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The Strategy of Using Social Networks in the Arab Archives

Elsayed Salah Elsawy
Sultan Qaboos University, eelsawy400@gmail.com

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Introduction

The term "social network" refers to "a community of individuals or organizations in a direct or indirect relationship having common interests or characteristics."[1] Social networks are described as digital when they are online, and online social media platforms support building communities; each member has a profile and communicates with the rest of the members of the virtual community. Social networks are forms of e-communication in which users create communities online to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content. Social networks provide interactive platforms "for individuals, communities and organizations to participate in creating, discussing and modifying content on the Internet."[2] Social media share some common features in that they are interactive Web 2.0 applications on the Internet, and the user engages in content creation, such as text posts, comments, digital photos, or videos.

Most social media platforms are managed by companies that receive little or no money for their services; some of them rely entirely on advertisements. Some social media services offer a special membership with options that can be customized according to the user's needs. For example, YouTube offers a membership option to governments allowing them to post videos longer than their standard ten minutes.[3]

Archives centers are increasingly using their websites and social media platforms to develop and update their information services for users and to confirm their role as important centers of information at the national level. Archivists use social networks to edit and share information and documents that support the role and objectives of the archives centers, to communicate with users who tend to use virtual archival materials, and to facilitate information sharing among users (historians, researchers, genealogists, etc.). Since 2006, the use of social networks in archives centers has increasingly grown, which has brought many benefits to the community of archivists and users.[4]

Archives centers, especially the national ones, have sought to adopt strategies for the use of social networks to increase communication and interaction with users, and to benefit from their views on the development of the information services provided. According to the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA),[5] the term "strategy for using social networks" refers to the rules and guidelines adopted by the archives centers and adhered to by social network users, such as setting controls, adopting a policy, providing training for employees,

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[1] Julie Scheffer, *Médias sociaux et services d'archives: Étude relative à l'implication du réseau des Archives départementales et municipales dans les médias sociaux en France* (Paris: Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication, 2013), 2.

[2] Jan H. Kietzmann et al. "Social Media? Get Serious! Understanding the Functional Building Blocks of Social Media," *Business Horizons* 54, no. 3 (2011): 241, https://www.academia.edu/959458/Social_Media_Get_Serious_Understanding_the_Functional_Building_Blocks_of_Social_Media.

[3] New York State Archives, "Records Advisory: Preliminary Guidance on Social Media," May 24, 2010, www.archives.nysed.gov/records/mr_social_media.shtml.

[4] Bilal Ahmad, "10 Advantages and Disadvantages of Social Media for Society," Techmaish.com, March 10, 2016, https://www.techmaish.com/advantages-and-disadvantages-of-social-media-for-society/.

[5] National Archives & Records Administration (USA). "Social Media Strategy FY17–20," accessed May 16, 2019, http://usnationalarchives.github.io/social-media-strategy/.

observing the behavior of the users of the archives centers' social media platforms, and determining the social media to be used.

In order to avoid repetition, in this study ANA is used to refer to the Arab national archives, which includes the Arab national archives institutions concerned with the collection, organization, and availability of archival material of national importance that has permanent archival and cultural value, while FNA is used to refer to foreign national archives.

Objectives of the study

As part of the efforts of Arab countries to enrich Arab content on the Internet, and the keenness of some ANA to create websites and invest in social networks, this study has two main objectives. First, it seeks to evaluate the use of ANA for social networks (objectives, content attributes, and so on), the existence of a specific strategy for the use of these networks, their objectives, which social networks the ANA selected to achieve these objectives, the guidelines set by the national archives centers to use their social media platforms, and the characteristics of these platforms: content type, update rate, number of users, the main features of their content, which social networks are most commonly used in ANA, and which Arab countries used social networks widely in their national archives centers. Second, the study compares these results to what FNA offer in some developed countries (US, Canada, Australia, UK, France).

Study questions

The study raises the following questions:

- What are the advantages of using social networks in ANA?
- Are there specific and declared strategies for using social networks in ANA?
- What are the characteristics of the content edited and shared by the ANA with their users through social networks (its themes, relevance to archives' activities, services, size, novelty)?
- Which social media are most commonly used by ANA?
- Which ANA most commonly use social networks?
- Do the ANA and FNA seek to archive the content of their social media platforms regularly?

Study approach

The study relied on descriptive methodology to find out how ANA and FNA use social networks, to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the use of social media, and to detect similarities and differences between social platforms in ANA and those in FNA. In addition, a content analysis methodology was used to evaluate the characteristics of national archives' strategies in their use of these networks.

Data collection tools

The study data were collected in the period from May to October 2017, then updated in December 2018, and the researcher used the following tools:

- Web sites for ANA and FNA to identify social media used and rules and guidelines set by the archives centers for the users of their social media platforms.

- Popular social network websites like Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, and Pinterest, to search for ANA accounts.
- A list of questions for social media managers in the ANA and FNA to supplement the data available on their websites and social media platforms. This consisted of six questions, some of which were open, in order to give the group surveyed an opportunity to freely express their views without restrictions. It also included questions about their objectives in using social networks, the benefits gained, selected social media platforms, the numbers and qualifications of staff managing the content of their social media platforms, the type of content being shared, the frequency of updating, and so on. The list of questions was prepared in three languages: Arabic, English, and French, and distributed by e-mail.

Study population

The study population included twelve ANA from the twenty-two Arab countries, which use at least one social media platform. These twelve ANA are: Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Djibouti, Saudi Arabia, Sultanate of Oman, Sudan, Iraq, Palestine, Libya, Egypt, and Morocco. The study population also included five FNA, selected for their social media platforms: the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Canada, and Australia. The goal was to analyze the main features of their social media strategies.

