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Social media and strategic communication: A neglected playground for strategy as practice research?

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Abstract

This study investigates how are strategists framing strategic issues on social media to build ambient awareness. While strategic communication was traditionally carried out by peripheral actors such as public relations departments (Heavey et al., 2020), social media has democratised strategic communication as it affords direct strategic communication from strategists' broad stakeholders (Baptista et al., 2017; Heavey et al., 2020). Therefore, social media offers distinct opportunities, and also challenges, to the conventional roles and work of strategists (Heavey et al., 2020; Morton et al., 2020). Utilizing a netnography method, we study the (strategy focused) social media posts of strategists from FTSE 100 companies, specifically looking at LinkedIn. Our findings revealed three key components of strategic framing through which the strategic leaders build ambient awareness, with the aid of multimodality of social media: framing strategic issues with style (identity), framing everyday achievements as part of strategy implementation, and framing strategy as responsible.

Keywords: Strategy-as-practice, social media, ambient awareness, multimodality, strategic framing.

Introduction and Background

Strategy-as-practice (SAP) has been effervescent for over two decades and is now at a crossroad in its development (Kohtamäki et al., 2022; Jarzabkowski et al., 2022). One promising and well documented pathway at the crossroads is social media, which is often categorised in relation to a sociomateriality stream within SAP or under the guise of 'digital strategizing' (Kohtamäki et al., 2022; Morton et al., 2022). While strategic communication was traditionally carried out by peripheral actors such as public relations departments (Heavey et

al., 2020), often with a temporal lag, social media has democratised strategic communication as it affords direct strategic communication from strategists to both internal and external stakeholders (Baptista et al., 2017; Heavey et al., 2020). Therefore, social media offers distinct opportunities, and also challenges, to the conventional roles and work of strategists (Heavey et al., 2020; Morton et al., 2020). Such strategists include prominent CEOs like Elon Musk (Craig & Amernic, 2020), who have already benefitted from this informal information economy (Leonardi & Vaast, 2017).

Prior research has highlighted the opportunities that social media brings. For example, it can help strategists build trust with investors and other stakeholders (Elliott et al., 2018), or facilitate the competition for attention to subsequently secure support and resources (Castello et al., 2016). Extant work has endeavoured to explore social media in the domain of strategy research, yet, the area remains fragmented (Heavey et al., 2020). One notable attempt is by open strategy scholars (e.g., Tavakoli et al., 2017; Baptista et al., 2017; Gegenhuber & Dobusch, 2017; Morton et al., 2020; Lundgren-Henriksson & Sorsa, 2023) where work has, for instance, established that social media can be beneficial for impression management, for strategy formulation and implementation, for developing commitment to strategic decisions, harnessing emotions, and for improved decision quality due to diverse information resources. However, we argue that focus on strategy communication by senior strategists (e.g., C-suite level executives) remains largely neglected. It has been observed that strategy research has been constrained by a traditional emphasis on internal organizational dynamics, instead of situating strategic communication within its broader context (Vaara and Fritsch, 2022). This represents both a theoretical and practical gap that limits our comprehension of the arenas of strategic work and the communication methods employed, including in social media, and this is where our research aims to explore a promising path for SAP.

In particular, prior research has delved into how social media is being utilised by strategists, such as in extant behaviours and practices (Heavey et al., 2020), but interrogation of discursive intricacies afforded by social media – including the language strategists use – represents an important next step. This complements the sociomateriality stream within SAP, which explores how materiality relates to the social activity and the actors in strategy practices (Kohtamäki et al., 2022; Morton et al., 2022). Beginning to understand the linguistic nature of strategy (Vaara and Fritsch, 2022), on social media is crucial because it is unimaginable to formulate, communicate, giving sense to, make sense of, and frame strategic issues without embodied by

language first (Balogun et al., 2014; Bjerregaard & Jeppesen, 2023). The study of strategic framing has been intricately interwoven with strategic discourse (Kohtamäki et al., 2022), and are often regarded as part of sensegiving (Logemann et al., 2019), which is an important process, through which strategists can interpret and explain strategy to influence stakeholders' understandings of strategic issues and secure stakeholder endorsement (Bjerregaard & Jeppesen, 2023). Our study emphasises on the strategic framing through social media to build ambient awareness.

