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### Version history

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This study analyses the relationship between citizen trust and e-government services in Jordan. The population consists of Jordanian citizens who use e-government services, acknowledging that “the ordinary citizen in Jordan might not be using such services or [be] aware of it” (p. 487). Results are delineated based on demographics (e.g., gender, education, age) and item statement (e.g., “Using e-gov services will be easy to me”; “E-gov services make my life easier”; “Electronic websites and the Internet are familiar to me”) (p. 489). The author highlights the imperativeness for governments to “raise public awareness” of the relevancy of e-government services and promote the growth of such services to improve credibility and accountability (p. 494).


This article looks at the e-petition as a form of e-participation that empowers citizens. The goal is the measurement of e-participation through e-petitioning. The authors studied those who participated in an e-petition regarding polluting a canal in India. Alathur, Ilavarasan, and Gupta investigated if e-petitioning fosters improved effectiveness of citizens’ democratic process. They found that e-petitioning alone did not effect change, and that media can influence change.


John Alford is professor of Public Sector Management at the University of Melbourne and the Australia and New Zealand School of Government. He defines coproduction as "any positive action by anyone outside the government agency which produces value and is prompted by the agency" (p. 7). The presentation offered here gives a schematic of how coproduction works with Australian/New Zealand government institutions.

This article offers some insights into actions city halls take to interact with constituents. This is crucial because traditional municipal power comes from a city's City Hall. This brings up the question: Is social media expanding the traditional role of City Hall?


This blog entry reports on Facebook modifying terms for city use. The eight ways are in list form: 1) Communicate local events and happenings; 2) Engage citizens by soliciting feedback on events and projects; 3) Post videos of community to attract potential residents and visitors to the area; 4) Post videos to engage residents by providing a behind-the-scenes look at city government; 5) Promote your local businesses by posting sales, specials or other events; 6) Educate your constituents and residents on legislation or community programs; 7) Track your media impressions; 8) Connect your Facebook account to Twitter to further get the word out on urgent updates. This list can be a basis for questions we ask on our survey.


A relatively small, culturally homogenous country, Tunisia has witnessed noticeable political instability since 2011. This paper analyses the role of Tunisia's "social network" in fostering civic engagement among Tunisians in light of both recent political unrest and modernization. The author expounds upon the attributes of social media use, particularly in the context of democracy and Tunisians' political participation. Findings include noticeable distinctions in engagement based on social inequality and expatriate status of Tunisian citizens.


The authors use Information and communication technologies (ICTs) as an umbrella term that includes social media applications. While many research efforts have been conducted on transparency and e-government, this paper looks
at how ICTs are affecting trust in digital information. This is in essence a bottom up look at the cultural implications of the relationship. This statement is key to our research: “Many nations with transparency laws have directly tied the implementation of these laws to the implementation of ICT-based initiatives, often through e-government” (p. 265). Indeed one key point of this paper is that ICTs can act as anti-corruption tools, and these tools in general fosters trust in government.


The authors highlight policy issues as they relate to access to social media led government initiatives. The purpose is a better alignment of these policies to how the broader public uses social media for e-government services.


The authors looked at the E-Government Act of 2002 and concluded it does not allow for participatory democracy. Moreover, this article highlights the Obama Administration’s Open Government initiative, and presents several portals where federal government agencies are using social media to interact with patrons.


This paper offers a detailed overview of how the U.S. Federal Government is using social media to promote and exercise the various open government initiatives produced in recent years by the last three presidential administrations. Table 2 in the paper offers the initiatives and laws and which aspect of transparency in government. The authors state that a major obstacle to obtaining transparency in open government is inclusion through access to social media.


This study measures citizen engagement on Western European local governments’ Facebook pages via an analysis of 50 posts of various content (e.g., environment, housing) and media type (e.g., video, text). The results of the study reveal that the media types with the highest access are links and photos, while cultural activities,
sports and marketing comprise the most widely published content by local governments: “those topics more widely covered by local governments are not necessarily those that elicit higher levels of engagement on the part of citizens” (p. 57). The study also found that there are significant differences relative to citizen engagement based on media and content types in various institutional contexts (e.g., environment, social services, health, education). Generally, results indicate “there is a demand from the citizens’ side to a more effective communication about topics related to everyday life in their municipalities” (p. 59). Additionally, higher levels of engagement are found on Facebook sites which permit wall posts by citizens.


This article focuses on the capability of Twitter (tweeting) to reflect public mood and perceptions. The authors employ a sentiment analysis lexicon-based approach to their analysis of all public tweets produced between August 1 and December 20, 2008 using an extended Profile of Mood States to map tweets according to six moods: tension, depression, anger, vigor, fatigue, and confusion. The authors were curious about the extent to which prolific or major events in media and popular culture (such as the U.S. federal election) impact public mood and perception, and whether patterns or fluctuations in mood could be evidenced through Twitter. Several “case studies” related to major fall 2008 events (the presidential election, Thanksgiving) pointed to tweets as providing insightful data relevant to fluctuations in public mood as they relate to major events (p. 6).


Bonson et al. (2012) studied the presence of social media platforms in seventy-five European Union municipalities. Their results indicate that municipalities that are not present in social media platforms are not hearing what citizens are saying, and thus missing out on “grass roots opinions and feelings about local policy, public services, and daily life in their municipalities” (p. 128). The authors also found that participation in social media platforms at municipal level did not reflect country-specific issues (p. 129). Bonson et al. found that internet access is not a factor in measuring social media use among the citizens of the seventy-five municipalities studied, and that traditional e-government practices that center on information access and e-commerce are not a factor when measuring citizen e-participation. Their broad point here is that with the use of social media, citizens are discussing issues that affect them at the local level. This should be a motivating factor for developing social media policy.

Booz Allen Hamilton provides "management, and technology consulting services" for public and private organization. This report looks at seven agencies within the United States' Federal Government and how managers used social media. This report identified challenges these managers faced, how managers solved the challenges, and the lessons learned. From the executive summary of the report: "Our aim is to help agencies improve mission performance through more informed and effective use of social media and technology. The case studies and other information in this report are intended to inspire federal program managers to employ social media in new and innovative ways in order to strengthen relationships with their constituencies, and further their missions, through interactive communication.


The authors looked at social media technology from a humanistic perspective, and attempts to tie social networking to the technology, stating, “unless social means are attached, the platform is not being utilized to its fullest social capacity...The network was the facilitative means to achieve the social end. The same is said of digital spaces that produce similar outcomes” (p. 328).

CATSMI Project, (n. d.). Find out what some of your favorite Social media sites have to say about your privacy... *The Canadian Access to Social Media Information Project.*
Retrieved from http://www.catsmi.ca/

This website is Canadian centric and offers some insight into how Canadians are dealing with social media privacy issues. On CATSMI’s front page there are three questions the project asked Linked In. The first question asks if Linked In's social media privacy policy adheres to US-EU safe harbor privacy standards, a member of the Council of American Survey Research Organizations, and TRUSTe’s Privacy Seal. TRUSTe is a privacy consulting service that offers safe data economy transactions.


“Social capital tends to (but not always) integrate a behavioral dimension such as social participation with an attitudinal dimension such as trust... the most common measures of social capital are membership in informal and formal groups, and
interpersonal trust.“ (p. 358). Chappell and Funk (2010) looked at measuring social capital by looking at levels of trust and membership participation. Using multivariate analyses, the authors included a third attribute, socio-economic status, as measures of perceived health, mental health, and physical function. They found “social participation and trust do not mediate the relationship between advantage (measured as income here) and perceptions of health” (p. 366).


