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An Ethnographic Study of the Media Consumption Habits of Registered Nurses in the Chicago Designated Market Area (DMA)

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AN ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDY OF THE MEDIA CONSUMPTION HABITS OF REGISTERED NURSES IN THE CHICAGO DESIGNATED MARKET AREA (DMA)

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Requirement for the Degree of
Master of Arts

June, 2009

BY
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In loving memory of my mother, Glenna Jean Van Wagoner Ter Molen
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Chapter 1: Introduction

There has been a nursing shortage in the United States for the past decade, and the Federal Government projects that the need for registered nurses (RNs) will continue to increase as the Baby Boomer generation ages (Donelen, Buerhaus, DesRoches, Dittus, & Dutwin, 2008, p. 143). The disparity between supply and demand creates a competitive recruitment marketplace. While some hospitals attract and retain nurses by offering desirable staffing ratios, educational opportunities, professional development, and other attractive working conditions (Rutkowski, 2007, p. 542), others are at a loss as to how to cost effectively attract applicants in the first place (Sullivan, 2007). Classified listings in the Sunday newspaper used to be the tried and true way of advertising job openings; but with newspaper circulations on the decline (Adams, 2007; Rauch, 2008), recruiters need to consider other options including those that have been traditionally used only by consumer brands.

Because of advertising and marketing, people are familiar with consumer brands like Budweiser, Dairy Queen, and State Farm Insurance. Advertising is the placement of messages in the media with the intention to persuade and/or inform target audiences about an organization’s products or services. With the help of advertising agencies, advertisers develop campaigns that appeal to specific demographic groups in an attempt to make emotional connections between consumers and the products or services being advertised (American Marketing Association, n.d.). When employers develop similar campaigns, it is known as employer branding.
Ambler and Barrow were the first scholars to use the term *employer brand* (Berthon, Ewing & Hah, 2005, p. 153). They defined the term as “the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company,” and they believed that an “employer can be seen as a brand with which the employee develops a closer relationship” (Ambler & Barrow, 1996, pp. 185-187).

Existing research on employer branding and recruitment advertising has primarily been quantitative, relying heavily on questionnaires given to university students (e.g. Allen, Mahto, & Otondo, 2007; Belt & Paolillo, 1982; Collins, 2007; Collins & Stevens, 2002; Feldman, Bearden, & Hardesty, 2006; Gatewood, Gowan, & Lautenschlager, 1993; Roberson, Collins, & Oreg, 2005; Van Hoyle & Lievens, 2007). These questionnaires have often focused on the level of specificity regarding candidate qualifications or corporate descriptions within newspaper or online recruitment advertisements. Some of this research has indicated that employer reputation and image impact perceptions of organizational attributes and attractiveness, which, in turn, affect the likeliness that candidates will complete the application process (Belt & Paolillo, 1982; Roberson, Collins & Oreg, 2005).

Unfortunately, the use of university students as respondents in these studies is problematic since students generally have limited work experience. Therefore, the results of these studies may not translate to other demographic or occupational groups with more experience.

When researchers study the specificity of advertisements, they are studying the creative. Creative is the term for the advertisements themselves: the copy (i.e. the
text), the graphics, the layout, and other audio and visual aspects (Advertising Glossary, n.d; American Marketing Association, n.d). Employers can have artistic, strategic creative, but it is not effective if no one sees it. The process of deciding where to place the creative is called media planning (American Marketing Association, n.d.). Media includes trade publications, consumer magazines, television, radio, Internet, billboards, text messaging, and a plethora of other options. An employer can advertise almost anywhere, and the number of possibilities is daunting. There is limited research available regarding the effectiveness of recruitment advertising based on where the ads are placed, however. Pearce and Tuten (2001) studied how recruiters at Fortune 500 banks use the Internet to recruit management and non-management employees, and they found that banks with strong corporate brands (i.e. consumer brands) had success posting their job openings on the career pages on their own websites\(^1\) whereas lesser known banks depended on job boards such as Monster.com to drive traffic to their career sites. Unfortunately, this study depended on the opinions of recruiters rather than those of job seekers, and studies from the points of view of potential job seekers are needed.

