



EFFICACY OF THE LEAGUE OF GREEN EMBASSIES TWITTER

*How to amplify the League of Green Embassies
(core) message to its followers on Twitter, to
inform, educate and empower people to act?*

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Date: 19-12-2012

Thesis submitted for Bachelor of European Studies

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Executive Summary

The League of Green Embassies, also referred to as ‘the League’ or LoGE, is a global network of now approximately 100 U.S. and Foreign Diplomatic Missions that commit to a “more successful, vibrant, and profitable energy and resource portfolio” (The League of Green Embassies: one-pager).

Headquartered in U.S. Embassy Helsinki, it devotes itself to bringing together public and private actors with a common agenda for energy efficiency, renewable energy and water conservation.

Due to the universally increasing energy demand, an initiative such as LoGE is a very essential one. Embassies are a magnificent platform for mobilizing public action and demonstrating tangible ways to make a difference which benefit both economy *and* environment. In collaboration with the Department of State, Commerce and the Alliance to Save Energy, LoGE initiated an “Energy Efficiency Sweep across Europe” where twelve U.S. Ambassadors residences were made over within a time span of a year. This effort, the biggest public-private partnership ever undertaken by the U.S. Government overseas, represents the immediate and physical action that Embassies and Missions globally can take hereby making their energy work *for* them.

With Web 2.0 being a household term by now and the arrival of Web 3.0, companies and organizations cannot afford to opt out of social media anymore. As of late 2012, Facebook has over one billion active users and Twitter around 500 million users, 200 million of whom are active. This number is expected to rise as people become more familiar with its use. The LoGE recognizes the value of joining the conversation online. It wants to increase its web presence and the dialogue on green energy practices with its various counterparts. Via social media channels, namely Facebook and Twitter, it wishes to inform, educate and empower individuals to act.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate how the League can maximize its messaging via its Twitter, @thegreenleague. This paper attempts to be guideline for future employees to gain insight into strategies that help make the most of Twitter with the resources that are available to them.

This research concludes the following: Firstly, more online personality lowers threshold, builds trust and increases likelihood of conversation on @thegreenleague. Secondly, a clearer target group which LoGE regularly communicates with guides LoGE in further crafting attractive messages for its audience. This is likely to increase interaction and encourage retweeting. Thirdly, more focus on the content of tweets and sub-goals along bigger ones, makes its mission more concrete for followers and helps amplify the message. Finally, LoGE should monitor simple metrics at first and then move onto more complex data. Monitoring results is most optimal when done in real-time or shortly after.

Preface

Social media is not just a trend. In one form or another, it is here to stay. Although, it is unlikely that the next person you meet is “NOT on Facebook”, these rare individuals do still exist. Regular people can (barely) survive without social media, however the case is different for businesses and organizations. With over 1 billion active users, Facebook is its own global village, with incredible opportunities to reach others and influence public opinion. Twitter currently counts approximately 500 million users, around 200 million of whom are active, and Twitter’s popularity too is increasing rapidly.

Developments in social media seem so rapid that they are out-of-date at the blink of an eye. It is therefore likely, that this thesis, will also be old news already the moment it is handed in for evaluation. As my mentor, Nicholas Kuchova, at U.S. Embassy Finland likes to say: “it’ll be a snapshot of what was.” It is nevertheless important to analyze these trends to better grasp of issues most important to us. We need to do all we can to stay one step ahead of the (social media) game, because we cannot deny its impact on the reality of the 21st century.

I would like to thank both my supervisors for their incredible support. In addition I’d like to recognize the people whom I interviewed (in order of interviewing): League of Green Embassies coordinator, Riikka Jalasvirta, MTV3 Journalist, Ville Juutilainen, Press Attaché at U.S. Embassy Helsinki, David McGuire, Information Resource Technician, Matti Lauren, U.S. Ambassador to Finland and Chair of the League of Green Embassies, Bruce J. Oreck, Social Media Specialist, Alicia Cowan and Media Psychologist, Mischa Coster. These interviews provided a great deal of insight into both internal and external perceptions of The League of Green Embassies and its Twitter: @thegreenleague. They helped to link a whole lot of research together and provide clues as to what needed most attention.

Last but not least, all emotional support from family and friends helped me to continue on my path. Special thanks goes to Qian Jing and Hanne Pearce.

Sonja Meskanen, December 2012

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1 Introduction

1.1 League of Green Embassies (LoGE)

The League of Green Embassies, also known as ‘the League’ and abbreviated as LoGE, is a global network of now approximately 100 U.S. and Foreign Diplomatic Missions who “provide new economic opportunities while addressing important political and ecological challenges such as energy security and climate change.” (League of Green Embassies, 2012). Headquartered in U.S. Embassy Helsinki, its chairman, since September 10th, 2009, is U.S. Ambassador to Finland, Bruce J. Oreck.

As LoGE chair, Embassy Helsinki’s stance is “action-based leadership, leading by example.” It envisions Embassies as platforms for energy innovations, a suitable place to unveil the latest technologies that highlight best practices in energy efficiency. A key example of such innovation at U.S. Embassy Helsinki will be the Innovation Center that is set for opening in early 2013.

An important part of the League of Green Embassies programme are the Energy Efficiency (EE) Sweep makeovers, twelve of which have been executed so far, accomplished in partnership with the Department of State, Commerce, the Alliance to Save Energy and 9 U.S. and foreign green businesses. ‘EE Sweep: part 1’ makeovers which spanned across twelve European CMR’s (Chief of Mission Residences) were executed between April 2011 and May 2012 and attracted a lot of national and international press coverage hereby helping gain recognition for LoGE and its efforts.

To further generate interest towards itself as an organization and what it stands for, the League is active on several social media platforms. It has its own website, a Facebook, a Twitter and a YouTube account. LoGE Twitter, which was re-launched to coincide with the COP17 conference in Durban in October 2012, has been somewhat of a focal point in guiding the organization in its social media activities.

1.2 Research topic

How to amplify the League of Green Embassies (core) message to its followers on Twitter, to inform, educate and empower people to act?

Sub questions are:

- What is the League’s mission statement and basic values?
- What is LoGE’s exact goal with its social media?
- Who are LoGE’s followers on Twitter?
- What do they think about LoGE’s tweets?

➤ What encourages individuals to act?

This topic has risen from an interest from U.S. Embassy Helsinki to find out how LoGE social media can be utilized to its full advantage. To keep within the scope of the assignment, focus is laid entirely on the efficacy of LoGE Twitter, also referred to as @thegreenleague. An assumption has been made that the public sees the League in a positive light, however it is apparent that more awareness towards the organization is anticipated. Although a wide range of research has been conducted, it is important to note that this touches upon only a small part of what is possible.

1.3 Research aims

This thesis contends with two major objectives. First, it aims to provide useful recommendations for the League of Green Embassies with regards its questions on efficacy of @thegreenleague. Secondly, it strives to be a source for other, similar organizations to guide them in their social media endeavors.

This thesis is written to help the League and any other organization/company that wishes to understand how to build and better optimize its Twitter presence. It is also a basis for further research in this area, should this be conducted.

This thesis will deal with the following:

- Analyze LoGE situation on Twitter currently (and provide a background).
- Gather opinions from Embassy staff with regards social media efforts to date.
- Provide insight into how other organizations are utilizing this tool, via examples.
- Present opinions of LoGE followers and analyze these.
- Illustrate ways to use Twitter effectively, via desk research and external specialists
- Evaluate findings from qualitative expert interviews and spot potential tendencies.
- Discuss the various methods used and draw comprehensive recommendations.

1.4 Rationale behind study

The author completed a work placement at U.S. Embassy Helsinki. During this placement she was in charge of re-launching LoGE social media. With a communication background, it seemed a relevant research topic for her final thesis. This study will hopefully inspire forthcoming LoGE staff to maximize their Twitter use to its full potential and assist in carrying on consistent messaging on both traditional and new media.

1.5 Justification of methodology

The research is a combination of desk research (relevant literature), qualitative (interviews) and quantitative methods (surveys). Due to the nature of the problem and that much of it relates to the social aspect of human behavior, how to influence individuals and organizations by means of social

media, mainly qualitative research methods have been applied. One-on-one interviews were utilized, as opposed to bigger discussions (and focus groups) to prevent group-think from happening. A total of seven interviews were held ranging from internal interviews with U.S. Embassy personnel to external experts in the field of social media.

Three internal interviews with Embassy personnel took place. The League of Green Embassies perspective from LoGE coordinator, Riikka Jalasvirta, provided a basis for the research. Public Affairs Officer (also known as Press Attaché), David McGuire was consulted around the middle of the research to see how Public Affairs uses social media, to analyze the current status and determine subsequent steps. Finally, U.S. Ambassador to Finland and League of Green Embassies Chair, Bruce J. Oreck, was interviewed to inquire about his opinions on research findings so far, more about strategy and @thegreenleague in 2013. Embassy personnel have been interviewed on steady intervals to ensure that the LoGE message is being communicated clearly and that the research question is at all times linked to the end goal of the organization.



Around halfway through the research process, a survey was sent out to @thegreenleague followers to determine, more specifically, what their views are on LoGE tweets. This quantitative method helped to determine what the audience thinks about the content and frequency of @thegreenleague tweets. Also, it gave indications on their motives for following and whether the tweets encourage them to be greener.

Finally, external experts were central to the entire research. These experts provided in-depth knowledge and impartial advice on Twitter optimization in the most powerful and cost-effective manner. Three experts were interviewed: Ville Juutilainen, a journalist at MTV3 (Finland's leading commercial television station), Alicia Cowan, a social media specialist in London and Mischa Coster, a media psychologist in the Netherlands. The motivation behind this was to receive valuable feedback from professionals that are entirely detached from the Embassy hereby safeguarding that the views are as unbiased and diverse as possible and therefore most valuable for the League of Green Embassies.

In addition to these three experts, Information and Resource Center Technician, Matti Lauren at U.S. Embassy Helsinki was interviewed. With a vast experience in social media yet working at the Embassy he was the perfect balance between an internal and external point of view.

Via desk research, recent books and articles on Twitter and social media marketing has been added to the information received from interviews. Desk research was never at the very forefront due to more specific know-how being necessary to prove the right methods of efficacy. Twitter requires a hands-on approach, one that is practical and tangible. The social media landscape is forever shifting making literature quite quickly out-of-date. Twitter experts lead the way with their extensive knowledge on recent developments and future trends and this is highly useful for the League of Green Embassies' objective.

At its very essence, this research strived to apply as many methods as possible, in order to verify the findings, bind these together in an accurate outcome and provide sound recommendations which can be of use for the future League of Green Embassies as well as other organizations.

1.6 Limitations

LoGE followers were approached on Twitter both via public tweets as well as direct messages notifying them that there is a survey to fill out. Out of approximately 280 followers, an ideal amount of responses was deemed 50. This amount was however not feasible, because direct messages could not be sent out to even half of followers and reach was more limited than anticipated. The 39 responses that were gathered will either way be considered valid and analyzed accordingly.

1.7 Structure

Following the Introduction, chapter 2 will touch upon the League of Green Embassies brief but action-packed history, describing its mission and core values. The third chapter will introduce Twitter more in depth, explain why it is a suitable tool for LoGE revealing its most important characteristics. Chapter 4 will look at the League of Green Embassies Twitter so far analyzing initial strategy and tweets. The fifth chapter will discuss followers, who they are and what they think of LoGE's tweets. Chapter 6 will discuss empowerment and how to empower individuals to act. Chapter 7 will introduce various methods to increase efficacy and finally, Chapter 8 will, based on all desk research, interviews and surveys, provide conclusions and recommendations.

1.8 Keywords

- @thegreenleague: username of the League of Green Embassies Twitter.
- @mention: A symbol which facilitates conversation on Twitter by linking to the username that is mentioned.
- @reply: See @mention.
- Direct message (DM): Private messages users can send with each other.
- Follow: As a verb, to decide to see a certain user's tweets in your home timeline. As a noun, used to refer to the act of following, as in "Can I follow you?"
- Followers: The people who are following you on Twitter.
- Following: The people you follow on Twitter.
- Handle: See Username.
- Hashtag: words preceding a # to create a link on Twitter which can then be searched.
- Retweet (RT): The act of forwarding tweets to one's own follower base.
- Twittersphere: See Twitterverse.
- Twitterverse: Everyone on Twitter.
- Username: The name a user takes on when using Twitter, also referred to as a 'handle'.¹

1.9 Abbreviations

- ASE: Alliance to Save Energy
- FFR: Follower to Following Ratio
- CCAC: Climate and Clean Air Coalition
- CMR: Chief of Mission Residence
- CTR: Click through Rate
- EE Sweep: Energy Efficiency Sweep
- LoGE: League of Green Embassies
- NEI: National Export Initiative
- USG: U.S. Government

¹ Kate Bussmann's *Twitter Year* has been used as a guide to facilitate definitions. For more information, please refer to the Bibliography.

2 League of Green Embassies (LoGE)

2.1 Background

The League of Green Embassies was founded in Stockholm, Sweden, in 2007, under the name “The League of Green U.S. Embassies” by former U.S. Ambassador to Sweden, Michael M. Wood, with its goal to take concrete steps to reduce Greenhouse gas emissions and adopt environmentally responsible practices. President Bush declared that “Energy Security and climate change are two of the important challenges of our time. The United States takes these challenges seriously and we are effectively confronting climate change through regulations, public-private partnerships, incentives, and strong investment in new technologies” (U.S. Department of State, 2007).

The Obama administration has been supportive of the League of Green Embassies initiative because it concurs with President Obama’s National Export Initiative (NEI). He announced this during the State of Union Address in 2010, aiming to double U.S. exports by 2014 (International Trade administration, 2012). In early December 2011, Obama announced a nearly \$4 billion investment in energy upgrades, both to public and private buildings (White House, 2011), which was naturally great news for the League of Green Embassies. Secretary of State, Hillary Rodham Clinton, who paid a visit to the Embassy in Helsinki, in June 2012, sees value in the League of Green Embassies via her interest in the Climate and Clean Air Coalition (CCAC), which shares the need for creativity when it comes to a sustainable environment and sustainable economy. At the Press Conference in Helsinki, she mentioned the League of Green Embassies spreading the word, spreading best practices and how excited she is about the new Innovation Center that is being constructed at the Embassy compound (U.S. Department of State, 2012).

2.2 Current status

Embassy Helsinki took over leadership from Embassy Stockholm in November 2010, with U.S. Ambassador to Finland, Bruce J. Oreck, becoming the new chairman. Back then LoGE membership was roughly 25 Embassies (League of Green Embassies Progress Report, 2012, p. 10). Between November 2010 and November 2012 LoGE membership has tripled and even, within a year, it has gone from 50 to nearly 100 members. (R. Jalasvirta, personal interview, May 21, 2012. See appendix 1).

As of October 2012, LoGE counts 99 members. Ranging from Armenia to Zimbabwe, also two non-U.S. Embassies are members: British Embassies in Sweden and Latvia. Most recent additions are: Consulate Tijuana and Embassy Vientiane. (League of Green Embassies, 2012).

League of Green Embassies coordinator, Riikka Jalasvirta believes that people are seeing the value in the organization. She trusts that as years go by, people will see an even higher value. When influential people praise the LoGE effort (such as Al Gore did at a business forum in Jyväskylä, Finland in late 2011), this only adds to the positive perceptions. In addition, Ambassador Oreck has been successful in obtaining more funds for the League of Green Embassies which is proof that the State Department too sees value in the LoGE initiative.

2.3 Mission

LoGE's mission revolves around energy efficiency, water conservation and renewable energy. It operates with the following three goals in mind: 1) to advance the Presidential mandate to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in USG buildings; 2) to demonstrate the capabilities of U.S. products and technologies to the world market; and 3) to increase the exports of U.S. products and services in line with the previously mentioned National Export Initiative. (League of Green Embassies Progress Report, 2012, p. 21)

Its official mission statement, found on the League of Green Embassies website, is the following:

To provide new economic opportunities while addressing important political and ecological challenges such as energy security and climate change.

2.4 Core values

The League of Green Embassies values can be divided into the following categories:

Bipartisan character: LoGE is bipartisan by nature, it is not divided politically, making it suitable for both a Democrat or Republican administration.

Economic benefits vs. "just saving the planet": LoGE's core focus is on monetary profit versus "just saving the planet". It trusts that economic benefits affect behavior favorably and will therefore result in a better, more sustainable environment. "Fire the electric bill, rather than the people" is what Ambassador Oreck and many others at the Embassy like to say. What better way to solve a financial crisis than by using energy more smartly, it is a win-win strategy.

Innovations for the long-term: Ambassador Oreck emphasizes the fact that developing new, innovative solutions for our energy issues, is not a trend or a phase. There is no way around it, a new relationship with energy is imperative. "Innovation is the currency of the 21st Century", he says.

Action-based leadership: Embassy Helsinki's standpoint as LoGE chair is "action-based leadership, leading by example" (League of Green Embassies, 2012). According to the League of Green Embassies Progress Report (2012, p.5), it visions Embassies as platforms for energy innovations, where cutting-

edge technologies highlight best practices in energy efficiency . A key example of this is the Innovation Center which will be opened early 2013. Another one, are the Energy Efficiency (EE) Sweep makeovers.

2.5 EE Sweep makeovers

A central part of the League of Green Embassies programme are the Energy Efficiency (EE) Makeovers, which clearly illustrate the LoGE's 'active leadership' role and the willingness to invest in energy innovations. LoGE executes these makeovers to U.S. Ambassadors residences across the globe by respecting the buildings current architecture but making the technology used in it cleaner and smarter. In collaboration with the Department of State and Commerce, the Alliance to Save Energy and 9 U.S. and foreign businesses, LoGE retrofitted twelve European residences ranging from Madrid to Bern, Berlin to Sofia. These makeovers were accomplished between April 2011 and May 2012, with U.S. Embassy Brussels being the first one and U.S. Embassy Vienna the last, so far. This is, to date, the largest public-private partnership ever undertaken by the U.S. government overseas, which LoGE sees as a remarkable milestone in itself. The Energy Efficiency Sweep has global implications and due to a wide range of media coverage from both national and international press, the first round was viewed by participating Embassies and partners to be a very successful one.

3 Twitter

Levinson and Gibson (2010, p. 11) envisage 'Technophobia' to be the "demise of many companies and industries over the next decade." Learning to use social media tools is therefore an absolute necessity if one is going to communicate effectively. Web 2.0 is often referred to as the 'interactive web' and characterized by user-generated content. TechTerms (2012) asserts that Web 2.0, which social media falls under, provides a level of interaction that wasn't possible before and which makes it even easier to share information.

At the end of 2012, Facebook totals more than one billion active users (Schroeder, 2012). Twitter, whose popularity has risen tremendously, has momentarily around 500 million users, approximately 200 million of whom are active (Lunden, 2012).

3.1 Definition and background

Twitter is as a 'micro-blogging service' which has been around since 2006. Posts, known as tweets, are like 'mini-blogs' because they can only be 140 characters long. Although it has been around for over six years now, it has grown much more rapidly in recent years with growth rates up to 585%, according to Lacy (2011, p. 9).

Twitter is the medium for following absolutely anything and the allure is that you can follow those you don't know and tailor your own cluster of accounts, in order to get exactly the information you are searching for. Just as you are likely to follow strangers on Twitter, there is the chance that they will follow back. Unlike Facebook, which is generally among friends and acquaintances, Twitter allows for more varied connections. According to Pingdom (2012) a performance monitoring service, the average Twitter user is 37.3 years old and gender distribution is 40% male, 60% female. It is thus a myth that it is principally 'generation Y' who is on Twitter. Twitter is a particularly popular service in The U.S., Brazil, Indonesia and the UK (Fitzgerald, 2012).

Like Facebook, Twitter is a magnificent platform not just for regular people but businesses and organizations too, to connect and discuss an array of topics. According to O'Reilly and Milstein (2012), it has emerged as a 'key business channel' allowing companies to engage with their constituents in "a direct way that's both personal and public – something no other medium allows" (p. 17). O'Reilly and Milstein (2012) further remind that "Twitter isn't so much a broadcast medium as it is a discussion channel" (p. 103), emphasizing the importance of two-way or multifaceted dialogue.

There are several ways to use the service, allowing one to share content and interact with followers in a way which one finds personally suitable. Linking articles and videos on Twitter for others to see

by shortening links (via a URL shortener such as bit.ly or goo.gl), asking or replying to questions from followers via @mentions or tracking certain hashtags (search words which become links by adding # at the beginning of the word). In addition, retweeting (forwarding) others tweets to your own follower base “shows respect and helps extend their messages”, according to Lacy (2011, p.13).

Twitter is increasingly seen as a credible news source by media outlets as much of breaking news shows up first on Twitter. This is quickly depicted via ‘trending topics’ on Twitter – which list the “top ten most popular and fastest growing words or phrases being tweeted about at any given moment” (O’Reilly & Milstein, 2012, p. 53). Journalists have really embraced Twitter and a lot of national and international politicians also use it for campaigning and reaching voters directly. Twitter and other forms of social media were at the very core of the most recent U.S. Presidential elections. In fact, Obama’s victory photo ‘Four more years’ became the most retweeted post in history, retweeted a total of 641,800 times. (Fitzgerald, 2012).