This study analyzes e-participation activities and initiatives in Austria, Greece and the UK using both quantitative and qualitative research techniques. The aim of the study is to “develop a novel approach to e-participation, which is based on ‘passive crowdsourcing’ by government agencies, exploiting the extensive political content continuously created in numerous Web 2.0 social media (e.g. political blogs and microblogs, news sharing sites and online forums) by citizens without government stimulation, to understand better their needs, issues, opinions, proposals and arguments concerning a particular domain of government activity of public policy” (p. 283). Study traces the development of “crowdsourcing” and distinguishes “passive crowdsourcing” from the more often employed “active crowdsourcing.” In this way, the researchers focused primarily on non-government agency websites to base its data retrieval, analysis and recommendations.


This editorial offers some key background information that includes a listing of the type and scope of each Web 2.0 platform. The authors also introduce some key terms, such as “Social Enterprise” and “big social data”, which adds to the “Social media-based citizen engagement model” identified by the authors (p. 442).


Chun et al. (2010) places the development of e-government into four categories. During the first three, basic information is provided on government Websites, interactivity is added to webpages, and transaction services are provided. The fourth category is a participatory/co-productive one where government promotes shared governance to transform operations, in terms of seamless information flow and collaborative decision-making (p. 1).

This is an official Canadian Parliament document that lists how the four primary political parties in Canada use social media. The paper makes the distinction that already elected officials in Canada and the U. S. use social media for outreach, the U. S. particularly Obama For America used social media as a campaign tool. According to the paper, “Parliaments are using social media to engage citizens in public policy debates...the UK Parliament is experimenting with online consultations that allow the public to share their response to specific questions on a topic under examination by a select committee” (p. 3). Unfortunately the website is now gone.


The Conference Board of Canada (2013) prepared a report card that puts Canadians' trust in parliament in context with sixteen other countries. Ranking 6th among the sixteen countries (The United States ranks last with a “D”) the Board gave Canada a “C”. There is a pull down menu on in the Web article that compares Canada with each of the fifteen other countries.


Coglianese (2009) noted that open-government does not mean 100% transparency in every action. He cautions that we should not seek this complete transparency but seek transparency in policymaking. Additionally, the author highlighted memorandums and executive orders the Obama Administration took almost immediately after taking office. From the beginning, the Obama Administration has sought to bring more transparency to policymaking. In a review of a standing executive order first enacted by President Clinton, and then reenacted by President Bush, that governs how the White House reviews regulations, the Office of Budget Management (OBM) solicited open comments for a week before President signed the order. According to Coglianese, there were 150 comments.

The authors summarize the findings of the “Task Force Advancing the Public Interest Through Regulatory Reform Project, established by OMB Watch, a Washington, D.C.- based organization interested in regulatory issues” (p. 925). The point of the report is recommendations for the Obama Administration’s push for transparency and openness in government. The report divides the recommendations into three categories that should each be addressed in the literature review: transparency, public participation, and strategic management. This report defines transparency as “the availability of, and ease of access by the public to, information held by the government, as well as the ability to observe or become informed about regulatory decision-making” (p. 926). The authors define public participation as, “the involvement by citizens, small businesses, nongovernmental organizations, trade associations, academics and other researchers, and others outside of government in helping develop agency rules, whether through the open comment process required by section 553(c) of the Administrative Procedure Act (‘APA’)2 or through other participatory processes” (p. 926). These definition are important because many see them as end results in their own rights. The authors, in contrast see them as tools used to promote open government. One transparency recommendation is strengthen and enhance access through FOIA. Another is adopting the “requirements of Clean Air Act § 307 that call for promptly including in each rule’s docket” (p. 939). Simply put, a rule’s docket is all of the information that went into deciding the rule should be included with a FOIA request. Improve the public search ability of regulations.gov, enhance Office of Government Information Services (OGIS), created as part of the Openness Promotes Effectiveness in our National Government Act of 2007. A key recommendation for the enhancing public participation is: “Promote the Multidirectional Flow of Information in the Comment Process” (p. 947).


Coursey and Norris in 2008 looked at the literature surrounding e-government and determined that “the models implicitly presume that fully transactional systems are better and that more citizen interaction equals improved service” (p. 524). On that note, the authors examined five models of e-government to determine if the models need revision, stand on their own, or rejection outright. Coursey and Norris did a side-by-side comparison of the models and mapped out the steps the models took to reach predicted levels of e-government usefulness. All five models have similar steps, and predict that greater participation by citizens will foster greater trust in government. The authors wanted to see if the predictions were accurate. The research involved two surveys, one conducted in 2001 and the other 2004. The data collected suggests the model predictions of greater participation were not born out and that the status of e-government at the time was still largely informational. This research was published in 2008 so it would beneficial to our
research to examine if the predictions still fall short with the use of social media platform use in e-government.


Enjoyment seeking behavior Curran and Lennon (2011) “found that enjoyment is the strongest factor influencing Attitude and has a significant direct effect on Intention to Continue Using Social Networks, Intention to Recommend Social Networks, and Intention to Join Other Social Networks” (p. 34).


With an extensive literature review centered on trust as it relates to e-government models in various non-English countries, Das, DiRienzo, and Burbridge (2009), concluded that trust is a result of organizational social capital, which is encouraged by social media in that these social networks are made up of clusters of “friendship networks.” Further, Das, DiRienzo, and Burbridge concluded that “trust can play an important role in facilitating the development of e-government within a country as any digital medium is a social platform through which individuals interact or transact with other citizens, businesses, or governments” (p. 2). The level of trust (or lack of) is organizational social capital. Another insight from the literature review is that communities with large diversities tend to foster less trust across the spectrum. Social media networks cancel out this diversity. The study’s findings indicate that countries with lower levels of technological, economic, and political (measured here as levels of democracy) developments have less trust in institutions outside of traditional social networks such as family and community cohesiveness. Because social media bypasses these obstacles, it can foster greater trust in e-government.


This paper looks at ways of developing digital habits that promote e-participation.


The authors used a trust-game to investigate interpersonal trust transfers among individuals

A straightforward look at who uses social media in Canada


Although elements of public relation (PR) discourse is not a direct thread of this project, such elements can be used to understand how those that are in power can reach audiences they might never have previous to social media platforms. This study “focuses specifically on whether participation in social network sites and adoption of social media tools is associated with public relations practitioners’ perceptions of their power within their organizations” (p. 440). One key finding is that managers within the scopes of their organizations tend to spend more time on social media sites than technicians. This finding affects the upcoming survey questions for our project. Are the findings from 2009 similar to what is happening in 2013?


D'Agostino et al. (2011) point out that much of the research behind the development of e-governance practices centered on creating a new form of governance that is independent of previous lessons learned about governance, particularly, the political aspect of governance. D'Agostino et al. make a key distinction between e-governance and e-government, where e-government deals with electronic services and access to electronic assets, and e-governance involves providing technology that fosters e-participation for citizens that wish to engage in politics and civic engagement. Because of the development of technology, e-governance research has centered on providing evidence that aligns with transactional and e-commerce based services. Given e-participation goes beyond transactional relationships centered on electronic information access to include politics, it will be useful to look at how municipalities use web pages to facilitate e-participation. In other words, the onus for providing better e-governance lies first with creating more efficient e-government models, and then with providing better e-participation. Essentially, D'Agostino et al. view social media applications as e-governance tools that provide citizens with a means to engage in e-participation.