Although the Internet had been in place for decades, average people did not discover it until personal computers became popular in the 1990s (Banks, 2007, p. 34), and it is probably not a coincidence that Ambler and Barrow (1996) introduced the term *employer brand* during this time. Newspapers have lost readers to the Internet (Rauch, 2008, p. 29), and the fragmentation of audiences across all media

\(^{1}\) “Website” is written as one word and as lower case per the APA Dictionary throughout this document, except within quotes when the original authors used other forms such as “Web site.”
requires advertisers to find “new ways to approach brand management and new ways to collaborate with marketing partners” (Garment, 2008, p. 15). The Internet has forced employers who previously depended exclusively upon classified newspaper advertising to manage their employer brands and to advertise across the media spectrum. Yet, scholars have neglected examining how potential job seekers use media and whether or not the advertising venues themselves might affect perceptions of employer brands.

It is not unusual for media consumption to be connected to specific cultures (e.g. Jones, 1990; Davis & Gandy, 1999); and because there is an urgent need for registered nurses, I conducted an ethnographic study of the occupational co-culture of experienced registered nurses living and working in the Chicago designated market area (“DMA 2” hereafter) to discover how the members of this occupation utilize media, to discover whether or not they share these media as an occupational co-culture, to gauge their receptiveness to recruitment advertisements in these media, and to determine if the media vehicles used to deliver recruitment messages impact perceptions of employer brands. If it could be discovered that registered nurses share some media habits as an occupational co-culture and that they are receptive to recruitment advertisements in these media, it would help employers know where to advertise their career opportunities to attract experienced nurses and would help potential candidates receive recruitment messages appropriate for their career goals.

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2 “A DMA consists of those counties whose largest share of viewing is to [television] stations located in that same market area. Non-overlapping DMAs cover the entire continental United States, Hawaii and parts of Alaska. DMAs are used to identify specific media markets for those interested in buying and selling television, advertising and programming” (Nielsen Media Research, n.d.).
Barley (1991) stated that, “Organizational theorists often claim that culture is best understood as a set of assumptions or an interpretive framework that undergirds daily life in an organization or occupation” (p. 39). The daily life of these cultures are made up of cultural elements such as metaphors, rituals, stories, artifacts, heroes and heroines, performances, and values (Eisenberg, Goodall, & Tretheway, 2007, pp. 128-129). But as Barley (1991) points out, we are not constrained only to look at symbolism. Instead, he encourages that researchers focus on the way that members of an organizational or occupational culture “interpret a wide range of phenomena.” His examples include “chairs, air, and sunlight” (p. 53). These are more than symbols. They do not just stand for things. They shape the way that members of a culture understand their meanings and uses (Eisenberg, Goodall, & Tretheway, 2007, p. 128). In this study, newspapers, radio stations, websites, and a variety of other media are the phenomena, and registered nurses provided their interpretations of their meanings and uses for this occupational co-culture.

This study of the Chicago DMA incorporates data from four sources: archival data from The Media Audit³, a quantitative survey of registered nurses, a series of qualitative interviews conducted with registered nurses, and observations made of registered nurses during their work breaks. The Chicago DMA includes the following counties in Illinois: Cook, DeKalb, DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, LaSalle, McHenry, and Will. It also includes the following counties in Indiana: Jasper, Lake, La Porte, Newton, and Porter. According to The Media Audit, they are

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³ Permission was obtained from Bob Jordan, president of The Media Audit, on August 6, 2008 as well as a subscriber, Rada Advertising (via Teresa Morphew and Marianne Kulka), on August 7, 2008.
the only local market qualitative study accredited by the Media Rating Council (The Media Audit, n.d.b), an organization that provides standards and audits of audience measurement services to ensure validity and reliability (The Media Rating Council, n.d.). The Media Audit conducts surveys in over 80 markets in the United States on 450 data points regarding media exposure, lifestyle habits, and demographic and socioeconomic characteristics, and the data is available to advertising agencies, advertisers, and the media (e.g. radio stations) through subscriptions (The Media Audit, n.d.b). The advertising industry often refers to media planning tools such as The Media Audit as syndicated data (Kusomoto, 2002, p. 54). This study utilizes demographic, socioeconomic, and media exposure data from the general A25-54 and the Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry categories of The Media Audit’s 2007 national aggregate occupational release in The Live In Metro-Chicago, IL market. Registered nurses are included in the Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry category along with several other occupations (Appendix Table 1), but data specifically about registered nurses is not available. Therefore, this data is compared to the results of a quantitative online survey that I conducted of 100 A25-54 registered nurses who live and work in the Chicago DMA using SurveyMonkey.com. This survey, which was administered online and was promoted through emails containing a link, collected data regarding general demographics,

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4 Adults 25-54 is a common demographic in both consumer and recruitment advertising.

