

Employees' drivers for online boundary management behaviours

Bachelor thesis

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Abstract

As employees increasingly interact online through social media, boundaries between professional and personal lives are blurring. This study investigates employees' drivers to engage in two online boundary management behaviours. Results from a survey of 200 employees suggest that self-enhancement is a driver for content boundary management behaviour and, contrary to the theory, not for hybrid boundary management behaviour. Employees' preference for integration or segmentation of work and nonwork roles did not reinforce engagement in any of the boundary management behaviours. Findings from this research provide insight into the social media strategies employees adopt, which forms a starting point for further analysis into the influence of online boundary management behaviour on professional reputation.

Keywords: Online boundary management, self-enhancement, integration-segmentation, social media

Theoretical framework

Nowadays it is hard to imagine life before social networks, as they have become omnipresent in the daily lives of many. According to Boyd and Ellison (2007) social network sites can be defined as online services that enable individuals to construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, where users can create a list of other users whom they share a connection with. All social networks have in common that users can create connections, although different networks have different focuses.

LinkedIn, for instance, is aimed at professionals, whereas Twitter is the go-to network to share short messages about anything one has on mind. Facebook originally started as an online network for college students to stay in touch, but presently individuals in the age group 35-54 are the most highly represented on Facebook with over 56 million users (31.1% of total users; Neal, 2014). According to the 2014 Facebook Demographic Report based on data from Facebook's Social Advertising platform, teens are leaving the network, whilst users in older age groups are quickly growing (Neal, 2014). As a result, the working population is shifting towards being more connected on Facebook. Chances that colleagues or bosses are active on the same social network are considerable, and therefore receiving friend requests from professional contacts is likely to be the rule rather than exception.

The results of a recent online survey of nearly 1,000 Americans showed that 21% are Facebook friends with their work supervisor, 71% is not and 5% used to be friends with their boss (Russell Herder, 2011). Research has indicated different reactions of individuals to friend requests from their bosses on Facebook (Peluchette, Karl & Fertig, 2013; Karl & Peluchette, 2011). The 75 contributions that were examined in one study had split opinions as 45% indicated that one should accept the boss's friend request, whereas 48% argued that the friend request should be ignored (Peluchette et al., 2013). Similar results were found by Karl and Peluchette (2011), as 51% of the total 208 respondents stated they would be likely to accept a friend request from their supervisor. A third (33%) of respondents indicated they would accept the boss's friend request, but with reservations, and 15% said they would ignore the request of their boss.

Del Bosque (2013) also investigated social networking in the workplace. Of the 765 respondents who completed her survey, many did not accept friend requests from

colleagues. A total of 15% did not accept friend requests of people they supervise, 19% did not accept requests from their supervisors, and 8% did not accept requests from direct colleagues within their organization. Additionally, 10% of respondents kept their professional and personal contacts apart by creating and maintaining separate online profiles.

Since social networks revolve around sharing personal information about private or social activities, interests and opinions, people are now disclosing information that would not have been shared with everyone before the social media era. Interacting online through social media is considerably different from traditional offline interactions (e.g. face-to-face or phone conversations). Offline, employees can control the amount and nature of personal information they want to share with professional contacts, based on the relationship built with each individual (Ollier-Malaterre & Rothbard, 2015). In individualized interactions one can easily tailor disclosure to the other party, whereas in online social networks the information disclosed is available for all contacts and is not tailored to a particular relationship. Consequently, social networks can cause a collision between personal and professional life.

The way employees interact online can affect how they are respected and liked by professional contacts (Ollier-Malaterre, Rothbard & Berg, 2013). Judgements of respect and liking are of great importance in organizational situations (such as hiring, firing, promoting, appraisals, etc.) and being liked and respected by professional contacts can positively influence career success (Cuddy, Glick & Beninger, 2011; Ollier-Malaterre & Rothbard, 2015). Different online behaviours can influence success, and therefore it is important to gain thorough insight into those online behaviours and their drivers.