From this article surveyed twenty-five public relations executives from various organizations that included Fortune 500 companies, consulting firms, and universities. Although none of the participants were local government officials, the authors’ findings give some insight into how the public relations contributes to the discourse.


This research looks at how the internet is changing society across several different domains. For the purpose of our research, it is crucial that we understand what happens inside the human brain that encourages the use of the internet to form social networks. Although written in 2001 before social media became commonplace, the authors note that the “Internet is unique because it integrates both different modalities of communication (reciprocal interaction, broadcasting, individual reference-searching, group discussion, person/machine interaction) and different kinds of content (text, video, visual images, audio) in a single medium” (p. 308). In particular, the authors investigated social capital formation, which is at the core of what happens in today’s social media platforms. In sum, the age of this article gives sociological credibility to our current research questions.


Dixon (2010) related e-government is defined primarily by automation of standard government services, Dixon introduces the term “Web enabled government” and “e-government 2.0”. Dixon contextualizes e-government 2.0 by identifying five stages of development that encompass the past, present, and future of e-government. E-government 2.0 is at the fifth stage, which Dixon identifies as being political in nature.


Although this report is five years old, it offers a framework for instituting public participation in British Columbia. The report finds: "When invited, the public are
more likely to get involved in public participation when the process is face-to-face, and when they are able to speak directly with the government officials responsible for the pending decision or with those who are seen to be expert in their field...Citizens believe that access to focused, government-held information is required as a basis for well informed discussions. The likelihood of participation increases when people receive succinct and decision-focused information in advance of discussions, and when those participating are assured that the input provided will be summarized afterward in writing and made available to them" (p.16). These findings are key to understanding how Canadian citizens interact with their government. Exhibit three lists six "Common Principles of Public Participation: authenticity, accountability, inclusiveness, transparency, commitment, and integrity" (p. 22). These principles partially align with GARP.


This report is in essence a toolkit that introduces managers to social media and use in local British Columbia governments. The authors used an extensive literature review and data collection from interviews and surveys to highlight advice on usage. Findings of the report “indicated that given the current trends in social media adoption by Canadians, the scalability of social media tools, and the relatively low risk of being involved, municipalities should implement social media tools to the extent their resources permit. Implementing social media on a minimal engagement level requires negligible investment, and ensures that the organization’s brand is reserved for future use should social media become commonly adopted” (p. 3).


Jason Falls presents useful tips for Kentucky’s municipalities as they adopt and use social media sites to interact with constituents. The tips are also presented on the webpage in bullet form that can be easily referenced. City in Kentucky might be an option.


"Social media is transforming interactions in the business world" (Slide 22). From the link provided to the left, search "open government" This is Canada centric.

This white paper looks at social media content as an asset that drives return on investment (ROI) in marketing and sales. Freed broke down social media content into three categories: controlled social media, which is content the organization owns, controls, and manages; sponsored social media, which is typically controlled, but has little oversight by the organization; and viral social media, of which the organization neither owns nor controls, but can be monitored. Because organizations’ websites now include links to the respective social media platforms, the white paper notes that the lines between these three are blurring. Although according to Freed, “Viral social media is particularly distressing for marketers...influence can be improved by driving social media participants to your website through the sponsored and controlled social media channels” (p. 4). What does this mean to municipalities that use social media platforms? Public organizations such as municipalities need better measurement tools that understand how the lines between the three types of social media content interact with public servants and those who depend on them for civic services. These new measurement tools can be approached from marketing and sales perspectives to drive customer satisfaction. Positive satisfaction will in turn foster better trust between the two.


Working from President Obama’s Open Government Initiative, this index fills a need expressed by federal records managers to measure how trust in Government relates to transparency. During the fourth quarter of 2009, the index viewed website visits of 36,000 patrons. According to this report, The E-Government Transparency Index is the first to assign specific quantitative transparency scores in order to create a baseline from which agencies can benchmark progress” (p. 2).


This paper looks at the scope of e-participation in political contexts.

The countries are Canada, the United States, Australia, and the U.K. Gibson, Howard, and Ward (2000) study data from over 60,000 participants in Survey2000, a data gathering initiative supported by National Geographic and was available throughout 1998 and 1999 on their Website. They found, “internet use has a direct and negative impact on political participation, independent from its mediated effects through social capital” (p. 15), and that there are two ways people used the internet to develop social capital, gaming and socializing. Conducted more than a decade ago, the authors discovered a negative link between online political participation and social capital in the United States. Additionally, Gibson, Howard, and Ward found that while online socializing may lead to higher levels of offline socializing and civic engagement in one’s community, it appears to make one less likely to engage in specifically political organizations and activities” (p. 15).


Using the simple question: “how do humans trust information obtained over the internet?”, Gligor and Wing (2011) broke down the question into two parts that address the values obtained during the sender receiver partnership. The receiver value relates to how the information advances an intended action planned by the receiver. Sometimes trust exchange is not the motivation for one side or both to advance an intended action. In the case of e-participation and e-government the trust bound centers on those enhanced or negatively impacted by the values and behaviors of governmental actions.


Beginning 25 years ago in Brazil, participatory budgeting has been incorporated both worldwide and by several U.S. cities. This report provides an analysis of participatory budgeting, including “the potential value of integrating social media into the participatory process design” (p. 4). Although some argue that participation rates are dispensable, “the use of social media in the participatory budgeting process holds promise for increasing participation in community life for citizens—especially among younger citizens who are comfortable engaging digitally” (p. 4).
Researchers analyze the role of metrics in research evaluation, particularly given the increased use of social media tools (e.g., Twitter, blog discussions) in the past decade. According to their analysis, such tools “are now seen, particularly by younger researchers (and those who publish their work) as a natural way to broadcast research result[s] and publications to interested communities, thereby alerting these communities to newly available work and inviting debate on the research findings” (np). In this way, the author stresses the importance of developing appropriate metrics to incorporate successfully data gleaned from social media (e.g., Twitter & Facebook posts) into one’s research.

This guide builds upon both the “Social Media in the Public Sector Field Guide” and the Fels report by uncovering additional case studies and presenting bright spots of social media experimentation in government. Specifically, this guide is broken up into the following three sections: importance, impact, and implementation.

Graves (2013) looked at the same survey results published by EKOS Politics and determined “The mistrust in government is much more focused on politicians and political parties, not officials” (para. 3). This explains why Canadians’ trust in democracy is slowly declining. Perhaps even more insightful to how much Canadians trust professionals outside of politics. Graves asked respondents to classify how they trust a collection of professionals ranging from nurses to blogger and compare the results with similar surveys conducted in the nineties.

These awards will help us choose the cities for our study and help us determine criteria for survey questions. In addition, the site that hosted the awards, Government Technology, govtech.com has a digital magazine and special reports that support digital government (e-government). This site is part of broader digital
footprint known as http://www.erepublic.com, “the nation’s only smart media and research company focused exclusively on public-sector innovation for state and local government and education.” February


“Elaborate elements of a conceptual framework that supports evaluation-led design of e-Government systems” (p. 135). Looks at case studies in London called Home Connections (HC) and Thurrock Choice Homes (TCL) and how effective internet based interaction was to client’s needs. Though not directly about social media, the paper offers insights into how to develop strategies for interacting with citizens through a Web 2.0 portal. This paper has a substantial section on how trust in local government is directly related to the services it renders.


