



**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE STUDIES**

SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION

**ASSESSMENT OF NEW MEDIA UTILIZATION AS A PUBLIC RELATIONS
TOOL; THE ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES GROUP IN FOCUS**

**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY, SCHOOL OF
GRADUATE STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF MASTER OF ARTS IN
JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION**

By: SAMRAWIT FEKADU

**THESIS ADVISOR
SAMSON MEKONNEN (PHD)
FEBRUARY 2023**

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FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER'S
IN JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATION**

**FEBRUARY, 2023
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

DECLARATION

I, undersigned, declare, this thesis is my original work, prepared under the guidance of my advisor Samson Mekonnen (PHD). All sources materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged. I further confirm that the thesis has not been submitted either in part or in full to any other higher learning institution to earn any degree.

Name: Samrawit Fekadu

Addis Ababa University

Signature

February, 2023

Letter of Certification

Addis Ababa University

Graduate School of Journalism and Communications

This is to Certify that this Thesis Prepared by Samrawit Fekadu on Assessment of New Media Utilization as a Public Relations Tool; The Ethiopian Airlines Group in Focus is Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Public Relations and Strategic Communications Obeys the Regulations of the University. The work is Original in its Nature and is Eligible to Earn a Master's Degree in Public Relations and Strategic Communications.

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Examiner _____ Signature _____ Date _____

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Acknowledgement

I am grateful to the all-powerful God who saw me through every step. I would like to express my profound appreciation to my adviser, Dr. Samson Mekonnen, for his words of counsel and direction. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to my family, friends, and colleagues who each contributed. The success of this thesis study would not have been achievable without the key respondents in the Ethiopian Airlines Group Public Relations office who participated in the research, sharing their ideas and knowledge without reservation. Thank You.

Abstract

The term "new media" refers to a wide range of electronic communications made possible by advances in computer technology. New media is being utilized as a mechanism for product marketing, brand development, enhancing customer experience as well as improvising passenger experiences in the case of the Ethiopian. Ethiopian is active on new media channels such as its website and apps as well as on multiple social media platforms which are managed with different social media management and monitoring software. In line with the competition in the aviation sector, a direct connection to its passengers is using the internet access and availing its services using the web is key. As such, even though the airline has adapted these various platforms to reach the millions of followers it has a gap in adapting the correct approaches to maintain its followers and engaging with them. The research design used both descriptive and explanatory research design. This research used a mixed method research approach and the major major findings were the lack of PR activity evaluation, gap in its utilization and real time customer engagement. Based on the assessment of these new media channels the researcher has put forward recommendations such as, Ethiopian should give great emphasis on pre planning and evaluation of PR tools and activities continuously. The PR tools and techniques Ethiopian uses should focus in two-way communication and its employees should be empowered to make real time decisions and actions.

Key words: *New Media, Public Relation, Social Media, Ethiopian*

List of Abbreviations

NM - New Media

OPR- Online Public Relations

SM- Social Media

PRP- Public Relations Practitioners

PRT - Public Relations Tools

PRU- Public Relation Utilization

URL – Universal Recourse Locator

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CHAPTER ONE

1. Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the subject matter to be studied. In this chapter, the background of the study, the objective of the study, the statement of the problem, the significance, scope, and limitations of the study are presented. The chapter introduces the title assessment of new media as a public relations tool in the Ethiopian Airlines Group.

The research problem statement is prepared based on the study's background and research questions were also articulated, and gaps were identified, which aided in the design of the research question. Furthermore, the scope of the study has been presented based on the study's theory and methodology.

2. Background of the study

The term new media is used ubiquitously in many different ways. Lievrouw and Livingstone (2002) focus on the message (i.e., the communication and its practices), the technology (i.e., the medium), and the social context in which it is used. These three aspects of the new media show up repeatedly in the literature along with other more specific technologies and practices such as collaboration, digitization, and telecommunication. Gitelman and Pingree (2003) take the temporal approach, using the term "media in transition" to describe a period of time during which a medium is emergent and thus a sort of contrast to and competitor for the old media. Manovich (2002) has defined new media as cultural objects "which use digital computer technology for distribution and exhibition."

The New Media Institute defines new media as "a catchall term used to define all that is related to the internet and the interplay between technology, images, and sound." In contrast, "old media" is defined by PCMag as all forms of communication prior to digital technology, including "radio, TV, and printed materials such as books and magazines." What is considered new evolves as new technology is developed and widely adopted. Once upon a time, DVDs and CDs were the latest way to watch movies and listen to music. Streaming services such as Netflix and Spotify are becoming more popular. Just a few examples of new media include: Websites, blogs, email, social

media networks, music, television streaming services, and virtual and augmented reality (Joe Cote 2022).

New media is being utilized as a mechanism for product marketing, brand development, enhancing customer experience as well as improvising passenger experiences in the case of the Ethiopian Airlines Group. The industry is focused on getting more and more customers, and online engagement and interaction are therefore considered important ways to build value for all existing and potential customers. New media and new media tools have improved rapidly and started to influence society, especially in recent years. This influence has forced businesses to revolutionize their communication with the external environment.

The fact that Web 2.0 has an influence on consumer behaviour and that it makes consumers stronger means it requires faster, more flexible, and more sensitive communication processes in businesses. The use of new media in public relations has become more common with the development of technology and its diverse ways of its usage. The goal of this study is to assess the utilization of new media in relation to the public relations office of the Ethiopian Airlines group.

Ethiopian Airlines (Ethiopian) is the flag carrier of Ethiopia. Ethiopian Airlines was founded on December 30, 1945, by Emperor Haile Selassie with assistance from TWA. It commenced operations on April 8, 1946, with a weekly service between Addis Ababa and Cairo with five Douglas DC-3 propeller-driven aircraft. The airline started long-haul services to Frankfurt in 1958 and inaugurated its first jet service in January 1963 from Addis Ababa to Nairobi. In the early 1960s it provided some initial aviation support to the Ethiopia-United States Mapping Mission in its operation to provide topographic maps of Ethiopia.

Although it relied on American pilots and technicians at the beginning, by its 25th anniversary in 1971 Ethiopian Airlines was managed and staffed by Ethiopian personnel. In 1998, it started transatlantic services. In 2007, Ethiopia Airlines provided basic pilot and aviation maintenance training to trainees from African countries including Rwanda, Tanzania, Chad, Djibouti, Madagascar and Sudan. Other training was given to employees of Kenya Airways, Air Zimbabwe, Bell view Airlines, Cape Verde Airlines and Air Madagascar. During the past seventy-five years, Ethiopian has become one of the continent's leading carriers, unrivalled in Africa for efficiency and operational success, turning profits for almost all its years of existence. Operating at the

forefront of technology, the airline has also become one of Ethiopia's major industries and an authentic institution in Africa. It commands a lion's share of the pan African network, including the daily and double-daily east-west flights across the continent. Ethiopian currently serves 100 international and 21 domestic destinations, operating the newest and youngest fleet. As a representative of the country, the airline directly and indirectly has the responsibility of keeping and displaying the good image of the country to the world. This applies in its practice to social media platforms. Social media platforms include blogs, virtual communities, social networking, collaborative tagging, and media file sharing sites (Xiang and Gretzel, 2010). Social media's capacity is designed to enable people to connect, share, and collaborate, which has resulted in its increasing use in personal, business, and educational domains (White, King & Tsang, 2011).

Ethiopian Group Public Relations and Corporate Communications office was an independent office from 1998 under the Director of Advertising and Sales Corporate Communications. Then, in 2012, the Corporate Communications Department was restructured to be under the VP of Corporate Strategy, Communications, and Alliances. Currently, the office is restructured under the VP of Ethiopian Holidays and Integrated Marketing and named Group PR and Corporate Communications. The airline, as a result, has been using new and updated communications channels in which it has launched its revamped, brand-new website, showcasing a customer-focused online presence. On a single home page, the new website provides a more user-friendly way to book flights, manage bookings, check-in online, check flight status and schedule, login to Sheba Miles account, access the latest and most important updates, and check out localized flight offers. Visitors to the redesigned website will notice streamlined menus and clean navigation, allowing them easy access to the most important information about all Ethiopian Airlines products and services. Online recruitment, procurement information like tenders and competitive bids, company information and many more renewed features are also included in the brand-new Ethiopian website.

Ethiopian Airlines has social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Weibo, Telegram, and YouTube, as well as a social media monitoring software. It uses these platforms for a variety of business purposes, including addressing requests and providing feedback in real time, posting available promotional packages, promoting new destinations, communication during crises, and reputation management tools. This research attempts to assess the above

mentioned platforms and their utilization by the public relations and corporate communications department of the airline.

2.2 Statement of the Problem

New media tools are very cost-effective for organizations and they often give more control than other broadly targeted advertising campaigns in building a company's reputation in relation to public relations. For organizations to promote favourable attitudes towards the business through using public relations (PR) tools and activities like advertorials, newsletters, brochures and catalogues, social media, business events sponsorships or partnerships to help convert interested consumers into customers. Among the lists on top, social media is accessible on the tip of our fingers and is more to be stated as a major tool to connect with customers. As a result, The utilization of new media channels in the organization is visible but just adopting these platforms as they are and not assessing their practice i.e structured review of new media channels, modifying them according to their own customers' needs such as considering which platforms they reach more of their customers on and creating a two way communications platforms and focusing on connecting and answering to their customers' needs on time created a gap in maintain its customers especialy with the ever grown competition in the market.

For businesses of all sizes, new media offers fantastic marketing options. Organizations can use social media to advertise their brand and business, as well as inform clients about their products and services. Adapting to new media as a communications tool will help find out what consumers think about the business being run and use that information to attract new customers and strengthen connections with existing ones. The aviation industry is one of the most modified in the web marketplace. Airline passengers are going back to purchasing online tickets mostly because of the satisfaction of the online booking experience and a good attitude towards utilizing the online booking system as well as the direct means of interaction through its social media pages.

The airline, as an international company, is facing global competition in the aviation sector. In line with this competition, a direct connection to its passengers is using the internet access and availing its services using the web. This competition is with international companies, so the presence and value it holds would not just be local. The success of social media depends on the well-planned

adoption of the right approach to reach audiences as well as research of other organisations' experiences (Walaski, 2013). This is because different audiences have different expectations for content and frequency. As such, even though the airline has adapted these various platforms to reach the millions of followers it has a gap in adapting the correct approaches to maintain its followers and engaging with them.

The researcher chose the title 'assess new media' because, as a practitioner of the field was eager to assess the practices and gaps in the utilization of social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube etc.) by the public relations and corporate communications office of the Ethiopian Airlines in the related literature. The researcher also identified the gap by observation that questions and queries that are posted on the Ethiopian Airlines SM channels from customers are not being resolved in time. Especially on social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, where Ethiopian Airlines has the most followers, complaints and questions about booking and reservations, lost baggage, and grievances about their experience are raised. The goal of this study is to point out the gaps the Airlines Public relations and corporate communications has in relation with the utilization of new media channels and show directions in which these platforms can be used beyond their existence and be used as the more effective marketing , promotional and engaging platforms they are. This research is unique because no other research has been done on this topic with direct insights as such this research is to fill the literature gap.

2.3 Objective of the Study

2.3.1 General Objective

The general objective of this study is to assess the utilization of new media as a public relations tool in the Ethiopian Airlines' Group.

2.3.2 Specific Objective

The specific objectives of this study were:

1. To find out the use of new media as an effective PR tool within the Ethiopian Airlines Group
2. To investigate the extent to which new media is utilized effectively in the Ethiopian Airlines Group
3. To analyse audience interaction on the Ethiopian Airlines Group's owned social media channels

2.4 Research Questions

This study provides an answer to the following fundamental research question:

1. How effective is new media as a public relations tool in the Ethiopian Airlines Group?
2. What is the extent of new media utilization in the Ethiopian Airlines Group?
3. What are the audience interactions on Ethiopian Airlines' owned social media channels?

2.5 Scope of the Study

This study assesses the utilization and conceptually focused on the new media employment of the public relations and corporate communications practice of Ethiopian Airlines. It was geographically limited to Ethiopian Airlines in Addis Ababa and the statistics of one year randomly selected data gathered from over three million social media followers of the airline with a digital social media monitoring and reporting software. Therefore, this study was cross-sectional because it studied everything at once.

2.6 Significance of the Study

This research will provide new insights into new media, the different channels and their usage. Through this research, the airline will further utilize new media channels with a literature backed direction to further improve its effectiveness. Moreover, the analysis that is presented in this study will convey valuable information for future research that will explore the various benefits of new media usage with relation to public relations.

2.7 Limitation of the Study

One of the limitations of this study was the incomplete data received from some of the social media pages. Another limitation may be the small target population and those being employees of the company might have limited them in disclosing information. The dependability of digital media platforms and their existence and active status during the randomly selected period was another limitation the research has not allowed to include all social media platforms and required a selection of platforms which were consistently active during the data collection process of this research.

2.8 Organization of the Paper

This thesis consists of five chapters. Chapter one deals with the introduction, which consists of the background of the study, the background of the organization, the statement of the problem, the objective of the study, research questions along with scope of the study, and significance of the study. Chapter Two deals with a related literature review of the title. Chapter three dealt with research methodology, which consists of study area, research design and approach, types and source of data, study population, sampling methods and sample size, methods of data collection, methods of data analysis, and ethical consideration. Chapter four dealt with data analysis and presentation, and lastly, chapter five dealt with a summary of findings, conclusion, and recommendation.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter covers related literatures in new media that best illustrates the area under study. Theoretical frameworks that link with internal new media, its utilization and relation to public relations along with, empirical studies in similar topics and conceptual framework are presented. Furthermore, related studies which are conducted in area of new media and digital public relations tools and bases for assessment are showed.

2.2 New Media

The term media refers to the dominant means of communication (such as television and newspapers), and more specifically to mass communication, hence the term mass media. The term "new media" refers to forms of media that make use of digital technology (e.g., social media and the use of the internet). In contrast, "old media" refers to traditional forms of media such as print media (such as newspapers and magazines), television, and radio. New media is a catch-all term for various types of electronic communications made possible by advancements in computer technology (Tutor2u, 2018). In contrast to "old" media, which includes newspapers, magazines, books, television, and other forms of non-interactive media, "new" media includes websites, online video/audio streams, email, online social platforms, online communities, online forums, and other forms of interactive media such as blogs, Internet telephony, Web advertisements, online education and much more.

While all of these are forms of mass media, the potential audience for new media is far greater than that of traditional media forms such as newspapers. The term "new media" refers specifically to digital media: media encoded in a machine-readable format, such as MP3 files. However, while a CD, DVD, or CD-ROM contain digital data, they are now considered obsolete technology. In today's world, the waters are muddled, and various aspects of marketing have become intertwined. This is especially true for public relations (PR) and social media. PR used to be more focused on influential people like investors, shareholders, business partners, and so on, but with the advent of social media, these people are now present on these platforms, which can then be used for the

purpose of PR. Because both public relations and social media are used to build and maintain trust in a company and its products, the two must work in tandem.

In the case of new media convergence, one device can be used to access a wide variety of media. A mobile phone, for example, can be used to watch movies and videos, listen to music, access social media, read books, read newspapers, access websites, and so on. Because it is a simple tool available on digital devices, new media audience formats frequently facilitate more interaction than old media. What could be considered "new" is constantly evolving. For our purposes, new media is defined as media that employs digital technology, this includes (but is not restricted to): Social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, websites, Blogs, emails etc.

The wide range of characteristics of these new media technologies can be summarized by the 5 C's: communication, collaboration, community, creativity, and convergence (Alexandria Stanton 2018).

Communication; - In general, new media technologies are concerned with communication in some way. After all, what are media if not modes of communication? Communication enabled by new media can be unidirectional, collaborative, or networked. Communication, whether asynchronous or synchronous, is extremely fast in our highly interconnected age.

Collaboration; Many, if not all, new media technologies allow for Internet-based collaboration. The wiki is the primary and definitive example of this type of medium. Email has been used extensively in the past (and present) for Internet collaboration. When we use email to collaborate on a document, we tend to send the collaborative document as an attachment to all members of the group at each iteration.

This is a huge waste of time, inbox capacity, bandwidth, hard drive space, and so on, and it also limits the group's size. Social networking technologies such as Facebook encourage collaboration, and virtual communities such as Second Life are used for virtual conferencing. Skype allows for conference calls and chats.

Community; - A key feature of many new media - community - is fostered in a variety of ways and in a number of diverse new media technologies, for example, social networking sites like Myspace and Facebook; fostered a sense of community among like-minded people who may be

separated by geography or time zone, but can meet synchronously or asynchronously through Internet connectivity.

To a large extent, this aspect of new media technologies is responsible for the perception of the world as a smaller place than it used to be. Our new media communities are democratic and inclusive, reaching people all over the world. New media technologies help to level the playing field (Johnson, 2007). Technology has evolved into the great equalizer.

Creativity; - User-generated content is a key feature of new media. Users are no longer unreceptive recipients of messages. The couch potato stereotype is already out of date. Members of today's "audience" create and edit videos, blog, post product reviews, and contribute content in a variety of ways. What drives this active new media innovation? This is largely due to the digitization of new media.

Is digital media fundamentally different from non-digital (analogue) media? For starters, digitization makes editing extremely simple. As a result, it fosters creativity because we are not constrained by the limitations of the medium with which we are working. Remember using a typewriter to make changes to a large document? Any changes we were willing to make were severely limited by the page's size. With digitization and the right software, our editing abilities are only limited by our ability to think.

Consumers of digital media today do not simply read, listen to, watch, or play it. They can also edit, modify, and make mashups. Because of this type of post-purchase behaviour, a product is no longer necessarily "finished" when it enters production and distribution.

Convergence; - In the coming years, the mashup may be viewed as the preferred metaphor for today's new media phenomenon. Indeed, if there is one driving force behind new media, it is the concept of convergence. The last few decades have seen a convergence of technology that is more fantastic than fiction. This is primarily due to widespread digitization and the Internet, which is a convergence of digitization and telephony in and of itself. As a result of this trend, printer manufacturers are now in the camera business; long distance phone calls use a broadband internet connection; photographs are transmitted via e-mail using a cellular telephone; several companies

are competing for video-on-demand; and computer manufacturers are now in the music business and many more.

According to Siapera, 2012, Digital media are composed of and/or are designed to read numerical codes (hence the root word digit). The most commonly used system of numbers is binary code, which converts information into a series of 0s and 1s. This shared code system means that any machine that can decode (read) binary code can make sense of, store, and replay the information. Analogue media are created by encoding information onto a physical object that must then be paired with another device capable of reading that specific code. So what most distinguishes analogue media from digital media are their physicality and their need to be matched with a specific decoding device. In terms of physicality, analogue media are a combination of mechanical and physical parts, while digital media can be completely electronic and have no physicality; think of an MP3 music file, for example.

To understand the second distinction between analogue and digital media, we can look at pre digital music and how various types of analogue music had to be paired with a specific decoding device. To make recordings using old media technology, grooves were carved into vinyl to make records or changes were made in the electromagnetic signature of ribbon or tape to make cassette tapes. So each of these physical objects must be paired with a specific device, such as a record player or a cassette deck, to be able to decode and listen to the music. New media changed how we collect and listen to music. Many people who came of age in the digital revolution are now so used to having digital music that the notion of a physical music collection is completely foreign to them. Now music files are stored electronically and can be played on many different platforms, including iPods, computers, and smartphones.

The developments usually associated with new media are many and include such technologies as CD-I and CD-ROM; cable television and computer networks; various computer-mediated communication (CMC) developments such as e-mail, newsgroups and discussion lists, and real-time chat services; and Internet-based news services provided by traditional newspapers and broadcasters. Many of these examples are technological in substance and have, by themselves, little to do with the communication process as embedded within specific historical, societal or personal contexts.

In these modern times, the water is muddled and the various areas of marketing have become intertwined. This is definitely the case with public relations (PR) and social media. PR was generally more focused on influential persons such as investors, shareholders, business partners, etc., but with the advent of social media, these individuals are present on these platforms, which can then be used for PR purposes. As both PR and social media are used to build and maintain trust in the company and their products, it is only natural that the two must be in sync.

2.1.1 Social Media

Platforms for social media (SM) have become an essential part of our daily communication and interaction with acquaintances. In fact, social media has evolved to the point where it is no longer just a domain for connecting with friends; users frequently interact with other social groups as well, including but not limited to family members, co-workers, and old friends (Stutzman & Woodrow, 2012). People now have more opportunities than ever before to be constantly connected as new platforms emerge. As a result, users are becoming more cautious when deciding what to post where. Users have adopted a strategy to maintain their privacy and sense of security by sharing news on social media, which has become popular among today's generations.

The process of sharing news on social media platforms reflects on social leadership characteristics and allows users to perceive themselves as opinionated leaders, especially when they gain many friends and followers (Kümpel et al., 2015). In terms of presentation, with so many social media platforms available, PR practitioners can use those platforms to present their ideas and inform the public about their PR activities or campaigns. When there was no Facebook, YouTube, or other social media, public relations professionals relied on press releases, reputation management, and trade show attendance. According to Broom (2009), traditional media cannot convey all available new information. The audiences only have so much time and attention to devote to millions of messages (Oneya, 2010).