Online Boundary Management

Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013) have investigated employees' motives for managing the boundaries between their professional and personal identities in online social networks. They propose that both preferences for self-enhancement or self-verification, and for segmentation or integration of employees' personal and professional lives are drivers for four sets of online boundary management behaviours (i.e. open, audience, content, and hybrid). The framework (Figure 1) Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013) created based on existing theories, has not been tested in actual practise. Hence, the framework

will function as the basis of this present study to examine the validity of the theory presented by Ollier-Malaterre and colleagues. The current study will focus only on content and hybrid boundary management behaviours. Furthermore, only the drivers for content and hybrid behaviours will be taken into account.

Online Boundary Management Drivers, Behaviors, and Consequences

Preferences for segmentation versus integration
of professional and personal identities

| | Integration | Segmentation |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| Self-evaluation motives | <p>Open boundary management behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decrease average respect • Decrease average liking | <p>Audience boundary management behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect but do not increase average respect • Decrease average liking |
| | <p>Content boundary management behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase average respect • Increase average liking • Moderated by online boundary management capabilities | <p>Hybrid boundary management behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase average respect • Increase average liking • Moderated by online boundary management capabilities (most demanding behaviors) |

Figure 1. Online Boundary Management Framework, in Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013, p. 652)

Content boundary management

Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013) predict that employees engaging in content behaviour only actively and carefully monitor the information they disclose, and that they do not manage the audiences they share that information with. Liking and respect among professional contacts are likely to increase with this strategy, as it enables individuals to show both personal and professional self-enhancing content to various work audiences (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). Content boundary management behaviours are relatively easy to manage as one only needs to closely monitor a single personal profile (Ollier-Malaterre & Rothbard, 2015). However, it does require close attention and effort to decide what information to disclose (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013).

Typical content behaviour employees may engage in is, for instance, refraining from posting controversial topics, controlling tagged photos, monitoring profile comments made by others, and disclosing information that is flattering, glamorous or status increasing (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). In sum, content behaviour can be described as presenting the best version of yourself to a wide array of both personal and professional contacts.

Hybrid boundary management

Hybrid boundary management behaviour can be seen as a more complex and advanced form of content behaviour. Employees engaging in hybrid behaviour “divide their professional and personal contacts into separate audiences and tailor the content they disclose to each audience”(Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013, p. 654). DiMicco and Millen (2007) investigated how employees can present themselves when using one system to interact with past social groups and new professional contacts at the same time. Typical hybrid behaviour is to adjust online profiles when individuals shift to different life stages (DiMicco & Millen, 2007). Employees could also customize their profile and create separate personal and professional lists of contacts so they can manage what information is shared with whom. One could then decide the visibility from each profile section for every branch of their network (Donath & Boyd, 2004).

Comparable to content behaviours, hybrid behaviours are likely to increase average likeability and respectability of employees among their professional contacts because of the tailored disclosure of personal and professional self-enhancing information (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). Because hybrid behaviour enables employees to tailor content to a specific audience, it can be argued that hybrid behaviours best mirrors the tailored nature of offline interactions (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). As the hybrid strategy is the most sophisticated, it takes a lot of time, skill and ongoing effort to constantly monitor content and audiences (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). Besides, it is crucial to always be aware of the ever-changing privacy settings of social networks (Ollier-Malaterre & Rothbard, 2015).

Self-enhancement

Employees can have different motives to promote a certain professional image of themselves. Professional image can be defined as “the aggregate of key constituents’ (i.e.

clients, bosses, superiors, subordinates, and colleagues) perceptions of one's competence and character" (Roberts, 2005, p. 687). Constructing a desired professional image therefore means evaluating and constructing those perceptions. As illustrated by numerous scholars, the process of self-evaluation has two distinctive motivational determinants, namely self-verification and self-enhancement (e.g. Sedikides, 1993; Swann, 1990; Swann, Pelham & Krull, 1989; see Kwang & Swann, 2010, for a meta-analysis of relevant literature). Both self-verification and self-enhancement are externally focused self-evaluation motives (how an individual wants to be seen by others), rather than having an internal focus (how one perceives oneself) or a focus on the 'actual' perceptions of others (Roberts, 2005; Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013).