Previous studies

Some studies have addressed the concept of social networks and Web 2.0 applications, their benefits, and their impact on information facilities and archives centers in particular. Among these studies, a 2018 study of the characteristics of social networks[6] indicates that social media plays a critical role in disaster management by disseminating emergency information to a society affected by disaster. It ranks fourth as the most popular means of accessing information in emergencies. A study of government social contacts, also from 2018,[7] shows that social media has provided new environments for individuals and organizations alike to communicate. Platforms provide a variety of democratic functions for government institutions in their capacity to increase transparency and citizen participation.

In 2016,[8] a comparative study of Facebook pages based on a sample of six ANA and three FNA on the Internet revealed that some Facebook pages of national archives centers lacked major components, such as notes, past and upcoming events, videos, photo albums, and users' comments. In 2014,[9] a study on the use of social media in Greek and non-Greek archives centers at the international level revealed that there was extensive use of Facebook, YouTube, and blogs by archives centers.

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[6] Jooho Kim and Makarand Hastak, "Social Network Analysis: Characteristics of Online Social Networks after a Disaster," *International Journal of Information Management* 38, no. 1 (February 2018): 86–96.

[7] Nic DePaula, Ersin Dincelli, Teresa M. Harrison, "Toward a Typology of Government Social Media Communication: Democratic Goals, Symbolic Acts and Self-Presentation," *Government Information Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (January 2018): 98–108.

[8] Abdul Hamid Nada, "Facebook Pages for Arab and Foreign National Archives on the Internet: A Comparative Study," *Egyptian Journal of Information Science* (Beni Suef University) 3, no. 3 (2016): 225–66.

[9] Lina Bountouri and Georgios Giannakopoulos, "The Use of Social Media in Archives," *Procedia–Social and Behavioral Sciences* 147 (2014): 510–17.

In 2013,[10] a study on Canadian archives centers' use of social networks found that in exceptional cases, the archives centers used minimal social media to attract users, on the one hand, and to increase users' participation in managing archival tasks, on the other. A study of social media and archives centers' users in North America and the UK[11] surveyed 695 users of archives centers (faculty, staff, postgraduate students, genealogists, and so on) who use documents in their research. The survey found that they shared information about their research by e-mail, and that their use of archives centers' social media platforms depended on the content users shared and the credibility of the source. The group surveyed included authors, teachers, filmmakers, bloggers, lecturers, and exhibit designers.

A 2012 study of Web 2.0 featured on the websites of Arab archives centers[12] found that at the international level these centers had begun to take actual steps toward the implementation of social media projects with a view to develop services for their users. At the time of this study, ANA were almost nonexistent on Web 2.0 sites and had not benefited from Web 2.0 tools to create new ways to communicate with users. In 2011, a study of the impact of policies on the use of governmental social media[13] found that government agencies increasingly used social media to communicate with the public, and that the use of these media by the government raised significant new challenges, including access and governance, privacy, security, and archiving. A study on the use of social media by archives centers to develop links with family historians (2011) found that the interviewees used social media to serve different purposes.[14] In most cases, these tools were used to maximize access to a wider Internet community. In 2008, a study on the participatory archives center and the wider context of document management revealed that users could be involved in archival tasks using tools such as blogs, podcasts, and social descriptions, and adding new and improved descriptions, abstracts, and links with other documents.[15]

The objectives of this study differ from those of previous studies. This study emphasizes multiple social networks without concentrating on one specific site and covers all the ANA that have social media platforms. It also focuses on the planning or strategic aspects of using social networks in national archives centers.

Study results

The strategy of using social networks in national archives centers

The study found that the FNA in the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and France have clear strategies for using social media platforms, and these strategies are available on their websites. However, the ANA do not have a specific strategy—either on their

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[10] Wendy M. Duff, Catherine A. Johnson, and Joan M. Cherry, "Reaching Out, Reaching In: A Preliminary Investigation into Archives' Use of Social Media in Canada," *Archivaria* 75 (Spring 2013): 77–96.

[11] Ellen Eckert, Merrilee Proffitt, and Bruce Washburn, *Social Media and Archives: A Survey of Archive Users* (Dublin, OH: OCLC Research), http://www.oclc.org/content/dam/research/publications/library/2013/2013-06.pdf.

[12] Elsayed Salah Elsawy, "Web 2.0 Attributes on National Archives Sites and Presidential Libraries on the Internet," *King Fahd Library Journal* 18, no. 2 (May–November 2012): 215–48.

[13] John Carlo Bertot, Derek Hansen, and Paul Jaeger, "The Impact of Policies on Government Social Media Usage: Issues, Challenges, and Recommendations," *Government Information Quarterly* 29, no. 1 (2012): 30–40.

[14] Julie Paterson, "Archives Use of Social Media to Develop Connections with Family Historians," School of Information Science Research Paper, Victoria University, Wellington, NZ, 2011, 1–36.

[15] Isto Huvila, "Participatory Archive: Towards Decentralised Curation, Radical User Orientation, and Broader Contextualisation of Records Management," *Archival Science* 8, no. 1 (2008): 15–36.

websites or on their platforms on social networks—describing the objectives of their use of social media, steps for its implementation, which social networks are used, or who is responsible for planning, execution, and follow-up.

