

# Chapter 1

## Social Media and Local Governments: An Overview

Mehmet Zahid Sobaci

**Abstract** Today, social media provide public institutions with new channels for rapidly spreading information, transparency, self-promotion to improve their image in the public eye, methods for designing and delivering public services with citizens. Taking advantage of the opportunities offered by social media is not limited to central government. Local governments deploy Internet-based innovative technologies that complement traditional methods in implementing different functions. However, social media tools provide opportunities as well as risk and challenges for local governments. In this context, aim of this chapter is to provide an overall evaluation of the relationship between local governments and social media.

### 1.1 Introduction

Social media have become an important part of the daily lives of millions of people all over the world. It has deeply impacted the way people communicate with each other, shop, entertain, and operate on a daily basis. In the digital age, all services and activities have gradually become available online. In this context, participation in social media has been increasing on a daily basis. In fact, the number of people using popular social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube has reached staggering levels. Facebook, which was founded in 2004 and adopted the mission of making the world more open and connected, has 1.35 billion monthly active users as of September 30, 2014 (Facebook 2014). Twitter, which was founded in 2007 and allows everyone to create and freely share their opinions and information, has 284 million active monthly users. Every day, 500 million tweets are sent (Twitter 2014). Every month, more than one billion users visit YouTube (YouTube 2014).

---

M.Z. Sobaci (✉)  
Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences,  
Uludağ University, Gorukle Campus, Nilufer, Bursa, Turkey  
e-mail: [zsobaci@uludag.edu.tr](mailto:zsobaci@uludag.edu.tr)

Even though these technologies were first discovered by the private sector, social media have also attracted the attention of political actors and administrative institutions that inform citizens as a prerequisite of open and transparent administration, deliver public services, and contact stakeholders. Today social media in government has been a rising trend. Different from web 1.0, with its interactive nature, social media provide public institutions with new channels for rapidly spreading information, transparency in public administration, self-promotion to improve their image in the public eye, methods for designing and delivering public services with citizens. Additionally, social media involves stakeholders in the decision-making process. In fact, Bertot et al. (2010, p. 53) stated that “social media technologies hold great promise in their ability to transform governance by increasing transparency and its interaction with citizens.”

Taking advantage of the opportunities offered by social media tools is not limited to central government. Local governments deploy Internet-based innovative technologies that complement traditional methods in implementing different functions. For instance, local governments can benefit from blogs to gather opinions and ideas from different stakeholders. Blogs can be valuable tools for local governments to detect social problems and obtain ideas for new services. Wikis may be useful for initiating discussions about corporate social responsibility activities and other projects. Local governments can disseminate certain documents (such as announcements and draft of regulations) and presentations through media sharing platforms. Moreover, social networks such as Facebook and Twitter can be used to send local service-related messages to the public and collect citizen feedback (Bonsón et al. 2012).

The use of social media tools to achieve public goals of the local governments, of course, is a choice open to local officials. Local officials may or may not use the above-mentioned opportunities for democratic local governments, better public services, and good public policies. A cost-benefit analysis, made by local officials, will be important to this decision because social media tools provide opportunities as well as risk and challenges for local governments. However, as Gibson (2010) stated, the real challenge for local governments is that there is a greater risk not to participate in than to participate in social media. Regardless of local government participation in social media dialogues, citizens will use these tools to discuss local governments and their decisions, services and policies, with an expectation that local governments will participate in the dialogue.

In the context of technological developments and citizens' expectations, there appears to be an indispensable relationship between local governments and social media. The purpose of this chapter is to provide an overall evaluation of the relationship between local governments and social media. The study begins by introducing a conceptual framework for social media. The next section includes a general analysis of local governments' reasons for deploying social media. Then, the relationship between local governments and social media is investigated as a cyclical process. The following section focuses on social media's benefits for local governments and barriers encountered by local governments when they use social media. The final section includes a literature review and recommendations for future research on social media use by local governments.

## 1.2 Social Media: A Conceptual Framework

It is difficult to find a commonly agreed upon definition for the concept of social media. In fact, social media and Web 2.0 are often interchangeably used. The literature provides many complicated technical definitions as well as definitions that focus on social media's purpose or practices. Therefore, defining social media is a difficult endeavor. However, to define social media, we can start with defining Web 2.0 because social media were developed based on Web 2.0 technologies.

According to O'Reilly (2007), Web 2.0 is a networked platform that gives the user control in creating, designing, improving, and sharing content and services. Collective intelligence is one of Web 2.0's fundamental features. In this context, Web 2.0 "is of the user, by the user, and, more importantly, for the user" (Chu and Xu 2009, p. 717). Web 2.0 is individual user centered. Therefore, governments will engage with citizens using the social media tools that citizens are already active users instead of setting up websites and publishing content. Web 2.0 comprises technologies such as blogs, wikis, mashup, RSS, podcast and vlog, tagging and social bookmarking, and social networking sites. Table 1.1 presents these social media types. For governments, these technologies reflect a loss of control, informality of communication, and customization to citizens, which implies that the content and services will be designed differently from the way they are currently designed (Chang and Kannan 2008).

Social media "is a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content" (Kaplan and Haenlein 2010, p. 61). In this context, the basic characteristics of social media are as follows (Mayfield 2007): (a) Participation: social media encourages contributions and feedback from all interested parties. (b) Openness: most types of social media are open to voting, feedback, comments, and information sharing. There are rarely barriers to accessing and using content. (c) Conversation: while social media provide a basis for conversation and are seen as two-way communication tools, traditional media is about broadcast, in which content is transmitted or distributed to an audience. (d) Community: social media allow communities to quickly form and effectively communicate about common interests such as political issues or favorite TV shows. (e) Connectedness: Most social media thrive on their connectedness, via links and combining different media types in one place.

From the public sector's perspective, social media are a group of Internet-based technologies that, by using the web 2.0 philosophy, allow public institutions to engage with citizens and other stakeholders (Criado et al. 2013). In public administration, these tools have been added to the existing tool kit based on one-way (unidirectional) technologies that view citizens as passive information receivers. Social media tools have elevated citizens to the content co-creator and sender positions (Mergel 2013a).

