

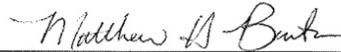
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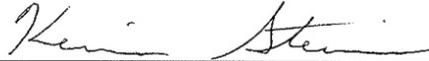
INTERNSHIP FOR THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT OF
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

presented by Samuel B. Hislop

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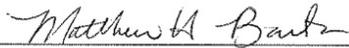
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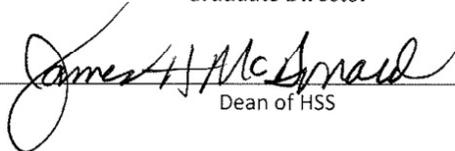
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INTERNSHIP FOR THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT OF
THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS

A Capstone Internship Portfolio
presented to
the Faculty of the Communication Department
at Southern Utah University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree
Master of Arts in Professional Communication

by
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April 20, 2011

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Abstract

From June 7, 2010 to June 7, 2011, I worked as a social media intern for the Public Affairs Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon). The principle objectives of this internship were to fulfill a requirement for a Master's Degree in Professional Communication at Southern Utah University and learn how an international organization uses social media to communicate with its publics — especially in crisis situations. This portfolio gives an account of my work in the Public Affairs Department, the outcome of this internship, and the internship's meaning to me academically and professionally. I have also included an academic paper about the importance of organizations using new media to respond quickly during a crisis. The academic paper examines the Church's response to a scathing November 2010 online blog post from America Online (AOL) titled, "No Sanctuary at This Church in Haitian Storm." The AOL blog claimed that the Church refused to give shelter to those who were not members of the Church in the aftermath of Hurricane Tomas. The academic paper's findings demonstrate the importance of an organization's everyday actions, the need to constantly monitor the Web for organizational references, and the value of using a blog or online newsroom during a crisis to respond quickly with a public statement that clarifies an organization's position on a certain issue.

Acknowledgements

Everlasting thanks are due first to my wife, Melissa, for her never-ending reserve of patience, as well as her sacrifices of time and comfort — all of which allowed me to spend needed time (and lots of it) to complete this capstone project. I am also extremely grateful to Art Challis, Matt Barton, Paul Husselbee, Jezreel Kang-Graham, Brian Heuett, and Pam Halgren for helping me take classes online, thus allowing me to pursue this prized internship with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 250 miles away in Salt Lake City. Thanks are also due to Kevin Stein and Paul Husselbee for their rigorous courses that stretch a student's mind and intellect. Finally, I thank all other communication faculty members and graduate students (past and present) at Southern Utah University for their communication insights and friendship.

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Introduction

My objectives for this internship with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (for convenience to be referred to throughout the remainder of this paper as “the Church”) were to: (1) fulfill an internship-focused capstone for the Master of Arts in Professional Communication degree, (2) learn how an international organization uses social media to communicate with its publics, and (3) gain professional experience. At the end of this internship experience, these objectives had been met. This portfolio will show how these objectives were accomplished by including several examples of projects I completed, descriptions of daily tasks I was assigned, and how the internship was an extension of the academic teachings from Southern Utah University’s Master of Arts in Professional Communication program. I have also included an academic paper that investigates the importance of an organization using new media to respond quickly during a crisis.

Before delving deeply into my internship accomplishments, I will provide the 50,000-foot view of my time in this internship. This internship was the most valuable work experience I have had in my young public relations career. Thanks to a Graduate Readings course from Dr. Jezreel Kang-Graham that coincided with this internship, I was able to apply public relations theory to real-world experience. Much can be learned from the many classes taken and books read in a university setting, but nothing can replace the value of going to work eight hours a day, five days a week, for one year, and viewing with my own eyes how certain theories apply and do not apply in the real world of public relations and crisis communication. This internship provided me with such an opportunity.

As cited in my internship prospectus, I carried out, to one degree or another, the following duties:

- Wrote news stories for Newsroom.lds.org and the Newsroom Blog (Newsroom is the Church’s official online newsroom, and the Newsroom Blog is part of Newsroom.)
- Wrote background material for Newsroom
- Prepared multimedia elements for publishing on the Web
- Searched social media for references about the Church

- Prepared reports to brief Public Affairs managers on various issues
- Assisted with news media management during Church general conference and other events
- Assisted with managing Public Affairs social media properties (YouTube, Twitter, and Facebook)
- Created reports from Newsroom web analytics program
- Assisted with posting material on Newsroom
- Worked with broader media relations team on various assignments

This internship allowed me to work in a group setting every day, and to witness how public relations is done in a large, international, and religious organization. In addition to the previous reason cited, the experience of working 40-hour weeks (and sometimes longer) in my chosen field for an extended period of time was an invaluable preparation for my career path because of how mentally and physically taxing such a schedule is—especially in addition to other work, family, school, and ecclesiastical obligations. While my news writing skills improved, I learned of the need to continue building these skills for the remainder of my professional career. I learned how to set up a social media “listening post” (see p. 12 for a description) and of the importance of an organization constantly monitoring Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and other emerging new media platforms for mentions of and conversations about the organization.

Although the internship was joyful, one challenge was a lack of communication and direction at times from supervisors. While there were many days packed with assignments and meetings, there were also too many days where I ran out of things to do and supervisors did not have other work for me, or they assumed I had things to do. This is a common problem for employees in many organizations. Scholars say job satisfaction is based on the variables of general job satisfaction and growth satisfaction. The latter variable, which means an employee has “the opportunity for growth and development on the job” (Becherer, Morgan, & Richard, 1982, p. 128) is deemed most important. Days on the job where I had nothing to do did not boost my morale and motivation because there appeared to be no opportunity to stretch myself and learn new skills.

Nevertheless, these difficult days helped me learn several unanticipated lessons. For example, when I ran out of things to do, I “created” my job by developing a social media listening post (see p. 12) and educating myself with a topical study of public relations and social media best practices via Ragan.com, BrianSolis.com, Mashable, and many other highly-read public relations and social media websites and blogs. I also learned what motivates me to work hard (e.g., challenge, human interaction, and work that matters). Finally, I learned the importance of public relations professionals developing good relationships with employees in other departments within the same organization. The Church’s beauracritic side contains many departments and many cases of necessary red tape. These factors can make it difficult to get work done quickly for all parties involved, which raises the importance of developing patience and kindness in inter-departmental relations.

In the remaining sections of this paper I will expound on this internship’s several accomplishments, and then list the various ways I was able to apply the Master’s of Professional Communication degree to the work I performed. I will conclude with an academic paper that examines the importance of organizations using new media to respond quickly during a crisis.

Accomplishments

Before listing my accomplishments, I will provide background information for what the Public Affairs Department of the Church does and why my work was needed.

The Public Affairs Department of the Church (commonly known by the public as the Mormon Church) is located at the Church's worldwide headquarters in Salt Lake City. My official title was "social media intern" with the department's media relations division. I will provide a brief description of the Church hierarchy for those who are unfamiliar with this organization. Fifteen apostles lead the Church; the most senior apostle is the president of the Church, and he selects two other apostles as counselors. These three function as the First Presidency, which is the highest governing body of the Church. As of April 15, 2011, Thomas S. Monson is the current president of the Church. Twelve others form the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles — the Church's second-highest governing body. Together, the First Presidency and the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles oversee the entire Church. Church members trace this organizational structure to the New Testament.

The purpose of the Church Public Affairs Department is to help the public see the Church as it really is — namely, an institution that believes in Jesus Christ and in doing good to all men and women. Specifically, this department seeks to build relationships of mutual trust, respect and understanding with news media and other influential audiences. This is done, in part, with Newsroom.lds.org and the Newsroom Blog. Newsroom.lds.org is an official news source of the Church, while the Newsroom Blog contains reliable and accurate information, but is not necessarily viewed as official statements from the Church.

I assisted the Public Affairs Department in carrying out its mission by writing several articles for Newsroom.lds.org and the Newsroom Blog; creating an online survey for Newsroom users; creating a social media "listening post" of blogs, Twitter feeds, Facebook pages, and YouTube channels to make monitoring more efficient and less time consuming; compiling a weekly web analytics report for Newsroom and the Newsroom Blog; and assistance in hosting journalists who visited Salt Lake City to learn more about the Church.

Writing for Newsroom

I wrote a combined 23 stories for Newsroom and the Newsroom Blog — all of which can be found in Appendix 1. As was stated earlier, Newsroom.lds.org is an official news source of the Church, while the Newsroom Blog contains reliable and accurate information, but is not necessarily viewed as official statements from the Church. One of the strengths of Newsroom and the Newsroom Blog is that the stories are published with a purpose — nothing is posted simply to fill space. I wrote news articles about Church humanitarian work, youth religiosity, Church temples, scholarly opinions of the Church, new Church websites and mobile phone applications (apps), and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir.

While most stories were assigned to me, others are the fruits of my own ideas. A Newsroom Blog post about the dedication of the Church's Kyiv Ukraine Temple was my favorite piece to write and was my idea. This Newsroom Blog post, which can be found on page 63 in Appendix 1, is a compilation of blog entries from Church missionaries in Ukraine who blogged about the temple dedication from Kyiv or some other city in Ukraine. This blog post is important because it shows the value of a very simple and important form of technology (personal blogs), and provides a unique perspective of the events of the temple dedication that the Newsroom's story does not. Members and missionaries blogged about their personal feelings of what took place and some provided photos to give their stories color. I became aware of these missionary blogs through my daily Internet monitoring assignments and through searches of Google Blogs. This Newsroom Blog post would not have been possible without the advent of personal blogs that allow anybody to tell a story.

Another story that was my idea can be found on page 73 in Appendix 2. This Newsroom Blog post highlights a podcast that features two scholars speaking highly of the wonder of volunteer participation by members of the Church. This podcast is important because it includes precious third-party promotion from two respected scholars who are not members of the Church. I came across this podcast during my daily social media monitoring tasks. I listened to the hour-long podcast, pitched the story to my supervisors, and then wrote the blog post.

Another valuable aspect of writing stories for Newsroom and the Newsroom Blog included attendance of two major news conferences. I was assigned to help out behind the scenes of and write a Newsroom story for a news conference announcing a large monetary donation from the Church to Operation Smile. I was also assigned to attend the annual Mormon Tabernacle Choir Christmas concert press conference that featured guest singer David Archuleta and narrator Michael York. I had attended news conferences in years past as a sports journalist, but these Church news conferences were, in many respects, on a larger scale than anything I previously experienced. In both instances, I was able to observe how my Public Affairs coworkers prepared for the news conferences and interacted with print and television journalists. I was also able to observe how much effort from different organizational departments goes into making a news conference successful (lighting, audio, background design, etc. In other words, the Public Affairs Department was not the only party involved).

Finally, writing stories for Newsroom and the Newsroom Blog was valuable because I was blessed to sharpen my writing and editing skills. I relearned that I will need to continue learning English, spelling, grammar, and style fundamentals for the remainder of my professional career. Any individual who thinks he or she “knows enough” about writing because they have an undergraduate or graduate degree in communication is at high risk for failure.

Newsroom survey

During the first few months of this internship, I noticed that there was not much of a difference in content between the Newsroom and the Newsroom Blog. As my colleagues discussed story ideas in staff meetings, staff members would sometimes ask, “Is this for the blog or is this a news story?” This confusion occurred several times because the type of content that we once put as a news release was now being put as a blog post and vice versa. This, of course, is not any staff member’s fault, but is a reality of the modern world of communication. Regardless of what a popular public relations professional claims, the idea and purpose behind blog content is still in its infancy, and communicators from all industries are struggling to find out what works in this new frontier of social media. As one communicator said, “We’re still in the [second] inning with this rapidly evolving platform” (Hansen, 2011).

Because of this confusion, I began to wonder whether Newsroom readers saw a difference in the content between the Newsroom and the Newsroom Blog. Also, a distinguishing factor for all blogs is that they allow readers to post comments (Jin & Fisher Liu, 2010; Xifra & Huertas, 2008), and I noticed that the Newsroom Blog does not allow users to leave comments at the end of stories. And, because of how many “Mormon” news sources exist, I wondered what level of credibility readers attribute to the Newsroom. According to Johnson, Kaye, Bichard, and Wong (2008), credibility is measured in four parts: accuracy, depth, believability, and fairness. These and other thoughts led me to create a survey for users of Newsroom and the Newsroom Blog. I proposed this idea to my supervisor and began researching journal articles that would help me form an effective questionnaire. Thanks to a Survey Research Methods class from Dr. Lionel Grady, I was more prepared to create an online questionnaire.

Questions four through nine measure Newsroom’s credibility based on the aforementioned credibility factors from Johnson, Kaye, Bichard, and Wong (2008). Questions 10 through 15 measure user satisfaction, as well as Newsroom search and social media capabilities. Finally, questions 16 through 21 ask respondents about the Newsroom Blog — namely, whether they see it as a true blog and a transparent source of information that is distinct from Newsroom content. This questionnaire can be found in Appendix 3.

Listening Post

One of my core duties in this internship was monitoring the Internet for blog posts, tweets, Facebook content, and other Web material that discussed Church topics relevant to the Public Affairs Department (e.g., Mormon Church and general conference, Mormon Church and polygamy, Mormon Church and the Japan earthquake and tsunami). During my first week, I asked whether there was a compiled list somewhere of relevant blogs, Twitter accounts, or Facebook pages that could give me a good starting point. This list did not exist, so I created one.

Before I go further, I will provide background information on what I mean by a “listening post.” The Public Affairs Department provided me with a DVD of a social media conference held in Atlanta,

Georgia, in February 2010, sponsored by Ragan Communications and Coca-Cola. At this conference, renowned communication professional Shel Holtz taught communicators how to create a “listening post.”

The first step to create this listening post was to conduct searches to assess the Mormon blogging landscape. To do this, searches of the term “Mormon OR Mormons” were completed on Google Blogs (2009), Blog Pulse (2011), Twitter Search (2011), Facebook, and YouTube. When I found blogs that seemed relevant, I copied the blog URL, as well as any Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, or RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed URLs that were associated with the blog, and pasted the links into an Excel spreadsheet.

A tiny orange or blue icon with white sound waves identifies the RSS feed. This icon can be found at the far right side of the URL box of the Mozilla Firefox browser, or on the top right side of any web page in an Internet Explorer browser (see Appendix 10 for detailed screenshots of RSS icons). RSS allows a person to keep track of several websites in a central location instead of visiting each website individually (Pro Blogger, 2010). Once I found the RSS link, I copied the link and pasted it into my Google Reader (2011) page (see Appendix 10 for screenshot instruction). Over time, as I compiled more and more links, I organized the blogs into different categories and folders within the Excel spreadsheet and within Google Reader (2011). Examples of these folders can be found in Appendix 5. The Excel spreadsheet (or, if preferred, a Word document will suffice) was used to back up the links in the unlikely event that Google Reader (2011) or Twitter ever lost the data, and to be able to share these links with others, including future interns.

For relevant blogs that included a Twitter page, or for those that only had a Twitter page, these pages were included in a Twitter “list.” A Twitter list is a way for a Twitter user to organize their followers or other Twitter users into different categories “for whatever reason (the members of your family, for example), and then you can get a snapshot of the things those users are saying by viewing that list’s page, which includes a complete tweet stream for everyone on the list” (Catone, 2009). With my own Twitter account I created the “Mormon-related-blogs” list, a public list (lists can also be made private) that can be found in Appendix 5.

Mormon blog and Twitter aggregators (i.e., bloggers or Twitter users who had already compiled lists of other bloggers and Twitter users they found relevant) were also excellent resources to create this listening post. The websites LDS Blogs (n.d.) and Mormon Mission World (n.d.) are great examples of blog aggregators, and Twitter lists such as that from Katheryn Skaggs (2011), are useful examples of Mormon Twitter page aggregators.

Aside from “Mormon OR Mormons,” many other search terms were used to find relevant content, and the selection of terms depended on what was happening in the news (e.g., when the Japan earthquake and tsunami struck in March 2011, terms such as “Japan AND Mormon” yielded more relevant results than “Mormon OR Mormons”).

Collection and deletion of these various social media links is not a static process; some blogs will become irrelevant and new blogs will emerge. Monitoring the links that have been compiled is easiest (in my opinion) with Google Reader (2011) and TweetDeck (2011). TweetDeck (2011) is a free browser that can display desired feeds from Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, and LinkedIn, all on one page and divided up in columns. Appendix 10 shows the TweetDeck (2011) browser I used with various searches for keywords associated with Mormons. Note, however, that Google Reader (2011) and TweetDeck (2011) may one day be obsolete or have new names, and new tools to curate content will continue to emerge.