Since the current study focuses only on content and hybrid boundary management behaviours as distinguished by Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013), only self-enhancement will be addressed. Self-verification (seeking affirmation of one's self-concept (Anseel & Lievens, 2006; Swann et al., 1989) is related to open and audience behaviours (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013), and therefore irrelevant for this present study.

Self-enhancement theory suggests that individuals want to view themselves in the most positive light (Anseel & Lievens, 2006; Sedikides, 1993). To this end, self-enhancers will avoid disclosing negative personal information and instead focus on information that has favourable implications for the self (Sedikides, 1993). Research by Swann et al. (1989) has shown that individuals with self-enhancing motives prefer feedback about their positive attributes, independent from their self-esteem levels. They also prefer to interact with contacts who offer them positive feedback (Swann et al., 1989). It is important to note that the decision to emphasize specific aspects of one's personality to different contacts does not imply presenting an unauthentic image of the self (Phillips, Rothbard & Dumas, 2009). Rather, it means tailoring one's true personality to a particular context (Phillips et al., 2009).

In sum, employees pursuing self-enhancement are likely to actively share and monitor information that enables them to manage the impressions others have of them. In terms of online boundary management behaviours, self-enhancers are therefore expected to tailor the content they disclose online in such way to impress professional contacts (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). As the theoretical framework proposed by Ollier-

Malaterre et al. (2013) suggests that self-enhancement is likely to result in content or hybrid behaviours, the first hypothesis is the following.

***Hypothesis 1:** Employees who pursue self-enhancement are more likely to engage in content or hybrid boundary management behaviour than employees who do not pursue self-enhancement.*

Integration versus segmentation

Prior work on boundary management suggests that “individuals vary in the extent to which their various roles are integrated or segmented across domains” (Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006, p. 433). The management of multiple roles is particularly salient for boundaries between personal and professional identities (Ashforth, Kreiner & Fugate, 2000; Rothbard, Phillips & Dumas, 2005). In their daily lives, employees have to actively consider to what extent they want to take nonwork-related issues to work, and vice versa.

Integration refers to the blurring of boundaries between work and nonwork roles (Ashforth et al., 2000; Rothbard et al., 2005), whereas segmentation refers to maintaining clear boundaries between work and nonwork roles (Ashforth et al., 2000; Edwards & Rothbard, 2000). Since individuals vary in the degree to which they integrate or segment separate roles, scholars have illustrated that integration and segmentation fall on a continuum, ranging from high segmentation to high integration (Ashforth et al., 2000).

Role integration and segmentation both have advantages and disadvantages. Firstly, as argued by Ashforth et al. (2000), for individuals with high role integration, it is easier to transition back and forth between roles. A drawback that follows logically is that it would increase the potential for conflicting role expectations (Olson-Buchanan & Boswell, 2006). Indeed, Kossek, Lautsch and Eaton (2005) found that a tendency towards integration resulted in a higher chance of family to work conflicts. Interestingly, these results were not true for work to family conflicts, suggesting that family is more likely to be negatively affected by integration strategies than work.

Alternatively, disclosure of personal information at work may affect other’s perceptions of competence or professional abilities, which can be one reason why

employees might prefer greater segmentation (Phillips et al., 2009). Employees who pursue greater segmentation can be more focussed on the salient role because the interruptions from other roles are minimized, which thus decreases the blurring of roles (Ashforth et al., 2000; Rothbard et al., 2005). On the contrary, high segmentation does increase the difficulty of switching between roles (Ashforth et al., 2000).

Employees' preferences for segmentation or integration are important predictors of whom they will connect with in online social networks, and what kind of boundary management behaviours they will engage in (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013) propose that integrators are not likely to actively manage their online audiences, and therefore will connect with both their professional and personal contacts online. However, employees pursuing self-enhancement are expected to actively manage the information they share with their integrated online audience, which is a feature of content boundary management behaviours (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013).

Hypothesis 2: *Employees who pursue self-enhancement and prefer integration are more likely to engage in content boundary management behaviour than employees with an equal preference for self-enhancement and a preference for segmentation.*

Subsequently, the framework presented by Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013) proposes that employees preferring segmentation “should be motivated to more actively construct boundaries between their professional and personal contacts in online social networks than integrators” (p. 650). Combining this characteristic with self-enhancement, it is expected to result in hybrid boundary management behaviour (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013).