Therefore, there is much potential in examining how social media, as a form of sociomateriality, impacts and interacts with strategic discourse to influence strategic framing (Logemann et al., 2019; Kohtamäki et al., 2022; Whittle et al., 2023), in response to the call initiated by Kohtamäki et al. (2022). Furthermore, giving the emerging nature of SAP sociomaterial stream (Kohtamäki et al., 2022), so far there only exists a limited body of literature that is solely focused on social media. Therefore, we take this as an opportunity to further develop the notion of “practice” by connecting with an affordance view (Leonardi & Vaast, 2017). Specifically, we argue that the examination of strategic framing stands as a pivotal driver for the evolution of strategists' roles at the crossroad of opportunities and challenges brought by social media. Examining these intricate strategic framing practices on social media holds significance in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of strategists' use of social media for communicating strategic issues and, subsequently, how this strategy practice builds ambient awareness (Kohtamäki et al., 2022; Whittle et al., 2023; Levordashka & Utz, 2016). Furthermore, it is imperative to direct more explicit attention to the particular linguistic aspects of strategy relating to strategists' work. In response, we pose the following research question: ‘How are strategists framing strategic issues on social media to build ambient awareness?’. Our empirical work focuses on a comprehensive dataset of social media posts by strategists.

We collected a substantial number of social media posts and have started a provisional analysis of these posts by individuals with a strategy role in FTSE 100 companies. As this short paper is based on work-in-progress, our intention is to outline our emergent findings and, looking ahead, how we aim to leverage these initial insights as a foundation for extending our research and to craft more precise contributions. In contrast to the limited number of researchers also examining one sided strategic communication on social media (Heavey et al., 2020), our study “zooms in” to study the micro language use in depth to understand the strategic

framing by strategists on social media. In addition, as sustainability is emerging from our data analysis as a promising theme, this can potentially add insights on how the framing of problems and strategies influences the approaches of actors in addressing Grand Challenges (Dorado et al., 2022). Hence, our research could present an opportunity to expanding SAP beyond ‘micro’ endeavours to tackle such macro phenomena (Seidl & Whittington, 2014).

Research Method

The research setting of this study is social media use where strategists communicate strategic issues and interact with stakeholders through posting content. In this context, strategists represent those who are responsible for the strategic direction of organisations, including CEOs, senior managers, and founders (Heavey et al., 2020). Our empirical work is based on constructionist netnography which is derived from ethnography that explores, and makes sense of, naturalistic internet conversations, languages, and interactions, including non-verbal interactions (Costello et al., 2017). Netnography allows researchers to promptly observe strategists and their stakeholder communities in their natural settings and record and analyse their digital work, specifically their organic communications, instantaneously (Morton et al., 2020). Therefore, our study is also informed by (digital) ethnographic research in the strategic management domain (Vaara and Fritsch, 2022).

We study the (strategy focused) social media posts of strategists from FTSE 100 companies, specifically looking at LinkedIn. This setting ensures a rich and varied sample. The data collection commenced in June 2023 and concluded in October 2023. The first step was to acquire the latest FTSE 100 lists from the London Stock Exchange website, followed by locating and accessing each companies’ official website. The majority of company websites incorporate a section titled 'Our Leadership' or a similar designation, which provides the information on strategists (e.g., top management team members). Where needed, we referred to the annual reports from the company’s website to identify the executives. We then used a social media scraping tool to retrieve relevant LinkedIn posts. Overall, data from 96 of 100 FTSE companies were available to be collected. We visited the earliest posts from strategists, some of which dated to approximately 10 years ago. We checked 968 strategists with a LinkedIn presence, and aggregated the comprehensive posts from 438 strategists with an ‘active’ presence. This active determination was contingent on whether they surpassed 20 posts or exhibited a conspicuous strategic focus in exceptional cases.

Considering the voluminous nature of social media data, beside using traditional Gioia method (Gioia et al., 2013) for data analysis, we are also using a data analysis software, Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC), to begin the process of better understanding our data. LIWC is used for analysing language, such as to understand thoughts, feelings, personality, and the ways of connecting with others (Pan et al., 2018). To show how LIWC works for our research, here is an illustrative input drawn from a social media post by HSBC's CEO.