The value of this listening post for the work I was asked to do was incalculable. This listening post was a one-stop shop for information that I thought would be important to the Public Affairs Department’s media division. This listening post saved me a good deal of time because the content from each website was brought to me in one place. A collection of my listening post links can be found in Appendix 5.

Another aspect of new media monitoring I performed for the department was to compile the new media portion of the daily morning media report for the department. An example of this report is found in Appendix 4 on pages 93-94. A final aspect of new media monitoring was my duty to monitor (and, if necessary, delete) comments on the Newsroom Facebook and YouTube pages. Because this is a relatively minor matter, I was given the charge to make sure the comment boards were places of civility and clean

language. On several occasions (daily if not weekly) I had to delete comments that were vulgar, crude, or simply off topic. Comment moderation was most time consuming on stories that dealt with controversial topics, such as same-gender marriage (LDSPublicAffairs, 2010). This experience led me to create a comment policy for each message board that explicitly tells users which kind of comments will be deleted. I proposed this comment policy to my supervisor and it can be found in Appendix 6. This comment policy is important because it communicates clear expectations and can help Newsroom avoid frustrating those whose comments are deleted.

Weekly web analytics report

As any wise organization does, the Public Affairs Department keeps track of web analytics for its web pages. Another assignment I was given for this internship was to use the department's web analytics account and compile a weekly web analytics report that measured such things as Newsroom page views, most popular stories, most frequent terms for which readers were searching, and geo-segmentation of readers. I presented each weekly report to the Newsroom editorial committee. An example of this report is in Appendix 9.

Hosting journalists

On three occasions I was asked to assist in hosting journalists on Welfare Square and Temple Square. "Hosting" is its own Church department, and the Public Affairs Department is occasionally called upon to host journalists. When we host a journalist we, with the assistance of missionaries and other personnel, give them a tour of different parts of Welfare Square and Temple Square in downtown Salt Lake City. This experience is designed to help the journalists become better acquainted with the Church.

In my first hosting experience, I accompanied a department colleague to give an American journalist a tour of Welfare Square. In my second hosting experience, I accompanied two department colleagues to give a crew of French journalists a tour of Welfare Square. My two colleagues had to leave in the middle of the tour, which provided me the opportunity to host this television crew of French journalists by myself on Temple Square. Hosting this French crew was a wonderful experience because I have a special love for the peoples of Europe. However, this experience was also challenging because the

crew spoke little English and this was their first visit to Salt Lake City. My third hosting experience was with a crew of four Danish journalists who were filming scenes of Temple Square for a popular television show in Denmark. This was their first time in Salt Lake City, and they noted that Salt Lake was the first city they had seen without graffiti. Unlike the crew from France, these Danish journalists spoke excellent English, which allowed me to more easily have a conversation with them and learn about their families, worldwide travels, and their thoughts about the Church.

Degree Applied to Internship

I have demonstrated the use of several forms of basic and essential communication skills in the work I was asked to perform for the Church Public Affairs Department. Several classes that are part of the Master's of Professional Communication degree helped prepare me for this internship. In the following paragraphs I will show which classes and theories were most applicable in the work I completed.

I thought most about Dr. Arthur Challis's Organizational Communication seminar. I will briefly discuss three principles Dr. Challis taught — culture, power, and motivation. Concerning culture, all Church employees must be members of the Church and possess a current temple recommend (a recommend is small card given to Church members who are “observing the basic principles of the faith and attest to that fact to his or her local leaders once every two years” [Newsroom, 2011]). Therefore, because I am a life-long member of the Church and share core religious values with all other employees, I knew going into this internship that, at least in one major way, I would be able to easily adjust to the culture of the Public Affairs Department. Nevertheless, this did not mean I was prepared for all of the department's cultural aspects.

Culture is the “unique sense of the place that organizations generate through ways of doing and ways of communicating about the organization” (Shockley-Zalabak, 2009, p. 47). I believe that every organization (and, really, every department within an organization) has its own unique way of doing things, and this was true with the Public Affairs Department. Over time I learned department jargon, the way meetings were conducted, and the different personalities and leadership styles of my colleagues. Understanding that organizational culture varies by situation and circumstance helped me to better deal with the department's unfamiliar cultural aspects.

I also relearned what I consider to be a grand truth. It is wonderful that, even though every member of a certain group can hold the same religious views and even come from the same state, city, or neighborhood, this same group can be very diverse and unique, and not a group of robots that all think alike. I say this to counter the argument by some that Latter-day Saints are guilty of “blind obedience” (Oaks, 2008), which means they follow the counsel of Church leaders without thinking about it

themselves. One outspoken man and former Latter-day Saint told Mike Wallace of *60 Minutes* several years ago that, “When [the President of the Church] has pronounced the Church’s position on any issue, it is incumbent upon the members of the Church to pray, pay, and obey” (AequitasVeritas7777, 2008), a comment that accuses Latter-day Saints of being unable to think for themselves and void of diversity. I have found the opposite to be true in the 18-plus years I have been a Latter-day Saint, and in my year as an intern with the Public Affairs Department. Each employee had a unique perspective and all were welcome to challenge ideas in meetings.

The principle of culture is connected to power. The general definition of power is the attempt to “influence another person’s behavior to produce desired outcomes” (Shockley-Zalabak, 2009, p. 46). I noticed how reward power was connected with unassigned seating arrangements during certain meetings (the person with the most reward power sitting at the front, and the power level decreasing toward the back of the room, where I was sitting). I also observed that those in the middle of the organization possess more power than I would have thought. For example, technical expertise to run Newsroom is possessed by several individuals not in leadership positions in the department. Without the technical understanding of those in the middle, the organization would suffer. Understanding who had decision-making power helped me to work more effectively. For example, sometimes I would get a little ahead of myself with an idea that I had. I would think I had a wonderful idea, but management did not always share my feelings. That is when I came to the humbling realization that I was only an intern — a position that, while valuable in several ways to the organization, is also low on the totem pole when it comes to decision-making power. I was never treated poorly or unfairly, and only use this as an example to illustrate decision-making power.

The final aspect of Dr. Challis’s class I will discuss is motivation. This internship experience allowed me to learn, perhaps more than ever before, about myself and what motivates me to work hard every day. I learned I am not motivated by money, even when making the common low wage of an intern. As Frederick Herzberg’s Motivation-Hygiene theory says, motivational factors for myself include “work itself, achievement, growth and responsibility, recognition, and advancement” (Shockley-Zalabak, 2009,

p. 145). My motivation level was low when I felt as though my work was not needed or appreciated, or when colleagues failed to communicate with me about things they expected me to know, or when I was in my cubicle all day without talking to somebody. I relearned that human interaction is very important for me in the workplace. My motivation level was high when I felt like I was working on a project that mattered and for which I had the skill to contribute to (e.g., writing assignments and creating a social media listening post), and when I was able to talk to colleagues and build relationships. I also learned that challenging tasks that help me grow intellectually and professionally (e.g., creating a Newsroom questionnaire and hosting foreign journalists) motivate me.

At the same time I was in this internship, I had a Graduate Readings course from Dr. Jezreel Kang-Graham. I studied over a dozen journal articles that examined effective and ineffective uses of blogs and other forms of new media, and also linked these concepts with communication theories. These readings, as well as the response papers I wrote alongside them, were valuable because I could apply the several case studies the readings contained to what I was doing as an intern and determine whether scholarly findings and recommendations were in sync with the new media communication strategies used by the Public Affairs Department. Several articles were noteworthy.

For example, an article from Xifra and Huertas (2008) argued that paying attention to public relations theory and scholarship can benefit public relations practitioners. They said the lack of debate of public relations theory is “surprising” (Xifra & Huertas, 2008, p. 271), and I agree. In my own experience in the public relations blogosphere, theory is rarely mentioned. Blogs are usually filled with talk of the latest trends in public relations and opinions from outspoken industry professionals about what public relations professionals should be doing to improve the image of their respective organizations. Some of these opinions are insightful, but many others are not useful. Because public relations professionals rely heavily on the latest technologies of the day (such as Facebook and Twitter), and because these technologies develop rapidly, many public relations practitioners feel pressure to do whatever the experts recommend so they do not fall behind. However, I strongly believe public relations professionals would

be wise to pay more attention to research into public relations theory because theory has more stability than guesswork.

Another notable article I found came from Porter, Sweetser, and Chung (2009). The researchers noted that, because 70 percent of respondents in their study updated a personal blog rather than an organizational blog, “Professionals become aware of technologies and believe them important, but seem to put off adopting the technologies before they see a broad adoption among the general public” (p. 263). The Newsroom Blog is an excellent example of how delaying blog adoption (or adoption of any form of new media) is a useful strategy. The Newsroom Blog did not launch until August 2009, and many practitioners would say this organization was late to the game. However, while most organizations run around like a chicken with its head cut off as they listen to popular communication experts, the Church Public Affairs Department does its homework before making the decision to adopt a new web platform. Rather than use a technology tool because “everybody’s doing it,” conducting research allows an organization to immediately begin using a certain technology tool effectively when the time comes.

Dr. Graham’s class also introduced me to a 2009 study from Yang and Lim. The authors suggested “a blog cannot exist unless it allows for the existence of a dialogical thread or the narrative construction of meaning through relational communications” (Yang & Lim, 2009, p. 345). The Newsroom Blog is a good example of how this is not a universal truth. The Public Affairs Department embraces blogging because of the advantage of a more informal, conversational voice, but, as of April 15, 2011, this organization does not have the functionality on its blog for users to post comments.

Some public relations professionals would say this is not a true blog because there is no two-way communication. However, this organization uses other platforms — Facebook and YouTube — to allow users to comment. The advantage is that Facebook and YouTube have built-in comments, so comment moderation is easy. And, although the use of Facebook and YouTube are ways to increase an organization’s dialogic self, the Public Affairs Department rarely interacts with or responds to Facebook or YouTube users’ comments. Commenting is by and large left to Facebook and YouTube followers — most of which are strong advocates for the organization. Does this mean this organization has weak

relational trust with key publics? No. Trust can be developed in other ways — including and especially the actions of the organization.

The final article I will mention from Dr. Graham's class is from Wei (2009). The article compared filter blogs (blogs that take the political news of the day from traditional media outlets and "filter" desired information into their blog) and personal journals (blogs that contain the minutia of the bloggers' everyday life). One of Wei's (2009) key findings dealt with blogger influence.

Some bloggers are more influential than others does not necessarily mean they are more powerful in terms of knowledge influence. There is no question that knowledge is a key indicator of social power. But other factors may contribute to the influence of bloggers, such as Web design features, personal characteristics, and celebrity status (p. 551).

As I have mentioned, one of my key assignments as social media intern was to monitor the Mormon blogosphere — also known as the "bloggernacle" and, more recently, the "Twitternacle" (Lavery, 2011). When I started this internship, I asked a colleague if the department had a list of the most influential bloggers to follow because such a list would save me a great deal of time. A brief list existed, but it was not complete. So, I decided to start a new list, and, as I was mentioned earlier, created a listening post.

I judged blogger influence on three main criteria. First, I looked for any number I could find — number of Twitter followers, blog subscribers, retweets, Facebook "likes," etc. Second, I looked at the blogs and Twitter users that get linked to and retweeted the most (there are countless bloggers and Twitter users that post information, but the majority is posting the same information that originated from one main source. That main source is what I was looking for). Third, I noted those blogs that mention public affairs issues (e.g., immigration, polygamy, same-gender marriage, and internal information that should not be public). So, from these three criteria I created a list of blogs, Twitter feeds, Facebook pages, and YouTube channels that could be of highest importance to the department. As the article said, I learned that many factors contribute to the amount of influence a blogger has, and a three-pronged approach is far more effective than a one-pronged approach.

Dr. Lionel Grady's Survey Research Methods class gave me a solid foundation for creating brief but effective online questionnaires with mutually exclusive questions. Dr. Grady's class also provided the opportunity to conduct a participant observation on the comment section of Toyota's YouTube channel — an experience that taught me the need for organizations to monitor and respond to key publics online. The experience with Toyota's YouTube channel was especially valuable because of the extensive time I spent in this internship monitoring social media platforms for mentions of the Church.

Dr. Brian Heuett's Leadership Communication seminar introduced me to invaluable leadership principles — especially from the text, *Leadership and Self-Deception: Getting Out of the Box* (The Arbinger Institute, 2010). This book teaches that the bedrock of effective relationships is a genuine love and care for people. And, while loving people is key, the book teaches the additional principle that no organization can succeed unless individuals are willing to accept personal responsibility and pull their assigned weight. As I thought of these leadership principles and observed my bosses' lead, I remembered the times when I have been in leadership positions (in school, work, Church, etc.), and I remembered how burdensome such positions could be. As Shakespeare wrote, "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown" (Greenblatt, Cohen, Howard, & Maus, 1997, p. 1337). I realized I needed to take more initiative in my work to ease my bosses' burden. Dr. Heuett's class motivated me to come more prepared each day to work with ideas and diligently carry out each assignment.

Finally, Dr. Kevin Stein and Dr. Paul Hesselbee's qualitative and quantitative research classes (the department's most thorough and demanding classes, in my opinion) stressed the need to conduct exhaustive research of a problem before attempting to find a solution. Sometimes I tend to be lazy and look only at the surface of a problem, and these two professors taught me to use more brainpower before giving up and asking for help. For example, this internship often required me to do on-the-spot Web searches for various pieces of information. Web search is frustrating without a deeper understanding of a search engine's advanced functionality (see, for example, Google Advanced Search, 2011; Twitter Advanced Search, 2011), or without understanding where information can be found. This might sound

simple, and that's because it is. Too often we overlook detailed instructions because we think we know what we are doing.

Conclusion

This internship with The Public Affairs Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was, to this point in my career, the most valuable job experience I have had — especially because of the opportunity to apply principles learned in Southern Utah University Communication Department classrooms. Although accepting the job required me to finish my degree online and forfeit the advantages of in-class discussions (not to mention moving my family 250 miles north to Salt Lake City), I was blessed to grow academically, professionally, and personally in ways that would not have occurred if I finished my Master's degree in Cedar City.

A critical aspect of this internship was to learn how an international and religious organization uses social media to communicate with its publics and become aware of issues discussed by those publics. I had the advantage to take what I had learned about organizational communication, public relations, and new media and apply it to my work in a major organization. And, as wonderful and necessary as all the classes, journal articles, and textbooks are, nothing can compare with the value of personally using and witnessing communication principles and theories being used by others in real situations with real outcomes.

Because I am a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, I have always wanted to use my communication skills for the benefit of this Church. This internship confirmed this desire, and also allowed me to significantly expand my professional network. The contacts I developed from this internship will be valuable as I pursue future employment opportunities inside and outside of the Church.

Academic Paper

Establishing Calm After the Storm:

Responding to a Journalist's Errors Through an Organizational Blog

In the digital age, organizations can find themselves in the midst of a crisis communication fiasco in a matter of minutes — and at no fault of their own. Such was the case for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) in November 2010. On the morning of November 8, the America Online (AOL) News blog published a story by contributor Emily Troutman titled, “No Sanctuary at This Church in Haitian Storm” (Troutman, 2010). Troutman reported that one Latter-day Saint chapel in the town of Leogane, Haiti, refused to give shelter to those who were not members of the Church in the aftermath of Hurricane Tomas. Troutman’s article offered several scathing accusations against the Church, including the following comment:

The church did not welcome non-Mormon community members, and did not extend much comfort to its own church family. The policy reflects two common realities in Haiti: First, charity is complicated by a seemingly endless sea of need; and second, many churches are here to serve only themselves, not the community at large (Troutman, 2010).

The Church clarified inaccuracies in the AOL News story with a response on its Newsroom Blog on November 9 at approximately 5 p.m. — over 30 hours after the AOL News story was published (see the full text of this response in Appendix 7). The Church’s Newsroom Blog said the AOL News story “obviously describes an isolated aberration” (Kirkland, 2010). By that time, however, nearly 300 comments were posted to the comment section at the bottom of the AOL News blog story, and an additional 29 comments were posted to AOL’s Facebook page under the link to Troutman’s story.