Twitter is also increasingly accessed via mobile devices and third party applications such as HootSuite and TweetDeck. Hootsuite and TweetDeck are gaining popularity because they help organize one’s social media. Over 40% of Twitter users access Twitter also via their mobile devices (Miller, 2011) and 1 in 4 tweet via applications and not via Twitter itself (The Twitter Apps, 2012).

3.2 Advantages of Twitter relevant to LoGE

There are numerous advantages which make Twitter suitable for the League of Green Embassies

Simplicity and flexibility : Due to its straightforward style, Twitter is relatively simple to use. It takes a while getting accustomed to but once you learn to tweet, it becomes easy to do. This is valuable for the League because anyone can learn it, meaning it can be deployed as a (sub)task for various employees. This helps increase LoGE’s flexibility.

Lowers threshold: Martin (2010, p. 75) calls Twitter “the cocktail party of the social media scene.” It is also commonly referred to as one’s backyard or neighborhood as it can truly be an icebreaker due to its casual demeanor. It is very normal to discuss topics with people you do not even know. For LoGE this is beneficial because it can help others contact LoGE despite its official status.

Fast and short: Twitter is the ultimate tool for those with limited time because of how compact tweets are to write and read. These attributes make it apt for busy people. The League is in contact with Embassies and companies globally, all of whom, one can assume, have relatively little free time on their hands. Twitter is great for attracting their attention in small doses. Although messages can only be so short, they allow for sharing valuable content via articles and videos. As Martin (2010, p. 76) says: “Just like workplace conversation around the water cooler, it’s the content, not the

duration, of the conversation that counts.” Twitter is not the place for making official statements nor providing detailed information but it can be a channel to direct others to one’s website, as LoGE often does as well.

Cost-effective: Twitter is ideal for spreading the message in a cost-effective manner, which is exactly what LoGE wishes to do. Via Twitter one can reach global audiences in an instant and it doesn’t cost anything. Its cost-effectiveness is one of Twitter’s greatest advantages.

Networking tool: Twitter is great for community building which is useful for LoGE due to a wide range of international stakeholders it wishes to communicate with. Via Twitter, LoGE can build relationships and expand its network between the public and private sphere and create a community of followers with like-minded interests for business and environment.

4 League of Green Embassies and social media

LoGE recognizes the importance of being part of the conversation on social media. In order for the LoGE to become stronger, it would like to see its organization grow. By utilizing these powerful communication tools, it wishes to further increase its visibility, web presence and the discussion of green energy practices with its various counterparts.

Although being part of this ‘phenomenon of our time’ is significant in itself, it wants to bring value to the discussion and not be on social media just for the sake of it. Currently the League of Green Embassies has its own website, a Twitter page, a Facebook and a YouTube account.

4.1 State Department and Embassy stance on social media

The State Department on the whole encourages the use of social media. This is Embassy Helsinki’s standpoint too and is regularly communicated at Senior Staff meetings. Embassy staff are encouraged to engage in online conversation, bearing in mind they do not contradict with the official policies of the United States.

The State Departments’ pro-social media outlook was further evident when, in late 2011, Ms. Breton Boudreaux, a social media expert from Washington, was invited to the Embassy to hold a series of workshops. Ms. Boudreaux illustrated the range of possibilities that exist, how messaging on Facebook and Twitter can be maximized for the various departments, as well as for the League of Green Embassies. Best practices were shared and new ideas circulated around. The workshop brought more awareness not only to how these tools can be used but what is likely to keep others interested in staying a friend or follower.

The Public Affairs Section at U.S. Embassy Helsinki are increasingly turning to new media to remain up-to-date and reach audiences more effectively. Press Attaché David McGuire says that social media has truly reinvented their communication both with ‘host country’, Finland, as well as globally. “It’s a way of having a more free-flowing conversation with everyone from local government officials to student groups to the general public.”, adding that it allows for messaging anyone can see, without Public Affairs having to personally make an appearance. (D. McGuire, personal interview, August 30, 2012. See appendix 3.)

LoGE coordinator, Riikka Jalasvirta finds social media to be an absolute necessity these days. When she finds ‘Posts’ (Embassies) who are not on Twitter or Facebook this is a great surprise. In those cases “there’s no way of formulating that virtual communication which is so important to modern-day communication” she says. Ambassador Oreck often says: “You cannot control the conversation,

but you have to be in it.” If this conversation is increasingly taking place on social media, then that is where one has to be.

4.2 Purpose of LoGE Twitter

The League of Green Embassies Twitter, @thegreenleague, was officially launched February 3rd 2011, but remained inactive until late October 2011. It was re-launched to particularly coincide with the COP17 Climate Change conference in Durban, South Africa to demonstrate that the U.S. government is “walking the talk”. @thegreenleague was deemed a suitable place to promote and create excitement for the EE Sweep, a series of makeovers made to twelve Ambassadors’ CMR:s (Chief-of-Mission Residences) in Europe between a time span of approximately a year (April 2011-May 2012). As Jalasvirta, points out: “we wanted to demonstrate that we’re acting right now. As we speak in Durban, we’re upgrading all these Embassies and putting in high-performance technology and so, the whole point was, to counteract the negative.”

By counteracting the negative, @thegreenleague’s focus is on now and the future, sending out positive messages drawing attention to opportunities rather than threats. It wishes to provide valuable information to its followers, as well as create a community where multifaceted dialogue is central, highlighting mutual benefits for both business and environment. As Jalasvirta says: “When you earn money through energy savings you’re simultaneously “saving the world.” So, it’s a win-win scenario.”

At its very essence, Jalasvirta says that @thegreenleague’s function is “to accentuate our virtual communication and generate interest from external sources. Not just other Embassies that haven’t joined but also the private sector.”

4.2.1 Target group

LoGE’s target group are its stakeholders, Twitter followers and the general public. Stakeholders include the State Department, The Department of Commerce, Alliance to Save Energy, US and foreign businesses in the field of high-performance building and technology, but also local, national and international Green Building Councils, building owners and other U.S. Embassies.

The idea so far has been that the message is tailored to those that follow @thegreenleague, versus wanting to attract a specific audience, such as government or the business community.

4.3 LoGE Twitter style

The LoGE’s current bio reads:

The League of Green Embassies is a global network of over 100 diplomatic missions providing new economic opportunities and addressing political challenges.

On the whole, @thegreenleague, like its mission, is characterized by tweets focusing on energy efficiency, renewable energy and water conservation. It wishes to be true to its core values on all its online communication platforms applying consistent messaging from the LoGE website to Facebook to Twitter, and so forth. It also has to safeguard its role as an official organization, meaning its tweets must provide accurate, up-to-date and suitable content which do not contradict in any way with the official viewpoints of the U.S. government.

@thegreenleague regularly posts articles which exemplify how local efforts can make a global difference. It demonstrates cause and effect of good (sustainable) behavior and emphasizes that saving energy is, in fact, a win-win strategy for both business and the environment. The articles it posts showcase joint efforts between countries hereby striving to motivate others to do the same. It steers away from too much political talk on climate change, as this tends to be very problem-focused and negative.

4.3.1 Examples tweets

@thegreenleague tweets serve one (or more) of the following goals:

- 1) Inform and educate: articles on energy efficiency, renewable energy and water conservation:

[thegreenleague](#) The Green League

[@thegreenleague](#) [@UNEP](#)'s [#Environmental](#) Data Explorer -a great resource for all interested in [#green](#) [#science](#) <http://geodata.grid.unep.ch/>

- 2) Increase awareness of LoGE as an organization: develop the LoGE brand:

[thegreenleague](#) The Green League

The League has nearly tripled in size in 2011, with almost 80 members now. Looking forward to 100+ in 2012! <http://goo.gl/P59pB>

- 3) Create and maintain a relationship with LoGE stakeholders:

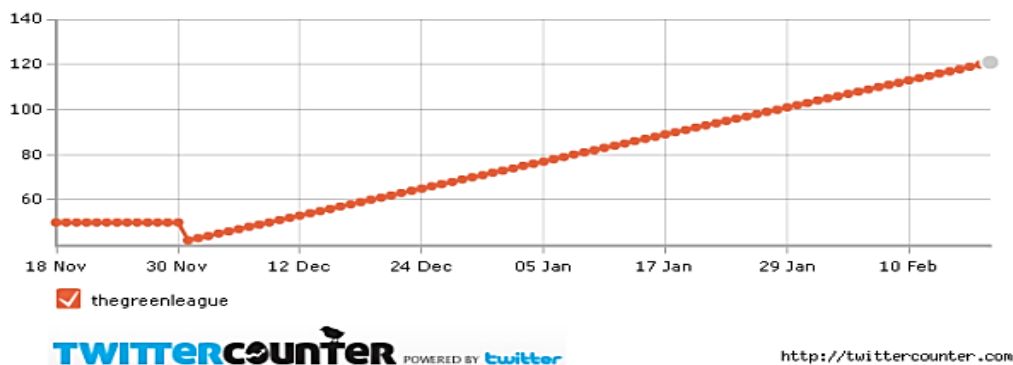
[thegreenleague](#) The Green League

8 companies, 6 Embassies & [@ToSaveEnergy](#) helped make [#US](#) residences across Europe more [#energyefficient](#). Thank you all once again! [#EE_Sweep](#)

4.4 Twitter evolvement

4.4.1 Followers

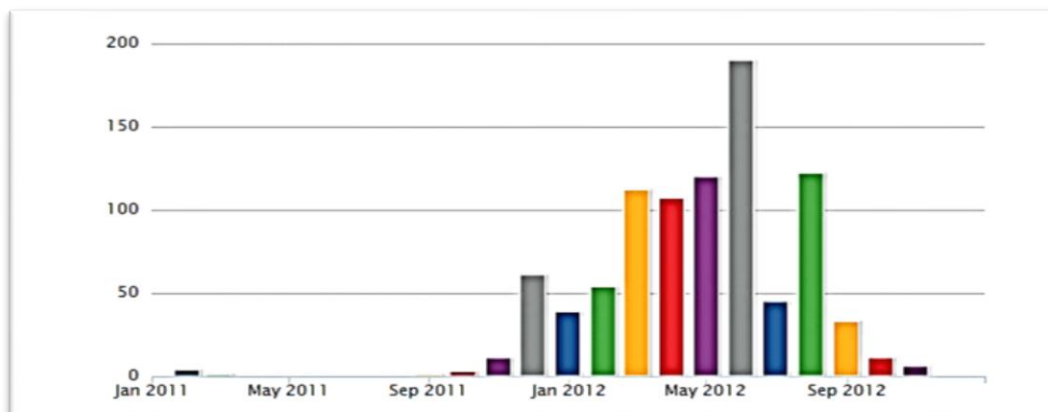
The graph below shows a vast increase in followers in the first months after the relaunch (November 2011-February 2012). It suggests a good start and that the conference in Durban and the EE Sweep may have been a factor in gaining awareness.



Retrieved from Twitter Counter: 22/03/2012

4.4.2 Tweets

The graph below attests an irregularity in tweets, with a highest point in July at nearly 200 tweets per month and again a much lower score of under 50, from October 2012 onwards.



Retrieved from Tweet Stats: 21/11/2012

4.4.3 Style

According to Klout (2012), LoGE's style evolved from conversationalist to socializer between October 2011 and March 2012, with a score of 32 in March 2012. The Klout score measures the sphere of influence with followers, looking at amount of @mentions and retweets. To provide perspective, Lady Gaga and Justin Bieber have a score of 100, meaning they are among the most influential on Twitter (Klout, 2012). Information Resource Technician at U.S. Embassy Helsinki, Matti Lauren is somewhat skeptical about the Klout number and where it comes from. He says that it can be tricked

higher and does not know how this is taken into account in the algorithm. He therefore suggests it is only used as part of tracking and not as a “one and for all” reference. (M. Lauren, personal interview, November 2, 2012. See appendix 4)

4.5 Current status

In November 2012, @thegreenleague tweets only 1.4 times a day (How Often Do You Tweet, 2012). Its style, according to Twitalyzer (2012) is

‘casual user’ which is defined as “ones which drop in and out of Twitter on a whim, treating the network as a social channel when it suits their needs.” O’Reilly and Milstein (2012, p. 129) suggest that 4.22 is a good average to tweet per day, although many of the most popular tweeters tweet even four times that amount. On Twitter it seems tweeting often is better than tweeting seldom. This is imperative for maintaining current followers, attracting new ones and building community on a whole.

4.5.1 Follower to Following ratio (FFR)

As of October 2012, @thegreenleague has roughly 280 followers and follows 300 accounts, meaning its’ Follower to Following ratio (FFR) is quite steady at 0:9. Ideal FFR, according to Lacy (2011, p.116) is 1:0 or 1:1 because this indicates that one is listening as much as being listened to.

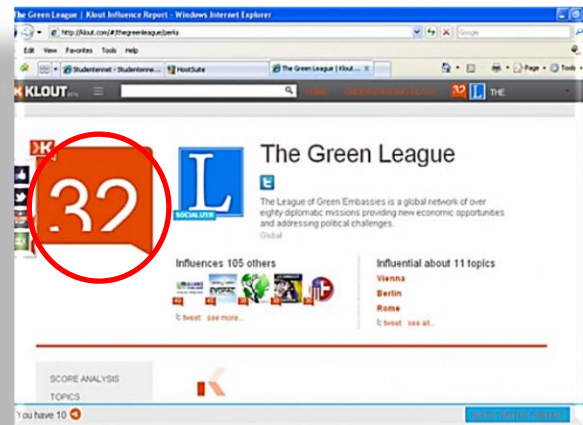
4.5.2 Click through rate (CTR)

As LoGE Twitter is largely based on sharing links, it’s also important to know how many clicks each article or video gets. Based on what is available for analysis at goo.gl, out of 88 links average click through rate is: 2.5 (October 2011-May 2012). According to Lacy (2011) 2/100 followers will click a link, meaning that @thegreenleague’s CTR should be twice the amount at 5 clicks per link.

4.6 Problem

Based on the above situation analysis, self-observation and insights from numerous interviews with Embassy staff, @thegreenleague’s core challenges are the following:

Lack of focus: The League needs to project its entire social media strategy with a more focused aim and at least a primary target group. According to Lauren “now it’s green things, saving energy, it’s so ridiculously vague area it’s almost impossible to narrow it down in a meaningful way.” McGuire also says that there should have been more strategizing to begin with: “Having a one-year outline [...] and then sticking to a very precise programme and drawing in other Embassies to do a lot more.”



However, he recognizes that there were practical realities LoGE faced which prevented proper planning and that the people involved just did what was best. Ambassador Oreck says that LoGE is now in between things and that “there’ll be an awful lot of things to report pretty soon”, signaling an opportunity for focusing its goals into something more concrete.

MTV3 Journalist, Ville Juutilainen noted that the LoGE bio does not clarify *why* one should follow the account. “what do I get when I click follow, what’s the value of this for me?”, he asked. He additionally noticed a lack of coherence in the hashtags LoGE uses. In his view they are far too general (V. Juutilainen, personal interview, July 5, 2012. See appendix 2).

Lack of conversation: Another core challenge is a lack of activity on its Twitter page. @thegreenleague does not tweet enough (or does so irregularly) and it lacks conversation. A constant flow of conversation is precisely what LoGE wants yet due to a lack of internal resources and constantly altering situations at the LoGE office, it has difficulty maintaining this. McGuire acknowledges the fact that there probably are not enough “financial resources to hire somebody to run a full-time social media site.” Ambassador Oreck says in an interview in November 2012: “One of the goals we have is to get someone back on the account, to really take charge of keeping us current in that conversation.”

An inconsistent Twitter usage may signal lack of interest which can consequently have implications on LoGE’s image and credibility. LoGE is not that recognized or a ‘de facto organization’ that others will *automatically* follow, “it needs to build itself from scratch” according to Lauren. This means it must provide interesting content and conversation regularly, to attract more followers and as a result, create even more conversation. The very essence of Twitter *is* the conversation and it loses its impact without it. Lauren says that LoGE could have not only been more actively part of the discussion but also in *creating* it. He admits, however, that this is not easy for an organization like LoGE “that doesn’t really have a face.”

Lack of personality: Finally, finding a middle ground between being formal yet “with a face”, is vital. As O’Reilly & Milstein (2012, p. 233) state: “Twitter gives you a phenomenal chance to reveal the human side of your organization.” This is precisely what LoGE is missing. This is already apparent in the bio which only depicts a logo and without a proper description as to who is behind the account. According to Juutilainen, @thegreenleague looked like an account made by a governmental agency and he found that it could have been much more personal. LoGE needs to thus remain official yet find a way of bringing out its personality. People want to talk with people and this helps in signaling much more transparency also. Ville Juutilainen says that “the toughest part is to make the message personal and also official at the same time. “

5 LoGE Followers

As of late October 2012, @thegreenleague counts 280 followers. A survey was sent out to them to determine their perceptions of @thegreenleague.²

5.1 Who

Of the roughly 280 followers, approximately 15% are businesses, 10% government and 75% are the general public. This remains an educated guess, however, since Twitter users create their own profiles, demonstrating the inability of fully defining their backgrounds. It is therefore more useful to keep a regular eye on who follows and to do so in real-time.

5.2 Why

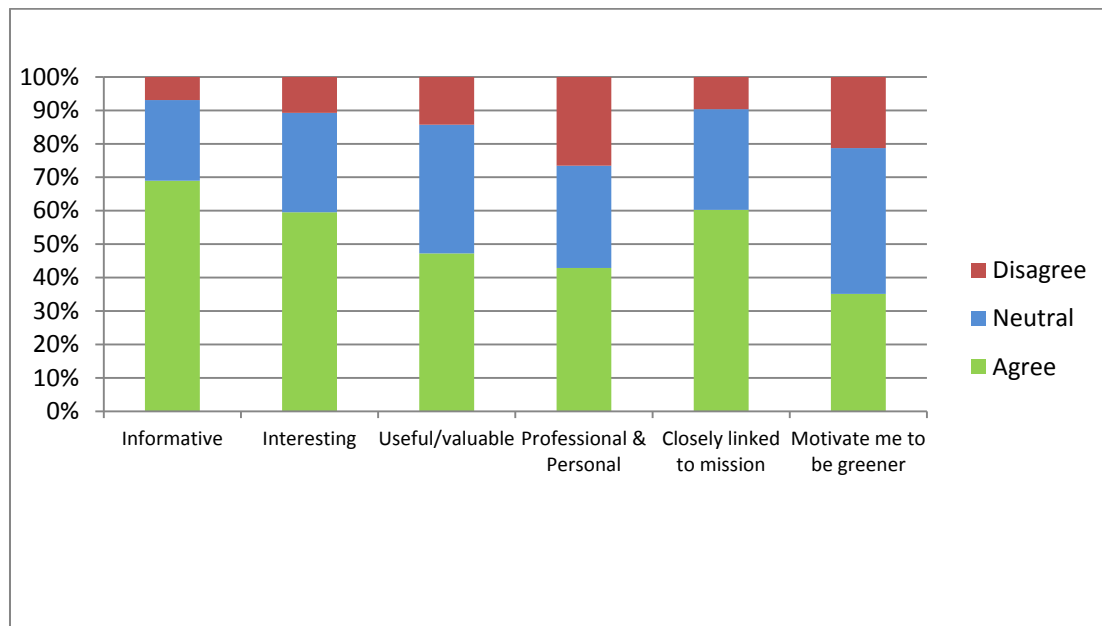
Of a total of 39 who responded to the survey, over 60% stated following @thegreenleague because they care about the environment. In addition, 1/3 are interested in U.S. Embassy Helsinki and almost 20% are curious about what Ambassador Oreck is up to. (See question 1 of survey, in appendix 8).

Jalasvirta sees a connection with who follows @thegreenleague. She says that, for example “smaller, non-profit organizations tend to follow us because perhaps they see us as someone to look up to because we are quite a huge organization from their standpoint.” She also sees a clear link between followers and the mission itself, which confirms why survey respondents state “I care about the environment” as first choice for following.

5.3 What do the followers think?

Nearly 3/4 of respondents are aware of LoGE's core message and almost 65 % read the tweets. For those that do not, around half say lack of time to be the reason. With regards, character of the tweets, LoGE followers find them to be most informative, with 70% agreeing, and 60% saying they are interesting. Less than half find them to provide value however, or to have a good mix of professionalism and personality. Only for 35%, the tweets are a motivation to be greener. In the graph on the next page, the various statements can be seen in comparison to one another.

² To simplify data from a series of questions involving a Likert scale, 'entirely disagree' (1) and 'disagree' (2) have been calculated together, as well as 'agree' (4) and 'entirely agree' (5).

LoGE tweets are:

This could suggest that although the content of the tweets is fairly good, the followers do not relate personally with them.

Looking at consistency and style, followers do not find @thegreenleague to tweet too much, with over 3/4 disagreeing with the statement “LoGE tweets too excessively” (Q:12 of survey, in appendix 8). In addition, respondents do not believe it advertises itself too much with 65% disagreeing with “LoGE markets itself too much on Twitter” (Q:11 of survey, in appendix 8).

In the future, over half would like to see tweets from the Ambassador. Also interactive discussion among followers was valued highly at nearly 50%.