In fact, the use of social media applications in the public sector can be seen as an extension of the digitalization efforts of public administration as a new wave of

**Table 1.1** Social media types

Blog	A Web log (Blog) is a Web-based interactive application that allows one to log journal entries on events, or to express opinions and make commentaries on specific topics. It is a popular content generation tool. Blogs typically consist of text, images, videos music, and/or audios
Microblogging	The process of creating a short blog that is primarily achieved through mobile devices to share information about current events or personal opinions. A well-known example is Twitter
Wiki	A Web-based collaborative editing tool that allows different people to contribute their knowledge to the content. One author's content can be modified and enhanced with another author's contribution. A well-known example of this application tool is Wikipedia
Social networking	A Web-based tool or model that allows individuals to meet and form a virtual community through socializing via different relationships, such as friendships and professional relationships, sharing and propagating multimedia information, exchange interests, and communicating
Multimedia sharing	The rich multimedia contents such as photos, videos, and audios are shared through multimedia sharing tools. Typical examples include YouTube, Flickr, Picasa, Vimeo, etc.
Mashup	An application that uses contents from two or more external data sources combines and integrates them and thus creates new value-added information. This is a reuse and repurposing of the source data by retrieving source contents with open APIs (Application Programming Interfaces) and integrating them according to the information needs, instead of navigating them sequentially
RSS	A Web application that can pull the content from sources that are structured in standard metadata format called RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds such that it is easy to syndicate the contents from RSS formatted documents. The RSS feeds or Web feeds can be published and updated by the authors such that the updates can be easily inserted and quickly updated in content aggregation sites. The RSS feeds (also called atoms) are annotated with metadata such as the author and date information. The RSS-based content aggregators include news headlines, weather warnings, blogs, etc. Once the source content is updated, the content aggregator sites will be updated thus always sharing the updated content
Widgets	Small applications either on the desktop, a mobile device, or the Web. The widgets bring personalized dedicated content to the user from predefined data sources
Virtual World	A virtual world is an interactive 3-D computer-simulated world where avatars, controlled and played by the users, interact with each other as inhabitants
Social bookmarking and tagging	A tagging system that allows the users to describe the content of the Web sources with metadata such as free text, comments, evaluative ratings, and votes. This human-generated collective and collaborative set of tags forms a folksonomy and helps cluster Web resources

Source: Chun et al. (2010)

e-government era. However, social media differ from previous e-government waves. (1) Social media applications are provided by third parties, thus technological features are hosted outside of public institution's direct control. (2) Compared to e-government practices, such as static websites, social media is more interactive. (3) Content is created by both public institutions and citizens. (4) Social media applications cannot replace offline services and e-government services; these applications are existing communication mechanisms (Mergel 2013b).

In this context, the use of social media in the public sector is expected to contribute to the fulfilment of such purposes as cost savings, improvement of public services and citizen satisfaction, enhancement of transparency and accountability, citizen participation, co-production, and cross-agency collaboration.

### 1.3 Reasons for Using Social Media in Local Governments

In this day and age, there are several factors that encourage local governments to use social media for improving democracy, encouraging participation and citizens' knowledge of political processes. These factors can be discussed from economic, political, administrative, and social context frameworks. Economic and financial crises may increase the local government's social media use. Currently, countries all over the world have experienced severe economic and financial crises. These crises emerged in a globalized economic structure, and, like previous crises, upset many states' economic and financial balances. Local government's financial conditions are not immune to the financial disruptions faced by countries. Therefore, several recent studies have focused on the global crises' impact on local governments (United Cities and Local Governments 2009; Council of European Municipalities and Regions 2009; Commonwealth Secretariat 2010; Local Government and Public Service Initiative 2009). The global economic crisis negatively impacted local government's financial structure. Because of a sharp decrease in revenues (both tax revenues and central government financial transfers), economic activity recessions, and increased unemployment, local governments have experienced increased spending and budget deficits (Paulais 2009; Council of European Municipalities and Regions 2009).

Local governments that have to rationally use resources may be more sensitive to efficient and productive working and rational resource use during crisis periods. Social media may offer important opportunities to rationally allocate resources by determining citizen's priorities and needs; to make more acceptable policies by gathering citizen's ideas and opinions; and to provide citizen-oriented, efficient, and productive public services. These opportunities may encourage local governments to use social media tools.

Participatory democracy and new political understandings may also encourage local governments to use social media tools. Today, there is significant discontent with functioning of democracy. Low voter turnout and confidence crises in political

institutions are seen as the symptoms of this disappointment (Putnam 1995; Berman 1997). Coleman and Gøtze (2001) asserted that many developed democracies experienced a loss of confidence in traditional democratic government models. To prevent and end the democratic legitimacy and accountability crisis, there is a need for a new type of relationship between citizens and governance institutions. In this context, representative democracy is criticized, and there are increases in participatory democracy. Although the idea that information and communication technologies (ICTs) have the potential to improve democracy is not new, there has been a rise in current expectations from Internet-based technologies such as social media to materialize participatory democracy.

Moreover, a growing, new understanding of politics may also play an important role for use of social media by local governments. Today, Internet-based technologies have become an integral part of election campaigns, political communication, and political marketing practices. In fact, politicians cannot be indifferent to developments in ICTs. However, politicians at the national and local levels intensively use opportunities offered by social media tools in an attempt to organize and mobilize supporters and communicate messages to the public. Of course, the use of the social media by important elected figures such as mayors and council members may encourage the local governments to open official institutional accounts on social media.

Emerging alternative approaches to public service delivery and changing social expectations make social media use at the local level a prerequisite. Today, public service improvement constitutes a vital part of countries' administrative reforms. Because governments have questioned the traditional conception of public service delivery, in the context of New Public Management (NPM), alternative approaches regarding public service delivery have been introduced. However, although they provide gains in efficiency, these alternative mechanisms have also been strongly criticized, as they have failed to account for citizens' perceptions in public service improvement. It has been argued that mechanisms introduced by NPM failed to meet expectations for improving citizen satisfaction, trust and participation (OECD 2011). In fact, post-NPM debates, such as collaborative governance (Ansell and Gash 2007), new public governance (Osborne 2006), and public value (Moore 1995), directly or indirectly focus attention on this problem. Today, citizens expect public institutions to not only provide public services in an efficient way, but to also provide them in a participatory and accountable manner. In fact, it is believed that the involvement of citizens in every stage of public service design and delivery, as an innovative approach, can help improve public services through better understanding of citizens' changing priorities and accumulating citizens' information and ideas (OECD 2009).