The comment sections of blogs provide an immediate opportunity for the public to interact on any given topic. Although IP addresses can be tracked with appropriate technology, commenting on blogs can essentially be done anonymously, and anonymity encourages honest opinions (Manniche & Hayes, 1957). Because of the rapid nature of online conversation, the tone of conversation can snowball rapidly in favor of or against any organization, stressing the need to for an organization to always have its ears pressed to

the ground of that portion of the online world that is talking about it. A cursory glance at the AOL comment boards seemed to contain several comments both for and against the Church and Troutman. The Church's response also came late in the game (30 hours is an eternity in a world of high-speed Internet). Therefore, the purpose of this research paper is to answer the following research questions:

- RQ1. What are the themes of the positive and negative AOL News blog and Facebook user comments?
- RQ2. Which positive and negative AOL News blog and Facebook user comment themes did the Church's response address on its Newsroom Blog?
- RQ3. Judging from the AOL News blog and Facebook comment boards, did the readers of the AOL News blog and Facebook page report being positively or negatively impacted by the Church's response to this story?
- RQ4. How many different users commented on the AOL News blog and Facebook comment board? Was this just a conversation between the same 20 people?

Before analyzing the findings for these four questions, a brief literature review of crisis communication within new media will be presented.

Literature Review

Because "new media" are continually evolving, I will provide a brief description of what I mean by the terms "new media," "social media," and "blogs." I consider new media to be an umbrella term that contains at least two sub terms — social media and blogs.

Social Media

Solis and Breakenridge (2009) said, "Social Media is the democratization of content and the shift in the role people play in the process of reading and disseminating information [and thus creating and sharing content]" (p. xvii). Popular high-traffic social media platforms include Facebook, YouTube, Wikipedia, Twitter, MySpace, and LinkedIn (Alexa, 2010). The popularity of social media platforms has spread virally over the past few years. An example of this is Facebook, the second-most visited site on the Web (Alexa, 2010). Though only founded in 2004, Facebook had over 500 million users worldwide as of

December 11, 2010 (Facebook, 2010). Social media — and the entire Internet for that matter — has caused significant shifts in crisis communication strategies because, “like viruses [crises] now mutate, acquiring new and dangerous forms in, for example, social forums like Facebook, or video distribution sites such as YouTube” (Gonzalez-Herrero & Smith, 2010).

Blogs

A blog is a “personal publishing or content management system on the Internet at which an author, or multiple authors, can publish information on a variety of topics” (Jin & Fisher Liu, 2010, p. 431). Jin and Fisher Liu (2010) defined two main types of blogs: official organizational blogs (a blog created by or affiliated with the organization) and external blogs (blogs created and updated by a third party). A distinguishing factor for all blogs is that they allow readers to post comments (Jin & Fisher Liu, 2010; Xifra & Huertas, 2008). In the case of this paper, the AOL News blog represents the external blog, and the Church’s Newsroom Blog is the official organizational blog, although, as of April 15, 2011, the Newsroom Blog does not contain functionality for publics to post comments.

Crisis

Ulmer, Sellnow, and Seeger (2007) define a crisis as “a specific, *unexpected*, and *nonroutine* event or series of events that create high levels of *uncertainty* and *threaten* or are perceived to threaten an organization’s *high-priority goals*” (p. 7, emphasis in original). Crisis communication experts recommend that organizations include new media in a crisis communication plan (Sherman, 2010) — especially because these media make the first 24 hours of crisis communication even more crucial. Taylor and Perry (2005) found that 80 percent of companies they analyzed that used the Internet to respond to a crisis posted a press release to their website within the first 24 hours of the crisis. Yang, Kang, and Philip (2010) found that openness in dialogic blog communication during crisis “is essential to creating and enhancing audience engagement in crisis communication, which, in turn, leads to positive post-crisis perceptions” (p. 473).

Finally, because a major aspect of the current study is online comment forums, it is important to note that several researchers have found value in studying comment boards of blogs and websites (Choi & Lin, 2009; Gilpin, Palazzolo, & Brody, 2010; Haugh, 2010).

Methodology

To study the AOL News blog and Facebook user comments, 68 pages of screen shots were taken of all comments on each platform (305 AOL News blog comments; 29 AOL Facebook comments; nine LDS Newsroom Facebook page comments) that were posted between November 8, 2010 and November 20, 2010. Grounded theory, also known as the constant comparative method, was used to identify the various themes in the comments (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). “The grounded theory approach is aimed at inductive theory development within a positivist paradigm” (Ozanne, 1992, p. 382). From the data collected with this theory (in this case, text from comment boards on a blog and Facebook), main points are marked with a series of codes that are extracted from the text. These codes are then grouped into similar concepts to make them more manageable. From these concepts, categories are formed (Andronikidis & Lambrianidou, 2010).

Grounded theory was the best approach for this study because comments on blogs and Facebook pages are a new area of study. Facebook started in 2004 and blogs did not become ubiquitous until 2005 (Sifry, 2007). The analytical procedure involved was open coding. All comments were read several times — once to tally the number of comments that were positive and negative toward the Church, another time to list the themes of the positive comments, and a final time to list the themes of the negative comments. The AOL News blog story and the Newsroom Blog response were also studied, but the most focus was placed on the comments from the AOL News blog and both Facebook pages.

Results

Of the 305 comments on the AOL News blog, 127 (47%) were favorable toward the Church, 106 (35%) were unfavorable, 53 (17%) were neutral, and 19 (6%) were not applicable (spam messages). The AOL News Facebook page featured 29 comments, 11 (38%) of which were positive, 11 others negative, and seven (24%) neutral. As might be expected, all nine comments under the LDS Newsroom Facebook

page's link to the Newsroom Blog response were favorable toward the Church. In the following paragraphs findings for the four aforementioned research questions will be listed.

RQ1: What are the themes of the positive and negative AOL News blog and Facebook user comments?

Positive comment themes can be divided into five main categories: (1) Poor AOL News reporting, (2) references to past Church humanitarian work, (3) Mormons are Christians, (4) the Church can't help everybody, and (5) link to Newsroom Blog Post with correction. These categories will be explained below. Please note that these comments were not edited, and several contain spelling and grammar errors.

Poor AOL News Reporting

Fifty-four comments complained that Troutman's story was biased. For example, this is the first comment posted after the story was published:

Wow this is some hack job. Every organisation [sic] has policies and rules, to cherry pick a complaint and leave it out of context of the wider scope of service is just irresponsible. It's very easy to frame a complaint like this.

Another commenter claimed that Troutman had a hidden agenda to her article:

This article is written by a very agenda ridden, clearly faith biased, individual. The revealing of the government agreement with the church nearly at the end of the story is clear evidence that the author wished to install a spin of anger and unfounded claims against the Latter-Day Saints.

The majority of comments in this category are similar to these two excerpts. While the tone of many of these comments may indicate that the author of the comment is a Mormon, this is impossible to know where this fact is not disclosed.

References to past Church Humanitarian Work

Fifty-three comments fell under this category. Several comments included links to stories in the *Deseret News* and on LDS Newsroom that show what the Church has done to help in the past. For example, a few comments like this one did nothing more than copy and paste links into the message:

What the LDS Church has done in Haiti- Church sends aid-

<http://www.ldschurchnews.com/articles/58436/Church-sends-humanitarian-aid-to-Haiti-after-70-earthquake.html> LDS Church sends doctors- <http://beta-newsroom.lds.org/article/church-sending-team-of-doctors-to-assist-in-haiti> LDS Church provides temporary housing kits- <http://www.examiner.com/abstinence-in-roanoke/lds-church-provides-temporary-housing-haiti>.

Others told of their personal experiences of helping during disasters in Haiti and elsewhere. “I was in the Philippines when the Hurricane flooded Manila and other area, the Mormons were the first to get supplies in.” Another comment described being the recipient of help from the Church. “I lived in Utah and a Mormon family let me stay with them and paid for my schooling when I had no where to go and no money. I have never met such a nice caring and generous community” [capitalized for emphasis].

These comments show the value that can come from positive organizational actions during the “planning-prevention” phase (when there is no crisis) of crisis communication (Gonzalez-Herrero and Smith, 2008, p. 149).

Mormons are Christians

Twenty-nine comments are in this category. Some claimed that Mormons try to help others, but this help is rejected. One comment said, “Why should [Mormons] share at the last moment with those who chose to ignore fair warnings?” Others said Mormons are Christians because Christ’s name is in the title of the Church (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints). Others claimed the Mormons have freedom to do as they please. “I am not a Mormon ... but why single them out? ... Why do you people always want to go after other people’s beliefs.” Others recited Mormon scripture to prove Mormons’ Christianity. Finally, others reasoned that Christians of all faiths must be united.

All Christians should stick together and defend the great humanitarian aid given by Christians of all faiths. . . . I would hope the Mormons would stick up for the Catholics or Lutherans if a news org was trashing their church with biased articles.

This is a particularly interesting category because previous research found that many Americans do not consider Mormons to be Christians (Pew Forum, 2007). Therefore, the comments in this category that appear to come from persons who are not Mormons are the most surprising. These comments show that the Church's messaging efforts to prove to the public its belief in Jesus Christ has had, to some degree, the desired impact (see, for example, Jesus Christ, 2010; Nielson, 2010; LDS Newsroom, n.d.; 2007; 2007a; 2007b; 2008; 2008a; 2008b; 2008c). The fact that some non-Mormons view Mormons as mainstream Christians places a different set of expectations on Mormon humanitarian aid. For example, a person who views the Church as mainstream Christian is more likely to naturally expect the Church to do good things and even defend the Church's critics, and less likely to question the Church's motives.

Mormons Can't Help Everybody

Nine comments fit into this category. One comment pointed out that Church leaders are all volunteers doing the best they can, and that "they couldn't distribute what they didn't have." Another said, "So what! [The Church does] not have room for a thousand people." Of all the comments that are sympathetic toward the Church, these comments seem to convey the rudest tone. The fact that these comments are rude and defensive seems to reinforce the truth of the aforementioned Pew Forum study (2010) that many do not consider Mormons to be Christians. How so? Some Mormons could become frustrated by the fact that their faith is, in their view, misunderstood, and this frustration can show itself in response to news articles, such as AOL's, that seem to misrepresent the Church. Also, some could look at the defensive and rude response as unbecoming behavior of people who consider themselves to be followers of the Christ.

Link to Newsroom Blog Post with Correction

Sixteen comments either included or mentioned this link and text from the Newsroom Blog. The most interesting finding to go along with this category is that, after 5 p.m. on November 9, 2010 (the time

when the Church responded on the Newsroom Blog), there are 22 comments on the AOL News blog forum, and *zero* negative comments about the Church. Because the Newsroom Blog is linked to or mentioned in 16 of these comments, the blog post from the Church obviously had a significant impact on user perceptions of the AOL News blog story.

Negative comment themes can also be divided into five main categories: (1) Mormons are not Christians, (2) acceptance of the AOL News blog story without questioning its accuracy, (3) all religion is bad, (4) Mormons and politics, and (5) acceptance of the AOL story, but with questions about its accuracy.

Mormons are not Christians

The majority (63%) of negative comments fell into this category. These comments have several sub categories. Some comments claimed the AOL News blog story was reporting typical Mormon behavior. Several others said Mormonism is a cult. Still others criticized Mormon theology with comments like, “[Mormon doctrines] were lies put together by an evil Con man (Joseph Smith)” and, “typical Mormon narrow minded beliefs.” Others claimed Mormons are self-righteous and judgmental. “Mormons have always considered themselves ‘better’ than other people. They are not Christians.” Others said Mormons do not accept or help those different from themselves. “I am not surprised. Mormons have just begun to accept people of diversity. Look it up ... It’s true.” Finally, some claimed Mormons only help other Mormons. “They only want to help their own church members.”

As was stated earlier, this category is not surprising because previous surveys have found that many Americans do not consider Mormons to be Christians (Pew Forum, 2007). This shows that, as hard as the Church has tried to prove to the public its belief in Jesus Christ (see, for example, Jesus Christ, 2010; Nielson, 2010; LDS Newsroom, n.d.; 2007; 2007a; 2007b; 2008; 2008a; 2008b; 2008c), some publics either have not heard these messages or do not believe them. At the individual and institution levels, the Church must communicate its Christianity to the public in more effective ways (Mormon Identity, 2010). The sources cited above from LDS Newsroom show that the Church has produced extensive messaging about its Christianity, so perhaps the message simply needs wider distribution.

Acceptance of the AOL News blog story without questioning its accuracy

Nineteen comments fell into this category, and all were very similar. The second comment posted after the story was published said, “To limit shelter to mormons only and be able to house 200 and have only 36 is a new low in the name of religion. i don’t care what the reason, too bad the church didn’t float away.” Others rejected the arguments from those who spoke of the Church’s previous humanitarian work. “Who cares about what the LDS Church has done in the past. When it mattered the people of Haiti were faced with the LDS attitude of ‘it’s not shelter, it’s a Mormon church,’ Again, I’m sure Jesus is weeping.”

Of course, not everybody will accept information without questioning its validity, but these comments demonstrate the importance of communicating quickly in a crisis because of the likelihood that some persons will accept everything they read in the news and draw immediate conclusions. Even if it did not immediately have all the facts, the Church could have posted a message on the Newsroom or Newsroom Blog, or Facebook or Twitter, that simply said, “We are aware of the report from AOL News. We do not have all the facts at this time and are actively investigating the situation and communicating with Church representatives in Haiti. We will post more information as it becomes available. Also, please note that the Church has been very active in helping suffering Haitians.” This would be followed by several Newsroom links that describe what the Church has done to help in Haiti. This statement protects the Church from the venomous arguments that it was not doing anything to help Haitians, or that it was only helping its own Church members.

All religion is bad

Seven comments fit this category. These comments pointed the finger of blame at *all* religions. One comment said, “Religion is and will always be the greatest evil in the world!! These people who CLAIM to be christian are usually the most hypocritical and prejudice people I know.” This category is unique because it is the only one that is negative toward all churches, and not only Latter-day Saints. This type of comment provides a golden opportunity for the Church to unite with other faiths by posting messages that focus on the common ground Mormons share with other churches, as well as how Mormons join with other faiths in humanitarian and welfare efforts. Many previous Newsroom links

already had this focus, and the Church could have easily drawn from them in its messaging (see, for example, LDS Newsroom, n.d.a; Porter, 2011).

Mormons and politics

Five comments are in this category. Comments mentioned famous Mormons Glenn Beck, Harry Reid, and Mitt Romney, as well as the Church's involvement in California politics. "All the millions the Mormons spent with Prop 8 in California could have went to feeding hungry children. Sad, really, isn't it." The comments that mentioned California politics made an understandable link (money) between the California law and Haiti, while the comments mentioning Glenn Beck, Harry Reid, and Mitt Romney were unrelated to Haiti.

The references to Glenn Beck, Harry Reid, and Mitt Romney were so scarce and irrelevant to the AOL story about Haiti that the Church would have no need of addressing these comments. However, the comment about the Church's involvement in California law should be addressed indirectly. For example, because news coverage about the Church's involvement in a certain California law was negative (see, for example, Wildermuth, 2008; Garrison & Lin, 2008; CNN Belief Blog, 2010), mentioning the law by name in a message about Haiti would only aggravate the situation. Because the root concern of the comment is the way money is being spent, the Church would be wise to include messaging about how much money or humanitarian supplies have been sent to Haiti. Similar messaging is contained in past Newsroom news releases (LDS Newsroom, 2006; 2006a).

Acceptance of the AOL story, but with questions about its accuracy

Four comments fit in this category. These comments wanted to know how donation money was being used in Haiti, but not only by the Church. For example, one comment said, "Wish the media would let us know how the United Way spent the millions in donations America donated to Haiti for the earthquake." Although few comments are in this category, the fact that these users do not accept the story without question makes this category the least negative of the five negative categories. These few comments show how organizations should be prepared to respond when the public connects the organization's current situation with that of other organizations in a similar situation. For example,

although the comment above does not seem to be concerned with the Church, the Newsroom has mentioned how Church has joined with the United Way in past service projects (Porter, 2010). It is unclear whether the comment above is making a connection between the ways Church and the United Way distributed humanitarian funds in Haiti, but the Church should be prepared to address this issue.

RQ2: Which positive and negative AOL News blog and Facebook user comment themes did the Church's response address on its Newsroom Blog?

The Newsroom Blog addressed three of the positive comment themes from the AOL News blog and Facebook comment boards: (1) Poor AOL News reporting, (2) References to past Church humanitarian work, and (3) Mormons are Christians. Excerpts will be listed from the Newsroom Blog that show how the Newsroom addressed each theme.

Poor AOL News reporting

The Newsroom Blog does not explicitly denounce the AOL News blog reporting in the unkind way many comments do (for example, one user used the term "hack job" to describe the AOL News blog story). Rather, the Church simply and briefly clarifies the story's errors.