Hypothesis 3: *Employees who pursue self-enhancement and prefer segmentation are more likely to engage in hybrid boundary management behaviour than employees with an equal preference for self-enhancement and a preference for integration.*

Method

Instruments

Respondents filled in an online questionnaire in which they answered questions which could be divided into three categories: questions related to self-enhancement, to integration-segmentation, and to content or hybrid behaviours. Besides, they were asked about background variables, such as age, sex and educational level.

Self-enhancement

Self-enhancement was operationalized as employees' tendency to tailor the content they disclose only so that it impresses professional contacts. The 'Desire for self-verification and self-enhancement' questionnaire was adapted from Wiesenfeld, Swann, Brockner and Bartel (2007). However, as the questionnaire was not published in that article, we used the questionnaire from Dr. William Swann's personal website (n.d.). The four items measuring desire for self-enhancement can be found in Appendix 1. An example statement is 'I want others to have a positive attitude toward me'. The items were anchored by seven-point Likert scales ('strongly disagree' – 'strongly agree'). The reliability of the four items measuring self-enhancement was good ($\alpha = .88$).

These items focused on individuals' innate desire for self-enhancement, and to check if there were any differences in desire for self-enhancement in the specific domain of work, four extra items were included. In these four items 'others' was replaced by 'colleagues' (e.g. 'I want colleagues to have a positive attitude toward me', see Appendix 1). These items were also anchored by seven-point Likert scales ('strongly disagree' – 'strongly agree') and the reliability of the four items measuring professional self-enhancement was excellent ($\alpha = .91$).

Integration-segmentation

Integration-segmentation was measured with two different scales. Integration was operationalized as the blurring of boundaries between work and nonwork roles, and segmentation referred to an individuals' tendency to treat work and nonwork as separate domains. The first scale used to measure integration-segmentation was inspired by a single question to measure personae overlap by Fieseler, Meckel and

Ranzini (2015): 'In which degree do your private and professional social media profile overlap?'. Subsequently, the questions 'In which degree do your private and professional contacts overlap on social media?' and 'In which degree do your contacts overlap on your professional (e.g. LinkedIn) and personal (e.g. Facebook) social media profiles?', were added to the scale for online integration-segmentation. These items were anchored by five-point Likert scales ('not at all' - 'completely'). The reliability of the three items measuring individuals' tendency to integrate or segment online was good ($\alpha = .84$).

Moreover, the scale by Clark (2000), as reported in Kossek, Lautsch and Eaton (2006), was used to measure individuals' tendency to integrate or segment roles offline. The six items used to measure offline personae overlap can be found in Appendix 1 (e.g. 'I prefer to not talk about my family issues with most people I work with'). The items were anchored by seven-point Likert scales ('strongly agree' - 'strongly disagree'). The four negative items were recoded. Unfortunately the reliability of this scale was not high enough and even after omitting several items the Cronbach's Alpha remained poor ($\alpha = .52$). Therefore it was decided to ignore this scale. Only the scale for online integration-segmentation was used for further analyses.

Content or hybrid boundary management behaviours

Since no previous research had included scales designed to measure boundary management behaviours yet, a new scale was developed based on the framework by Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013). The five items used to measure content boundary management behaviour can be found in Appendix 1 (e.g. 'I deliberately choose the content I share on Facebook'). The questions were anchored by seven-point Likert scales ('strongly agree' - 'strongly disagree'). A principal component analysis with oblimin rotation revealed a two-factor solution. The first factor explained 39.77% of the variance and because the second factor explained only 20.18% of the variance, it was decided to only include the items loading on the first factor. The first factor consisted of 3 items (content2, content4, content5). The reliability of this scale was acceptable ($\alpha = .67$) and removing 'content5' improved the reliability. Therefore, the two factors used to measure content boundary management behaviour were 'content2' and 'content4' and the reliability of the scale was good ($\alpha = .80$).