"It's been a big week for sustainability in the financial sector. On Wednesday we helped launch the Net Zero Banking Alliance, which will play a critical role in improving the consistency and raising the ambition of net zero commitments in the banking sector. On the same day, I took part in an International Institute for Finance webinar on the work of the Sustainable Markets Initiative, and our industry's role in providing innovative solutions to complex climate problems. It's clear the financial sector's momentum showed that the financial sector's momentum towards net-zero is stronger than ever. Most now see that a transitional approach isn't just the right thing to do, it's also the smart thing to do. It will bring benefits to the natural world, and value to our clients, our shareholders, and the communities we serve. We mustn't let this momentum slip. With COP26 coming up in November, we have a fantastic opportunity, as an industry, to drive real change on sustainability and to turn our net zero commitments into practical action. It's something I know many of my colleagues at HSBC care deeply about, and it's one of my biggest priorities. HSBC will continue to be at the forefront of this effort, both in the lead-in to COP26 and beyond. #RaceToZero #GFANZ"

Table 1 below shows the corresponding result from the above input:

Traditional LIWC Dimension	Your Text	Average for Social Media Language
I-words (I, me, my)	1.78	5.44
Positive Tone	4.00	5.03
Negative Tone	0.00	2.34
Social Words	7.56	6.74
Cognitive Processes	5.33	8.86
Allure	6.22	8.62
Moralization	0.00	0.27
Summary Variables		
Analytic	93.64	47.06
Authentic	72.01	62.38

Table 1: LIWC example output

Preliminary Findings

In presenting our preliminary findings, we show insights from a sub-set of data analysed to date. In particular, we outline five emergent discursive practices and summarise these in Table 2 with example data in relation to LIWC features, indicative strategic issues, prominent linguistic features, and their potential implications for strategic framing.

Discursive practices	Example data	LIWC suggestions/ indication/features	Indicative strategic issues	Linguistic features	Strategic framing potential
Expressing sentiments	<i>"I'm proud that we're co-launching the Net Zero Banking Alliance today, which brings together 43 banks from 23 countries to accelerate the transition to net-zero across the sector...and it would be great to see you there. It's a big day for sustainability in the finance sector"</i>	Absence of a negative tone, lower-than-average use of "I-words" typical in social media language. Highly analytic and authentic language use.	Sustainability / Net Zero	Positive language Rhetoric	Resonance on important issues
Evidencing experience	<i>"I've had the honour of working with His Majesty through his Sustainable Markets Initiative, and specifically the Financial Services Task Force...I'm delighted, therefore, that HSBC is supporting the Terra Carta Accelerator, a new fund that will bring together private sector financing for nature and biodiversity projects."</i>	Absence of a negative tone, relatively high social words usage. Highly analytic, extremely low authentic language use.	Sustainability	Positive language Rhetoric	Rhetoric to boost alignment to new strategy and generate emotional reactions Management of credibility
Personalising content	<i>"We're just as enthusiastic as you are about working together..." "...although it's clear a couple of them (children) want my job!"</i>	Absence of a negative tone, high positive tone. Surprisingly low authentic language use.	Acquisitions Equality	Direct language Comedic relief	Increased intimacy of communication and engagement
Coalescing others	<i>"Take a look and let me know what you think." "What's been on your mind?"</i>	High presence of social words, cognitive process, and allure.	Gender equality	Direct language Opening the discussion	Enables strategic input
Directing virtuousness	<i>"Most now see that a transitional approach isn't just the right thing to do, it's also the smart thing to do."</i>	High presence of positive tone, allure. Low authentic language use.	Sustainability/ Net Zero	Rhetoric Comparison Emphasis	Manages legitimacy Impression management, strengthen faith

Table 2: Discursive practices of strategists on social media and their potential for strategic framing

After the initial examination of the data, we have taken a closer look at three strategists, and find evidence of how they are framing strategic issues in the social media posts, which is shown in Table 3, with example data in relation to related company strategy, framing updates as part of strategy/strategic issues, illustrative quotes, evidence/action of strategy implementation and social media multimodality features.