6 Empowerment

Web 2.0 enables a much more interactive presence on the internet which LoGE can leverage. Empowerment is important, because it is likely to get others more involved. Due to the psychological nature of empowerment, however, it is a demanding question to answer. Based on opinions from numerous interviews, there are certain aspects that can be ascertained.

In Ambassador Oreck's view empowerment consists of two levels, educational and mental. People often believe they are helpless to solving big challenges which consequently causes a sense of feeling overwhelmed. Letting them know that "you actually can make a difference and here's the things that you can do" is the first step. (B. Oreck, personal interview, November 14, 2012. See appendix 5). Then, people need to gain that 'psychological edge' which he says, for instance, athletes need to succeed in competitions. When discussing tactics, Oreck says remembering you are talking *with* somebody, never *to* somebody, is crucial. So, he strives to make his speeches conversations, not lectures. Finally, he notes that "people rarely remember what they *hear*, but they remember what they *feel*", emphasizing the need to evoke emotions and inspiration.

Jalasvirta believes successful communication to work well with events, as it can be a way of gaining awareness particularly of those that do not know what one is trying to accomplish. Otherwise they may not relate "unless it's tied to some specific, broader-term event, for example the conference in Durban." She additionally finds monetary profit to be a huge incentive. "When you can actually, physically, see the savings in your account. I think that's a huge motivational factor for individuals, businesses, for governments, for anyone really. The world revolves around money and if you can save that, then that's what people are going to work towards."

Media psychologist, Mischa Coster says that to change behavior, one needs to start with baby steps. Coster suggests encouraging people to do very small things that benefit the environment. Consequently, when this has been reached, it's easier to convince them to take the next step. (M. Coster, personal interview, November 30, 2012. See appendix 7). This correlates with Ambassador Oreck's views about the public feeling overwhelmed with large-scale problems, meaning they need to be broken up into much smaller segments to increase feelings of empowerment.

Jalasvirta's views could be translated onto Twitter by relating LoGE followers more via events, as well as clarifying the economic benefits that individuals can enjoy by being more energy efficient. The Ambassador's views can be converted onto @thegreenleague by LoGE talking *with* followers and evoking feelings in them, whether that is through an element of surprise, through laughter or tears.

7 Social media efficacy

The question: “How to amplify the LoGE message” is what ties the entire research together. To answer this, one needs to consider social media efficacy on the whole. For a better overview, this has been divided into three main themes: 1) content 2) community and 3) technical aspects. These answers have come to light from Twitter literature as well as interview and survey results.

7.1 Content

According to social media specialist, Alicia Cowan: “You build your community through content” (A. Cowan, personal interview, November 29, 2012. See appendix 6). Coster also says that on Twitter people tend to search for content rather than people or organizations, meaning to amplify one’s message, content is where to start.

7.1.1 Focused expertise and goals

There is a vast amount of content in the Twitterverse with over 1 billion tweets being sent out each week (Perez, 2011). People are often following hundreds of accounts alongside yours, which is why followers tend to value specified expertise and a clear Twitter style. What ones page is about needs to be very clear already in the bio to help Twitterers make the choice whether to follow or not. For this reason, Lacy (2011, p. 19) emphasizes giving the Twitter profile careful consideration.

Juutilainen stressed the importance of content on a whole, seeing a great value in small companies which are an expert in a small area of something important. People are looking to grasp something tangible to guide them in the ‘sea of noise.’ A Finnish computer virus specialist from F-Secure, for example, has, according to Juutilainen, built a steady following due to a very specialized know-how. People trust him to have correct information and this increases efficiency. Lacy (2011, p. 14) writes that “you can become a reference for people who are looking for information about [a certain] topic and that status can ultimately gain you more followers.”

Lauren also supports this view, adding that: “the League of Green Embassies could have smaller things that they are trying to achieve and [the Twitter] could be aligned to those”, providing the example of WWF and ‘saimaannorppa’ (a subspecies of ringed seal) which WWF focuses a lot of its attention on. Juutilainen, on the other hand, mentioned the City of New York’s announcement of planting 1 million trees by 2017 as something memorable due to its tangibility.

7.1.2 Themes

A way of making content more tangible could be via themes. Social media expert from Washington, Boudreaux, highlighted themes during her workshop. Themes can be a way of attracting followers

and keeping them checking in more often. They can also be tied around events, as Jalasvirta suggested, hereby helping others relate to one's cause in a more concrete way.

7.1.3 Hashtags

The use of hashtags adds visibility to tweets, however general ones, such as #green or #development, are to be avoided due to contradicting with the goal of providing specific expertise. Juutilainen says he would never search such words on Twitter and that utilizing campaign hashtags, for example, can be more effective. During the Energy Efficiency Sweep events, LoGE, for example, used the hashtag #EE_Sweep. Coster, says hashtags can also encourage clicking. He sees people adding ones that mimic 'social proof' such as #trending or #bestread and says that though these do work, doing so is, in his opinion, on the border of persuasion and manipulation.

7.1.4 Defined audience (target group)

Jalasvirta accentuates the importance of attracting the private sector whereas McGuire says that LoGE Twitter is meant to involve the Embassies more. Clearly, there are altering views in Embassy staff concerning audience. Everyone is welcome to take part, however, a clearer target group is good for more focus. Ambassador Oreck says in an interview in November 2012, that he would like to firstly target a young audience and secondarily the business people, however this too needs to be further specified.

According to Coster, one needs to "build a mission statement or value proposition that appeals also to the general public, something that people can connect with." He adds that Retweeting is also much more likely to occur when one's information is interesting for the target audience, further underlining the importance of defining this more clearly.

7.1.5 Personalize

Twitter can help humanize one's brand or concept and there are various ways to go about this. There seems to be an inclination for authenticity and curiosity to have a behind the scenes look to companies and organizations. "In today's reality show culture, getting a look at the 'drama' behind the show is almost expected" (Martin, 2010, p. 171). Juutilainen talked about this, citing as an example how the public goes wild when they post photos of the MTV3 Newsroom where the news anchors work. "There's lots of things that people want to see even though we cannot see that they are in any way interesting", he says, adding that there could be a same kind of appeal to Embassies. Cowan adds to this that "people nowadays want to be a part of things, from the start" signaling that they need to be wired in via pictures, videos etcetera, in a personal way.

Personalizing the bio is also important. Cowan asserts: "Studies show, if you show the people behind whoever's running the account, then immediately you break down a barrier of trust." Lauren also

highlighted the need for a personal approach and having a face behind the organization, suggesting the account is updated to a picture of those behind it and that LoGE tweeters end tweets by signing with their initials. When Obama tweets, he adds B.O to the end to clarify it is really him tweeting. Another way would be to have multiple, personal accounts that are seen as 'sub brands' to LoGE. Martin (2010, p.116) states: "People want to deal with other people, and your photo assures readers that you are a real person."

7.1.6 Tone of voice

Tone of voice can also impact content significantly. Talking *with* followers rather than *to* followers, is one part of it. Another is evoking feelings to gain attention and help followers relate more. O'Reilly & Milstein (2012) consider tweeting in a way that is more entertaining or informative (p. 149). Cowan reminds that chitchat and lighthearted conversation is important, because you are communicating within a social network.

Finally, simplifying one's messages can help them stand out more. "If you have an easy-to-understand message that is distinct, people will want to share it" (p.29), according to Levinson and Gibson (2010). Coster adds that, for instance, to encourage retweeting, you need to make it easy to do so, by leaving enough space (ideally at least 40 characters) for followers to add their own comments to the tweet.

7.1.7 Diversity

Diversity of content is not only important because you have a diversity of followers, but when attracting new ones, a 'rich activity stream' is likely to be a key motivation for whether to follow or not, according to Coster. He also notes that a good mix, content-wise would be around 50% informational tweets, 10% giving own opinions, 20% conversations with others and 20% retweets.

Diversity is also important in relation to what Ambassador Oreck says about new followers versus 'the old hands'. In other words, keeping content relevant for both those that have been part of the conversation longer and those that just stumbled upon it more recently.

7.2 Community

Community-building is central to getting the message through on social media, as well as developing brand appreciation. According to Levinson and Gibson (2010) only 10% of social media marketing is targeted marketing, the remaining 90% is about 'community, contribution, and connection' (p.9).

Part of managing community is knowing *who* is in your community, meaning that LoGE needs to get to know its followers better. Rather than wait and wonder why nobody's talking, it should dive into conversations itself, according to Cowan. This is proactive and also helps in getting acquainted

better. It also supports the notion of giving first and asking later, which Coster discussed. “First you have to earn the right to ask things”, he says. With asking, he means asking to engage with you, but also for support and feedback.

7.2.1 Be present and consistent

As McGuire reminds, Twitter is a social tool and one needs to be present, it’s crucial to “keep at it.” Being present means tweeting regularly, this could be 3-5 times a day, for example. The more one tweets, the more others will realize and this will add to ones follower numbers. McGuire however states that it’s not so much quantity that counts, but “quality on a regular basis.”

7.2.2 Listen

Twitter should never be used solely as an ‘advertising channel’ as Meerman Scott (2010, p.181) points out. It is important to listen to what followers have to say. McGuire notes that Public Affairs uses social media not just for ‘outreach’, but also as a ‘receiving tool’, meaning that paying attention to your community is vital for enhancing Twitter relations. Cowan also notes that, on Twitter being *interested* in others is even more important than being *interesting*.

Juutilainen highlighted ‘community managers’ and that hiring one for LoGE could be a way of increasing efficacy. A crucial part to this is replying to @messages, as suggested by O’Reilly and Milstein (2012, p. 107), who say it is “good community practice.” It sounds obvious, but is absolutely essential, as well as retweeting which O’Reilly & Milstein (2012) also highlight (p. 49).

7.2.3 Influential people in one’s network

More is not always better. When it comes to followers Martin (2010) advises “qualified followers, not just huge numbers” (p. 76). Cowan also emphasized that having the right followers who will likely spread your message, is more important than the amount itself.

Seeking out influencers in one’s area is not only for the chance that they will follow back but that one’s messages may get retweeted. This can give large visibility in a matter of seconds. Mick Jagger’s former wife, Bianca Jagger, for example, retweeted one of @thegreenleague’s tweets in March 2012 which reached her 18,000 followers instantaneously.

Not only is following important, but engaging in conversation. Due to the ‘humanness’ of Twitter, it’s increasingly easier to get close to celebrities and influencers in your subject area. Interacting with experts is not only for visibility but adds to the quality of the discussion. And as Coster points out, from a psychological perspective, “people, most of the time, start looking at another profile once that profile is mentioned in a tweet from somebody else that they know and trust” meaning if

influencers are talking about your organization, others are more likely to notice hereby amplifying your message.

7.3 Technical aspects

7.3.1 Amplifying other channels

Twitter efficacy grows when integrating it with other channels. Amplifying other social media, such as Facebook, amplifies the message on Twitter. Traffic to Facebook can increase traffic to Twitter and vice versa. Coster points out that advertising your website page views on Twitter can invite others to go to your website. Integrating media in a variety of ways assists in maximizing visibility on Twitter. Juutilainen mentions that in the future we will see more integration with media and that Twitter will be increasingly seen in other channels confirming how increasingly assimilated new media is.

7.3.2 Managing via applications

Third Party Applications such as HootSuite are useful for scheduling tweets and tracking certain hashtags, as well as managing other social media. They provide a good overview and as O'Reilly and Milstein (2012) write, they make one's 'sending, receiving and listening more effective' (p. 89)

Lists in Twitter can also save time and make it easier to listen to ones followers by subcategorizing the various groups. Lists are a sort of 'filter of information' that let people narrow in more specifically and allow one to "efficiently manage what information you receive." (Tadah, 2012).

7.3.3 Tracking Twitter stats

Keeping score of @mentions and retweets on a weekly basis can provide new insight into whether ones Twitter influence is growing. Occasionally referring to the Klout score and Twitalyzer can also provide insight. Goo.gl url shortener can be used to gather click-through rates and see which tweets have been clicked on most.

8 Conclusions

This research clarifies that for LoGE to amplify its message, it needs to personalize its Twitter presence, define its (primary) target group and focus its content. More personality lowers threshold, builds trust and increases likelihood of conversation on @thegreenleague. A clearer target group, on the other hand, would help LoGE to craft messages that are attractive to its audience, which can encourage interaction and retweeting. More focus on the content of the tweets helps make LoGE mission more concrete and relatable for followers. Content should not only be more specific via sub-goals aligned with bigger mission, but increasingly tied to events and via content that is likely to evoke followers feelings, making it thereby more memorable.

Tweeting regularly (with a tone that speaks *with* followers rather than *to* them), being proactive in conversation and listen more to one's community also assist in amplifying ones tweets even further. To succeed at this, a community manager for @thegreenleague would be helpful. If there are no funds to hire an external one, an Embassy colleague with an affinity for Twitter and energy issues, would be suitable. An intern in the field of communications and/or environment is another good option. As LoGE is relatively new to Twitter, it should start with monitoring simple data and then move onto more complex ones, tracking results preferably in real-time or shortly after.

The Embassy and State Department being 'pro-social media' is a plus, especially as Twitter's popularity is increasing. The upcoming opening of the Innovation Center is a prime opportunity for a lot of specific content that followers can grasp and be a part of from day one, as well as something they can relate to. If there are more EE Sweep projects taking place, these too, are an opportunity for LoGE Twitter to benefit from.

Finally, followers can be empowered by first educating them on what they can do and how, and then by giving them that psychological edge, which is necessary. In addition, they are to be encouraged with small steps at first, after which it is easier to encourage to do bigger things.

8.1 Recommendations

As of 2013, LoGE could devise a one-year Twitter strategy and communicate this to all employees involved. It is advisable to start small and slowly build up, focusing first and foremost on developing a more attractive account for the group it wishes to primarily target. Then, specifying the content it tweets and making this more personal will further increase its value. Finally tweeting consistently and building relations with like-minded people in the Twittersphere will amplify its community and visibility at the same time.

8.1.1 Give LoGE Twitter 'a personality'

8.1.1.1 Profile

LoGE bio needs a makeover: more personality by adding a picture, preferably of the person/people tweeting from the account, in combination with the L-logo. Those responsible could communicate they are in charge of @thegreenleague (the 'community managers') and introduce themselves when they first start tweeting. Each person could end tweets with their initials to add personality and clarity.

8.1.1.2 Tweets

A mix of tweets is advised for a diverse activity stream, using Mischa Costers recommendation as a guideline: 50% informational, 10% giving own opinions, 20% conversations with others and 20% retweets. In addition, more content that arouses feelings so followers remember how they *felt* about LoGE tweets.

More pictures from LoGE headquarters is recommended for transparency and increasing feelings of 'rootedness'. Pictures from the office and the Innovation Center, for example, to give followers a behind-the-scenes look and enabling them to be more involved and wired in.

Occasional tweets from Ambassador Oreck to add personality and increase traffic to @thegreenleague. Ambassador could end his tweets with BJO, rather than B.O to avoid confusion with the initials Obama uses.

8.1.2 Define target group

Decide upon a primary target group, analyze it in as much detail as possible: which age-group do they fall under, where are they located, what are their interests? Look at whether to attract those already with an affinity for energy efficiency versus those without. Regularly look back at Twitter followers to compare actual and desired audience.

No matter what the targeted audience is, a lighthearted tone is advised as well as always talking *with* followers. Chitchat is particularly important if a younger audience is to be targeted. Adjusting content to target group shows that you are listening to the people in your community.

8.1.3 Concrete goals

Very firstly "Why should followers follow @thegreenleague?" needs to be answered. Ensure that 'the value proposition', what followers get, is very clear in the bio. Then, content needs to be made more relevant and memorable for the target audience: "What can LoGE announce on Twitter that will be remembered by followers months, even years to come?" Themes and events can assist in this and if there are new EE Sweep makeovers or other energy-efficiency events, this should be fully benefited

from. The opening of the Innovation Center in Helsinki is a major opportunity to focus its content more specifically. Finally, using campaign/event hashtags is advised. Realizing that the use of hashtags generally increases likelihood of being found, however specific ones help in amplifying more. Hashtags should be used consistently for clear communication. For the EE Sweep, LoGE can continue using #EE_Sweep.

8.1.4 Manage community better

The community manager(s) should tweet regularly (ideally, 3-4 times a day), keep track of and listen to followers and conversations. An external person could be hired or a tech-savvy Embassy colleague/intern with an interest in energy issues. This person shows interest in others, both by answering to @mentions, thanking those that retweet, as well as proactively engaging in discussions with like-minded individuals, organizations and influencers in the community. Answering: “What can I give to my community which will be valuable?” can guide the process.

8.1.5 Utilize monitoring tools and third-party applications

Because LoGE is relatively new to Twitter, using complex metrics is not advisable at this early stage. One needs to first build a more substantial online presence before one starts to measure it. In addition it is much more advisable to do so in real-time. LoGE can schedule some of its tweets via Hootsuite or TweetDeck and track hashtags it finds important. In addition, it can keep an eye on its followers: who mentions or retweets a lot to discover LoGE fans or ‘advocates.’ Via Klout or Twitalyzer it can occasionally check its influence score to see whether this has elevated. Via goo.gl, it can monitor click-through rates to see whether average CTR is increasing or whether certain links attracted particular attention.

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10 Appendices

Appendix 1: Interview with Riikka Jalasvirta

Date: 21-5-2012

Interviewee: Riikka Jalasvirta

Title: League of Green Embassies coordinator

Duration: 28:50

Form: Interview, face-to-face

Q: Good afternoon, I'm here with Riikka Jalasvirta from the League of Green Embassies at U.S. Embassy Helsinki. I'm currently conducting research on the efficacy of the League of Green Embassies social media and Riikka was so kind to do an interview with me and give her thoughts on various aspects on this matter. Riikka, thank you very much for joining.

A: Thank you

Q: During this interview, I'd like to ask you about various aspects related to, not only the League of Green Embassies mission and general matters, but also on your views on the League of Green Embassies social media, particularly Twitter. But before we start, would you first tell me how long you've been working for the League of Green Embassies and what sort of tasks you perform here.

A: I've been here for about roughly a year and the kind of work I do varies from updating our social media feed as well as coordinating a variety of Energy Efficiency Projects around the world.

Q: Could you specify the Energy Efficiency projects?

A: So this was, and I can provide more details later on if you like, but just to summarize the Energy Efficiency Sweep took place in Europe where we did makeovers in U.S. Ambassadors Residences in fifteen Embassies and that ranged from Embassy Madrid to Bern to Berlin, Warsaw to Rome. So, a grand total of fifteen and this involved a huge public/private partnership with companies in the high-performance building products and services sector. So that has been very successful and has generated a lot of interest and monetary comeback, monetary profit. So that's been very important for our social media as well and has increased our visibility significantly.

Q: Because the LoGE, or the League of Green Embassies, is a global network of now over ninety Embassies and I'm quoting: "The League of Green Embassies wants to provide new economic opportunities while addressing important political and ecological challenges such as Energy Security and Climate Change. The League website is a platform to discuss common challenges, promote best practices and to connect solution providers to organizations in search of energy-saving innovations" So, this is from The League of Green Embassies website. How would you, in your own words, describe the League of Green Embassies central message: what does it want to convey to its public?

A: Well, to quote Ambassador Oreck, who is the current chairman of the League, he very much dislikes the word green and anything related to that color for that matter. So in essence, I think, the central message to the League of Green Embassies is not in fact "going green" but to move towards high-performance building and energy-efficiency, which is more important. Basically, saving your energy but rather earning energy through energy upgrades. So I think it's all about modernizing but in an ecological way.

Q: Right. And what about, do you have an idea how the public actually sees the League of Green Embassies?

A: Well, because the League of Green Embassies is a very new organization, in fact it's only been around for a couple of years, the last year which has only been in Helsinki, has been a very fast-paced one but at the same time we've increased our visibility hugely. So, I think there's still a lot of potential to fulfill in the next few years as we continue to grow. So, on that note, I think, people are still just beginning to see what the League of Green Embassies is about, and in fact we receive a request to join the League of Green Embassies once maybe every week. So one new member each week has meant that we've increased our membership from a total of 50 Embassies back in June last year to about a hundred, currently.

Q: So that's really good news.

A: So, to go back to your question, I think, people are seeing value of this organization and I think, with the next months and few years to come, people will see an even higher value.

Q: So we could say that they do see it, in any case, in a positive light?

A: Yeah

Q: Great. And since my research is going to evolve mainly around social media, I was interested to know. I mean, social media is becoming increasingly important. Just regular people can decide not to have a Facebook account or Twitter account but companies and organizations just can't afford to not be part of that conversation. Do you agree on this and what are your thoughts?

A: Yeah, definitely. I think social media is very important these days and it would be very strange to find an organization or an individual or business or any sort of body that didn't have access to social media. In fact, whenever we receive new members in the League, the first thing we do is to check if they have Twitter and then we follow them and then they usually follow us back. And it's a huge surprise when you come across Posts that don't have a Twitter or Facebook account. And so, there's no way of formulating that virtual communication which is so important to modern-day communication.

Q: Just to clarify, Post that's..?

A: Embassy, sorry

Q: No problem.

Q: The League of Green Embassies Twitter was launched at the start of 2011 in February and then it was re-launched in November the same year, around the time of the COP17 conference in Durban, South Africa and also during the Energy Efficiency Sweep across Europe. What can you say about this?