The items used to measure hybrid boundary management behaviour are listed in Appendix 1 (e.g. 'I differentiate the online information I share with professional and private contacts'). All six items were anchored by seven-point Likert scales ('strongly agree' - 'strongly disagree'). A principal component analysis with oblimin rotation revealed a two-factor solution. The first factor explained 36.73% of the variance and the second factor explained only 18.21% of the variance. Because 'hybrid2', 'hybrid3', 'hybrid4', and 'hybrid6' loaded highest on the first factor, it was decided to use those four items for the hybrid boundary management behaviour scale. The reliability of the scale was acceptable ($\alpha = .65$) and because removing or adding items did not improve the reliability, it was decided to utilize the four items to create a scale for hybrid boundary management behaviours.

Procedure and respondents

The survey was composed online, by using Qualtrics. All respondents were sent a personal online message with an invitation to participate in the survey. The invitation contained a link to the online questionnaire. The questionnaire started with an information page with instructions. On average, it took the respondents about 15 minutes to fill in the questionnaire. First, respondents answered questions about background variables. Subsequently they answered questions about the boundary management behaviours, self-enhancement, and integration-segmentation.

To guarantee the trustworthiness of respondents' answers an important criterion was that the respondents were currently employed in a full-time or part-time job. Besides, they had to have a Facebook account. If the respondents did not meet those criteria, they were friendly rejected from further participation.

Of the total number of 200 valid responses, 86 (43%) surveys were completed by men and 114 (57%) by women. The average age of respondents was 34.64 ($SD = 14.28$, range 18-69). All respondents were native speakers of Dutch, and the questionnaire was translated to Dutch. The majority of respondents were educated at university level (33.5%), or the Dutch HBO-level (33%). The remainder had a MBO-level education (14.5%) or had finished high school (19%). Of the total number of respondents, 101 (50.5%) worked full time, and 99 (49.5%) had part-time jobs. Table 1 gives an overview of the number of Facebook connections respondents had.

Table 1. Number of Facebook friends of respondents

| Facebook connections | Frequency (N = 200) |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 10 or less | 2 |
| 11-50 | 22 |
| 51-100 | 20 |
| 101-150 | 28 |
| 151-200 | 12 |
| 201-250 | 18 |
| 251-300 | 26 |
| 301-400 | 26 |
| More than 400 | 46 |

Statistical treatment

All analyses were conducted with IBM SPSS 22. The statistical tests that were performed were linear regression analyses. To test the interaction-effects the independent variables were transformed to z-scores.

Results

In order to test the hypotheses several linear regression analyses were performed. To investigate the first hypothesis four separate regression analyses were carried out. Moreover, linear regressions were executed to test the interaction effects.

Main effects

Content boundary management behaviour

A linear regression showed that the variable innate self-enhancement explained 23% of the variance in content boundary management behaviour ($F(1, 198) = 61.80, p < .001$). Innate self-enhancement was shown to be a significant predictor of content boundary management behaviour ($\beta = .49, p < .001$) (see Table 2). A linear regression showed that the variable professional self-enhancement accounted for 21% of the variance in content boundary management behaviour ($F(1, 198) = 54.27, p < .001$).

Professional self-enhancement was shown to be a significant predictor of content boundary management behaviour ($\beta = .46, p = <.001$) (see Table 3).

These findings provide support for the first hypothesis. Employees who pursue self-enhancement (both innate and professional) are more likely to engage in content boundary management behaviour than employees who do not pursue self-enhancement.

Table 2. Regression analysis for the variable innate self-enhancement predicting content boundary management behaviour ($N = 200$)

| variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Innate self-enhancement | .58 | .07 | .49* |
| R^2 | .23 | | |
| F | 61.80* | | |

* $p <.001$

Table 3. Regression analysis for the variable professional self-enhancement predicting content boundary management behaviour ($N = 200$)

| variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Professional self-enhancement | .53 | .07 | .46* |
| R^2 | .21 | | |
| F | 54.27* | | |

* $p <.001$

Hybrid boundary management behaviour

As illustrated in Table 4 and Table 5, linear regressions showed that innate self-enhancement and professional self-enhancement both had no significant effect on hybrid boundary management behaviour. Consequently, there is no support for the first hypothesis regarding hybrid boundary management behaviour. Apparently, neither innate nor professional self-enhancement can be considered as a driver of employees' hybrid boundary management behaviour.