Objectives of using social networks in national archives centers

The study found that FNA's strategies for social networks aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- Identify the national archives center as an information institution and promote awareness of its importance
- Promote awareness of the importance and richness of the documentary heritage in the national archives center
- Tell great stories that strengthen affiliation, identity values, and social participation
- Encourage users' participation in the national archives center's activities and services
- Increase the number of the national archives center's followers and users, through its active presence on social media platforms and by posting interesting content that people like to share on their own pages
- Develop and improve the practice of the national archives center's staff and encourage them to prepare projects using social networks (set goals, select appropriate platforms, improve editorial services and storytelling skills, and so on)
- Collaborate with internal and external partners in creating, sharing, and enriching archival content on social networks

The study found that ANA used social networks, such as Facebook and Twitter, to achieve the objectives outlined in the following table (1):

Table 1
Objectives of Using Social Networks in ANA

No.	Objectives of using social networks	No. of ANA	%
1	Spread awareness of national archives center, collections and services	9/12	75%
2	Communicate more interactively with national archives center's users	6/12	50%
3	Improve the overall image of the national archives center	6/12	50%
4	Interactive presence on the Internet	5/12	41.7%
5	Increase and diversify the national archives center's users and followers	4/12	33.3%
6	Reply to researchers and users' inquiries	3/12	25%

Figure 1
Objectives of using social networks in ANA
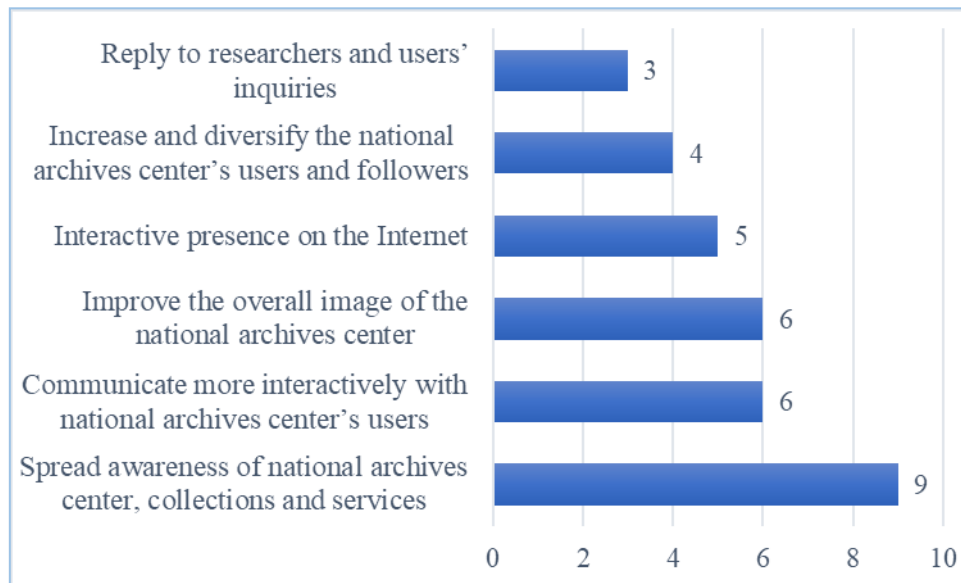
Main features of the strategies for using social networks in national archives centers

The analysis of FNA strategies revealed that their most prominent features are:

At the level of vision and objectives:

- The national archives centers hope to be pioneers in benefiting from social networks to improve the services provided for users, to continue to communicate with them and to involve them in the planning of archival activities and services.
- The national archives centers recognize the importance of social media, and that the archives centers have the greatest impact on the public when they succeed in utilizing social media to their advantage.
- The national archives centers prioritize social media when updating and developing their strategic plan.

At the level of planning:

- The national archives centers do not require any personal information from users on the social networks because these social media platforms are out of archives' control.
- The national archives centers do not participate in any issues related to partisan politics.
- The national archives centers remove any posts that may cause offense to anyone. They reserve the right to prevent any user from posting abusive comments as well.
- The national archives centers do not follow their users on social media platforms, except for the main Twitter users who are believed to belong to the national archives center.
- The national archives centers share on their platforms only the content that is of interest to their users, such as research results and statistics.
- The national archives centers dedicate a qualified team to plan and implement their social networking strategy. This team is responsible for setting tasks, providing guidance to managers and supervisors, selecting employees, and developing their skills in using social media.

At the level of implementation:
- The national archives center signs agreements with social networks, publishing platforms, and content sharing sites, to share content and communicate with more people.
- The main task of the national archives center's social media team is to guide and coordinate with the archivists, hear their ideas, and train some of them in the management of social networks (setting goals, selecting social media platforms, editing, improving storytelling skills, producing graphics and videos, and reviewing the national archives center's platforms to evaluate if the projects will be supported or terminated).
- The team focuses on a few projects to develop deep and powerful content, sometimes using fewer platforms and less sharing.
- The team creates a Data Lab to support staff and improve their social media skills, helping them to share new ideas and develop best practices.
- The team guides archivists and users to use social media properly, teaching them tips for publishing good content, what and when to publish, and how to evaluate the success of social media.
- They update the content of national archives center's social media platforms regularly, especially those followed by large numbers of users.
- They authorize use of the photo library of the national archives center by e-mail if the images are used for any commercial purpose; that is, for purposes other than research or education.

At the level of evaluation and follow-up:
- After each project, the social media team in the national archives center prepares a statistical profile (the number of users who viewed the content, the social media platform they preferred, the device they used, and so on) then presents ideas and recommendations.
- They carry out a periodic survey of the national archives center's platforms and the center's strategy in using social networks.