A scholarly credible guide that is current, comprehensive, and offers many examples of social media adoption by local municipalities throughout the U. S.


This article looks at how and why people trust digital information that will be preserved, or has the potential to be preserved.


Hertzum, Andersen, H., Andersen, V., and Hansen (2002) put the assessment of information quality into a process with two progressive steps. If the information is already perceived as being high quality, the accessibility of information contributes to this perception. Accordingly, “The first step is necessary because the quality of the information does not reside in the information as a label that can be read but has to be established actively by the individual person. Establishing the perceived quality of a source or piece of information is essentially a matter of establishing to what extent one is willing to place trust in it” (p. 577). Academic researchers, who through scholarship and training know the value of the term
peer-reviewed, search for peer-reviewed articles. This process needs attributes such as reputation and intrinsic value of the articles for credibility.


This US Federal Government how site lists a detailed metrics that can be used across all agencies. These metrics look at how agencies can analyze and improve social media uses. “These tools are also being used for predictive and sentiment analysis—using the vast amount of real-time data from these social platforms to predict emerging trends and respond to them quickly.” The Federal Government uses these metrics to improve customer relations.


This report gathered answers from a survey distributed to various local government offices in Australia. Following up the survey, detailed in person interviews supplemented the survey data “to gain insights into the ways that councils are approaching the use of social media” (p. vii). Respondents indicated that most challenges can be overcome by devising social media policies with employees, and by providing staff with training in how patrons use social media. Respondents also indicated that they should understand community expectations. According to Howard, “Authenticity, accuracy, timeliness and openness are essential traits when using social media. An added advantage of councils responding quickly, in a friendly tone with accurate information is the opportunity to build trust with the community. Brisbane City Council’s use of social media leading up to and during the Brisbane flood crisis in January 2011 is an example of how a council can build a strong reputation as a source of trusted information, and a large following on Twitter and Facebook as well.” (p. 9). These traits can correspond to the recordkeeping Principles. 1) Councils (cities) with larger populations tended to have a social media presence. 2) There is a positive link between tourism development and more robust social media practices. Broadly speaking, the report indicates a link between a location’s web page and their use of social media.

Microblogging promotes computer-aided collectivism. In recent years microblogging, posting short 140 character or less messages on social media sites such as Twitter, has exploded in use. Several things account for the explosive growth. For instance, Google and other major companies have Twitter accounts that they use to send specific messages to potential customers. According to Hsu, Liu, and Lee (2010), Google had 176 million followers as of 2009. However, as more people connect to social networks through microblogging, where Twitter and other companies like it promote actions for marketing purposes, a form of computer-aided collectivism explodes. Hsu, Liu, and Lee (2010) noted that “micro-blogs are open public platforms. Thus, the sense of intimacy is not one-to-one but one-to-many” (p. 293). From a marketing perspective, the “one to many” scenario is ideal.


Uncertainty may be an antecedent of interpersonal trust development. Hsu and Chang (2014) looked at how knowledge sharing within a group affects the interpersonal trust bonds within that group. They concluded that as knowledge sharing increases, uncertainty decreases, which in turn promotes trust. This implies that trust increases as the amount of knowledge a government shares with its constituents increases. Further, Hsu and Chang concluded “social interaction ties and a shared knowledge-sharing vision exercise positive effects on interpersonal trust” (p. 135). Uniting around a common outcome such as uncertainty fosters greater trust among members of that group.


With several correlates, including neuroticism, extraversion, openness-to-experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness, this study looked at personality traits of Facebook and Twitter users. The findings were largely neutral, or unrelated to what site subjects used. The one exception is extraversion. Facebook is positively influenced by extraversion and Twitter negatively.


This research focuses on ways to improve mobile or m-government services for residents of Taiwan. M-government is an extension of e-government in that instead of providing services via a computer terminal, services are offered through the mobile phone environment. It is important to note here that Taiwan, from 2004, pursued a robust program to find ways to connect all citizens to e-
government services. This program included enhanced Wi-Fi networks and ways to connect rural areas. That said, “The goal of this research is to identify and explain factors of improving user acceptance of these services” (p. 34). For the purposes of the I-trust project, the implications are that m-government and e-government are one in the same. A direct link to our research is that the authors used the theory of planned behavior (TPB) to examine the effects of external variables on the overall effectiveness of the service.


In their research, the authors introduce theories and ideas from traditional governmental studies, and apply them to e-government. Specifically, Javidian and Mollayaaghobi identify three models of government/citizen participation, managerial, consultative, and participatory. In doing this they note that most governments fall under the managerial model. Ethical and legal foundations of relational marketing exchanges. This article surveyed users of Mashhad Electronic city, an e-government entity in Iran. According to the authors, “this study found that some service elements like Users as stockholders, Government Control & Supervision and Hard rules for new entrants with most absolute value can make more trust between Mashhad e-city citizens.


This study seeks to understand motivations behind why people use social networking sites. The study included 57 applicants answering a questionnaire about how they use Facebook. This paper argues that “forums organized around such artifacts as a focus will engender novel behaviors, not only in the media sharing practices overtly supported but also in the type and nature of the interpersonal connections fostered among members” (p. 821). Karnik, Oakley, Venkatanathan, Spiliotopoulos, and Nisi (2013) identified four elements that align with Facebook user satisfaction: “contribution, discovery, social interaction and entertainment” (p. 823). If we posit that satisfaction seeking is a primary motivating factor for an individual’s use of Facebook, the four elements take on a new meaning that is collective in nature. With the exception of “discovery” the other three need social interaction to materialize. If we add into the scenario what happens when users like a post or retweet a post, discovery becomes an integral part of contribution.

This article points out that social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter generate massive amounts of data. Moreover, filtering this data and analyzing patterns can lead to better response to citizen needs. The authors ask several questions related to trust in government, including: “What role do social media play in the general mix of information sources for citizens to communicate about civic life, with each other, and with government? Do social media affect civic participation and if so, for whom and what kinds of civic participation?” (p. 481). This study is part of a larger project, CTRnet: Crisis, Tragedy, and Recovery network, an internet archive of disaster related information.


The authors looked at the various components of trusting information obtained from the internet.


Killerby (2005) notes the “trust in government is a form of fiduciary trust between society and government” (p. 1). The author used the factor analysis and principal component analysis methods to measure trust in government, and assumes there is an underlying latent variable he calls GOVTRUST. Killerby developed an initial data set by asking respondents: “I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all” (p. 3). Confidence for Killerby is an indicator of trust. Killerby defines social capital as “a latent form of collective action, an intangible stock of norms and networks that defines the limits of cooperation in a society, community or group” (p. 4). Using these methods, he found that “trust in government is a poor indicator of the level of social trust in a given country” (p. 4).