The use and impact of social media marketing have drastically increased in recent years. With every person, from baby boomer to millennial, being a member of at least one social media network, it is safe to say that the new way of word of mouth marketing is social media marketing. But why do companies engage in social media marketing? Most would say it is to connect to their

consumers, to have a relationship with them in order to keep their products and company top of mind and viewed in the best and most positive light (Paul Bates, 2020).

It was difficult for public relations professionals at the time to track the audience and measure the results. (Hysenlika, 2012) defined social media as "the various electronic tools, technologies, and applications that facilitate interactive communication and content exchange, allowing the user to easily transition back and forth between the roles of audience and content producers." Social media is becoming such an integral part of business operations that its use for product launches, developing consumer loyalty, and sharing news is now commonplace (Walaski, 2013).

In contrast, opportunities for public relations professionals to reach consumers through a variety of channels are now available. Each channel provides a unique platform for professionals to share their content with consumers, whether through catchy Facebook posts, brief tweets, or moving video posts on YouTube. These platforms can be used by various users to provide various types of information, such as text or video, and allow PR to reach a larger audience. New media is increasingly becoming free media. People with the necessary devices and broadband internet access can gain instant access to a vast array of media content, much of which is also free.

While this is good for the audience, it raises questions about how media companies make money, with a shift toward subscription services and significant amounts of advertising. As in-house social media channels, the Ethiopian Airlines group employs a variety of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Telegram, YouTube, and, in China, Weibo.

Facebook; - An American online social network service that is part of the company Meta Platforms. Facebook was founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg, Eduardo Saverin, Dustin Moskovitz, and Chris Hughes, all of whom were students at Harvard University. Facebook became the largest social network in the world, with nearly three billion users as of 2021, and about half that number were using Facebook every day. The company's headquarters are in Menlo Park, California.

Access to Facebook is free of charge, and the company earns most of its money from advertisements on the website. New users can create profiles, upload photos, join a preexisting group, and start new groups. The site has many components, including Timeline, a space on each

user's profile page where users can post their content and friends can post messages; Status, which enables users to alert friends to their current location or situation; and News Feed, which informs users of changes to their friends' profiles and status. Users can chat with each other and send each other private messages. Users can signal their approval of content on Facebook with the Like button, a feature that also appears on many other websites. Other services that are part of Meta Platforms are Instagram, a photo- and video-sharing social network; Messenger, an instant-messaging application; and WhatsApp, a text-message and VoIP service (Hall Mark, 2023). Facebook has over 1 billion users worldwide, making it the largest social network in the world.

Twitter; - Twitter is a social networking and online news site where people communicate in short messages known as tweets. Tweeting is the practice of sending short messages to anyone who follows you on Twitter in the hope that your words will be useful and interesting to someone in your audience. Another way to describe Twitter and tweeting might be micro blogging. Some people use Twitter to find interesting people and businesses online and choose to follow their tweets.

LinkedIn; - LinkedIn is a social networking site. And, like another social network, it is owned by a large technology corporation: Microsoft. LinkedIn, on the other hand, is a professional networking site that helps people make business connections, share their experiences and resumes, and find jobs.

Instagram; - was founded in 2010. It is a mobile application for Smartphone which is freely available in the Application Store (App Store) and Google Play (Bergstrom & Backman, 2013). Being mainly a photo-sharing application, Instagram has excelled as an effective communication and marketing tool to display products with visual descriptions. Hence, it becomes a useful social networking platform instantly to individuals and companies. Moreover, the acquisition of Instagram by Facebook has potentially made the application more attractive and appealing to millions of users. Despite the usefulness of Instagram as another social networking tool, little is known about specific beliefs about the use of this particular mobile application. Whether it is just another social networking channel or a better or more innovative communication tool, especially in the context of emerging markets, remains largely unknown Ting, Hiram & wong poh ming, Winnie & De Run, Ernest & Choo, Sally. (2015).

Telegram; - Telegram is a popular cross-platform messaging app that is widely used because it provides enhanced privacy and encryption features, as well as support for large group chat features. The app is multiplatform, with versions for iOS, Android, Windows, Mac, and Linux, as well as access to Telegram via a web browser.

YouTube; - YouTube is a popular video-sharing website where registered users can upload and share videos with anyone who has access to the site. These videos can also be shared and embedded on other websites. YouTube was founded in 2005 by former PayPal employees and was acquired by Google in 2006. It has had a significant impact on the media and advertising.

Weibo; - Sina Corporation launched Weibo in 2009 as a microblogging application based on user relationships to share, disseminate, and obtain information. As of the fourth quarter of 2019, it had over 516 million monthly active users (compared to 300 million for Twitter), making it the second largest social media platform in China after WeChat.

2.1.1.1 Website

A website is a collection of linked, openly accessible Web pages that share a domain name. A website can be created and managed by a person, group, business, or organization to fulfil a variety of objectives. There are countless different types of websites, including ones for learning, news, porn, forums, social media, e-commerce, and more. A website's pages typically contain both text and other types of media. Nevertheless, the design of a website is not constrained by any rules. Websites must be accessed through a web browser like Chrome, Firefox, or Internet Explorer as they are stored on servers (either on a computer or mobile device). By typing in a website's URL address or searching for it on a search engine like Google or Bing, one can gain direct access to the website.

Originally, initially, top-level domains were used to classify websites. Examples include:

- Government agency websites = .gov
- Educational institutions' websites = .edu
- Non-profit organizations' websites = .org

- Commercial websites = .com
- Information sites = .info

These top-level domain extensions are still used, but they offer minimal information about the content of websites. The ".com" extension is by far the most popular domain extension on the internet today, along with numerous other country-specific extensions (.it, .de, .co.uk, .fr, etc. (Techopedia 2020)). A British physicist working at CERN named Tim Berners-Lee developed the first website in 1990. CERN said that anybody could access and utilize the World Wide Web for free three years later, in 1993.

2.1.1.2 E-mails

Email is a term used to describe a means of instantaneously transmitting communications from one system to another through the internet. Email used to be restricted to users of the same computer and needed users to be connected to the internet in order to receive messages (Priya Pedamkar 2022). The mailbox's appearance has altered with the passage of time. The recipient's name can be concealed from other recipients by include their names in the Bcc field when sending mail to several recipients. An email client assists in the process by connecting to a server running Simple Mail Transfer Protocol via the internet. To assist the client in sending messages through the mail, the server is given a specific port.

The recipient's email address must be accurate; hence the header information must be preserved. To transport mail content across ports, SMTP transforms the data. Because the @ symbol serves as a separator between the name and mail server, SMTP looks for the mail server after the @ symbol.

Emails can be sent and received via a variety of email applications, including Outlook, Gmail, Thunderbird, and others. When the domains are different, SMTP searches the Domain Name System for the domains and uses an IP address to send a signal to the recipient's server informing it of the email. The gateways are now open, mail is being sent to the new server, and communication is taking place. Business communication is quicker than other forms of communication and is simple to do without any security concerns. Additionally, emails make it simple to save contacts, and old messages can be routinely viewed in place of storing information

on a local server these helps in Storage space. Email is quicker than one-on-one chat when compared to it. Email is incredibly fast in both respects since it may be used as a casual informational conversation or a serious business one. This tool sends messages more quickly than any other.

2.1.2 The Rise of New Media

Human civilization has experienced a variety of media over the years, with communication over the internet being thought to be the most efficient method. The traditional media, which are frequently considered to be first generation media, including newspaper, television, printed matter, radios, telegrams, cable phones, and flyers, have had a truly magical effect and have been used primarily to disseminate information for a considerable amount of time. However, innovation occurs very organically for the benefit of people and society, and this field was no exception. After the creation of computers and the new method of digital computing, things began to change. Media was the first to be impacted by the shift from analogue to digital information, which began to happen gradually. The established media outlets modified the fundamental technology.

To gain the advantages of easier transmission, lower inaccuracy, reduced power consumption, and better information management, traditional media outlets converted their underlying technology to digital. These events occurred in wealthy countries between the late 1950s and the late 1970s, and beginning in the late 1980s, they began to spread to less developed countries. Despite some ARPANET testing, some were nonetheless concerned about the mass transmission of digital information.

When individuals were able to send a small amount of packet-switched data from University of California, Los Angeles to Stanford Research Institute across ARPANet. As ARPANet was expanded to encompass other networks and the Internet Protocol Suite (TCP/IP) was defined in 1982, this was a significant turning point in the history of media. After ARPANet was shut down in the late 1980s and the internet was commercialized in 1995, commercial Internet service providers started to appear. On that day, media reborn and became a second-generation medium with a variety of glitzy features, including electronic mail, instant messaging, online portals, phone

and video chats over the Internet, remote sharing, etc. People began utilizing these new media platforms and immediately understood their potential influence.

Not only did it turn out to be advantageous, but it also made information interchange rapid and nearly real-time.

It makes sense that this would influence business and the economy as well because real-time information transmission is essential in these industries. As the number of users of the Internet increased and information began to be digitized and shared via a public network, individuals began to recognize three variables that could create the system's bottleneck:

1. The ability to transport a large volume of digital data
2. The massive storage required to accommodate this large amount of data
3. Security precautions when delicate information is broadcast

By expanding the capacity of the underlying transmission lines, introducing wireless technologies, and integrating with packet switched networks, the first issue was dealt with cleverly in two different ways. With the advent of wireless technology, people were free to share information even when they were traveling, opening a new dimension of second-generation media. Real-time information exchange was starting to become a reality as people started to become more connected. The emergence of data centres and distributed storage, where each node of the network stores some information, effectively solved the second issue. To more readily store or provide information in a fault-tolerant fashion, large data centres were established up all over the world.

According to Cees B. & Charles J (2007), communication strategies are fundamentally about practical usage of media, message and budget. The purpose of communication strategies is to establish a common sense among the source or sender and the destination or receiver effectively and efficiently. Effective communication strategies help us consider the receiver's capacity to comprehend. The message must motivate the receiver's self-interest and cause him or her respond. Communicators need to bear in mind that communication is no substitute policy or action. A sender can encode a message and receiver decode it only in terms of their own experience and knowledge. When there has been no common experience, then communications become virtually impossible.

Commonness in communication is essential to link people and purpose together in any cooperative system Nicholas W.Jankowski (2002).

2.1.3 Public Relation

According to the Public Relations Society of America, public relations is "a strategic communication process that develops connections between organizations and their publics that are mutually advantageous." Public relations professionals look after a company's reputation and public image. They assist the organization in communicating with the general public and attempt to foster a good rapport between the two. Public relations, frequently referred to as "PR," is a distinct subject, but it does have elements in common with several other disciplines, including marketing, communications, and advertising. Even though the duties in these professions could be similar, there are several features of public relations that set it apart and give it a special place in the world of business.

Finding out what something is can frequently be aided by knowing where, when, and how it began. The next section briefly examines how PR has been applied in the past and how it has changed over the past 100 years. Given how challenging it is to define public relations, it is not unexpected that its past is riddled with misunderstandings. When it comes to organizations, public relations and community relations are related since they both include enhancing an organization's reputation within the local or regional community. Businesses frequently interact directly with the community through hosting events, supporting causes, or taking part in neighbourhood initiatives. By doing this, the organization builds a presence in the community and relationships with its constituents.

Public relations are essential to modern business. It's an essential component of managing your brand, can boost revenue, and fosters connections with those who interact with your business. Additionally, PR can help you lessen the effects of a crisis or seize unanticipated commercial possibilities. The best part is that PR could increase the effect of the narrative that surrounds your business. This is quite helpful given how connected and hurried modern life is. Community relations are an essential component of PR for local or small enterprises. To engage in constructive conversation with your community, you must know how to interact with them and serve them.

Community interactions can also be advantageous for larger or national businesses, especially if they have or are participating on local events.

While companies may be capable of handling this component of marketing on their own, they can lack the expertise and knowledge needed to do so efficiently. Organizations should recruit the help of a specialist for the most result. Each business has different demands; therefore, it is important to carefully analyse what would be ideal for a certain organization before deciding. This can mean that they either hire someone from an agency or maintain someone on staff. Modern businesses cannot, downplay the significance of public relations. It's a tough career, and PR professionals need to be excellent communicators, capable of strategic thinking, and knowledgeable about how to manage the extensive and intricate interaction between the public and an organization.

Theories and models of public relations try to explain how information is produced, transported, and conveyed, as well as how meaning is developed and disseminated as a result. Considering this, the researcher will discuss the theories and models below in order to gather pertinent data on the use of social media as a PR tool in organizations.

When both sides exchange information, this is referred to as "two-way communication." Two-way communication is also known as interpersonal communication.

2.1.3.1 The Two-Way Asymmetric Model

The asymmetrical model is founded on the ideas of behavioural psychology and was developed between 1920 and 1950 by Edward Bernays, the nephew of psychiatrist Sigmund Freud. Public relations research aims to ascertain what the general public knows, understands, or believes regarding the client organization, significant topics, etc. This is a two-way communication intended to convince using the traditional public relations functions of research, objective setting, communicating, and then evaluating to evaluate if the communication altered attitudes and opinions as desired, according to Tench and Yeomans (2006: 147) The goal of this model's two-way communication is to comprehend the public's perception of the business and develop a different strategy for persuading them to embrace the message.

Most of the time, this is accomplished through research, during which the public's opinion is sought and the structure of PR communication is developed. In the asymmetrical approach, the organization incorporates these views into its public relations messages after learning about them through polling and other research methods. It is named asymmetrical because the balance is tilted in the communicator's favour; the communicator makes no meaningful changes; instead, she just uses the concepts she anticipates will be persuasive while speaking with the audience to persuade them on a certain issue or topic. For instance, if I'm a politician seeking re-election and my research shows that tax cuts are a significant issue with the general population, I'll mention the significance of tax cuts in my next speech. An important part of this strategy is research, which aims to persuade the public to adopt attitudes and ideas favourable to the organization by gathering information about their current beliefs.

2.1.3.2 The Two-Way Symmetric Model

Between roughly 1960 and 1980, Edward Bernays and several other well-known public relations professionals and academics also invented the symmetrical model. Like the asymmetrical approach, it aims to incorporate public opinion research as well. However, it uses research to foster understanding between organizations and the public rather than to persuade. In this paradigm, organizations are flexible in altering their internal rules and procedures in response to feedback from their target audiences. Although not perfectly balanced, it is a changing equilibrium that gives both parties in the communication process the chance to contribute and influence a situation. It is a collaborative method to fostering understanding.

According to Lattimore et al. 2004, Public relations efforts in terms of its research-based description as the use of communication to improve understanding with strategic publics." We can deduct from this that the model is like the two-way asymmetric model, but distinct in that it entertains public opinion to promote understanding between an organization and the public. By maintaining balance, PR professionals work as a liaison between a company and the public in this situation (Seitel, 2004). Within a single public relations campaign, we frequently see the public relations models combined with other communication strategies or instruments in modern public relations. Consider the models as theoretical as much as possible.

The best way to think of the models is as theoretical constructions that, when put into practice, merge due to the conflicting goals of public relations. Most of the time, public relations specialists strive to help both their employer or customer and the general public access and comprehend the company's internal operations. This mixed-motive strategy is based on the real-world factors that influence public relations decisions and the goal to help organizations and the general public communicate on both sides of an issue.

2.1.4 The Impact of New Media in Public Relations

Since the internet's inception decades ago, public relations practices have changed dramatically. Positive and negative impacts can be easily seen throughout the practice of this industry today. It has been observed that more people are getting their latest news online rather than through traditional mass media. According to the Pew Research Centre (2008), most people use a combination of online and traditional sources to find news and information, but more young people are reading traditional news media online. The inventions of Twitter, Facebook, and news feed applications like BuzzFeed and Huffington Post enabled instant breaking news to reach a large audience always.

With a single click of your refresh button, you will be served with the most recent events from around the world. Since the decline in circulation figures for many traditional news media outlets, many have chosen to cease publication, while others have chosen not to print seven days a week.

Online offerings are becoming more concentrated and important than ever before. The public relations industry is undergoing similar transformations. In a 2009 study, public relations professionals believed that the emergence of blogs and social media had changed the way their organizations communicated. Many aspects of public relations are changing dramatically as a result of the impact of these new technologies (Wright & Hinson).

One of the most significant effects of new media on public relations practice is increased productivity and efficiency. Message transmission speed and timeliness are constantly being improved. Clients, employees, and the general public are all easily accessible. This is compelling evidence that the internet should be used to boost productivity, efficiency, and effectiveness (Springston, 2001). Another way that new media has an impact is in research and evaluation.

Today's technological advancements enable practitioners to create online surveys or research at a much faster and lower cost.

New media eliminates labor and time constraints with a single click, allowing researchers to conduct faster analyses as data is received (Sprinston, 2001). Companies now have unprecedented freedom in what they write in press releases thanks to the Internet, which allows them to publish directly on their websites rather than relying on the opinion of a journalist. However, the pre-formulating role demonstrated by Jacobs (1999) remains an underlying assumption in a case study on the construction of pseudo-quotations in press releases (Sleurs et al., 2003), as evidenced by the following quotation: Press releases continue to play an important role in the production of today's news, whether on paper or online, despite the fact that the nature of journalists' professional routines is rapidly changing. Jacobs (Jacobs, 1999: 193) However, the quotation also demonstrates that online press releases are gaining traction.

Newer research of Internet-based press releases supports the validity of the assumption. Callison's study of all Fortune 500 company websites accessible in 2001 is an example of such research. The goal was to determine how much companies use the Internet to meet the informational needs of journalists (Callison, 2003). According to Callison (2003)The Seventh Annual Middleburg/Ross Survey of Media in the Wired World, which found a significant increase in journalists' use of the Internet for article research - from 60% to 92% - between 1995 and 2001 (O'Keefe, 1997, Callison, 2003).

This partially confirms Sleurs et al assumption.'s that press releases serve the purpose of pre-formulating news and partly points to a new situation in which the Internet plays an increasingly important role for two constituencies: journalists who write media stories and press release writers, who are no longer constrained by strict gatekeeper rules and conventions. According to Callison (2003), while much effort is made to assist journalists by making press releases available on the Internet, many businesses could do more to facilitate media relations by establishing press rooms. Even though many different press room labels were used, the two most common labels were News Room and Press Room, making navigation relatively simple for journalists.

Interestingly, press releases were categorized as 'press/news releases,' implying that there is no clear demarcation line between the two. Overall, this paints a rather complex picture of how text producers and consumers perceive press releases.

In some interpretations, the label press release may include several documents with the sole criterion that their function is to inform the public of a news item. On the other hand, the concept of a press release, defined as a text with the label "press release" written on top, may be subsumed under broader higher-level categories that would also include documents such as company fact sheets, annual reports, corporate profiles, and company mission statements - documents that the press release may be subsumed under.

2.1.5 Public Relations in Organizations

Today's world is a world of communication and in every second, millions of information units are exchanged in the world. Public relations professionals shape an organization's image. They build the brand, spread the organization's message and minimize the effect of negative publicity. At a small company, the PR person may have to handle all the roles – cheerleader, media contact person, the deflector of criticism – themselves. At larger companies or big PR firms, staffers can have more specialized roles to handle different organizational needs (Fraser Sherman 2019). Since development of human life improves, thus increase need to information and communication every day increased and nowadays having accurate and up to date information for people is the important and people with more information will be more successful. Public relations in organizations in term of work quality means assist to organization management in achieving organizational goals, believe to the transparency affairs and accountability, respect citizens' rights, identify duties and responsibilities of government, the right control of people to the work and the right people in criticize and evaluate programs and practices of the organization and having specific strategies and programs are divided into three categories:

- 1- Justifier public relations
- 2- Explainer public relations
- 3- Analyser public relations.

Justifier public relations is an organization based and manager –based concept which continually tries to explain the views of managers and their organizations benefit and with misrepresentation,

concealment, false and misleading and closing real and concrete ways of disseminating information to the public which are outside of the organization with large volumes informing and misleading advertisements trying to show better objectives and activities of the organization.

Explainer public relations in its most optimistic form describes and narrates public relations in a way that moves following events and only deals with illustrations and report them. This type of public relations techniques used in organizations could be labelled as examples in lacking strategic planning and executive program as they could be passive, and without prior innovation and creativity.

Analyzer public relations is a public relation unlike the above with programs that move ahead of affairs, events and trends. These tend to improve to levels of management consultants and participates in policies of organizations.

Online PR is an extremely crucial new stage in PR development. It has completely altered the way of working and the content of work in PR and has permeated the PR work of almost every organization. Furthermore, online PR helps to solve many problems quickly and efficiently especially in time of crises. In addition, online PR helps in data gathering and research and in monitoring a corporate image through online newspapers and all types of electronic publications. Also, suggestion boxes and comments and questions of visitors gathered through an organization's website are major sources for research and data gathering and provide feedback for PR activities, for PR planning and for PR programming and are a good source for decision making. Generally, online PR has altered the speed, efficiency and ease with which organizations and institutions deal with the public as online PR has allowed an organization to remain informed about the public's views and reactions. This means that they can manage any crisis that they face quickly. Kirat noted that online communication serves all varieties of tasks and types of content in organizational communication.

Online has become the closest that an organization can come to one channel carrying plain text through multimedia. For example, email is a primary internal and external communications tool and to national media. PR departments can send images and text through email so online newsrooms are essential for companies. Also, web pages have shown a great progress for better design possibilities, the integration of multimedia elements and a larger interaction between a user

and an organization. Moreover, Naude, Froneman, and Atwood have pointed out that many companies and organizations already were devoting particular sections of their websites typically called “online press rooms,” for communicating with the media. From this specific area, a company can provide any sort of news to the press, making it easy for journalists to gather information about a company and simultaneously serving as a channel for information requests. This clearly offers advantages for organizations having limited resources.

