatever she thinks is very important," Editor-in-chief Wu said. Because the regression finding showed that the readers were more likely to click and share stories with

*timeliness* and *impact* news value, *TAM* should look for more *timeliness* and *impact* angles in stories.

**News categories.** In phone interviews, the four editors said they favored *entertainment*, *family*, and *place-recommendation* stories (RQ2). The content analysis showed that among the eight news categories examined, *entertainment*, *tips*, and *family/children* were present most often in WeChat content (RQ4). The following news categories were also relatively prominent: *place recommendation*, *business*, and *product recommendation*. On the whole, the ranking of stories by categories was almost consistent with what the editors said.

*Entertainment* was displayed most often in WeChat news contents. This finding contradicted earlier research involving a newspaper. Wu and Bechtel (2002) reported that *international politics* accounted for the most stories (28%) in *The New York Times*. Unlike mainstream media, which focus on political and religious news, *TAM* preferred to display casual and non-sensitive information. One possible explanation is the magazine's marketing position. *TAM* is positioned as a city lifestyle news organization; topics like *international relations* or issues related to foreign countries do not match the magazine's business purpose. Moreover, *TAM* editors do not have the background to be perceived as authorities on political news.

The strong showing of the *family/children* category can be first explained by Chinese culture. The family-centered tradition of Chinese culture (Zhang, 2013) encouraged *TAM* to cover lots of family topics, from family outdoor activities to early childhood education. Second, phone interviews with editors showed that one of *TAM*'s target marketing groups was 30-to-40-years-old Chinese people in Dallas. Most Chinese people in this age group are married and building a family. They have a strong interest in knowing everything related to family

relationships and their children. Therefore, *TAM* editors correctly predicted that the *family/children* news category would successfully appeal to their target readers.

In addition to *entertainment* and *family/children* news categories, *TAM* editors often selected articles with *place recommendations*. Editor-in-chief Luo particularly noted that restaurant recommendation stories would let people find out more about Dallas and make their lives more convenient. A common saying in China is “Food is the first necessity of the people.” No matter whether people have just moved to the city or they have lived in Dallas for many years, they always need information about well-known or new local restaurants. Furthermore, because *TAM*'s target readers are 30-to-40 years old, family interests attract their attention and enhance engagement with recommendation stories.

*Fashion/beauty* had the lowest presence among the eight news categories. Editor-in-chief Wu mentioned in the phone interview that *TAM*'s WeChat account does not have many stories about fashion and beauty. One possible reason is that no editor had a very strong interest in fashion. According to Shoemaker and Reese (1996), gatekeepers make decision based on their personal preference, to some degree. When gatekeepers are not familiar with the fashion industry, they have little reason to follow or report on those topics.

RQ6 asked how closely news categories priorities in *TAM* WeChat newsletters matched the readers' preference. The regression model result showed that *business*, *place recommendations*, and *Weekend-to-Do* stories were positively correlated with readers' preference. In addition, the *tips* news category positively affected the number of “shares.” The relatively frequent presence of *place recommendations* and *tips* closely matched what readers wanted to read.

The reason *Weekend to Do* was not present often was that it appeared only once per week. *TAM* delivered *Weekend-to-Do* news via WeChat every Thursday to provide weekend event information to readers. These weekend news items were very creative and unique. They recommended interesting and fun activities, such as food festivals, golf shows, and orchestra performances, that people could do on the weekend. For Chinese people who have left their country and do not have many friends in Dallas, the *Weekend-to-Do* list made their weekend easier.

Articles with *entertainment* unexpectedly had a negative effect on the number of “reads.” This effect can be explained by looking at the definition of this news category. In the codebook of this study, *entertainment* had a very broad definition that overlapped other news categories. For instance, a waterpark recommendation story could not only be coded as *place recommendations* but also coded as *entertainment*. All *Weekend-to-Do* articles could have been coded as *entertainment*. Finding *entertainment* in a wide range of articles made the final data distribution look skewed. Some articles with *entertainment* had a large number of “reads,” while some got extremely few clicks. Like *proximity*, the non-constant variance led to the negative relationship between *entertainment* presence and readership.