A: You mean the fact that it was launched at that time?

Q: Yeah

A: Well, I mean I think it was a very positive move that we launched our Twitter account at the same time as the conference in Durban. Essentially, I think that successful communication has to do with coordinating it with events. This is especially important for lay people who aren't as aware of the cause or the goal that you are trying to achieve. If they're not aware of it, then they won't necessarily relate to it unless it's tied to some specific, broader-term event, for example the conference in Durban. So when you tie together huge projects and huge events, people become more aware and

that way you get more followers on board, you get more interest, you get more visibility when you work with other organizations. So I think that was a positive thing and we've gotten a lot more followers since then.

Q: Right. And, in a way you could say that it was partly related to Twitter, but also the Energy Efficiency Sweep itself was timed with that too, in order to maximize the message and make clear that we're doing as much as we can.

A: And also, the Energy Efficiency Sweep was tied specifically to the conference in Durban because there's a tendency that negative narrative emerges from that conference each year, any environment-related conference really, the one in Rio.. you know, there's always some sort of negative narrative that emerges. So, what we wanted to do was demonstrate that we're acting right now. As we speak in Durban, we're upgrading all these Embassies and putting in high-performance technology and so, the whole point was, to counteract the negative.

Q: Tie that all together and make it a positive message?

A: Mmhmm

Q: Great. What sorts of ambitions does the League of Green Embassies have with its social League of Green Embassies? I know that the League of Green Embassies has a Facebook page now, but I'm particularly interested in the Twitter. Who decides where the League of Green Embassies Twitter goes?

A: Well, I think obviously the Ambassador, Ambassador Oreck has a huge influence on that. Whatever his wish is as Chairman, that's the wish of the League of Green Embassies. Obviously, we have smaller scale projects that we can coordinate without his approval but the general guidance does come from above, from the Ambassador. And, in terms of where it's going right now, I think, the main purpose on Twitter, is to accentuate our virtual communication and generate interest from external sources. Not just other Embassies that haven't joined but also the private sector. We're obviously trying to increase our collaboration as an intermediary between the public and private sectors. I think it's just to accentuate that conversation.

Q: Right. Where do you personally see the League of Green Embassies Twitter going and how would you like it to be? Like, you mention now which direction it's going, but would you prefer it to go somewhere else, or do you agree with how it's now?

A: No, I would have to agree with the central message and the way it's going now. I think that is essentially the whole point. If it were to go in another direction I wouldn't be so sure as to what that would be and what the point would be. So, I think everything we're doing now is only helping us in a positive way.

Q: Do you see in any problems with the League of Green Embassies Twitter or something else you've noted?

A: No, I wouldn't say there's any problem per se. Maybe because it's such a new phenomenon. You know, Twitter's only been around for the past few years from what I understand.. since 2006?

Q: Yeah

A: So, I think the challenge, if there is one, is that we're trying to get more and more members on board the League of Green Embassies but not everyone knows what Twitter is about and how you're supposed to use it. There's a combination of League handles, hashtags, shortening links.. not everyone knows how to do that. Not even the young generation, generation Y, or whatever it is -

generation X? So I think that's a challenge, but I wouldn't say that's a problem. It's just a challenge that we have to overcome.

Q: Okay. And then I'd like to know about the followers on the League of Green Embassies Twitter. There's at the moment 183 followers, do you know who these are and what can you say about that?

A: We do check our account every day and we check the connections page where you see all the latest interactions. So we do keep an eye on who follows us and who mentions our comments or retweets. For the most part, the most recent followers have been green organizations, so for example news outlets. For the most part, the most recent followers have been green organizations, so for example news outlets. They're not official, like CNN or BBC. Obviously they're huge followers, that aren't easy to approach but you know smaller, non-profit organizations tend to follow us because perhaps they see us as someone to look up to because we are quite a huge organization from their standpoint. And quite an important one as well, because it involves diplomatic missions. You know, organizations that can make a huge difference.

So, when we start getting more and more followers, I think, eventually we will be able to move on to larger organizations. For example, one interesting follower was Bianca Jagger, who happens to be Mick Jagger's former wife, who has a total of, I think, 20, or 22.000 followers. She retweeted our tweet which meant a huge visibility to her audience. So that was great news. And we hope that more and more examples like that will come up.

Q: That's really great news. The funny thing about Twitter is that you just can't anticipate it, You can't go and tweet a tweet that you think Bianca Jagger might retweet. It just happens. It's what's great about social media, is it's just so unpredictable.

A: Mmhmm

Q: So, do you have any idea of what the League of Green Embassies Twitter followers might think of the tweets? I mean, I understand a lot of the tweets are informative. Articles, videos, links that they might find interesting. I'm assuming you haven't asked them what they think, but do you have any idea? Trying to see it from their perspective.

A: We did look at the Twitalyzer page one day, which broke down basically our Twitter usage: our number of followers and what kind of user we are. And from what I recall, we were conversationalist, or conversation-something.

Q: Yeah

A: Which is true, I believe. We do provide rather up to date articles which obviously are linked to our mission: water conservation, energy efficiency and renewable energy. So we try to revolve around those kind of themes. In terms of our followers, what they think, well, judging by the types of followers that join, they're green news outlets, or green non-profit organizations, so I think there's a connection there. Based on the hashtags that we use, the handles that we link to, so I think, there's a strong connection with that.

Q: Do you think this could be amplified still in any other way? This is just a suggestion, but do you think it would be important to know what the followers think? Is it relevant?

A: You mean, would they like to see us do something different?

Q: Yeah or to find out what they think.

A: It's a good question. It would be interesting to see what our followers think, on the types of things that we post. It's always good to know your audience, because they're the ones who follow you,

they're the ones that have the most potential to spread the word. And, obviously word of mouth is very important. Not just the work that you physically do but also what others do on your behalf. So, yeah I think it would be interesting to find out. I'm not sure how that could be done, but maybe at some point we could do an online survey. Saying: "What do you see the League of Green Embassies doing in the future, what's your understanding on their concept?" Etcetera.. So yeah, I think it would be good to know what others think.

Q: And then, the last question on these followers and who the League of Green Embassies is following: do you think it's also important who the League of Green Embassies follows, or is that irrelevant? Can you follow whoever you want, as an organization?

A: No, I think it's important, of course, who we follow. Obviously, it would be very fishy, if, for example, the League of Green Embassies followed something that had nothing to do with our mission. Obviously, it's fun sometimes just to know, for example, Lady Gaga what she's up to. Obviously that's not part of our mission at all. So, that can be something that's done on your personal account, not necessarily a business page. I think, it's important because then you have, sort of, "idols" that you can look up to and see what others are doing. That can motivate you to do something different, for example you can retweet the tweets of users that have relevant articles that we may be interested in. You know, we have all of our League of Green Embassies members, on our account so, whenever they have something, for example green-related, then we always like to retweet them so that they gain visibility and when we retweet we gain visibility and pass on the word. So, it's definitely important who we follow.

Q: And, I mean, it feels nice when somebody retweets one of your tweets. So, both ways: when somebody retweets the League of Green Embassies tweet and vice versa.

R:Mmhmmm

Q: What about the future, where do you see it going?

A: Well, as mentioned earlier..

Q: I realize, sorry, that I've asked kind of this question already but it's a very important one because we don't know where the League of Green Embassies itself will go, so..

A: We do have a rough idea, in terms of the mission. And, the mission is to spread the word, on the importance of being energy-efficient and high-performance in a number of ways. But at the same time, it's difficult to say exactly where we'll be because it depends on the Ambassador and you know, the whole U.S. political situation, whether Obama's gonna be re-elected, which means Ambassador Oreck, is he gonna stay here or is he *not* gonna stay here and who is the next chairman and is that chairman going to be as active in the League as the current chairman is, we have no way of telling. And it's only a matter of months to see how those elections go.

Q: Absolutely. So, a lot is dependent on the political situation in the U.S. as well?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you think that, and again this might be repetition but, it's an important question. Do you think that the social media strategy at the moment is good or should it be changed in some way? And even in small ways, feel free to give any kind of example.

A: I think it's good, I think we've gotten better since last year when we started. Our Twitter account was completely non-existent, we had 3 tweets in a matter of 5 months, so I would say that was very poor. So, back in October, when Durban started, that's when we launched Twitter and then we also, shortly after, published a Facebook page and we've also had YouTube in the background, ever since

the League was passed over to Helsinki. So, I think those three social media tools are very effective, you have video, you have short and sweet conversation going on Twitter and then you also have a more interactive way of passing on information, on Facebook, where you can post photos and links and articles, more easily than on Twitter. So, I think that gives you a very broad access to the material that we want to spread the word on.

Q: Do you see all these social media channels as very different from each other?

A: Yeah, definitely. There all different mediums and I think it's important to have a diversity because of the diversity of our audience. You can never do a "one size fits all" when it gets to spreading the word on your mission. So there has to be a diversity of tools and I think it's good.

Q: I'd like to know, do you find that the house style, so to speak, needs to be the same as that of the other channels, or, would you say that it's okay because they're all different that they also have a different look to them?

A: What's the house style?

Q: I mean, for example the logo and how it's presented. The Twitter page for example, the background, the picture.. does there need to be a consistency or would you say that it can be very different?

A: Like you mean, can it be different within the same organization or between different Posts?

Q: Within the same organization, because you just mentioned social media you know, the medium being..

A: Oh yeah, okay. So, well, I think that there should be a silver lining between all three, in our case Facebook, Twitter and YouTube. Obviously the League of Green Embassies homepage, that's a fourth

Q: Yeah.

A: And I think, I'm not a marketing specialist, but I'm sure that it matters that you have some sort of silver lining, some sort of central theme in all four. And that, in our case, is the color scheme, which I think is important. For example, on our Twitter, Facebook and YouTube and League of Green Embassies homepage, we have a dark blue color scheme which kind of helps users identify with the same organization. And then they feel like they've already been there, even though there using all these three mediums, you still feel like you're on that League of Green Embassies theme. So I think it's important that you have a diversity of content but you can still have the same central message.

Q: What's the reason that blue is the color?

A: Well, that goes back to the Ambassador's despising of the word and the color green. I think it's, and I would have to agree with him, it is very cliché these days, everything is "green-washed." Everything from businesses to governments to individuals. I mean, it's not about *saving* energy per se, it's about *earning* energy through the upgrades that you do. So basically, I think, Ambassador Oreck kind of invented the term 'blue energy' because he wanted it to be something that wasn't green but he still wanted to use a color to represent the whole theme. And blue, I'm not so sure why he chose blue, but I do know that blue is a color that you can trust, for example police wear blue. It's a very neutral but professional color nevertheless. Obviously you're not gonna use black to represent some sort of devil worship.

Q: And, it's about energy-efficiency and not so much about.. it is about saving the planet, but like you mentioned..

A: Yeah. Earning money from energy upgrades or then saving the planet, saving the planet definitely comes second, at least in the Ambassador's view. Because when you earn money through energy savings you're simultaneously "saving the world."

Q: It's win-win

A: It's a win-win scenario, definitely

Q: And then we have two more questions. About the efficacy: do you think it's worth it? Are these tweets reaching their audience, is it effective?

A: I think it is very important and very efficient. Obviously it takes time to build your audience, to build your message, to get people to get on board. But I do know that the Ambassador was just in Washington last week and he was successful in obtaining more money for these projects. Which means, that we'll be doing more energy-efficiency upgrades throughout the world, not just in Europe, which was our pilot programme, but we're also moving to South America, we're moving to Africa and the Middle East. At least that's the plan for the short term. So, the question is how do we get to this stage? While we've used our Twitter, we've used our Facebook and our League of Green Embassies webpage and our YouTube very efficiently, very effectively and The State Department obviously is seeing this because they're trusting us to use their money wisely and that's probably one reason why we're moving onto the next round.

Q: So you see a link between the actions that are being taken as well as the actions online, via social media?

A: Yeah, definitely.

Q: Ok and then, final question because, seeing that the Ambassador often emphasizes the need to act now, like you already mentioned. How can these individuals be encouraged to act and is this possible via Twitter?

A: Explain to me individuals?

Q: It could be organizations or individuals who are following the League of Green Embassies on Twitter. You know, in the end it's about action, it's about changing behavior. People can read the articles and then click it away and think: "Ah, never mind –it's great news but.." How do we get them firstly, to change their views, to get them to have a little bit what the Ambassador has of, "it's about now, it's not about in ten year's time"

A: Well, I think, it all just comes down.. and this is what the Ambassador also mentions all the time. It all goes down to saving money, earning money rather. And, what better way to deal with an environmental crisis and an economic crisis than saving money and saving pollution from the air. I think that's what people like to read, that's what people like to be involved in. When you can actually, physically, see the savings in your account. When you don't have to spend so much on electricity bills. I think that's a huge motivational factor for individuals, businesses, for governments, for anyone really. The world revolves around money and if you can save that, then that's what people are going to work towards.

Q: In other words, especially if it involves them, if their money can be saved then they're more likely to want to take these steps.

A: That's right.

Q: Thank you very much for your interview.

A: Thank you

Q: It's been very, very useful. And, we may do another interview at some point in time, but this was definitely enough, for now. Thank you.

A: Thank you

Appendix 2: Interview with Ville Juutilainen

Date: 5-7-2012

Interviewee: Ville Juutilainen

Title: Journalist for MTV3, largest commercial television station in Finland

Duration: 37:48

Form: Interview, face-to-face

Q: Good afternoon, my name is Sonja Meskanen. I'm here with Ville Juutilainen to discuss Twitter. I'm writing my thesis, currently, on the efficacy of the League of Green Embassies Twitter. So, we're going to discuss together how he uses Twitter. He's a journalist for MTV3, which is a commercial TV station here in Finland and he's going to tell me his views on the matter, as well as we're going to look at some other examples of those that use Twitter effectively, thirdly he can give his view on the League of Green Embassies Twitter, how he sees it, in a neutral perspective, and finally the Twitter of tomorrow, how it's going to possibly evolve from here.

Now, before we start the League of Green Embassies is a network of approximately 90 Diplomatic Missions. Its quickly increasing, more member Embassies are coming on board and its goal is to become more energy-efficient, conserve water and find renewable energy sources. So, together come up with new, smart technology and promote energy efficiency. The League of Green Embassies Twitter has been around since beginning of last year, but it became a proper user from October/November 2011 onwards, and has been tweeting ever since.

Thank you, Ville, very much, for joining. I look forward to hearing your views, on Twitter and everything you have to say about it, as a journalist.

A: Thank you for having me.

Q: Very firstly, would you tell us what your position is, as well as what you've done before, and particularly, what made you interested in Twitter in the first place.

A: I'm currently working at MTV3 News, as a journalist. At MTV3 we do news for all kinds of mediums, we do radio news, for Radio Nova, then we have television news, we have website news and also we got social media presence on Twitter and Facebook. Before this, I worked at the National Broadcasting Company in Finland, for Current Affairs Programme and for TV news. Before that I worked with *Helsingin Sanomat*, which is the largest newspaper in Finland and before that for smaller papers around Finland. I got into social media in the beginning of this century, when Facebook started. I think it was maybe one year old service when I started doing Facebook.

Q: So, was this then 2004, 2005?

A: 2004, yeah. I got into Twitter, some two or three years ago, maybe. That's how I got into social media.

Q: What is it about Twitter that you find intriguing? Or, do you?

A: I think the best part of Twitter is that, when I used Facebook, there was always this idea of having certain friends, having a certain social network. But with Twitter, you basically just follow the people you're interested in. Those relationships don't have to be permanent, they can change all the time.

For example, as a journalist, if I'm doing a story on some interesting person, I can follow him or her for a certain period of time and then I can stop following. It's really a simple way to do it. And also find connections based on your interests, because Facebook is largely based on connections you already have naturally, people you've grown up with, people you know from school, or whatever. Twitter helps to find more people you have common interests. Even though the people can be somewhere in other countries.

Q: Who you don't even know?

A: Yeah

Q: Yeah. Exactly.

A: And for a journalist that's really important for developing sources and getting to know about things.

Q: Absolutely. If you know who to follow, that can be very valuable?

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you find that you have a personal Twitter style? And, I was curious, whether that varies in your professional and personal life?

A: I think, when I started doing Twitter, I thought of it more like Facebook but then, it has basically transformed into more of a professional account. But, it's in a constant change, in a way, because if I'm on holiday, I write about different things and link to different things.

Q: Yeah. Do you keep them very separate – your personal and professional [Twitter]?

A: I like to see them more as merged, in a way. Because I sometimes describe to my colleague - because he was wondering the same thing - I said that, one easy way to look at Twitter is to think about it as a cocktail party. There are things you could say, on a cocktail party, talk about current events, you could talk about your work, you can talk about your personal life. But you always have the idea that these people are not your closest friends. They can be also your closest friends but you also have friends that are interested in you because you have something in common, some common interests.

Q: That's an interesting way to put it, yeah.

A: I like to think that it's like an extension of me, professionally, like a professional extension. I wouldn't write there about my relationship with my mother or father.

Q: Exactly. Not too personal?

A: Yeah. I like to give valuable information. That's the way I look at it.

Q: You see yourself as a contributor on Twitter, so, giving articles?

A: Yeah. I link to my articles, other webcasts, other material I produce, as a journalist. But, I don't share everything I do. I only share stuff that has some other value than just being the news and I'm more oriented towards technology, science and some other weird news that people wouldn't otherwise find. Sometimes I've done traditional news work on Twitter, breaking news on Twitter, trying to find people to say something on certain topics.

Q: But, quality versus quantity? Something more special, because we see so much news nowadays..

A: Yeah. I don't post to Twitter quite frequently. I want to value the content itself. Because there are some people on Twitter who tweet all the time. For some it works, it's part of their style, it's not for me. Because I'm already bombarded with all the information from Twitter, from news agencies.. For me Twitter mainly means getting valuable information.

Q: Because we can always learn from others, I was wondering if there was someone you particularly look up to in the Twittersphere?

A: I think one good example, is Mikko Hyppönen, this Finnish computer virus expert from F-Secure. He has really strong presence as an expert of computer security, and he's also there with his own face. He tweets from his expertise and has a steady following on Twitter. He still has the personal side as well, but he has really taken up his field of expertise on Twitter.

Q: Why do you think this is?

A: People know that when he writes something it's true because he's an expert. There's also the thing that sometimes when he writes those things, he knows how to do it in a personal level as well, and write in an interesting way.

Q: Do you think this personal side is important?

A: Well, personal in a way, that he uses humor and some other cultural references. Not in a personal way that he would say that "I woke up this morning..." and tell his whole life story.

Q: That people can feel some kind of connection or relation to what he's posting?

A: Yeah. I could read an article about a new computer virus, but he can say in 140 characters what is the point in this new computer virus. I think that's a good example, but there are other people on Twitter as well who can do that, too.

Q: Can you think of a company that is in your eyes particularly successful?

A: When I think about companies, I think about *small* companies. Of course there are, on Facebook, there are these companies that are really known for their good marketing, like Starbucks. When I think about social media and companies, I tend to think of small companies who otherwise don't have a marketing budget and they find this new audience of people. For example, you have an electric company or audio company. Then you have people who really appreciate good sound and they know that this company does the one thing really good. They can use their expertise and they are building social media presence around that.

I think there's actually one British company. There's this audio company that they have and this one expert of hifi and he's really building web presence. I think that's a really good opportunity for small companies, to do that.

Q: Correct me if I'm wrong, but you've found examples of small companies that have become successful. Is it perhaps, that they know exactly what they're an expert in? Because I suppose, Twitter users they start following someone because they expect that person or organization to be tweeting about something particular. Is that, that you're an expert at something and you build your Twitter around that?

A: Yeah, that's something that I appreciate. Of course if you look at the big masses like Starbucks or McDonalds or whatever, they know how to make discount campaigns, give away free coffee. Those things are fine but, for me as a journalist, I value much higher the expertise that they have and that even if you're a big company, you can go there and say that "we know how to do this and this is why we do it like this."

Q: It's somehow simple, but effective?

A: Yeah.

Q: You had a look at the League of Green Embassies Twitter, so @thegreenleague. Because we, at the League of Green Embassies, so far, haven't had anyone external give us their opinion, I'm really anxious to know what you think of it. Please be 100% honest. Whatever you think, anything that came to your mind, is of value to us. What would you say is your general impression when you looked at it?

A: It looked like an account that's made by a governmental agency. It's always hard because the most interesting thing about Twitter is that you can follow a person, you hear someone saying something. Then when you have, like an agency, or a company, the toughest part is to make the message personal and also official at the same time. For this, you could do better with making it more personal. I don't know what would be the right answer to make it better, but some companies have, for example, community managers. People who are in the middle, who can say that "I'm now tweeting for you, behalf this matter" and "I can get you answers" and "I will be the link between you and this organization" For example, game companies have started to do this.

Q: Sorry, which?

A: Game companies. So there are game companies with their own community managers who run their message boards and if somebody complains on something, he can go there and say that: "Ok, we'll look, I don't know what is the source of the problem, but I will look it up"

Q: So you think that a person behind the League of Green Embassies Twitter?

A: It could be one way.

Q: One way

A: But I don't know if this certain solution is the right one for this.