The literature discusses this innovative approach as the concept of "co-production" (Bovaird 2007; Brandsen and Pestoff 2006; Cassia and Magno 2009; OECD 2011). "This new conception towards public services alters the role of the citizens and elevates them from the passive recipients of public services to the position of partner and contributor. The views, expectations, and demands of the citizens are considered as a vital input in improving the public services" (Sobaci and

Karkin 2013, p. 418). This innovative concept for public service delivery is compatible with philosophy of social media. Therefore, this innovative concept and the citizen's changing expectations may encourage the local governments to use social media tools.

#### **1.4 The Local Government - Social Media Relationship: A Cyclical Process**

The relationship between local governments, stakeholders, and social media can be considered as a cyclical process. In fact, this cyclical process provides a simple road map for local government's social media use. I introduce a road map for deploying social media tools by local governments. I developed this road map based on the Young Foundation's framework for the use of social media by local governments. While the Young Foundation framework is composed of three steps, I have developed the local government and social media relationships cyclical process in five steps. These steps include: making decisions to deploy and choosing tools; listening; participation; transformation; and evaluation.

The first step in the cyclical process is to make a decision and choose a tool. Local governments may deploy social media tools for various purposes (such as making them aware of decisions or services; being visible; self-promotion; developing personnel recruitment; promoting local tourism; developing the policy-making process; or problem solving). Accordingly, the first step of the process for the local governments is to decide to partake in the social media world and choose the appropriate social media tool. Local governments have to fulfil their public goals and conduct certain functions to meet these goals. In principle, an initial awareness must emerge about how social media could contribute to the realization of public goals and a decision must be made to take advantage of these innovative technologies. As explained above, every social media tool has unique features. Therefore, local governments may deploy different social media tools for different goals and functions. Moreover, the target group or social segment may vary depending on local government activities. Thus, it is crucial to choose the correct purpose-compatible social media tool. For instance, if a local government seeks to promote the local economy by attracting tourists to the city, it would be appropriate to deploy video and photo sharing sites. A local government that wishes to produce policies for young people should use the social media tools that young people most use and the local governments get into contact with them.

The second step in this cyclical process, specifically when the target is the improvement of policy-making process and solving certain local problems, is to listen to social media users and their conversations about local problems. It is fairly easy for local governments to start to listen to social media users and does not pose any risk. In this way, local governments may first build an understanding of who talks and what they are talking about. Listening to these online conversations is important because this step may help obtain unfiltered ideas and opinions on local

issues. Moreover, listening to citizens in social media supports the first step of the process as it helps determine the best channels for reaching citizens and different segments of society (Young Foundation 2010).

After listening to stakeholders in the social media, the most appropriate reaction to stakeholder's sharing (such as posts, tweets, and comments) would be to participate in social media conversations. In general, this method is at no cost for local governments. There is no cost because local governments will not establish new websites or platforms to create online communities but will join into preexisting communities, such as Facebook and Twitter. In the participation stage, citizens will make judgments based on the online behavior of local governments: Do local governments respond in a constructive way and provide timely feedback? Do the local governments really listen? Or do they just react? (Young Foundation 2010).

Thus, local governments should be cautious in the participation stage and restructure social media participation around five key activities: Dialogue (having conversations with the citizens via social media); Energize (providing citizens an issue that they can support and mobilize); Support (providing platforms for people); Involve (involving citizens in the decision-making process); Measure (being informed about the impact of social media) (Young Foundation 2010).

The next step in local governments' relationship with social media is transformation (Young Foundation 2010). Local governments should implement transformation by using the local knowledge that was obtained in the listening and participation stages as input in the problem solving, decision-making, public service improvement, and altering working methods processes.

The last stage of the cyclical relationship is evaluation. It is necessary to measure and evaluate the real contribution that social media makes in reaching predetermined social, political, organizational, and financial aims or resolving a problem. As with all social phenomena, it is difficult to measure and evaluate the impact or contribution of social media. However, social media performance and impact on the results should be evaluated with several tools (analysis of social media-based indicators; network analysis; citizen surveys). In this way, it is possible to understand whether the correct social media tools have been selected and appropriately used throughout the process.

## 1.5 The Benefits of Social Media to Local Governments

One of the questions to be answered to understand the significance of social media for local governments is how social media can make a contribution to local governments. In other words, in what areas do social media provide opportunities for local governments? In fact, the literature has discussed the benefits of social media use in the public sector (Bertot et al. 2010; Mergel 2013b; Picazo-Vela et al. 2012; Mossberger et al. 2013). However, given unique features of local governments, it is possible to outline the opportunities offered by deploying social media for local governments in several areas:



*Improving Efficiency and Productivity:* In a period when public administration faces challenges in terms of resources, social media may contribute to fulfilling many functions with little resources (Freeman and Loo 2009; Landsbergen 2010; Kuzma 2010). The use of social media by local governments may play a complementary role for traditional methods in many activities or services they organize and save resources, money, and time. For instance, via social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter, local governments may more quickly and cost-effectively contact citizens and other stakeholders. Similar to the private sector, local governments may take advantage of social media tools such as LinkedIn, specifically for personnel recruitment. Local governments may share council meetings via YouTube. Similarly, sharing platforms, such as YouTube or Pinterest, can be used to promote historical and cultural places and improve the city's tourism potential. In addition, as Landsbergen (2010) stated, local governments may benefit from social media, not only for finding resources that are out of their control but also as creative and innovative tools for mobilizing resources to fulfil the public purposes.

*Improving Local Public Services:* Social media tools allow local governments, as institutional actors or political actors (including the mayor or council members), to more frequently and comprehensively interact with citizens. Social media allow almost everyone to easily communicate opinions, recommendations, and criticisms to local officials, including those who do not often have their voices heard. In other words, social media include several channels for citizens to report problems they faced. At the same time, social media allow local governments to use the feedback they obtained from citizens as input in improving public services. In this way, social media pave the way for local governments to co-produce public services and mediate citizens' satisfaction in public services. For instance, mayors may use blogs or Twitter as a channel for collecting citizen's opinions and complaints.

*Improving Policy Making:* Local governments may start interactive and powerful dialogues with citizens about local issues via social media tools and involve them in the decision-making process. Social media tools provide new opportunities for involving citizens in problem-solving, community engagement, crowdsourcing, consultation, and cooperation processes. Thus, social media tools may lead to more rational and legitimate decision-making based on local knowledge and community preferences. A good example of policy improvement via social media is from England and is called "Help a London Park." This was a simple competition that was run by the Mayor of London and allowed people in London to vote for parks that would receive £400,000 for improvement. This project allowed Facebook groups to be set up and created YouTube videos, Flickr photos and countless blog articles. More than 110,000 votes were cast in this consultation project (Gibson 2010).