5 The definition of a Metro is “a city (or cities) whose population is specified as that of the central city together with the county (or counties) in which it is located. The Metro also includes contiguous or additional counties when the economic and social relationships between the central and additional counties meet specific criteria” (Arbitron, n.d.). A Metro is not the same as a DMA. It usually consists of fewer counties. The Media Audit does not list the counties included in its definition of Live In Metro-Chicago, IL.

6 “SurveyMonkey.com is an online survey tool that enables people of all experience levels to create their own surveys quickly and easily” (SurveyMonkey, n.d.).
household incomes, and media preferences. These data are also compared to data derived from 15 qualitative interviews that I conducted in person with A25-54 registered nurses who live and work in the Chicago DMA to provide in-depth information regarding how individual registered nurses consume media, their attitudes toward recruitment advertising in these venues, and whether or not they share these media together in any way. Finally, these data are compared to the data derived from the hand-written notes that I created during 20 hours of observations in the cafeterias of two medical facilities and two restaurants located near an additional medical campus to record how registered nurses used and shared media, if at all.

The combination of the analysis and interpretation of these data were used in an attempt to answer the following research questions:

R1) In what ways does the 2007 national aggregate data of The Media Audit parallel the media exposure of A25-54 registered nurses in the Chicago DMA as indicated by the 100-participant quantitative survey, and in what ways does the data differ, if at all?

R2) What are the idiosyncratic media habits of individual registered nurses compared to the two surveys?

R3) Do registered nurses consume media together as an occupational co-culture? If so, what media and in what ways?
R4) Does encountering recruitment advertisements in media venues preferred by registered nurses influence their perceptions of the organizations’ employer brands? If so, how is this relationship mediated?

R5) Which media venues best lend themselves to recruitment advertising when trying to recruit registered nurses in the Chicago designated market area?

The first three research questions were designed to explore the ways that registered nurses utilize media in relation to each other as well as other adults between the ages of 25 and 54 whereas research questions four and five were formulated to examine how the media used to deliver recruitment messages might be related to perceptions of organizations. These research questions led me to form the following hypotheses, each of which were stated for the purpose of testing the relationships between variables (Babbie, 2007, p. 47).

H1) Although deviations from The Media Audit’s 2007 national aggregate occupational data occur when observing the media habits of individuals, “these things do not happen often enough to seriously threaten the observation of social regularities” (Babbie, 2007, p. 13).

H2) The media habits of registered nurses are related more so to their demographic (e.g. A25-34 of A45-54) and/or their socioeconomic background
(e.g. Hispanic with a household income of $50,000-74,999) than to their occupation.

**H3)** At least in the cases of professional organization media and trade publication media, registered nurses consume media as an occupational co-culture.

**H4)** Registered nurses will be more receptive to recruitment advertisements viewed within their preferred media and that this will lead to positive perceptions of organizations’ employer brands.

Demographics such as A25-54 have traditionally represented target markets and have played a major role in media planning (Cannon & Mertz, 1980, p. 33). When trying to reach the target market of registered nurses, organizations have often used newspapers and nursing journals to promote their career opportunities (Freeman & Carpenter, 1983, p. 7). Of course, the Internet has made a significant impact on the way that employers market their positions as well (Cober, et. al, 2000, p. 480; Feldman & Klass, 2002; Young & Foot, 2006, p. 44). Collins (2007) notes that recent research has been rooted in brand equity theory (p. 180), “defined as the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand” (Keller, 1993, p. 17), but this has been in regards to the creative rather than to the media vehicles utilized to market the brands. The current study approaches recruitment advertising and employer branding from a slightly different angle.
In Chapter 2, I present a review of literature that encompasses a variety of recruitment advertising, employer branding, and other related literature from across several disciplines including advertising, business, communication, and psychology. Lievens, Van Hoye, and Anseel (2007) have previously unified organizational identity and employer image literature under a single framework, and this study also recognizes the value of including multiple perspectives and streams of research. Chapter 3 is the methods section where I further discuss the sources of my data: The Media Audit, the participants in the qualitative and quantitative surveys, and the observation sites. I also introduce the affinity for advertising (Smit & Neijens, 2000) into the recruitment advertising and employer branding literature as a way to examine the receptivity of target audiences, in this case A25-54 registered nurses in the Chicago DMA, to receiving recruitment messages in various media. Additionally, signaling theory, which has been previously utilized by scholars such as Allen, Mahto, & Otondo (2007) in recruitment advertising research when assessing the creative, is used in the current study to examine whether or not target audiences assign attributes to organizations based on the media vehicles they use to deliver the recruitment messages. Finally, my ethnographic method is discussed. Within Chapter 4, the analysis takes place and a number themes emerge that suggest that A25-54 registered nurses in the Chicago DMA may not share media as an occupational co-culture but that they certainly share some opinions about recruitment advertising. Chapter 5 answers the research questions, addresses the hypotheses, and continues the discussion regarding these findings and the emergent themes, and this study
concludes in Chapter 6 with limitations, implications, and suggestions for future research.
Chapter 2: Review of Literature