Bortree and Seltzer, Cooley , and Grunig all noted many benefits existed for using online PR by organizations, especially in increasing interactions with publics. These led to improving the corporate image, setting corporate agendas reflecting the needs of the public, and ease in collecting and analysing public opinion and increasing corporate accountability (Cooley, 1999). McAllister and Taylor added that other advantages existed like collecting information, monitoring public opinion on issues, and engaging in direct dialogues with publics about various issues.

2.1.6 Organizational Communication

Organizational communication is a broad field that includes all forms of communication that enable organizations such as businesses, governments, and non-profits to function, grow, connect with stakeholders, and contribute to society. Internal communications, such as employee training modules, messaging about an organization's mission, interpersonal communications between management and employees, and professional communication, such as emails, are all examples of organizational communication. External communications contain public relations announcements, press releases, marketing materials, and branding. Organizational communication is complicated because there are many moving parts within an organization, almost all of which require clear communication for the organization's efficacy to be maximized. Indeed, organizational communication is made up of many different types of information transfer and relationship mediation, ranging from interpersonal communication to group communication and cross-cultural communication, to mass communication and digital and social media.

Because of the complexity and importance of organizational communication, there is a demand for individuals who are well-trained in how to optimize internal and external communications for corporations, non-profits, government agencies, and similar organizations. Public relations and project management positions are available, as are positions in human resources, marketing, and

corporate communication management. While organizational communication is primarily a professional practitioner's field, there are also scholars who conduct research on the phenomenon, its components (i.e., interpersonal communication, group communication, media and its influence on human psychology and behaviour, and so on), and its sociocultural, economic, and political effects. Organizational communication scholars may investigate the impact of specific organizational and hierarchical structures on inter-team communication within an organization or how the dynamics of internal communication within a corporation affect external-facing communications with stakeholders, and thus the corporation's brand identity. Others may investigate the relationship between organizational communication and cultural diversity or social justice.

2.1.7 Organizational Theory

An organizational theory is a collection of related concepts/constructs that explain how individuals behave in social units known as organizations. In other words, organizational theory investigates the impact of social relationships among individuals within an organization, as well as their actions, on the organization. It also investigates the effects of the organizations internal and external business environments, such as political, legal, cultural, and so on. The term organization refers to a group of people who work together to complete a set of tasks in order to achieve a common goal. The organization is founded on the idea of synergy, which means that a group can accomplish more than an individual working alone. Organization and public relationships are the management of a company's relationship with the general public. According to Royston Greenwood, Bob Hinings, John Amis 2021, Organization theory is concerned with the relationship between organizations and their environment, the effects of those relationships on organizational functioning, and how organizations affect the distribution of privilege in society. A central concept is organizational design (sometimes termed “organizational form”). Organizational design is important because the ability of societies to respond to various problems depends on the availability of organizations with different capabilities. A new paradigm for public relations is relationship management theory. It bolsters academic arguments about the essence of public relations—what it is and the value it brings to organizations, in this case the Ethiopian Airlines group, and society.

2.1.8 Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC)

Even in the mid-twentieth century, successful organizations valued integration, or the attempt to present a consistent message across the available promotional mix elements. The integration and coordination of various messages aimed at portraying a single and unique image to all stakeholder groups has become both more important and more difficult to achieve with the proliferation of media channels in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

A more transitory global marketplace enabled by the Internet may result in a customer-driven and focused marketing environment. In such an environment, technology can enhance marketing communication strategies by allowing both traditional advertising techniques and new, unconventional marketing practices, such as database marketing, one-to-one communication, or marketing public relations, to be used (McGrath, 2005a; Edelman, 2004; Gonring, 1994; Nowak and Phelps, 1994). In the United States, for example, the social networking website MySpace receives over 17 million visitors per month. Innovators in marketing communication propose using such networks to maintain an ongoing dialogue with customers and prospects (Economist, 2006a). To summarize, technology can not only help consumers connect and communicate with one another, however, it can also serve as a bridge builder between individual consumers and businesses.

With rising competition and supply outstripping demand in most developed countries, power has shifted to retailers and intermediaries. As a result, in today's marketplace, any type of business should prioritize long-term customer relationships. Indeed, because retailers have direct contact with end-users of manufactured goods, they should know them better. Indeed, there is a strong bond between retailers, intermediaries, and manufacturers. Reid (2003), Low and Mohr (1999), and Schultz (1996) In an ideal world, the relationships between retailer, intermediary, and manufacturer would be interdependent, if not integrated, so that all parties could create customer-oriented communication messages and, more importantly, the manufacturer could develop customer-specific products (Pickton and Broderick, 2005; Schultz and Schultz, 2005).

Customer and manufacturer communication used to be linear or one-way, that is, from the marketer to the consumer (Schultz, 1993c). However, today's customer is well-versed in the marketplace and does not need to wait for messages and information from the organization.

Today's customer makes informed decisions, makes demands, and influences advertisements or other information received. Marketers must adapt to these shifts. In order to design effective communication strategies, the marketer must first develop communication plans with the consumer as the starting point, then work back toward the product or service. Information about the customers, their wants and needs, and other background knowledge must be obtained during the planning process. In IMC taxonomy, this is referred to as an outside-in approach (Kitchen, 2005; Schultz and Schultz, 2003; Hartley and Pickton, 1999; Schultz, 1996b; Stewart, 1996; Schultz, 1993e, 1993c). An important result of an IMC approach is that all communication mix tools are integrated and support each other, resulting in synergy effects. Schultz, Schultz, and Broderick, 2005; Schultz and Schultz, 2003; Schultz, 1993c).

IMC enables marketers to integrate all their communications in order to plan and implement a cohesive and synergistic strategy. One significant advantage of IMC is that it recognizes the importance of new communication tools, such as direct marketing, Internet marketing, or various types of sales promotions, to marketing strategy and corporate branding (McGrath, 2005b; Pickton and Hartley, 1998; Drobis, 1997/1998). Most managers regard IMC as a process that promotes message integration and consistency, thereby making information easier to interpret for customers. When confronted with an IMC approach, the customer will understand the various information and will not be perplexed by the vast amount of it from all contact points (McGrath, 2005b; Stewart, 1996; Duncan and Everett, 1993). However, if companies disregard IMC and different messages are not delivered in unison, it may result in an incoherent brand image, which can have a negative impact on consumer purchasing and recall behaviour (McGrath, 2005b; Stammerjohan et al., 2005; Stewart, 1996; Schultz, 1993e). The combination of product contact points and consumer consideration raises company awareness and fosters a positive relationship between the customer or prospect and the company (Gylling and Lindberg-Repo, 2006; Schultz and Kitchen, 2004; Bill, 1993). As a result, various brand-customer contact points must be carefully maintained (McGrath, 2005b).

A database can aid in determining customer preferences for media channels, usage, and times. A healthy brand relationship with customers can be achieved by utilizing a variety of promotional tools, such as public relations campaigns, television commercials, and magazines, to convey the

message (McGrath, 2005b). Multiple communication tools are not enough for building brand relationships.

On the contrary, increased use of marketing communication tools within an IMC approach can result in a better overall outcome and may also provide a more comprehensive picture (Smith, Gopalakrishna, and Chatterjee, 2006; Reid, 2003; Naik and Raman, 2003; Low, 2000; Phelps and Johnson, 1996; Schultz, 1996b). As a result, advertising should not be held solely responsible for brand development, because the brand is an asset belonging to the whole organization. Eagle, Kithen, and Bulmer, 2006; McGrath, 2005b; Edelman, 2004; Schultz, 2004a; Drobis, 1997/1998; Hutton, 1996; Gonring, 1994; Nowak and Phelps, 1994).

2.1.9 Social Exchange Theory

The origins of social exchange theory can be traced back to 1958, when American sociologist George Homans published "Social Behaviour as Exchange." Homans developed a framework based on behaviourism and basic economics. Other studies expanded the parameters of Homans' fundamental concepts in the years that followed. The concept of social exchange theory is based on the idea that a relationship between two people is formed through a cost-benefit analysis. In other words, it's a metric designed to assess an individual's effort in a person-to-person relationship. The measurement of a relationship's pluses and minuses may produce data that can determine if someone is putting too much effort into a relationship.

According to Blau (1964): "Social exchange ... refers to voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from others." In contrasting social and economic exchange he emphasizes the fact that it is more likely in social exchange for the nature of the obligations involved in the exchange to remain unspecified, at least initially. Social exchange, he argues, "involves the principle that one person does another a favor, and while there is a general expectation of some future return, its exact nature is definitely not stipulated in advance" (Blau, 1986). Given that all social media platforms rely on users to provide content, understanding why people participate appears to be critical. Sociology studies on exchange between individuals or small groups gave rise to social exchange theory. The theory primarily employs a cost-benefit framework and alternative comparison to explain how humans communicate with one another, form relationships and bonds, and form communities through

communication exchanges. Most relationships involve some give and take, but this does not always imply that they are equal. According to social exchange, the valuing of the benefits and costs of each relationship determines whether we choose to continue a social association.

According to social exchange theory, we should take the benefits of a relationship and subtract the costs to determine how much it is worth. Costs include things you perceive as negatives, such as having to invest money, time, and effort into a relationship. For example, if you have a friend who constantly borrows money from you, this could be a significant cost. The benefits of a relationship include things like fun, friendship, companionship, and social support (Kendra Cherry 2022.) In relation to this, organizations benefit more from developing positive relationships with their stakeholders, which aids in determining the value of their relationship, which ultimately outweighs the expenses, whereas negative relationships occur when the costs exceed the benefits. Applying the metrics that collectively build social exchange theory can be a great tool for analysing relationships and human behaviour from a sociological standpoint.

2.1.10 New Media and Public Relations Practice

Consideration will be given to both the impact on current and future practitioners' skills, knowledge, and work practices, as well as the way new media is consumed and used, including the impact that related consumer expectations and behaviour is having on public relations practice. New technologies are constantly being developed and updated, posing challenges for public relations professionals in terms of staying current on not only what is available but also what is planned for release in the future. Many large-scale public relations projects, such as national public information campaigns or major international events, have long lead times, and plans made several years in advance of an event may need to be revisited several times to account for trends in the industry.

Galloway (2005) contends that the mobile nature of new media is undermining traditional public relations techniques, requiring public relations practitioners to reconsider how they interact with the public. Internet news services are increasingly relying on sources other than news wire services for raw materials. 'Transcripts, reports, and budgets are regularly placed on the Web, either by organizations themselves or by citizens attempting to hold those organizations accountable,' public relations practitioners should be aware (Stephens 2007, p. 35). When something happens,

customers expect instant updates in their inboxes. Public relations professionals may face increased pressure to create this instant content.

The implications for public relations practitioners of having to prepare material faster than ever before include being able to produce what is required almost instantly and with the required level of accuracy; having processes in place to obtain required priority clearances for materials to be released; and having the technology to directly distribute or upload what is being disseminated. These factors may put pressure on the public relations practitioner and their team, but they may also put pressure on their relationships with colleagues or more senior staff, particularly the CEO and his or her minders. It can also strain relationships with the Information Technology (IT) team if direct upload to the corporate website is not possible. When content is demanded instantly, in-house public relations practitioners may need to form stronger alliances with IT departments and engage with the organization's legal advisers to refine content clearance procedures.

Another area of practice that has been altered by new media in the last decade is that of events. People attending events are being exposed to an increasing number of "bells and whistles," as new media technology allows for the creation of spectacle for an ever-increasing number of people. The ubiquitous digital projector and PowerPoint presentation have become baseline requirements for even the most basic events, and Internet access to allow presenters to integrate online elements is now almost mandatory. Event practitioners may need to manage expectations from their employers, consumers, and stakeholders, including sponsors that the level of spectacle and gadgetry provided at one event will be replicated or augmented at another.

If new media is to be adopted, public relations professionals will need to develop more technical skills in areas such as web publishing, new software operation, online security, search engine optimization, web analytics, and web trend analysis software operation. They will require improved online information architecture skills as well as digital management of an increasing amount of complex information. Writing for cross-media delivery will remain a significant component of practice, but the increased demand for multimedia elements will pose additional challenges in this area.

Since late 2006, several trade press articles have discussed how the media release is beginning to evolve to include multimedia elements. The use of multimedia and interactive content in news

releases has increased in recent years, and leading newswire services are fully equipped to distribute such material (Nowland, 2006).

The trend toward multimedia news releases will increase the demand for multimedia elements to be available for inclusion in such releases. Public relations practitioners will be responsible for either coordinating or producing this material, and public relations units' budgets and skill bases may need to be reviewed to accommodate these new demands.

There is also the issue of whether target audiences have access to new media technologies such as the Internet, which becomes problematic when communication strategies target audiences who do not have such access due to geographic or socioeconomic factors (Badaracco, 2007). All public relations practitioners will need to keep up with emerging media, and many may already be planning, implementing, and evaluating public relations in unfamiliar media areas. PR News Online launched their PR Digital Report earlier this year and is now covering stories on topics such as blogging, online communities, and podcasting on a regular basis. Many practitioners would have thought it unlikely only a few years ago that they would have to plan campaign components to incorporate website possibilities such as YouTube and My Space. However, many organizations, including election campaigns, are doing just that.

Galushkin proposed in 2003 that organizations consider SMS text messaging to improve internal communications now that spatial and temporal constraints have been weakened or removed, and new communication structures and forms have emerged. Less than three years later, during the 2006 Australian Census of Population and Housing, the Australian Bureau of Statistics used SMS extensively to communicate with tens of thousands of census employees. (Personal communication, 26 April 2007; C. Verey, Media and Public Affairs Unit, Australian Bureau of Statistics).

According to the academic literature, public relations practitioners will face a variety of challenges in the future. They may need to create virtual experiences that elicit emotions such as connectedness, involvement, appreciation, and meaning (Galloway 2005). Blogs should be seriously considered as part of campaigns because there is evidence that they can be effective at establishing and maintaining organization-public relationships (Seltzer & Mitrook, 2007). There are already cautionary tales about blogging in the trade literature. A public relations firm was

discovered ghost writing a blog on behalf of Walmart customers in the United States, causing the company embarrassment (Holmes, 2006). Sony was also caught red-handed by faking a blog purportedly written by a young boy hoping to receive a Playstation 2 for Christmas this is known as 'flogging'—a term coined in the information technology media for fake blogging (Laycock, 2006).

Practitioners must understand how new technologies can help or hinder traditional public relations roles such as public information dissemination, media relations, reputation management, stakeholder relations, marketing communications, investor relations, and issues and crisis management. Practitioners can use research to guide their practice. Taylor and Kent's (2007) work articulating six best practices of mediated crisis communications is an excellent example of this.

According to Taylor and Kent (2007), the use of the internet in crisis communications is logical because websites are a single controlled channel through which organizations can communicate directly with the media and the general public. An organization can use the website to tell its side of the story, reduce consumer uncertainty, address multiple stakeholder needs, and collaborate with government agencies that specialize in public safety.' Taylor and Kent (2007) (p. 146) As the in-house communication experts, public relations practitioners are likely to be advising senior management on these issues and, in some cases, actively participating in the implementation of new media initiatives. As has been the case in the past, the practitioner will need to manage the organization's expectation that all traditional media will be fully serviced.

Additional work resulting from these expectations may require additional personnel or budget allocations. Finding time, money, and support to upgrade skills and participate in professional development experiences may continue to be difficult. Other work areas in the organization, such as IT, marketing and sales, customer relations, call centers, and others, may develop turf wars.

This is because these areas see a variety of benefits, such as career advancement and control over information and technology, in managing communication activities in the new media age. Turf wars can also occur when public relations assert management responsibility for areas of practice that have traditionally been handled by other departments, such as IT. These internal relationships must be managed with care. These internal relationships must be carefully managed, as encroachment from management information systems departments can result in public relations

practitioners losing control over Web site management (Pavlik & Dozier, cited in Porter & Sallott, 2003). According to research, public relations practitioners who embrace new technologies such as blogging are perceived as having more power within organizations because they are willing to be industry leaders and use new tools to better reach target audiences (Porter, Sweetser Trammell, Chung, & Kim, 2007).

Some practitioners may find themselves working with key organizational decision-makers who are unaware of emerging media developments or, on the other end of the spectrum, working with decision-makers who are very aware of new media developments and want to embrace every new one without fully considering the implications.

There may be public relations recruitment issues that affect journalists looking to 'jump the fence' into a public relations role. Academic literature in journalism indicates a high level of debate about the future of journalism practice, journalism outputs, and journalist education, to name a few topics. The outcomes of these debates may have unanticipated consequences for public relations, both in terms of how media relations are handled.

Although it is not evident in the academic literature, there is a trend in some public relations agencies and in-house units looking to hire staff with broader tertiary qualifications and career backgrounds than public relations. Instead, these organizations may be looking for people with technological expertise to work alongside traditional public relations practitioners. Anecdotal evidence suggests that mature practitioners are being overlooked in some cases in favour of young, relatively inexperienced (but technically-savvy) public relations practitioners who can take the lead on projects requiring technical know-how or first-hand knowledge of new media consumption habits. Some public relations firms or in-house units are merging to form multidisciplinary strategic communication firms that include public relations, marketing, advertising, media production, website development, and graphic design. There are agencies that are forming strategic alliances with various companies in order to provide cross-disciplinary multimedia services.

2.1.11 New Media and Public Relations

The ways we communicate have fundamentally changed in the last decade. Advances in digital technology have engendered a shift in communication patterns characterised by the shift from the 'one to many' broadcast paradigm of mass media to the 'network paradigm' of 'many to many'

communication Fitch, K. (2009). Much writing about new media and public relations celebrates the interactivity or conversational nature of new media, which is considered to have the potential to develop relationships and build communities (see, for example, Levine et al. 1999; Holtz 2002). This shift has major implications for traditional public relations practices and concepts.

Not surprisingly, new media is cited by practitioners and scholars as one of the biggest challenges facing the public relations profession (Dougall et al. 2001; Weaver et al. 2003; Zefass et al. 2007). As Katie Delahaye Paine writes: 'The implications for twenty-first century practitioners are all at once far reaching, terrifying and enormously exciting' (Paine 2007: xiv).

Public relations is concerned with either the management of relationships between publics and organisations or the management of communication between publics and organisations. The advent of the internet causes us to rethink the nature of these relationships and communication. Some academics and practitioners (Gregory 2004; Duhé 2007) are beginning to recognise the potentially transformative impact of technology on public relations and its important contribution to the ability of organisations to be socially responsive. Attempts to apply Grunig and Hunt's (1984) two-way symmetrical communication model to examine the potential of new media to build constructive relationships between organizations and their publics have dominated the academic literature. Alfonso and de Valbuena Miguel (2006) concluded that while new media can increase two-way symmetrical communication, current practice, at least in terms of online press rooms, does not. McAllister and Taylor (2007) investigated community college websites to see if they fostered dialogic relationships, continuing the theme of two-way symmetrical communication. They discovered an overall lack of interactive features that could solicit feedback or input from key stakeholders, limiting opportunities for public relations practitioners to collect information.

They assessed the website offerings as examples of essentially one-way asymmetrical communication, like a brochure, and based on the sender-receiver transmission model of communication. The authors concluded that the websites investigated did not facilitate relationship building with key audiences (Allister & Taylor, 2007). According to Hassink, Bollen, and Steggink (2007), symmetrical two-way communication is an important component of effective corporate communication. They used this approach in their own study of online investor relations and concluded that the presence of mechanisms on corporate websites for email investor inquiries did

not imply symmetrical communication. It was determined that whether the corporation responded at all, or the timeliness and quality of a received response, was the determining factor. The study discovered that, on average, corporations performed poorly in this area and that organizing a symmetrical dialogue with investors may necessitate a structure quite different from the traditional asymmetrical communications process (Hassink, Bollen & Steggink, 2007).

Another theoretical theme is cross-cultural analysis, specifically looking at Asian public relations practice in comparison to US practice, but to a lesser extent European and Middle Eastern practices. Beckerman's (2007) description of Middle Eastern blogging sheds valuable light on the role of the blog as both a diary and a "personal op-ed page" (p. 19) that exposes "a hidden vast collection of multiple perspectives in a world that the West frequently imagines having only one."

Although beyond the scope of this paper, Galushkin's (2003) theoretical argument for challenging aspects of media richness theory and social presence theory will be of interest to those involved in organizational communication. Hermann (2007) investigates Weick's sensemaking process in the context of investor online discussion boards and suggests several theoretical approaches for future research, such as comparing interaction analysis typologies, applying network analysis, or exploring strategic ambiguity.

Dewdney and Ride (2006) proposed another way of theorizing new media by using the term "cultural concept," which refers to "an active and shaping set of ideas, and the underlying theories or larger discourses to which they belong, that inform what the practitioner does" (p.8). Galloway (2005), in one of the most intriguing approaches to theorising public relations and new media, calls for professional communicators to develop a new form of cultural literacy, stating that 'negotiating meaning systems in the mobile communications context requires use of a new language—'txt'—and knowledge of the protocols of this environment' (p. 572).