*Strengthening the Local Democracy:* There is a very close relationship between local governments and democracy. This is because the most appropriate scale for democracy is local scale. Local governments make decisions that directly impact citizen's lives. Because local governments are closest to citizens, it is easier for citizens to inspect and hold local governments accountable. Providing information to the citizens about decisions and services may enhance transparency and accountability.

Involving citizens and other stakeholders in the decision-making process may increase trust in local governments. Social media can improve local democracy by enhancing transparency, accountability, trust in government, and participation at the local level.

Moreover, as Gibson (2010) stated, social media tools provide new opportunities to engage people in elections. For instance, the Derbyshire County and Newcastle City Councils in England used Twitter and Facebook to provide information about local elections and announce election results.

*Collaboration and Knowledge Management:* Strengthening intra- or cross-agency cooperation is one of the fundamental objectives of public administration reforms. It is necessary to remove the “silo effect” that negatively impacts organizational efficiency and productivity. Fragmentation has a negative impact, especially in emergencies and disasters. Social media tools can be deployed in the public sector to join government and provide cross-agency cooperation (Osimo 2008). Thus, they also contribute to knowledge management. According to Chun et al. (2010, pp. 4–5), “These social network systems allow large scale distributed collaboration, information sharing and creation of collective intelligence in government areas at all levels from local to federal.”

## 1.6 Risks and Barriers for Local Governments

There is some skepticism about using social media in the public sector (Kingsley 2009; Zavattaro and Sementelli 2014). In general, critics emphasize the intrinsic risks of social media use and barriers to social media adoption. In this context, it is not clear if social media is an opportunity or a threat (Spurrell 2012). However, it is possible to say that there is in general a dominant optimistic point of view. There are few studies that identify barriers to social media use and make suggestions to remove them in the relevant literature (Bertot et al. 2012; Picazo-Vela et al. 2012; Zheng 2013; Landsbergen 2010; Meijer et al. 2012; CIO Council 2009; Tappendorf 2012). These studies use social, political, legal, organizational, technological, and information-related categories to understand barriers for the use of social media in public sector (Picazo-Vela et al. 2012; Zheng 2013). The barriers to public sector social media use are related to leadership, lack of resources, privacy, security, public records management, perceptions, social inclusion, and governance (Bertot et al. 2012; Landsbergen 2010; Dadashzadeh 2010; Meijer et al. 2012).

It is beneficial to briefly review contextual factors that may impact local government’s social media use before discussing the barriers that local governments have encountered in practice. As has been seen in prior e-government practices, the most important barrier to social media in the public sector is not the innovative technology itself, but public institution’s adoption of Internet-based applications. Thus, the first requirement is a mind-set change. In other words, by abandoning traditional functioning, the adoption of social media by public institutions requires awareness, collective belief, and consensus about the opportunities offered by social media for public institutions.

In this context, as with any innovative organizational initiative, leadership is an important factor for local governments to take advantage of social media applications in an efficient way to achieve specific objectives (transparency, accountability, participation, and cooperation). A powerful leadership that does not see using social media as a waste of time can facilitate social media use in local government. In other words, one potential barrier to local government's social media use is a lack of powerful leadership.

Another contextual factor that may influence local government's social media use is culture. Here, culture can be classified into two categories: Organizational culture and political culture. Organizational culture is a decisive factor in an institution's adoption of a change and ability to keep up with ongoing changes. In this context, a local government's culture that does not resist social media applications is closely related to being an open system and sensitive to environmental changes in the local government.

For political culture, it is necessary for citizens to have an active role so that these technologies can contribute to transparency, participation, and cooperation. The nature of social media predicts a two-way relationship and dialogue between the governing and the governed. When local governments adopt social media applications, there is a need for citizens to use these technologies for political and administrative purposes to achieve the above-mentioned objectives. In other words, citizens are required to be active and participatory political actors. The political culture in a country decides if this type of citizen can emerge and be nurtured by the democratic climate. In addition, even if the political culture of a country paves the way for an active and participatory citizen to emerge, citizens still must have the skills to use the social media tools. Therefore, the e-maturity of the society has an indirect impact on local government's social media use.

The other contextual factor is digital divide. For expected benefits from social media to emerge at the local level, disabled and socioeconomically disadvantaged people need to have access to social media tools. In other words, there is a need to overcome the problem of digital divide.

Having briefly explicated contextual factors above, we can explain the risks and barriers that local governments encounter while using social media in the following section:

*Resources:* One main barrier to local government social media use is a lack of sufficient resources. The problem of resources can be addressed in three ways: technological, personnel, and time. In the technological dimension, local governments need to have the required broadband to support streaming videos; security measures to protect their institution's network from viruses and malware-rich social media software; and to have sufficient disk space to support certain applications (Center for Technology in Government 2009). Local governments are faced with various challenges in terms of personnel. The use of social media by local governments requires that personnel have certain new and different skills. Thus, local governments should hire a person responsible for the management of social media or set up a team that will be responsible for social media relations. Moreover, all institutional personnel should know how to use social media tools, which raises personnel training

and development questions. For local governments to effectively use and implement best practices in social media, they need to train their personnel on social media. In addition, allocated time is needed to respond to citizen's posts, partake in conversations with citizens on behalf of the institution, and follow ongoing discussions and activities in the social media. Indeed, empirical studies that have focused on local government's social media use confirm that the lack of sufficient resources is a significant barrier raised by local officials (Howard 2012; Purser 2012; Center for Technology in Government 2009).

*Legal Issues:* The use of social media by local governments highlights many legal concerns on which officials need to attentively focus. These legal issues comprise the following concerns: compatibility with laws of open records laws or sunshine laws (such as the obligation of the council meeting being open to the public and retaining records); monitoring personnel's appropriate use of social media (the potential impact of social media use on productivity, inappropriate online activity on agency computers); posting inaccurate information in the agency's name and the resulting liability for consequences resulting from misinformation; employer-employee relationships (employer requests for social media passwords); posts causing copyright issues; and concerns of discrimination based on digital divide (Center for Technology in Government 2009; Hennessy 2012; Tappendorf 2012; Hrdinová et al. 2010; Kingsley 2009).