Table 4. Regression analysis for the variable innate self-enhancement predicting hybrid boundary management behaviour ($N = 200$)

| variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Innate self-enhancement | -.06 | .08 | -.06 |
| R^2 | <.001 | | |
| <i>F</i> | .71 | | |

Table 5. Regression analysis for the variable professional self-enhancement predicting hybrid boundary management behaviour ($N = 200$)

| variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Professional self-enhancement | -.09 | .07 | -.09 |
| R^2 | .003 | | |
| <i>F</i> | 1.51 | | |

Interactions

To investigate the effect of employees' preference for integration or segmentation of work and nonwork roles this variable was used as a moderator in the main effect of self-enhancement (innate and professional) on content boundary management behaviour. The interaction terms of both innate (Table 6) and professional self-enhancement (Table 7) and integration-segmentation showed no significant effect on content boundary management behaviour. Because the effect of self-enhancement on content boundary management behaviour was not reinforced by a preference for integration, hypothesis 2 was not supported.

Table 6. Regression analysis for the interaction of the variables innate self-enhancement and integration-segmentation predicting content boundary management behaviour ($N = 200$)

| variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β |
|--------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Innate self-enhancement | .67 | .09 | .49* |
| Integration-segmentation | .11 | .09 | .08 |
| Innate SE x int/seg | .08 | .07 | .07 |
| R^2 | .24 | | |
| <i>F</i> | 21.48* | | |

* $p < .001$

Table 7. Regression analysis for the interaction of the variables professional self-enhancement and integration-segmentation predicting content boundary management behaviour ($N = 200$)

| variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Professional self-enhancement | .61 | .09 | .45* |
| Integration-segmentation | .11 | .09 | .08 |
| Professional SE x int/seg | .03 | .08 | .03 |
| R^2 | .21 | | |
| <i>F</i> | 18.51* | | |

* $p < .001$

As shown in Table 8 and 9, hypothesis 3 was not supported by the findings because there was no significant effect of the interaction of both innate and professional self-enhancement with integration-segmentation on hybrid boundary management behaviour.

Table 8. Regression analysis for the interaction of the variables innate self-enhancement and integration-segmentation predicting hybrid boundary management behaviour ($N = 200$)

| variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β |
|--------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Innate self-enhancement | -.12 | .09 | -.10 |
| Integration-segmentation | .00 | .09 | .00 |
| Innate SE x int/seg | -.12 | .08 | -.12 |
| R^2 | <.01 | | |
| <i>F</i> | 1.09 | | |

Table 9. Regression analysis for the interaction of the variables professional self-enhancement and integration-segmentation predicting hybrid boundary management behaviour ($N = 200$)

| variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β |
|-------------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Professional self-enhancement | -.15 | .09 | -.12 |
| Integration-segmentation | .00 | .09 | .00 |
| Professional SE x int/seg | -.11 | .07 | -.11 |
| R^2 | <.01 | | |
| <i>F</i> | 1.25 | | |

Because no significant interaction effects were found, it was decided to test if employees' tendency to integrate or segment work and nonwork roles had a main effect on the boundary management behaviours.

Integration-segmentation was shown to be no significant predictor of hybrid management behaviour. However, it appeared that the variable integration-segmentation did account for 3,3% of the variance in content boundary management behaviour ($F(1, 198) = 7.79, p = .006$). As can be seen in Table 10, the degree to which an employee integrates or segments work and nonwork roles was shown to be a significant predictor of content boundary management behaviour ($\beta = .20, p = .006$).