Websites of ANA

The study found that the number of ANA using social networks is twelve archives centers, or 54.5 percent of the national archives centers of the Arab countries (twenty-two centers): Jordan, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Djibouti, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Sudan, Iraq, Palestine, Libya, Egypt, and Morocco. However, only 59 percent of the ANA have websites available on the Internet, and 41 percent of the ANA do not have websites available on the Internet (Sudan, Somalia, Qatar, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, Palestine, Egypt, Yemen, and Comoros).

Social media platforms for FNA

The following table shows the social media platforms of the FNA and their accounts. This list includes FNA and their branches without regional archives centers and presidential libraries.

Table 2
Social Platforms of FNA

No.	Social media platforms / accounts	National Archives					Total	%
		US	UK	FR	CA	AUS		
1.	Facebook	36	3	2	4	1	46	28.7%
2.	Twitter	18	7	3	4	1	33	20.6%
3.	Blogs	13	1	2	2		18	11.3%
4.	Instagram	10	1	1		1	13	8.1%
5.	Tumblr	8					8	5%
6.	YouTube	2	1	1	2	1	7	4.4%
7.	Pinterest	4	1	1		1	7	4.4%
8.	Flickr	2	1		2	1	6	3.8%
9.	Podcasts	3	1		2		6	3.8%
10.	Storify	1	1	1	2		5	3.1%
11.	Historypin	1	1			1	3	1.9%
12.	Wikimedia		1	1			2	1.3%
13.	LinkedIn		1				1	0.6%
14.	Google+	1					1	0.6%
15.	Dailymotion			1			1	0.6%
16.	Foursquare	1					1	0.6%
17.	Giphy	1					1	0.6%
18.	Google Play	1					1	0.6%
	Total	102	20	13	18	7	160	100%
	%	63.7%	12.5%	8.1%	11.3%	4.4%	100%	

From the above table, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- FNA have used a variety of popular social networks, such as Facebook, to edit, publish, and share information and documents, to post information about events, presentations, archival documents, additions to the collection of documents, and links to other sites, databases, and blogs.
- FNA have used the Instagram platform to share images and videos of documents and exhibitions on the archives center's website, the YouTube platform to watch short videos and highlight interesting stories from the archives center, Tumblr as a microblogging platform, and LinkedIn as a platform to find new jobs and communicate with staff.
- FNA have used lesser-known social media platforms such as Historypin to invite their users to explore the world through images of archival documents. They have also used the Storify platform to present stories based on documents associated with an event, and Pinterest to search and share archival documents.
- FNA used eighteen well-known social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and so on, to reach the largest number of users and followers.
- FNA created 160 accounts on social networks, 102 of them for the US National Archives, or 63.7 percent of accounts (without the presidential libraries that are supervised by the US National Archives). The National Archives of the United

Kingdom created twenty accounts, the National Archives of Canada eighteen, the National Archives of France thirteen, and the National Archives of Australia seven.

Social media platforms of ANA

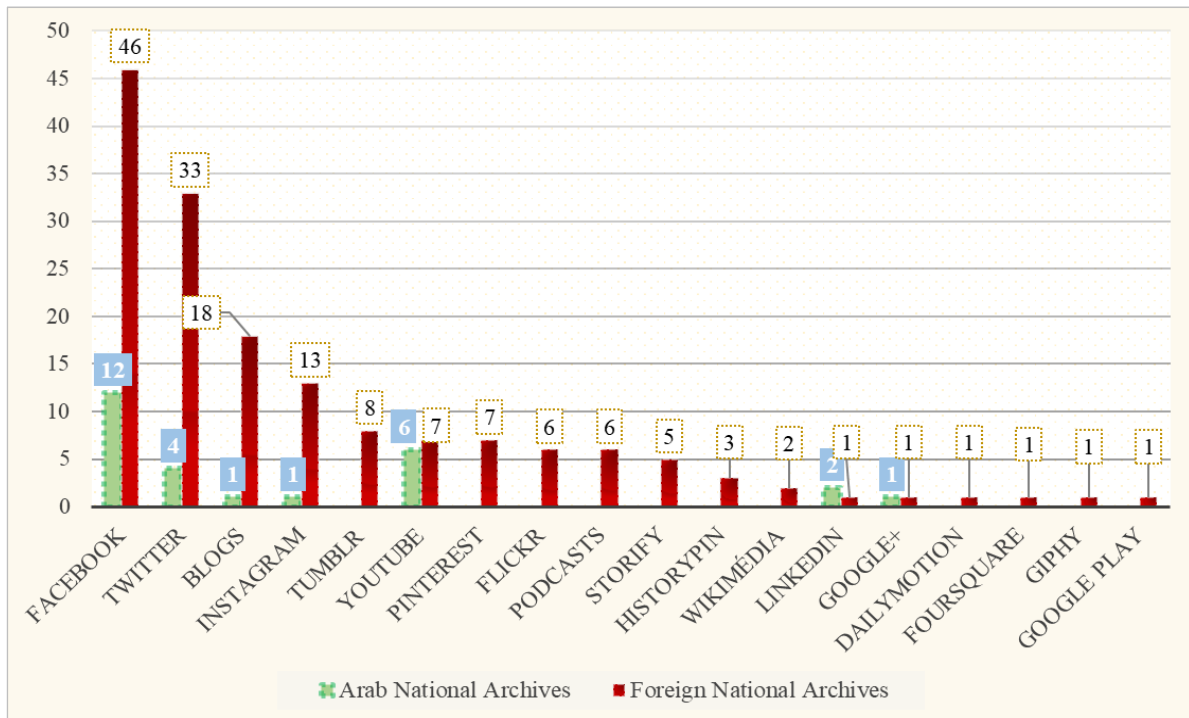The following table shows the social media platforms of ANA:

Table 3
Social Media Platforms of ANA

Social media platforms	National Archives												Total	%
	Jordan	Arab Emirates	Bahrain	Djibouti	Saudi Arabia	Sultanate of Oman	Sudan	Iraq	Palestine	Libya	Egypt	Morocco		
Facebook	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12/12	100%
YouTube		1	1		1	1		1				1	12/6	50%
Twitter		1	1		1	1							12/4	33.3%
LinkedIn		1				1							12/2	16.7%
Instagram		1											12/1	8.3%
Blogs											1		12/1	8.3%
Google+						1							12/1	8.3%
Total	1	5	3	1	3	5	1	2	1	1	1	3	27	
%	3.7%	18.5%	11.1%	3.7%	11.1%	18.5%	3.7%	7.4%	3.7%	3.7%	3.7%	11.1%	100%	

From the above table, the following conclusions can be drawn:
- At the level of Arab archives' use of social media, the Sultanate of Oman and the United Arab Emirates are ranked first with 18.5 percent each, as each country used five platforms. They are followed by the National Center for Archives and Records (Saudi Arabia) and Bahrain's Center for Historical Documents at the Isa Cultural Center. They used three social media platforms with 11.1 percent of the total of social platforms used.
- Twelve ANA used seven social media platforms, while five FNA used eighteen social media platforms.
- The ANA's most popular social media platforms were Facebook 100 percent, YouTube 50 percent, Twitter 33.3 percent and LinkedIn 16.7 percent.

Figure 2
Social Media Platforms of FNA and ANA

The social media platform teams of ANA:

The following table demonstrates how the qualifications of the teams working on social media platforms varied, and how their number varied to suit the number of the archive's social media platforms.

Table 4
Examples of Varying Number and Qualifications of the Teams Working on Social Media Platforms in FNA and ANA

Country	No.	Academic Qualification
Canada	10	Library specialists, archivists, communications and multimedia experts
United Kingdom	5	Archivists, Marketing and Communications
Sultanate of Oman	3	Media
Egypt	2	Archivists, history

Content of social media platforms of national archives centers

National archives centers seek to enrich the content they provide and share on their social media platforms to communicate with their users and provide them with important services. The archival content on social media includes many conversations and questions between followers

or between them and the archivists with hyperlinks to caches of archival documents.[16] The main features of the social media content of national archives centers include:

The types of content national archives centers prefer to share via social media platforms:

The content shared by national archives centers varied on social media (text, images, or video). The following table (5) classifies the content published on the networks into the following categories:

Table 5
The Types of Content on ANA and FNA's Platforms

Content of Archives' Social Media	ANA		FNA	
	No.	%	No.	%
Photos and videos (famous people, events, historical places)	3/12	25%	5/5	100%
National archives centers' events (conferences, visits, exhibitions)	6/12	50%	4/5	80%
Historical documents	4/12	33.3%	3/5	60%
Services of national archives centers	4/12	33.3%	3/5	60%
Creative content inspired by national archives centers' holdings			3/5	60%
Statistics	2/12	16.7%	2/5	40%
Reports and guides (annual reports, etc.)	2/12	16.7%	1/5	20%
Advertising of archival versions of books and publications	5/12	41.7%	5/5	100%

The following conclusions can be drawn from the previous table:
- One hundred percent of FNA publish and share photos and videos on social networks, 80 percent publish national archives centers' events, 60 percent post historical documents, 60 percent list centers' services, 60 percent offer creative content, and 20 percent post reports and guides.
- Fifty percent of ANA give priority to the publication of national archives centers' events (conferences, visits, exhibitions), 41.7 percent list publications of national archives centers (books and brochures), while 33.3 percent offer images of historical documents, and 25 percent images and videos.

The volume of content shared via social media

The following table (6) shows the volume of content ANA and FNA shared on their social media platforms. Jordan, Iraq, and Bahrain were excluded from this inventory because of the confusion of content related to the National Library and the National Archives Center, and most of the content was related to the National Library.

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[16] Pete Schauer, "5 Biggest Differences between Social Media and Social Networking," SocialMediaToday, June 28, 2015, https://www.socialmediatoday.com/social-business/peteschauer/2015-06-28/5-biggest-differences-between-social-media-and-social.

Table 6

Examples of the Volume of Content Shared via Social Media

Social Networks / Accounts	Content	ANA										FNA				
		Emirates	Djibouti	Saudi	Oman	Sudan	Palestine	Libya	Egypt	Morocco	Total	USA	UK	FR	AUS	Total
Facebook	Image	1921	60		1542	5	75	139	675	2489	6906	2728	1942	2779	1809	9258
		27.8%	0.8%		22.4%	0.1%	1.1%	2%	9.8%	36%	100%	29%	21%	30%	20%	100%
	Video clips	220	0		72	0	2	1	6	8	309	174	11	9	19	213
		71%	0%		23.4%	0%	0.6%	0.3%	2%	2.7%	100%	82%	5%	4%	9%	100%
YouTube	Video	79		6	61					73	219	2730	176	165	78	3149
		36%		3%	28%					33%	100%	87%	6%	5%	2%	100%
Twitter	Tweets	5124		447	2006				4	2	7583	33563	11886	7745	4051	57245
		67.5%		5.8%	26.4%				0.2%	0.1%	100%	59%	21%	13%	7%	100%