Q: Was there anything else that you noted?

A: I would have put more in the biography section.

Q: Okay

A: Put more, more concrete reasons for the target audience to follow. So, what is the reason, why should I click follow, what do I get when I click follow, what's the value of this for me?

Q: Right

A: Because if you think about Green Embassies, you tend to think, this is something happening inside government, is this just for their own views..?

Q: The target audience is actually everyone, it is also member or other Embassies, its U.S. businesses, other businesses too, anyone who actually wants to discuss energy-efficiency, but what the League Chair, Ambassador Oreck – so U.S. Ambassador to Finland – he has mentioned is, that it is really for everyone. So, perhaps as you say it could be made still more inclusive. It's something to be looked at, what the angle needs to be.

A: Yeah, I'm not saying that it's easy. But always when you think about the content that will be posted, what kind of value does it bring to the people that are following.

Q: Right.

A: It's always about the content, I think.

Q: I agree

A: Also, when I think about similar kind of campaigns, for example, in New York -the city of New York- has this green campaign of their own. I don't remember much about the other campaign goals, but I remember one thing: they said that, by the year 2017 they will plant 1 million trees in New York. I heard it for the first time like, maybe 2 or 3 years ago, I heard it just once and I still remember that thing. If you have a mission of doing something, you could offer some really concrete goals. Making something energy-efficient, I know it's really hard to say that something is energy-efficient and something isn't but..

Q: Something for people to remember in a way that you remember this?

A: Yes. Maybe nowadays you can have energy consumption meters that work in a flexible way. Just, if you think about these gadgets, where you can see a red light when it's using a lot of energy and green light when it's not using so much energy.

Q: Would it be an idea to make it more about the League of Green Embassies in Finland and even more local? When you say concrete, what comes to my mind is then: what is the US Embassy in Helsinki doing and what do *they* plan?

A: Yes, it could be something more local. Because on Twitter you can make as many Twitter accounts as you want to do. But then of course you want to make something more centralized to get the following. But it depends on resources and the actual content and how you distribute it to people.

Q: Making it more concrete would maybe get the attention of others?

A: Yes, yes. And again, if you look at other examples on same kind of campaigns: Finnair had this campaign where they hired a person in a competition to test their services and write about how their service is working and so on. That really spread in the social media. These are kind of temporary community managers. Also, now in Vaasa, they have this campaign where they want to promote local tech companies, like energy companies. They hired a summer worker who has the highest summer salary in Finland. At least they say so.

Q: Not a bad job

A: I've already seen several articles written on that. Okay, the articles aren't really talking about companies in Vaasa, but everybody remembers that there is this one guys who's talking about companies in Vaasa and it's working there. Some of these kind of things are like gimmicks in a way but still, they work.

Q: So the League of Green Embassies is going to look for something like that, to see how to manage the community better

A: They could be -I'm just throwing out ideas - like Green Ambassador.

Q: For a period of time, to bring somebody in and to concentrate it more: to have the big picture and then, perhaps a certain amount of time that somebody is tweeting.

A: When you think about the content in a technical way, it's always a good thing to have pictures, videos. There's lots of things that people want to see even though we cannot see that they are in any way interesting. For example if I'm at our office and I take a picture of the place where we're working

with the News Anchors, people go crazy in the news are made. So, I think there could be a same kind of appeal in the social media. We have a really big fan base there who think that it's really interesting to see where Embassies and in the technology as well.

Q: Interesting

A: Also twitter-specific things, if you think about hashtags: Sometimes it's really efficient to use a certain campaign- hashtag. If you have some certain goal. Let's say, during this year we will install new LED lighting. Everytime one LED lighting is installed, you will tweet on that and make a hashtag, like #ledlightinstalled.

Q: So the followers can be part of it from day 1 and follow it until the end. No, that's a great idea. We looked at themes as well and making for example week-themes. This is something to look into and to make it perhaps even longer, to keep everyone interested. To keep checking back to the League of Green Embassies Twitter.

A: Yeah. I noticed that you had lots of hashtags that were really general words. And I'm not sure if that's the right thing to do. I don't know, I don't find them really attractive. If you think of the word 'development', I wouldn't look up that with a hashtag from Twitter. I think about hashtags more like things, that tell about certain themes, something more..

Q: Much more specific.

A: Much more specific, exactly.

Q: Well, these are many suggestions that we can look at, very valuable. Maybe we can do all of these but at least some of these will be considered.

Finally the last part is about the Twitter in the future. Twitter, as well as social media in general, is going at a quick pace forward. I was wondering, how would you describe the Twitter of tomorrow? How do you see that it's evolving and in which direction?

A: I see it as a stream that will be more and more tied into other services. For example, we have done news programs during elections where we have tweets on the screen, that's one way to look at it.

Q: More and more tied around events?

A: Yeah, and to see them on other media as well, together, bundled with other media. We have this idea of making live reporting in a way that, we have at least three elements where one is live video feed, then there are still images where you can always go back, if you just started seeing the video you want to go back a bit and see the most interesting pictures and then you also have the Twitter. Some kind of Twitter or other live text broadcast.

Nowadays we're used to seeing Twitter as a 140-characters, small text messages. Nowadays it's more about services that pick up a message on Twitter that already has the content that the Twitter message is linking to. You can use services that you won't even see a Twitter message, you just see the video that people have linked to, you go and see the article, really nicely laid out.

Q: So that's even easier?

A: Yeah. It will become more like a backend for other stuff. Because the problem with Twitter has been it seems really technical and hard to understand. I think in a way, it's becoming more easier to use. So, the 140 character messages might still be there but they're presented in a different way that everybody can understand.

Q: That others will also be attracted to using that versus other social media channels.

My last question is that if there was one thing that an organization should do on Twitter - Because there are so many priorities and so many goals that we can have - but from your work and your experience, what do you see as one of the most valuable things to consider? If we don't have the resources to do everything, what should we tackle first?

A: If I think myself as a journalist, the minimum thing for a company would be to have a Twitter account for just those occasions when there's something big happening. It can be a new product or whatever, but there is some place where they can say that "it has happened now" or "we have this news right now. That would be the minimum thing to do on Twitter. But, I'm not sure if it's really interesting for other people just to follow for that

Q: Do you find it important that the people you follow that they tweet very regularly, or is it okay that that organization only tweets when something bigger happens?

A: It depends of the whole idea of the Twitter account. I think for some companies it works really well to tweet all the time, but for other companies I'm not sure if that's the right thing to do.

Q: It's more situation-specific or company specific?

A: Company specific. But it always depends what do you want to do with the Twitter account.

Q: Exactly.

A: But I wouldn't personally follow a company that is all the time marketing its own services and products. There is a certain line when you start to see it more like a dumb marketing channel in a way.

Q: I see what you mean

A: For some big companies you can see right now on Twitter that they want to launch some campaigns but those campaigns are really fast seen as ways to get people to buy more. It's not really building a customer relationship, its more about just normal marketing. If you have some stuff that seems like advertisement in the middle of the feed where you have these people you're really obsessed with, some people you really wanna follow and see how they think in their everyday life and then you see something like that in the middle of the whole stream, then it looks even worse.

Q: It's important to market yourself but don't market yourself excessively., or at least make it in a way that it's interesting for the followers that they don't. I'm sure that there's others that find this too.

A: I read from somewhere that on Twitter you should.. I'm not sure how it went, but you have three missions on Twitter in a way: share something that you've made, help others and share other stuff. I'm not sure, it didn't go that way, there must be some other category.

Q: In any case, help others. So it's also a lot about being part of the community, helping.

A: And being, an opinion leader? And building your presence so that.. You build trust basically. When you think about a journalist on Twitter and you compare that to someone else whose on Twitter. If the journalist says on Twitter that "this information is false" and there's other people saying "this information is true" 'that's something you need to hold onto as a journalist to keep that position where people trust you more than some other people.

Q: I see what you mean.

A: That's the basic idea of news organizations as well. The trust is the most important thing you have. If you lose that then you lose everything else. So everything is built on trust and you can build that trust also on Twitter.

Q: Thank you very much for your time. This has been very interesting and we will sure look back to it and see what we can apply to the League of Green Embassies Twitter. Thank you very much for all your suggestions and views. Thank you.

Appendix 3: Interview with David McGuire

Date: 30-8-2012

Interviewee: David McGuire

Title: Public Affairs Officer at U.S. Embassy Helsinki

Duration: 19:40

Form: Interview, face-to-face

Q: Good afternoon my name is Sonja Meskanen. I'm here with Dave McGuire from U.S. Embassy Helsinki to discuss the efficacy of social media, particularly Twitter. Thank you, Dave, for joining me. Could you tell me, what exactly do you do for Public Affairs?

A: Sure. Thanks for talking to me, this is exciting for us. I am the Embassy's Public Affairs Officer so I head up a section that deals with public outreach for the Embassy, press matters, cultural affairs and exchange programmes. So, we're really the public face of the U.S. Embassy in our host country, here in Helsinki obviously for me, but everywhere around the world where we have a mission, there's a Public Affairs section and they are the public face of that Embassy, they do all the outreach, all the messaging.. so they really are the driving force behind what's coming out of the Embassy.

Q: Okay, well, in that case it's very useful for us to discuss the League of Green Embassies and how it looks to the public as well, especially via social media. Well, let's get started, I have a series of questions starting from "How does public affairs use social media" then onto the "efficacy of social media" seeing what methods are the best to get as much out of the message as possible and finally I'd like to know what your opinion is, or opinions are, on the League of Green Embassies Twitter. The League has been using Twitter for about a year. So kind of themed into three groups.

A: Perfect. Well, we can start right with the number one here, in terms of how we use social media and I think, it's a very interesting time for the Department of State, in particular, but I think all government organizations who historically have used carefully crafted messaging to convey what it is they want to convey to the public audience. That is no longer a feasible reality in the way the world works in the information age.

Q: True

A: So, what social media is, is a new way for Embassies and for governments to put out messaging quickly, coherently to a wide audience that they might not otherwise be able to reach. And also more traditional audiences who are using the same social media tools. So it's really reinvented the way that we communicate with our host country and how we communicate with each other, throughout regions and countries across the globe, really. So the challenge is.. it comes with some challenges in the sense that when you're speaking on behalf of your government you have to be careful about what you're saying because it's not a matter of public opinion, it's a matter of what is the official viewpoint of the U.S. government which is what every Diplomat is overseas to represent.

Q: Right

So, social media has created a great opportunity to get messaging out, but also a great challenge in terms of making sure that you're not going way off the reservation, as we would say, in terms of what your messaging is and how it's getting approved. I think what we've found with social media is it's not used to deliver really substantive messaging, it's a way just to have a more casual, a more

free-flowing conversation with everyone from local government officials to student groups to the general public. And it also provides a medium for us to put messages out there that anybody can look at. So we don't have to go out somewhere and deliver a message and make an appearance, we can post something on Facebook or send out a Tweet and anybody can see it.

Q: Exactly

A: So, it really allows us to maximize our outreach and number of people we can get to. So I'd say that's the number one use for it. Now we still.. it's not a mechanism for delivering official demarches or government to government communication, we haven't reached that point at all. But it's simply - as the moniker implies - it's a social tool. It allows us to be in the conversation with a broader group.

Q: Great. You use Facebook and Twitter. How important would you say that Twitter is to your communication?

A: Twitter is great. It's important in the sense that it allows us to quickly alert people to things that we want them to see. It's not an effective tool in terms of getting out an actual viewpoint because it's simply too short. But, we can draw attention to something longer by tweeting about a link or an episode that's happened, a programme that we're putting on. And so, it's a very, very fast way of reaching a very large audience. It's been a great tool for that.

Q: And, it's quite simple as well.

A: Very simple.

Q: It is different than Facebook, obviously.

A: Yes, yeah.

Q: So, you would say that Twitter is important to your online communication?

A: Twitter's important. I should note, that it's not just important to us in terms of getting messages out but also in terms of us getting information. We follow a lot of tweeters from prominent journalists to politicians. We look at what they're tweeting and their tweets draw our attention to things as well. So, it's an outreach tool but it's also a receiving tool for us.

Q: Two-way dialogue.

A: Absolutely, as it should be.

Q: Exactly.

Q: What about, I mean my central question in my thesis is "how to amplify the League of Green Embassies message." I recently interviewed a journalist from MTV3, so the biggest television network in Finland and he mentioned about companies and organizations that use community managers and in my desk research I found that as well. So, people that are hired for a period of time to manage the social media community. Could this be something for the League of Green Embassies to try?

A: Absolutely. It's a great idea for a variety of reasons. Number one, anytime you can bring in someone who specializes in something to share information with and show you how it's done, you can't beat that. One of the challenges that the League of Green Embassies faces, as does every Embassy and every State Department office, is that you didn't hire people who were trained specifically to be social media experts. People were hired to do other functions, complete other roles, and those jobs still go on. Running a social media network is a full-time job, if you want to do it really effectively. And so you need to have either somebody who can do it very well, very quickly or

you have somebody whose wholly devoted, their time is wholly devoted to running that system. Bringing somebody in, number one, will give people experience they probably don't have, because they weren't hired to fill that role. I think once you've demonstrated and shown people how you can do it, it's not a difficult thing to maintain, once you know what you're doing. So, bringing somebody in for training purposes is great, if you can bring somebody in to be a full-time operator. My view is that this is not only the reality of now, it's going to be the reality of the future -not that it's going to be exactly the same- but these processes are going to evolve, and they're not going to go away. This is not going to be something that people say: "Remember when we were all connected on the Web? Boy, glad we got rid of that and we're back to using the telephone". This is a new reality.

Q: Yeah, it is to stay.

A: Yeah, this is a new reality. So, I think you really risk falling behind if you don't jump onto this now. The whole next generation is going to be so wired on all of this that, if you want to communicate with them you're going to have to be wired into that as well.

Q: Yeah. Correct me if I'm wrong, do you suggest both somebody hired for a traineeship for example, as a community manager, but then also somebody fulltime?

A: Well, obviously there are challenges in reality that have to be addressed, like do you have a budget?

Q: And, is it possible?

A: Is it possible? In all likelihood and knowing the situation of League of Green Embassies, there isn't financial resources to hire somebody to run a full-time social media site. So, I think, that's an ideal situation if you can hire a full-time person to maintain this, to keep lockstep with what the new trends are and be on top of all that, fantastic. In practical reality, that's not going to happen.

Q: Right

A: But, if you could bring somebody in. And, there's resources to be tapped there: students, interns, people who know how to do this stuff and come in and, at least do a three-month set up, evaluation and write up recommendations for what the full-time employees of the League of Green Embassies can do. I think that's a great step as well. I know that's not a great answer, but the short is whatever you can do, do it.

Q: Exactly. I understand that in practice it may be very different from theory. But in theory, hiring a community manager, just like companies are doing or other organizations, that could be something that the League of Green Embassies might consider.

A: Well, and I think it's something that... you know, it's *not new*. Major corporations have always had communications people. First, to actually operate the telephones. You had telephone operators, then you had computer network engineers and this is now how we communicate. It's not such a foreign concept, it's just a new reality for an old term.

Q: Absolutely. Other than, for example, community managers, what other methods do you think are effective? What could the League of Green Embassies do to expand the conversation?

A: Well, I think you just have to keep at it. I don't think there's any.. We've been struggling with the same thing so I speak from some experience. There's not one thing that you do that all of a sudden you're connected to millions of people, it just doesn't work that way. You just have to keep plugging, keep plugging.. The more you get into the conversation, the more *you* start appearing in other people's conversations and the more your social network grows. And that's just it, you know, but it takes work, it takes effort. And you got to keep at it, it's not something that you can, once a month

go in and send a tweet. You've got to be consistent and you've got to be useful. I mean, you're information has to be good and it has to be relevant. So..

Q: So, in a way it's quality and quantity. It's..

A: Well, yes it is.. I don't want to say quantity because just putting stuff out doesn't do it, but you have to be persistent and you have to be regular, and you have to be good. So I think it's definitely quality, but quality on a regular basis.

Q: Quality on a regular basis, that sounds good. So, it's actually, in your view, if I understood right, then being there, being active is one of the most effective things you can do?

A: Absolutely, it's imperative.

Q: It's actually quite simple

A: Yeah, It really is.

Q: As long as you find what you want to tweet about, keep at it and eventually people will start to notice.

A: Yeah, and within a thing that's social – and I think it's always important to maintain that this is social, it's a social network – you have to be present. If you're not present you're not being social and therefore you're not going to have a place in the society.

Q: That's right. So, we need to go back to the very basics, in some way. What is social media really?

A: Exactly.

Q: And what is Twitter? And how to use that.

A: Yeah

Q: Do you have any other thoughts on that or shall we..

A: No, those are probably the two ones that I can think of, yeah.

Q: Okay. What about the League of Green Embassies Twitter, that was re-launched last October, so more or less a year now, focusing on providing relevant content, good articles to its followers. And also especially having a positive angle and making the message empowering. Your section, Public Affairs, was one of the first ones to start using social media at the Embassy, so I'm really curious to know, looking back what do you think we did right and what do you think we did wrong?

A: Yeah, it's a tough question because I don't think it's so much a matter of right and wrong, it's what was done well and what could have been done better. What we did right, I think, getting into the game right away, was the right thing. When Helsinki took over the League of Green Embassies, it very quickly established a website and then later grew in a Twitter account and a Facebook account. I think getting the jump was really good. I say that's a positive, but it also could have been done better. I think we could have started with the Facebook page sooner, I think the Twitter account could have come in sooner but again, there were practical realities which prevented that from happening. There just wasn't a staff to do that. And I think that's part of –when we discuss this- it's important to keep in mind the practical realities that the League of Green Embassies was facing. It was basically a unfunded, unmanned station when we took it over. There were so many external function going on, it was very hard to establish a social network and it wasn't until people had time to do that.

What could have been done better, in a perfect world, is, I think, a little more strategizing in the approach. Having a one-year outline of what the social media strategy would be and then sticking to a very precise programme and drawing in other Embassies to do a lot more. That was something that was really attempted but just didn't get a lot of attraction, and that's unfortunate. But again, the League of Green Embassies was established and sent off running very quickly in Helsinki. It wasn't like the people involved were given time to plan these things out, they just had to go and do it, and do what's best. So some of these criticisms are just more in theory than in reality. Certainly I think, having a more defined strategy with broader involvement so that it just created a more dynamic, social atmosphere that the League was projecting outwards. And we've seen it, it's definitely grown to a point where there's a lot of involvement, a lot of excitement and people are really buying into it. So, that could have been done better.

Q: Yeah

A: Again, this is not a criticism of the people. Simply the reality was very different.

Q: We need to know what can be done better in order to do it better from now on. That helps my thesis, finding what are the problems.

A: I think the other thing that just came to mind as you were saying, it's not just about establishing the social media, you have to have your messaging down. You have to understand what you are, you have to understand what you want to convey. I think it's important you have a clear definition of what it is you are, as an organization, what it is you hope to accomplish. And then you use that as a foundation of your social media strategy, so when you build it up you know what it is you're promoting, you know what it is you're talking about. The League of Green Embassies when Helsinki took it over, was still very much conceptual and it wasn't very well defined.

Q: And it still is a working process

A: It's always gonna be an anamorphous organization, but I think that would have helped a lot, having a more clearly defined mission-strategy.

Q: Right. Definitely, So It's important to have, like you said, a one-year outline, for example. To have that in advance, before beginning. That's something to be learnt and perhaps this can be implemented then next time, if there are new people coming to the League of Green Embassies. That's something I can definitely integrate into my thesis and into the recommendations as well.

A: Perfect.

Q: Thank you very much for your time.

A: Thank you.

Q: Really, it's very useful. I'm going to look through these ideas that you gave.

A: Great and if I think of anything else, I'll jot it down in an email.

Q: Sure, let me know

A: Great

Q: Thank you very much.

Appendix 4: Interview with Matti Lauren

Date: 2-11-2012

Interviewee: Matti Lauren

Title: Information Resource Technician at U.S. Embassy Helsinki

Duration: 24:40

Form: Interview, via Skype

Q: This interview is being conducted as qualitative research for my final thesis for the League of Green Embassies. I am interviewing Matti Lauren who is Information Resource Center Technician at U.S. Embassy Helsinki to find out how the League of Green Embassies Twitter messaging could be further optimized. Good evening, Matti, thank you for accepting this interview.

A: Good evening

Q: Matti is joining us via Skype tonight. I know that you have a lot of technical knowledge and a great interest for Twitter, which is why I was very interested in speaking to you. My very first question is: What is your experience in social media and particularly Twitter?

A: In social media, I've been part of basically in personal life since 2003. Also I have a communications company with my friend and we created social media strategies for some small or middle-sized companies in Finland and also for the U.S. Embassy Helsinki in 2010. In Twitter I've been active since 2008, approximately. I think it's become more relevant for me considering my professional life and compared to Facebook or any other social media platform. It's probably the easiest place to share ideas and find ideas and have a conversation with same-minded people and / or other companies or organizations.

Q: Ok so you think highly of Twitter, or you like using Twitter?