I begin this chapter by defining employer branding and its components while also drawing comparisons with consumer branding. Next, I discuss that much of the current body of literature is problematic for its reliance on student participants, but I also highlight a small number of studies in which the use of students was appropriate. The following collection of literature reveals the importance of considering an organization’s own employees when making advertising decisions since corporate communications create expectations that must be met by the job and organization. Some of this literature is specific to the health care industry, an industry in which communicating a unique employer brand is shown to be of the utmost importance. Thereafter, this chapter moves into a discussion of literature on the use of the Internet in the realm of recruitment advertising and employer branding. While setting the stage for the methods outlined in Chapter 3: Methodology, this chapter concludes by acknowledging that qualitative data provided by actual or potential job seekers is needed and that media other than the Internet has often been neglected in these studies.

It is expected that, despite the declining U.S. economy, there will continue to be a labor shortage (Miller, 2008). This labor shortage is not restricted to nursing or healthcare. It spans various occupations from service employees (Berta, 2006; Fosse, 2007; Prewitt, 1997; Verdon, 2007) to professionals in the knowledge economy who work as computer scientists and engineers (Ewing, Pitt, de Bussy, & Berthon, 2002, p.7). Because attracting and retaining key talent “is a driver of business success” (McKenzie & Glynn, 2001, p. 22) and because the competition for this talent is fierce
(Gaddam, 2008, p. 50; Van Hoye & Lievens, 2007, p. 2024), some organizations are becoming increasingly aware of the need to enhance their attractiveness to entice potential applicants (Highhouse et al., 1999, p. 152). Corporations such as Siemens, Honeywell, Accenture, Deloitte, Coca-Cola, Roche, Yahoo, Johnson and Johnson, and Starbucks have formally defined their employer brands (Moroko & Uncles, 2008, p. 160) because they recognize that strong employer brands can attract some of the most desirable employees while also offering “significantly lower salaries than competitors with weaker employer brands” (Ritson, 2002, p.18). Additionally, employer brands help with retention (Moroko & Uncles, 2008, p. 160) by creating an identity held among current employees (Gaddam, 2008, p. 46). Airliner, easyJet increased its employee satisfaction from 68% to 82% over the course of a year through branding initiatives (Smedley, 2007, p. 12). Although a properly managed employer brand will not end the overall labor shortage, it may decrease the impact of the labor shortage for some organizations.