This study focuses on the relationship between political efficacy and online civic/political activities (e.g., informative posts, e-mail communication with local government officials). Variables applied include: internal and external political efficacy, community collective efficacy, trust, and extroversion. The study applied the Hierarchical Regression Model (HRM) using data from household telephone surveys (2005-06, 2012) of citizens from Blacksburg (location of Virginia Polytechnic Institute and Virginia Tech), Christiansburg, and Montgomery County in Virginia. The four control variables—education level, household income, trust in people, and extroversion—were “statistically significant predictors of offline civic activities” (p. 46). Results related to online civic activities indicate that internal political efficacy and collective efficacy have statistically significant, positive relationships with online civic interests and activities. Additionally, results suggest “that more educated, younger, extroverted and male individuals report greater online civic activities” (p. 46). Regarding “trust” as a variable, the study concludes that “the level of trust is not significantly associated with both offline/online civic/political activities” (p. 48). The study emphasizes “extroversion” as being a significant “psychological factor” in predicting offline/online civic/political activities (p. 48).


The authors state, “this article develops a theoretical model of the process of e-participation and analyzes the impact of the e-participation process on participants’ trust in government” (p. 820). Said another way, this research attempts to establish a link between e-participation, e-government, and trust in Seoul South Korea. The study utilized 1,076 responses to a 2009 e-participation survey. Figure 1: Proposed Model of E-Participation and Trust in Government on page 820 visualizes how the study utilized six hypotheses to establish a link to trust.


The purpose behind this article was to analyse how social media is changing the dynamic between the citizens and government in Arab countries. The author wanted to understand how the use of social media is influencing political change and giving activists a larger voice. One of the things that stood out the most in when it came to governments and their citizens is the fact that there are no democracies despite that being something the citizenry wants. On further examination, there are various reasons for this, like economic dependence on oil and trying to determine how much of a role Islam should play.
Looking at how social media can induce change, the author notes that various people have determined that social media influenced the start of the Arab Spring because it was able to put a face to those oppressed. The ability to share and talk led to greater mobilisation and empowerment. The article states that governments were not prepared for the effects of social media on its citizens. Therefore, there was very little they could do about it outside of cutting off the internet completely, or figuring out a way to apply filters. In some cases, however, the government implied the use of social media was a danger to their relationship with the citizens. Additionally, the growth of social media in these countries has also led to "malpractice" in its use such as leaking false reports and fake stories. According to the author, this is the time for the government to build a better relationship with their citizens and social media is the way to do that, especially as so many who use it acknowledge its contributions to the formation of national identities.


Many agencies use blogs, wiki’s and comment sections to solicit public comments. Kriplean et. al. (2009) saw these social media methods as “acrimonious” because they offer intermittent collaboration and limited space for comments. The authors' research looked at this type of social media and concluded there is a need “for the design of socially-mediated spaces—sockets—that serve to translate between the activities of public agencies and those of the networked public sphere” (p. 1). Kriplean et al. recognized that modern electronically enabled societies are networked together in social groups that rely on two-way communication, not the stagnant Web 1.0 world in which many government agencies still operate. That said, the authors sought the construction of structured and repetitive mediated spaces that are “molded into something actionable during decision making, as well as fostering communication between contributors and decision makers” (p. 2).


This report outlines various capabilities of online technologies, including how governments can best employ online tools to engage the public. Specified challenges facing public officials are: “the increasing complexity of how people organize themselves online; Citizens’ evolving expectations of government;” and the implications of the “digital divide” (p. 3). Leighninger emphasizes “productive engagement” as being foundational for successful “interactive
communication between public managers and citizens” (p. 4). The report acknowledges challenges to participant engagement, most notably the “failure to proactively recruit participants” (p. 5) as well as the incompatibility of legal frameworks with recent technological innovations (p. 6). The report delineates “Ten Tactics” for public engagement ranging from collaboration, survey attitudes, and prioritization.


The authors looked at how trust relationships evolve over time and concluded, “the operational level of trust is often deduced from either the proportion of cooperative choices or the long-term behavior patterns of those who chose to cooperate” (p. 996). These patterns are characterized by certain behaviors “trustors” and “trustees” exhibit while performing the actions of the partnership.


Working from the Obama Administration's 2011 Open Government Partnership, "federal agencies are under tremendous pressure and expected to implement three principles of open government (transparency, participation, and collaboration) in a relatively short period of time" (p. 493). The authors used five case studies from U.S. Healthcare Administration agencies you develop an Open Government Maturity Model that will aid government agencies in implementing and cultivating engaging citizens to participate in government.


Using site visits and interviews, the authors devised a methodology for promoting trust in Singapore's e-government initiative. The methodology consists of four stages. At each stage Lim et.al. developed a set of “prescriptions for e-government systems that synchronize with the type of trust-building strategy required for each of the four developmental stages” (p. 1111). Moreover, the authors clarified the role of technology (including social media) at each stage, and highlights how the “sociopolitical climate” mitigates “trust-building via e-government systems” (p. 1111). The authors found that “citizens are more likely to place their trust in e-governments when they are empowered to engender control over the governance of governmental institutions” (p. 1113).

This article introduces the term "coproduction," which defines a citizen's role in government as more of a partnership. The author refers to the use of social media in e-government settings as "Internet-facilitated coproduction" (p. 447). Linders maintains that there is a vast diffusion of terms that describe Internet-facilitated coproduction, and that this diffusion hinders scholarly investigation into the cause and affect of coproduction. A key component of coproduction, according to Linders, is *Service Monitoring: Citizen Reporting* (p. 448), which is potentially why Facebook and other social media applications are affective e-government tools.


This article is a straightforward review of the Obama Administration's Open Government Directive (OGD). Linders and Wilson highlight three principles of open government, (transparency, public participation, and collaboration) and designates “goals” and “drivers” for each. They state, “the OGD has also served as a rallying point for new, action oriented communities of practice that bring together practitioners, advocates, subject matter experts, and academics to share best practices, discuss implementation challenges, and collaboratively develop solutions” (p. 262). In reviewing OGD one year out, the authors identified lenses through which third parties can gage the success of OGD.


Macintosh (2004) noted that e-participation requires the use of ICTs. “In the case of e-participation there are a growing number of examples of government organizations innovatively using technology to provide access to policy information and request comment on it. These examples demonstrate how technology is emerging as a tool to provide people with the capacity to participate and influence decision-making” (p. 1).

1. reach a wider audience to enable broader participation
2. support participation through a range of technologies to cater for the diverse technical and communicative skills of citizens
3. provide relevant information in a format that is both more accessible and more understandable to the target audience to enable more informed contributions
4. engage with a wider audience to enable deeper contributions and support deliberative debate

The difference between e-access and e-participation (p. 2).

Although four years old, Mangold and Faulds look at how businesses are using social media. They introduce “promotion mix,” which is similar to co-production, but focuses more on the marketing aspect. The authors align the promotion mix with integrated marketing communication (IMC), suggesting that organizations should use social media as a “hybrid component of the promotional mix and therefore be incorporated as an integral part of the organization’s IMC strategy. This IMC strategy could be put to use in building and promoting trust in local governments.


After an extensive review of trust literature March and Dibbens (2003) suggested, “Trust may usefully be considered as a processual phenomenon, ever-changing and evolving in the individual with respect to others” (p. 476). They further hypothesize that user-friendly human-computer interfaces lead to better trust in the overall system. Additionally, March and Dibbens surmise that in trust that occurs when interacting with a system such as a Website “trust becomes a two-way street—user judges system via trust (and other measures), and system considers user in terms of trust” (p. 482).