Unlike earlier literature, which heavily focused on the role news value played in news selection, this study found that news category was more significant in the online gatekeeping process. *TAM* WeChat editors relied on some specific story topics to choose stories and appeared successfully to deliver what their readers wanted to read.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

This study has several limitations. First, the case study is just a snapshot of gatekeeping operations in *TAM*. The analysis is limited to a specific time in 2014 and space in Texas. Although results provide *TAM* editors a better insight into how readers react to WeChat contents, the findings may not apply to other news organizations. Future research might follow a similar method to look at other city magazines to compare gatekeeping approaches. Furthermore, editorial thinking at *TAM* may have evolved. This study looked at the WeChat stories in the summer of 2014. The phone interviews with *TAM* editors happened in January 2015. Some comments indicated that editors' thinking was not the same in January as it was during the summer. Editors had gained more experience working with WeChat and seeing what readers liked. If interviews had been done during the summer of 2014, the question of changing editorial thinking would not come into play. Furthermore, if evolution has happened and continues, *TAM* editors' reliance on values might be different after a couple of years. Future researchers might repeat this case study after five years to see if *TAM* gatekeeping routines have changed.

The translation issue complicated this study to some degree. I and another coder had to analyze the Chinese WeChat contents based on an English codebook. The switch between two languages might have affected the coding result to some degree.

The study's findings offer some possible directions for future research. First, this study did not offer interpretations for readers' preference for *business* and *tips* news. Future research should attempt to analyze more deeply why *TAM*'s WeChat subscribers want to read *business* and *tips* stories. Second, *TAM*'s WeChat daily newsletter consists of one major story and several minor stories. Because the major story on the front page might catch readers' eyes more easily than minor stories, story positioning and display should be taken into account in future research.

Last, all editors at this magazine are female. Whether online editors' gender influences the gatekeeping process could be a research topic in the future.

### **Conclusion**

This case study advanced the gatekeeping literature into a new area of technology: online social networks. Unlike previous studies that focused on television and newspaper, this study looked at a magazine's WeChat newsletters. Results opened a new door to this area of research. Many editors today work in a 24-hour online media environment. The delivery system, especially through social networks, is two-way. Reader feedback can be immediate. Therefore, the news-selection process may be different for social media from that of traditional news media. Results from this study may give researchers who look at news delivery through other social networks a place to start. Moreover, this study presented a holistic method to look at a local start-up magazine. The process started by interviewing editors to determine their decision-making priorities, compared those priorities to published content, and used regression to explore reader engagement. The approach employed in this study may be beneficial for future examinations of gatekeeping in an online environment.

As the first research on WeChat newsletter, this study may enlighten people about this Chinese-language social network and news organizations' use of public account to reach people. In terms of *TAM*, this case study provides significant insights into day-to-day news selection. This magazine is still in a start-up period. Insights from this study could help *TAM*'s social media group more effectively select stories to better connect with readers in the future.



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Appendix A—A Sample of Newsletter on *TAM* WeChat Account

Figure 2. A Sample of Newsletter on *TAM* WeChat Account

## Appendix B—English Version of Interview Questions

1. Why did you begin this magazine?
2. I know you didn't study journalism. What got you interested in the magazine business?
3. Why did you start this magazine in Dallas?
4. Why a Chinese magazine?
5. How would you describe *TAM*'s marketing position?
6. Editors choose stories for lots of reasons. Please describe how you decide what would make a good *TAM* story.
7. Did you think about news value such as *proximity*, *timeliness*, *currency*, etc.? Did you rely on one or some specific news values to select stories?
8. Besides news values, newsrooms also cover a variety of categories. For example, sports, politics, etc. What categories do you focus on?
9. Describe type of readers who follow your WeChat official account. Do you measure readers' demographics?
10. What role does reader interest play in choosing your content?

### Appendix C—English Version of Interview Contents

#### Editor Yue

1. How would you describe *TAM*'s marketing position?

Yue: *The Asian Magazine* positioned as an informative magazine, focusing on topics like dining, travel, art, entertainment, etc. We do not often do in-depth discussion and incisive analysis. It is more focused on aspects of entertainment and art.

2. Please describe how you decide what makes a good *TAM* story.

Yue: Before making a decision, I first do some research on the Internet. Since most of our readers are Chinese family members aged from 30 to 50 years old, I am more concentrated on stories related to family life and Dallas local information. Because I was an intern who was still learning, all kinds of topics could be tried.

3. Did you think about news value such as *proximity*, *timeliness*, *currency*, etc.? Did you rely on one or some specific news values to select stories?