Related company strategy	Framing updates as part of strategy/strategic issues	Illustrative quotes	Evidence/action of strategy implementation	Social media multimodality features
Strategy: Driving innovation and exploring new frontiers to transform cancer outcomes: Attacking cancer from multiple angles. Treating cancer earlier and smarter. Leading with transformational technologies. (from company official website)	sharing upcoming conference, where more than 130 abstracts we will be demonstrated, which are aligned to the strategy.	"#event is fast-approaching, and I'm looking forward to returning to Chicago alongside so many researchers, healthcare professionals and patient advocates, all focused on advancing #cancer research and care. I'm proud to share that this is our fifth year in a row that we have a headline plenary session! And with more than 130 abstracts, we really are demonstrating our strategy to attack cancer from multiple angles, harness the potential of combinations, and treat earlier and smarter. Exciting times!"	Presents more than 130 abstracts at industry conference.	Use hashtags: #event #cancer research to attract audience in the same industry. Gif moving picture, background is Chicago night skyline, with the conference details slowly appearing.
Goal: One day eliminating cancer as a cause of death. Strategy: Driving innovation and exploring new frontiers to transform cancer outcomes.	Sharing company's new research paper published in Cancer Discovery about medicine to prevent cancer, and actions we need to take next to achieve the goal.	"Medicines that can prevent cancer before a malignancy develops have the potential to redefine cancer care. Our latest research, published in Cancer Discovery, identifies groups who may benefit from preventative cancer therapies, and also outlines concepts that could help to accelerate progress in the field. However, the challenges of treating pre-malignant conditions are considerable. We need to follow the science and understand the complexity of how pre-cancer leads to cancer, as well as develop better tolerated therapies that can intervene in this process. This is aligned with our goal of one day eliminating cancer as a cause of death. http://.../WhatScienceCanDo "	Latest research paper, published in Cancer Discovery.	48 seconds videos, start and end with company logo, strategist herself, talking about the content of the post but more in detail. End with 'this is our first step not just cure cancer but eliminate cancer as cause of death' with a smile.
Strategy: Driving innovation and exploring new frontiers to transform cancer outcomes. Commitment: transform patient outcomes.	Announce new agreement to contribute to the company commitment.	"Today we announced Company X has entered into an agreement for a novel early-stage antibody drug conjugate (ADC). This strengthens our growing pipeline of ADCs, one of six scientific areas of focus in Oncology R&D. By enriching our oncology portfolio with multiple mechanisms and modalities we have opportunity to explore diverse treatment strategies across multiple tumour types, as part of our commitment to transform patient outcomes. Thank you to everyone involved for helping us deliver this exciting deal!"	Entered into a new agreement to enriching portfolio technologies.	Picture, red background, Microscope imaging of biological tissues, with green matter, might suggesting medication, and blue light dots showing working treatment.

Related company strategy	Framing updates as part of strategy/strategic issues	Illustrative quotes	Evidence/action of strategy implementation	Social media multimodality features
Our strategy is to develop and actively manage a portfolio of high-quality resource assets, which we operate safely, efficiently and competitively – to reliably serve our customers, deliver sustainably attractive shareholder returns and create wider stakeholder value. (from company official website)	Sharing milestones that are of strategic relevance.	"We achieved a number of operational and strategic milestones in the first half of this year that will position Company for long term success – securing access to high value future supply, underpinning confidence in the provenance of our diamonds, and unlocking new sources of value through technology and innovation. Scroll through to take a look at some of the key highlights so far, made possible by our talented colleagues around the world, the support of our customers and clients throughout the diamond industry, and our highly valued partnerships with the countries and communities where we operate. #company #diamonds"	Strategic milestones.	hashtags& visual pictures. 6 pictures, for example, first is a photo of two man shaking hands, with words description about a new partnership.
Our strategy is to develop and actively manage a portfolio of high-quality resource assets, which we operate safely, efficiently and competitively – to reliably serve our customers, deliver sustainably attractive shareholder returns and create wider stakeholder value.	Sharing award related to EDI, which is embedded in strategy.	"Proud to share that Company has been named as a Times Top 50 Employer for Women for the first time. This signifies our commitment to gender equality and inclusion, and our dedication to addressing inequalities through strategy, policies and culture. We are delighted to be recognised for the steps we are taking to make our workplaces somewhere everyone can truly thrive in successful careers. #TimesTop50 #TakeActionOnGenderEquality #GenderEquality #Inclusion"	Awarded Times Top 50 Employer for Women for the first time.	share post from CHRO with link to website about winning award in detail.
Our strategy is to develop and actively manage a portfolio of high-quality resource assets, which we operate safely, efficiently and competitively – to reliably serve our customers, deliver sustainably attractive shareholder returns and create wider stakeholder value.	Sharing donation to Ukraine, which is not part of strategy, however, is of strategic importance.	"Company stands with the people of Ukraine and condemns Russia's military actions. In light of this, and in support of our employees who have family and friends affected, Company Foundation will be making a donation of US\$5 million to one or more charities involved in providing humanitarian relief in Ukraine. Read more here: http://... "	Donation to Ukraine.	Sharing post of company account, which attach link to the press release, also clarifying the war has no direct impact on the company.