Mergel states part “the most important driver for social media use in the public sector should be the existing organizational mission and communication strategy of the agency. The organizational goals and objectives drive the extent and types of social media tools an agency should add to the already existing communication channels” (p. 4). This article mentions that third-party social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are outside the control of local governments. In addition to the universal concerns posed by use of social media platforms (such as security and privacy), Mergel presents eight practical questions local government managers should ask when creating policy and guidelines for use. The article also presents a logical methodology for implementing social media programs in the public sector.

This article make the connection between using social media at the local level and warning residents about impending dangers. Before implementing a social media strategy, Murphy suggests localities “start with a communication plan, and ask what message do we want to convey? Who will maintain the information and how will we measure success (p. 179)”


This article focuses on premises of social capital, including the strengthening of social ties within diverse communities following instances of “participatory reform.” The authors used social network statistical models to understand the development of active civic networks following a reform that took place in Los Angeles. The authors expound on the importance of developing trust-based relationships: “civic actors interested in organizing collective action will benefit from forming strong relationships that build trust and a common sense of purpose” (p. 152). The authors used a number of methods in their research, including sociometric survey data of neighborhood council board members throughout LA that “captured both the internal relationships within councils and the external relationships the councils maintained with stakeholders, the city and other neighbourhood councils (p. 155). They measured for reciprocity (“whether a new tie reciprocates an existing tie,” homophily and transitivity (“a general tendency of actors to form relationship with alters with whom they already share a connection”). Their research is particularly useful for analyzing the continuing formation of trust-based social relationships in diverse locales.


This article provides an analysis of Government Online Survey data to determine purposes of e-government use. Study highlights five determinants of such use: psychological factors of technology adoption, civic mindedness, information channels, trust in government, and socio-demographic and personal characteristics.


E-participation in the EU.

Nielsen, B. (2004). The role of trust in collaborative relationships: A multi-dimensional approach. *M@n@gement, 7*(3), 239-256. DOI: 10.3917/mana.073.0239
Nielsen introduced the term “organizational trust,” claiming “individuals act within institutional and social contexts” (p. 241).


An example of e-participation.


This article highlights an April 2013 survey of Canadian citizens' use of social media.


Broadly speaking, The United Nations defines e-participation as “the sum total of both the government programs to encourage participation from the citizen and the willingness of the citizen to do so” (para. 3).


This study builds on brand theory and loyalty concepts that drive customer connections on Twitter. The study compared data from the US and the Ukraine to determine any cultural differences in how trust is developed with social media sites. The authors contend “understanding whether and how trust in these sites affects users’ intentions to continue their membership and to recommend these sites to others is important for marketing researchers and practitioners” (p. 1548). Insights into what marketing firms want to accomplish on social media sites is helpful in understanding how and why social media users trust.


This study analyzes the Twitter activity of local government accounts during and immediately following the 2011 riots in London. The authors “explore how local authorities attempted to reduce the effects of the riots and support community
Information taken from 1746 posts by 81 official government accounts revealed “specific mechanisms of collaboration [e.g., appraisal, call for action] that enabled the organization of anti-riot actions” (p. 349). The authors primarily categorized tweets according to content (e.g., Information seeking, Situation description, Preventing rumors, Clean-up actions) and hashtag (e.g., #Riots, #Police or equivalent, #RiotCleanup) and provide examples in the report, along with discussion points. For example, the authors note for “Preventing rumors” tweets, the majority of posts conveyed a “straightwordward” tone which, according to the authors, corresponds with governmental authority over the dispersal of false information. The authors reflect on “Twitter’s conversational and rapid update features” which allowed for collaborative actions to foster easily during the time frame (p. 355). The study problematizes the use of social media for research use, including its limitations (e.g., “capturing social media information retrospectively does not provide a solid justification of why local authorities chose to interact the way they did.”) (p. 356).


This study uses a structural equation model (Zucker 1986) to analyze “the antecedents and formation of citizen trust and expansion in actual citizen patronage behavior” (p. 629), using data relevant to Korean citizens’ engagement with their government’s social media service. The study also provides a delineated representation of trust, including its various classifications (e.g., process-based trust, characteristic-based trust, and institutional-based trust) (p. 631). Research emphasizes the “multidimensionality” of trust, including the reciprocity between the “truster” and “trustee” (i.e., the recipient of trust). Results indicate that a positive correlation between citizen confidence in the agency providing the social media service and overall trust in the government (p. 638). Another significant relationship exists between “citizen patronage intention” toward social media and “actual patronage behavior” (p. 638). The study concludes that ongoing reciprocity of trust between citizen and government is intrinsic to encouraging a trustworthy online environment.


This report gives baseline statistics about how Americans contacted government before the explosion of social media.
72% of Online Adults are Social Networking Site Users. Pew Internet and American Life Project. Retrieved from http://www.pewinternet.org/Reports/2013/social-networking-sites/Findings.aspx

This data shows all age groups and demographics are using social media.


Pew found that for the first time a majority of Americans believe the federal government threatens their personal rights and freedoms. It is important to note that this data came out before the NSA revelations.


This is an interactive graph that provides levels of trust per year via a moveable slider.


The Canadian Access to Social Media Information project analyzed and evaluated the privacy policies and access of 20 popular social media platforms, including Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn, Plenty of Fish and World of Warcraft. The purpose was to provide plainly worded privacy information and make it available to the public. But they also want to show Canadians how their personal information might be used and accessed by authorities.


Canadian specific survey from 2011


This article analyses the various approaches of sentiment analysis, including both lexicon- and learning- based methods. Bag-of-words, n-grams and n-gram approaches constitute the lexicon-based methods studied by the authors, and 7
learning-based classification algorithms such as Logistic Regression, Multilayer Perceptrons, Best-First Trees, Functional Trees and C4.5. The researchers used a set of 4451 “manually annotated tweets” for their cross-method comparison. They determined that while some sentiment analysis approaches are “easier” or less complex than others, with the “combinatory approach” being most impressive for its effects on n-grams (p. 1).


This survey report gives much of the same information the Pew reports offer, but from an Australian perspective. What is unique about this report is that it specifically ties trust in local government to social media use.


A straightforward listing of some positive social media outreach outcomes from Chesapeake, Va., Arvada, Co., Miami Dade County, Fla., Fulton County, Ga., and Pinellas County, Fla.


This multinational study looked at whether or not access to information laws influence policymaking. Specifically, Relly and Sabharwal investigated the connection these laws have to transparency in governance. This study identified a link between countries that have high gross domestic product indexes and other factors such as freedom of the press, transparency in government (which includes e-government), access to information laws, telecommunication infrastructures, and democracy. For our research, we can extend telecommunication infrastructure to include the Web and social media sites.


The authors used a custom designed algorithm to test how retweets in Twitter influence the group. They used a dataset of total Twitter tweets over a 300 hour period. They found that the “correlation between popularity and influence is weaker than expected” (p. 114). The point is users have a better chance of acting on information seen in Twitter if they go out of their way to retweet.

This paper presents social public policy framework that local municipalities in New Jersey can use as guidance when implementing social media.