A: Yeah, I think it's professional-wise it's probably the best social medium. It's probably the least personal. A lot of people use it just to share links and share ideas. Considering how the journalists have taken it into part of their life and part of the conversation. In Facebook a lot of people are just posting ideas and then there's some sort of conversation, mostly between friends, but in Twitter it's more like commenting in blogs where people are sharing same interests - in Twitter it's rather two-way street, it's more equal.

Q: Yeah, okay. Well, the League of Green Embassies has been on Twitter for roughly a year now. What is your opinion on the League of Green Embassies Twitter, do you think that they're using it in an efficient way?

A: Depending on what would have been the strategy, what would have been the goal to achieve. Considering its part of the website I think it's been pretty solid, in a way that it's another medium to bring out the ideas what the League of Green Embassies has and achievements of the League of Green Embassies, spread the word for the wider public and be part of the conversation. But then considering in the most efficient way, it again depends of course of the resources. Like you mentioned earlier, it could have been more conversational tone, be part of the discussion more actively, creating the discussion, but that takes time and that takes effort to become part of the discussion. It's really difficult to achieve also through an impersonal organization. There's no face in the League of Green Embassies besides the Ambassador, who's not of course the one whose active

on Twitter. It's not the easiest to get somebody to be part of the conversation with an organization that doesn't really have a face.

Q: Yeah, exactly. Just a side note, do you have any idea how such a face could be created? Would it need to be the Ambassador or some other employee?

A: It could be somebody else. It could be just in the info box or in the background, there could be the face of the person who is in charge of the Twitter and a short introduction what he or she is doing in the League of Green Embassies and that is the person who is doing most of the tweets and all the tweets that he or she is doing would be then ended maybe with the initials. Like in your case, every tweet ends in S.M, in parenthesis.

Q: So that would make it more personal?

A: It's not the best way but it's one way to do it. The best way of course would be to have a totally different Twitter account and @sonjameskanen and Sonja is part of the League of Green Embassies and that would be then on the side of the League of Green Embassies. League of Green Embassies would be tweeting the organizational stuff and the other account would be taking part in the discussion on behalf of the League of Green Embassies and as part of the League of Green Embassies and in a way with the voice of the League of Green Embassies.

Q: So in some way a kind of sub brand, perhaps? If you see the League of Green Embassies as the brand and the employees are part of the brand too.

A: Yeah. For example, the elections at the moment. Barack Obama has his Twitter account but it's not the most interesting one to follow because it basically has the campaign info coming up, once in a while there's a tweet that is written by Barack Obama and in the end there's a 'B.O.'. But he's not part of the conversation, he's just posting stuff for other there. But, then one of his main spokespersons, David Axelrod, following him is much more interesting because he *is* David Axelrod and he tweets a lot of the time himself. He's taking part in the conversation but at the same time, whatever he says, he knows that it's part of the campaign, that everybody knows what he's doing. He's in line with the Barack Obama but there's chance to be part of the discussion.

Q: I see what you mean. So, that's something that maybe the League of Green Embassies could also adopt.

A: Yeah, definitely. At least the initials in the end would make sense. That there's a couple of people doing the tweeting and there could be a background picture that has photos of the two persons and short introduction what they wrote in the League of Green Embassies and what are their biggest interest, energy efficiency or climate change. Of course regarding the League of Green Embassies.

Q: Yeah, exactly, that would help humanize it.

A: Make it more personal, basically.

Q: That's definitely something that I've come to see in my research as well, the League of Green Embassies needs even more the personal approach. Because that's what other people like, they like to see that.

A: That's a lot what Twitter is about. You want to be able to send a message to somebody and ask their opinion. There's a chance that it's not just people posting stuff, a lot of people don't know how to tweet and, basically if you're just doing that, then you're missing a lot of points that make Twitter so excellent.

Q: Yeah, exactly. The social media landscape is changing, Twitter is all the time evolving. I'm curious to know what sort of trends have you seen recently on Twitter and how do you think the League of Green Embassies could use these? I mean, could we say that one of these trends is making it my personal?

A: I think it's been for quite a while already. I think it's becoming more popular. It's not becoming available for a wider public, but a wider public is getting more familiar with it. There's a chance to reach a wider public through it and it seems a different medium from Facebook, which in many senses is a really personal thing. A lot of people want to just discuss with their friends and families there and then they like some pages and follow them, like blogs. Or just a lot of likes are because there was a competition. But the idea of Twitter is more you follow what you really are interested and you can actually get somebody to read it, 140 characters every tweet, it's actually possible they are reading it.

Q: There's a bigger chance that they will read it?

A: Yeah. In Facebook it's often 4-5 lines that are visible in the beginning and everything else you have to click 'see more' and you only see more if you really want to read what's there. But in Twitter everything's in one glance possible to be read. When it's getting more popular in the wider public, it's where the League of Green Embassies would be wise to target it. People who are interested in green issues, they get their information somewhere, from their own connections already. So for the League of Green Embassies, Twitter would be a chance to break in when the spread of the Twitter for the wider public materializes. At the moment it's mostly used by professionals who have some sort of use for them in their profession, a lot of media people, a lot of journalists,

Q: Politicians..

A: Politicians, researchers, celebrities and other public persons, who basically have a decent follower base and just wanna share their own tweets but not necessarily be part of the discussion.

Q: So, you find that it's becoming more accessible to the wider public and this is something that the League of Green Embassies could leverage, or should definitely take advantage of?

A: Yeah, at the moment a lot of professional people are in, but in Twitter it's also one of the challenges: how do you get your message to the wider public, because you have to get the followers.

Q: Absolutely. And this remains a challenge for many.

A: Yeah. League of Green Embassies is not a de facto organization that gets tons of followers immediately like WWF or Greenpeace or those that are visible in the main media all the time, mainstream media. So it has to be built from scratch, basically.

Q: Are there any other trends or interesting things that you've seen recently that the League of Green Embassies could possibly benefit from as well? Or you think that mainly this that people are getting more acquainted with it that that's something the League of Green Embassies can really grasp?

A: Yeah, I think that's the biggest thing. More and more people are starting to use it, so it's interesting to see where it develops. So far most active people have been in some sort of professional way, self-promotional way, so when it becomes one of the mediums we talk with same-minded people who use it in a personal way, how it changes it.

Q: And then, my final question is about the technical aspects. Are there ways that the League of Green Embassies can measure its return on investment or efficacy via useful metrics and which of these would you recommend?

A: As far as I know, Twitter is not really good in metrics, there's not too many good applications that you can measure them. Basically, Klout is one of them but it has its own problems. So I wouldn't consider it as a measure stick that you could always rely on and see how it's going by looking at your Klout number.

Q: Why would you not rely on it?

A: You don't really know where the number comes from. You can kind of cheat the Klout number higher if you want and I don't know how they take that into consideration with the algorithm. It's one part of what could be and should be measured by Klout. It's not one and for all.

Q: Is it one of the ways that the League should measure?

A: It's probably one of the ways to keep an eye on. I think at this point, a lot could be done. Having a strategy, doing a weekly base checkup: how many mentions, how many retweets, how many new followers and how many LoGE followers. See how the graphs are going. The one who's basically in charge of it, some sort of like a gut feeling: how much you're able to take part in the conversations, how many times you are starting the conversation and how many times people are asking you to be part of the conversation. When it's more personal it's starting to happen. I think at the moment there aren't that many conversations, but kind of be part of the Twittersphere, spreading the word. When you're able to converse with people always their followers see what you're conversing with them and you become part of the 'defacto' talk of the topic, green ideas or energy efficiency. So that all the time pushes the League of Green Embassies Twitter forward and little by little it becomes the source for more people. They can talk, with LoGE, if they want to read or want to share their ideas @LoGE is the place. But before that it's more difficult.

Q: Would you then recommend that the League of Green Embassies starts with very basics and tracking the mentions and retweets on a weekly basis and doing this more manually?

A: That and then Klout. Manually in the way that probably the applications that work for you. You have to look for the applications that are doing it and there's the graphs already. But I think best probably would be the gut feeling.

Q: You mean the gut feeling? So, what kind of feeling the person who is tweeting is getting?

A: How many times he or she is taken into the conversation or how many times he or she is taken into conversation or how many times he or she builds the conversation. You can always ask somebody and make the conversation happen, in Twitter that's a lot easier than on Facebook. But in the end it's how much you're becoming part of the tweeting that's happening around the topics that are most important. That's kind of the first thing then it should be decided which ones are the most important. I think from the beginning of the League of Green Embassies, when the website was created, a year before the Twitter, there should have been a lot more talk about the strategy, what it's trying to achieve. Is it just that it's trying to get the Embassies with it on the same board or is it promoting U.S. businesses around the world or is it saving energy by net kilowatts.

Q: So much more strategy about exactly what the League of Green Embassies stands for and what it wants to bring across.

A: Yeah. I don't know what's the right term for it is, but semi-goals. For WWF, one of their goals is to save the 'saimaannorppa' (a subspecies of ringed seal) and they do a lot of things to just achieve that goal. The League of Green Embassies doesn't necessarily have to have a certain goal but it could have smaller things that they are trying to achieve and the Twitter could be aligned to those and the discussion could be taken into those spheres. Now it's green things, saving energy, it's so ridiculously vague area it's almost impossible to narrow it down in a meaningful way.

Q: So something much more concrete and perhaps the League could announce a specific goal and build its conversation around that?

A: And have more focus on everything that it's doing. For me, a lot of it has been that we've been doing a lot, but this week its likely totally different than it is next week.

Q: So, much more focus?

A: Yeah.

Q: Ok, well do you have anything to add to this?

A: Maybe not at the moment, but you can be in touch with me if there's anything you want to ask for and I can send you a message , email if something comes up to my mind.

Q: Sure. Well, thank you very much for this interview, it's been very useful. Thank you for all your ideas, I'm sure that I can incorporate those all into my thesis. I agree with you on many of these aspects absolutely. I'll let you know how the research process goes.

A: Ok, thank you.

Appendix 5: Interview with Ambassador Bruce J. Oreck

Date: 14-11-2012

Interviewee: Bruce J. Oreck

Title: U.S. Ambassador to Finland and Chair of League of Green Embassies

Duration: 27:23

Form: Interview, via Skype

Q: Good afternoon. My name is Sonja Meskanen and I am interviewing Ambassador to Finland, Bruce J. Oreck, via Skype this afternoon. This interview is for my final thesis on the efficacy of the League of Green Embassies Twitter – @thegreenleague. Ambassador Oreck and I are going to discuss his views about the League of Green Embassies Twitter in more detail: what the angle could be in the future and who it is primarily meant for. Everyone is encouraged to join the conversation however it is useful to have a primary target group in mind. In addition, we'll talk about how to empower people to act. The Ambassador asked me about this earlier this year and I was curious to know more in detail what he meant with this. This interview will last approximately 30 minutes.

Sir, I am extremely grateful to be able to talk to you. As you are Chair of the League of Green Embassies, it's very useful to hear your insights. Thank you for finding the time for this interview.

A: My pleasure, Sonja.

Q: So, let's proceed with the first question. When we spoke earlier this year shortly about empowerment, I was really curious to know, in more depth, what exactly do you mean with this and how would you like to achieve it?

A: Well, what I mean with it, and first of all let's step back and talk about the challenge. The challenge is creating a new relationship with energy in the 21st century. We have been in a relationship of lots and lots of cheap energy, abundance of energy and we've always thought of our ability to use it as not having a consequence. We know two things: we know that our supply of energy- at least that based on hydrocarbons, is limited, there's only so much. Whether that means we have 100 years left or 25 years left, doesn't matter, we know there's a limited supply.

Q: Right

A: And the other is, we know that using hydrocarbons for energy does have a consequence. We know that sequestering Carbon has a consequence in the climate. So, what do we do, as individuals, to take on these tremendously large and complicated challenges. One aspect of big problems, or big challenges is, it's not unreasonable for people to feel overwhelmed that the problem is just so big there can't be a solution. Certainly I, an individual, can't act to help find a solution. And of course I think that's totally wrong. The fact of the matter is, often times, it is the small actions of many individuals that turns the tide when you have a big problem or a big challenge. So when I talk about empowering, the first thing is to let people know that there's actually things they can do that are important and that make a difference, so they don't feel helpless. As a first piece is really educational, "you actually can make a difference and here's the things that you can do" so that's what I mean with empowerment.

Q: To get the knowledge out there, to inform and educate people.

A: Inform and educate people but also, I guess, there's a psychology piece in it. Think about athletes, whether they're competing in some school amateur competition or at the level of Professional Sports or Olympic Sports. We know with sports people that there's a mental component: if you think you can, you actually can do things. If you go into a game, or go into a contest believing you're going to fail that you can't do it, more times than not, you do fail. So part of this whole process, is to have people gain that psychological edge, saying: "hey, you know, I do have power, I can do something." So, not just what to do but the sense that they actually can do something. If that makes sense.

Q: Absolutely. So, would that mean, in the case of the League of Green Embassies Twitter to get the message across to the followers that there are – even if they are small actions – there's absolutely things that they can do to make a difference.

A: Absolutely. And of course the Twitter piece is trying to find a conversation where people are engaged in conversation today, for reasons that sometimes still baffle me. The role has turned to these Twitter conversations but there it is. And so obviously, if that's where the conversation is happening we want to be in that conversation, we want to be participating in that conversation.

Q: Exactly. That is a good answer to this question, definitely. What I wondered also is, you travel all over the world and speak to so many people from all sorts of backgrounds, I've heard many of your speeches and I've realized that you're very good at bringing your message across. I was wondering, recently, what have you found to be good ways to influence people, in a positive way of course, when it comes to the environment and what the League of Green Embassies stands for. Are there techniques?

A: The first thing really is, when I go out and I talk, rule number 1 for me, is to remember that I'm never talking *to* somebody, I'm talking *with* somebody. There's a difference between us being in a conversation and you being an attendant to a lecture. People respond differently. I always strive, the best that I can – even if I'm giving a lecture – to make it come across as us being in a conversation, that's sort of my opening rule. There's another rule of speaking - and this has nothing to do per se with the League of Green Embassies, but just in general – and that is, people rarely remember what they *hear*, but they remember what they *feel*. So if you come out of a speech that's really full of dense but good information but it's delivered in a flat and boring way, odds are most people are just going to turn off. They're going to walk away saying "I heard a bunch of facts and figures but I don't remember what they were" and that's just sort of human nature. Conversely, if I give a speech that has no facts, no figures, no data, but it's inspiring, people will walk out of that speech and go: "I don't remember what he said but boy, I was really inspired and the topic was being more energy efficient and I'm really inspired about that." So, rule number is, talk with, inspire and then fill in with details. I mean, I don't want to just give a fluffy conversation.

Q: It's good to have the facts, but it's very much about how its delivered and are you able to inspire people.

A: Yes, exactly.

Q: It sounds to me – correct me if I'm wrong - that these examples you gave can absolutely be translated onto Twitter too, by making sure that when you tweet that you're tweeting *with* your followers and that you're inspiring your followers. So, then the bigger question is of course how do you that? How do you involve them and make sure that they feel that they actually have a role in this and that they're able to do something as well.

A: Exactly, exactly.

Q: It's a big question to answer but we can try to definitely answer a part of it. I'm actually tomorrow taking part in a Social Media & Marketing workshop, or a full day actually, with various workshops

and one of them looked into the psychology of it more, so I'm hoping to find good insights from there as well that I could apply to this.

A: Great. Even within the character limitation, whatever it is –the 144 characters on Twitter - if the rule is always, remember it's a conversation, it's not a lecture. And how are your messages, how are the tweets that you're sending out to the Universe, how are people feeling about them: are you reaching them at some emotional level -whether it's with humor, with inspiration, with tears, whatever -and therefore connecting in a really more powerful way. Because you're not the only person out there in the Twitterverse pounding out messages.

Q: No, that's right. You're only one of the possibly hundreds or thousands that they're reading, so how do make sure that you stand out?

A: Exactly.

A: It sounds like what is often used in marketing as well, the 'Knowledge, Attitude and Behavior' is in a way applicable to this as well. Making sure that people first know what it is you want to tell them or what it is that you stand for, what is the attitude behind it –so, now when you said about feeling: what is the feeling that they have and then on basis of that, hopefully you can also make sure that behavior changes.

A: Yeah, exactly.

Q: I think this empowerment is a very interesting topic, for sure. And on social media, because as you said yourself, it's increasingly happening there. Whatever one's opinion is about it, it's just the reality of today. It's a similar kind of reality as you said that we need to develop a new relationship with energy, we also need to develop our relationship with social media. It seems that it's here to stay as well, at least in one form or another.

A: It certainly will stay in some form or fashion. Whether Twitter gets to be as clips that are passed as notes in the classroom., I don't know. But you're right, the takeaway is, that we are no longer engaging in a conversation one-on-one, we're engaging in conversations at a tremendously large scale.

Q: And there's a great power in that.

A: Oh yeah, absolutely. If there's a power in conversation one-on-one, think of what happens if it's me and a thousand people at one time, or a million, or whatever it is. I don't know what the most popular Twitter accounts are but you can imagine there are some huge amounts of followers.

Q: Absolutely. And then my final question, which is a more broad one but a very important one at the same time: Looking at the upcoming year, how do you see the League of Green Embassies Twitter evolving? Or, let's put it this way, how would you like to see it developing, in which direction and what sort of focus as well as to whom?

A: Sure. I would love to see it be -as we talked about catching emotions, inspirationally- but then really inform, make it a pathway to saying: "hey, we did this, tell us what you're doing." You know, "We just accomplished this thing, we did this, big success.. Hey, talk back! Tell us what's going on." Get people to engage really much more vigorously with us in conversation.

Q: Do you have any ideas of how this, from your personal perspective, how this could be achieved?

A: Well, I think our job, on the Twitter side - and unfortunately that's something that we have to keep a person engaged in being our Twitter voice - is just to be out there much more regularly, much more consistently.

Q: I agree. I spoke to Public Affairs Officer, Dave McGuire, and he was also saying that there's definitely more of a strategy needed and as well as more of a focus. When I spoke to an external Twitter expert, he also mentioned a need for more of an angle and something more concrete. If we look at what is the core message of the League of Green Embassies, what would be, perhaps, sub-goals that could be aligned with that. Do you have any examples of what they could be?

A: Well, again if we understand that people come and go in conversation, no different in Twitter than in real life. If someone walks in or walks out of a room. Someone may stumble across or enter into our Twitter conversation at any point and we have to continually remember that we have to speak to both the newcomers as well as the old hands, not being so esoteric that the new guy coming in is chased away, but by the same time we don't wanna be so focused on the new conversation that our old hands go "I'm bored."

Q: Yeah. It's finding that balance, because right now there are around 280 followers. Followers can change at any given time, of course. People can unfollow, it's important to keep an eye on that, who they are. Like you said, with communication as well, realizing that you're not all the time talking about similar things to make sure that people who actually are listening that they're not hearing the same story over and over again.

Q: When, looking at making it more concrete, are there perhaps specific goals that maybe U.S. Embassy Helsinki would like to announce. Because this was when I spoke to this expert and also to a few people from the Embassy there, they really emphasized the fact that having something much more concrete is really important on Twitter.

A: Well, as we roll out the opening of the Innovation Center, we can absolutely talk about very specific things that we were able to do there, that we focused on. As we roll out the next phase of our undertakings around the globe – we got several projects I'm working on with the State Department- hopefully once I've got those tied down, we can start talking about those. They are some really terrific goals, important ones and inspiring ones. Very specific but can't talk about them until I can actually do them.

Q: No, I understand. Actually that's a great idea, because when the "Energy Efficiency Sweep: part 1" was going on, that was when the Twitter was re-launched. It was absolutely great to be able to always tweet not only articles more in general, but having a theme going on, "this is what we're doing, now its Embassy Bern, next time its Embassy in Vienna." So, it's kind of theming in but at the same time making it concrete.

A: Yeah, that's great.

Q: I would say, because at the moment, there's a lack of that concreteness, I can imagine that once the Innovation Center opens up, there'll be a lot of new content for the Twitter account.

A: Absolutely. We sort of finished up that project and we're between things. There'll be an awful lot of things to report pretty soon.

Q: So, do you see that the League of Green Embassies Twitter in 2013 will have a lot of that as well, it's going to inspire hopefully much more, get more the feeling. Like you mentioned before really more talk *with* people as well as say: "This is what we're doing, what are you doing." It seems that it's possible with these projects.

A: I don't know how others handle Twitter accounts. I am most assuredly old-school in the sense of, I know the importance but it's not part of my routine, you know. I'm not out there, when I go out do something, I'm not sending out tweets. I'm not immediately taking a picture and posting it onto a Facebook account, I'm just not that way. That's not to say those aren't the way people communicate

today, I'm just not there. One of the goals we have is to get someone back on the account, to really take charge of keeping us current in that conversation.

Q: Yeah. For example, Matti Lauren, from the Information Resource Centre, he suggested having a few people tweet and have really also in the logo a person behind it, but you could have the League of Green Embassies logo but then combined with a picture of two people. That increases efficacy, having an actual person who you're speaking to. It could also be you, but if you are not the one that's tweeting too much then I'm not quite sure if that's the way to go. Looking at what Obama has been doing with his account, whenever he tweets it's with his initials 'B.O', which funnily enough are your initials. I was wondering – because I'm actually testing that at the moment, via a survey about what do the followers want to see next, and, one of them was 'Tweets from the Ambassador' so from you.