*Security:* Security concerns are one of the most fundamental barriers to local governments social media use. Security concerns include risks, such as malware software targeting institutions' networks or cyber-attacks by hackers and leaking secret information. The use of social media by local governments has introduced new methods (information scraping, spear phishing, social engineering, spoofing, and web application attacks) for these risks (Oxley 2011; CIO Council 2009; Center for Technology in Government 2009). In fact, empirical studies that have focused on the use of social media by local government have shown that officials consider security to be one of the main barriers (Howard 2012; Purser 2012; Center for Technology in Government 2009).

*Information and Content Concerns:* Content management is another important issue in local government's social media use. In this context, determining the sender of information on behalf of the institution and ensuring the correct content is crucial. If these issues are not clearly determined by the institution, many personnel may post inaccurate information on behalf of the institution. In addition, sensitive information may be leaked. Moreover, because the institution does not have full control of the content, the institution may falsely seem to approve opinions and advertisements published on its social media site or from other social media sites (Center for Technology in Government 2009). Additionally, institutional personnel may share opinions and comments on social media tools that differ from the local government's official social media accounts. There may be a false perception that these opinions and comments were approved by the local government (Hrdinová et al. 2010). Finally, when citizens are informed by the local government through different sources via social media tools, there may be an abundance of information. Thus, the important messages of the institution may

drown in the sea of information (Center for Technology in Government 2009). All these problems are in the list of barriers for using social media in empirical studies (Purser 2012; Howard 2012; Hrdinová et al. 2010); thus, local governments should take measures against those risks.

*Reputation Management:* Posts sent on social media spread very quickly. While this provides local governments with opportunities for disseminating information, it may also generate adverse consequences. Because local governments do not have control over their own messages in the social media world, there may be extensive negative statements or defamation about local government. This raises the issue of reputational risk. In other words, local governments should preserve their online reputations as social assets. Concerns about reputational risks are extensively articulated by local officials (Purser 2012; Howard 2012; Gibson 2010; Ben-Yehuda 2012).

## 1.7 Literature Review and Future Studies

Because social media have significant impacts on political and social life, it is an academically worthwhile endeavor to focus on and examine social media. In fact, the literature on the use of social media by the political and administrative institutions has recently expanded. However, there have been few studies on the relationship between social media and local governments, and the locally elected. For example, there are hardly any books focused on the relationship between social media and local governments. Research on local government's or politician's social media use includes very few articles published in core journals and some conference papers. Each article and paper focuses on a particular aspect of the relationship between social media and local government. Moreover, it is also possible to talk about some guides and reports focusing on the relationship between local government and social media (Gibson 2010; IDeA 2010; Hrdinová et al. 2010; Howard 2012; Purser 2012). Table 1.2 presents the studies focused on the relationship between local governments or politicians and social media.

Given the literature review on the use of social media by local governments, the following suggestions can be made:

*Increasing the Number of and Enriching the Content of Studies:* There is a need for more research on local government's or politician's social media use in terms of each subject specified in Table 1.2. Existing studies are often from the USA, England, and Australia. Thus, there is a need for studies that investigate the use of social media by local governments in other countries. Studies of social media in local governments could specifically focus on the experiences of underdeveloped or developing countries, countries with different political and administrative traditions, and those in different geographies (Middle-East and Asia). Moreover, there are few comparative studies. In this context, it is important to compare and analyze social media practices in different countries.

**Table 1.2** Literature review on the relationship between local governments and social media

Focus	Academic studies (countries and social media tools)
Presence and use	Vaccari (2013) (Italy-Facebook, YouTube, Twitter); Avery and Graham (2013) (USA-Social media in general); Scullion (2013) (England-Twitter and Facebook); Larsson (2013) (Sweden-Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Flickr); Mainka et al. (2014) (Various Countries-Social media in general); Panagiotopoulos and Sams (2012) (UK-Twitter); Panagiotopoulos and Sams (2011) (UK-Twitter)
Adoption and diffusion	Zheng (2013) (China-Microblog); Mundy and Umer (2012) (UK-Twitter); Omar et al. (2012) (Australia-Social media in general); Ma (2014) (China-Microblog); Oliveira and Welch (2013) (USA-Social media in general); Reddick and Norris (2013) (USA-Social media in general); Sharif et al. (2014) (Australia-Social media in general)
Communication and citizen engagement	Agostino (2013) (Italy-Facebook, Twitter and YouTube); Bonsón et al. (2013) (European Countries-Facebook); Ellison and Hardey (2013) (England-Facebook, Twitter and YouTube); Graham and Avery (2013) (USA-Facebook and Twitter); Hofmann et al. (2013) (Germany-Facebook); Lovari and Parisi (2012) (Italy-Facebook); Mossberger et al. (2013) (USA-Social media in general); Rustad and Sæbø (2013) (Norway-Facebook)
Transparency, accountability, and participation	Schellong and Girrger (2010) (Germany-Social media in general); Bonsón et al. (2012) (European Countries-Social media in general); Ellison and Hardey (2014) (England-Facebook, Twitter and YouTube); Mambrey and Dörr (2011) (Germany-Twitter); Sobaci and Karkin (2013) (Turkey-Twitter)
Local election, campaign, and politics	Segaard and Nielsen (2013) (Norway-Blog); Segaard (2012) (Norway-Blog); Lev-On (2012) (Israel-YouTube); Ozdesim Ikiz et al. (2014) (Turkey-Twitter); Criado and Martinez-Fuentes (2010) (Spain-Blog); Criado et al. (2012) (Spain-Twitter); Skogerbø and Krumsvik (2014) (Norway-Facebook and Twitter); Yannas et al. (2011) (Greece-Social media in general); Effing et al. (2013) (Holland-Social media in general); Raynauld and Greenberg (2014) (Canada-Twitter)
City planning	Evans-Cowley (2010) (USA, England and Canada-Facebook); Evans-Cowley and Hollander (2010) (USA-Facebook and Second Life); Fredericks and Foth (2013) (Australia-Facebook and Twitter); Williamson and Parolin (2013) (Australia-Social media in general)
Emergency	Panagiotopoulos et al. (2014) (England-Twitter); Tyshchuk and Wallace (2013) (USA-Social media in general)

Most existing studies focused on Facebook and Twitter. Researchers often analyze these tools because they are popular and have many users around the world. However, future studies should analyze opportunities or risks from other social media tools for local governments.

Moreover, in addition to presenting statistical findings on which tools are most frequently used and by whom, more theory-based studies on the applicability of social media tools in local governments may significantly contribute to the relevant literature in the future. Future studies may benefit from administrative reform the-

ory, political and administrative culture discussions, policy diffusion theory, self-organizing, new institutionalism, and socio-technic systems approach.