Figure 3

Examples of the Volume of Content Shared via Social Media
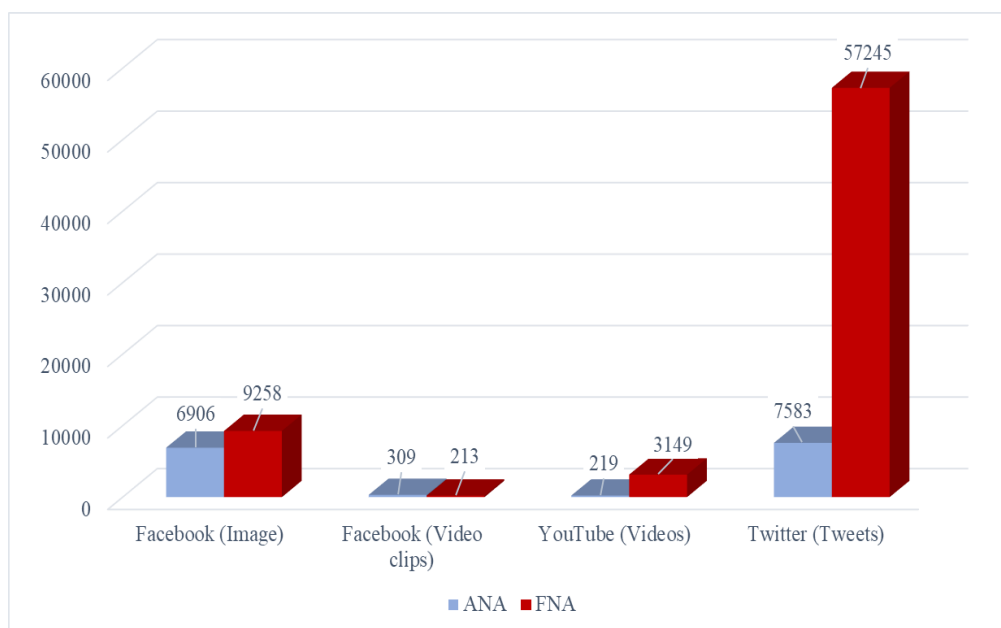
We conclude from the above table that for the ANA, in terms of image content on Facebook, the National Archives of Morocco is ranked first with 36 percent, followed by the National Archives of the United Arab Emirates with 27.8 percent, with the National Records and Archives Authority in the Sultanate of Oman in third place with 22.4 percent. In terms of visual content "videos" on the YouTube platform, the National Archives of the United Arab Emirates comes first with 36 percent, followed by the National Archives of Morocco by 33 percent, and the National Records and Archives Authority in the Sultanate of Oman with 28 percent. With 67.5 percent and vastly outstripping the others, the National Archives of the United Arab Emirates is ranked first among the ANA in tweeting on Twitter.

Updating the content of social media platforms

With regard to the frequency of updating the content of social media platforms in FNA, the National Archives of Canada (NAC) update the content of Facebook and Twitter platforms daily, blogs and photo albums on Flickr weekly, and podcasts monthly. The NAC share YouTube videos only when they become digital, and the videos are usually short. In examining the social media platforms of the ANA, the study observed the following:
- Some ANA are keen to update the content of their social media platforms daily or on a regular basis with breaking news and new events. They include the National Records and Archives Authority in the Sultanate of Oman and the National Archives of the United Arab Emirates.
- Some ANA have not updated the content of their social media platforms for two years or more, such as the Isa Cultural Center (Bahrain) on Twitter (last updated in 2012), the National Archives and Library (Iraq) on Twitter (last updated in 2015) and on Facebook (last updated in 2016), and the Libyan Center for Archives and Historical Studies on Facebook (last updated in 2014), and the Egyptian National Archives (in 2015). This means that the public are not regularly informed about the latest events in the national archives.
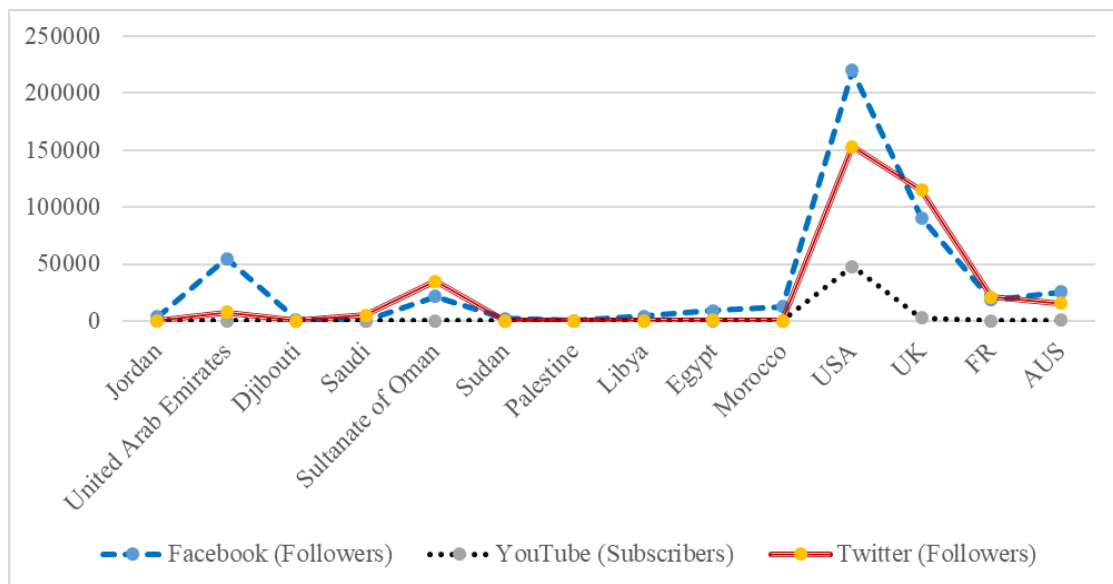
Social media users of ANA