A: Ok [laughs]

Q: I don't have the final results yet, but there seems to be interest for that too. Would you be willing to, it could even be just once every few weeks, or once a month, just send out one tweet?

A: I think it's kind of like brushing your teeth, I don't think it's actually hard to send out one a day. It's just a question of have I done this thing, let me get out there with a 144 characters. It's just a practice that I, as an old dog am not into. I'm an old guy, Sonja, what do you want?

Q: No, no - I totally understand. The same way we need to convince people more into energy efficiency and realize the importance. I'm not saying that we need to get everybody on social media, it's not for everyone, absolutely – I do understand that side as well. Even if you are there, even just a little bit. Let's just phrase it this way, there seems to be interest, people are interested in what you're doing, that's also one part of the League of Green Embassies Twitter. I'm just asking whether you would be interested to be a guest tweeter on the League of Green Embassies Twitter.

A: Absolutely

Q: Only every now and then, that could add a personal touch, as Chairman. Because that also personalizes it more. That there would be, for example, two tweeters who are mainly responsible for it, but then, in addition, if you would, every now and then, tweet that might increase the interest because they'll be like: "ooooh, when is the Ambassador going to be tweeting here." So, I've come to realize that that is something the followers are interested in, actually.

A: Well, that's good to know. See now, you're making me feel guilty. [laughs]

Q: No, no that is by no means the intention.

A: Oh no, you're supposed to be make me feel guilty.

Q: [laughs] There seems to be interest for it, so that could be one part of it. The strategy will be many things and it's an ongoing process, it's going to have to be evaluated on many occasions but it's always good to have an initial strategy that's more concrete.

Q: I missed only one part. Everybody at the Embassy has been saying, that it should be by all means for everyone, inclusive, it's not for a particular group. Still, it's good to know, if there was only one group, who would you like to actually read these tweets? Who would you hope - if there was only one group on Twitter - if we think that we have the business people, the government people and the general public –who would this be? It could only even be in the back of our mind, just to know that there's a primary target group.

A: I think that I would be most interested first in reaching a younger audience, and then secondarily the business audience. That would be my rank in my priorities there.

Q: Okay. Younger audience, business audience, ok. That's good to know. Because that also could help in defining the style of the Twitter.

A: I think, I don't know the demographics but my guess is, Twitter audiences tend to run younger than older.

Q: They're becoming younger, but at the moment actually the average age is 37.3.

A: Well, that sounds old to you, but young to me.

Q: [laughs] That's also a very good point.

A: [laughs] When you said 37, I thought: "Oh my heavens. I can't even remember 37, it was so long ago."

Q: [laughs] That's also true. Funny, I thought to myself that is relatively old, but no. It's all relative.

A: Boy, good thing you're not here right now, you would so be in trouble for saying that. [laughs]

Q: Sir, thank you so much for this interview, it's been really useful. I am really, really grateful that you took the time in your busy schedule to speak to me. Its clarified so many things, I'm very happy to hear it from you. I'm combining all the research, all the interviews that I've done to get a comprehensive view of everything. It's very important to know what you want and where you see it heading and to keep that in mind as well.

A: Well, great. Thanks Sonja, it's been fun, stay in touch. Good luck with the rest of your interviews and the process.

Q: Thank you so much. You'll surely be able to hear about the final research how that goes.

A: Let us know. Thanks kiddo, we'll talk soon.

Q: Yeah. Thank you. Bye Bye.

Appendix 6: Interview with Alicia Cowan

Date: 29-11-2012

Interviewee: Alicia Cowan

Title: Social Media Specialist

Duration: 35:55

Form: Interview, via Skype

Q: Good afternoon my name is Sonja Meskanen, I'm today on Skype with a social media specialist from London, Alicia Cowan. Alicia, thank you very much for accepting this interview. I'm really curious to discuss various aspects related to Twitter with you.

A: Hi Sonja, it's a real pleasure. I can't wait to speak with you and to get involved and debate some of these questions and topics – it's going to be fun.

Q: It's very exciting, thank you so much. The very first thing I'm interested to know is what is your background in social media, and then particularly Twitter?

A: My long-term background is, I used to work for a PR-agency and then back in 2009, I set up my own business as a – it's supporting other businesses as a virtual assistant, I'm not sure if you know what that is – it's providing admin and business support to other small businesses and entrepreneurial types. I had no marketing budget at all, I didn't have a business – I was building the business from scratch and Twitter played a massive role in that, in me reaching clients, people that could help me in my business, driving traffic to my website. So during that first year, Twitter alone accounted for over half of my website traffic.

Q: Wow.

A: And a quarter of my new business wins as well, and that was Twitter on its own so no other intervention from other sources. Since then I've used it to develop my business and my business has actually changed a lot in a very, very short period of time. People and clients started asking me for help using Twitter to market their businesses and now for over a year, it was early 2011 when I wound down the virtual assistant side of my business so I could concentrate solely on helping other businesses and entrepreneurs use social media to market themselves, raise the profile of their business and amplify their message.

Q: That's great! That's exactly what the League of Green Embassies needs. This thesis that I'm writing is all about that. So you're completely the right person to speak to.

A: Yeah. [laughs] It's a really interesting area and time to be involved in marketing because social media has completely changed the way people market, how businesses market themselves. It's very fluid and fast-moving, so it's changing all the time. And Twitter particularly, even though it's only been around for a few years, it's made an massive impact in the way that we as businesses communicate with our customers and prospects.

Q: Absolutely. It's a very interesting time.

A: Yeah, I love it.

Q: Are you a fan of Twitter?

A: Yeah, absolutely, as I said, it made a massive difference to my business. It's enabled me to connect with clients, first of all, other people that were freely sharing their information online, so I found it very educational for me. And also finding people that can help me in the areas where I may be lacking in knowledge. When I started, I had no experience of setting up a business on my own. So there were people sharing it very freely, information I could use for that and it made it really easy to connect with people from all over the world. So now my clients and the people that I work with are based all over, there is no geographical limitations. When initially my business was quite reliant on other local businesses.

Q: Absolutely. Wow, and it's going to continue to be exciting.

A: Yeah. It's made the world a much smaller place. I've made fantastic, amazing friends and people that I work with now, that I met very early on when I first started on Twitter. I feel very passionate about helping other people use it and understand how to use it because there's a lot of misinformation out there. I get such a buzz from seeing other people embrace it and actually get results from it, that's why I do what I do. I love teaching people ways to use it, how to leverage it and get their message heard.

Q: That brings me then to my first question. If you think of those Twitter users out there that are very successful at what they do, what in your opinion, separates them from the others?

A: Well, you have varying degrees of influential/popular Twitter users. So a lot of people look at the amount of people that are following them and look at the actual numbers whose following them. That's not necessarily a good metric to measure. But obviously you have people, celebrities. As soon as celebrity signs up to Twitter then very, very quickly they have a high volume of followers following them. So you have those kind of people, but also you have people, whether you're a celebrity or not, you have a community already that magnetizes that, so it attracts people to you - if you've already got that community already.

What makes them influential, fundamentally understanding that Twitter is a communication channel foremost, it's really just another way to communicate with other people so the same as a phone, email, a letter, it's a channel – a way to communicate, it's nothing really more complicated than that. What it enables us to do, is to amplify that so we can reach a lot more people in a much shorter space of time.

Q: Exactly.

A: It's also where lots of people are hanging out. By hanging out in their domain, where other people are hanging out and the audience and the people that you're trying to connect with, then obviously that's where you want to be, because they're not hanging out on your website. Some of them might be, but the majority of the people are hanging out in these big groups like Twitter and Facebook and these social networks. What attracts people to you and makes you influential is making your communication interesting and ultimately, probably more importantly, is being interested in others. So actually opening up the channels to have a conversation with these people, being interested in what they've got to say, listening what they've got to say and inviting them in the conversation with you.

Q: That actually brings me to the next question which is about having more conversation. Because the League of Green Embassies would like to interact more and speak more with its followers, but it doesn't. Not at the moment. What are ways to encourage this?

A: When you initially have a Twitter profile, you want to think about what you want to be saying, initially. So what your strategy is online and on Twitter, is it going to be a customer service channel which probably wouldn't be your idea and what you'd want to do. It seems that what your strategy

along the lines of educating people about becoming greener and getting that message heard. It's understanding your objectives and what you want to achieve first of all. And then, telling people about it, so telling people away from Twitter that your Twitter profile exists so you bring people to you and the advocates and fans that you have already, outside of Twitter, know that you have a Twitter profile and a presence there already. You can start bringing the people that are already invested in you, can start coming and connecting with you there. And then, inviting the conversation.

I've had a little look at the @thegreenleague profile, you're sending out messages but there isn't any interaction with anybody or having any conversations with people. Initially getting involved in those conversations, rather than expecting people to come to you, you have to go out and find the conversations and really dive in. That is something that culturally on Twitter is expected and is invited. It's a bit like a big, social event, like a party or a networking event or cocktail party. Those kinds of real-life circumstances you can walk up to people and start conversation. There's nothing wrong with that, there's nothing unusual about that and Twitter is very much the same. It's okay to reach out to people and start talking to them. Another part of the equation is including chitchat and lighthearted conversation within those messages as well. Because behind the Twitter profile there's always another person, so you're just communicating with another person, essentially. Part of that communication and the way that you build relationships with people is having lighthearted chitchat. Before we started talking on the interview, we were talking about coffee and this and that.. That is part of human interaction and it's no different on Twitter and that's something that a lot of people forget.

Q: So even with an organization like the League of Green Embassies a little more lightheartedness could be good?

A: Absolutely. Remembering that even though you're using Twitter from a business perspective, or professional perspective, You're still communicating with people in a social network, you have to remember that element of fun and socializing. Sending out tweets and messages or linking to interesting articles or pictures or videos that are lighthearted. They might be educational, they would be entertaining as well. That's what draws people to you and that's what people want to see there because they are there predominantly in their own time.

Q: Yeah, exactly.

A: Getting that element right, you've got to get the balance right. It's not all about business, business business.. corporate messages. What you want to be doing is, educating people about your message, what you have to offer and what you're trying to do, interspersed with that you want to think about having a bit of lighthearted conversation. A broader sense of what's going on within your industry.

Q: So, it's okay to jump into conversation. It's definitely something to do rather than wait and wonder why are people not speaking to me. This has already opened up so many things for me now. It's quite simple what you say but I hadn't thought of that.

A: You have to be selective, I think, as well. From your standpoint, jumping into a conversation and saying: "Hey, look at this article that we've written" that might not be taken too kindly or it might be a little bit ignored. I use this analogy quite a bit, you wouldn't walk into a cocktail party, walk up to someone and say: "Hi, my name is Sonja, I sell handbags, would you like to buy one?" That wouldn't be your opening line whenever you meet somebody. You have to think of it in that context as well. It's more likely to be, open it up with something a bit more conversational, more social and lighthearted rather than going in straight away with your message. Do you know what I mean?

Q: Absolutely.

A: Reaching out to people, showing that there's a new connection there. If you get new followers, checking out your new followers, thanking them for following you, maybe mentioning something that they've written in their bio, so it kind of initiates that conversation. Or it might be that you've seen something that they've tweeted that you think is interesting, finding something to initiate that conversation. Also sharing as well. Sharing is really what makes Twitter such a special place. You have your own information and your own articles and things that you can share but finding other articles, that are going to be of equal interest to your audience, they may not be written by you, or @thegreenleague but they are still of interest. And sharing that kind of information shows that you are generous as well.

Q: A lot of the articles that the League of Green Embassies tweets about are not actually written by the League of Green Embassies, but I understand what you mean. But making sure that the promotional part of what you're about is not over-ruling, that you have a good balance. That you're giving to your community. It's the same as in real-life.

A: Yeah, absolutely. This is the thing, it's about remembering that the real-life situations work just as well online and in Twitter as they would in real life. If you have those kinds of attributes and morals outside when you're dealing with other people and you bring those onto Twitter as well and it will hold you for sure.

Q: Definitely. What about, because you were saying before that it's not the number 1 thing to try to get loads and loads of followers, you want quality versus quantity in the sense that followers that are actually interested in what you have to say and who you have something in common with. At the same time, it seems to me that to have more conversation and to build it up, it would be good to get more visibility, as well, and followers. Are there ways that the League of Green Embassies could do this?

A: Well, this is the thing: a lot of people look at how many followers you have as being a show of social proof, so basically showing that you are popular, well-respected and all the rest of it. So it's good to have lots of followers, from that viewpoint, and of course the bigger your community the better it will be, providing they are interested in your message. This is the area where people get a bit muddled. You can buy followers, you can follow people and they will follow you back in order to elevate the amount of followers that you have. When people do that, they're not connecting with people that are really interested in what you've got to say. That's who you want to be reaching: people that are interested in what you've got to say so when you say it they talk about it with their friends, they share it with their friends, they talk to you, they're interested in what's going on. They can go out and champion you and spread your message. That's how your message is amplified. So if they're just a number, they won't do that for you and that's where the disconnect is.

What happens on Twitter is that, if you're communicating the right kind of message, if you're reaching out to people individually or connecting with other groups that have similar interests and values as you and having those conversations on Twitter, replying to other people and getting involved in these conversations and making your presence known, then when people can see that you're valuable to stay connected with because you're sharing information that they want to hear about, then followers come. It's the other way around. You don't get followers first, you start sharing interesting, useful and entertaining information first. So, the followers will follow you. So that's how your message is amplified.

Q: I understand, indeed. It's the other way around. Keep tweeting and make sure what you're tweeting about is of interest. There's not really a way. Would you then say that it's not something to be too concerned about?

A: Personally I say no. I don't think it's important to be too worried about numbers. Numbers are numbers. Its remembering, again, that behind every Twitter profile there's a real person. So you've got 277 followers of the @greenleague, you put those people in a room together, that's a lot of people. When you compare it to... I don't know how many followers Lady Gaga has..

Q: A lot [laughs]

A: I know she's got tens of millions, I think. When you look at it in that context then you kind of think: "Oh, I've hardly got any followers.." But the important thing is, if those 277 people are really interested in what you've got to say and they're sharing your message for you, that's a big noise you can create.

Q: Exactly. Because you've mentioned a few times about that there's an actual person behind the Twitter account, one of the things I'm also trying to find out is how to get more personality for the League of Green Embassies. Can the League of Green Embassies have a face? This just came to mind as an extra, from what you just said. What's your opinion? Do you think it should have 'a face', so to speak – in some way?

A: Studies show, if you show the people behind whoever's running the account, then immediately you break down a barrier of trust. So, when people don't really know who they're talking to, or they feel they're talking to a faceless corporation then the feeling they get to interact to with you, is lowered. They're disinclined to want to connect to you. They don't know who you are, they can't see your name, they can't see your face. When you're a much smaller business and if you are the brand, I absolutely 100% think there should be your face in the profile picture, it should be very clear that there's a person behind the profile, with name. When we're talking about bigger brands, there are ways around that. A lot of the bigger corporations, that particularly use Twitter for customer service, they might put in the bio that the Twitter profile is manned by 'this person'. So if it was you, for instance you would include in your bio that "Sonja manages @thegreenleague." So people, immediately have a connection, they know that there's a person there.

Q: Even though the organization itself – I mean the Ambassador to Finland is the chairman and often also the spokesperson, but even though the organization may not have a face, so to speak, it's important to create one for the Twitter at least?

A: Yeah. It doesn't have to be a face of a person. Even if you have a team of people tweeting, then just make it very clear, its having that clarity and opening that up, so that people are more inclined to trust you. And make clear whose looking after it. If it's only manned between certain hours, then saying that in the profile. It might have your name or a picture of you and the rest of the team members who manage the account.

Q: I have heard that a few times, now. So that's definitely one side to amplifying.

A: If you were going to be the community manager, for instance, if it was you Sonja then there could be you're profile picture in there or have @thegreenleague so people know that it's you. You see a lot of communications people within businesses that do that, so it's very, very clear that there's a person behind the profile.

Q: So, it's simply a term of somebody who manages the community? The person who takes the responsibility.

A: It's the voice of that business. They encourage and build a community around the brand, around the business, by building this trust and the community. Once you have a community around you, it's very easy to amplify that message and get your message out, because people enjoy being part of that community, they want to help you, want to get your message out, want to talk about you, their

friends see them talking to you so then they want to know what that's all about and get on connect with you.

A: Social media and online world has made conversation a very two-way thing. People want to be involved in things from the beginning. Whereas traditional marketing has been very one-sided, conversation from the brand or the business but there's been no way for their community or their fans to reply and respond back to them and now social media has allowed and enabled that to happen.

Q: I'm working now on finding the recommendations and putting together all this that I've heard from various experts and from Twitter literature. I've put into one group, content-related efficacy, so to speak, and then community-related. I was wondering, which one do you think is even more important? Is it possible to say between content and community? If you think that content is what it's about and that it's personal and the other side is building the community, tweeting often and building those relationships. Is it possible to say which is most important? Because there's only so much that I can give as advice to the League of Green Embassies in the end, I'm trying to really prioritize.

A: You build your community through your content.

Q: That's a good point, yeah.

A: So if you're providing information, they'll be more interested in you and they will come and it'll grow.

Q: That's a good point, so you build your community through content. What about, I interviewed the Ambassador recently. I asked him – I mean the League of Green Embassies Twitter is for everyone – I asked, just to have an idea of who is the main, primary target group, who do they want to attract the most? He said a younger audience. Young is of course, depends on your age. We were laughing about it. We're just of a very different age group. He didn't specify the exact age, but I'm thinking 20-40. How do you attract such an audience on Twitter, do you know?

A: By creating an atmosphere and an area or profile that they are interested in. It's remembering, if you're clear on who your audience is and who you want to target and you know what they like, how old they are, where they're based, what they're interested in, other than green issues, and create that client or customer profile then it's easier to make your messages speak to them. You'll be talking in their language, terms and phrases. Once you know who your customer is, then it's making their messages attractive to them to be attracted to you.

Q: Is it important to target a certain audience?

A: Well, yeah to attract the group you want to attract. It kind of goes back to the numbers thing. If you're looking to increase your number of followers and you don't really care who they are or you don't know who they are, they're not going to have an invested interest in you either. You have to resonate with people in order for them to feel driven or moved to communicate with you or to advocate you.

Q: Exactly. In a way, obviously everyone who wants to can follow the account, but then to have an idea, in the back of your mind, who is the primary group who we're attracting?

A: Exactly. That's important in all marketing, you're marketing across every outsource that you have, whether it's your blogs, your website. Who you speak to, if you hold conferences and things like that. Twitter, Facebook, all of them, you need to be speaking to your audience in order to do that.

Q: That very much correlates with what I've been thinking of advising the League of Green Embassies. Of course, everyone is welcome to be part of the conversation but that they do have a primary target group in mind and who this is and to define that more clearly.

A: Absolutely, that's really important. Like you said, other people will be attracted that might not be people who are considered to be your audience and that's absolutely fine, but if you have a very clear idea of who you're speaking to and you speak to them through your marketing then you will attract these people.

Q: I'm guessing that part of it is, for the Ambassador at least, has to do with because he wants to empower people to be more energy-efficient, both businesses and government but also the general public. He seems to be very interested in the general public and getting them to understand the importance of it. This is actually my last question, I'm wondering can you empower people on Twitter to become greener, so to speak? To have more of that mentality?

A: Yeah, absolutely. It's a very powerful topic, it's something people are very passionate about and interested in and want to learn more about it. You can absolutely empower people through Twitter. This is the great thing, I mentioned earlier about communication channels, if you would speak to one person on the phone in the traditional way of communicating with people. You can speak to one person on the phone or you can speak to tens of thousands of people on Twitter and it amplifies that message. You can get movement and attraction very, very quickly. By making it attractive to people and by creating a movement and getting people interested and excited about what you're doing and educating them in what they can do. Twitter is a very powerful way of doing that and doing it quickly. It's one of the best social networks, I think, or online platforms to do that.

Q: The Ambassador was talking about how there's the educational side to empowerment as well as the mental side. And then he was talking about people rarely remember what they hear but how they felt, so bringing out much more that emotional part to it. That reminds me of what you said earlier, making it also lighthearted in the sense that, tone of voice, as one example, can really have an impact on people, do they really remember what you said or wrote or tweeted?

A: Your absolutely right, making it fun. It can be educational and fun at the same time.

Q: Exactly. Thank you Alicia so much. I've been hanging onto every single word of what you've just said, its clarified so many things. Some of these things, of course- I've been doing research for quite a while now as well - and I've heard some of them, but then, hearing them from you again, makes me feel like now I can prioritize what sorts of advice I should give @thegreenleague. Really, thank you so much for your time and all these opinions, they're really going to put that final touch to the chapter that I'm writing on the efficacy, as well as the recommendations.

A: I'm so pleased to hear that, it's great speaking to you. Thanks very much for the opportunity and I hope that it gives you some nice ideas on what you can do on Twitter.

Q: It really does. Thank you so much, I'll definitely let you know how everything evolves

A: Great

Q: Thank you.

A: Thank you.