*Demand and Supply Side of Social Media Use in Local Governments:* Future studies should analyze citizen's and local official's perceptions about social media. What are the factors motivating citizens to use social media in their relationship with local governments? Do citizens consider the use of social media by local governments an opportunity for efficient public service, democracy and cooperation, or a waste of time? What are the basic characteristics of citizens who contact local governments via social media? Which users are interested in specific decisions that local governments have made and, in which policy areas? What are the local politicians' and officials' perceptions of social media? Can local governments and local officials be categorized by social media use? In order for the local governments to make more legitimate and rational policies and fulfil their public goals by benefiting from social media tools, researchers should focus on these and similar problems.

*Local Democracy and Participation:* Given the significance of local governments, especially for democracy and efficient public service delivery, there is a need for empirical studies that analyze social media tools' potential for enhancing of transparency, accountability, and participation at the local level. When this need is met, we see whether the commitments of the social media are realized. In the past, there have been debates that previous e-government waves have failed in terms of two-way relationships, participation, and strengthening democracy.

*Detailed Analysis of Barriers and Recommendations:* Barriers for use of these technologies in local governments are scarcely considered and categorized in the relevant literature. At this stage, researchers should specify each and every barrier encountered by the local governments as an independent topic of study and analyze it in detail.

*Measuring the Impact of Social Media on Local Governments:* It is important to measure the impact of the use of social media in local governments. These innovative technologies may have organizational, political, financial, and social impacts on local governments. It is an important topic of research to measure the real impact of social media use because social media may contribute to cost saving, transparency, participation, improving the policy-making process, and cooperation. What is the reality? Have social media tools contributed to these gains? Future studies may answer these questions through case studies.

## References

- Agostino, D. (2013). Using social media to engage citizens: A study of Italian municipalities. *Public Relations Review*, 39, 232–234.
- Ansell, C., & Gash, A. (2007). Collaborative governance in theory and practice. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18, 543–571.
- Avery, E. J., & Graham, M. W. (2013). Political public relations and the promotion of participatory, transparent government through social media. *International Journal of Strategic Communication*, 7(4), 274–291.

- Ben-Yehuda, G. (2012, Fall/Winter). Road hazards: Recognizing the risks of social media. *The Business of Government Magazine*, 68–70.
- Berman, E. M. (1997). Dealing with cynical citizens. *Public Administration Review*, 57(2), 105–112.
- Bertot, J. C., Jaeger, P. T., Munson, S., & Glaisyer, T. (2010). Social media technology and government transparency. *Computer*, 43(11), 53–59.
- Bertot, J. C., Jaeger, P. T., & Hansen, D. (2012). The impact of polices on government social media usage: Issues, challenges, and recommendations. *Government Information Quarterly*, 29(1), 30–40.
- Bonsón, E., Royo, S., & Ratkai, M. (2013). *Analysis of European municipalities' Facebook channels activity and citizens' engagement*. In XVII Congreso AECA 'Ética y emprendimiento: valores para un nuevo desarrollo', Pamplona, Spain. Retrieved from [http://www.aeca1.org/pub/on\\_line/comunicaciones\\_xviiicongresoaeaca/cd/84g.pdf](http://www.aeca1.org/pub/on_line/comunicaciones_xviiicongresoaeaca/cd/84g.pdf)
- Bonsón, E., Torres, L., Royo, S., & Flores, F. (2012). Local e-government 2.0: Social media and corporate transparency in municipalities. *Government Information Quarterly*, 29(2), 123–132.
- Bovaird, T. (2007). Beyond engagement and participation: User and community coproduction of public services. *Public Administration Review*, 67(5), 846–860.
- Brandsen, T., & Pestoff, V. (2006). Co-production, the third sector and the delivery of public services. *Public Management Review*, 8(4), 493–501.
- Cassia, F., & Magno, F. (2009). Public services co-production: Exploring the role of citizen orientation. *International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences*, 1(3), 334–343.
- Center for Technology in Government. (2009). *Exploratory social media project: Phase I—Identifying benefits and concerns surrounding use of social media in government*. Retrieved from [http://www.ctg.albany.edu/publications/reports/social\\_media/social\\_media.pdf](http://www.ctg.albany.edu/publications/reports/social_media/social_media.pdf)
- Chang, A., & Kannan, P. K. (2008). *Leveraging web 2.0 in government* (E-Government/technology series). Washington, DC: IBM Center for the Business of Government.
- Chu, H., & Xu, C. (2009). Web 2.0 and its dimensions in the scholarly world. *Scientometrics*, 80(3), 717–729.
- Chun, A. S., Shulman, S., Sandoval, R., & Hovy, E. (2010). Government 2.0: Making connections between citizens, data and government. *Information Polity*, 15, 1–9.
- CIO Council. (2009). *Guidelines for secure use of social media by federal departments and agencies*. Retrieved from [https://cio.gov/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/09/Guidelines\\_for\\_Secure\\_Use\\_Social\\_Media\\_v01-0.pdf](https://cio.gov/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2012/09/Guidelines_for_Secure_Use_Social_Media_v01-0.pdf)
- Coleman, S., & Götze, J. (2001). *Bowling together: Online public engagement in policy deliberation*. London: Hansard Society.
- Commonwealth Secretariat. (2010). *The global financial crisis and local government*. Commonwealth Secretariat, Discussion Paper No. 9.
- Council of European Municipalities and Regions. (2009). *The economic and financial crisis: The impact on local and regional authorities*. Paris: Author.
- Criado, J. I., & Martínez-Fuentes, G. (2010). Mayors' usage of blogs in local election campaign: The Spanish case study. *International Journal of Electronic Governance*, 3(4), 395–413.
- Criado, J. I., Martínez-Fuentes, G., & Silvan, A. (2012). Social media for political campaigning: The use of Twitter by Spanish mayors in 2011 local elections. In C. G. Reddick & S. K. Aikins (Eds.), *Web 2.0 technologies and democratic governance* (pp. 219–232). New York: Springer.
- Criado, J. I., Sandoval-Almazan, R., & Gil-García, J. R. (2013). Government innovation through social media. *Government Information Quarterly*, 30(4), 319–326.
- Dadashzadeh, M. (2010). Social media in government: From eGovernment to eGovernance. *Journal of Business & Economics Research*, 8(11), 81–86.
- Effing, R., Van Hillegersberg, J., & Huibers, T. W. C. (2013). Social media participation and local politics: A case study of the Enschede council in the Netherlands. In M. A. Wimmer, E. Tambouris, & A. Macintosh (Eds.), *Electronic participation* (pp. 57–68). Heidelberg, Germany: Springer.
- Ellison, N., & Hardey, M. (2013). Developing political conversations? Social media and English local authorities. *Information, Communication & Society*, 16(6), 878–898.