This weekend, an AOL article reported that Haitians displaced by flooding caused by Hurricane Tomas were not allowed shelter in a Church meetinghouse in Leogane, Haiti. The fact is that other Church buildings in Haiti were used as public shelters, and arrangements had been made for this particular building to be used by a government agency to respond to the disaster. Because of this arrangement, it was unclear to some whether the building could also be used as a public shelter (Kirkland, 2010).

The evidence that this blog entry points out AOL News blog errors is found in the phrase, "The fact is," which is followed by a brief two-sentence clarification. This is an excellent lesson that public relations professionals should always correct inaccurate information with diplomacy, kindness, and professionalism. This method of communication helps maintain healthy relationships between reporters and the organization. Rudeness, on the other hand, breeds animosity and burns bridges that may need to be crossed later on.

References to past Church humanitarian work and Mormons are Christians

The Newsroom Blog's reference to past humanitarian work the Church has done is very similar to what user comments said. Because this portion of the response is brief, the entire second paragraph that covers this issue is included.

The [humanitarian response](#) arm of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints springs into action when disaster strikes to relieve suffering regardless of religious affiliation. For example, in response to the devastating earthquake that hit Haiti earlier this year, the Church has sent the equivalent of over 60 truckloads of relief supplies, including 10 air shipments, to the disaster area. The shipments have included a million pounds of food and hundreds of thousands of pounds of other relief supplies. Medical doctors were also flown to the Caribbean nation to give care to the thousands injured in the quake. Thousands more were [sheltered in the Church's meetinghouses](#) for weeks while normalcy was restored. The Church continues to provide relief aid to Haiti (Kirkland, 2010).

Three key aspects are contained in this paragraph from the Newsroom Blog. First, hyperlinks are very important because they allow the response to be brief and provide readers an easy way to get more depth and context to what the blog post is saying. Second, the blog post provides specific details of things the Church has done ("60 truckloads of relief supplies," "10 air shipments," "a million pounds of food," "hundreds of thousands of pounds of other relief supplies"). Finally, the statement, "The Church continues to provide relief aid to Haiti" emphasizes the fact that the Church is still helping those in need in Haiti.

Although indirectly, this second paragraph also emphasizes that Mormons are Christians by pointing out several good deeds the Church has done and is still doing. As was noted previously, several user comments argued that the AOL News blog article tried to show that Mormons are not Christians because they only help their own members. The Newsroom Blog counters this argument with the following two statements:

1. “Of course the Church would want to shelter all those who sought refuge, as it has done countless other times in scores of nations and places.”
2. The Church seeks “to relieve suffering regardless of religious affiliation” (Kirkland, 2010).

This final point defangs the AOL News blog’s key argument against the Church — namely, that the Church only helps its own members.

The Newsroom Blog addressed two of the negative comment themes from the AOL News blog and Facebook comment boards: 1) Acceptance of the AOL News blog story without questioning its accuracy and 2) Mormons are not Christians. The “Mormons are Christians” theme also addresses the argument that Mormons are not Christians, so only the first negative theme will be addressed.

Acceptance of the AOL News blog story without questioning its accuracy

The Church’s clarification on the Newsroom Blog clearly addresses this theme because the post provides a point of view that the AOL News blog post does not contain. The phrase, “The fact is,” is used and is followed by several specific examples of how the Church has provided help to those in need. These examples were listed in the previous section about references to past Church humanitarian work.

RQ3: Judging from the AOL News blog and Facebook comment boards, did the Church’s response to this story have a positive or negative effect on readers?

The short answer is that the Church’s response was likely one of several factors that stemmed the tide of negative comments, and there are two reasons why this is the case. The first reason is found in the numbers — of the 305 comments on the AOL News blog, 127 (47%) were favorable of the Church, 106 (35%) were unfavorable, 53 (17%) were neutral, and 19 (6%) were not applicable (spam messages). The AOL News Facebook page was more even — of 29 total comments, 11 (38%) were positive, 11 others negative, and seven (24%) neutral. These comments include both those before and after the Church’s crisis response.

The second reason is more important. After 5 p.m. on November 9, 2010 (the time when the Church responded on the Newsroom Blog), 22 comments were posted on the AOL News blog forum, and *zero* negative comments about the Church. Because the Newsroom Blog is linked to or mentioned in 16

of these comments, the blog post from the Church obviously had a significant impact on user perceptions of the AOL News blog story comment forum. After 5 p.m. of the same day on the AOL News Facebook page, there are two comments and both link to the Newsroom Blog post. In addition to the Newsroom Blog post, the reason fewer comments are posted to the AOL News Facebook page is probably because links on Facebook become less visible after a few hours in a user's Facebook news stream. Comments on the AOL News blog may have slowed for similar reasons. One might assume that most of these positive comments, if not all of them, come from Latter-day Saints, but this is impossible to know where this fact is not stated by the commenter.

RQ4: How many different users are commenting on the AOL News blog and Facebook comment board? Is this just a conversation between the same 20 people?

This question is difficult to answer on the AOL News blog comment forum because users can anonymously post comments; anonymity is more difficult to achieve on Facebook, but not impossible. However, 179 different screen names were used throughout the AOL News blog comment forum; also, 21 different Facebook accounts were used on the AOL News Facebook page (see Appendix 8 for complete list). These findings suggest that this was a conversation between as many as 200 persons. Of course, these 200 persons do not represent the entire population, but the fact that so many persons are involved in the conversation tells us that these comments are something to which an organization should pay attention. In a sense, these comments are a free focus group from which the organization can learn valuable lessons.

Discussion

This study provides at least three key lessons organizations can build upon in a crisis. First, an organization's everyday actions will play a major role in defining that organization during a crisis. The Church's history of extensive humanitarian aid work caused several comment forum participants to immediately question the validity of the AOL News blog article. This finding underlines the value that can come from positive organizational actions during the "planning-prevention" phase (the time when there is no crisis) of crisis communication (Gonzalez-Herrero and Smith, 2008, p. 149).

Second, this study highlights the importance of constantly monitoring the Web for organizational references — including comment forums at the bottom of stories and blog posts. The AOL News blog story broke, as almost all stories today do, in the blink of an eye on the Internet, and hundreds of comments were posted to the story within 24 to 48 hours. Several contemporary Internet tools, such as Google Reader, TweetDeck, and SocialMention, make the monitoring process easy (Holtz, 2009).

Finally, this study shows the value of using a blog or online newsroom during a crisis to respond quickly with a public statement that clarifies an organization's position on a certain issue. This study found that the Church's Newsroom Blog response to a scathing article from the AOL News blog had a positive impact on reader perceptions. Granted, a quick response is not always easy for conservative, beauracatic organizations such as the Church. But, had the Church's response appeared earlier than 30 hours after the AOL News blog article was published, the Church's response could have exerted even more influence.

Limitations

This study has several limitations. First, comments from two online platforms — AOL and Facebook were studied. Other forums may exist with opinions about the AOL News blog story and the Church's response. Second, all comments were coded by the author, without another person's second opinion. Nevertheless, the comments were read through several times to make sure coding was as accurate as possible. Finally, this study did not include the things the author witnessed from within the organization at the time the Church responded to this AOL News blog article. Rather, the author approached this research paper as if he was not a part of the Church Public Affairs Department, and only studied information accessible to the public.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1 | News stories and blog posts written for LDS Newsroom and the Newsroom Blog

The screenshot shows the Newsroom Blog website. The header includes the title 'Newsroom Blog', the subtitle 'Public Affairs Department', and the affiliation 'The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints'. Navigation links for 'HOME', 'ARCHIVES', and 'ABOUT' are visible. A dark red box indicates the article was 'PUBLISHED JUNE 16, 2010'. The main article title is 'Mormon Missionaries Lend Helping Hand to Ohio Tornado Victims', posted by 'DOUG ANDERSEN'. The text describes a tornado in Ohio on June 5 and mentions 200 volunteers, including missionaries, wearing 'Mormon Helping Hands' T-shirts. A video link from WTVG is provided. On the right, there is a sidebar with 'Article Categories' showing 'Humanitarian Efforts' with a count of 17, and a 'SHARE' button with social media icons.

Newsroom Blog
Public Affairs Department
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

HOME ARCHIVES ABOUT

PUBLISHED JUNE 16, 2010

Mormon Missionaries Lend Helping Hand to Ohio Tornado Victims

POSTED BY [DOUG ANDERSEN](#)

A vicious tornado that made its way through northwest Ohio on June 5 has left many in the damaged area in need of helping hands.

Toledo, Ohio's [WTVG recently reported](#) on the cleanup efforts of 200 volunteers in Ohio's Fulton County. Approximately 50 of those volunteers were [missionaries](#) from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, wearing yellow [Mormon Helping Hands](#) T-shirts.

See the video from [WTVG](#).

Article Categories

Humanitarian Efforts	17
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Youth a Driving Force Behind Mormon Summer Pageants

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SALT LAKE CITY | 22 June 2010 | For those who work behind the scenes of summer pageants of [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#), there is little doubt as to what the driving force is behind these popular summer productions — the youth.

Mormon summer pageants, which kick off in Manti, Utah, are well known for dramatic displays of history from the scriptures and the Church. These pageants are the product of thousands of hours of volunteer work, and no group is more serviceable than the youth.

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Take, for example, [The Nauvoo Pageant](#) in Nauvoo, Illinois. Two crews of 10 young men ages 17 to 19 help set up the pageant, run the show and take down equipment. In past years these young men came from as far away as England; this year they come from across the United States. Not only do these young men volunteer their time, but they also pay their own way.

Dave and Kathy Folkman are assigned to watch over these young men in Nauvoo.

"They literally work from 7 a.m. until midnight," Kathy said. "It's hot, dirty work and they love it."

While many stages for such productions are powered by hydraulics, Kathy said the stage for the Nauvoo Pageant moves thanks to the muscle of these young men.

"We couldn't do it without them," Kathy said. "We truly couldn't."

Korbin Goulding of Utah is one of the young men who will participate on this year's crew that will set up the stage and lights. Goulding, who has been helping build a house from start to finish, was recruited to the crew by Dave Folkman, who lives in Goulding's area.

"It will be a good experience learning how to build a stage," Goulding said. "I've been looking forward to it. It's a once-in-a-lifetime chance."

The Nauvoo Pageant starts 6 July and was first performed in 2005 to commemorate the 200th birthday of the first Church president, [Joseph Smith](#). In addition to the pageant, the [Nauvoo historical sites](#) feature daytime vignettes where cast members share the history of the site through smaller intimate performances.

Mormon Miracle Pageant

This year's [Mormon Miracle Pageant](#) started 17 June and has a cast of approximately 900. Manti Pageant president Douglas L. Barton said 600 cast members are 18 or younger, and they are a key force to set up the 14,000 chairs for the audience on the hill of the [Manti Temple](#) in one hour.

"We wouldn't have [a pageant] without the youth," Barton said. "A lot of the parts are geared around the youth."

The Manti Pageant storyline covers the beginnings of the Church and the history of the pioneers who settled in the Sanpete Valley in Utah.

Castle Valley Pageant

The [Castle Valley Pageant](#) starts 29 July and is performed in Castle Dale, Utah. This pageant portrays the trials, triumphs and tragedies of settlers in eastern Utah's Castle Valley, who were called by Brigham Young in 1877 to colonize what is now Utah's Emery County.

Pageant director Mark Justice said a couple hundred youth from the Castle Dale area maintain the pageant site through service projects.

The Castle Valley Pageant is performed in an outdoor amphitheater that can seat 4,000 people. Before each performance, patrons can visit the nearby pioneer village and learn how to survive on a pioneer settlement.

Hill Cumorah Pageant

Located in upstate New York, Palmyra is where Mormons believe Joseph Smith received divine visitations to restore the same religious doctrines that Jesus Christ had established when He lived on the earth. The pageant is performed on the [Hill Cumorah](#), the place where Joseph Smith received the sacred record that later became known as the Book of Mormon. The pageant attracts anywhere from 6,000 to 9,000 people each night.

The storyline of the [Hill Cumorah Pageant](#) focuses on the history and message of the Book of Mormon. It emphasizes the belief that [Christ](#) is the focus of the Church, sent to bring peace and happiness to families and increase love among men and women.

Pageant president Dwight Schwendiman said there will be 700 cast members this year — 186 of which are young men and women ages 13 to 17.

Two other pageants, the [Clarkston Pageant](#) (held every other year) and the [Mesa Pageant](#) (held during the Easter season), are also produced by the Church.

Pageant details

Manti, Utah: Mormon Miracle Pageant

Performances 17–19 and 22–26 June 2010

Pageant begins at 9:30 p.m.

More information at mormonmiracle.org

Nauvoo, Illinois: A Tribute to the Prophet Joseph Smith

Performances Tuesday through Saturday from 6 July 2010 to 31 July 2010

Preshow activities begin at 7 p.m.

Pageant begins at 8:45 p.m.

More information at nauvoopageant.org

Palmyra, New York: Hill Cumorah Pageant: America's Witness for Christ

Performances 9–10 and 13–17 July 2010

Pageant begins at dusk, around 9:15 p.m.

More information at <http://www.hillcumorah.org/pageant/>

Castle Dale, Utah: The Castle Valley Pageant

Performances 29–31 July and 3–7 August 2010

<http://www.lds.org/placestovisit/location/0,10634,1782-1-1-1,00.html>

Newsroom Blog

Public Affairs Department
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

THE LATEST BLOG POSTS FROM PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Maintaining Accurate Public Perceptions of Mormonism

JUNE 30, 2010 POSTED BY [LYMAN KIRKLAND](#)

The [Mormon Channel](#) recently interviewed Church Public Affairs managing director Michael Otterson about current public perceptions of the Church, as well as what more can be done to help the public better understand Church beliefs and practices.

A [recent study](#) from the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life shows that over half of Americans know little or nothing about Mormons, 47 percent have an unfavorable view of Mormons and one-third say Mormons are not Christians.

Otterson told the Mormon Channel that the purpose of the Church Public Affairs Department is to help the public see the Church as it really is. However, Otterson added that the burden to accomplish that goal does not rest solely on the Church as an organization. Rather, public perceptions are influenced just as much – if not more so – by interactions with individual Church members.

"The body of research in public relations practice emphasizes very strongly that you cannot change people's perceptions of an organization by simply sending out messages," Otterson said. "You only change people's perceptions of an organization by that organization's behavior or actions, or by the actions of the people that represent it."

Those familiar with Mormon theology know that [Mormon Church leaders](#) teach members about [Jesus Christ](#) and to live a Christ-centered life.

"What I would hope people would respond to when they hear the word 'Mormon' is that they think first of all, these are people whose beliefs, whose doctrines, whose practices are rooted in Christ," Otterson said. "And secondly, right behind that would be the idea that these are people who live their religion."

[Listen to](#) or [download](#) the full interview from the Mormon Channel.

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Forbes Covers City Creek Project

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SALT LAKE CITY | 30 June 2010 | Salt Lake City's [City Creek](#) development, which is scheduled for completion in 2012, continues to garner national attention.

A recent column on Forbes.com ("[Salt Lake City's Sacred Space](#)") by Joel Kotkin takes a look at how City Creek — an initiative of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints — is enhancing downtown [Salt Lake City](#). The Church undertook the City Creek project to protect the environment around Temple Square.

"On the surface, Salt Lake City, America's 38th largest central business district would seem an unlikely place for such an ambitious development," Kotkin wrote. "Over the next decade, the Church's effort could represent something unique in an urban America increasingly obsessed with the ephemeral."

Kotkin, who writes *Forbes'* weekly *New Geographer* column, is a distinguished presidential fellow in urban futures at Chapman University, as well as an adjunct fellow at the Legatum Institute in London.

Read Kotkin's column at [Forbes.com](#).

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PUBLISHED AUGUST 19, 2010

FamilySearch and Archives New Zealand Provide Access to Millions of Genealogical Records

POSTED BY [DOUG ANDERSEN](#)

Thanks to a partnership between [FamilySearch](#) and [Archives New Zealand](#), 3 million New Zealand maritime immigration records will soon be available on FamilySearch.org.

These records are contained on about 300,000 pages of passenger and crew lists that detail arrivals at New Zealand ports in the 1800s. Ten percent of the records are currently online, and the remaining records will be uploaded over the next couple of months.

Michael Higgins, a Pacific area representative for FamilySearch, said the process of digitizing the records took 18 months to complete.

"The Archives have been great to work with, and we feel privileged to be involved," Higgins said.

Read about how these records have already [blessed the life of New Zealand's Glen Reid](#).