Yue: *TAM* tried to explore their story-selection rule. But they had no idea which news value or whatever works effectively. The only thing we can do is to try something new. If I have to rank those news values, I would like to put *utility* in the first, and then *timeliness*. Our goal is to provide readers with useful information for daily life. Instead of focusing on in-depth discussion and incisive analysis, our WeChat articles try to recommend readers to try something new, or go to some amazing places. It is not hard to find that many of our WeChat articles talks about restaurant week, upcoming movies, outdoor activities, etc.

4. Besides news values, newsrooms also cover a variety of categories. For example, sports, politics, etc. What categories do you focus on?

Yue: Local family and entertainment. As I mentioned before, many of our followers on WeChat are Chinese families in Dallas. The family-centered tradition in Chinese culture made us realize the importance of selecting family news topics like how to choose a school for your children.

5. Describe type of readers who follow your WeChat official account. Do you measure readers' demographics?

Yue: Different topics were selected according to different reader groups. We did not do any data collection for readers' demographics. We just personally feel that the main target readers are young people and local Chinese families in Dallas.

6. What role does reader interest play in choosing your content?

Yue: Reader interest does influence my decision. *TAM* is not an in-depth analysis magazine. Therefore, we care more about what the readers want to read. Audience interest is important for us.

#### Editor Li

1. How would you describe *TAM*'s marketing position?

Li: Lifestyle magazine based in DFW areas.

2. Did you think about news value such as *proximity, timeliness, currency, etc.*? Did you rely on one or some specific news values to select stories?

Li: I relied most on *utility*. I edited a variety of place recommendation stories for our WeChat account. Followed by *proximity* as the next most important. Since *TAM* is a start-up company, we selected more local stories than national ones at the beginning. After August, we gradually expanded the geographical category and tried to reach more readers. In addition, our target markets are Chinese young people and Chinese families in Dallas. The stories we select should be closely related to their daily life.

4. Besides news values, newsrooms also cover a variety of categories. For example, sports, politics, etc. What categories do you focus on?

Li: Entertainment. Entertainment is actually a broad category, which can include restaurant recommendations, introduction of upcoming movies, Weekend to Do, etc. Those topics are all closely related to people's daily lives. In other words, our company's brand identity needs editors to cover more entertainment lifestyle news stories.

5. Describe type of readers who follow your WeChat official account. Do you measure readers' demographics?

Li: Mainly young college students and Chinese families in Dallas.

6. What role does reader interest play in choosing your content?

Li: It is very important to us. We do online content for the magazine and can often get feedback from the readers via WeChat platform. Therefore, we care about audience preference.

### **Editor-in-chief Wu**

1. I know you didn't study journalism. What got you interested in the magazine business?

Wu: Well. I am very interested in magazine and new media. Some of my friends are working in this industry. I got to know more about magazine from them. Market research had been done before I started this company, which made me very confident.

2. Why did you start this magazine in Dallas?

Wu: My whole family lives in Dallas. This is the first reason. I do not want to leave my family for the sake of earning more money. Making money is not my most important motivation. Besides, I did some research before and had a good social networking in Dallas. I feel there is a big potential market in this city.

3. Why a Chinese magazine?

Wu: Our target readers are Chinese people in Dallas, even in Texas. They will have a strong identification with us when they read something in Chinese. No other magazines were ever edited in Chinese before. We are the first one in Southern America. This is a good opportunity for us. Of course, our final goal is to make the magazine bilingual so that American-born Chinese can also get access to information about China. Besides, editing in Chinese is a good opportunity for us to let people know more about the Chinese language and culture.

4. How would you describe *TAM's* marketing position?

Wu: We are a high-end magazine introducing high-quality lives, located in Dallas, and promoting Chinese empowerment. Our advantage is that we are the first Chinese magazine in Southern U.S. We have the advantage of being the only one and face less competition. We have plenty of time to explore, grow, and find the right path for development.

5. Please describe how you decide what makes a good *TAM* story.

Wu: It is important if the topic is related to Chinese people, or if it happened in Dallas. If a news story is nonlocal but related to Chinese people, we'd still like to select it. Generally, we avoid selecting sensitive topics like politics, religion, etc.

6. Did you think about news value such as *proximity*, *timeliness*, *currency*, etc.? Did you rely on one or some specific news values to select stories?