- Ellison, N. R., & Hardey, M. (2014). Social media and local government: Citizenship, consumption and democracy. *Local Government Studies*, 40(1), 21–40.
- Evans-Cowley, J. (2010). Planning in the age of Facebook: The role of social networking in planning processes. *GeoJournal*, 75(5), 407–420.
- Evans-Cowley, J., & Hollander, J. (2010). The new generation of public participation: Internet-based participation tools. *Planning Practice & Research*, 25(3), 397–408.
- Facebook. (2014). Retrieved from <http://newsroom.fb.com/company-info/>
- Fredericks, J., & Foth, M. (2013). Augmenting public participation: Enhancing planning outcomes through the use of social media and web 2.0. *Australian Planner*, 50(3), 244–256.
- Freeman, R. J., & Loo, P. (2009). *Web 2.0 and e-government at the municipal level*. Paper presented at 2009 World Congress on Privacy, Security, Trust and the Management of e-Business, August 25–27, 2009, New Brunswick, NJ, pp. 70–78.
- Gibson, A. (2010). *Local by social: How local authorities can use social media to achieve more for less*. London: IDEA.
- Graham, M., & Avery, J. E. (2013). Public relations and social media: An analysis of the perceptions and trends of social media use at the local government level. *Public Relations Journal*, 7(4), 1–21.
- Hennessy, K. S. (2012, February). Are city governments and social media a good match? *Quality Cities Magazine*, 16–19.
- Hofmann, S., Beverungen, D., Räckers, M., & Becker, J. (2013). What makes local governments' online communications successful? Insights from a multi-method analysis of Facebook. *Government Information Quarterly*, 30(4), 387–396.
- Howard, A. (2012). *Connecting with communities: How local government is using social media to engage with citizens*. Sydney, New South Wales: ANZSOG Institute for Governance at the University of Canberra and Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government.
- Hrdinová, J., Helbig, N., & Stollar Peters, C. (2010). *Designing social media policy for government: Eight essential elements*. New York: Center for Technology in Government.
- IDEA. (2010). *Connected councillors: A guide to using social media to support local leadership*. London: Author.
- Kaplan, A. M., & Haenlein, M. (2010). Users of the world, unite! The challenges and opportunities of social media. *Business Horizons*, 53, 59–68.
- Kingsley, C. (2009). *Making the most of social media: 7 lessons from successful cities*. Fels Institute of Government. Retrieved from [http://www.fels.upenn.edu/sites/www.fels.upenn.edu/files/PP3\\_SocialMedia.pdf](http://www.fels.upenn.edu/sites/www.fels.upenn.edu/files/PP3_SocialMedia.pdf)
- Kuzma, J. (2010). Asian government usage of web 2.0 social media. *European Journal of ePractice*, 9, 69–81.
- Landsbergen, D. (2010). Government as part of the revolution: Using social media to achieve public goals. *Electronic Journal of e-Government*, 8(2), 135–147.
- Larsson, A. (2013). Bringing it all back home? Social media practices by Swedish municipalities. *European Journal of Communication*, 28(6), 681–695.
- Lev-On, A. (2012). YouTube usage in low-visibility political campaigns. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, 9(2), 205–216.
- Local Government and Public Service Initiative. (2009). *The impact of the economic downturn on local government: What is happening and what can be done about it?* Report by OSI/LGI to the Council of Europe.
- Lovari, A., & Parisi, L. (2012). Public administrations and citizens 2.0: Exploring digital public communication strategies and civic interaction within Italian municipality pages on Facebook. In F. Comunello (Ed.), *Networked sociability and individualism: Technology for personal and professional relationships* (pp. 238–263). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.
- Ma, L. (2014). Diffusion and assimilation of government microblogging: Evidence from Chinese cities. *Public Management Review*, 16(2), 274–295.
- Mainka, A., Hartmann, S., Stock, W. G., & Peters, I. (2014). *Government and social media: A case study of 31 informational world cities*. In R. H. Sprague (Ed.), *Proceeding of the 47th Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences* (pp. 1715–1724). Waikoloa, HI: CPS.