TAGS: FAMILY HISTORY, GENEALOGY

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Newsroom Blog

Public Affairs Department
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

PUBLISHED JULY 15, 2010

Portable New Testament Available

POSTED BY [DOUG ANDERSEN](#)

The Church of [Jesus Christ](#) of Latter-day Saints has taken another step to make the scriptures more accessible to Church members. The Church recently released a more portable stand-alone version of the New Testament in English.

This new version has the standard size (5¼" x 7¼"), print and footnotes that Church members are accustomed to. However, this smaller book is 404 pages (compared to the 2,000-plus pages of the Church's current LDS edition of the King James Version of the Bible), is one-fourth inch thick and does not include the Topical Guide, Bible Dictionary, Joseph Smith Translation, Bible maps, or photographs.

This book was released in advance of next year's study of the New Testament in Church Sunday School Gospel Doctrine classes, which have a four-year rotating curriculum. The [Old Testament](#) is this year's book of study, followed by the [New Testament](#) in 2011, the [Book of Mormon](#) in 2012 and the [Doctrine and Covenants](#) in 2013. On Sundays Church members attend congregations for three consecutive hours -- one of which is dedicated to learning the scriptures.

The portable New Testament is currently available in Church distribution stores from Logan to Spanish Fork, Utah, as well as by phone (1-800-537-5001) or [Internet](#) in the United States and Canada. The stand-alone New Testament will be under evaluation between now and the end of the year to determine if the Church should distribute the book worldwide.

The Church has done a number of things over the years to make scriptures more accessible to its members. For example, chapter summaries, footnotes, an introduction, an index and other information -- all of which are not considered scripture -- were added or expanded in 1981 to help the reader navigate through the book and compare scriptures in the Old and New Testaments. And most recently, the Church published a Latter-day Saint edition of the [Holy Bible in Spanish](#) to benefit an estimated four and a half million Latter-day Saints whose native language is Spanish.

[Mormons](#) regard the [Bible](#) as scripture, along with the Book of Mormon and other sacred texts. The Church's eighth [article of faith](#) states, "We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God."

TAGS: BIBLE, EDUCATION, SCRIPTURES

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Mormon Tabernacle Choir Marks 100 Years of Recording

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SALT LAKE CITY | 1 September 2010 | Exactly one century ago, at 8:00 p.m. MST, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir recorded its first album.

Now 175 albums, 5 gold and 2 platinum records, and a Grammy later, the [Mormon Tabernacle Choir](#) has been recording longer than any other recording artist in the United States. The choir has already celebrated this milestone in a several ways. The choir released a three-disc set of songs titled *100: Celebrating a Century of Recording Excellence*, which includes a CD/DVD of rarely seen or heard performances. The choir also held a [Pioneer Day concert](#) at the Conference Center in July and was [voted into the National Radio Hall of Fame](#) in August.

"Just think — we've been on the cutting edge for 100 years, right from the beginning," said Mormon Tabernacle Choir president Mac Christensen. "And so many times they thought it couldn't be done, and it's been done. There's nothing else like it in the world. What's happening now and what's happened before is unbelievable."

The choir's new album contains 32 tracks made up of the choir's most-requested songs, including "Consider the Lilies," "Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing," "Battle Hymn of the Republic" (for which it won a Grammy), "Climb Ev'ry Mountain" and "Hallelujah" from Handel's *Messiah*.

The CD/DVD's rarely seen or heard performances include the first recording made by the choir on 1 September 1910, "Let the Mountains Shout for Joy."

Click on [this video](#) for photos and audio from that 1910 recording, as well as video of today's choir performing the same song.

The all-volunteer, 360-member choir is accompanied by the 110-member Orchestra at Temple Square. The choir's weekly *Music and the Spoken Word* program is the world's longest-running network broadcast and airs on more than 2,000 TV, radio and cable stations across the United States. For more information about the choir, visit [MormonTabernacleChoir.org](#).

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President Monson Dedicates Kyiv Ukraine Temple

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KYIV, Ukraine | 30 August 2010 | Members of [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#) in Ukraine no longer need to travel 30 hours by bus to Freiberg, Germany, to attend the nearest [temple](#). The Church's first temple in the former Soviet Union was dedicated 29 August 2010 in Kyiv, Ukraine, by Church President [Thomas S. Monson](#).

President Monson described the day's events as "landmark in the maturation of the Church in Eastern Europe."

The [Kyiv Ukraine Temple](#), which was dedicated in three sessions Sunday, is the Church's 134th operating temple worldwide and will serve approximately 31,000 Church members living in nine European countries.

Prior to the dedication, President Monson sealed the temple cornerstone — a tradition marking the end of construction and the beginning of the sacred work inside the temple.

"There is a nice spirit here among you," said President Monson, as he ceremoniously put the cornerstone in place. "I'm sensitive to the Spirit. I feel it today. There is no place else I would rather be."

[President Dieter F. Uchtdorf](#), second counselor in the First Presidency, [Elder Russell M. Nelson](#) of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles, and Elder William R. Walker of the First Quorum of Seventy also participated in the cornerstone ceremony.

A [cultural celebration](#) was held Saturday evening inside the Palats Ukraina concert hall, where performers retold the rich cultural history of the region through song and dance.

The [Church News](#) has extensive coverage of the dedication, including photos and videos.

The Kyiv Ukraine Temple was [announced in 1998](#) by President Gordon B. Hinckley, and the temple groundbreaking took place in June 2007. The Church has been established in Ukraine for nearly 20 years, and as of December 2009, there were 10,722 members in the country.

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PUBLISHED SEPTEMBER 2, 2010

Mormon Missionaries Blog about Kyiv Ukraine Temple Dedication

POSTED BY [DOUG ANDERSEN](#)

This past Sunday's [dedication of the Kyiv Ukraine Temple](#) of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints by President [Thomas S. Monson](#) was a historic day for the Church. Not only does the Kyiv Ukraine Temple provide a shorter commute to the nearest [temple](#) for 31,000 Church members in Eastern Europe, but this temple is also the first of its kind in the former Soviet Union.



Church members from Ukraine and other countries in the Kyiv Ukraine Temple district attended Saturday's cultural celebration and Sunday's dedicatory services. Many other members in the temple district watched the dedicatory services via satellite transmission. Several Mormon missionaries and others in Eastern Europe blogged about last weekend's historic events.

One senior missionary couple wrote the following about Saturday night's cultural event:

[President Monson] and [President Uchtdorf](#) and [Elder Nelson](#) were present at the Cultural Celebration the previous evening. It was quite a spectacular event. Nine different countries participated with all their colorful folk costumes, dances and songs. Lots of fun and lots of energy. (Read more at [their blog](#).)

One senior missionary couple wrote the following about Saturday night's cultural event:

[President Monson] and [President Uchtdorf](#) and [Elder Nelson](#) were present at the Cultural Celebration the previous evening. It was quite a spectacular event. Nine different countries participated with all their colorful folk costumes, dances and songs. Lots of fun and lots of energy. (Read more at [their blog](#).)

Of Sunday's temple dedication, one missionary wrote:

One of my favorite parts was just being able to laugh with our prophet. During the cornerstone ceremony he was laughing and just being himself. (Read more at [her blog](#).)

Another couple witnessed the temple dedication from a city in eastern Ukraine. Here's how they described the dedication:

It was so wonderful to see the faces of the [members] as they came out of the first session of the Dedication. They are so happy to have a Temple here in Ukraine! (Read more at [their blog](#).)

Below is a list of other blogs that detailed last weekend's events and the Kyiv Ukraine Temple open house.

[Kiev Ukraine Temple Dedication](#)

[Kyiv Temple Dedication](#)

[Aug 29 2010 A Historic Day For Russia](#)

[Mission Photo](#)

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PUBLISHED AUGUST 26, 2010

Book Details Mormon Teens' Sacrifice, Discipline and Energy

POSTED BY [LYMAN KIRKLAND](#)



In Kenda Creasy Dean's new book, *Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers Is Telling the American Church*, one chapter focuses on the religious dedication of teenagers of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Throughout the book, Dean references survey results from the National Study of Youth and Religion (conducted from 2002 to 2005). The survey, given to 3,300 teenagers ages 13 to 17, provides the following insights into the lives of [Mormon](#) teenagers:

- Eighty percent of Latter-day Saint teens talk about religion with their families more than once per week.
- Seventy-three percent of Latter-day Saint teens are "significantly more likely" than other teens to hold religious views similar to that of their parents.
- Sixty-eight percent of Mormon teens fast and practice other forms of self-denial.
- Forty-three percent of Mormon teens say religious faith is "extremely important" in daily life.

Dean, who is an associate professor of youth, church, and culture at Princeton Theological Seminary, says, "Mormon teenagers tend to be the 'spiritual athletes' of their generation, conditioning for an eternal goal with an intensity that requires sacrifice, discipline, and energy."

Those familiar with The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and its youth won't necessarily find these results surprising. Several Church initiatives aim to help teens develop a solid spiritual foundation. For example, Mormon high school-aged youth are encouraged to enroll in four years of religious education (in addition to regular schooling) known as the [seminary program](#).

Mormon teenagers also participate in the Church Young Men and Young Women programs. As part of these programs, teens meet in classes on Sundays for religious instruction and several times during the month for social activities -- including service projects, sports, camping and dances. Young men and women are also given leadership positions within the organization in which they learn to set goals, plan group activities and solve problems.

The First Presidency of the Church has also created the [For the Strength of Youth](#) pamphlet for teens. The standards in this booklet -- including honesty, clean language, regular exercise and obtaining as much education as possible -- encourage teens to take an active part in their religion and community, and are rooted in the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Read more about the [National Study of Youth and Religion](#).

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Scottish Parliament's Andrew Welsh Receives 2010 Family Values Award

OCT 08 2010 — POSTED by DOUG ANDERSEN

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The Scottish Parliament's Andrew Welsh recently received the 2010 Scottish Family Values Award at a ceremony inside the Scottish Parliament. Welsh was recognized for his support of family values and extensive public service.

“The old taboos and disciplines have been challenged; even the word ‘family’ now has multiple meanings,” Welsh said. “We now live in a very different society from the mid-20th century environment into which I was born with, as my immediate family, my mother, father, brothers and sister and with grandparents, cousins, aunts, uncles as the wider family — all of whom had a role to play in the upbringing and well-being of children, and that is what families are all about.”

The Family Values Award [has been presented](#) for several years to recognize those who promote and defend the family unit.

[Read the full story on the Church's United Kingdom website.](#)

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NEWS RELEASE

Church Makes Significant Donation to Operation Smile

OCT 27 2010 — SALT LAKE CITY

PRINT | [SHARE this STORY](#)



Operation Smile, an international children's medical charity, joined **The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints** in a news conference to thank the Church for its recent \$927,000 donation.

Funds will support medical missions over the next year to help a combined 3,800 children in Kenya, Ethiopia, Egypt and Jordan who are afflicted with cleft palate and other facial deformities.

"There's no such thing as any one person doing anything in life. There is no one hero," said William Magee, cofounder and CEO of Operation Smile. "Without so many people [working together], no job would get taken care of. There's never one person that does it. The Church is a great example of that. ... We want to say thank you for sharing your love. God bless you."

According to Operation Smile, every three minutes a child is born with a cleft lip condition that will go untreated. Furthermore, one in 10 children born with a cleft will die before their first birthday.

"We are grateful for members of the Church who have so freely donated financially to the Church's Humanitarian Fund," said Fred Riley, Church project manager for Humanitarian Services. "It is through such donations that this partnership with Operation Smile can come to fruition."

"We know that much good will come from this partnership and look forward to helping to increase the good work that Operation Smile provides," Riley said.

The Church is a longtime supporter of Operation Smile and including today's financial commitment has donated nearly \$1.2 million to the organization since 1991. Most recently, the Church supported Breakfast for Smiles, a yearly Operation Smile event.

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS — *The* CHURCH of JESUS CHRIST of LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Mormons and Seattle-area Food Banks Unite in 'Yes We Can' Project

OCT 28 2010 — POSTED by DOUG ANDERSEN

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Yes We Can, a community canning project in the Seattle area, has found a creative solution to feed the hungry.

Elisa Jaffe of [KOMO 4 News](#) recently reported that [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#) has opened up its local cannery — normally used for private welfare needs — to help with the project. To date, Yes We Can has produced thousands of canned goods that will help people throughout South King County.

"[This project has] been a blessing because I know this food is going to people in real need," said Bill Lawrenson, manager of the bishops' storehouse and cannery in Kent, Washington.

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NEWS RELEASE

Newsweek Praises Utah for Economic Stability During Recession

NOV 10 2010 — SALT LAKE CITY

PRINT | [SHARE this STORY](#)



A story published 8 November in *Newsweek* labeled Utah “the new economic Zion.” The article highlights Utah’s capacity to attract new businesses and prosper during a recession.

One reason for Utah’s economic muscle, *Newsweek* said, is the state’s religious population.

“Utah’s people are, indeed, an employer’s dream,” the article said. “They are healthy, hard workers (pouring in 48 hours a week on average), and exceedingly stable, with the highest birthrates in the nation. The large number of young Mormons who spend two years on a conversion mission also means a huge swath of the population earned its sales stripes in hostile terrain.”

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints counsels its members to live a **healthy lifestyle** and become self-sufficient through hard work. The Church’s **missionary program** allows young men and women to live away from home for 18 to 24 months, work every day from 6:30 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. and possibly learn a foreign language.

Read “**Promised Land: How Utah became the new economic Zion.**”

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[Forbes Covers City Creek Project](#)



[Wise Financial Management During Tough Economic Times](#)



[Personal Financial Sufficiency and Integrity](#)



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NEWS RELEASE

Christmas on Temple Square Celebrates Birth of Christ, Welcomes Holiday Visitors

NOV 26 2010 — SALT LAKE CITY

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The Friday after Thanksgiving not only attracts multitudes to local shopping centers, but also brings thousands to Christmas on Temple Square – a month-long event focused on the birth of Jesus Christ that draws hundreds of thousands of guests and tourists each year.

Christmas on Temple Square features several activities, including the [Christmas lights](#) and the Mormon Tabernacle Choir concerts.

Millions of lights are turned on at dusk and turned off at 10 p.m. on Temple Square and 10:30 p.m. on the areas surrounding the square. The light display continues through New Year's Eve. The Mormon Tabernacle Choir [will also perform 16-19 December](#) for 100,000 people, and a [First Presidency Christmas devotional](#) will be broadcast 5 December throughout the world from the Conference Center of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

See more at the Church's [news and events site](#).

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“New and Improved” LDS.org Now Fully Live

NOV 30 2010 — POSTED by NEWSROOM STAFF

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In September, Newsroom published [a story about new.lds.org](#) — a new version of one of the Church’s primary websites that, until now, has been in test form. Beginning today, new.lds.org becomes the official LDS.org.

This latest revision, which includes changes in content, processing and online appearance, also includes upgrades to the search functionality.

After 30 November 2010, users will still be able to access content on the [classic LDS.org](#). Because several areas of the new LDS.org are still under construction, links in these sections go back to the old LDS.org.

(More information on the new website can be found on the [Church’s news and events site for its members](#)).

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Research on Religion Podcast Discusses Volunteer Participation Within the Church

NOV 29 2010 — POSTED by NEWSROOM STAFF

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As [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#) grows worldwide, public interest in the Church expands as well. This means increased attention not only from journalists, bloggers and opinion leaders, but from scholarly circles as well.

Research on Religion — a weekly podcast devoted to the social scientific study of religion, sponsored by the Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion — recently posted a one-hour discussion about the Church and its efforts to meet the welfare needs of its membership through organized volunteer efforts.

Host Tony Gill, who is not a member of the Church, related a personal story of how he was inspired to see Church members help one another in a time of crisis.

“[I am amazed] at how tightly knit these communities are and how they respond to one another,” Gill said. “I was in Provo, Utah, giving a talk at BYU several years ago. I had a friend down there and asked him if we could go to a basketball game. He got us tickets. I was supposed to be picked up at the hotel and he gave me a call on my cell phone and said, ‘Hey, I’m going to be a little bit late.’ He explained that there was an automobile accident for one of the members in the [ward](#) (congregation), and the whole community just rallied around this person.

“It was just such an amazing thing to see. You see this in other churches, but I don’t think to the extent that the Latter-day Saints can do this. It’s quite amazing that they are able to do this.”

Podcast guest Michael McBride, a professor of economics at the University of California–Irvine, spoke of the Church’s pattern of giving members a [calling](#), or Church office or responsibility, to help them learn and grow.

“Everyone gets a chance to participate, and they get lots of experience and have opportunities to contribute their time and their talents in various ways,” McBride said.