Related company strategy	Framing updates as part of strategy/strategic issues	Illustrative quotes	Evidence/action of strategy implementation	Social media multimodality features
We strive to be the best place to find, buy and sell a car in the UK — on a platform that enables data-driven digital retailing for our customers. These three strategic priorities sit alongside our commitment to always being a responsible business. Classified marketplace: Be the best place to buy a car. Platform: Be the industry's data & technology platform. Digital retailing: Be the enabler for all retailers to sell online. (from company official website)"	Publishing Company UK Product & Technology podcast Roadmap' podcast, contributing to one of the three strategic priorities: Be the industry's data & technology platform.	"Episode 8 of our Company UK Product & Technology podcast Roadmap is now out. Check it out via the link below - well worth a watch. The team who produced this work did so entirely in house - content, production and creative has all been excellent. But we need some help please. Before we can start experimenting with YouTube Shorts, we need to get to 1000 subscribers. So, if you're interested in #product... or just generally want to learn more about Auto Trader UK then please check it out AND SUBSCRIBE (that last bit being the important bit 🙏). https... available on Spotify and Apple Podcasts, of course. Credits: ... #automotiveindustry #digital #technology #newcars #usedcars https:..."	Share new in house made podcast episode on industry insight, also want to expand to YouTube shorts content.	Experienced internet language use, using all the features provided by the social media platform. Hashtags. Tag people involved. Link to the podcast. Framing with humour and down-to-earth attitude.
Our commitment to always being a responsible business. Platform: Be the industry's data & technology platform. Digital retailing: Be the enabler for all retailers to sell online.	Sharing YouTube series about electric sceptic where they show evidence to combat sceptical comment about EV online, as part of commitment to always being a responsible business.	"EVs are a pile of crap" ... or are they?!With the slightly delayed #worlddevday coming up on 29/9, check out the incredible Electric Sceptic series from Person on the Company UK You Tube channel or on https... For those of you who've now had the chance to get behind an #EV wheel, you may well not be too surprised to see that the combination of Person's driving and the amazing Audi e-tron GT managed to convince this particular sceptic. Well done to another Person too for being such a great sport. #audi #electricvehicles #sustainablemobility #electriccars"	By actually driving n EV car on YouTube and explain fact about it to combat opinions that are against sustainable EV option.	Sharing YouTube short videos from series. Internet casual language use, even swearing.
Platform: Be the industry's data & technology platform. Digital retailing: Be the enabler for all retailers to sell online.	Sharing news that Office for National Statistics will be using the data that company produced to calculate inflation, acknowledging its credibility.	"Over the past extremely turbulent couple of years, we've been proud to help shed some much-needed light on the shape of #usedcar pricing. We've consistently shared our Industry Insight right across the #automotiveindustry, with #retailers, #OEMs, #finance houses, #leasing companies, #government, and even the #energyindustry or #insuranceindustry...And we're now particularly proud that it's also recognised as very valuable currency by government and the Office for National Statistics!"	Keep publishing Industry insight with data about market, now the data being recognised by government.	Sharing news/achievement/ by company.

Table 3: Evidence of framing strategic issues in the social media posts

In Table 4, we present our data structure, our analysis revealed three key components of strategic framing through which the strategic leaders build ambient awareness: framing strategic issues with style (identity), framing everyday achievements as part of strategy implementation, and framing strategy as responsible.

For concision, we present the findings here and then discuss these further in relation to our intended future work to conclude the paper. Subsequent steps will involve a more comprehensive review of the social media, strategic framing, and ambient awareness literature to refine data categorisation and analysis, as well as making comparisons to discern the distinctions offered by social media in contrast to traditional outlets used for strategy communications.

