Analyzing the Purpose of Public Communication

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Course

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**Introduction**

Public communication is used where a group or an individual seeks to address a specific issue in the public sphere that is aimed at a specific target audience. Public communication can be undertaken by various forms which include newspaper editorials, a public speaking event, and advertisements among other options. Depending on the purpose of public communication, the piece of public communication may carry various characteristics. In 2016, Cambridge Analytica was a key consultant for President Trump’s presidential campaign. Cambridge Analytica accessed personal data of American citizens on the social media platform, Facebook, for use in driving the campaign. The personal data was accessed illegally. Following the revelation, Facebook founder and CEO, Mark Zuckerberg, released a public statement to address the issue (Rubin, 2018). Mark Zuckerberg was informing Facebook users about the methods that Cambridge Analytica used to access the information and the steps that are being taken to correct and prevent the situation from taking place again in future.

**Discussion**

There are various purposes for releasing a public statement. Facebook CEO’s public statement was targeted at the users of the social media platform. Mark Zuckerberg was informing Facebook users about the methods that Cambridge Analytica used to access the information and the steps that are being taken to correct and prevent the situation from taking place again in future. To begin with, Mark Zuckerberg’s statement by stating that the statement is giving an update on the Cambridge Analytica scandal and the steps that Facebook is taking to address the issue. This beginning tells the audience that the public speaker is not seeking to entertain or persuade the public on the issue but is rather looking to offer an insight into the on-going activities in the investigation.

Second, the public statement made by Zuckerberg has a timeline of the various events that took place. This timeline includes the vision for launching the Facebook platform and a systematic review of the activities leading to the Cambridge Analytica scandal. This seeks to bring the issue into perspective by narrowing down to the specifics of the situation in order to enlighten the users of the problematic areas. Third, there is an outline of the steps that Facebook is taking to prevent the act from repeating in the future. This outline seeks to educate the audience on the necessary steps that Facebook is taking to protect their information. Additionally, Mark Zuckerberg does not appeal to the audience to act in a certain manner or engage in certain activities which negates the purpose of the public statement as a form of persuasion.

The audience should be able to understand the purpose of a public statement to understand the message clearly. By understanding the purpose an audience is able to avoid confusion and adopt the right attitude and mood for the message. This can help in giving back feedback and understanding the subject matter better.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, a public statement is given in the public sphere and is targeted to a specific audience for a specific purpose. Following the Cambridge Analytica scandal, Mark Zuckerberg released a press statement to Facebook users to inform them of the progress being made to protect the users’ personal data. An audience should be able to identify the purpose of a public statement in order to avoid confusion and better understand the message of the speaker.

References

Rubin, M. (2018). Read Mark Zuckerberg's full Facebook statement on Cambridge Analytica. *Quartz*.