Rowley and Johnson make the connection between trust and the context in which information is provided. They assert that “trust” as a concept is often convoluted in the digital world because it is often used interchangeably with other concepts such as credibility, reliability, and confidence. The authors propose that “in the context of digital information, one of the most challenging theoretical issues is the confusion between the concepts of trust and credibility” (p. 496). Additionally, perceived reliability leads to use of digital information. The authors assert that much research was previously conducted on the credibility of digital information, and they then make the connection between credibility and trust. Simply put, accessibility leads to use, then leads to credibility that in turn fosters trust.


Conducted a decade ago, this research examines the power relationship between those that create Web content and those that use it. Sallot, Porter, and Acosta-Alzuru found, “the web empowers practitioners by providing a means for them to communicate directly with their publics, bypassing traditional “filters” and “gatekeepers,” such as editors in the news media” (p. 273). This bypass of traditional filters is one possible explanation why social media applications are popular. Popularity aside, city authors of social media content would benefit from the PR literature review this research relies on.

Researchers analyze Facebook and Twitter use related to two 2011 protest movements in Chile. Study applied a face-to-face survey for “urban youth (18-29 years old)” (1,737 individuals in total) revealing a positive correlation between social media participation in both movements, “even controlling for other relevant variables (e.g. political interest, ideology and trust)” (p. 151). The authors refer to the “social mobilizations and democratization” of the 2011 Arab Spring as contributing to the increased attention to social media outlets as effective forums during opposition movements. The study also found that “the frequency in use of these social media in the 18-29 year old segment is significantly higher than in the adult population” (p. 158). Additionally, while political interest has a positive correlation with participation in social media, institutional trust is negatively correlated with participation (i.e., “the people who took part in the two forms of protests [they measured] did so because of strong mistrust of institutions (particularly political institutions)” (p. 163).


Before social media became a predominant form of internet interaction, many municipalities developed web pages to facilitate better e-services. Yet did this facilitate better direct democracy in the form of e-democracy. Using survey methods, Scott (2006) examined to what extent web sites affect e-participation among 100 of the most populous cities according to the 2000 census numbers. Scott’s results showed “very little evidence that U.S. municipal government Web sites support significant public involvement in accordance with direct democracy theory” (p. 349). While the results show a wide range of informational and transactional services available to citizens, the identified Web sites rarely facilitated two-way communication about policymaking.


This research paper presents findings of a survey study conducted among 137 CIOs at Government agencies in Taiwan. Of interest to our study is that it was primarily by the individual agencies with IT performing a supporting role. Taiwan's agency web pages were created under the mandate of Openness of Government Information Act of Taiwan. Stating “integrated government websites serve to change the legitimacy of the government from a congressional transmission belt model to a participatory mode” (p. 270), the authors found a connection between transparency in governance and information accessibility.
Shneiderman, Ben. (2015). Building Trusted Social Media Communities: A Research Roadmap for Promoting Credible Content. in Roles, Trust, and Reputation in Social Media Knowledge Markets, 35-43. DOI: 10.1007/978-3-319-05467-4_2

This chapter provides a “defining framework for discussing the social, technical, and content foundations that encourage trusted contributors to contribute credible content to social media communities,” acknowledging that any component (e.g., contributors, content, resources, organizations) has an opportunity to be “undermined.” The author cites inspirational and committed leadership as having a pronounced, positive effect on social media outcomes in a variety of settings, including government.


This article explores how Canadian government departments and agencies make use of Twitter, and how such use complies with service delivery oriented e-government. Small outlines the Canadian federal government’s transition from a Web 1.0 framework to providing e-government services in a Web 2.0 arena. The research entailed a “content analysis” of tweets produced by government and agencies during March 2011. A type-based coding scheme was used to classify “tweets as either being oriented towards service delivery or democratization” (p. 96). Results indicated that despite the government’s promotion of its commitment to e-government principles, their use of Twitter does not orient towards democratization.


This is a case study of two e-services implemented in Chile. Although this paper is looking at South America, it offers some theoretical background on the attributes associated with “trust.”


The article highlights how FEMA uses social media feeds for up-to-date information, usually before official word is published. Spellman notes that many social media feeds are not allowed on official government terminals. This indicates that these agencies do not trust public information.

This paper analyses the relationship between social media use by government and openness and accountability in Greece. The authors conducted a "qualitative case study" of openness and accountability in governance, particularly in the Greek context of social media policy and initiatives. Semi-structured interviews with public policy makers, executives, and relevant stakeholders (public and private) supplement the researchers' analysis of social media, focusing on the functionality affordances (e.g., communicability, visibility, interactivity, collaborative ability, anonymity) of various initiatives (e.g., "Cl@rity," "Governmental portal Hermes," "Startup Greece") and how they measure according to openness and transparency.


EKOS Politics published a report in October 2013 that indicated similar discontent with Canadian Federal politicians that the U.S. frequently shows in similar reports. The right track wrong track numbers are reversed. 62% say the country is on the wrong track while only 29% think the Canadian Government is on the right track. The data in this report reflects similar trends in the U.S.


In the context of the buyer-seller relationship, Stewart identified two elements of this partnership that include trusting intentions and trusting belief. When a patron buys something, there is a reasonable trust that he/she will receive what the seller said he/she would sell them. The buyer adheres to trusting intentions, while the trusting beliefs. The research focused on the cognitive processes behind “trust transfer” on the Web. Building on this relationship, one of Stewart’s hypotheses states, “the greater the perceived similarity between an unknown target and a trusted target, the more positive the initial trusting beliefs about the unknown target will be” (p. 7).


Looking at the quality of online health information, the authors found that 80% look for quality assurance markers on Web pages (p. 1786). Carrying this over into our research would mean a study of the accuracy of information posted on
official government social media sites. Nonetheless, the digital mode of information delivery becomes as important as the information.


Although Thomas investigates government institutions in a broad sense, the research question that runs throughout this article is, “what can we do to maintain, restore, or create public trust in government agencies and their employees” (p. 167). That said, Thomas identifies three types of trust, fiduciary, mutual, and social trust. Understanding each of these will allow greater understanding of the link between social media and trust in government. We should pay particularly close attention to Thomas’s discussion on social trust. Published in 1998, at a time when a large part of the internet was still lamenting in clunky read-only web pages, this article offers insight into the social trust dynamic that will dominate social media in the future.


Tolbert and Mossberger highlight 2001 Pew Survey data that shows e-government influences users’ attitudes but does not affect the trust factor. They state that previous interpretation of the data did not take into account other factors that may have influenced trust in e-government. Essentially, Tolbert and Mossberger looked for positive factors related to trust, concluding: "The evidence suggests that e-government can increase process-based trust by improving interactions with citizens and perceptions of responsiveness” (p. 354).


This article analyses public trust in the context of traditional news outlets as well as in generalized social media (i.e., Facebook) communities. Research includes a survey-based experiment with 364 undergraduate (18 to 36 years) respondents. Researchers find that content recommendations made by respondents’ Facebook friends “improve levels of media trust” and encourage respondents to continue following that particular media outlet in the future. This effect is heightened “when the real-life friend sharing the story on social media is perceived as an opinion leader.” Study finds that information-seeking intent correlates with
recommendations from trusted opinion leaders in one’s personal social community.