[Listen to the entire podcast](#) at the Research on Religion website.

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NEWS RELEASE

David Archuleta and Michael York Join With Mormon Tabernacle Choir for Annual Christmas Concert

17 DECEMBER 2010 — SALT LAKE CITY

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Pop singer David Archuleta and actor Michael York took center stage Thursday night to kick off the annual Christmas with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square concerts. *(Downloadable, broadcast-quality video clips from the concert and a press conference with the performers are available for news media use. Watch YouTube video of press conference here.)*

Choir president Mac Christensen called this year's opening show "the greatest night we've ever had." A capacity crowd witnessed the performance in the Conference Center in Salt Lake City, and **three more performances** are scheduled. Two concerts will be Friday, 17 December, and Saturday, 18 December, both at 7:30 p.m. The weekly half-hour CBS radio broadcast of *Music and the Spoken Word* on Sunday, 19 December, at 9:30 a.m. in the Conference Center will also feature Archuleta and York. This will be followed by additional music from the previous performances in a mini-concert. (Attendees should plan on being in their seats 30 to 60 minutes before each performance begins and should not save seats.)

"It just seemed so unreal last night," said Archuleta, who has lived in Utah since age 10. "It was one of those moments where it was very hard to actually take it in and realize this is actually happening. ... I've always enjoyed listening to the Choir — I think they're my most listened to thing on iTunes. It's amazing. There's no place like performing here. It's really incredible having the Choir right behind you. It's like, 'Wow, is this really happening?'"

The Choir was joined by the Orchestra at Temple Square and the Bells on Temple Square. Mack Wilberg and Ryan Murphy conducted the performances; both also arranged or composed much of the music.

Archuleta sang several classic Christmas songs, while York, whose acting career has spanned 45 years, shared the stories of how the Choir was formed and read the traditional account the birth of [Jesus Christ](#) from Luke 2.

“I was this sort of outsider,” said York, who is a native of Britain. “I’ve been to Salt Lake City before and been outside the buildings, and I’d seen the tapes of the shows and of course watched it on PBS. But [it is special] to be actually inside, to belong as a part of this extraordinary entertainment. But it’s more than entertainment because there’s a great sense of fellowship and of worship at this time of year.”

As with previous seasons, the concert began with a processional of 107 dancers entering the stage through the multiple aisles of the 21,000-seat center. The dancers were directed by Carol N. Iwasaki, choreographer. Costumes for the evening were designed by Susan Memmott Allred, resident designer of the Utah Opera Company.

“When you grow up having respect for something, it just doesn’t really seem like you’re going to be there next,” Archuleta said. “[This concert] already is one of the most amazing things I’ve been able to do, and I know it will be one of the most memorable moments of my life.”

Related Stories:

[David Archuleta to Perform with Mormon Tabernacle Choir in Annual Christmas Concert](#)

[Michael York to Narrate Annual Christmas Concert](#)

[Mormon Tabernacle Choir and Orchestra at Temple Square 2010 Christmas Concert Guest Artists](#)

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Videos Provide Inside Look at Mormon Tabernacle Choir Summer Tours

14 JANUARY 2011 – POSTED *by* NEWSROOM STAFFPRINT | SHARE *this* STORY      

Today a [news release](#) on Newsroom announced the Mormon Tabernacle Choir's 2011 summer tour schedule, which will include stops in Toronto, Canada; Chautauqua, New York; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Washington, D.C.; and Norfolk, Virginia.

Watch the videos below for a more in-depth look at these biennial choir tours.

[Mormon Tabernacle Choir 2011 Tour](#)

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Catholic Visitors Sing in Mormon Tabernacle Choir Seats

11 FEBRUARY 2011 — POSTED *by* NEWSROOM STAFFPRINT | SHARE *this* STORY

Mormon Tabernacle Choir assistant music director Ryan Murphy leads a group of Catholic visitors in song on 2 February 2011 at the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City. (Photo courtesy of [Intermountain Catholic](#))

If you could sit in the seats of the [Mormon Tabernacle Choir](#) and ask its leaders one question, what would it be? Those attending the [Southwest Liturgical Conference](#) had this opportunity 2 February at the Tabernacle in Salt Lake City.

Choir president Mac Christensen, assistant music director Ryan Murphy and principal organist Richard Elliott welcomed a group of about 50 Catholics from the conference to sit in the choir seats, ask questions, hear the organ and sing for 45 minutes.

[*Intermountain Catholic*](#), a weekly print and online publication, reported about the event in today's edition:

Ryan Murphy, who used to work for a Catholic church in Boston ... had the Catholic group sing 'Music of the Spoken Word,' a non-denominational work.

"They told me every one of you has a great voice; that you are very well tuned," Murphy said. "It's meant to be a program of music and inspiration."

Before singing, Murphy had the group stand up and do a warm-up exercise. "I want you to be able to say that you sang in this beautiful space with this fantastic organist," he said.

Read the full story at [*Intermountain Catholic*](#).

TAGS: [MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR](#) [SOUTHWEST LITURGICAL CONFERENCE](#) [INTERFAITH RELATIONS](#)

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NEWS RELEASE

Mormon Mobile Phone Apps Have Strong Roots in Volunteer Work

15 FEBRUARY 2011 — SALT LAKE CITY

PRINT

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Ben Christensen, Cliff McCollum, Michael Morrow and David Gaona have never met, but they share the same hobby: Each is a part of an army of approximately 100 volunteers who help create mobile phone applications (apps) for [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#).

Tom Welch, a senior Church technical program manager, started the volunteer effort in 2006 with the launch of [LDS Tech](#). Church members can use this website to fill out a talent profile and see which projects best fit their skill set.



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“We have a team of employees at the Church who work on the projects, but we also enlist our volunteers who have expertise in these platforms to come and help,” Welch said. “These volunteers do everything from helping with design, to programming, to project management. We even have a group of people who answer support e-mails from customers. It’s a pretty big effort.”

The Church currently offers **four free apps** on several mobile phone platforms: Mormon Channel, Gospel Library, LDS Tools and Scripture Mastery. The Church’s first app, the Mormon Channel, was launched in June 2009. Since then, the apps have been downloaded over 800,000 times.

Some may wonder why people would volunteer to do this, especially when those in the computer programming industry can make a comfortable living. But that is even more incentive for some of these men and women to volunteer their time and knowledge.

“I have been blessed with technical skills and talents that have enabled me to be well-employed and greatly blessed in my life, and felt I should try and use them to benefit others,” said Christensen, who helps with the Gospel Library app for the iPhone. “[Creating apps for the Church] seemed like a good avenue to do so.”

McCollum, a software developer by trade who has worked on the Mormon Channel iPhone app, agreed.

“The fact that the applications are useful to other members of the Church is icing on the cake,” McCollum said.

The Mormon Channel app allows users to listen to the **Mormon Channel**, the Church’s official radio station. Gospel Library allows users to download the **scriptures**, **general conference** talks and a wealth of other Church content. To date, Gospel Library books within the app have been downloaded over 13 million times. LDS Tools allows members to download ward (congregation) and stake (similar to a diocese) directories and schedule ward and stake events. The Scripture Mastery app helps youth memorize scriptures.

Morrow, who assists with the LDS Tools app, said the volunteer opportunity is great because of its impact.

“When they first put out the call for community help, I suspected volunteers might be relegated to a support role,” Morrow said. “But Tom and the rest of the Church team have really opened their arms and welcomed us in as full team members. We truly have a voice in the direction of this work.”

Though difficult to measure, Welch estimates volunteers are responsible for half of the work that has gone in to the creation of the Church’s mobile apps. A combined 1,200 volunteers help out with other projects at LDS Tech.

The Mormon Channel and Gospel Library apps will be released in Spanish and German in March — also thanks in part to volunteers. Two months ago, Gaona fortuitously came across LDS Tech and learned he could help with Spanish translation of the Mormon Channel iPhone app.

“I was astonished to know that I could join the projects,” Gaona said, “so realizing that I can contribute in a really small way in providing this application in different languages makes me really happy.”

The Church is also looking to develop other apps that could benefit from volunteer efforts.

Users can download the Church’s mobile apps from **Mobile.LDS.org**, the **Android Market**, the **Palm App Catalog**, or by searching “The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints” in the iTunes app store.

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NEWS RELEASE

Mormons in Africa: Church Humanitarian Initiatives Give Life

21 FEBRUARY 2011 — SALT LAKE CITY

PRINT | [SHARE this STORY](#)



Dr. Mohammed S. Swaray is an eyewitness to what can happen when a hospital staff does not know how to help a newborn baby breathe. During one early morning in August 2009 in Liberia, a newborn baby boy was discolored from lack of oxygen. The hospital staff used all its resources to resuscitate the child, but the baby passed away.

“What we didn’t have at that time was the knowledge of how to use the equipment properly and in the right order,” Dr. Swaray said. “The area was very chaotic.”

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in partnership with national health organizations and ministries of health around the world, has sent volunteer physicians and nurses to instruct birth attendants on **neonatal resuscitation** techniques. With this training, attendants are able to save the lives of babies who have breathing difficulties at birth. To date, Church volunteers have trained over 53,000 Africans like Dr. Swaray in neonatal resuscitation techniques.

“By improving these skills and teaching them to others in the maternity centers, I know we are headed in the right direction,” Dr. Swaray said. “I thank LDS Charities for organizing this training that is so needed here in Liberia.”

Dr. Ryan Wilcox of Utah has participated in 10 such neonatal training projects across Africa and Brazil. He said that each person who is trained is expected to train an additional 60 to 100 persons.

“All trainings are provided to people who are not members of the Church,” Wilcox said. “One of the principal teachings of the Church is to help everyone in need. When we see an area of the world that needs help, we provide that help regardless of religion.”

And this fact is not reserved to neonatal resuscitation trainings. The Church’s humanitarian efforts also distribute wheelchairs, provide clean water, give immunizations and restore vision to persons of all faiths. Combined, these and other initiatives have blessed more than 46 million Africans since 2003.

Wheelchair distribution

The Church’s **wheelchair initiative**, which began in 2003, has resulted in the distribution of nearly 40,000 wheelchairs in Africa. Part of the wheelchair initiative is to train people to construct a wheelchair from basic bicycle parts. Sierra Leone’s Maligie Bundor created one of these wheelchairs for himself and can now move around easier in his village and go to school.

“I love having this wheelchair,” Bundor said. “I feel good that I have made this wheelchair in this country. That’s a big thing. I’m proud of it. The last time I went into my village my father asked me where I got this wheelchair from. I said, ‘This wheelchair is made by myself.’”

Clean water projects

The Church’s **clean water projects** in Africa have helped people in places such as Sierra Leone, the central African city of **Luputa** and the **Congolese**

Related

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Infographic of Church Clean Water Projects in Africa](#)

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[Africa Fact Sheet](#) ↗

villages Tshiabobo, Mafumba, Kasha and Ibola. These projects have blessed the lives of nearly four million Africans since 2003.

“Good clean water, like the water Latter-day Saint Charities is providing for the villages, has brought remarkable changes in their lives in terms of health,” said Sierra Leone native Mustapha Turay. “If I could speak for the people of Sierra Leone, I would say a big ‘thank you’ to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for blessing our lives, for coming to our aid at the most needed time, for saving lives, for saving children who would have died, and for creating jobs for our brothers and sisters who are employed in this water project.”

See this **infographic** for more information about the Church's clean water projects in Africa.

Measles vaccinations

In 2003, the Church donated \$3 million to support a worldwide initiative with several organizations, including the **American Red Cross** and **United Nations Foundation**, that provides **measles vaccinations** to children in 40 countries. Over 42 million Africans have benefited from these immunizations.

According to the Red Cross, millions of African children have been immunized against measles, leading to a 92 percent decrease in measles-related deaths across the continent between 2000 and 2008.

Vision treatment

More than 161 million people in the world are visually impaired, of whom 124 million people have low vision and 37 million are blind. Up to 75 percent of all blindness is avoidable or treatable.

As part of the Church's **vision treatment** program, volunteer ophthalmologists assist medical care providers around the world with training and equipment to treat simple vision problems. This program has aided more than 130,000 Africans since 2003.

(Video) Clean Water is Happiness



(Video) From the Darkness to the Light: Church Wheelchair Initiative in Africa



(Video) We Did Not Stand Alone: Church Aid During Sierra Leone War



Race Relations

Additional Resources on the Church in Africa



See the Newsroom [Humanitarian Services](#) page for more information about the Church's humanitarian work.

Church Humanitarian Work Overview

[Latter-day Saint Charities](#)

[Humanitarian Services](#)

[Helping people to help themselves, goal of LDS Charities \(9/11/2010\)](#)

[The Church's Humanitarian Efforts: Discipleship in Action \(Ensign; 9/2010\)](#)

[Blessing lives for generations \(Church News; 1/10/2004\)](#)

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Catholic Marriage Champion and Public Policy Adviser Receive UK Family Values Awards

18 MARCH 2011 – POSTED *by* NEWSROOM STAFF

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Two prominent men in Britain have received the 2011 UK Family Values Award from [The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints](#).

Local Church leaders in the UK recently presented the award to leading political commentator and founder of think tank ResPublica, [Phillip Blond](#). [Edmund Adamus](#), director of pastoral affairs at the Roman Catholic Diocese of Westminster, also received the award.

The Church gives this award to religious organizations and individuals who promote the family as the fundamental unit of society.

Blond received the award for underlining the value of marriage and family in his commentary and writings.

“The family unit is deserving of support from politicians of left and right alike,” Blond said. “The family offers character formation and life orientation.”

Adamus was commended for his work to promote marriage as part of Christian living.

“[This award makes] possible the promotion of authentic resources and initiatives for marriage preparation, integrating theology of the body as well as matrimonial enrichment and remedial support for marriages facing difficulties,” Adamus said.

Read the full story here: [Westminster: Edmund Adamus receives award from Mormons](#)

Related stories:

[Archbishop Alex J. Brunett Receives Family Values Award \(11/30/2010\)](#)

[Scottish Parliament's Andrew Welsh Receives 2010 Family Values Award \(10/8/2010\)](#)

[Family Values Award Presented at British Parliament \(3/22/2010\)](#)

[Family Values Award Presented at British Parliament \(3/5/2009\)](#)

TAGS: [FAMILY VALUES](#) [UK AWARDS](#)

APPENDIX 2 | Survey created for feedback on new LDS Newsroom website**Newsroom Survey**

The Public Affairs Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints recently released a new version of Newsroom (newsroom.lds.org). The purpose of this survey is to obtain user feedback about various aspects of the new Newsroom and Newsroom blog (newsroom.lds.org/blog). This survey should take 5-10 minutes to complete. Thank you for your feedback and time.