Although preliminary at this stage, from our data we see potential to draw more explicitly on ambient awareness (Leonardi, 2015; Krämer et al., 2017), extant behavioural theories such as language-based views of strategy (Vaara and Fritsch, 2022) or emotion perspectives (Whittle et al., 2023).

description of social media features	feature type	text quotation examples	1st order code	2nd order themes	aggregate dimensions	
Squinting Face with Tongue Emoji. podcast discussing the industry insights Using topic hashtag to locate potentially interested audience.	hashtags, emoji & link to podcast/visual picture	Episode 8 of our podcast is now out. Check it out via the link below - well worth a watch... But we need some help please. Before we can start experimenting with YouTube Shorts we need to get to 1000 subscribers. So if you're interested in #Y or just generally want to learn more about X then please check it out AND SUBSCRIBE (that last bit being the important bit 🙄).	framing strategic issues with humor	framing from the identity of an "character"	framing strategy with style(identity)	
sharing post, that the author post their thought piece about EV being the future on the Guardians. Tag celebrity to gain attention.	tag celebrity, internet language & sharing post with link to opinion piece	Well done, X. Very clear points, well made! No one has been "duped", have they? ... Rowan Atkinson said the same but then... we need all influential voices to come together and provide confidence and clarity to car buyers, rather than to feed doubts with dubious arguments based on extremely partial views.	framing strategic issues with emotion			
link to article, with summarised content, then asking question at the end to engage audience.	link to a scientific paper	In continuing my goal to share more papers this year... A paper I recently found interesting by H, et al in Science provided new insights on... What are your thoughts on this paper and the potential of this pathway to enhance immuno-oncology therapeutics? Are any of these insights applicable to how we optimise cell therapies?	share scientific article (related to strategic issues)			framing from the identity of an "scholar/scientist"
48 seconds videos, start and end with company logo, herself, talking about the content of the post but more in detail. End with "this is our first step not just cure cancer, but eliminate cancer as cause of death" with a smile.	video, sharing company published scientific paper	Our latest research, published in Cancer Discovery, identifies groups who may benefit from preventative cancer therapies. This is aligned with our goal of one day eliminating cancer as a cause of death. http...	framing strategic achievement as a scientist			
share post by company account, which share press release about the details of the donation, and clarifies the war has no conflict with the company.	share post with link to press release	X stands with the people of Ukraine and condemns Russia's military actions, and in support of our employees who have family and friends affected, the X Foundation will be making a donation of US\$5 million to one or more charities involved in providing humanitarian relief in Ukraine. Read more here:...	framing strategic issues as a-matter-of-factly			framing from the identity of a "businessman"
hashtags: #event name #cancer research. gif picture, background is chicao night skyline, with the conference details slowly appearing.	hashtags & visual picture	"#Event is fast-approaching... with more than 130 abstracts, we really are demonstrating our strategy to attack cancer from multiple angles, harness the potential of combinations, and treat earlier and smarter. Exciting times!"	framing event as evidence of strategy	framing with strategy explained	framing everyday achievements as part of strategy implementation.	
hashtags& visual pictures. 6 pictures with word descriptions. For example, first is a photo of two man shaking hands, on the bottom of the picture, "about a new partnership.	hashtags & visual picture	"We achieved a number of operational and strategic milestones in the first half of this year that will position X for long term success... Scroll through to take a look at some of the key highlights so far"	framing with strategy mentioned	framing mlstones as strategic.		
article discussing the content of the post in detail.	hashtag & article posted by company account	That data has proven invaluable in helping our partners to track an exceptional market context and maximise their revenue potential. And we're now particularly proud that it's also recognised as very valuable currency by government and the Office for National Statistics!	framing achievement without make connection to strategy	framing without mentioning strategy (but actually is relevant to strategy)		
share post from CHRO with link to website about winning award in detail.	share post with link to website	Proud to share that X has been named as a Times Top 50 Employer for Women for the first time. This signifies our commitment to gender equality and inclusion, and our dedication to addressing inequalities through strategy, policies and culture. #TimesTop50 #TakeActionOnGenderEquality #GenderEquality #Inclusion	framing EDI strategy through winning awards	the add-on responsible strategy	framing strategy as responsible/moral	
share post from company account, picture has blurred people, with words description :83% (in large size), ...know their status.	share post with visual picture	In 2002 we were one of the first companies to introduce free HIV anti-retrovirats to our employees and later, to their dependents - a process which has had a measurable and positive impact on the physical, social and emotional welfare of our employees and on our business performance. #WorldAidsDay #KnowYourStatus	framing company-specific strategic issues as ethical			
sharing in-house made youtube video from series.	sharing youtube video	EVs are a pile of crap" ... or are they? With the alightly delayed #worlddevday coming up on 29/9, check out the incredible Electric Scoptic series from X on the X You Tube channel or on... #electricvehicles #sustainablemobility #electriccars	framing sustainability through video evidence	strategy itself is moral already		
link to article written by herself with the topic explained in detail, serious read with references.	sharing thought piece written by herself	Our strategy is... This strategy allows us to attack cancer from multiple angles, and devise highly effective combination regimens. Our data at ...illustrate how we've been applying this strategy.	framing strategy itself as moral			