Table 10. Regression-analysis for the variable integration-segmentation predicting content boundary management behaviour ($N = 200$)

| variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE B</i> | β |
|--------------------------|----------|-------------|---------|
| Integration-segmentation | .27 | .10 | .20* |
| R^2 | .03 | | |
| F | 7.79* | | |

* $p < .01$

Conclusion and discussion

Conclusion

Engaging in specific online boundary management behaviours can affect how employees are viewed by others. Diagnosing the social media strategies employees adopt, is the starting point for further research into the influence of social media on professional reputation (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013; Ollier-Malaterre & Rothbard, 2015). This research was a first critical attempt to investigate the drivers of two online boundary management behaviours as distinguished by Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013). The main purpose was to investigate if employees who pursue self-enhancement are more likely to engage in content or hybrid boundary management behaviours than employees who do not pursue self-enhancement.

First, it is important to note that no difference was found between professional and innate self-enhancement. If self-enhancement appeared to be significantly related to a certain boundary management behaviour, this was true for both the self-enhancement variables. In partial support of hypothesis 1, results indicate that self-enhancement is indeed a predictor for employees' engagement in content boundary management behaviour. In other words, content boundary management behaviour is practiced by employees who want to be seen in the most positive way possible. It can be concluded that employees who pursue self-enhancement tailor the content they disclose online to impress others. Contradictory, the first hypothesis was not supported regarding hybrid boundary management behaviour. This suggests that, contrary to the theory by Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013), self-enhancement is not a driver for employees to engage in hybrid boundary management behaviour; self-enhancers are not more likely to engage in hybrid behaviours than employees who do not pursue self-enhancement.

The second and third hypothesis were rejected because the relation between self-enhancement and the boundary management behaviours was not reinforced by neither a preference for integration nor for segmentation. Based on these findings it can be concluded that self-enhancing employees who prefer to integrate personal and professional online contacts are not more likely to engage in content boundary management behaviour, than if they would prefer segmentation. Similarly, it can be said that self-enhancers who prefer to segment online contacts are not more likely to engage in hybrid boundary management behaviour than if they would have a preference for integration.

Even though unanticipated based on the framework by Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013), it was found that, when analysed as a separate main effect, preference for integration or segmentation affects boundary management behaviour. Interestingly, this only applies for content boundary management behaviour and not for hybrid boundary management behaviour. Thus, an employee's tendency to integrate work and nonwork roles results in content boundary management behaviour, whereas a tendency for segmentation does not result in more hybrid boundary management behaviour.

Our present findings are only partly in line with the theory provided by Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013). It is interesting to note that self-enhancement and a preference for integration do indeed result in content boundary management behaviour. However,

the interaction between the two variables is non-existent. This provides evidence for the inaccuracy of the theoretical framework by Ollier-Malaterre et al. In addition, none of the results indicated a driver that leads to employees' engagement in hybrid boundary management behaviour. Apparently, hybrid boundary management behaviour does not imply dividing personal and professional contacts into separate audiences and tailoring content accordingly. The current findings show that the model by Ollier-Malaterre and colleagues is disputable. It might be concluded that the model in current form is ineffective to analyse drivers and predict online boundary management behaviour.

Discussion

There are several factors that may have affected our research, mainly due to its exploratory nature. Before, only theoretical frameworks had been provided based on previous literature, and online boundary management behaviour had never been tested in actual practice. This research was a first attempt to investigate online boundary management behaviours, based on the theoretical framework by Ollier-Malaterre et al. (2013).

Since this was the first time this subject was studied, there were no scales available yet. For content and hybrid boundary management behaviour the measurements were based on the example behaviours provided in the existing literature. After several consultations with colleagues from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, final scales were designed (see Appendix 1). Several items had to be deleted from the scales to improve reliability. For content boundary management behaviour, eventually the items 'content2' and 'content4' were used. Remarkably, those two items are clearly related to self-enhancement, and not as much to integration. This may have influenced further outcomes and might justify why no interaction-effect was found for self-enhancement and integration-segmentation. Further research should investigate other possible correlations between the drivers for online boundary management behaviour.

The scale used to measure hybrid boundary management behaviour appeared to be debateable. The factor analysis had no clear outcome and could be interpreted in several ways. Two out of the four items ('hybrid3' and 'hybrid4') that were used loaded negatively on the scale for hybrid boundary management behaviour, which may have affected the results. Even though those two items were clearly provided by previous

research (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013; DiMicco & Millen, 2007; Donath & Boyd, 2004), it can be suggested that those items might not be related to hybrid boundary management behaviour. Interestingly, both items are related to the creation of subgroups on Facebook. It might be possible that no one uses Facebook's option to create subgroups, which then cannot be related to any behaviour whatsoever. In follow-up research it is recommended to revise the scales used to measure online boundary management behaviours (especially hybrid).