This includes not only technical knowledge, but also knowledge of the conventions of 'swift, abbreviated, direct responses that capture communicative moments rather than extended discussion' (Galloway, 2005). According to Galloway (2005), these moments are "spontaneous rather than structured, used more to coordinate and sustain social relationships, and to meet emotional needs such as feelings of belonging rather than simply to achieve task-related outcomes". One possible explanation for all of this is referred to as "dynamic communicative

touch" (Galloway, 2005). If Galloway is correct, and new media communication is fluid and spontaneous, with an emphasis on instilling feelings, public relations management paradigms based on strategic planning and evaluation may need to be reconsidered.

2.2 Empirical Review

Many studies have recently examined the use of new technology by public relations practitioners such as PR practitioners' use of social media tools and communication technology by (Eyrich, Padman, & Sweetser, 2008; The role of new public relations practitioners as social media experts Sha & Dozier, 2012; and Tracking How Social and Other Digital Media are Being Used in Public Relations Practice: A Twelve-Year Study which was an analysis of the increasing impact of social and other new media on public relations practice by (Wright & Hinson, 2009b). Social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, Foursquare, YouTube, and Pinterest are examples of newer technologies. The adoption of social media has been accelerated. Although blogs and podcasts were popular among public relations professionals in 2008, only 24% of practitioners used social networking sites (Eyrich, Padman, & Sweetser, 2008).

According to Will Kenton 2022, the term social networking refers to the use of internet-based social media sites to stay connected with friends, family, colleagues, or customers. Social networking is also a significant opportunity for marketers seeking to engage customers. Social networking is now considered an essential component of most public relations campaigns. The use of social networking tools is part of a trend in public relations that emphasizes the importance of two-way or multi-directional communication rather than information dissemination (Deuze, 2007; Van Ruler, Vercic, Buetschi, & Flodin, 2004; Wright & Hinson, 2009b). According to Wright and Hinson (2008a, 2009b), most public relations professionals believe that the use of social media has benefited public relations. They also discovered that approximately 85 percent of public relations professionals believe that these new tools and traditional media complement rather than compete with one another (Wright & Hinson, 2009b).

Information and communication technologies (ICT) have boosted opportunities for social connection among world inhabitants, particularly for those who live in urban areas, notwithstanding the reality of the digital divide. The ability to use social media and other digital tools depends directly on the degree of technology available to PR practitioners and their publics,

as well as the level of technological expertise of virtual communication with stakeholders near and far (Sriramesh & Duhe, 2009).

Lately, online PR has become a major medium that PR practitioners should use efficiently and rationally for effective PR. PR professionals should adopt and master the new technology because of the various services it provides for a transparent, democratic and effective communication to promote and develop strong relationships between the organisation and its publics (Kirat, 2007).

It is obvious that new media has the potential to make people more technically available all of the time: in the automobile, while shopping, at work, at home, and while socializing. This is especially true when considering the cultural forms and contexts in which these new technologies are used. Both public and private companies now use new media to communicate press releases, adverts, and any other information about their organizations and the strategic public; new media is used in public relations practice today to maintain relationships and understanding. Nowadays, businesses post information about open positions and opportunities on social media and the internet, they offer opportunities for investor relations online, and some even create an online chat platform to interact with stakeholders.

E-mail and videoconferencing have also developed into true tools in this new dimension using the internet as a platform (Fitzgerald, 2005). According to a paper by Bledsoe et al. (2007), digital information and applications will be just as important and deeply ingrained in economic prosperity in the twenty-first century as electronic power was in the twentieth. The research claims that digital content and apps have features with "general-purpose technology" like information and communications technology in general. The idea that no other technology can more effectively foster relationships between organizations and their publics than the new media is raised by the internet as a communication tool. Ever since new media entered the corporate sector in the 1980s, the profession of public relations has undergone a permanent transformation.

Since new media entered the corporate sector in the 20th century, the profession of public relations has undergone constant transformation (Pavlik & Dozier, 1996). Social networking websites will force public relations professionals to re-evaluate how they build relationships with their stakeholders, claims Christ (2007). The interactive features of social networking have been tested by practitioners, who report success for their companies.

According to Galloway (2005), the mobile nature of new media undermines established public relations strategies, which forces professionals to reconsider how they interact with the general public. According to Waters et al. (2010), the development of new media has caused public relations, including media relations, to no longer be categorized as the routine of producing static programming. Instead, practitioners must look for new communication channels and opportunities for involving all stakeholders if they want to remain relevant and current in the context of the development of new media. Typically, many observers refer to new media as any electronic communication that is made feasible by a computer or other digital technology.

It is common knowledge that building and maintaining positive relationships with an organization's key stakeholders is the primary goal of public relations. Utilizing the proper tools will make this simple to do. Today, technology advancements and convergence have transformed traditional public relations tools like press kits, newsletters, news releases, and facility visits, to name just a few. As a result, new and modern instruments for public relations practice have emerged. This is not to argue that the "old" tools have been superseded by the "new," but rather that they work best together for successful media relations. The media outlets that adapt to the 21st century's shifting trends continue to be the modern public relations tools.

They include, among other things, facility visits, the internet, webcasting, email, videoconferencing, and video news releases. Concerningly, the public relations department now faces a dilemma of choice due to the entry of a variety of contemporary public relations tools. In this regard, presents some considerations to keep in mind when making the best decision (Ajala, 1993). The academic literature suggests that public relations professionals will face a variety of difficulties in the future. They could need to create virtual experiences that inspire sentiments of kinship, participation, admiration, and significance (Galloway 2005).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Moreover, the chapter describes the methods used in the collection and analysis of data for this investigation. The subject selection process, research methods, data collection, and measuring instruments used in this study are also discussed. This research would assess the utilization of new media at the Ethiopian Airlines Group. As a research methodology the researcher used a mixed method approach. A mixed-methods approach is a research methodology in its own right. As stated by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011), a mixed-methods research design is a research design that has its own philosophical assumptions and methods of inquiry.

3.2 Research Design

The researcher used mixed-methods study of qualitative and quantitative data collection to improve the evaluation by ensuring that the limitations of one type of data are balanced by the strengths of another. The mixed-methods sequential explanatory design will be applied in this research consisting of the two distinct phases: quantitative followed by qualitative, the qualitative data will be collected and analysed second in the sequence and help explain, or elaborate on, the quantitative results obtained in the first phase. An initial definition provided by Denzin and Lincoln (1994) adheres that qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matters.

Qualitative research involves the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials (case study, personal experience, introspective, life story, interview, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts) that describe routine and problematic moments and meaning in individuals' life, in this study to focus on the assessment and utilization of Ethiopian Airlines new media channels.

Quantitative research utilizes experimental methods and quantitative measures to test hypotheses and generalizations are the outcomes of this test. They also emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables (Creswell, 2003 & McMillan and Schumacher, 2006). The data collection method will help identify the advantages of new media sites and their

implementation in which they allow people to interact with the airline's channels. In this study the researcher aims to familiarize herself with the concept to be studied and generate a hypothesis. The rationale of the sequential explanatory design is that it provides better understanding of the research problem and in which to investigate the benefits and effectiveness of new media channels as well as analyse how the PR office of the company and its customers interaction with these new media channels as the qualitative data can be used to clarify and explain the quantitative analysis.

The researcher used a qualitative research method which affords a rich insight and understanding of a situation or target public to also state the problem by establishing definitions to be used in the measurement to create a hypothesis and to communicate and report the findings, interpret the data to make inferences and generalizations, related literature on the subject would be used to research facts to support the study in addition to interviewing an expert who can offer advice on a specific issue in the usage of social media from the airline's public relations office and quantitative method of collecting data will be used in examining the size of the audience, and the number of followers on the airlines' social media pages, as well as the reach of the postings via Facebook and tweeter Insights and analytics , After wards to looked at how many people have interacted with posts and finally to assess the overall practice of social media usage in the Ethiopian Airlines group.

The researcher intended to conduct a mixed-methods study in which the above mentioned qualitative research method will allow the researcher to understand the deeper structure of a fact and increase understanding related to the desire to uncover the story behind the statistics and because quantitative research methods analyse data using statistical figures, in this study which are posted content ,engagement, followers, and actionable insights this method saves the researcher time and effort that would otherwise be spent describing findings. The basic premise of this methodology is that such integration permits a more complete and synergistic utilization of data than do separate quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. By identifying the research design (population of study and then sampling) the researcher will obtain the data for analyses. Interpret the data to make interpretations and generalizations to communicate and report the findings. Within this type of outcome study, the researcher will collect and analyses both quantitative and qualitative data from the PR office of Ethiopian Airlines Group.

Mixing two methods might be superior to a single method as it is likely to provide rich insights into the research phenomena that cannot be fully understood by using only qualitative or quantitative methods. A mixed-methods design can integrate and synergize multiple data sources which can assist to study complex problems (Poth & Munce, 2020). The application of mixed method research, as mentioned in the previous section, means purposeful data consolidation which allows researchers to seek a wide view of their study by enabling them to view a phenomenon from different perspectives and research lenses (Shorten & Smith, 2017).

3.3 Research Approach

This study used a descriptive and explanatory sequential research approach to evaluate new media with an emphasis on Ethiopian Airlines' public relations application or usage strategy. Explanatory Sequential design occurs in two distinct interactive phases, the beginning with the collection and analysis of the quantitative data to expand the first phase quantitative results followed by the designing of the second, qualitative phase on the basis of the quantitative findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017; Shorten & Smith, 2017; Wisdom & Creswell, 2013). In this design, a researcher follows up on a specific quantitative finding and explains it with the qualitative data (Wisdom & Creswell, 2013). Study design is a logical model that guides the investigator in the various stages of the research process. Once the researchers identify the study design, they will know how to proceed conducting that research. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used in this study. When both quantitative and qualitative data, together, provide a better understanding of a research problem than either type by itself.

When one type of research (qualitative or quantitative) is not enough to address the research problem or answer the research questions the mixed method is the best option to use. In addition the mixed method approach applies pragmatism – practicality; multiple view points; biased and unbiased; subjective and objective Creswell, J. (2008). As a result, both descriptive and explanatory study designs were applied. The mixed method utilizes both quantitative and qualitative data collection methodologies such as Interviews and Questionnaires, Performance Tests and Observation, Questionnaires and follow up Focus groups, Document analysis, Performance Tests, Questionnaire, and Interviews.

3.4 Type and Source of Data

In order to accomplish the goal of the study, the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative types of data. Additionally, primary and secondary data sources were used in this investigation. A questionnaire, interviews, and social media insights were used as the data gathering tools to gather the key sources of data. Documents such as standard operating procedures, checklists, service level agreements and reports including a digital media analysis and reporting software the Public Relations and corporate communications department of Ethiopian Airlines as well as websites, and other published and unpublished sources served as the secondary source of data.

3.5 Study Population

The target population was the entire group of people to which the researcher wished to generalize the study findings. The corporate communications and public relations department of Ethiopian Airlines Group is where this study was carried out. The study's accessible population was limited to the PR & Corporate Communications organizational structure, personnel and professional factors. The data for the study was collected and analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The accessible population in a systematic sampling will be the 10 corporate communication officers who are directly involved in creating social media and website content production. The study was used to determine the target demographic for Ethiopian Airlines' social media pages as well as how the Public Relations & Corporate Communications division uses these platforms. The study used data from the airline's online database and analytics gathered from its website and social media sites to gather information from its online audience.

3.6 Sampling Method and Sample Size

The participants in a research study are referred to collectively as the population. A population is the entire group that the researcher wants to draw conclusions about. A sample is the specific group that will collect data from. The size of the sample is always less than the total size of the population. The researcher concentrated on gathering qualitative data from Ethiopian Airlines' Public Relations Department for the purposes of the study. The Department is divided into three groups. The team in charge of media relations, the team in charge of social media, and the team in charge of event planning. The media relations team is primarily in charge of public and media announcements and releases. Through the company's various social media channels, the social media team works to maintain the company's interaction with the public and the media. The event

management team oversees organizing and planning events with the goal of involving the public and the media. Officers who may represent all Ethiopian Airlines' customers are drawn from the above-mentioned PR staff.

Therefore, this study used the census sampling method because it was possible to include all the population in the corporate communication department. According to Neuman (2007), surveying every member of a population, which is known as census, helps the researcher get high-quality data which leads to sound conclusions. Work experience, general perception of the Public relation activities, current position of each PR officers, personal and professional insights of each respondent were considered to analyse data gathered from interview and the questionnaire distributed.

3.7 Tools of Data Collection

Data collection as a main stage in research can overshadow the quality of achieving results by decreasing the possible errors which may occur during a research project. Therefore, alongside a good design for the study, plenty of quality time should be spent in the collection of data to gain appropriate results since insufficient and inaccurate data prevents assuring the accuracy of findings (Kabir, 2016). The researcher used both qualitative and quantitative data collection method with different tools to execute them. Qualitative data is data both nominal and descriptive non-numerical data which cannot be shown as numbers but are put in words or sentences format. This type of data answers to "how and why" questions in a research study and mostly covers data regarding feelings, perceptions, and emotions using unstructured approaches such as questioners, surveys and interviews for data collection the other Numerical data type in research which is mathematically generated and computed is recognized as quantitative data.

There are different scales for measuring quantitative data including nominal, ordinal, interval, and ratio (Kabir, 2016). By identifying the research design (population of study and then sampling) the researcher obtained data, analyzed and interpret it to make inferences and generalizations to communicate and report the findings. The measures used to evaluate the assessment of new media practice in public relations was based on previously validated items to and to measure practical and theoretical applications of the subject. To assess the general state of the quality of the work of

the PR department within an organization the Nikolic, M., Bozic, S., Terek, E., Vlahovic, M., Kavalic, M., & Ivanis, M. (2020).

3.7.1 Questionnaire

A structured questionnaire was used in the study's survey methodology. A survey is used to extrapolate findings from a sample to the entire population. This approach was chosen due to its rapid data collection speed and cost-effectiveness. In addition, this study is cross-sectional in that all pertinent information was gathered at a single point in time. The questionnaire data for the study was collected and analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The accessible population in a systematic sampling was the 10 corporate communication officers who are directly involved in accessing and managing the airlines new media channels, creating social media and website content production. Due to scheduling constraints, a cross-sectional research was adopted for this investigation.

The Development of a Questionnaire for Measuring the Quality of the Work of the PR Department in Organizations will be adapted. The defined questionnaire consists of 5 dimensions and 16 items with an evaluation from 1-7, which cover all of the most important segments of the work of the PR department in organizations, out of the 5 dimensions selected 2 from the questionnaire will be used in this research first dimension to assess the Ethical and responsible action, the second Media relations dimension which will consists of 6 items in total.

The structure of the questionnaire is comprehensive, complementary, logical and consistent. The questionnaire responds to a very important question: how well (quality) does the PR department work in the organization? To assess the practice of new media in the organization a measure adapted from Wright & Hinson – Public Relations Journal – Vol. 7, No. 3, 2013, An Updated Examination of Social and Emerging Media Use in Public Relations Practice: A Longitudinal Analysis Between 2006 and 2013, will be implemented. The research questions with minor adjustments throughout the years to examine social and emerging media use in public relations distributed to 2,616 respondents throughout the eight years with an average of 523 respondents each year. Most (more than 90 percent) of this study's subjects were from North America, other respondents have come from many different parts of the world representing a good cross-section of the public relations industry.

These series of questions were used to collect useful information from respondents as such can be used as standard questioners to evaluate this study's general objective which is assessing new media and public relations practice. The mixed-methods sequential and explanatory design was applied in this research consisting of two distinct phases: quantitative, followed by qualitative; the qualitative data was collected and analysed. Second in the sequence and help explain, or elaborate on, the quantitative results obtained in the first phase. The researcher used a qualitative research method, which provided a rich insight and understanding of a situation or target audience in order to also state the problem by establishing definitions to be used in the measurement to create a hypothesis. Communicate and report the findings, interpret the data to make inferences, and generalizations, an online database was used to research facts to support the study. For the validation of items in the questionnaire, content and construct validity was carried out. This is usually done to ensure that the instrument accurately measures what it sets out to measure.

3.7.2 Interview

To gather detailed information on new media channels and their utilization as a public relations tool the researcher gathered data by interviewing staff working in the Public Relations and corporate communications department particularly those managing the airlines social media channels five in number and the two corporate communication experts who can offer insights on a specific issue in the usage of new media channels by the airline. The interview questions are also adopted from the standardized measure adapted from Wright & Hinson – Public Relations Journal 2013, the results of the interview have been summarized and grouped into themes accordingly.

3.7.3 Document analysis

The quantitative data collection on this study focused on new media platforms consisted of the organizations profile information, published content (such as text, images and other media), as well as details of relationships or interactions between the users on the platform. Documents such as standard operating procedures, checklists, service level agreements and reports including a digital media analysis and reporting software the Public Relations and corporate communications department of Ethiopian Airlines as well as websites, and other published and unpublished sources served as the secondary source of data.

Thus, the quantitative data collection of this research focused on public data which will be gathered from the Ethiopian Airlines new channels through page analytics and a digital social network managing tool which supported in collecting the external audience data analysis. This social media analysis software included data such as post engagement: Number of (likes, comments, and shares), post reach, views, Follower count and growth over time and demographic data: (age, gender, and geographical location). To assess the Ethiopian Airlines public relations and corporate communication managed social media pages, the researcher selected the airline's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube page data for one year's sample randomly from May 2021- May 2022.

3.8 Methods of Data Analysis

Before data analysis and presentation, the researcher did the reliability test using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). The most popular internal consistency reliability estimate was given by Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient. Then, afterwards, an analysis was conducted to ascertain the reliability and consistency of the research instrument. Data obtained from primary sources was analysed by using simple descriptive inferential statistical tools such as frequency and percentage. Once the researcher completed the questionnaires, interviews and completion of information that is collected from the digital media channel and the data analysis software, then the data went on editing, and analysing of the finding of the study. The assignment of transforming the data from the above-mentioned data collection tools into useable results involved numerous discrete tasks such as initial editing of the questionnaires, entering of the data and correction of the data, for analysing it, and then further went to interpreting the results of the findings. The analysed data was presented in tables and graphs, and all the necessary narration and interpretations were made on the findings from the obtained data through a questionnaire.

The reason that more researchers are opting for these types of research is that both qualitative and quantitative data are simultaneously collected, analysed and interpreted. Reliability which is the measuring power Instruments which are used at different times to provide similar results. While applying the measurement of reliability it is unlikely to get the same result as time passes it is expected to receive different results time changing people's perspectives in matters even in the same group samples. The Reliability of the measuring instrument is an important factor to be safe

for the outcomes of the research. Accordingly, Researchers will ensure that the instruments used for the measurement will be accurate.

Quantitative research utilizes experimental methods and quantitative measures to test hypotheses and generalizations are the outcomes of this test. They also emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables (Creswell, 2003 & McMillan and Schumacher, 2006). The meaning of quantitative paradigm of research was explained by Golafashani (2003) as: Charts and graphs illustrate the results of the research, and commentators employ words such as ‘variables’, ‘populations’ and ‘result’ as part of their daily vocabulary. In quantitative paradigm researchers attempt to delimit phenomena into measurable or common categories that can be applied to all the subjects (winter, 2000). Therefore, construction of instrument(s), and administration in standardized manner based on the predetermined procedures is the primary requirement of quantitative researchers.

Therefore, the research instrument was subjected to content inspection by an expert in the field. In addition, the researcher will insure that the items in the research instrument successfully measure the theoretical constructs of the study. In this research the main research instruments (questionnaire, interview and online data collection) usually used in the mixed method designs will presented to review validity and reliability, of these data collection methods a pilot study consisting of four Public Relations Practitioners was conducted for examination and evaluation. A sample data analytics within a given time frame was also gathered from the selected social media channels for prior evaluation and understanding. It is believed that using different types of procedures for collecting data and obtaining that information through different sources can augment the validity and reliability of the data and their interpretation.