Table 4: Data Structure

Discussion

Strategic ambient awareness

As new information technologies like social media affords the real-time dissemination of short crumbs of strategic information from a variety of official and unofficial sources (Heavey et al., 2020; Quigley, 2012). This paper draws from ambient awareness and ambient media literature (e.g. Levordashka & Utz, 2016; Lin et al., 2016; Leonardi, 2015; Leonardi & Meyer, 2015; Zhao et al., 2020; Hermida, 2010) to suggest that with the aid of multimodality of social media, these open, asynchronous and relentless strategic communication fragments are enabling stakeholders to maintain a mental model of strategy and strategic issues around them, leading to increasing social awareness of the identity and expertise of strategist, the content of strategy, and the moral of the strategy that we describes as strategic ambient awareness.

Technology enabled ambient awareness, describes the peripheral social awareness of knowledge about the omnipresent ambient exposure in the online environment without active communication (Leonardi, 2015; Krämer et al., 2017). While each separate crumbs of strategic information may appear as random noise, their ever-present accumulated reception can paint a comprehensive image of social others (Levordashka & Utz, 2016). Therefore, ambient awareness is a suitable lens to understand how strategist are framing strategic issues on social media.

Furthermore, there are two adjacent concepts that relevant to our future work, first one is ambient intimacy, which is derived from ambient awareness. The emphasise of ambient intimacy is a feeling of emotional closeness developed from merely following someone's posts on social media (Lin et al., 2016). Research has shown that audience tend to grow ambient intimacy to someone, with their posts being regarded as more intimate, entertaining, and informative (Lin et al., 2016). With the different style and identity strategists portray on social media, especially with expressions of humour and down-to earth style, connections may be drawn with the ambient intimacy. The second one is ambient affiliation, refers to the relationship among social media users who are not necessarily engaging with each other, instead, contributing to the same boundless online community formed by shared values, by hash tagging or iterating memes (Zappavigna, 2014). Hash tagging is a common practice we observed from our data.

Existing ambient awareness research (e.g. Leonardi, 2015 ; Leonardi & Meyer, 2015; Zhao et al., 2020) has predominantly focused on ambient awareness within the organisation boundary, and mainly from a perspective of recipients receiving the social media information. However, despite the growing body of literature on ambient awareness, few studies have specifically investigated how ambient awareness is achieved from the sender side posting the strategic information, especially neglecting the nuanced context of when expanding across the traditional organisational boundaries. Levordashka & Utz (2016) have concluded that fragmented noises online combined represents of social others, with the findings in our data structure, we want to build on this by arguing that fragmented strategic updates on social media combined, represents the combination of the style and the identity of both the strategists and the company, along with the moral stance and the content of the strategy.

Framing strategic issues as part of strategy implementation responsibly, with style (identity)

To discuss the findings, we start with three distinct stories of three strategists, “the scientist”, “the businessman”, “the character”. We will discuss the first strategist we labelled as ‘the scientist’ in detail, who is a top manager at a pharmaceutical company, and holds a relevant PhD degree. By running her sample posts through LIWC, the ‘analytical’ score is 90.61 out of 100. High analytical score tends to appear in academic environment and is correlated with reasoning skills (Jordan et al., 2019). The ‘authentic’ score is 39.29, which is meant to reveal honest and personal language usage (Markowitz et al., 2024). We draw on two examples to demonstrate how she embeds her identity in framing strategic issues. One Post with shared link to a scientific paper, *“In continuing my goal to share more papers this year...A paper I recently found interesting by H. et al in Science provided new insights on how...What are your thoughts on this paper and the potential of this pathway to enhance immuno-oncology therapeutics? Are any of these insights applicable to how we optimise cell therapies?”* With consciously making effort to share scientific papers, translate it to simple language for lay audience, by demonstrating this skill set beyond the standard toolkit of professional managers, she builds ambient awareness of besides being a top manager solely, her more noteworthy identity in the research-driven pharmaceutical industry is a scientist.