Wu: Well. I am more likely to select WeChat stories with *timeliness* because this media platform is online. Internet users always want to know something new, something they never knew before. In addition, I often choose stories that can impact a large number of people or stories that talk about a current issue at that time. Those stories like policy change or Ebola virus protection can reach bunch of people and get their attention. In all, stories with higher news value are more likely to be aired.

7. Besides news values, newsrooms also cover a variety of categories. For example, sports, politics, etc. What categories do you focus on?

Wu: Entertainment, place recommendation, family/children. Currently, WeChat does not cover many stories about fashion.

8. Describe type of readers who follow your WeChat official account. Do you measure readers' demographics?

Wu: According to our data analysis, we have found that our WeChat followers are mostly aged from 20 to 40. Most of them are Chinese families living in Dallas.

9. What role does reader interest play in choosing your content?

Wu: The readers' preference is very important. A company existing both in paper magazine and also online cannot ignore readers' taste. But this doesn't mean that we will always cater to public taste. We also have our own judgment. We want to provide readers with high-quality content. A good editor needs to know the market instead of locking herself in a room and writing whatever she thinks is very important.

### **Editor-in-chief Luo**

1. Why did you start this Chinese magazine in Dallas?

Luo: No one did this before. Currently existing magazines in the market are not good. We want to create a media platform that provides our readers with more useful information with high quality.

2. How would you describe *TAM's* marketing position?

Luo: An elite lifestyle magazine. We will try to achieve bilingual contents in the near future, to reach more readers. I think this magazine is a great platform to connect Asian people, and to let Americans know more about Chinese culture.



3. Please describe how you decide what would make a good *TAM* story.

Luo: I think practicality and creativity are equally important. Living is the first thing to think about. The bottom line is that we want to create a more harmonious combination between the eastern and western culture. We want to present Chinese and Americans with more new things. We focus on practical issues, but it is creative.

4. Did you think about news value such as *proximity*, *timeliness*, *currency*, etc.? Did you rely on one or some specific news values to select stories?

Luo: Yes. News value is important, particularly *proximity*, *utility*, and *timeliness*. So far, I prefer to define *TAM* as a city or regional magazine. Its contents focus on information about city life as well as dining, travel, and entertainment. We highlight anything that has a close connection with the Chinese community in Dallas. Therefore, *proximity* and *utility* news value undoubtedly have great significance to us.

5. Besides news values, newsrooms also cover a variety of categories. For example, sports, politics, etc. What categories do you focus on?

Luo: I sort content by recommendations, particularly restaurant recommendations. Think about it. Why would you want to share a WeChat article with your friends? One reason is because the article is funny. Another possibility is that it is useful. We hope to provide our subscribers with useful guide information. For example, when subscribers receive a Sushi restaurant recommendation article from *TAM*'s WeChat account, they might scan it first, and then save or even share with their friends. Next time when they want eat out, they can re-read this Sushi article again and get helpful information to make a decision. Besides, I focus on entertainment, family, hot news, activities organized or participated in companies, and fan interaction.

6. Describe type of readers who follow your WeChat official account. Do you measure readers' demographics?

Luo: Chinese people who are living in Dallas at the age of 20 to 40.

7. What role does reader interest play in choosing your content?

Luo: We care about what readers want to read. This is a magazine, readers are very important to us. Based on this prerequisite, we still should keep a consistent writing style no matter whether online or in print edition.

#### Appendix D— English Version of Story Headlines and URLs

| Date    | Headline (English Version)                                    | URL   |
|---------|---|---|
| 5/23/14 | <i>TAM</i> : Who we are                                       | <a href="http://bit.ly/1F9Rvpv">http://bit.ly/1F9Rvpv</a> |
| 5/23/14 | DFW Area Weekend to Do  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1BXqoum">http://bit.ly/1BXqoum</a> |
| 5/23/14 | Children Drawing Contest for Celebrating Dragon Boat Festival | <a href="http://bit.ly/1C37C7o">http://bit.ly/1C37C7o</a> |
| 5/23/14 | 2014 DFW Area Dragon Boat Festival                            | <a href="http://bit.ly/16Gu7oc">http://bit.ly/16Gu7oc</a> |
| 5/24/14 | Hawaii Travel Guide   | <a href="http://bit.ly/16ulsEz">http://bit.ly/16ulsEz</a> |