For future research it could be interesting to investigate whether different boundary management behaviours are related to the full- or part-time nature of a job. Possibly, part-timers could have a preference for segmentation of work and nonwork roles, whereas full-timers could prefer integration because their jobs play a vital role in their day-to-day lives. Besides, it can be suggested that full-timers and part-timers differ in their desire for self-enhancement. This might result in engagement in different online boundary management behaviour by full-timers and part-timers.

Furthermore, a fruitful extension to the current framework may be to focus on the influence of organizational identification (Ashfort et al., 2000; Fieseler et al., 2015) on online boundary management behaviour. In accordance with their hypotheses based on previous theory, Fieseler et al. (2015) found that employees with strong organizational identification prefer greater integration. Including organizational identification as a driver of online boundary management behaviour may be an interesting addition or adjustment to the framework and provides a relevant opportunity to nuance boundary management theory.

Another recommendation is to repeat the survey with respondents in another country. The current respondents all worked within Dutch organisations, and it would be interesting to see if the (relatively open) Dutch organisational culture influences the results and if other cultures would have different outcomes. It might even be possible that online boundary management behaviour is related to a nation's culture or an organisational culture in general. Possibly, hybrid boundary management behaviour does exist elsewhere, and just does not prevail in the Netherlands.

Next to the great opportunities for further research, the present findings offer practical implications for employees and organizations. Literature suggests that

engaging in content or hybrid behaviour will enhance both liking and respect (Ollier-Malaterre et al., 2013). Even though it requires more thorough investigation to make definite conclusions, the current findings suggest that none of the predicted drivers lead to hybrid behaviour, which would imply that no employee is able to engage in that type of behaviour, and can therefore never positively influence their professional reputation online. For employees it is important to gain insight in the best way to utilize online social media so that it positively influences career success. Organizations could help employees with their development of the crucial skills to create and maintain online boundaries, by providing training and policies regarding online boundary management.

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Appendix 1

Survey scales

Innate self-enhancement

1. I want others to have a positive attitude toward me.
2. I want others to see me as talented.
3. I want others to respect me.
4. I want others to see that I am able to accomplish what I do.

Professional self-enhancement

1. I want colleagues to have a positive attitude toward me.
2. I want colleagues to see me as talented.
3. I want colleagues to respect me.
4. I want colleagues to see that I am able to accomplish what I do.

Online integration versus segmentation

1. In which degree do your private and professional social media profile overlap?
2. In which degree do your private and professional contacts overlap on social media?
3. 'In which degree do your contacts overlap on your professional (e.g. LinkedIn) and personal (e.g. Facebook) social media profiles?

Offline integration versus segmentation

1. I prefer to not talk about my family issues with most people I work with.
2. Throughout the work day, I deal with personal and work issues as they occur.
3. It would be rare for me to read non-work related materials at work.
4. I tend to integrate work and family roles through the work day.
5. I tend to not talk about work issues with my family.
6. I actively strive to keep my family and work-life separate.

Boundary management behaviours

Content boundary management behaviour

1. I deliberately choose the content I share on Facebook.

2. I think it is important to present myself in the most positive way on Facebook.
3. I check tagged pictures and messages before they appear on my Facebook profile.
4. When I post on Facebook, I keep my friends' opinions in mind.
5. I do not openly announce my opinion on Facebook if it's controversial.

Hybrid boundary management behaviour

1. I differentiate the online information I share with professional and private contacts.
2. I have both professional and private contacts on Facebook, but I have adjusted the visibility for different contacts.
3. I have created different subgroups on Facebook so not all contacts can access the same information.
4. I have created subgroups on Facebook to share certain posts with certain subgroups.
5. I adjust the content I share on Facebook to my audience so I can present myself in the best way possible.
6. I clear my Facebook whenever I shift to a different life phase.