3.9 Ethical consideration

While conducting the study, ethical dilemma subjects were bound to come up. Several steps were taken to minimize these issues. First, the researcher made sure to get consent from the individuals who participated in the research before answering the questioners and doing the interviews. Secondly, the capacity of the participants was also determined. Moreover, institutional data policies were followed carefully. Every individual who participated did so willingly without being under any form of pressure or distress.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Background Information of the Respondents

This study consists of 50% male and 50% female respondents. About 60% of respondents were bachelor's degree holders, and the rest, 40% of respondents were master's degree holders. In addition, 90% of respondents' work experience was between 5–10 years and the rest 10 had above 20 years of work experience, as shown in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Sex, educational level and work experience of respondents

	Sex			Educational level			Experience			
	Male	Female	Total	B. A	M.A	Tot.	1-5	6-15	16 - 25	Tot
Frequency	5	5	10	6	4	10	9	0	1	10
Percent	50	50	100	60	40	100	70	0	10	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

4.2 Analysis of New media in Public Relations

According to this study, approximately 40% of their working time in public relations and communications was spent on new media channels was more than 50%. And, 30% of their working time in public relations and communications was spent on new media channels was between 1–10%. About 20% of their working time in public relations and communications spent on new media channels was between 26 and 50%. At last, 10% of their working time in public relations and communications spent on new media channels was between 11% and 11%, as illustrated in table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Percentage of respondents working time in public relations and communications is spent on new media channels

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-10%	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
	11-25%	1	10.0	10.0	40.0
	26-50%	2	20.0	20.0	60.0

	more than 50%	4	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

In this study, 70% of respondents agreed that about 51–75% of communication was disseminated through new media channels. The remaining 30% of respondents agreed that 76% of communication was disseminated through new media channels as shown in table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: The amount of communication that is being disseminated through new media channels

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	51-75%	7	70.0	70.0	70.0
	above 76%	3	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

This study showed that 60% of the content communicated through new media channels was two-way and 30% of the content communicated through new media channels was both one-way and two-way. The rest of that 10% of the content communicated through new media channels was one way, as illustrated in table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: The content of what's being communicated through new media channels

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	one way	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	two way	6	60.0	60.0	70.0
	Both	3	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to this study, 90% of respondents agreed that the magnitude of the impact of the information disseminated about the organization through new media channels was high. The

remaining 10% of respondents agreed that the magnitude of the impact of the information disseminated about the organization through new media channels was very high, as shown in table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5: The magnitude of the impact of the information disseminated about the organization through new media channels

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	very high	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	High	9	90.0	90.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

4.3 Analysis of Ethical and Responsible Action

According to this study, 40% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that public relations tells the truth and provides comprehensive and accurate information. And also, 30% of respondents strongly disagreed that public relations tell the truth and provides comprehensive and accurate information. The remaining 20% of respondents were neutral about whether public relations tell the truth and provides comprehensive and accurate information or not, as shown in table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Public Relations tells the truth, and provides comprehensive and accurate information

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
	Disagree	2	20.0	20.0	50.0
	Neutral	4	40.0	40.0	90.0
	Agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Strongly Agree	10	100.0	100.0	
	Total				

Source: Field Survey, 2022

About 50% of respondents disagreed that public relations act transparently while respecting the public interest and about 30% of respondents agreed that public relations acts transparently while respecting the public interest. The remaining 20% of respondents were neutral about whether public relations act transparently while respecting the public interest or not, as illustrated in table 4.7 below.

Table 4.7: Public relations acts transparently, while respecting the public interest.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	5	50.0	50.0	50.0
	Neutral	2	20.0	20.0	70.0
	Agree	3	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

In this study, about 30% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that public relations work in accordance with the principles of social responsibility. Furthermore, 30% of respondents disagreed, with 10% strongly disagreeing, that public relations work in accordance with social responsibility principles. As shown in table 4.8 below, the remaining 20% of respondents were unsure whether public relations work in accordance with social responsibility principles or not.

Table 4.8: Public relations works in accordance with the principles of social responsibility.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Disagree	3	30.0	30.0	40.0
	Neutral	2	20.0	20.0	60.0
	Agree	3	30.0	30.0	90.0

	Strongly Agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to this study, 40% of respondents disagreed that the evaluation of public relations activities is done continuously. Also, 20% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that the evaluation of public relations activities is done continuously. The remaining 30% of respondents were neutral about whether the evaluation of public relations activities is done continuously or not, as illustrated in table 4.9 below.

Table 4.9: The evaluation of public relations activities is done continuously

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	4	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Neutral	3	30.0	30.0	70.0
	Agree	2	20.0	20.0	90.0
	strongly agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

4.4 Media Relation Analysis

In this study, about 40% of respondents agreed and 20% of respondents strongly agreed that public relations provide good relations and cooperation with the media. And, 10% of respondents disagreed and 20% of respondents strongly disagreed that public relations provide good relations and cooperation with the media. The remaining 10% of respondents were neutral on whether public relations provide good relations and cooperation with the media or not, as shown in table 4.10 below.

Table 4.10: Public relations provide good relations and cooperation with the media

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Disagree	1	10.0	10.0	30.0

	Neutral	1	10.0	10.0	40.0
	Agree	4	40.0	40.0	80.0
	Strongly Agree	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

On the media relations analysis, this study showed that 50% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that public relations provide good relations and cooperation with journalists. And, 20% of respondents strongly disagreed and 20% of respondents disagreed that public relations provide good relations and cooperation with journalists, as illustrated in table 4.11 below.

Table 4.11: Public relations provide good relations and cooperation with journalists

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Disagree	2	20.0	20.0	40.0
	Agree	5	50.0	50.0	90.0
	Strongly Agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

4.5 Digital Media Analysis

About 50% of respondents agreed that the emergence of new media has changed the way their organization operates. And, 30% of respondents disagreed and 20% of respondents strongly disagreed that the emergence of new media has changed the way their organization operates, as illustrated in table 4.12 below.

Table 4.12: The emergence of new media has changed the way your organization operates

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	20.0	20.0	20.0

	Disagree	3	30.0	30.0	50.0
	Agree	5	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to the study, 50% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that social media has enhanced the practice of public relations. And, 30% of respondents disagreed and 10% of respondents strongly disagreed that social media has enhanced the practice of public relations, as illustrated in table 4.13 below.

Table 4.13: Social media have enhanced the practice of public relations

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Disagree	3	30.0	30.0	40.0
	Agree	5	50.0	50.0	90.0
	Strongly Agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to the study, 50% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that new media channels were trusted information sources. And, 20% of respondents disagreed and 10% of respondents strongly disagreed that new media channels were trusted information sources. The remaining 10% of respondents were neutral about whether new media channels were trusted information sources or not, as shown in table 4.14 below.

Table 4.14: New media channels are trusted information sources.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Disagree	2	20.0	20.0	30.0
	Neutral	1	10.0	10.0	40.0

	Agree	5	50.0	50.0	90.0
	Strongly Agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

This study showed 70% of respondents were neutral about whether new media advocates a transparent and ethical culture or not. The remaining 30% of respondents agreed that new media advocates a transparent and ethical culture, as shown in table 4.15 below.

Table 4.15: New media advocates a transparent and ethical culture.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Neutral	7	70.0	70.0	70.0
	Agree	3	30.0	30.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

This study showed 40% of respondents disagreed and 10% of respondents strongly disagreed that new media offers organizations a low-cost way to develop relationships with members of various strategic publics. And, 20% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that new media offers organizations a low-cost way to develop relationships with members of various strategic publics. The remaining 20% of respondents were neutral on whether new media offers organizations a low-cost way to develop relationships with members of various strategic publics, as shown in table 4.16 below.

Table 4.16: New media offers organizations a low-cost way to develop relationships with members of various strategic publics.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly disagree	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Disagree	4	40.0	40.0	50.0
	Neutral	2	20.0	20.0	70.0

	Agree	2	20.0	20.0	90.0
	strongly agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to this study, 30% of respondents agreed and 20% of respondents strongly agreed that new media was impacting corporate and organizational transparency. And, 30% of respondents disagreed that new media was impacting corporate and organizational transparency. The remaining 20% of respondents were neutral about whether new media was impacting corporate and organizational transparency or not, as illustrated in table 4.17 below.

Table 4.17: New media is impacting corporate and organizational transparency.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
	Neutral	2	20.0	20.0	50.0
	Agree	3	30.0	30.0	80.0
	strongly agree	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

In this study, 20% of respondents agreed and 20% of respondents strongly agreed that since social media has made communications more instantaneous, they have forced organizations to respond more quickly to criticism. And, 20% of respondents disagreed and 10% of respondents strongly disagreed that since social media has made communications more instantaneous, they have forced organizations to respond more quickly to criticism. As illustrated in table 4.18 below, the remaining 30% of respondents were neutral to the concept.

Table 4.18: Since social media have made communications more instantaneous, they have forced organizations to respond more quickly to criticism.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly disagree	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Disagree	2	20.0	20.0	30.0

	Neutral	3	30.0	30.0	60.0
	Agree	2	20.0	20.0	80.0
	strongly agree	2	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

4.6 General PR Activities

According to this study, 40% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that Ethiopian Airlines' PR uses new media tools and techniques. And also, 20% of respondents disagreed that Ethiopian Airlines' PR uses new media tools and techniques. The remaining 30% of respondents were neutral about whether Ethiopian Airlines' PR uses new media tools and techniques or not, as illustrated in table 4.19 below.

Table 4.19: Ethiopian Airlines' PR uses new media tools and techniques

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	2	20.0	20.0	20.0
	Neutral	3	30.0	30.0	50.0
	Agree	4	40.0	40.0	90.0
	strongly agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

In this study, 40% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that Ethiopians use proper PR tools for their targeted audience. In addition, the study found that 40% of respondents disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed that Ethiopians use appropriate PR tools for target audiences, as shown in table 4.20 below.

Table 4.20: Ethiopian uses proper PR tools for targeted audience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly disagree	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Disagree	4	40.0	40.0	50.0

	Agree	4	40.0	40.0	90.0
	strongly agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to this study, 20% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that the PR tools and techniques that Ethiopians use were effective. And also, 30% of respondents disagreed that the PR tools and techniques that Ethiopia uses were effective. 20% of respondents were neutral about whether the PR tools and techniques that Ethiopian used were effective or not, as shown in table 4.21 below.

Table 4.21: The PR tools and techniques that Ethiopian uses are effective

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
	Neutral	4	40.0	40.0	70.0
	Agree	2	20.0	20.0	90.0
	Strongly Agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to this study, 40% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that Ethiopians invest in skills and knowledge of PR tools and techniques. Also, 10% of respondents disagreed that Ethiopians invest in skills and knowledge of PR tools and techniques. The remaining 40% of respondents were neutral to the idea of whether Ethiopians invest in skills and knowledge of PR tools and techniques or not, as shown in table 4.22 below.

Table 4.22: Ethiopian invests on skills and knowledge of PR tools and techniques

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Disagree	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Neutral	4	40.0	40.0	50.0

	Agree	4	40.0	40.0	90.0
	Strongly Agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

In this study, 30% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that the choice of PR tools considers Ethiopia's audience. Furthermore, 10% of respondents disagreed and 10% strongly disagreed that the choice of PR tools takes the Ethiopian audience into account. The remaining 40% of respondents were neutral to the idea of whether the choice of PR tools considers Ethiopian's audience or not, as illustrated in table 4.23 below.

Table 4.23: The choice of PR tools considers Ethiopian's audience

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly disagree	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Disagree	1	10.0	10.0	20.0
	Neutral	4	40.0	40.0	60.0
	Agree	3	30.0	30.0	90.0
	strongly agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

In this study, 30% of respondents agreed and 10% of respondents strongly agreed that the PR tools Ethiopian uses allow two-way communication between the company and its public. And, 10% of respondents disagreed and 10% of respondents strongly disagreed that the PR tools Ethiopian uses allow two-way communication between the company and its public. The remaining 40% of respondents were neutral on whether the PR tools Ethiopian uses allow two-way communication between the company and its public or not, as shown in table 4.24 below.

Table 4.24: The PR tools Ethiopian uses allow two-way communication between the company and its publics.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	10.0	10.0	10.0
	Disagree	1	10.0	10.0	20.0

	Neutral	4	40.0	40.0	60.0
	Agree	3	30.0	30.0	90.0
	strongly agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to this study, 30% of respondents agreed and 10% strongly agreed that Ethiopia is reaching out to its public through PR efforts. And, 30% of respondents strongly disagreed and 10% of respondents disagreed that Ethiopia is reaching its public with PR work. As shown in table 4.25 below, the remaining 20% of respondents were unsure whether Ethiopian was reaching its target audience through public relations efforts.

Table 4.25: Ethiopian is reaching its public with PR works.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly disagree	3	30.0	30.0	30.0
	Disagree	1	10.0	10.0	40.0
	Neutral	2	20.0	20.0	60.0
	Agree	3	30.0	30.0	90.0
	strongly agree	1	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	10	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4.26: Descriptive statistics

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Percentage of your working time in public relations and communications is spent on new media channels	10	1.00	4.00	2.7000	1.33749
Sex	10	1.00	2.00	1.5000	.52705
Education level	10	2.00	3.00	2.4000	.51640
Experience	10	2.00	3.00	2.3000	.48305
The amount of communication that is being disseminated through new media channels	10	3.00	4.00	3.3000	.48305
The content of what's being communicated through new media channels	10	1.00	3.00	2.2000	.63246

The magnitude of the impact of the information disseminated about the organization through new media channels	10	1.00	2.00	1.9000	.31623
Public Relations tells the truth, and provides comprehensive and accurate information	10	2.00	5.00	3.3000	1.05935
Public relations act transparently, while respecting the public interest	10	2.00	4.00	2.8000	.91894
Public relations work in accordance with the principles of social responsibility	10	1.00	5.00	3.0000	1.24722
The evaluation of public relations activities is done continuously.	10	2.00	5.00	3.0000	1.05409
Public relations provide good relations and cooperation with the media	10	1.00	5.00	3.3000	1.49443
Public relations provide good relations and cooperation with journalists	10	1.00	5.00	3.1000	1.44914
The emergence of new media has changed the way your organization operates.	10	1.00	4.00	2.8000	1.31656
Social media have enhanced the practice of public relations	10	1.00	5.00	3.2000	1.31656
New media channels are trusted information sources.	10	1.00	5.00	3.3000	1.25167
New media advocates a transparent and ethical culture.	10	3.00	4.00	3.3000	.48305
New media Offers organizations a low-cost way to develop relationships with members of various strategic publics.	10	1.00	5.00	2.8000	1.22927
New media is impacting corporate and organizational transparency.	10	2.00	5.00	3.4000	1.17379
Since social media have made communications more instantaneous, they have forced organizations to respond more quickly to criticism.	10	1.00	5.00	3.2000	1.31656
Ethiopian Airlines' PR uses new media tools and techniques	10	2.00	5.00	3.4000	.96609
Ethiopian uses proper PR tools for targeted audience	10	1.00	5.00	3.0000	1.33333
The PR tools and techniques that Ethiopian uses are effective.	10	2.00	5.00	3.1000	.99443
Ethiopian invests on skills and knowledge of PR tools and techniques.	10	2.00	5.00	3.5000	.84984
The choice of PR tools considers Ethiopian's audience.	10	1.00	5.00	3.2000	1.13529

The PR tools Ethiopian uses allow two-way communication between the company and its publics.	10	1.00	5.00	3.2000	1.13529
Ethiopian is reaching its public with PR works.	10	1.00	5.00	2.8000	1.47573
Valid N (listwise)	10				

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4.27: Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	10	100.0
	Excluded ^a	0	.0
	Total	10	100.0
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.			

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 4.28: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.941	27

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The Cronbach's Alpha reliability test was 0.941 as shown in table 4.28 above and therefore it is acceptable value.

Table 28. Responses given for Interview question 25. Does the PR prepare different press release for different media types?

Frequency Yes - No 5 Total 5

4.7 Data Analysis and Discussion of Questionnaire

The first part of the interview focused on new media channels and management and these questions were raised to the Airlines corporate communications experts, as the researcher believed they have more knowledge and experience of working on new media channels in comparison to the agents with less experience in working on general communications.

Table 4.1: Sex, educational level and work experience of respondents

	Sex			Educational level			Experience		
	Male	Female	Total	B. A	M.A	Tot.	1-5	6-11	Tot
Frequency	2	0	2	0	2	2	1	1	2
Percent	100	0	100	0	100	100	50	50	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to table 1 the total number of respondents holding an expert's position were two males. The above table also displays the level of education of the Ethiopian Airlines Public Relations communication experts. According to the analysis, 100% of the public relations experts were university graduates holding master's degree and with experience on the field. For the purpose of this study the Ethiopian Airlines corporate communications experts are labelled as E1 for Expert 1 and E2.

The first question the researcher raised was asking **what platforms does Ethiopian Airlines use to communicate with its consumers?** The respondents both agreed that Ethiopian airlines has an online presence with different channels in which it reaches its customers with. The first responder coded E1 responded with *Ethiopian has an online presence on Social media, website, and mobile app, email communication channels where they can address their messages on and connect with their customers with.*

And the second interviewee E2 replied with *the airline has a great online presence in different platforms to reach its customers in their own place, whether be it on mobile or in computer available 24/7 in multiple channels.*

The second question directed was **How important is social media in your organization?**

The respondents again agreed on the high importance of using social media in organizations. E1 said *it is very important because it's a means to get a lot of audience and our customers at the same place and a way to easily and simply disseminate info with less cost and a short amount of time.* The second respondent E2 added *it's important as an in-house media managed by the company but is a way to directly reach our customers with our own platform. Very handy especially at the time when crisis communication is needed.*

For the third question, **to what extent is your organization being effective in using the new media in communicating with its external publics?**

The Respondents agreed on the effectiveness of using new media channels E1 said *It is effective mentioning that the office works 24/7 in schedule with the social media team monitoring and disseminating information & the according to the rating & engagement measured it is good. But In comparison to other airlines it still needs work and the expectation for higher ratings and numbers is more.* E2 responded saying *The number of followers on social media channels increasing each day and with technology development the services we give being re directed to online are the proof that show the airlines presence online and the increasing number of ticket sales and usage of different services we provide show the effectiveness of usage of new media and its communication channels.*

For the fourth question which is **Have you developed an overall content strategy?**

E1 responded with *No, not that I know of.* E2 said *the department has standard operating procedures when we go accordingly with and SLA too with other departments for a smooth flow of communication.*

The last question raised for these respondents was, **what kind of website analytics do you have available?** Both respondents said yes and mentioned the use of an online software, a tool used for monitoring and reporting called Social baker analytics, a marketing & analytics suites, offering one of the largest databases of social media statistics and insights.

4.8 In-depth Interview Questions Focusing on Social Media

The Second part of the interview was to the social media managing team of the corporate communications office. To identify the respondents their answers are represented below coded as SM1 – SM5 referring to their position and title in the department as Social Media Managers.

Table 4.1: Sex, educational level and work experience of respondents

	Sex			Educational level			Experience		
	Male	Female	Total	B. A	M.A	Tot.	1-5	6-11	Tot
Frequency	1	4	5	4	1	5	4	1	10
Percent	10	90	100	90	10	100	90	10	100

Source: Field Survey, 2022

According to table 1 the total number of Females who responded were 10 % while female was 90% from the study it can be concluded that the number of females exceed the number of male PR officers in the social media management section.

The above table displays the level of education of the Ethiopian Airlines Public Relations communication officers in the social media management team. According to the analysis, 100% of the public relations officers were university graduates. With four Female and one male public relations officer in the social media management section.

The first question was **who are your target audience?**

According to the interviewees the target audience of the airlines social media pages are people on all demographics all over the world, the company as a commercial airline is open to transport all people from all walks of life and as such the public on social media is a potential customer in this regard the contents published on the pages are promotions and are used as marketing strategies to gain new customers and maintain the existing ones to use the service the airline provides.

The second question raised was, **what is the quality of your social media updates?**

The interviewees mentioned that they use a content calendar for all social media posts, there is a weekly post calendar which includes the different sections and departments the Airline has, and diversified contents are produced from every section which could be a promotion of the services they provide, a discounted fare, a notice, events and alike. Contents that have been produced from getting information from every section then goes through a vetting and approval process before getting published, and at times contents that have been published through this process might be edited or removed amended and then reposted.

One of the respondents coded SM2 further explained saying yes *they are quality posts which are planed but sometimes the editing and removing and then after reposting of contents might put the quality of posts to begin with and questions whether this process is applied effectively or if it is just written checklists that are not put to work on the day to day.*

Respondent coded SM1 added *we also benchmark other airlines social media pages to see the level of where we are and to adapt positive trends that will help our engagement.*

The third question was **What are your most engaging post types?**

According to the interviewees the most engaging post types vary depending on the platforms and the time, pictures of cabin crews and pilots are mostly engaging and what the audience like and at times its engaging posts which ask the audience for answers in replays, competition and interviews are also listed as the most engaging post types of the Ethiopian airlines social media pages.

The forth question raised was **What do you or your company aim to achieve with social media?**

According to the interviewees the Ethiopian airlines group aims to achieve the strategic goals set in their vision 2025 of increasing passenger numbers and revenue by marketing the airlines services and products gaining more customers, engage with passengers and their inquiry's fix problems they must keep them loyal and with the company for the future.

The fifth question was **What emotions do you hope to convey through your brand's visuals and messaging?**

The interviews replied the aim of their contents are to put a positive message an engaging and attractive post that will create a happy and positive impact to build more on their relationship with customers to continue to fly Ethiopian and address issues on time to show the effectiveness and performance of the airline specifically answering and replying to customer comments within 5 minutes in reference to the SOP the team has and uses. SM4 highlighted on this saying *Customers need positive and safe place to put their complaints on or compliments for the airline and if what we post doesn't allow that or is uninviting it's hard.*

The six question was **What type of content best supports your content marketing mission?**

The respondents replied with multiple types of post such as Q& A types where they ask questions and the customer replies which have high number of reach and engagements, pictures of crews, pilots and attractive pictures of aircrafts along with messages are the types they have mentioned. Respondent SM2 added *we put links on posts to redirect customers to more information and for*

them to purchase tickets and get services online easily which is part of our growing mission as an Airline.

The last question was **how is the customer interaction on your social media pages?**

The interviewees agreed that the customer interactions are medium regarding the outreach and in comparison, to the target they have seated. SM2 more elaborated on this matter said *The competition on the field is high and we want customers to prefer to use our services that is how we make the contents but due to many reasons the interaction compared with our international competitors in low but in the region and in Africa we have a good presence and the interaction is fine.*

4.9 Analysis of Social Media Data

According to this study, Ethiopian Airlines Group social media pages had a magnitude of data to analyse and interpret the status they are in relation with the three-objectives listed below. The analysis of social media data can help businesses better understand their customers' needs and expectations, as well as improve the efficiency of customer service and market research conducted through social channels. For the purpose of this study the data collected from the social media channels will be analysed with the below three business objectives.