Employer branding has been defined as “something concrete” (Moroko and Uncles, 2008, p. 163), combining an organization’s culture, internal marketing, and corporate reputation into one term (Amber & Barrow, 1996, pp. 188-192). The element of culture is comprised of the values of an organization that define its purpose, strategy, and/or corporate identity (Ambler & Barrow, 1996, p. 188; Lipton, 1996). Every organization has a culture. For example, the culture at GE is one in which employees have to take their work seriously, respect their peers, show deference for authority, and demonstrate deliberateness. When individuals choose an employer, they are not just choosing a job because these values, which may be unique
to an organization, will affect every aspect of a company, and therefore, they are also choosing a way of life. When employees claim the values of their organization as their own, they perpetuate these ideals and identify with the employing company (Deal & Kennedy, 2000, pp. 4, 9, 16, 17, 31). These values are often shared with employees through internal marketing. Internal marketing is, “marketing to employees of an organization to ensure that they are effectively carrying out desired programs and policies” (Ambler and Barrow, 1996, p. 189; American Marketing Association Dictionary, n.d.). Reynolds (1987), for example, described a computer company’s failed attempt to change its culture through a two-page values document, but corporate communications can successfully embody an organization’s culture and can be sent through many channels such as mediated interpersonal communications (i.e. email) or newsletters (Eisenberg, Goodall, & Tretheway, 2007, p. 335; Lee, Gombeski, & Doremus, 1991, p.62). Organizational culture, company policies, and CEO leadership affect corporate reputation (Ambler & Barrow, 1996, pp. 189-191). Together, these elements should set an organization apart from its competition (Moroko and Uncles, 2008, p. 164), potentially creating a competitive edge (Fernon, 2008, p. 47; Moroko & Uncles, 2008, p.160). Organizations that are successful in managing their employer brands (and not all organizations are) can build relationships between these employer brands and potential job seekers (Moroko & Uncles, 2008, pp. 163-164).

*Brand relationship* is an advertising term that grew in popularity in the 1990s (Heath, Brandt, & Nairn, 2006, pp. 412-413). Regardless of an advertiser’s efforts to build positive brand relationships, however, many advertising campaigns fail (See
Adamy, Jargon, & Lublin, 2007, p. A1 & Lombard-Platet, 2007 for examples of advertising campaign failures). Nevertheless, Ambler and Barrow (1996) suggest that employer brands need to be managed in much the same way as consumer brands (p. 187), although Moroko & Uncles (2008) question which successful consumer advertising tactics might translate to employer branding campaigns because they also wonder whether or not employer brands might be experienced differently than consumer brands (p. 161). How to communicate employer brands to potential job seekers remains contested. Scholars agree that recruitment ads, “must arrest attention, capture interest, instill desire, and provoke action,” but they don’t agree on how to achieve these goals (Belt and Paolillo, 1982, p. 106). Breaugh and Starke (2000) summarize several recommendations by scholars such as Tybout and Artz (1994) who suggest that messages should include vivid images and concrete language and Chaiken and Stangor’s (1987) suggestion that messages should provide “personally relevant information” (Breaugh & Starke, 2000, p. 410). Unfortunately, there isn’t one proven formula of success. Despite the large amount of money organizations spend on recruitment advertising, there is simply limited research available (p. 429), particularly about where the potential job seekers see and hear recruitment advertisements. But despite the exigent need for this research, recruitment advertising and employer branding literature has neglected studies that have engaged with experienced employees to discover just that.

Instead, research has focused primarily on student participants’ perceptions of organizations in fictional scenarios. For example, Belt and Paolillo (1982) enlisted 218 graduate and undergraduate students to rank 20 fast food restaurants based on
their perceived corporate images after viewing six recruitment advertisements that presumably had appeared in newspapers. The authors argue that fast food restaurants are relevant because college-aged adults often work in fast food and because they often frequent these types of establishments (p. 107) although they don’t indicate that any of their participants actually fit these assumptions. Their results indicate that organizations with high corporate images may generate a response even when their recruitment advertisements lack specificity and that low corporate images might cause potential applicants not to apply (p. 110). This is consistent with Roberson, Collins, and Oreg’s (2005) findings based on questionnaires completed by 171 undergraduate students in a human resources class after reviewing faux recruitment brochures indicating that organizations that manage their corporate brands with advertising are able to attract larger quantities and more qualified candidates than employers who don’t advertise (p. 710). Perhaps contradicting these findings, Freeman and Carpenter (1983) found that economic information was the most likely element to convince 20 associate’s degree-prepared and 21 bachelor’s degree-prepared nursing students to respond to hypothetical newspaper advertisements, but the authors also recognize that space limitations in newspaper advertisements inhibit the ability of advertisers to provide a significant amount of information about the work environment and that the absence of this specificity might have inflated the importance of the economic information in their study (p. 12). This is certainly possible since research has shown that perceptions of an organization are based on “the information available to an individual at a given time” and that the specificity of recruitment advertisements can impact perceptions of organizations (Gatewood,
Gowan, & Lautenschlager, 1993, p. 424). For example, Feldman, Bearden, and Hardesty (2006) depended on questionnaires completed in two studies by 272 undergraduate students in business administration courses and then an additional 190 undergraduate students in their senior year to make the case that the specificity of recruitment advertisements increase participants’ perceptions of an organization’s informativeness, truthfulness, and job appropriateness as well as overall attitudes toward the company. Although interesting results, this study once again utilized students. Likewise, Berthon, Ewing, and Hah (2005) argued that because undergraduate and graduate students nearing graduation are “prime candidates for employer advertising and recruitment campaigns” that they were ideal participants in their six focus groups (p. 157). And if the authors’ study was about the recruitment of students or recent graduates, this argument might carry more weight. But since their study’s purpose was to create an employer attractiveness scale for use in future employer branding studies, the use of students can once again be questioned.