One of the objectives of the FNA in their use of social media platforms is to increase the number of their users who benefit from the services of the archives centers. It is therefore important to know the number of users, subscribers, and followers of the ANA social media platforms, as illustrated in the following table:

Table 8

The Number of Followers of ANA and FNA on Social Media Platforms

Social media platforms		ANA											FNA				
		Jordan	Emirates	Djibouti	Saudi	Oman	Sudan	Palestine	Libya	Egypt	Morocco	Total	USA	UK	FR	AUS	Total
Facebook	Followers	3502	54961	1041		21517	2414	449	4057	9332	12440	98661	220000	90573	18519	25393	317889
YouTube	Subscribers	12	264		78	154					180	304	68804	3543	446	1014	51705
Twitter	Followers		7846		5113	34906				741	13	46444	181643	134704	26692	17926	304500

Figure 4

The Number of Followers of ANA and FNA on Social Media Platforms

Archiving the content of the social media platforms of ANA and FNA

This means that national archives centers tend to archive the social media platforms of the central government departments (Tweets and YouTube videos) with relevant documents. FNA in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom have begun archiving the content of

their social media platforms. In the UK the content of thousands of social contributions was archived in relation to events such as the birth of Prince George and the Diamond Jubilee of the queen to create "snapshots" online. The National Archives UK began archiving a collection of Tweets and videos published by government departments to keep them permanently as official records. In the Arab case, the National Archives of the United Arab Emirates developed a plan for archiving the websites and social media accounts of government entities, which include the website of the archives center itself and its accounts on social media platforms.[17] The National Archives of the United Arab Emirates assert the importance of this step because of the widespread use of social media, whether by decision-makers or by the ministries and official institutions of the state, and the enormous increase in the number of accounts, Tweets, and e-mails.

Discussion of results

Compared with the limited number of users who come to visit the national archives centers, a vast number of users can access the archives' social media platforms, form relationships with other users, and engage in archival activities and services. Archives centers can encourage these interactions by constantly surveying users' views and identifying their needs. In reviewing the study results, the following conclusions and observations can be drawn:

First, regarding social networks use in ANA:

> Only 59 percent of the ANA have websites available on the Internet. Forty-one percent of them do not have websites, and to find a way to connect with their users, some decided to use social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter. Fifty-four point five percent of ANA use social media.

Second, concerning the strategy of using social networks in FNA and ANA:

> FNA are keen to have a clear and specific strategy that controls and directs their use of social networks and defines their vision, objectives, and the principles of planning, implementation, evaluation, and follow-up. By contrast, ANA do not have a specific strategy to define their goals in using the social media, the most important social media projects being planned or implemented, or the rules and regulations to control and guide users of their social platforms.

Third, in terms of the objectives of using social networks in FNA and ANA:

> The objectives of using social networks varied for FNA: to promote awareness of the national archives center and the importance and richness of its documentary heritage, to tell great stories that strengthen affiliation and identity values and social participation, to encourage users' participation in national archives centers' activities and services, and to increase the number of national archives centers' followers and users through active presence on social media platforms and posting interesting content that people like to share on their own pages.

> Seventy-five percent of ANA aim at using social media to inform the public about their tasks and holdings, their role in document protection and the dissemination of documentary awareness. Moreover, 45 percent use their social media platforms to improve their overall image and 50 percent to communicate with their users more actively. A total of 41.7 percent of them use social media to have an interactive presence on line and 25 percent to respond to inquiries. ANA do not prioritize using social media to

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[17] "National Archives Document the Websites of Government Agencies," *Al-Bayan* newspaper, November 8, 2015, http://www.albayan.ae/across-the-uae/news-and-reports/2-15-08-10-1.2433807.

encourage users' participation in archival activities and services or to promote belonging, identity, and social participation by offering ideas and documents and encouraging the public to visit social media platforms and share their views.

Fourth, about social networks and FNA and ANA accounts:

Only five FNA have used social media platforms (a total of eighteen) to reach a large number of users and followers, and have used multiple accounts on the same social network to meet the needs of a specific category of users or to cover a specialized subject, such as educational resources or accounts in more than one language. For example, the National Archives of Canada use two accounts on Flickr, one in English and the other in French. FNA have used less well-known social platforms, such as the "Historypin" platform, through which the national archives center invites participants to explore the world from images of archival documents.

By contrast, twelve ANA have used only seven social media platforms. The most popular ANA using social media platforms are Oman and the Arab Emirates with 18.5 percent each, using five social media platforms. They are followed by National Center for Archives and Records (Saudi Arabia), and Bahrain's Center for Historical Documents at the Isa Cultural Center, with 11.1 percent each using three social platforms.

Fifth, as regards social media content of FNA and ANA:

In terms of the content that the national archives centers preferred to share on their social media platforms, FNA primarily chose images and videos. This choice came in last place for ANA, despite the importance of this type of content for users of social networks. ANA contribute much less to textual and visual content than FNA; some of the leading countries in creating the national archives centers in the Arab world, such as Egypt and Sudan, have contributed very little to the textual and visual content.

Eighty percent of FNA publish and share the events of national archives centers, 60 percent publish historical documents, 60 percent publicize centers' services, 60 percent post creative content and 20 percent post reports and guides. By contrast, 50 percent of ANA shared a selection of their activities and events (conferences, visits, exhibitions), 41.7 percent advertised their publications, 33.3 percent offered historical documents, and 25 percent images and videos.