Awareness

When launching a new product of service business goals are to get to their audience new and existing the objective being to increase more traffic to their site for higher sales. As such do the contents published on the Ethiopian Airlines social media pages achieve this? In social media sites the researcher has viewed and analysed this using the content reach, page views and follower numbers.

Engagement

To get people more aware of the product or service that the company is offering with a lead to interaction to build brand trust and influence the customers purchase decision and Ethiopian Airlines Group as an internationally competitive company needs to maintain a standard high brand image. To assess this in social media platforms the researcher has measured the audience embankment on a content such as likes, comments, shares and retweets of the social media pages.

Lead generation

In order to have new customers or keep the existing ones and increase sales, driving enough leads or high traffic to a company is crucial with the goal of demonstrating value of the product or service the company is offering to then increase buyer frequency. This from social media channels is measured in assessing incoming traffic in the case of social media posts the sales data produced from a redirecting post links. Through the above-mentioned data gathering formats and types quantitative data analysis involves working with numerical variables — including statistics, percentages, measurements, and other data as the nature of quantitative data is numerical.

In general, the case of evolution interaction, Facebook was the leading social media in the Ethiopian Airlines group. It was also the maximum distribution of interactions in the Ethiopian Airlines group. Instagram was the leading social media platform in the Ethiopian Airlines group by the number of interactions per 1000 followers, as illustrated in table 4.29 and figure 4.1 below.

Table 4.29: Social media data

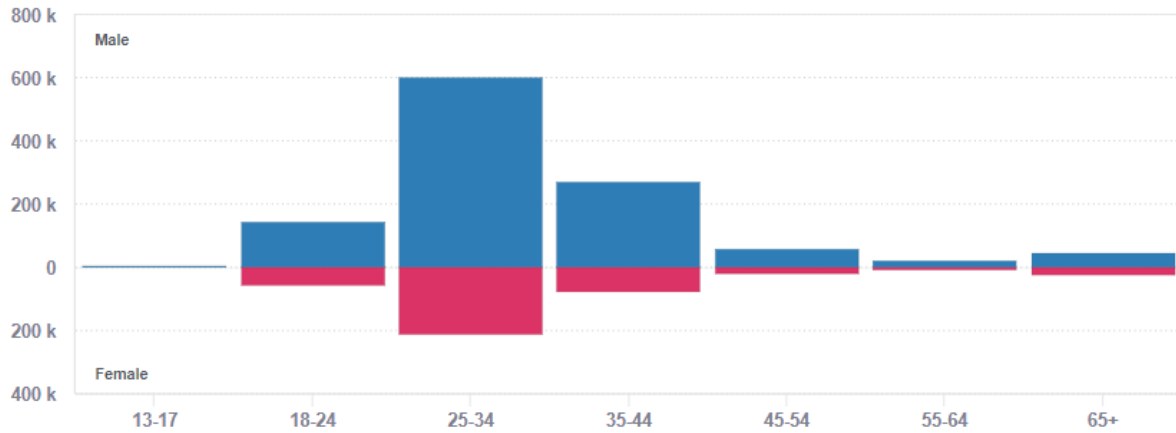
S/N		Facebook English	Facebook Amharic	Instagram	Twitter
1.	Growth of Total Followers	+780,000	+13,800	+19,800	+182,000
2.	Maximum post Interaction	243,900	57,700	31,700	44,700
3.	Distribution of Interactions	1800000	264000	8,600	217,000
4.	Number of Interactions per 1000 Followers	243.9	440.7	55.45	78.5

Source: Ethiopian Airlines Group department database

4.9.1 Facebook English page

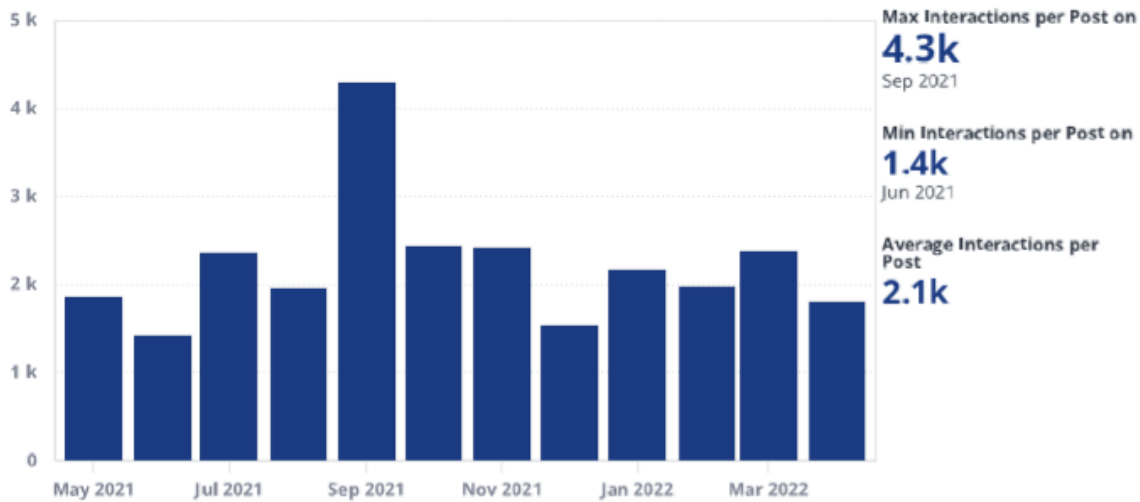
Demographics

The analysis of the demographic data from the Ethiopian Airlines English Facebook Insights gave the following result:



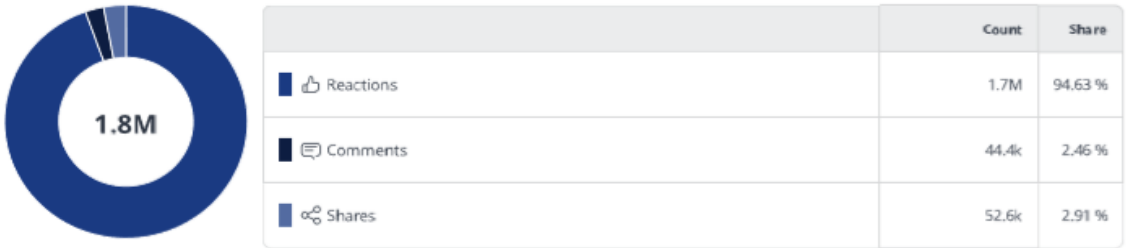
Age Range	Male in%	Female in %
13-17	0.2	0.1
18-24	9.2	3.8
25-34	38.9	13.7
35-44	17.6	5.2
45-54	3.8	1.2
55-64	1.2	0.6
65+	2.8	1.7
Total	73.7	26.3

As shown in the figure below the demographics of the Ethiopian Airlines facebook English page range begins from 13-65+. The highest number of fans according to the facebook analytics is in the 25-34 age range with a 38.9% male and 13.7 in female fans.

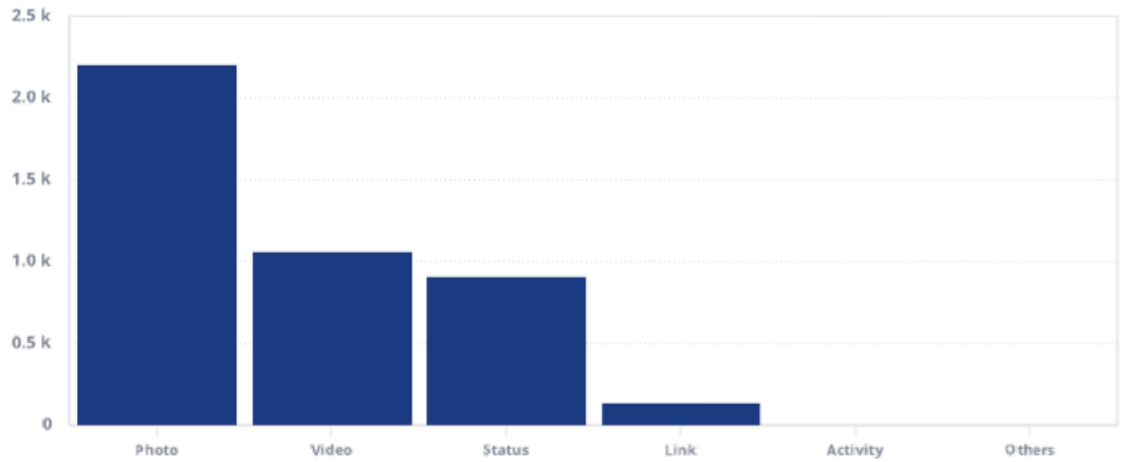


Engagement Overview May2021-May2022

The above engagement overview graph shows the follower interaction from the beginning of May2021 until the end of April 2022 recording a highest number of engagements in September 2021. The maximum Interaction of a post during this highest recorded month as a 4.5k per post and with the minimum post interaction recorded as a 1.4k in June giving an average interaction per post of a 2.1k.

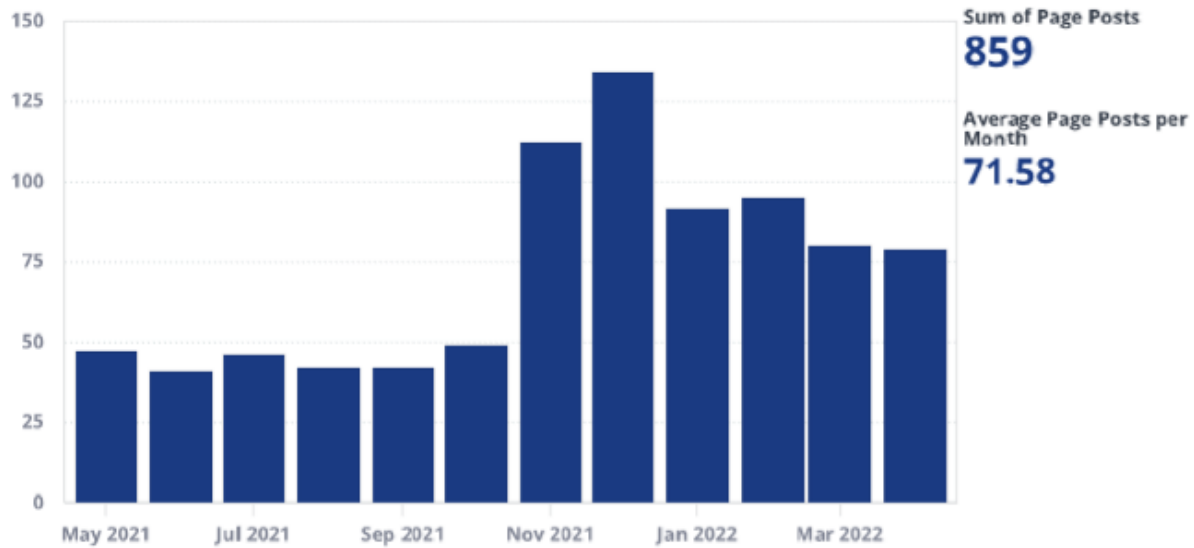


Most Engaging Post Types ¹¹



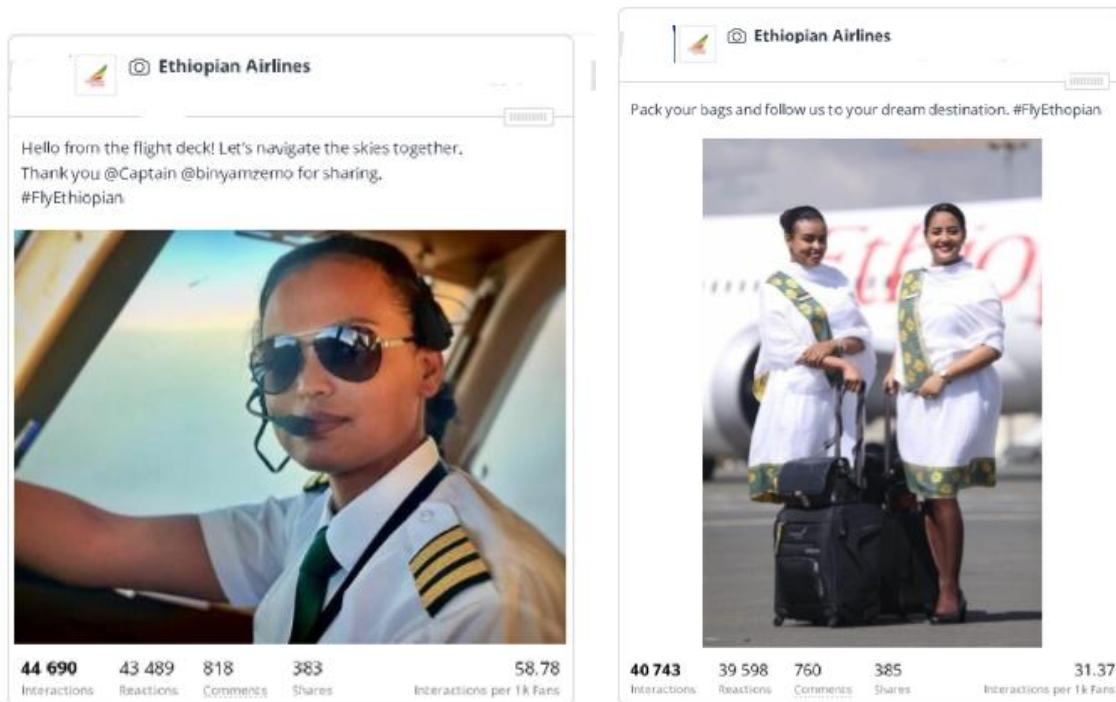
Engagement distribution and types May2021-May2022

Distribution of the above-mentioned interactions per post are shown in the chart below with a 1.7M reaction ,44.4k Comments and 52.6 shares holding 94.63%, 2.46% & 2.91% respectively and in total the number of interactions is 1.8Milion throughout these twelve months, with the most engaging post type being posts with photos then with videos after with status and then posts with links.

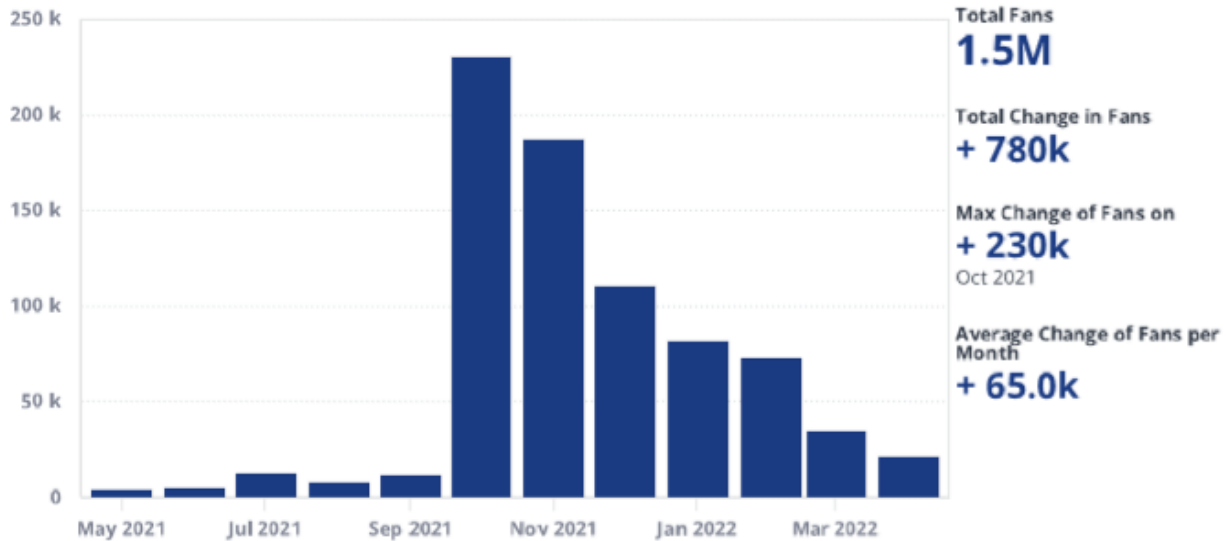


Page posts May2021-May2022

The engagement statistics are derived from the content posted on the page as, so we see the detailed figures and distribution of these posts on the below graph. According to the collected analytics posts published on the Ethiopian Airlines Facebook English pages were higher in the month of December with a total post throughout the year being 859 posts and about 71 posts on average per month, and below are the most engaging posts per 1000 fans of the page during the selected timeframe.



Most engaging post May2021-May2022



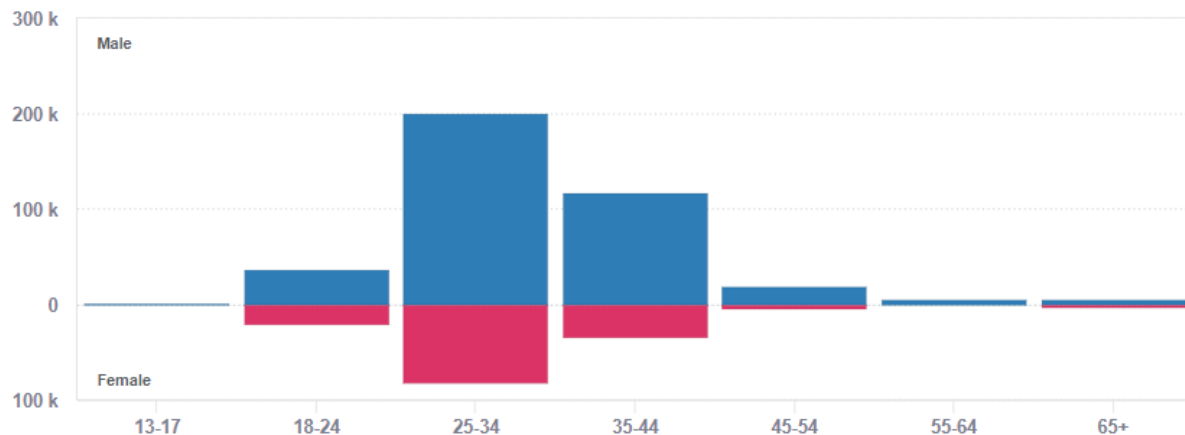
Growth of fans May2021-May2022

The total number of followers during the period until May 2022 was 1.5Milion and the data collected through the targeted one-year period shows a 780k change of followers in gain an average follower raise in a month and the maximum recorded follower change in gain being October 2021 with 230k follower gain.

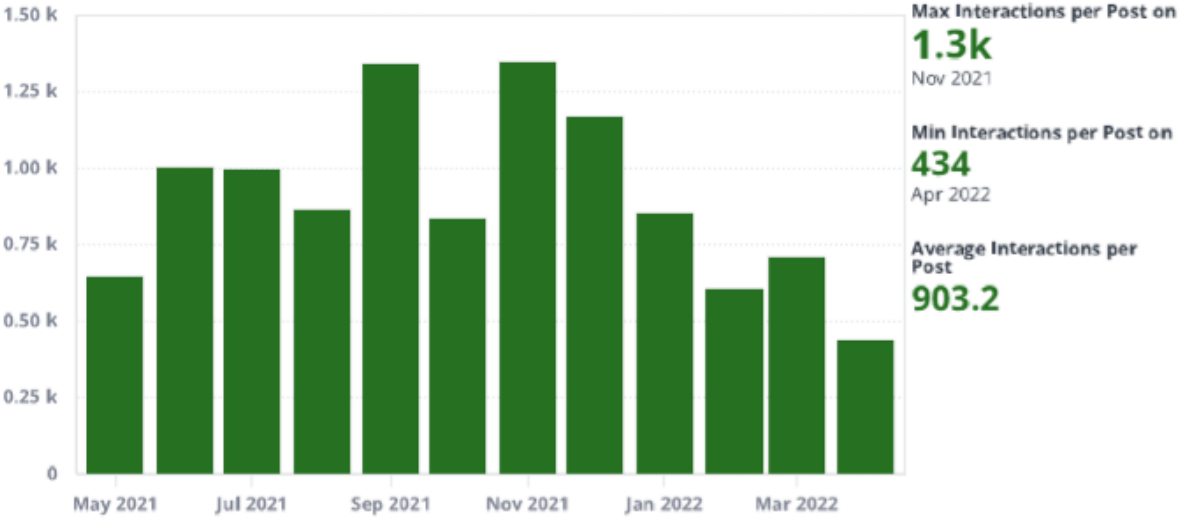
4.9.2 Facebook Amharic page

Demographics

The analysis of the demographic data from the Ethiopian Airlines English Facebook Insights gave the following result:

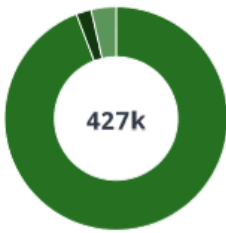


Age Range	Male in%	Female in %
13-17	0.2	0.1
18-24	9.2	3.8
25-34	38.9	13.7
35-44	17.6	5.2
45-54	3.8	1.2
55-64	1.2	0.6
65+	2.8	1.7
Total	73.7	26.3



Engagement Overview May2021-May2022

The above engagement overview graph shows the follower interaction from the beginning of May 2021 until the end of April 2022 recording a highest number of engagements in the month of September and November 2021. The maximum Interaction of a post during these highest recorded months were 1.3k per post and with the minimum post interaction recorded as a 434 in the month of April while the average interaction per post was recorded as 2.1k.