|         |   |   |
|---------|---|---|
| 5/24/14 | American Airlines Launches New Service between Dallas/Fort Worth and Hong Kong and Shanghai | <a href="http://bit.ly/1zjTzud">http://bit.ly/1zjTzud</a> |
| 5/25/14 | Obama Signs to Simplify the Procedure of Chinese Travel Visa                                | <a href="http://bit.ly/1DCd0xC">http://bit.ly/1DCd0xC</a> |
| 5/25/14 | Top 10 Spas in Dallas   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1DCcWOD">http://bit.ly/1DCcWOD</a> |
| 5/26/14 | Toyota's Move to Plano  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1zc9O7K">http://bit.ly/1zc9O7K</a> |
| 5/26/14 | Frisco ISD Plans to Open 14 New Schools   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1uew4m6">http://bit.ly/1uew4m6</a> |
| 5/27/14 | Most Popular Bubble Tea Stores in Dallas  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1CxVVs3">http://bit.ly/1CxVVs3</a> |
| 5/27/14 | U.S Housing Price Tends to Be Lowering Speed  | <a href="http://bit.ly/16kCVPx">http://bit.ly/16kCVPx</a> |
| 5/28/14 | Top 10 iPhone Office Apps (1)   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1vutsRO">http://bit.ly/1vutsRO</a> |
| 5/29/14 | DFW Area Weekend to Do  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1KissTP">http://bit.ly/1KissTP</a> |
| 5/30/14 | How to Select Your Sunscreen  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1KishrE">http://bit.ly/1KishrE</a> |
| 5/31/14 | Best Waterparks in DFW Area   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1Di2Lkt">http://bit.ly/1Di2Lkt</a> |
| 6/1/14  | Most Popular Nail Shops in Dallas   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1uevgO2">http://bit.ly/1uevgO2</a> |
| 6/2/14  | Interesting Crowd Funding Program   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1BXp7U6">http://bit.ly/1BXp7U6</a> |
| 6/3/14  | Top 5 Coffeehouses in DFW Area  | <a href="http://bit.ly/16ujpQU">http://bit.ly/16ujpQU</a> |
| 6/4/14  | Top 10 mobile Office Apps (2)   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1C36QHk">http://bit.ly/1C36QHk</a> |
| 6/5/14  | DFW Area Weekend to Do  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1KuNhtF">http://bit.ly/1KuNhtF</a> |
| 6/6/14  | Discounts on Groupon  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1F9OLIK">http://bit.ly/1F9OLIK</a> |
| 6/7/14  | Most Popular Zoos in DFW Area   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1xqGN7S">http://bit.ly/1xqGN7S</a> |
| 6/8/14  | Top 5 Best Mascaras to Make Up Your Eyelash   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1DIYMLT">http://bit.ly/1DIYMLT</a> |
| 6/8/14  | 2014 CIE MathFun in Dallas  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1CxVi1C">http://bit.ly/1CxVi1C</a> |
| 6/9/14  | 2014 FIFA World Cup Television Schedule   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1F6SYNa">http://bit.ly/1F6SYNa</a> |
| 6/9/14  | Summer Children MavsCamp  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1uapWlt">http://bit.ly/1uapWlt</a> |
| 6/10/14 | Best Gifts for Father's Day   | <a href="http://bit.ly/16ANmzx">http://bit.ly/16ANmzx</a> |
| 6/11/14 | American Airline Plans to Launch Direct Flight to Beijing                                   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1DyWdvv">http://bit.ly/1DyWdvv</a> |
| 6/11/14 | Exclusive Interview: First Passengers Experience  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1vt9FIQ">http://bit.ly/1vt9FIQ</a> |
| 6/11/14 | Live News: First Flight Ceremony  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1vt9BCu">http://bit.ly/1vt9BCu</a> |
| 6/12/14 | Weekly Film Recommendation  | <a href="http://bit.ly/18Onhh0">http://bit.ly/18Onhh0</a> |
| 6/12/14 | DFW Area Weekend to Do  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1EGSW18">http://bit.ly/1EGSW18</a> |
| 6/13/14 | Selecting a Omega Watch as a Father's Day Gift  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1BV8f00">http://bit.ly/1BV8f00</a> |
| 6/13/14 | Top 5 Pet Hotels in DFW Area  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1EGSCj3">http://bit.ly/1EGSCj3</a> |
| 6/14/14 | Write Your Film Review, Win Free Cinema Tickets   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1DGqFUQ">http://bit.ly/1DGqFUQ</a> |
| 6/14/14 | Five Places the World Cup Fan Should Go in Dallas   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1KdJtyG">http://bit.ly/1KdJtyG</a> |
| 6/15/14 | Free Ticket for Dirk Nowitzki's 2014 Heroes Celebrity Baseball Game                         | <a href="http://bit.ly/16ALxCC">http://bit.ly/16ALxCC</a> |
| 6/15/14 | Top 10 Commonly Used Medicines in American Families   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1F6R0fE">http://bit.ly/1F6R0fE</a> |
| 6/16/14 | Horse Racing in US  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1uYJf5t">http://bit.ly/1uYJf5t</a> |
| 6/17/14 | 2014 New Cities Summit of Dallas  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1CZIC2j">http://bit.ly/1CZIC2j</a> |