- Mambrey, P., & Dörr, R. (2011). Local government and social networking technologies in Germany: The example of Twitter. In P. Parycek, M. J. Kripp, & N. Edelmann (Eds.), *Proceedings of the International Conference for e-Democracy and Open Government (CeDEM11)* (pp. 249–259). Krems an der Donau, Austria: Edition Donau-Universität Krems.
- Mayfield, A. (2007). *What is social media*. Retrieved from <http://www.iCrossing.com/ebooks>
- Meijer, A., Koops, B., Pieterse, W., Overman, S., & ten Tije, S. (2012). Government 2.0: Key challenges to its realization. *Electronic Journal of e-Government*, 10(1), 59–69.
- Mergel, I. (2013a). *Social media in public sector: A guide to participation, collaboration and transparency in networked world*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Mergel, I. (2013b). A framework for interpreting social media interactions in the public sector. *Government Information Quarterly*, 30(4), 327–334.
- Moore, M. H. (1995). *Creating public value: Strategic management in government*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Mossberger, K., Wu, Y., & Crawford, J. (2013). Connecting citizens and local governments? Social media and interactivity in major U.S. cities. *Government Information Quarterly*, 30(4), 351–358.
- Mundy, D., & Umer, Q. (2012). United Kingdom Local Authority Challenges in the use of Twitter and other social media. In *SOTICS 2012: The Second International Conference on Social Eco-Informatics*, October 21–26, 2012, Venice, Italy.
- O'Reilly, T. (2007). What is web 2.0: Design patterns and business models for the next generation of software. *Communications & Strategies*, 65(1), 17–37.
- OECD. (2009). *Focus on citizens: Public engagement for better policy and services*. Paris: OECD.
- OECD. (2011). *Together for better public services: Partnering with citizens and civil society* (OECD public governance reviews). Paris: OECD.
- Oliveira, G. H. M., & Welch, E. W. (2013). Social media use in local government: Linkage of technology, task, and organizational context. *Government Information Quarterly*, 30(4), 397–405.
- Omar, K., Scheepers, H., & Stockdale, R. (2012). Adoption of social media in Victorian local governments. In *23rd Australasian Conference on Information Systems*, December 3–5, 2012, Geelong, Victoria, Australia.
- Osborne, S. P. (2006). Editorial: New public governance. *Public Management Review*, 8(3), 377–387.
- Osimo, D. (2008). *Web 2.0 in government: Why and how?* Luxembourg: European Communities.
- Oxley, A. (2011). *A best practices guide for mitigating risk in the use of social media*. Washington, DC: IBM Center for The Business of Government.
- Ozdesim Ikiz, O., Sobaci, M. Z., Yavuz, N., & Karkin, N. (2014). Political use of Twitter: The case of metropolitan mayor candidates in 2014 local elections in Turkey. In *ICEGOV 2014*, October 27–30, 2014, Guimaraes, Portugal.
- Panagiotopoulos, P., Bigdeli, A. Z., & Sams, S. (2014). Citizen–government collaboration on social media: The case of Twitter in the 2011 riots in England. *Government Information Quarterly*, 31(3), 349–357.
- Panagiotopoulos, P., & Sams, S. (2011). Twitter in local government: A study of Greater London Authorities. In *2011 Pre-ICIS Workshop: Open Innovation in eGovernment*, Shanghai, China.
- Panagiotopoulos, P., & Sams, S. (2012). An overview study of Twitter in the UK local government. In *Transforming Government Workshop*, May 8–9, 2012, Brunel University, London.
- Paulais, T. (2009). *Local governments and the financial crisis: An analysis*. Washington, DC: Cities Alliance.
- Picazo-Vela, S., Gutiérrez-Martínez, I., & Luna-Reyes, L. F. (2012). Understanding risks, benefits, and strategic alternatives of social media applications in the public sector. *Government Information Quarterly*, 29, 504–511.
- Purser, K. (2012). *Using social media in local government: 2011 survey report*. Sydney, New South Wales: Australian Centre of Excellence for Local Government, University of Technology.
- Putnam, R. (1995). Bowling alone: America's declining social capital. *Journal of Democracy*, 6(1), 65–78.

- Raynauld, V., & Greenberg, J. (2014). Tweet, click, vote: Twitter and the 2010 Ottawa municipal election. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, 11(4), 412–434.
- Reddick, C. G., & Norris, D. F. (2013). Social media adoption at the American grass roots: Web 2.0 or 1.5? *Government Information Quarterly*, 30(4), 498–507.
- Rustad, E., & Sæbø, Ø. (2013). How, why and with whom do local politicians engage on Facebook? In M. A. Wimmer, E. Tambouris, & A. Macintosh (Eds.), *Electronic participation* (pp. 69–79). Heidelberg, Germany: Springer.
- Schellong, A., & Girger, P. (2010). *Government 2.0 in betaphase—An analysis of eparticipation and web 2.0 applications of Germany's 50 largest cities and 16 federal states* (Policy paper series). Wiesbaden, Germany: CSC.
- Scullion, J. (2013). *Old rules for new technologies: Institutional responses to social media use by local councilors*. Paper presented at European Consortium for Political Research Conference, September 4–7, 2013, Bordeaux, France.
- Segaard, S. B. (2012). Local election campaign on social media—Horizontal or vertical conversation? In *ECPR Joint Sessions of Workshops*, April 10–15, 2012, Antwerp, Belgium.
- Segaard, S. B., & Nielsen, J. A. (2013). Local election blogs: Networking among the political elite. *Information Polity*, 18(4), 299–313.
- Sharif, M. H. M., Troshani, I., & Davidson, R. (2014). Adoption of social media services: The case of local government. In Z. Sun & J. Yearwood (Eds.), *Handbook of research on demand-driven web services: Theory, technologies, and applications* (pp. 287–303). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.
- Skogerbø, E., & Krumsvik, A. H. (2014). Newspapers, Facebook and Twitter: Intermedial agenda setting in local election campaigns. *Journalism Practice*, 1–17.
- Sobaci, M. Z., & Karkin, N. (2013). The use of twitter by mayors in Turkey: Tweets for better public services? *Government Information Quarterly*, 30(4), 417–425.
- Spurrell, D. (2012). An opportunity or a threat? How local government uses social media today. *The Guardian*. Retrieved February 7th Tuesday, 2012, from <http://www.theguardian.com/local-government-network/2012/feb/07/local-government-social-media-today>
- Tappendorf, J. A. (2012). Social media. In *IMLA 2012 Annual Conference*, October 21–24, 2012, Austin, TX.
- Twitter. (2014). <https://about.twitter.com/company>
- Tyshchuk, Y., & Wallace, W. (2013). The use of social media by local government in response to an extreme event: Del Norte County, CA response to the 2011 Japan Tsunami. In T. Comes, F. Fiedrich, S. Fortier, J. Geldermann, & T. Müller (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 10th International ISCRAM Conference* (pp. 802–811), Baden, Germany.
- United Cities and Local Governments. (2009). *The impact of the global crisis on local governments*, Barcelona, Spain.
- Vaccari, C. (2013). City hall 2.0? Italian local executive officials' presence and popularity on web 2.0 platforms. In P. Nixon, R. Rawal, & D. Mercea (Eds.), *Politics and the Internet in comparative context: Views from the cloud* (pp. 169–185). London: Routledge.
- Williamson, W., & Parolin, B. (2013). Web 2.0 and social media growth in planning practice: A longitudinal study. *Planning, Practice & Research*, 28(5), 544–562.
- Yannas, P., Klefodimos, A., & Lappas, G. (2011). Online political marketing in 2010 Greek local elections: The shift from web to web 2.0 campaigns. In G. Panigyrakis, P. Theodoridis, & A. Panopoulos (Eds.), *Proceeding of the 16th International Conference on Corporate and Marketing Communications* (pp. 38–50), Athens, Greece.
- Young Foundation. (2010). *A social media framework for local government: A local 2.0 think-piece*. London: Author.
- YouTube. (2014). <http://www.youtube.com/yt/press/>
- Zavattaro, S. M., & Sementelli, A. J. (2014). A critical examination of social media adoption in government: Introducing omnipresence. *Government Information Quarterly*, 31(2), 257–264.
- Zheng, L. (2013). Social media in Chinese government: Drivers, challenges and capabilities. *Government Information Quarterly*, 30, 369–376.