In the literature review, the authors make a nuanced argument that users of Facebook would not likely have people on their friends lists that they do not trust. Leveraging this with research on group personality theory, the authors point out Facebook profiles reflect personal characteristics of individuals they either trust or mistrust. Therefore, “social trust and Facebook use may have a reciprocal relationship” (p. 878). Later in the review, by pointing out the interactive nature of SSNs, the authors differentiate between internet use that displaces social capital development and internet use that encourages it. The former would include actions that discourage social interaction. Their point is users will bring their own expectation of how he/she will use the Internet to using the internet, and state “the features of Facebook allow for the production and maintenance of both strong ties and weak ties and, by extension, can influence positively users’ life satisfaction, trust and public participation” (p. 881). This research points out that Facebook is designed to encourage social interaction. This combined with the industry-wide definition of Web 2.0 applications fostering interaction between online actors means that these applications foster the development of social capital.


In this article, the authors explore what factors influence e-participation, especially regarding issue-related concerns, petitions and consultations. With traditional participation, it is well established that the more resources a person has the more likely they are able to participate. Granted this is different from traditional views of grassroots organizations and the like, and for some scholars they have found that those with fewer resources participate at a similar frequency. The authors cite four major advantages to using the internet for participation: "(i) it makes easier and faster for people to get information on public issues; (ii) it also facilitates the engagement in political participation by reducing the cost of social pressure: an individual can privately sign a petition on a controversial issue from his computer at home; (iii) individuals can themselves encourage the participation of others through online platforms such as Change.org or by disseminating information through their social networks; (iv) furthermore, the internet facilitates activism at the global scale and complements today's social repertoire of collective action" (p. 381).

Volken suggests that trust is fundamental to the success of technological advancements. More to the point, “trust as a cultural resource raises the overall innovative capacity of a social system, since it allows economic and also political agents to take advantage of their extended potential for action” (para. 6). If we apply this to social media Volken suggests that socio-economic and socio-institutional processes accelerate the popularity of social media as a technological advancement. Therefore, we can imply that the success of today’s social media platforms means there is at least some trust already present.


The authors contend that “trust is often conceptualized by researchers according to the features of a particular context” (p. 108). They also make a critical connection with philosophy, identifying interpersonal trust and morality into the equation. Additionally, Wang and Emurian state “spontaneous sociability engendered by trust is a mechanism by which values are shared and confirmed among group members” (p. 109).


This study investigates the propensity for social media to influence online civic engagement initiatives and increase trust in government, police and justice systems. In the literature review, the authors expound on predictors of online civic engagement (e.g., group incentives) as well as differences in terminology between trust, trust propensity, and trust in institutions (p. 292). They proposed multiple hypotheses related to the aforementioned “predictors” on which they based their resulting survey. Malaysia provided the context for the study whereby the researchers targeted “active Facebook users who are adult citizens working in geographical areas with high social media and internet penetration (MCMC, 2012)” (p. 294). Following distribution of 1,000 surveys, the response rate was just over 50% (515 responses). The authors also conducted post-hoc interviews with ten “social activists” for a more robust analysis (p. 294). Results of the study indicate that heightened transparency on behalf of government institutions is strongly correlated with citizen trust. The authors highlight the importance of “user-friendly” social media (e.g., Facebook pages) such that the public is able to organize their own activities with government support (p. 300).


Although this article is eight years old, it relates a crucial observation that is related to the Itrust project—governments are using e-government to deliver information and are not using the full capabilities of two-way communication prevalent in a Web 2.0 digital realm. Today these technologies are the many social media platforms that allow users two-way communication. Particularly, the authors note that “the extent to which citizens recognize and are satisfied with e-government strategies is not clear; nor is it clear that there is a connection between satisfaction with e-government and trust” (p. 372). The authors used 2004 National Election Studies (NES) data from the University of Michigan to examine various elements that affect trust in government.


This article reports on survey data collected from U.S. federal government agencies’ use of e-government in 2000, and could be a baseline for our study. This is important because the data collected is largely within the context of Web 1.0. Studying the transition from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 will give us insight into what is going on in our brains that sways our opinions about trust in local governments.


From marketing and sales perspectives, this paper introduces social customer relationship management (SCRM). This type of management could be part of an overall information governance strategy that engages the public in co-production. Particularly, the authors concluded “one of the opportunities presented by social media is that if a brand places relevant ‘content’ in the right places in the social cloud, it will attract interest and may develop ‘fans’. It can then listen to and interact with these fans without ever having to identify them individually or manage them through a database” (p. 254). How is this relevant to trust in social media? If governments look at their relationships with their constituents from SCRM, it would reinforce the trust relationship. In short, governments can reinforce their “brand” identity with the public in the same ways retail organizations do.

Open government not only means easy access to information. Arguably, the most important aspect of open government is access to policymaking debates and decisions. This article seeks to separate “the politics of open government from the technologies of open data” (p. 178). Because there is a difference between “open data” and “open government,” Yu and Robinson propose there is ambiguity regarding the definition of open government. This ambiguity comes in part from confusing data easily available with the use of technology as “open.” Even authoritarian regimes might provide access to things like bus schedules. This is open data. Conversely, open government, at least from the Obama Administration’s open government initiatives, relies on three principles: transparency, participation, and collaboration.

With social media we have both open data and open government. How is the disclosed data structured, organized, and published? We describe the data itself as being on a spectrum between adaptable and inert, depending on how easy or hard it is for new actors to make innovative uses of the data. The other dimension describes the actual or anticipated benefits of the data disclosure; the goals of disclosure run on a spectrum between service delivery and public accountability (p. 182).


This article notes that Communism in Eastern Europe fostered a lack of trust in government institutions. This was by design so citizens would only rely on the centralized Communist rulers for services. Teasing this out a bit more, the literature review in this article mentions that this lack of trust in institutions carries over to large organized groups, and that citizens “engage more in close networks of friendship” (p. 352). Moreover, social media sites encourage these networks of friendship. The point of this article is that corruption in many of the smaller government institutions in Eastern Europe that rose up after the fall of the Soviet Union, replaced the traditional boundaries of mistrust in institutions that were in place during Communist rule. The implications are that Communism and corruption act as antecedents when developing polices and applications that encourage open e-government. Therefore, the networks of friends on social media sites encourage the formation of trust in e-government.


This article makes some crucial observations about the current state of social media in the PR discipline. Particularly, Zavattaro maintains that the technology that makes social media possible is underutilized. Although this is a PR peer-reviewed response to another PR article, Zavattaro connects the fact that there are some crucial records management aspects the discipline. Because e-government
governance includes elements of PR, Zavattaro’s article has implications that apply to trust in government. Although it is not a direct link, the author mentions records management elements such as accountability and privacy as challenges to using social media in a public relational perspective.


In this article, Zavattaro and Semetelli address how social media adoption in government is progressing. They begin with presenting the fact that with this new trend, at the extremes, there could either be a more hands off approach to government participation, or it could lead to something truly democratic. As the scholarship shows, given the appropriate platform citizen interaction increases; however, many governments do not construct the necessary dialogue platforms with their citizens. Additionally social media use is not always positive, considering the “hive mind mentality” and spreading of false information. There must be a cost benefit analysis, because while democratization of social media use is desired, it is not necessarily the best thing.

The authors emphasize capacity over collaboration. Social media gives many governments a greater capacity for speaking to their citizenry, but unless there is an ability to create meaningful dialogue, collaboration is impossible. Even if both sides are "omnipresent," rules can hinder collaboration. Therefore, those who are implementing social media need to make sure they do so in a way that fosters, rather than discourages, collaboration.