1. How often do you visit Newsroom?
 - a. Daily
 - b. 1-3 times per week
 - c. 4 or more times per week
 - d. 1-3 times per month
 - e. Less than once a month
 - f. For the first time

2. What do you like about Newsroom? (please select all that apply)
 - a. Newsroom contains information I need
 - b. Information is comprehensive
 - c. Information is interesting
 - d. Information is easy to find
 - e. Information is easy to understand
 - f. Information is frequently updated
 - g. Graphic design is attractive
 - h. Links and buttons help me move around information easily
 - i. Other (please specify):

3. What topics do you want to find on Newsroom? (please select all that apply)
 - a. Core beliefs and practices
 - b. Education
 - c. Family
 - d. Genealogy/Family History
 - e. Growth of the Church
 - f. History of the Church
 - g. Humanitarian Services
 - h. Leaders' biographies
 - i. Missionary program
 - j. Mormon Tabernacle Choir
 - k. Organizational structure of the Church
 - l. Race relations
 - m. Temples
 - n. Welfare and self reliance
 - o. Public Issues
 - p. Contact information

q. Other: (please specify):

Measuring credibility

4. How believable is the content on Newsroom?
 - a. Very believable
 - b. Believable
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Unbelievable
 - e. Very unbelievable

5. How balanced is the content on Newsroom?
 - a. Very balanced
 - b. Balanced
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Unbalanced
 - e. Very unbalanced

6. How in depth is the content on Newsroom?
 - a. Very in depth
 - b. In depth
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Little depth
 - e. No depth at all

7. How accurate is the content on Newsroom?
 - a. Very accurate.
 - b. Accurate
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Inaccurate
 - e. Very inaccurate

8. How relevant is the news on Newsroom?
 - a. Very relevant
 - b. Somewhat relevant
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Irrelevant
 - e. Very irrelevant

9. Judging by the four aforementioned criteria of credibility, are there any sources (online or otherwise) you deem more credible than Newsroom for news about the Mormon Church? (Please enter URL or title of publication)
 - a. _____

10. In general, how satisfied are you with the content on Newsroom?

- a. Very satisfied
 - b. Satisfied
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Dissatisfied
 - e. Very dissatisfied
11. Which is your primary source of news about the LDS Church:
- a. Newsroom
 - b. LDS.org
 - c. *The Church News*
 - d. *The Ensign*
 - e. Your own local news (newspaper, television news, radio, etc.)
 - f. Other (please specify) _____
12. How often do you find what you are looking for when you search Newsroom?
- a. Always
 - b. Almost always
 - c. Not sure
 - d. Rarely
 - e. Never
13. How often do you use the search function of Newsroom to find information you are looking for?
- a. Always
 - b. Regularly
 - c. Often
 - d. Occasionally
 - e. Almost never
- Please rate your feelings of the following statements
14. Newsroom should allow readers to post comments.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree
15. Newsroom provides sufficient options to share Newsroom content on my social networks and blogs.
- a. Strongly agree
 - b. Agree
 - c. Neutral
 - d. Disagree
 - e. Strongly disagree

Newsroom blog (newsroom.lds.org/blog)

16. How often do you read the Newsroom blog?
- Daily
 - 1-3 times per week
 - 4 or more times per week
 - 1-3 times per month
 - Less than once a month
 - For the first time

Please indicate if you agree/disagree with the following statements

17. The Newsroom blog is more informal than Newsroom.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
18. The Newsroom blog provides additional context and information about the news not available on Newsroom.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
19. The Newsroom blog offers background information that's interesting and useful to me besides the news stories on Newsroom
- Strongly agree
 - Agree
 - Neutral
 - Disagree
 - Strongly disagree
20. How would you rate the Newsroom blog with other organizational blogs you're familiar with?
- Better than
 - As good as
 - About the same
 - Not quite as good as
 - Worse than
21. The Newsroom blog is a transparent source of information.
- Strongly agree
 - Agree

- c. Neutral
- d. Disagree
- e. Strongly disagree

Demographics

22. Please indicate your age.

- a. 18 years old or younger
- b. 19-24 years old
- c. 25-34 years old
- d. 35-44 years old
- e. 45-54 years old
- f. 55 years old or older
- g. No response

23. Please indicate your current occupational field.

- a. Journalist/Media Representative
- b. Education
- c. Business/Law
- d. Government/Politics
- e. Medical/Health Services
- f. Retired/Stay-at-Home
- g. Student
- h. Other (please specify) _____
- i. No response

24. Please indicate your gender.

- a. Male
- b. Female
- c. No response

25. Are you a member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints?

- a. Yes
- b. No – Never have been
- c. No – Former member

Thank you for your feedback and time.

APPENDIX 3 | *Examples of new media research conducted for co-workers*

Compiled 12/13/2010 for the daily department media report

Blogs/New Media

[Mormon Leader and WWII Veteran on Guam](#) (with video of Elder Perry)

@Guam News Watch | 153 followers

[LDS Apostle L. Tom Perry Journeys To Guam To Organize Their First Stake](#) (with video of Elder Perry)

Mormonism-Unveiled: Fact Vs. Fancy

[Mormon Tabernacle Choir Christmas Video Goes Viral](#)

LDS Media Talk

[Video spoofing Provo stereotypes goes viral on YouTube](#)

Mormon Life

[LDS Non-African Missionaries Evacuated from Cote d'Ivoire \(Ivory Coast\) - Cote d'Ivoire Abidjan Mission May Divide to Create New Mission in 2011](#)

LDS Church Growth

Selected Tweets about the New Mormon.org from July 15/16
@rhubarbucubed: These profiles are awesome! But my favorite Mormon profile so far is Jeff: http://mormon.org/me/1N0F-eng #mormons
@brotherjudkins: Here's another favorite mormon.org profile. http://is.gd/dsZLl Alex Boye
@jesse: Check out the new Mormon.org site and messaging. Be sure to read my profile here: http://bit.ly/czTm03
@CuteCultureChic: @formerlyphread Hey! I just found you on the new mormon.org!
@NoahSparks: hey @ccarlson18, saw you featured on the new http://mormon.org! thanks for sharing & looking fwd to more Lib of Congress related tweets #LDS
@AaronWJohnston: I love this family! And all the other featured videos I've seen. All at the great new Mormon.org http://ow.ly/2bYxf
@craigohobson: My two favorite Mormon.org profiles (for obvious reasons) http://bit.ly/aBXE0a http://bit.ly/a9f0Us #mormon (via @jaredfitch) YES!!!!
@taddgiles: A surfer hits the home page of the new mormon.org. Truly exceptional work by a great team of people. Check it: http://mormon.org/
@HearSayGame: Fascinating clip on Alex Boyé and his beliefs. http://bit.ly/dASJyz Homeless at how old? #bsa #jambo2010
@JayBluther: Hey, look! I'm a Mormon. http://mormon.org/me/1DGR-eng/ #lds
@Jesicmom: Mormon.org just relaunched a brand new website. You can find them on twitter too: @mormonorg
@SomethingGrt: New www.Mormon.org website is pretty smart. Love the orange. Good choice.
@letSnow: RT @bencrowder: Cool, the new http://bit.ly/2ZytOk (expand ----) redesign is up. #lds #mormon (Much more modern than I expected)
@FamilyTrifecta: check out my cousin's profile on Mormon.org http://bit.ly/a0siHv
@LDSNana: "Hi, I'm Kathryn" (http://bit.ly/cm9Qat) Check out my profile on the NEW Mormon.org :) #LDS #Mormon
Selected Newsroom Facebook Page Comments about NewMormon.org
Kourtney Fitzgerald : I could probably explore this site forever. I just spent an hour reading profiles of people just like me... the time went by so quickly... haha. Very nice though, I love the new videos, media like that seems to resonate more with investigators than a bunch of text on a page.
Roberta Blain : Yes, check me out at new.mormon.org. I'm there with several thousand others sharing my testimony. I encourage all members of Christ's church to share their testimony on this new site.
Jasmine Gay : That's fantastic, I love the site :) As a newer Church member, it's so easy to find info!

Yellow: 25000+ followers

Red: 5000+ followers

Green: 1200+ followers

APPENDIX 4 | Sample Screenshots of listening post

Unofficial (but influential) LDS Blogs/Tweets/FB pages					
	Name	Owner	RSS Link	Twitter RSS Link	Facebook Wall
1					
2					
3	Patheos		http://feeds.feedburner.com/PatheosMormonPortal	@Patheos (1,539; 100)	Patheos (2,735)
4	LDS Mormon			@LDSMormon (2,111; 93)	
5	LDS Missions		http://twitter.com/statuses/user_timeline/50597394.rss	@LDSmissions (1,869; 68)	
6	Mormanity	Jeff Lindsay	http://mormanity.blogspot.com/feeds/posts/default?alt=rss	@mormanity (1,692; 72)	
7	FollowTheProphet.Net	Bryce Hammond	http://feeds.followtheprophet.net/FollowTheProphet	@LDSProphet (205; 19)	FollowTheProphet.Net (2,298)
8	Nothing Waverin		http://www.nothingwaverin.org/	@LDSofficial (1,700)	
9				@LDSblogs (1,200)	
10				@LDSBloggers (292)	
11	LDS Media Talk	Larry Richman	http://lrdsmediatalk.com/feed/	@LDSMediaTalk (1,001)	LDS Media Talk (542)
12	@LDSweets Community		http://twitter.com/statuses/user_timeline/79505849.rss	@LDSweets (1,253; 100)	
13					
14					
15	ByCommonConsent		http://bycommonconsent.com/feed/	@bycommonconsent (674)	By Common Consent (116)
16	Mormon Stories Podcast		http://mormonstories.org/?feed=rss2	@MormonStories (279; 12)	Mormon Stories Podcast (753)
17	Mormon Archipelago		http://www.isablogs.org/	@MormonBlogs (502)	
18	North Temple	LDS.org Designers	http://feeds.feedburner.com/northtempleatom	@northtemple (474; 53)	
19	Sunstone Magazine		http://www.sunstonemagazine.com/feed/	@SunstoneMag (179; 15)	Sunstone (580)
20	Mormon Matters	John Dehlin	http://www.mormonmatters.org/feed/	@mormonmatters (395)	
21	Meridian Magazine		http://www.meridianmagazine.com/	@MerMag (108; 8)	Meridian Magazine (393)
22					
23					
24	Times and Seasons		http://timesandseasons.org/index.php/feed/	@timesandseasons (180)	TimesandSeasons.org (138)
25	The Millennial Star		http://feeds.feedburner.com/TheMillennialStar	@millennialstar (202)	The Millennial Star (46)
26	LDSChurchTemples.com	Rick Satterfield		@lds_temples (80)	
27	Messenger and Advocate		http://messengerandadvocate.wordpress.com/feed/		
28	Keepapitchinin	Ardis Parshall	http://www.keepapitchinin.org/feed/	@keepapitchinin (92)	Keepapitchinin (116)
29	USU Shaft	Chris Gardner	http://feeds.feedburner.com/usu-shaft		USU Shaft (184)
30	Mormon Identity		http://www.mormonidentity.org/feed/		
31	Prepares Ye the Way of the Lord		http://mormonpreparation.blogspot.com/feeds/posts/default?alt=rss		
32	Main Street Plaza		http://latterdaymainstreet.com/?feed=rss2	@ChinoBlanco (620; 28)	
33	Mormons for Marriage	John Dehlin	http://mormonsformarriage.com/?feed=rss2		
34	Mormon Chronicles		http://mormon-chronicles.blogspot.com/feeds/posts/default?alt=rss	@LDSChronicles (107; 4)	
35	Faith-Promoting Burner		http://faithpromotingburner.com/feed/		
36	Wheat and Tares	ee- Mormon Matt	http://www.wheatandtares.org/feed/	@WheatnTweet (82; 3)	
37	Nine Moons		http://www.nine-moons.com/?feed=rss2		
38	Jews and Mormons	Mark Paredes	http://feeds.feedburner.com/jewishjournal/jews_and_mormons		
39	FAIR Blog		http://fairblog.org/feed/		
40	LDS Church Growth	Matt	http://ldschurchgrowth.blogspot.com/feeds/posts/default?alt=rss		
41	Mormonism-Unveiled: Fact Vs. Fancy		http://mormonism-unveiled.blogspot.com/feeds/posts/default?alt=rss		
42	LDS Apologetics		http://www.lesapologetics.org/	@LDSapologetics (1,106; 35)	
43					
44					
45					
46	Mormon Musings	Krista Cook	http://feeds.feedburner.com/MormonMusings		
47	The Book of Mormon Broadway Musical		http://www.thebookofmormonbroadway.com/	@BookofMormonBWY (1,354; 56)	The Book of Mormon on Broadway
48	The Mormon Worker		http://themormonworker.wordpress.com/feed/		
49					
50	Mormon Times YouTube		http://data.youtube.com/feeds/base/users/MormonTimes/uploads?alt=rss&v=2&orderby=published&client=yt-api-youtube-profile		
51	IamaMormon YouTube		http://data.youtube.com/feeds/base/users/IamaMormon/uploads?alt=rss&v=2&orderby=published&client=yt-api-youtube-profile		
52	Atlanta Mormon Temple		http://www.atlantomormontemple.org/feed/	@AtlantaMormonTemple	Atlanta Mormon Temple
53	BYU Television YouTube		http://data.youtube.com/feeds/base/users/BYUTelevision/uploads?alt=rss&v=2&orderby=published&client=yt-api-youtube-profile		
54	This Week in Mormons		http://thisweekinmormons.com/feed/	@TheRealTWM (186)	
55	LDS Orange County News		http://data.youtube.com/feeds/base/users/LDSOCNews/uploads?alt=rss&v=2&orderby=published&client=yt-api-youtube-profile		
56	Mormon Expression		http://mormonexpression.com/blog/feed/	@MormonExpress (122)	Mormon Expression (637)
57					
58	Mormon Scholars Testify		http://mormonscholarstestify.org/feed/		
59	A Motley Vision		http://www.motleyvision.org/feed/		
60	Latter-day Commentary		http://feeds2.feedburner.com/latter-daycommentary	@LatterDayCommen	Tim Malone
61	LDS Architecture		http://ldsarchitecture.wordpress.com/feed/		
62	Mormon Perspectives		http://www.mormonperspectives.com/feed/	@MormonPersctives (13 followers)	
63	Mormon Gaze		http://www.mormongaze.com/rss.xml		
64	Ben Munson - SA Today		http://www.satoday.com/search?rss&cl=posts&v=2&orderby=published&client=yt-api-youtube-profile		
65	Modern Mormon Men		http://www.modernmormonmen.com/feeds/posts/default?alt=rss		
66	A Good Cadence		http://agoodcadence.blogspot.com/feeds/posts/default?alt=rss		
Mormon Mommy/Women Blogs					
1					
2					
3					
4	A Well Behaved Mormon Woman	Kathryn Skaggs	http://feeds2.feedburner.com/wellbehavedmormonwoman	@LDSNana (4,944; 169)	
5	Mormon Mommy Blogs		http://feeds2.feedburner.com/MormonMommyBlogs	@MMBCommunity (2,704; 130)	MMB (1,033)
6	Mormon Woman		http://mormonwoman.org/feed/	@MormonWomen (1,156; 44)	
7	Flunking Sainthood	Jana Riess	http://feeds2.feedburner.com/beliefnet/flunkingsainthood?format=xml	@Janariess (1,153; 90)	
8	Joanna Brooks	joanna brooks		@askmormongirl (1212)	
9	Segullah		http://segullah.org/feed/	@blogSegullah (107)	Segullah (189)
10	Feminist Mormon Housewives		http://www.feministmormonhousewives.org/?feed=rss2	@fmblog (154; 12)	
11	The Exponent		http://www.the-exponent.com/feed/	@TheExponent (162; 13)	Exponent II (431)
12	Unpunished rapture	Neylan McBain	http://www.neylanmcbaine.com/rss.xml		
13	A Ravin Lunatic	Heather B. Armstrong	http://dooco.com/feed_main/feed		
14	Women in the Scriptures	heatherlady	http://womeninthescrptures.blogspot.com/feeds/posts/default?alt=rss		Women in the Scriptures (287)
15	Mormon Women Project		http://feeds.feedburner.com/mormonwomenproject/feed		

Mormon-related-blogs



A public list
Curated by [Sammy Hislop](#)

Edit

Delete

[Tweets](#) [Following: 75](#) [Followers: 1](#)

People this list follows



LatterDayCommen Tim Malone
*IT Network Manager, Orthodox Conservative
LDS, Blogger, RM Central America (76-78), Traditional Marriage
Supporter, Alternative Medicine, Patriot, Catastrophist*

Follow



Scotty_Bos Scott B.
economist, blogger, mormon, ninja

Follow



Gunny2583 Jeffrey Sechler
*Employed with the LDS Chruch.I work in the
travel department and provide VIP services for the General
Authorities. Retired US Marines, served 21 years.*

Follow



mormonexpress Mormon Expression
*Mormon Expression is the weekly podcast of all
things Mormon*

Follow



Latter_DaySaint Latter Day Saint
*Interested in sharing and discussing about
religion and its affect on modern society.*

Follow



riyel27 Ariel Panga
Latter-day Saint. Running for fitness and life.

Follow



Idsconf LDS Gen Conf Tweets
*LDS General Conference tweets - Not an official
LDS twitter account*

Follow



LDSNews LDS News
*News from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter
Day Saints*

Follow



LDSmtg Jeff
*Grad student interested in all things Mormon,
especially sharing the gospel online*

Follow



-
- 

asoftanswer A Soft Answer
AKA @davidsundwall Blogging about politics and religion (primarily Mormonism) and trying (TRYING) to remain civil

[+ Follow](#) 
-
- 

RBSblog The Red Brick Store
A collaboration amongst editors of Mormon-related journals and magazines to nurture and share good writing and good thinking in Mormonism.

[+ Follow](#) 
-
- 

Idsconference LDS Conference
You'll find the latest links to audio and video from LDS General Conference posted here automatically as they become available. Direct questions @jmaxwilson .

[+ Follow](#) 
-
- 

TheLDSReligion TheLDSReligion
Ever wonder what the LDS religion is truly about, what they believe in? Our mission is to provide you with information on the LDS religion.

[+ Follow](#) 
-
- 

LDSTranslation LDS Translation
The LDS Community Translation project is an initiative organized by the Church Translation Division, to find volunteers who want to translate Church materials.