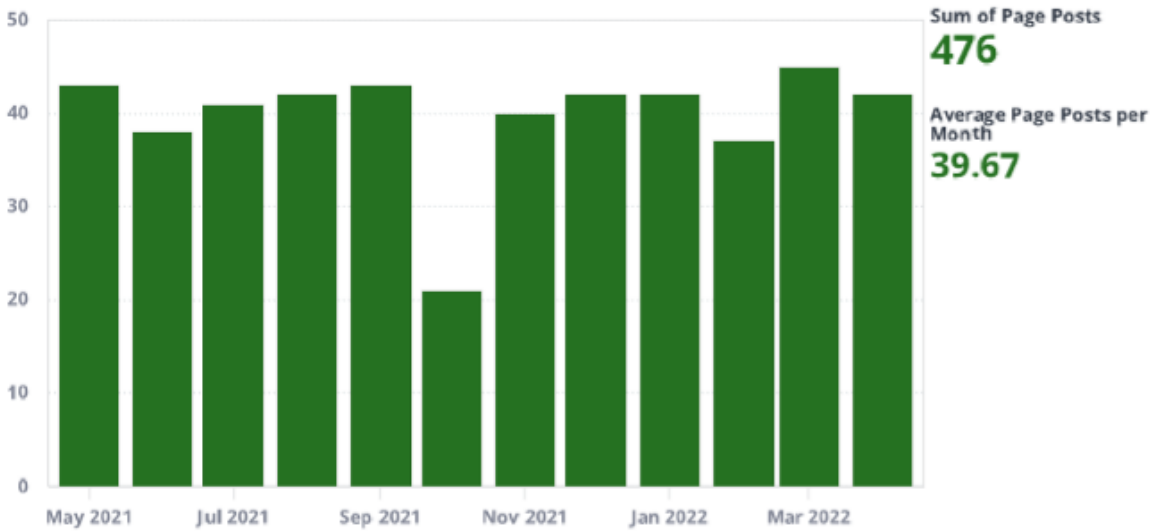
	Count	Share
👍 Reactions	402k	94.25 %
💬 Comments	9.3k	2.17 %
🔗 Shares	15.3k	3.58 %

Most Engaging Post Types ⁴



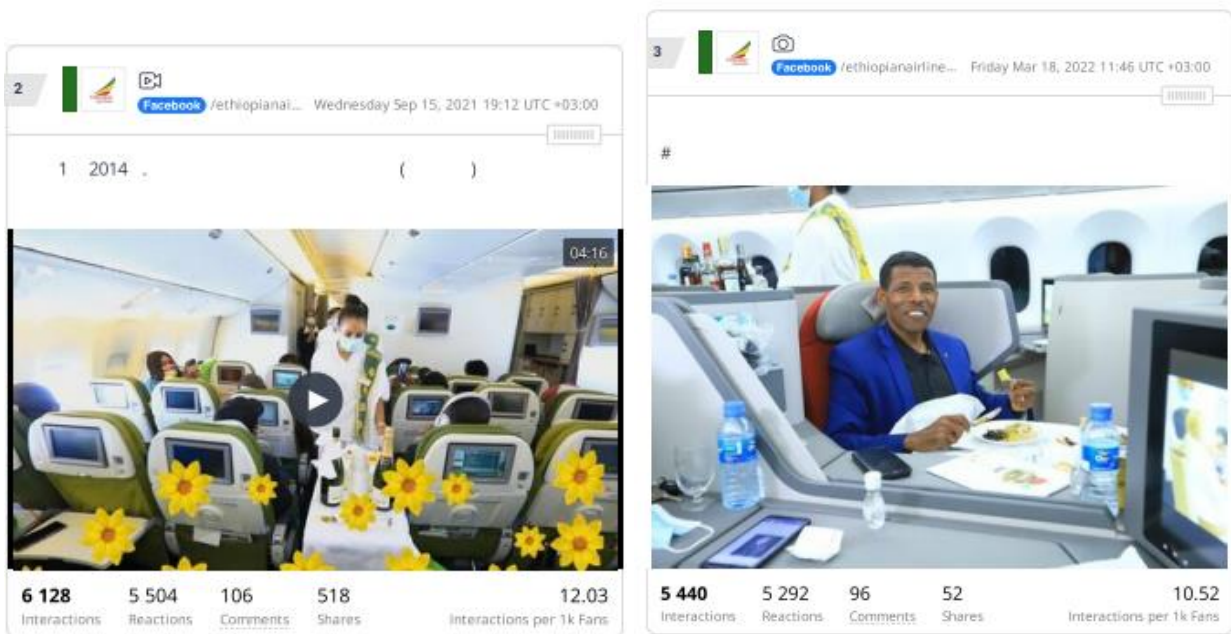
Engagement distribution and types May2021-May2022

Distribution of interactions per post during the selected time frame are shown in the chart below with a 402k reaction, 9.3k Comments and 15.3k shares holding 94.63%, 2.17% & 3.58% respectively and in total the number of interactions is 402 thousand throughout these twelve months, with the most engaging post type being posts with videos then with status (*post and shares in small amount of content on profile*) after with and then posts with photos.

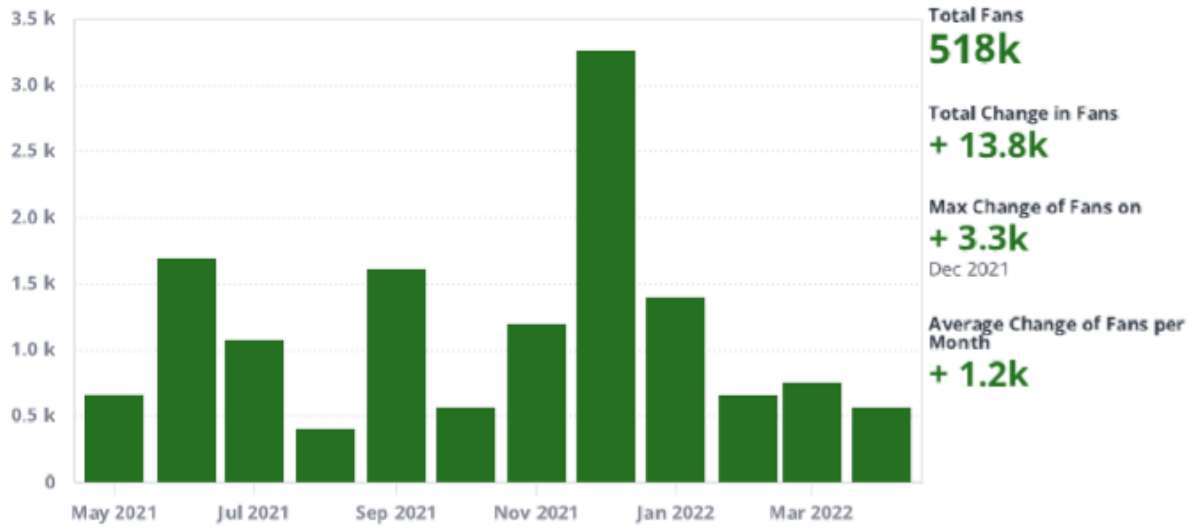


Page posts May2021-May2022

The engagement statistics are derived from the content posted on the page as, so we see the detailed figures and distribution of these posts on the above graph. According to the collected analytics posts published on the Ethiopian Airlines Facebook Amharic pages were higher in the month of March with 43posts and the total posts throughout the year being 476 posts and about 39 posts on average per month, and below are the most engaging posts per 1000 fans of the page during the selected timeframe.



Most engaging posts May2021-May2022

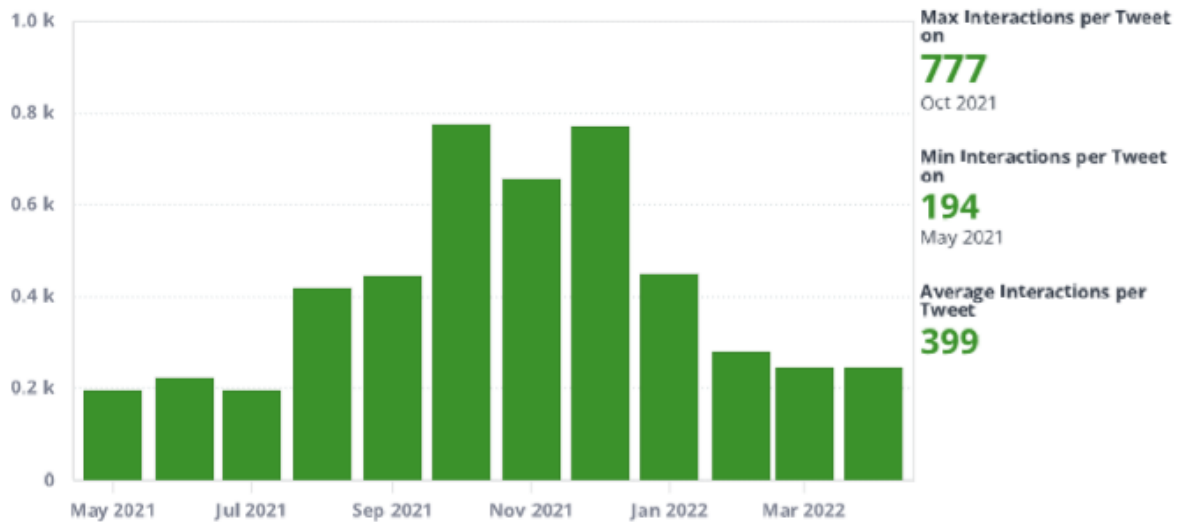


Growth of fans May2021-April 2022

The total number of followers during the period until May 2022 on the Amharic page was 518k and the data collected through the targeted one-year period shows a 13.8k change of followers in gain an average follower raise in a month and the maximum recorded follower change in gain being December 2021 with 3.3k follower gain. The average change of followers per month according to the statistics is about 1.2k.

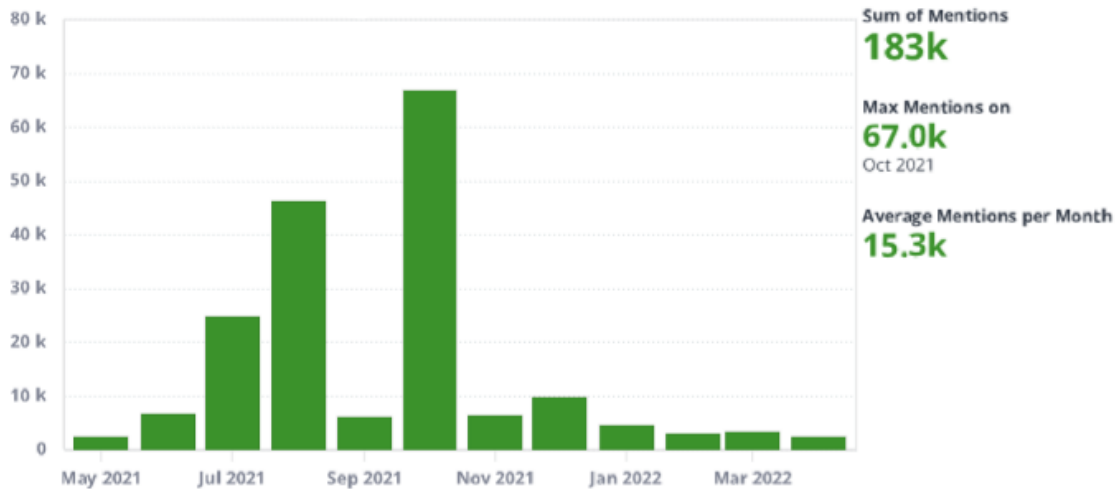
4.9.3 Tweeter page

Twitter does not have a gender follower identification of demographics on the app and as such the Ethiopian Airlines Tweeter analytics does not include it.



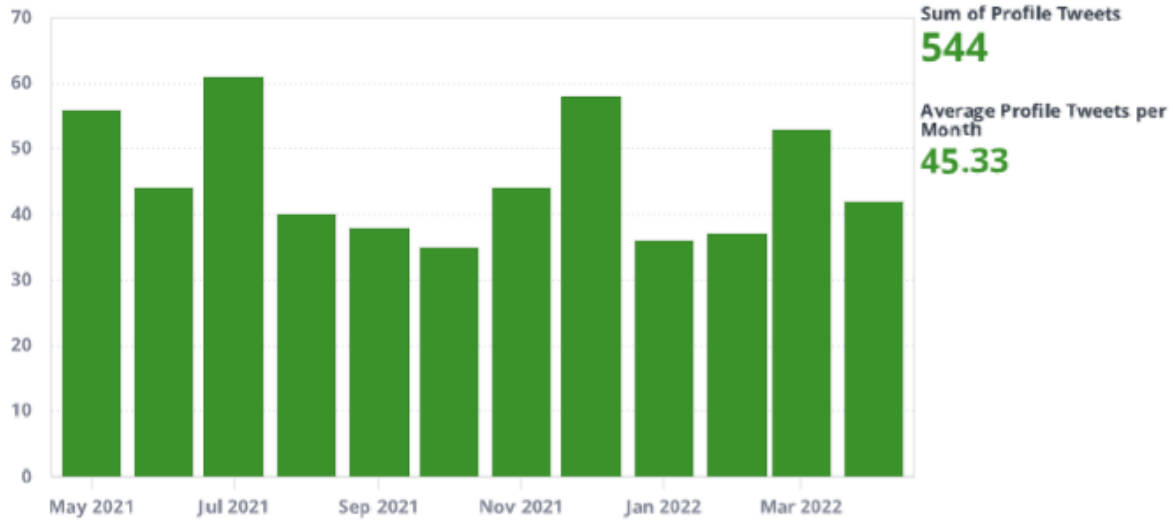
Engagement Overview May2021-May2022

The above engagement overview graph shows the follower interaction from the beginning of May2021 until the end of April 2022 recording a highest number of engagements in the month of October 2021. The maximum Interaction of a tweet during this highest recorded month was 777 per post and with the minimum tweet interaction recorded as a 194 in the month of May 2021 while the average interaction per tweet was recorded as 399.



Engagement distribution and types May2021-May2022

Distribution of interactions per post during the selected time frame are shown in the chart above with total numbers of retweets ,10.3k reply’s and 166k likes holding 18.65 %, 4.74% & 76.61% respectively and in total the number of interactions was 217 thousand throughout these twelve months.



Page tweets May2021-May2022

Looking at the tweet figures by the collected analytics in the above tweets published on the Ethiopian Airlines tweeter page was higher in the month of December with 58 tweets and the total posts throughout the year being 544 tweets and about 45 tweets on average per month, and below are the most engaging posts per 1000 fans of the page during the selected timeframe.

#GreatEthiopianHomeComing offer is now open, book from now until 20 December 2021 for travel from 01 to 31 January 2022 and enjoy up to 30% discount. #FlyEthiopian <https://t.co/XtPWTJ5BeL>

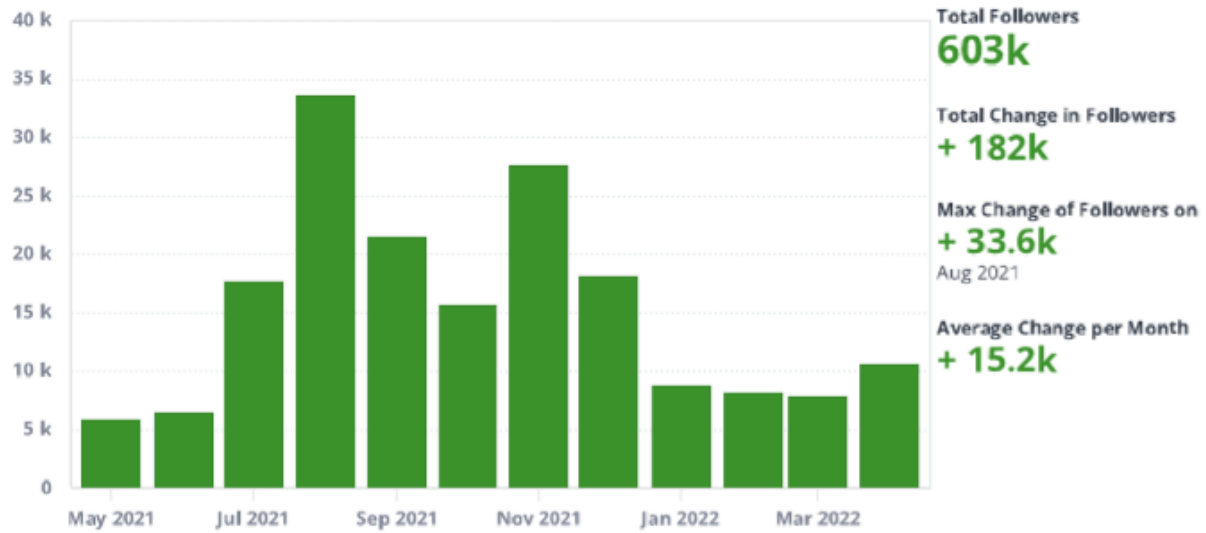
3 766 Interactions 2 370 Likes 115 Replies 1 281 Retweets **6.63** Interactions per 1k Followers

Ethiopian Airlines has been crowned as the 'Best African Airline' at the 2021 Business Traveller Awards.

<https://t.co/JHS1u67qE9> <https://t.co/mAifCofD8D>

3 197 Interactions 2 166 Likes 89 Replies 942 Retweets **5.64** Interactions per 1k Followers

Most engaging tweets May2021-May2022



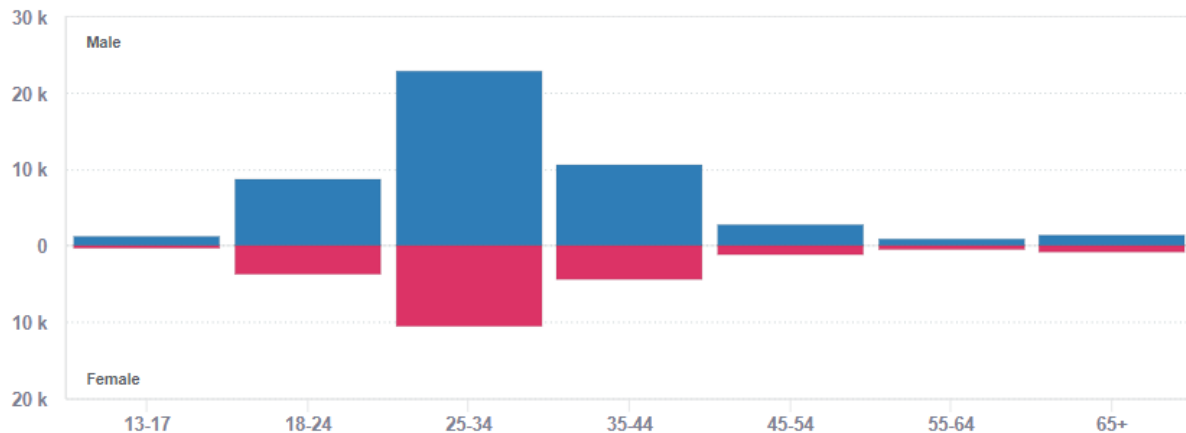
Growth of fans May2021-May2022

The total number of followers during the period until May 2022 on the tweeter page was 603k and the data collected through the targeted one-year period shows a 182k change of followers in gain and the maximum recorded follower change in gain being August 2021 with 33.6kk follower gain the average change of followers per month according to the statistics is about 15.2k.

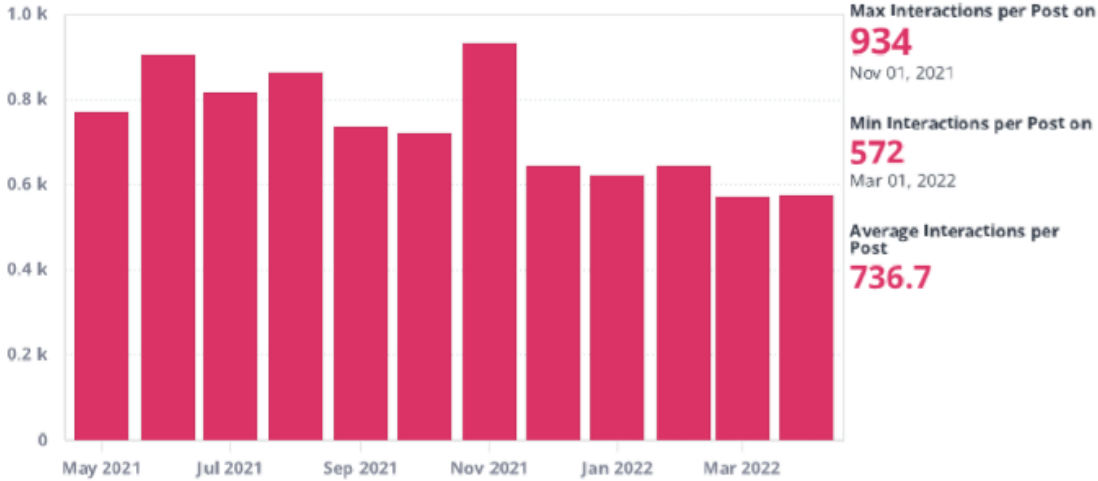
4.9.4 Instagram page

Demographics

The analysis of the demographic data from the Ethiopian Airlines English Facebook Insights gave the following result:



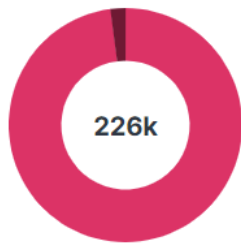
Age Range	Male in%	Female in %
13-17	1.8	0.5
18-24	12.5	5.2
25-34	32.8	15.0
35-44	15.3	6.2
45-54	4.1	1.6
55-64	1.3	0.6
65+	2.0	1.2
Total	69.8	30.2



Engagement Overview May2021-May2022

The above engagement overview graph shows the follower interaction from the beginning of May2021 until the end of April 2022 recording a highest number of engagements in the month of November 2021. The maximum Interaction of a post during these highest recorded months were 934 per post and with the minimum post interaction recorded as a 572 in the month of March while the average interaction per post was recorded as 736.7.