Sixth, concerning updating social media content of FNA and ANA:

With regard to the rate of updating the content of social media platforms, FNA regularly updates their content. Some of them update their content on Facebook and Twitter platforms daily, blogs and photo albums on Flickr weekly, and podcasts monthly.

Some ANA have not updated or added new contents to their social media platforms for two years or more, such as Isa Cultural Center (Bahrain), which last posted on Twitter in 2012, the National Archives and Library (Iraq), which last posted on Twitter in 2015 and on Facebook in 2016, and the Libyan Center for Archives and Historical Studies, which has not posted on Facebook since 2014. This means that the public is not regularly informed about the latest events in the national archives centers.

Seventh, as for the number of users and followers in FNA and ANA:

This study found that the number of users and followers has increased more significantly in FNA than ANA. The largest number of subscribers and followers in ANA is on Facebook (98,661), Twitter (46,444), and YouTube (304).

However, the number of users and followers of the social media platforms of ANA remains much smaller than that of FNA, which emphasizes the importance of the diversification of content that is published and shared on the social media platforms of the ANA in order to attract the largest number of users. This is a major objective of the ANA management policy.

Study suggestions

In light of the previous results on the use of social networks in ANA and FNA and the suggestions made by their social media teams to implement good strategies for social media projects, officials in ANA should consider adopting the following solutions and propositions:

First, using social networks:

The ANA should benefit from social media as low-cost and easy-to-use tools that can be managed to make national archives centers more transparent and user-oriented, and to increase interaction and communication with users on the Internet and involve them in the planning and evaluation of archives centers' activities and services.

Second, social network strategy:

It would be useful to develop a strategy for using social media in ANA, to publish it on the archives centers' websites and refer to it on their social media platforms. Furthermore, social media should be considered as a part of a broader marketing strategy planned and implemented by the ANA in cooperation with professionals and related entities (associations, professional federations, universities) to develop the content of local history and to raise awareness of the national archives center.

Moreover, the ANA should define the guidelines that help users to benefit from social media platforms effectively, giving priority to the target audience, that is, to understand their needs and opinions. They can start with a simple marketing plan and focus on a few social media. The professional who work with social media in FNA assert that this is the best way to improve knowledge of the existence of the national archives center in the community and to raise awareness of its role and functions.

Third, objectives of using social networks:

In view of FNA priorities in using social media platforms, social media strategy for ANA should set the following priorities: raising awareness of the national archives center and its functions, including the importance of documentary heritage; increasing the number of users of social media; using archival documents in education to promote belonging and identity, community participation, and archival services; and the training of archives' staff on the use of social media platforms.

Fourth, social media content:

The ANA should diversify the content that is published and shared on their social media platforms to cover the following subjects: photos and videos (famous people, events, historical places); archival activities (conferences, visits); historical documents; archival services; stories and creative content inspired by documents; and statistics, reports, and manuals. They should pay special attention to using creative visual elements to attract followers' attention, such as graphics, images, and videos.

Likewise, it would be useful to identify dates, birthdays, cultural events, and major events in national history, and to direct the content (text/graphics/audio/video) that is edited and shared on social media platforms in ANA. Also, they could publish and share examples of archival documents on social media platforms on a regular basis (daily or weekly) to stimulate discussions and the interaction of users and to increase public awareness of documentary heritage. Similarly, it is important to update the content of ANA social

media platforms on a regular basis, especially those with a large number of subscribers and followers.

Fifth, management of social media platforms

The ANA should form social media teams responsible for planning and implementing the ANA's strategy for social media and sharing their ideas and investing in developing initiatives for discussion and participation with followers on their social media platforms. This team should participate actively in the chats with the social media platforms' followers. They can use tools such as Hootsuite or Sprout Social to save time and to draw conclusions about the management of ANA social media platforms. They should archive samples of published and shared archival content on social media platforms, especially those associated with national social events or important events.

Conclusion:

Social media are increasingly being used in national archives centers to enhance their public image and to interact and communicate with users of archival services, especially in countries whose national archives centers do not have sufficient budgets to develop communication strategies. In the Arab case, ANA should realize that success in benefiting from social media means that they can have the greatest impact on the public, which is the first priority in preparing their strategic plan. ANA should share the content that they feel is useful for their users and assign a team to plan and implement the archives' strategy for social networks. The team members should target the development and training of archivists to share professional knowledge on their social media platforms, or train them to prepare a project using social media (setting objectives; selecting a social platform; developing editorial services; working on skills in storytelling, graphics, and video production), and to review platforms to evaluate how social media projects can be promoted, supported, or terminated.

After ANA plan and implement strategies for using social media, they should examine and analyze users' behavior on their social media platforms. To meet the users and followers' needs, ANA should diversify the content that is shared (text, graphics, image, audio, video) and prioritize the most popular social platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, Flickr, and Tumblr. To attract followers' attention, ANA should create visual elements such as graphics, images, and videos, identifying cultural and major events in national history, and directing the content that is edited and shared on their social platforms. It is preferable that samples of historical documents be published on social platforms on a regular basis in order to stimulate discussions and interaction of users and to increase public awareness of documentary heritage.

ANA need to define the basic principles and rules that control and guide the users of their social media platforms. For example, the ANA should not participate in any partisan issues or request personal information from users on social media platforms, because these social media platforms are out of archives' control. Moreover, ANA have the right to delete any posts that cause offense or abuse to anyone.

The Arab documentary heritage in its richness, diversity, and historical depth deserve all the attention of archivists in the ANA. The users who come to visit the archives center should not be the only ones considered; the needs of virtual users who use the website of the national archives center and its social media platforms should be examined and met in light of the legislation and rules governing the work of the national archives centers.

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