[+ Follow](#) 
-
- 

Keepapitchinin Ardis Parshall
The Mormon History Blog

[+ Follow](#) 
-
- 

Idsblogs LDS Blogs
You'll find the latest posts from LDS Blogs posted here. Be sure to retweet good LDS & Mormon posts to your followers. Direct questions and comments @jmaxwilson

[+ Follow](#) 
-
- 

LdsNana Kathryn Skaggs
Mormon - LDS - Married - Christian - Nana - Conservative - Who writes about Mormonism, Grandparenting and that which affects The Family, Today!

[✓ Following](#) 
-
- 

Idsmormonblogs LDS and Mormon Blogs
Looking for all LDS Blogs and Mormon Bloggers

[+ Follow](#) 
-
- 

LDSmblogger Gideon Burton
exploring new media + Mormonism

[+ Follow](#) 
-
- 

joelcampbell Joel Campbell
BYU Journalism prof, Freedom of Info, speaker, newsroom trainer, spj, e-gov, e-democracy. Lobbyist, Utah Press Association

[✓ Following](#) 

- Subscriptions**
- LDS Official**
 - LDSTech
 - MormonMessages - YouTube
 - Mormon.org YouTube
 - Youth videos - YouTube
 - Unto All The World
 - Church News and Events
 - LDS Newsroom RSS Feed...
 - Public Affairs YouTube
 - Conversations—A Mormo...
 - Idschurchnews.com | L...
 - Most Recent Devotiona...
 - (MP3) LDS General Con...
 - Stories from General ...

- LDS SM List (1)**
 - Latter-day Commentary
 - Mormon Scholars Testify
 - A Motley Vision
 - LDSOC YouTube
 - Church Pacific YouTube
 - Pacific public affair...
 - BYU-I YouTube
 - BYUtv YouTube
 - IamanExmormon YouTube
 - MormonTimes YouTube
 - BOM Broadway YouTube
 - PubAffairs New Media ...
 - The Mormon Worker
 - Mormon Musings
 - LDS Church Growth
 - Patheos Articles - M...
 - Jews and Mormons
 - Wheat and Tares
 - Nine Moons (1)**
 - Mormon-Chronicles
 - Mormon Expression
 - Mormon Expression Blogs

-  Mormon Expression Blogs
-  Faith-Promoting Rumor
-  Mormon Matters
-  Mormons for Marriage
-  Sunstone Magazine
-  Mormonism-Unveiled: F...
-  Main Street Plaza
-  USU SHAFT
-  Mormon Stories Podcast
-  By Common Consent
-  Times & Seasons
-  Prepare Ye the Way of...
-  FAIR Blog
-  Messenger and Advocate
-  The Millennial Star
-  LDS Media Talk
-  Joel Dehlin
-  Seth Adam Smith
-  Seth Adam Smith's Blog
-  Meridian Magazine's F...
-  northtemple
-  Mormon Neighbor Blog
-  Follow The Prophet - ...
-  Mormon Mentalitv
-  Mormanity - A Mormon ...
-  Flunking Sainthood

- 
 LDS Mommy Blogs
 -  Unpunished Rapture
 -  Mormon Mommy Writers
 -  Mormon Women
 -  MMB Community
 -  A Well Behaved Mormon...
 -  Women in the Scriptures
 -  Mormon Women: Who We Are
 -  Dooce
 -  The Exponent
 -  Feminist Mormon House...
 -  Segullah
 -  Mormon Momma

- 
 Japan Quake
 -  Elder Lay's Mission
 -  Letters To Home!
 -  Japan Sapporo Mission
 -  Christ is still the R...
 -  Danielsan
 -  Gregory Chōrō
 -  Elder Marcus Horton
 -  elder_rex_riki_saito
 -  Elder Stubbs Mission
 -  Elder Blake Ovard
 -  Elder Homer
 -  Saints and Samurai
 -  Letters from Elder Ky...
 -  We Are Family!
 -  Where in Japan is Eld...
 -  Called to Serve-Kobe,...
 -  Danielle's Mission to...
 -  Japan Kobe Mission Bl...
 -  Tia and Adriel's Mission
 -  Elder Low
 -  Mission to Fukuoka Japan

APPENDIX 5 | Facebook and YouTube comment board policy

The screenshot shows the Facebook profile for 'LDS Newsroom'. The page header includes the Facebook logo and a search bar. The profile picture is a globe icon. The cover photo features a world map and the text 'THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS'. The page is categorized as 'Newsroom' with the subtitle 'The OFFICIAL RESOURCE for NEWS MEDIA, OPINION LEADERS and the PUBLIC'. The 'Basic Info' section includes the following details:

- About:** Official news and updates from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons). Visit us at newsroom.lds.org
- Newsroom Twitter feed:** @LDSNewsroom
- Twitter URL:** <http://twitter.com/#!/ldsnewsroom>

The 'Detailed Info' section includes:

- Website:** <http://newsroom.lds.org>
- General Information:** Official news and updates from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

A red-bordered box highlights the 'Comment policy' section, which states: 'We invite civil discussion. Please note that comments that are profane, crude, insensitive, off topic or contain personal attacks will be removed.'



Subscribe ▼

Add as Friend |
Block User | Send Message

Name: Public Affairs
Channel Views: 174,932
Total Upload Views: 1,320,637
Style: Commentary
Age: 34
Joined: October 03, 2007
Last Visit Date: 3 days ago
Subscribers: 7,624
Website: <http://newsroom.lds.org>

Newsroom is the official website for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints for opinion leaders, the news media and the public. Newsroom provides news releases, background material, commentary, Church statements, multimedia and other elements for use by the news media, bloggers and others.

Social media sites:

Twitter <http://twitter.com/ldsnewsroom>

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/LDS...>

Comment policy:

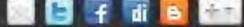
We invite civil discussion. Please note that comments that are profane, crude, insensitive, off topic or contain personal attacks will be removed.

Country: United States
Occupation: Public Affairs

APPENDIX 6 | *LDS Newsroom Blog post used in academic paper*

THE NEWSROOM | **Blog** PUBLIC AFFAIRS — The CHURCH of JESUS CHRIST of LATTER-DAY SAINTS

Context on AOL Story Regarding Haiti Chapel

NOV 09 2010 — POSTED by LYMAN KIRKLAND PRINT | SHARE THIS STORY 

This weekend, [an AOL article](#) reported that Haitians displaced by flooding caused by Hurricane Tomas were not allowed shelter in a Church meetinghouse in Leogane, Haiti. The fact is that other Church buildings in Haiti were used as public shelters, and arrangements had been made for this particular building to be used by a government agency to respond to the disaster. Because of this arrangement, it was unclear to some whether the building could also be used as a public shelter. Of course the Church would want to shelter all those who sought refuge, as it has done countless other times in scores of nations and places. The Church has a well established reputation for caring for the needy. The report of this event obviously describes an isolated aberration.

The [humanitarian response](#) arm of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints springs into action when disaster strikes to relieve suffering regardless of religious affiliation. For example, in response to the devastating earthquake that hit Haiti earlier this year, the Church has sent the equivalent of over 60 truckloads of relief supplies, including 10 air shipments, to the disaster area. The shipments have included a million pounds of food and hundreds of thousands of pounds of other relief supplies. Medical doctors were also flown to the Caribbean nation to give care to the thousands injured in the quake. Thousands more were [sheltered in the Church's meetinghouses](#) for weeks while normalcy was restored.

The Church continues to provide relief aid to Haiti.

APPENDIX 7 | *List of user screen names from AOL News blog comment forum for research paper*

- 1) Skisalth20
- 2) Keep token
- 3) Freshair1621
- 4) Don Clark (12)
- 5) Fvllmnkys (12)
- 6) Audiolaw
- 7) Utahnativeson
- 8) DavidVerona
- 9) Peg
- 10) Catz
- 11) Rvanhosen
- 12) Sylvan339
- 13) Gmydogbud
- 14) Munnmarym724
- 15) Pkatcher
- 16) Valerie
- 17) Bruce
- 18) Genewaters
- 19) Pb3319
- 20) Gov111w
- 21) Grnsfld
- 22) Erinannie17 (12)
- 23) Anne
- 24) Michael (12)
- 25) Georgeanderson2
- 26) Jemccjr
- 27) Jason (12)
- 28) Jkanon
- 29) Dvdsn61 (1234)
- 30) Bud (123)
- 31) Thorn nickels
- 32) Suzanne (12)
- 33) Memmottclan (123)
- 34) Kristina
- 35) Dneil55859 (12)
- 36) Paramed4life
- 37) Alan (12)
- 38) Mlue730
- 39) Sixmom1962
- 40) Luvdecat7 (1234)
- 41) Nag
- 42) aidanG (12)
- 43) bfgair
- 44) rex (12)
- 45) herbt56
- 46) Ken Anspach (123456789)

- 47) Lynn
- 48) Crabconnection
- 49) Yachtsforu
- 50) Patrick Carter
- 51) Cory (12)
- 52) Mrddoubledd
- 53) Special Ed
- 54) Jdixon1474
- 55) Good Lookin'
- 56) Phil Morris (12)
- 57) Rturk58645
- 58) Linmarco (12)
- 59) Rhiredhelp
- 60) Bruce and alan
- 61) Alwnco
- 62) Bob Gardner (12)
- 63) John G (12)
- 64) Digfestapp
- 65) Clpatey1
- 66) Cspinc1 (12)
- 67) Toby (12)
- 68) Chris
- 69) THE LORD (2)
- 70) Hot Mama
- 71) DocLagos (12)
- 72) Jlvtt
- 73) Coyneman (12)
- 74) Contrump
- 75) Brghtsnd (123456)
- 76) Sharon
- 77) Dwuzze
- 78) Paul
- 79) Murphyajnc (12)
- 80) Mrbretfoon
- 81) Engineherder
- 82) Marc
- 83) White Crow
- 84) Leonedmiston70 (1234)
- 85) Rahrah1954
- 86) Fred
- 87) Danny
- 88) democracyInPeril
- 89) Bobby Phippers (12)
- 90) Daytimedaddo (12)
- 91) Joper201
- 92) Liquidschwarz
- 93) Anrean (12)
- 94) Geddy37

- 95) Rdmu10746
- 96) Kisdbyfire
- 97) Ed (12)
- 98) Heydeckerocala
- 99) Ariaphoneplayer
- 100) Det11131
- 101) Annika
- 102) Cactus Pete
- 103) Cutie
- 104) Fordgarye
- 105) Ginnyginny
- 106) Nellis
- 107) Lisa
- 108) Gorgeous
- 109) Brenda
- 110) Georgeann
- 111) Bro Joe
- 112) Apercu001
- 113) Erchambers
- 114) Laraleew
- 115) Balittlemusician
- 116) chazmannj
- 117) Denisse Vega
- 118) Grant06
- 119) Warren
- 120) Ncj8100
- 121) Canyouseethebeam
- 122) BlIblIrw
- 123) Aironmo21
- 124) Anthony
- 125) Dolly1p
- 126) Billlllhulll
- 127) Mary ann
- 128) John/Kristine
- 129) Slsmgr10233
- 130) Registrant2010
- 131) Buddylubman
- 132) Rockettrip
- 133) Kipdynamite
- 134) Vcstone1
- 135) Mykittywinks
- 136) Retired Person
- 137) Steveover
- 138) Pacificpearl123
- 139) Tigian17
- 140) Dudespeaks
- 141) Ykyks1
- 142) BERNIE/LOIS

- 143) Aol sucks
- 144) Cshiff9342
- 145) Sretiredin2006
- 146) Chadandalaina
- 147) Ms. Stroman
- 148) lorenc@mac.com
- 149) Hisdisciple4ever
- 150) Jcbrooks
- 151) A713144
- 152) Rtruerelic
- 153) Drummer185
- 154) Mygunnydog
- 155) Johnsonk885
- 156) Bbakerlaw
- 157) Brianweir1
- 158) Cappy19188
- 159) Rlnrse
- 160) Musetteroof
- 161) Latterdaytexan
- 162) Stand4light
- 163) Titus Todd
- 164) Isaac
- 165) Ben
- 166) Jplaforce
- 167) Derek Hernandez
- 168) Dude
- 169) Janotheridea
- 170) Geesd
- 171) Goehring8
- 172) Lori
- 173) Romneyrich
- 174) Staci
- 175) June
- 176) Chip
- 177) Mistry349
- 178) Poguessq
- 179) Shaunsyphus

APPENDIX 8 | Example of weekly web analytics report for LDS Newsroom website

Newsroom Stats

Total Page Views	Unique Visitors

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Most Popular News Stories

#1	
#2	
#3	
#4	
#5	

Most Popular Pages

#1	
#2	
#3	
#4	
#5	

Where Newsroom Visitors Came From This Week

#1	
#2	
#3	
#4	
#5	

Top 10 Internal Search Terms This Week

#1	
#2	
#3	
#4	
#5	
#6	
#7	
#8	
#9	
#10	

Top Referring Domains This Week

#1	
#2	
#3	
#4	
#5	
#6	
#7	
#8	
#9	

#10	
-----	--

Newsroom Blog Stats

Most Popular Blog Posts

#1	
#2	
#3	
#4	
#5	

APPENDIX 9 | Google Reader and TweetDeck screenshots

RSS icon in Mozilla Firefox:



RSS icon in Internet Explorer:



Adding an RSS link to Google Reader:



TweetDeck browser:

The screenshot shows a TweetDeck browser interface with five columns of tweets. The top bar includes the TweetDeck logo, version number (v0.37.5), and navigation icons. Below the top bar is a search bar and a 'From:' dropdown menu. The columns are as follows:

- Column 1: @MrHislop/Ldsbloggers**
 - Tweet 1: YIKES! I just gave an interview to @tbttoone over at @deseretnews about #ldsconf and #socialmedia. Follow them to find out what I said! (5156)
 - Tweet 2: Mormon church to build new temples <http://bit.ly/f885b5> #mormon (5608)
 - Tweet 3: mormon_news, [H] Mon 04 Apr 15:33 via twitterfeed
- Column 2: @MrHislop/Ldsofficial**
 - Tweet 1: Your living testimony will expand as you study, pray, and ponder in the scriptures. #lds <http://bit.ly/jaU6z4> (2607)
 - Tweet 2: LDSGenCon, [H] Mon 04 Apr 15:40 via SocialDolph
- Column 3: Search: Mormon OR Mormons**
 - Tweet 1: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." ~ Amos 3:7 #prophets #Bible #lds #mormon (987)
 - Tweet 2: LivingProphets, [H] Mon 04 Apr 15:37 via web
 - Tweet 3: LDS Hymn #139 - In Fasting We Approach Thee - <http://tiny.ly/uX3n> #lds #mormon #hymns #Jesus #Christ #music (356)
 - Tweet 4: LDSHymns, [H] Mon 04 Apr 15:57 via web
 - Tweet 5: but Chris Rock IN a Mormon musical? #broadwaycouldbefunnier @mindykaling (10)
 - Tweet 6: MANNAYYY, [H] Mon 04 Apr 15:37 via web
 - Tweet 7: Wayland as sober as a Mormon @ <http://bit.ly/2EylcY> (64)
 - Tweet 8: waylandwords, [H] Mon 04 Apr 15:57 via web
- Column 4: Search: @BookofMormonBWY**
 - Tweet 1: @Jordan_Roth @BookofMormonBWY Hi Jordan, could you help me get in touch with Casey???? I was under his guidance at NLBam, 1985! (Pipemusic, [H] Mon 04 Apr 15:35 via web in reply to...)
- Column 5: Search: #Mormon OR #Mormons**
 - Tweet 1: "Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." ~ Amos 3:7 #prophets #Bible #lds #mormon (987)
 - Tweet 2: LivingProphets, [H] Mon 04 Apr 15:37 via web
 - Tweet 3: LDS Hymn #139 - In Fasting We Approach Thee - <http://tiny.ly/uX3n> #lds #mormon #hymns #Jesus #Christ #music (356)
 - Tweet 4: LDSHymns, [H] Mon 04 Apr 15:57 via web
 - Tweet 5: #Japan crisis spurs survival planning by U.S. #Mormons - Yahoo! News <http://yhoo.it/gogF34> (20)
 - Tweet 6: ECUCHRIS, [H] Mon 04 Apr 15:53 via TweetMeme
 - Tweet 7: Johannesburg South Africa Temple - 24 August 1985 - <http://www.ldschurchtemples.com/johannesburg/> #lds #mormon #Jesus #family #36thTemple (244)
 - Tweet 8: ldstemples, [H] Mon 04 Apr 15:52 via web