|         |   |   |
|---------|---|---|
| 6/18/14 | Winner List for Children Drawing Contest  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1uanS6m">http://bit.ly/1uanS6m</a>   |
| 6/18/14 | 2014 New City Summit of Dallas: The Development of China's Cultural Design Industry | <a href="http://bit.ly/18Omug9">http://bit.ly/18Omug9</a>   |
| 6/19/14 | TAM Job Opportunities   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1KssqHk">http://bit.ly/1KssqHk</a>   |
| 6/19/14 | DFW Area Weekend to Do  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1F6Qn60">http://bit.ly/1F6Qn60</a>   |
| 6/20/14 | Fashion Products of the FIFA World Cup  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1vt8umm">http://bit.ly/1vt8umm</a>   |
| 6/21/14 | Volunteering Opportunities in DFW Area  | <a href="http://bit.ly/16hUAqT">http://bit.ly/16hUAqT</a>   |
| 6/22/14 | Find a Restaurant for Celebrate Your Birthday in DFW Area                           | <a href="http://bit.ly/18OmdKb">http://bit.ly/18OmdKb</a>   |
| 6/23/14 | Best Gyms in DFW Area   | <a href="http://bit.ly/18OIN6w">http://bit.ly/18OIN6w</a>   |
| 6/24/14 | Exclusive Interview with Wei Shen, the Dancer Director for 2008 Beijing Olympics    | <a href="http://bit.ly/1DGoSza">http://bit.ly/1DGoSza</a>   |
| 6/25/14 | Top Frozen Yogurt Stores in U.S.  | <a href="http://bit.ly/16AIIxx">http://bit.ly/16AIIxx</a>   |
| 6/26/14 | TAM Official Website Opened   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1C1nXtg">http://bit.ly/1C1nXtg</a>   |
| 6/26/14 | DFW Area Weekend to Do  | <a href="http://bit.ly/16hThZc">http://bit.ly/16hThZc</a>   |
| 6/27/14 | In-depth Analysis of American Housing Property Tax                                  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1ual74N">http://bit.ly/1ual74N</a>   |
| 6/28/14 | Unique Boutiques in Dallas (1)  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1KdGJkO">http://bit.ly/1KdGJkO</a>   |
| 6/29/14 | How to Choose Your Dentist in U.S.  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1CZHqMn">http://bit.ly/1CZHqMn</a>   |
| 6/30/14 | DFW Area Weekend to Do  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1vt78br">http://bit.ly/1vt78br</a>   |
| 7/1/14  | Travel Guide on Independence Day  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1za9BIL">http://bit.ly/1za9BIL</a>   |
| 7/2/14  | Tips to Apply for Your First Credit Card in U.S.                                    | <a href="http://bit.ly/16hSmb6">http://bit.ly/16hSmb6</a>   |
| 7/4/14  | DFW Area Weekend to Do  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1BV6pfH">http://bit.ly/1BV6pfH</a>   |
| 7/4/14  | Dress Code Rituals in American Society  | <a href="http://bit.ly/16hS6ZL">http://bit.ly/16hS6ZL</a>   |
| 7/5/14  | 2014 AFFD Chinese Movies Introduction   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1z gobwE">http://bit.ly/1z gobwE</a> |
| 7/5/14  | Unique Boutiques in Dallas (2)  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1yIQnVc">http://bit.ly/1yIQnVc</a>   |
| 7/6/14  | 2014 AFFD Cartoon Movies Introduction   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1za8Usx">http://bit.ly/1za8Usx</a>   |
| 7/6/14  | Wine Glass Cup Art  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1LMYyJA">http://bit.ly/1LMYyJA</a>   |
| 7/7/14  | 2014 AFFD Horror Movies Introduction  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1yIPPPd">http://bit.ly/1yIPPPd</a>   |
| 7/7/14  | Breguet Watch Recommendation  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1DyPMII">http://bit.ly/1DyPMII</a>   |
| 7/8/14  | 2014 AFFD Action Movies Introduction  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1I2PTTx">http://bit.ly/1I2PTTx</a>   |
| 7/8/14  | Best Stores for Furniture, Home Goods, and Decoration in Dallas                     | <a href="http://bit.ly/1BV5awU">http://bit.ly/1BV5awU</a>   |
| 7/9/14  | 2014 AFFD Comedy Movies Introduction  | <a href="http://bit.ly/16ACJgb">http://bit.ly/16ACJgb</a>   |
| 7/9/14  | Win Free 2014 AFFD Movie Tickets  | <a href="http://bit.ly/16ACu4I">http://bit.ly/16ACu4I</a>   |
| 7/10/14 | Opening Ceremony of 2014 AFFD   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1vt5CpD">http://bit.ly/1vt5CpD</a>   |
| 7/10/14 | DFW Area Weekend to Do  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1zB5p1U">http://bit.ly/1zB5p1U</a>   |
| 7/11/14 | Winner List of 2014 AFFD Movie Tickets  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1DeU4aC">http://bit.ly/1DeU4aC</a>   |
| 7/11/14 | Garden in Texas (1)   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1F6LqtT">http://bit.ly/1F6LqtT</a>   |
| 7/12/14 | Chinese Movies in 2014 AFFD   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1AtcTal">http://bit.ly/1AtcTal</a>   |
| 7/12/14 | Introduction to Latest FATCA  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1zB56Eq">http://bit.ly/1zB56Eq</a>   |
| 7/13/14 | Five Things You Should Know About Investment Immigration                            | <a href="http://bit.ly/16hP5bM">http://bit.ly/16hP5bM</a>   |
| 7/14/14 | A Chinese's Hunting Experience in the United  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1uYCiS8">http://bit.ly/1uYCiS8</a>   |