Distribution of Interactions [?](#)



	Count	Share
Likes	222k	97.98 %
Comments	4.6k	2.02 %

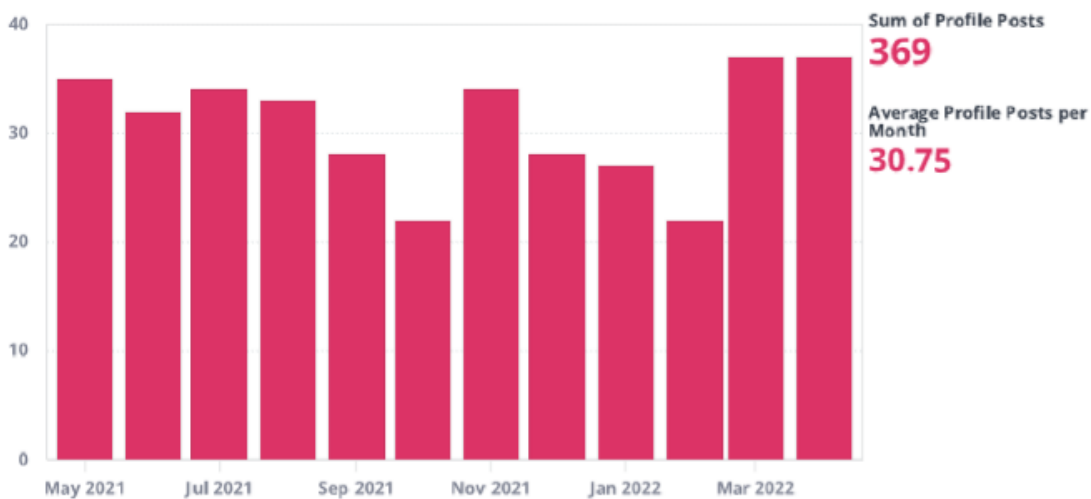
Distribution of Profile Post Types [?](#)



	Count	Share
Photos	375	88.65 %
Videos	26	6.15 %
Carousels	22	5.20 %

Engagement distribution and types May2021-May2022

Distribution of interactions per post during the selected time frame are shown in the chart above with a 226k total the number of interactions, 222k likes and 4.6k holding 97.98% & 2.02 % respectively throughout these twelve months, with the most engaging post type being posts with photos continuing with posts that have videos and after with carousels posts (a post containing more than one photo or video, which users can view by swiping left on a post.)



Page posts May2021-May2022

According to the collected analytics posts published on the Ethiopian Airlines Instagram page were higher during the month of March and April with both 37 posts and the total posts throughout the year being 369 posts and about 31 posts on average per month and below are the most engaging posts per 1000 fans of the page during the selected timeframe.

Fly Ethiopian

We are honored to have @julianmarley , son of the Reggae legend, Bob Marley, at our facilities.

#EthiopianAirlines



ORGANIC

2.4k Interactions	2.4k Likes	24 Comments	33.99 Interactions per 1k Followers
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Fly Ethiopian

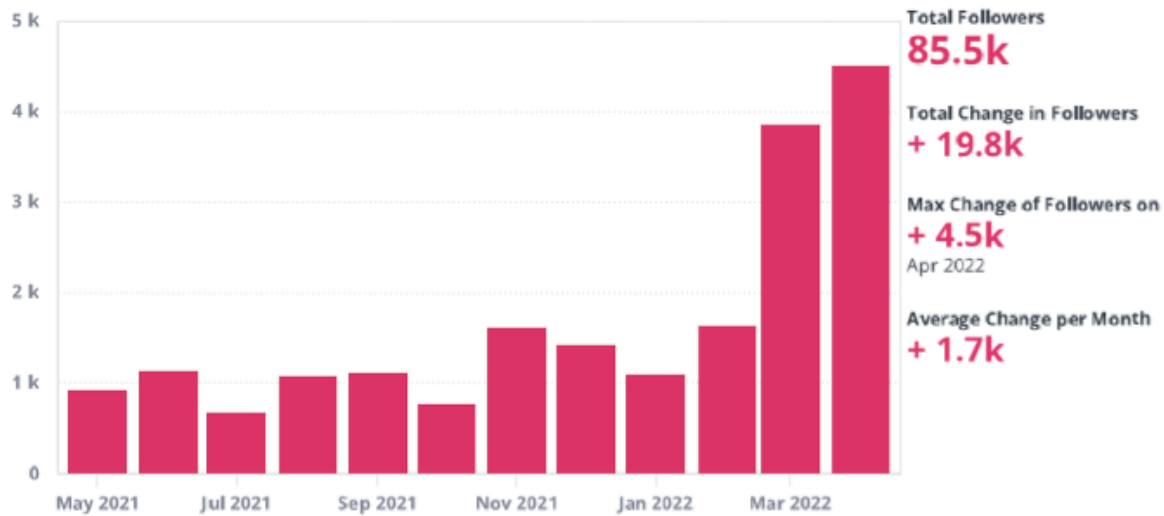
Skilful pilots gain their reputation from storms and tempest. Have a successful week ahead! #FlyEthiopian
Picture by @montreal.planes



ORGANIC

2.4k Interactions	2.4k Likes	25 Comments	33.41 Interactions per 1k Followers
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Most engaging posts May2021-May2022



Growth of fans May2021-May2022

The total number of followers during the period until from May 2021 to April 2022 on the Instagram page was 85.5k and the data collected through the targeted one-year period shows a 19.8k change of followers in gain and the maximum recorded follower change in gain being April 2022 with 4.5k follower gain the average change of followers per month according to the statistics is about 1.7k which shows a higher increase and as such could be put as positive in creating awareness and increasing the follower numbers.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research findings of the study, the conclusion reached based on the findings and the recommendations.

5.1 Summary

The objective of this study is to assess the utilization of the Ethiopian Airlines' new media channels and to evaluate how the Ethiopian Airlines Group practices new media as a public relations tool. In order to better comprehend research problems, a mixed methods research methodology was utilized, in which the researcher acquired both quantitative and qualitative data, merged the two, and then made interpretations based on the strengths of both sets of data.

By stating the problem and setting definitions to be utilized in the measurement, the researcher used a qualitative research method, with questioners, interviews and document analysis which provides a deep insight into and knowledge of a scenario or target audience. The organization's own information, published material (such as text, photographs, and other media), as well as information about the connections or interactions between social and digital platform users, made up the quantitative data collection for this study of new media platforms.

Based on the data collected the result showed that about 60% of the respondents agreed that working time in public relations and communications spent on new media channels was below 50%. This means the Ethiopian Airlines Group public relations and communication department has a gap in public relations. Ethiopian Airlines Group was also found to be in good status in communication, disseminated through new media channels. This was appreciable. Ethiopian Airlines Group also mostly used two-way communication through new media channels, and it also encouraged the effective communication of the organization. The result also showed that the information disseminated about the organization was almost exclusively through new media channels.

The result showed that Ethiopian Airlines Group public relations had a limit to their ability to provide comprehensive and accurate information at a fast pace. According to this study, the Ethiopian Airlines Group's public relations lacks to provide accurate information in time. This at times affects the organization's big name and needs immediate action to add value and grow the company around the world.

In this study, most respondents agreed that public relations provide good relations and cooperation with both the media and journalists. This enabled the Ethiopian Airlines Group to become the chosen airline in Africa, as we heard from the media and the leading African airlines group.

About 50% of respondents agreed that the emergence of new media has changed the way their organization operates. This means that the emergence of new media has a positive effect on the Ethiopian Airlines Group. Most respondents agreed that social media has enhanced the practice of public relations in Ethiopian Airlines Group. This improved the performance of Ethiopian Airlines Group. Most respondents agreed that new media channels were trusted information sources. This means that followers need new information from trusted media channels.

Most respondents agreed that Ethiopian Airlines' PR used new media tools and techniques. This means enabling the company to attract its customers and stakeholders and increase its performance. About 50% of respondents agreed that Ethiopians use proper PR tools for a targeted audience. This means it remains a limitation that Ethiopians use proper PR tools for their targeted audience. Few respondents agreed that the PR tools and techniques that Ethiopia uses were effective. This means PR tools and techniques need improvement.

In this regard, the study reviewed documents used by the Ethiopian Airlines corporate communications office such as standard operating procedures and service level agreements they have signed with different departments in the organization. The standard operating procedures list detailed description of what an officer does, and the responsibilities expected of them in a clear and descriptive way so it could be understood by anyone who uses the pages or by a new person assigned to perform the task.

According to this study, Ethiopian Airlines and its Public relations department uses new or digital media as a platform for communication with the target audience in order to build a positive

perception of the brand and a solid rapport with the customers. According to this study, Ethiopian Airlines Group had more Twitter followers during the sampled timeframe than its other social media pages. In an analysis of evolution interaction, Facebook was the leading social media in the Ethiopian Airlines Group. In an analysis of the number of interactions per 1000 followers, Instagram was the leading social media in Ethiopian Airlines Group.

According to this study the number of social media followers and the post engagements of fans on all the Ethiopian Airlines social media pages has increased. The post or content types in which the pages get the highest engagements on are post with pictures in comparison to other types.

According to this study, The Airline's corporate communications department has pre-arranged and saved reply's for answering queries posed from customers on their social media channels and accordingly stated on their sops are with certain timeframes from in which the question is written from, this goes not only for that social media page management but from internal communication such as emails too.

According to this study, posts with links added to them which help in driving leads or high traffic to their website are very minimal. This might be one reason of a gap on the sales increase, and buyer frequency.

Based on the result and discussion above the following major findings are drawn.

- About 40% of respondents agreed that their working time in public relations and communications spent on new media channels was more than 50%. This result showed that there were remaining tasks for Ethiopian Airlines Group. In the Ethiopian Airlines Group, most communication was disseminated through new media channels. This was a good point to observe being that new media channels are the future of PR and as an international competitor in its field the airline has modernized its means of communication, but this still needs encouragement to higher these percentages in the coming future. Also, about 60% of the content communicated through new media channels and was a two-way and interactive between Ethiopian Airlines Group and its audience. The magnitude of the impact of the information disseminated about the organization through new media channels was high and very high according to the respondent's feedback.

- Approximately half of those polled agreed that public relations tell the truth and provides thorough and accurate information. The remaining 50% of respondents were divided or neutral on whether public relations provide complete and accurate information. It is unclear based on the respondent's answers to fully conclude that whether Ethiopian Airlines Group provided the necessary information to its audience, and this could be improved in the future as an organizations accuracy on providing information's should not be put in question. Most of the time, Ethiopian Airlines Group public relations has struggled to act in a timely manner while maintaining public trust and fulfilling the group's social obligations. According to respondents The Ethiopian Airlines Group did not evaluate their public relations efforts on a regular basis. This could be what created the gap and needs to be improved and given a strategic plan in order to perform better.
- Almost 60% of respondents agreed that public relations foster good relations and media cooperation. From the results the Ethiopian Airlines, public relations department has created and maintained good relationships and collaborations with journalists. However, Ethiopian Airlines Group could have improved the result in regards, of this assessment with over by 70%.
- Approximately half of the respondents agreed, while the other half disagreed, that the emergence of new media has changed the way their organization operates. Mostly the, Ethiopian Airlines Group social media has improved the company's public relations practice, but it still needs to be improved. Most of the organization's information came from new media channels even during crisis which were acknowledged as reliable sources of information. The results of this study show that most new media channels gave organizations a low-cost way to build relationships with members of various of their strategic public. The findings revealed that new media had the greatest impact on corporate and organizational transparency.
- According to the findings of this study, 50% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Ethiopian Airlines' public relations uses new media tools and techniques. This result demonstrated that the airline uses tools and techniques to effectively use these platforms.

According to the study, 50% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that Ethiopian Airlines uses appropriate PR tools for a targeted audience.

- According to the study, one of the most significant effects of new media on public relations practice is increased productivity and efficiency. Message transmission speed and timeliness are constantly being improved and The Ethiopian Airlines customers, employees, and the general public are all easily accessible.
- Ethiopian Airlines Group had more Twitter followers than other social media sites. In the evolution of interaction, Facebook was the leading social media in Ethiopian Airlines Group. It also showed that the airline's Facebook page had a maximum distribution of interactions. Instagram was the leading social media platform in the Ethiopian Airlines Group by the number of interactions per 1000 followers.
- This analysis indicates that all Ethiopian Airlines' social media accounts have seen a rise in followers and post engagements. Compared to other content types, posts containing photographs receive the best engagement rates on the pages.
- According to this study, The Airline's corporate communications department has prepared and saved responses for responding to customer questions posted on their social media channels and accordingly stated on their policies are with specific timeframes from which the question is written from. This applies not only to that social media page management but also to internal communication such as emails.
- This study reveals that very few posts have links attached to them that help drive leads or significant traffic to the website. This could be a factor in the discrepancy between sales growth and customer frequency.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the result analysis in chapter four, the researcher put down the following conclusion:

- Even though Ethiopian Airlines Group has a good reputation for communication via new media channels, it retains some in the general ways of corporate communications. Ethiopian Airlines Group also relied heavily on communication via new media channels. This includes feedback from the receiver to the sender, which informs the sender that the message was correctly received. Both the sender and the receiver listen to each other, gather information, and are willing to change in order to work in harmony shown in regards to the audience interaction.
- The Ethiopian Airlines Group public relations had limitation to provide comprehensive and accurate information on time. This could create a gap between the organization and its customers because the customer with multiple options might shift to use other airlines due to lack of on time and genuine information by the Ethiopian Airlines Group.
- Ethiopian Airlines Group has a social responsibility Community Development, Environment, Education, Medical Travel, Art & Culture, Sport and Media Relation as such the company with its standard and operation manuals has built a good reputation and is fulfilling its commitment in the area of social responsibility.
- Ethiopian Airlines Group lacked the evaluation of public relations activities is done continuously even though reports are done on performance the evaluation for further corrective action on issues that need resolving were not done. Effective evaluation is at the centre of any public relations effort and should be a basic element of any planned public relations action. However, in practice, assessment is frequently disregarded or skipped for several reasons, such as prices, a lack of resources, or just a lack of knowledge on how to carry out fundamental evaluation.
- The Ethiopian Airlines Group public relations provide good relations and cooperation with both the media and journalists. This is important in building relationships. Media

relation and journalism in public relation of Ethiopian Airlines Group were effective and is encouraged as fulfilling its role.

- The emergence of new media has had changed on the way Ethiopian Airlines Group communicate. What it used to consider as new media has evolved into what we call social media. Websites such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as text messaging, have enabled people to connect from distant locations at a speed unimaginable to generations passed. These innovations in social communication are fundamentally changing the way Ethiopian Airlines Group operates which shows the effectiveness of the utilization of new media channels are. Social media have enhanced the practice of public relations in Ethiopian Airlines Group.
- Productivity and efficiency are two of the most significant effects of new media on public relations practice. Message transmission speed and timeliness are constantly improved. As such the Ethiopian Airlines customers, employees, and the general public mostly are reached easily.
- Ethiopian Airlines' PR actively uses new media tools and techniques. These new media tools used and managed by include social media channels, emails, and monitoring software's.
- The PR tools and techniques that Ethiopian Airlines Group uses are well written and organized on paper with standard operating procedures and checklists that are updated frequently by the officers.

5.3 Recommendation

Based on the conclusion made on above, the researcher put down the following recommendation to the Ethiopian Airlines Group:

- The Ethiopian Airlines Group should further assess and evaluate on public relations whether it provide comprehensive and accurate information or not. Then, it should take immediate action based on the finding and improve the accuracy of information to the target audience.
- Ethiopian Airlines Group lack transparency while respecting the public interest. Therefore, Ethiopian Airlines Group should be fulfilled and respect its social responsibility and accountability.
- Ethiopian Airlines Group should give great emphasis on evaluation of public relations activities continuously. The Ethiopian Airlines Group should plan the when how to evaluate tools and tasks and identify criteria of evaluation, on assessment of public relations activities.
- The PR tools and techniques that Ethiopian Airlines Group uses are put in place with proper documents to execute admiration of new media practices and new media channels. Based on the comments and feedback from customers. Even though these procedures are put in place, the applications, especially in the area of managing two-way communications on the social media channels, are not effective, as such for a seamless two-way communication identifying these gaps in detail and acting is mandatory.
- Social media posts with links redirecting the customer to the website and increasing traffic for increment of sales is necessary, as such posts should include links to the website and mobile application, the means for digital purchase.
- Further researching of trends and best practices of new media management from similar organizations or airlines could highly improve the airlines social media status and management.

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Appendices A: Questionnaire

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM AND COMMUNICATIONS

Dear respondent,

My name is Samrawit Fekadu, a post graduate student in the department of journalism and communication science, Addis Ababa University. Currently, I am undertaking a research entitled 'ASSESSMENT OF NEW MEDIA: (A FOCUS ON PUBLIC RELATIONS PRACTICE OF ETHIOPIAN AIRLINES)'. You are one of the respondents selected to participate on this study. Please assist me in giving correct and complete information to present a representative finding on the current condition of the New Media on Public Relation Practice of Ethiopian Airlines. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and the questionnaire is completely anonymous. Finally, I confirm to you that the information that you share me will be kept confidential and only used for the academic purpose. No individual's responses will be identified as such and identity of persons responding will not be published or released to anyone. All information will be used for academic purposes only. Thank you in advance for your kind cooperation and dedicating your time.

Sincerely,

Samrawit Fekadu

Part-I: Demographic characteristics of respondents

1. Sex: A. Male B. Female
2. Education level: A. < Grade 12 C. B.A Degree
 B. Diploma D. Masters & above
3. Experience: A. <5-year B. 6-10-year C. 11-15 year
 D. 16 & above years

Part II: Assessment of new media in public relations.

Read the following questions and circle the letter of your choice.

1. On average, approximately what percentage of your working time in public relations and communications is spent on new media channels?
 A. 1-10% B. 11-25% C. 26-50% D. More than 50%
2. What is the amount of communication that is being disseminated through new media channels?
 A. below 25% B. 25%-50% C. 51%-75% D. above 76%
3. The content of what's being communicated through new media channels is
 A. one way B. two-way C. both
4. The magnitude of the impact of the information disseminated about the organization through new media channels is:
 A. very high B. High C. Medium D. Low

Part III: Read the following questions and tick (√) the number that holds your degree of agreement according to the given alternative key.

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3. Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

No	A. Ethical and responsible action	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Public Relations tells the truth and provides comprehensive and accurate information.					
2.	Public relations act transparently, while respecting the public interest.					
3.	Public relations work in accordance with the principles of social responsibility.					
4.	The evaluation of public relations activities is done continuously.					

	B. Media relations	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Public relations provide good relations and cooperation with the media.					
6.	Public relations provide good relations and cooperation with journalists.					

Part IV: Questions focusing on digital media

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

No	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1.	The emergence of new media has changed the way your organization operates.					
2.	Social media have enhanced the practice of public relations					
3.	New media channels are trusted information sources.					
4.	New media advocates a transparent and ethical culture.					
5.	New media Offers organizations a low-cost way to develop relationships with members of various strategic publics.					
6.	New media is impacting corporate and organizational transparency.					
7.	Since social media have made communications more instantaneous, they have forced organizations to respond more quickly to criticism.					

Part V: Questions focusing on general PR activities

1. Strongly Disagree 2. Disagree 3Neutral 4. Agree 5. Strongly Agree

No	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Ethiopian Airlines' PR uses new media tools and techniques.					
2.	Ethiopian uses proper PR tools for targeted audience.					
3.	The PR tools and techniques that Ethiopian uses are effective.					
4.	Ethiopian invests on skills and knowledge of PR tools and techniques.					
5.	The choice of PR tools considers Ethiopian's audience.					
6.	The PR tools Ethiopian uses allow two-way communication between the company and its publics.					
7.	Ethiopian is reaching its public with PR works.					

Appendices B: Interview

Part I: Interview questions focusing on New media channels and management

1. What platforms does Ethiopian Airlines use to communicate with its consumers?

2. How important is social media in your organization?

3. To what extent is your organization being effective in using the new media in communicating with its external publics?

4. Have you developed an overall content strategy?

5. What kind of website analytics do you have available?

Part II: Interview questions focusing on social media channels and management.

1. Who are your target audience?

2. What is the quality of your social media updates?

3. What are your most engaging post types?

4. What do you or your company aim to achieve with social media?

5. What emotions do you hope to convey through your brand’s visuals and messaging?

6. What type of content best supports your content marketing mission?

7. How is the customer interaction on your social media pages?