Further evidence can be found in another post, *“Our latest research, published in Cancer Discovery, identifies groups who may benefit from preventative cancer therapies...This is*

aligned with our goal of one day eliminating cancer as a cause of death.” Along with the link to the paper, also attached a 48-second video, where herself explaining the details of the paper and its implications. The video ends with *"this is our first step to not just cure cancer but to eliminate cancer as a cause of death"* with a smile. The multimodality of social media beyond just affords her to summarise the key points of hard-to-read scientific paper in a short post, additionally, allows her popularising it in a video by herself, constructs both the strategic issues and her identity as a scientist more perceptible.

Besides identity and style, strategy content is also embedded in the social media posts that share updates of the organisation, even the word strategy is not always mentioned. We have observed three ways how strategic leaders framing strategy behind the scenes, when strategy is explained, when strategy is only mentioned, when strategy is not mentioned yet implied. Interestingly, start with, the instances when strategy is not merely referenced, but also being elucidated in detail. For example, *“#event is fast-approaching... with more than 130 abstracts, we really are demonstrating our strategy to attack cancer from multiple angles, harness the potential of combinations, and treat earlier and smarter.”* By framing ‘130 abstracts’ as the evidence of the strategy being implemented, the strategist takes opportunities like this to repeat the content of the strategy, further achieve strategic ambient awareness to the broad audience.

Lastly, we discovered two ways how strategists framing moral values align with the strategy, the first one is apparent in almost every strategy we have observed. The strategy itself is not relevant to moral stance, nevertheless, they frame the separate add-on moral strategies that may focused on sustainability or EDI to align strategy with an ethical stance. For example, *“Did you know that our FutureSmart Mining™ sustainability strategy features a number of stretch goals including a 2030 target to create five jobs off-site for every job on-site?”* The second type is not as common in our data, where the strategy itself is fortunately started from a moral high ground. For instance, *“Medicines that can prevent cancer before a malignancy develops have the potential to redefine cancer care. Our latest research, published in Cancer Discovery, identifies groups who may benefit from preventative cancer therapies, and also outlines concepts that could help to accelerate progress in the field... This is aligned with our goal of one day eliminating cancer as a cause of death. [http...#WhatScienceCanDo](#).”* With framing strategy align with moral values through social media posts, beyond ambient awareness, ambient intimacy have the potential that could further be achieved.

Conclusion

As seen in our emerging findings, linguistic features such as expressed emotion and rhetoric are prominent and can lead to notable outputs such as resonance or alignment. There are also rich possibilities at the crossroad of where SAP can lead to, in utilising theories of technology multimodality, affordances, enactment, and ambient awareness where our emergent findings show potential in connecting strategy practice and information systems streams, to harness diversity in illustrating how social media is a form of sociomaterial practice where technology features enable distinct outputs for strategic framing.

Another possible contribution is to connect SAP with notions of openness, particularly strategic transparency (Gegenhuber and Dobusch, 2017). Social media empowers stakeholders with diverse access to information within the organisation, with or without the help of 'official' sources. Therefore, pressuring strategic communication to be more transparent, more authentic, and more empathetic (Quigley, 2012). Communication studies have shown that there is a robust positive influence of authentic leadership on transparent organizational communication, employees tend to perceive organizational communication as transparent if the leaders are deemed as authentic (Jiang & Men, 2017).

Furthermore, one discernible theme emerges from our data is sustainability, this theme is closely related to one grand challenge, climate change, accentuated further by the COVID-19 pandemic, has become even more prominent. Past research elucidate how the framing of problems and strategies influences the approaches of actors in addressing Grand Challenges (Dorado et al., 2022). And it is argued that strategic communication plays a pivotal role in shaping not only the identification of innovative approaches to Grand Challenges, but also drivers that influencing businesses' willingness to reevaluate current norms that dictate their collaboration with stakeholders (Dorado et al., 2022). Our data has the potential to reveal the paradoxical elements intrinsic to grand challenges from inter-organizational level (Jarzabkowski et al., 2019). Hence, our research could present an opportunity to expanding SAP beyond 'micro' endeavours to tackle macro phenomena like grand challenges (Seidl & Whittington, 2014).

Going forward, we hope to get further feedback and ideas from EGOS, as we deepen our focus on these areas and develop a more specific and mature contribution on the potential implications of strategists' practices relevant to social media and strategic framing.

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