|         | States   |   |
|---------|--|---|
| 7/15/14 | Stories Behind 2014 AFFD   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1CvODVE">http://bit.ly/1CvODVE</a> |
| 7/16/14 | Top 5 Golf Clubs in DFW Area   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1CZEkrC">http://bit.ly/1CZEkrC</a> |
| 7/17/14 | DFW Area Weekend to Do   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1I2LCj4">http://bit.ly/1I2LCj4</a> |
| 7/18/14 | Best Healthy Lifestyle Apps  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1LMVmxg">http://bit.ly/1LMVmxg</a> |
| 7/19/14 | Top 5 Early Childhood Development Programs in U.S.                       | <a href="http://bit.ly/1Atbxfz">http://bit.ly/1Atbxfz</a> |
| 7/21/14 | Ways to Get a Green Card   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1DeSqG7">http://bit.ly/1DeSqG7</a> |
| 7/22/14 | Dallas ISD Adjust 2014-15 School Calendar                                | <a href="http://bit.ly/1vt4hPz">http://bit.ly/1vt4hPz</a> |
| 7/22/14 | Top 10 Sushi Restaurants in Dallas                                       | <a href="http://bit.ly/1BV3C64">http://bit.ly/1BV3C64</a> |
| 7/23/14 | Gun Purchase FAQ   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1LMUTv3">http://bit.ly/1LMUTv3</a> |
| 7/24/14 | DFW Area Weekend to Do   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1DeS5mA">http://bit.ly/1DeS5mA</a> |
| 7/25/14 | Garden in Texas (2)  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1F6JCB1">http://bit.ly/1F6JCB1</a> |
| 7/28/14 | FedEx Office is Planning to Relocate Headquarters to Plano               | <a href="http://bit.ly/1F6Jxx8">http://bit.ly/1F6Jxx8</a> |
| 7/29/14 | Creative Presents Recommendation for Celebrating Chinese Valentine's Day | <a href="http://bit.ly/1EGMze4">http://bit.ly/1EGMze4</a> |
| 7/30/14 | DART Expands Orange Line to DFW Airport                                  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1KskEgD">http://bit.ly/1KskEgD</a> |
| 7/30/14 | Cigar Rituals  | <a href="http://bit.ly/16AxLQj">http://bit.ly/16AxLQj</a> |
| 7/31/14 | DFW Area Weekend to Do   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1zB3SZF">http://bit.ly/1zB3SZF</a> |
| 8/1/14  | TAM Will Cooperate with Tesla to Hold a Test Drive Event                 | <a href="http://bit.ly/1F6J66b">http://bit.ly/1F6J66b</a> |
| 8/1/14  | Most Romantic Dating Ideas for Celebrating Chinese Valentine's Day       | <a href="http://bit.ly/1EGMgjF">http://bit.ly/1EGMgjF</a> |
| 8/2/14  | How to Make Macaroons at Home: Step by Step Guide                        | <a href="http://bit.ly/1zgjpiQ">http://bit.ly/1zgjpiQ</a> |
| 8/4/14  | Choose a Safe School for Your Children                                   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1KdyQvQ">http://bit.ly/1KdyQvQ</a> |
| 8/5/14  | Travel Packing List to U.S.  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1zSiIOO">http://bit.ly/1zSiIOO</a> |
| 8/6/14  | Expert Advice: How to Schedule Children's Summer Break                   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1F6HrNX">http://bit.ly/1F6HrNX</a> |