Appendix 7: Interview with Mischa Coster

Date: 30-11-2012

Interviewee: Mischa Coster

Title: Media Psychologist

Duration: 32:16

Form: Interview, via Phone

Q: Good afternoon, my name is Sonja Meskanen. I'm on the phone with Mischa Coster from Grey Matters, which is a research and consultancy firm in the area of applied psychology. Mischa has been so kind to agree to do an interview. His views will surely be very interesting and very important for the League of Green Embassies as a lot of what the League of Green Embassies wants to know with regards its Twitter is how to influence people and also, how to do this online. Mischa thank you so much for your time, I'm really interested to hear what you have to say about all these various things.

A: Very good.

Q: Could you briefly tell me your background in social media and then especially your background in Twitter?

A: Well, I started out as a media psychologist. I did a lot of internet projects, back in, let's say in 2000. What I noticed with the emergence of social media around 2007, people started paying more and more attention to human behavior. It's as if there was a sudden insight that all mass communication is not actually mass communication, but multi-one-on-one communication. So everybody was talking about human behavior again and I thought "Well, that's my area of expertise." So I started to figure out how this works in social media environments and I took some of the theoretical backgrounds and applied them on social media environments and that's what I do in my daytime job now, I advise companies on how to use these psychological insights but also research data in influencing their target audiences.

Q: Wow, great. Very interesting but also very relevant to the thesis that I'm writing.

A: Well, that's why I'm here!

Q: Well, I'm very curious to know firstly that... I would like to say, *how* can people be influenced online, but very firstly, *can* people be influenced online? Can they really be influenced?

A: Yes they can, yes of course. Research shows that human computer interaction is not actually that different from human to human interaction. There are things that you can do in a mediated environment that make people think they're actually talking to another human being while it is a computer or a social network. So, all the principles of social psychology actually are widely applied to online environments.

Q: So, they really can be influenced. What is particularly interesting is then, how do you do this on Twitter. How do you influence?

A: There are some steps before that, I guess. If you are a brand or a country or an Embassy. If you want people to do something you want them to do, you first have to figure out for yourself why

should they want to do it? Because they're not going to do it just to help you, most of the time. So you need, what we call in marketing terms, a value proposition. Something that people get a good feeling by or it pays off in some certain way. So first you would have to think about "What do I want them to do and how can I phrase that question in terms of advantages for them, in their personal advantage?"

That's the basis upon which you are starting to build things. Then you are going to look at how can I give people presents, how can I open a 'mental bank account', some people call it the 'guilt feeling', by which I am going to give them information or maybe even other stuff online which they can use and that can actually be beneficial for them. So, you take a period of time to just give them presents. For instance, if you want to do this as an Embassy you could open a Facebook page and have a look at, what you, as an Embassy, can give your target audience that will benefit them, and only them, not you. Once you've done that you will actually have created a kind of, like I call it, 'a mental bank account' with your target audience, because they have gotten so much from you that they are more willing, than if they hadn't gotten that stuff from you, to comply with your request. And your request then will be to take this survey or want to help us in these projects, or whatever.

From that point on, there are various ways you can go. For instance, if you have 150 people who have already done it, you could start communicating how many people have already done this. Instead of giving presents you start communicating: "Wow, this is cool already 150 people are very enthusiastic about this project." This will trigger the other people because the other people are people like them, because they share the same interest. So, this will trigger the other people to think: "Hey, these other guys are actually doing this too, so I should at least consider doing it also."

Q: Right, exactly. So, kind of that whole group-think and how the dynamics of groups work too.

A: Yeah, exactly. It's called social proof as well.

Q: And just to be sure, when you said before you meant presence or presents, like gifts?

A: Gifts. Online gifts. What information, or what products can I share in a way that I don't immediately want anything back. It's called the reciprocity-principle, you give first and you ask later.

Q: I understand. What about, because the League of Green Embassies is a network of Embassies that promote energy efficiency . It's in a way different sorts of influence, it's about influence online but also offline, to get people more this mentality, this ideology that's behind it. In a way its saving the planet but not in that kind of tree-hugging way, more focusing on we have only a certain amount of energy and we need to use it wisely. There are people that are very passionate about that already, but to get people to, so to speak, become 'greener'. Is that possible?

A: Do you want people who have already shown their commitment for this Embassy to become even more greener, or are you aiming at the people who don't know anything about it yet?

Q: Also others, just the general public in fact.

A: If you're looking at the first target group, so the people who have already done something with living more green or sustainable, then you could actually use the commitment-consistency principle, so you would emphasize the fact that they have already done so much for the environment, it would actually be strange if they were not to comply with your suggestion to do this other thing. That's the feeling you want to trigger. In the general public you can't use that of course, because those people haven't actually done something yet. Then again, I would go back to square one and figure out how you can build a mission statement or value proposition that appeals also to the general public, something that people can connect with. That's the way to build a fan base, instead of, for instance in company surroundings, a customer base.

You're actually talking about behavior change here. If you look at theory of professor BJ Fogg, he's done a lot of research about this, he points out that behavior change always goes in baby steps. So, if I want people to exercise more, I'm not going to ask them to do one hour exercise per day because that's too much, people won't do it, but I will ask them to do a very small thing for about a week and then build up on that small thing to expand it to a somewhat bigger thing. In campaigning I would suggest for general public, that you encourage people to start doing a very small thing that will help the environment. And, if you do that, then you would have actually made them a little bit more green or sustainable. Then you can use the other principle that I just talked about to say: "Well, you've already done this now, why not try this other thing, this even better thing that will have an even better impact on the environment."

Q: Smart. So, actually, you get them into the second group?

A: Exactly. But you first have to make them do that small, first thing and I think, that is where the big challenge is. You could combine it with habits that they have already formed, like brushing your teeth, going to bed at night or eating dinner. And figure out what small action they could do or take that would create a commitment towards your cause, without them knowing it.

Q: What about looking then more specifically: Is it possible to encourage others, for example, to follow an account on Twitter, to click on a link or become part of the conversation, and if yes, how can you do this?

A: This is again and maybe it's a little bit repeating myself, on Twitter, at least, it's largely part of the amount of beneficial information you can bring your followers base. So, a small research I did myself shows that, once you're on a Twitter profile and you're looking to see if you should start following this person or organization, the most important thing people look at is the value that they get from the latest, let's say, ten tweets. So, if those ten tweets are all about you broadcasting your message you won't get anybody to follow you. Yeah, you will get a few sympathy likes, but not the ones you want to follow you. You should start giving information, giving stuff away or maybe having a view or an opinion on current items in the news that are interesting and that way start building a timeline that people can actually benefit from.

Q: So, people look first at the tweets?

A: Yeah, and second at the bio.

Q: Okay. And third place?

A: Third was also actually the tweets. First one was the informational value of the tweets and third one was the amount of business versus personal stuff that is in the tweets. The preference was that it should be slightly more business-related stuff, informative stuff, instead of personal tweets like "I'm going to the grocery store right now."

Q: So, things like followers or if you have a verified account or things like these, these are not at the top of the list?

A: No. Number of followers was only at sixth place. I think again that social proof is not very much present on Twitter, I do think it's a main factor in Facebook. I think these platforms differ in that perspective. If you go to Facebook and you're looking for a page, most people will first pick the page that has the most amount of fans.

Q: Interesting.

A: That's different too, because people search on Facebook and they just go to a Twitter profile. So the whole flow of visitors, the visitor process, is a little bit different.

Q: What do you mean with that, that they search on Facebook and they go to a Twitter account? Do they not search?

A: On Facebook, most people, if they are interested in something, for instance sustainability, they type in the top search bar, they type sustainability and then they see a lot of company pages or community pages that they can choose from. They will probably first choose the ones that have the most appealing name combined with the most likes. On Twitter, people usually don't search that much, at least they search for content and not for persons or companies. Companies get mentioned in other tweets and that's how you come across them. That's actually the second part of the research I did, is when will people see your account. You can have as much interesting tweets on your account as you want, but if you don't appear in the span of attention of the other persons, nobody will look at your account, so they won't even have a chance to follow you.

Q: True

A: So, what I discovered, is that people, most of the time, start looking at another profile once that profile is mentioned in a tweet from somebody else that they know and trust.

Q: Ok, I see what you mean.

A: So, the strategy would be that you would have to engage in a conversation with an influencer in your own area of expertise.

Q: And what about, clicking on links. Can you somehow encourage that as well, that people will click on the links that you're posting?

A: Well, there are various tricks to encourage clicking. You can use hashtags. The principle of social proof you could also use on links. So, if you have a website and it gets read a lot, you could communicate the fact that it is being read a lot on Twitter. So you could say: "Cool, we've already passed the 10,000 page views on this page." Then other people will see that and people will see that this is apparently a very popular site. They will be more inclined to visit the site than if you were to post the site without the 10,000 views. On the other hand, you shouldn't fake it. Sometimes you see people using hashtags to mimic social proof. So what they do is they send a tweet and they put in the hashtag, for instance, #trending or #bestread, something that points to the fact that it's a popular link. They don't put in specific numbers or views. So, you can't actually check if it's true or not and that makes it a little bit in between persuasion and manipulation, actually.

Q: People don't like this. I mean obviously if they would find this out.

A: Yeah, but there's no way to find it out because if I send a tweet and put in a hashtag #mustread, a lot of my followers will read that, I know. But nobody is going to question the fact why I put in the hashtag #mustread. You could use that, but the most efficient way is to have other influencers on Twitter retweet your message or tell their followers that they should read your message or your website.

Q: Can you encourage more conversation or more retweeting?

Retweeting is all a matter, again of content, so you should just share stuff that is really interesting for your target audience. What also works very well is asking for a retweet. So just say: ""RT please" or something at the end. That works really well. What also works really well is leaving at least 40 characters blank. So you make it easier for people to retweet. Because if they retweet it, some of the clients they do a system retweet, so it doesn't cost you any characters, but a lot of people want to add their own comments to the tweet.

Q: True

A: If your tweet is already very full, let's say 135 characters, and they want to add comments to it, that's not possible anymore, so they have to start rebuilding or rephrasing your original message. Besides the fact that you don't want that, it's also very annoying for these other people, because they have to start puzzling how to get rid of some words while still maintaining the informative value of the tweet. It's a little bit annoying so there's a big chance they will just say "Oh, fuck it, never mind."

Q: I understand, so to make it easier for them.

A: Yeah.

Q: What about, I also interviewed the Ambassador, whose also the chairman of the League of Green Embassies and asked about the target group. One part of it was that he believes that a younger audience is on Twitter, but he anyway wants to attract a young audience. He didn't clarify the age group, but let's say between 20-40, something like this. Do you have ideas on how to attract these audiences on Twitter?

A: I think 20-30 or 40 is in general speaking the audience that is on Twitter, so I don't expect it to be anything different from the stuff I already said before. I don't think there's a big age differentiation on that.

Q: Are there things that you should consider perhaps with content or the way your message is? Or is that more related to the general guidelines on how you behave on Twitter that you conform to those?

A: 20-40 is quite a big range. That's like saying half of all the adults. So it's not a good way to differentiate between that. If you were to say we want to aim at children, that would be a whole other thing. Then I would also say don't do Twitter. The most important thing is that you do research on the group that you want to reach and that you connect with them on the platforms that they are using. And that's a big failure that I see in a lot of organizations, they say: "We're opening a Facebook page, or a website or we're going to use Jabber internally" and they haven't done any research. They want to reach a community that is already very engaged within another community platform, which is not even on social media. So, what I say to them is get rid of your Facebook page and try to get into this other community and start having value there.

Q: Exactly. So, more research about who your audience exactly is and it needs to be more defined more specifically.

A: Yeah, and what they are looking for. If there are various platforms, you could easily ask them: "What is the kind of information you are looking for when you're on LinkedIn, or when you're on Twitter?" I did that with a client and we got a very nice matrix out of that. They wanted to have Twitter for quick conversations and contact with the company, they wanted to have LinkedIn for business-related information, job openings, stuff like that and they wanted to have a Facebook page for inspirational things, like Ted Talks, videos and all that kind of things. That also gives you the opportunity to say to them at a later stage: "Listen, we've listened to. We're doing this and this is exactly what you wanted. So, it would be strange of you not to go and visit us" And again, that's the commitment-consistency principle.

Q: Makes sense.

A: You should also keep in mind that when you're asking your audience this, the asking itself, through a questionnaire or whatever, is not only a goal but it's also a means. It's a means to an end but the means is also a goal, because the fact that you're presenting them with this information is by itself an intervention. Because that will be their first contact moment with your organization.

So, it's in a way two-in-one. You're inviting conversation by asking them.

A: Exactly. To illustrate, there's been done some research on collecting funds, door-to-door collecting. It was a certain good cause, I think the Cancer fund. They wanted to have more people who went door-by-door. So what they did, they asked a lot of people and divided them into two groups. In the first group around 1 in every 8 persons said yes and in the second group about 6 in every 8 persons said yes. What did they do, the second group received a survey just a week before about the Cancer fund, it didn't have any questions about collecting door-to-door, it just was a small survey: "Do you know the Cancer fund, what do you think of it, where have you heard it, have you seen us on television?" Almost everybody filled out that form. And by filling it out they gave a certain level of commitment already to the Cancer fund so when they got presented with the request to go door-by-door, significantly more people complied.

Q: So, it goes back to the same what we discussed earlier.

A: Yeah, exactly.

Q: What about and this is my final question. There's so many things you can do to amplify your message, but what would you say, in your opinion, is the most important for increasing your efficiency on Twitter?

A: I'm not sure I understand the question. What do you mean by amplify?

Q: How to amplify, let's say, you have a message and you want to share that with as many people as possible, you want to have more conversation. When it comes to energy efficiency, you want to spread the word on that and get people more interactive with that as well. Because this research that I've been doing is turning out, sometimes feels like into a PhD, I'm trying to narrow it down because I'm only allowed to write 30 pages for the actual text. I'm trying to always figure out, if I could only give a few recommendations for the League of Green Embassies, what would the one aspect be related to what I just said about what they want?

A: Actually, I've got two. One would be, and that's what I've already said before, figure out what you can give your audience, in terms of presents. Don't be too scared to share information that you might consider to be internal, or whatever. It could also be discounts for nature parks, or whatever you can give them. And the second one, that goes especially for Twitter, is make sure that you have a nice mix of tweet types. So, for instance, make sure you have about 50% information-sharing, maybe 10% giving your own opinion, 20% conversations and interactions with other people and maybe 20% retweets of others. So what you want if people look at your timeline, is that there is a rich activity-stream with all kinds of activities, but the main focus should be on the information that you share in that stream.

Q: Yeah.

A: And after that you should start engaging and joining the conversation with influential others and getting people to do stuff. But first you have to earn the right to ask things. And that's step one and step two is that you're going to ask them to engage with you. So, "What do you think about this?" "We've written a new blog post, please give us your opinion or your feedback or maybe you have any suggestions how we can improve this?" In the beginning, nobody is going to do that because they don't know you and you haven't earned a spot in their span of attention yet.

Q: Mischa, you have helped me so much again with further research. I may have to extend this into a PhD, but hey [laughs].

A: [laughs]. Maybe you could just send it in and apply for a PhD. [laughs]

Q: Exactly. This is so interesting, all aspects related to this, I love it. Everything you've told me has been so interesting. So I want to thank you, firstly, it was great to meet you at the Workshop, and now that you agreed to this telephone interview. I'm going to start transcribing everything and if you want, I'm more than happy to send it to you.

A: No, don't bother. You've heard me quite a few times now, I trust your ability to translate my words into paper.

Q: Ok, well even if it is for your interest.

A: That would be nice

Q: Feel free to contact me at any point. If there's something that I can do to you, do let me know.

A: Alright. One more thing comes to mind, I don't know if this will help the cause. I recently met a guy whose very much into online search, search engine optimization. He's actually so good that Google itself has asked him to give workshops on how he does certain things. One of the things he does is he does a lot for charity, for sustainability. He has very, guerilla-like tactics. For instance, he will create a fictitious action group against something and using that action group he will get a lot of internet traffic and media will pick it up. So, he has all kinds of tricks to get your message across and make it to CNN. If they would be interested to meet this guy, I could maybe ask him if he doesn't mind me giving his details to you.

Q: Wow. I think definitely we should be in touch. Same goes the other way around, if the League of Green Embassies wants to go further with this, let's see how it goes. I'm more than happy to recommend you to them too. With everything that you do, because it's very relevant. Your field of expertise is very relevant.

A: I think so too, that's why I'm doing it [laughs].

Q: Exactly. Not just relevant in general, but relevant to the organization that I'm writing this for.

A: Yeah, okay.

Q: Thank you so much for your time. We'll be in contact, and I wish you a very lovely weekend.

A: Alright, same to you.

Q: Thank you so much.







A: Bye

Q: Bye, bye.

Appendix 8: Survey results

LoGE Twitter survey among 39 followers




1. Why did you start following @thegreenleague?

I care about the environment		24 (61.54 %)
I am interested in US Embassy Helsinki		12 (30.77 %)
I am interested in what Ambassador Oreck is up to		7 (17.95 %)
I am member of the League of Green Embassies		8 (20.51 %)
I was involved in the Energy Efficiency Sweep		2 (5.13 %)
Other, namely		5 (12.82 %)
		n = 39 # 58



2. True or false? I started following @thegreenleague on Twitter because they ...

True		8 (20.51 %)
False		31 (79.49 %)
		n = 39 # 39

3. What, in your opinion, is the core message of the League of Green Embassies...

Making monetary profit via energy efficiencies		1 (2.56 %)
Saving the planet		11 (28.21 %)
Making monetary profit via energy efficiencies while simultaneously saving the planet		27 (69.23 %)
		n = 39 # 39

4. Do you read the League of Green Embassies tweets?

Yes		25 (64.1 %)
No		14 (35.9 %)
		n = 39 # 39

5.If not, why not?

(choose n/a if you do read them)

No time		10 (30.3 %)
No interest		1 (3.03 %)
Other, namely		4 (12.12 %)
N/a		18 (54.55 %)
		n = 33
		# 33

**6.On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being entirely disagree, 5 entirely agree) how would...
LoGE tweets are informative (1 - 5)**

1		0 (0 %)
2		0 (0 %)
3		10 (27.03 %)
4		16 (43.24 %)
5		11 (29.73 %)
		n = 37
		# 37

**7.On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being entirely disagree, 5 entirely agree) how would...
LoGE tweets are interesting (1 - 5)**

1		1 (2.7 %)
2		0 (0 %)
3		12 (32.43 %)
4		17 (45.95 %)
5		7 (18.92 %)
		n = 37
		# 37

**8.On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being entirely disagree, 5 entirely agree) how would...
LoGE tweets are useful and provide value to me (1 - 5)**

1		1 (2.78 %)
2		4 (11.11 %)
3		13 (36.11 %)
4		15 (41.67 %)
5		3 (8.33 %)
		n = 36
		# 36

9. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being entirely disagree, 5 entirely agree) how would you rate LoGE tweets by combining professionalism with personality (1 - 5)



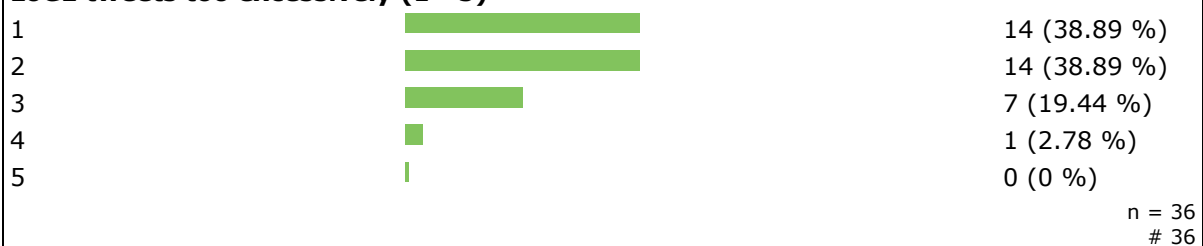
10. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being entirely disagree, 5 entirely agree) how would you rate LoGE tweets are closely linked to its mission (1 - 5)



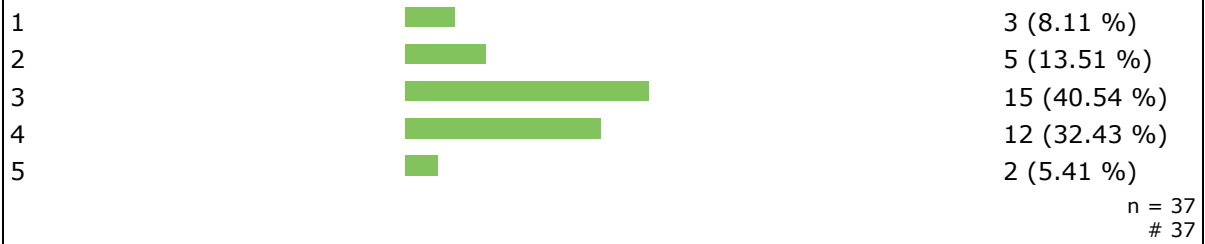
11. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being entirely disagree, 5 entirely agree) how would you rate LoGE markets itself too much on Twitter (1 - 5)



12. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being entirely disagree, 5 entirely agree) how would you rate LoGE tweets too excessively (1 - 5)



13. On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being entirely disagree, 5 entirely agree) how would LoGE tweets motivate me to be greener (1 - 5)



14. What would you like to see more of from the League of Green Embassies Twitter...