| 8/7/14  | DFW Area Weekend to Do   | <a href="http://bit.ly/16oRhP2">http://bit.ly/16oRhP2</a> |
| 8/8/14  | Short Film: 2014 AFFD  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1zB2FSi">http://bit.ly/1zB2FSi</a> |
| 8/8/14  | Guide to Adopt a Pet in U.S.   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1zLsIHW">http://bit.ly/1zLsIHW</a> |
| 8/9/14  | Read with Your Children  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1zB2t5j">http://bit.ly/1zB2t5j</a> |
| 8/11/14 | Winner List for Tesla Test Drive   | <a href="http://bit.ly/16AtMmQ">http://bit.ly/16AtMmQ</a> |
| 8/11/14 | Development of Housing Industry in Texas                                 | <a href="http://bit.ly/1yIFC5r">http://bit.ly/1yIFC5r</a> |
| 8/12/14 | Top 10 Foodtrucks in DFW Area  | <a href="http://bit.ly/16oPKsl">http://bit.ly/16oPKsl</a> |
| 8/13/14 | Prepare for Children's New Semester                                      | <a href="http://bit.ly/1vt2j1E">http://bit.ly/1vt2j1E</a> |
| 8/14/14 | DFW Area Weekend to Do   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1DGf9Zx">http://bit.ly/1DGf9Zx</a> |
| 8/15/14 | Asian Business Expo in Texas   | <a href="http://bit.ly/1ua6iPR">http://bit.ly/1ua6iPR</a> |
| 8/15/14 | DART Begins Rail Service to DFW Airport                                  | <a href="http://bit.ly/1EGKGI7">http://bit.ly/1EGKGI7</a> |
| 8/16/14 | 2014 AREAA Texas Regional Conference                                     | <a href="http://bit.ly/1BV1Dif">http://bit.ly/1BV1Dif</a> |
| 8/16/14 | Tesla Test Drive Event   | <a href="http://bit.ly/16AseJJ">http://bit.ly/16AseJJ</a> |

**Appendix E— Content Analysis Coding Sheet**

|   | General Information           |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Story Headline:                               |                               |
| Story Date:                                   |                               |
| Story URL:                                    |                               |
| News Values:                                  |                               |
| Check article a value of "1",<br>no check "0" | <i>Proximity</i>              |
|   | <i>Timeliness</i>             |
|   | <i>Human Interest</i>         |
|   | <i>Impact</i>                 |
|   | <i>Currency</i>               |
|   | <i>Prominence</i>             |
|   | <i>Utility</i>                |
| News Categories:                              |                               |
| Check article a value of "1",<br>no check "0" | <i>Business</i>               |
|   | <i>Entertainment</i>          |
|   | <i>Family/Children</i>        |
|   | <i>Fashion/Beauty</i>         |
|   | <i>Product Recommendation</i> |
|   | <i>Place Recommendation</i>   |
|   | <i>Tips</i>                   |
|   | <i>Weekend to Do</i>          |
| Number of "reads"                             |                               |
| Number of "shares"                            |                               |