Student participants are relevant in some studies such as in Blackman’s (2006) research utilizing final-year commerce students who rated advertisements with the word graduate in the headings as most attractive; Collins’ (2007) study of the impact that knowledge of employers and products have on students’ intent to apply for positions at organizations that actively recruit on college campuses; Collins and Han’s (2004) study of on-campus early recruitment practices on recruitment outcomes; and Gatewood, Gowan, and Lautenschlager’s (1993) study of the way college juniors and seniors perceive corporate and recruitment images after reviewing advertisements in an annual college recruitment publication. However, researchers
who conduct studies that aren’t specifically about college or new graduate recruiting practices would be wise to draw upon experienced employees since organizations generally seek experienced candidates.

Fortunately, there are at least a small number of studies that do include experienced employees. Gilly and Wolfinbarger (1998) conducted a study utilizing focus groups and in-depth interviews with employees at four companies in the service and manufacturing industries in a rare study of the impact of organizations’ consumer advertising on existing employees’ perceptions of their own organizations. They argue that current employees are an internal audience of an organization’s consumer advertising and that employees evaluate their organizations’ advertising for accuracy, value congruence, and effectiveness. They also argue that employees’ perceptions of these advertisements cause any one of four outcomes: role conflict (e.g. the organization over-promises services that the employees don’t feel they can deliver), organizational pride, organizational identification, or organizational commitment. However, organizational decision makers (i.e. management) often perceive their organizations’ advertising differently than their colleagues of lower organizational social classes (pp. 74-85). The insights provided by the informants in Gilly & Wolfinbarger’s (1998) study are detailed and thoughtful; but as Babbie (2007) reminds us, focus groups are directional and data derived from them might not be representative of larger groups since members aren’t recruited through probability sampling (p. 308).

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7 Experienced new hires have been evaluated higher than inexperienced new hires regarding their “technical skills, job expectation, and likelihood of success” (Rynes et al, 1997, as cited by Breaugh & Starke, 2000, p. 422).
Yet, these results suggest that employers’ need to consider the possible affects their advertising might have on their current employees because they “should not only focus on creating positive employer image perceptions in applicant populations, but should foster a favourable [sic] perceived employer image among employees” (Van Hoye, 2008, p. 366). Tapping into the opinions and expertise of current employees before making advertising decisions is a way organizations could make their advertising more accurate and congruent (p. 86), which is key in establishing brand relationships between employees and organizations. The qualitative research design of Gilly and Wolfinbarger’s (1998) study yields itself to insights from the perspectives of current employees rather than students or potential job seekers, and it has valuable recommendations for the retention of employees although it doesn’t address recruitment, which is the focus of the current study.

Solely addressing recruitment, McKenzie and Glynn (2001) introduced a case study revolving around an investment bank that employs thousands of technologists. Their focus was on how formal and information communication was used to express the employer brand of the organization (p. 22). Once this organization’s recruitment story, the realistic expectation of what an employee would actually experience after joining the firm, was conceptualized, it was embedded in their corporate advertising (p. 23). In the case study, any time the recruitment story was told to a group either in writing, such as in collateral materials (e.g. brochures) or on the Internet, or when the recruitment story was vocalized by a spokesperson, the communication was considered formal. Informal channels were considered to be face-to-face interactions that took place at open houses or through third-party recruitment partners such as
head hunters (McKenzie & Glynn, 2001, p. 24). All of the employees who would have contact with applicants were provided briefings or training about the newly defined recruitment story and its importance. The results of interweaving the recruitment story into their corporate communications were a 60 percent increase in the acceptances of offers, a decrease in the amount of time for these offers to be accepted, and an increase in minority hires (pp. 22, 25). These are impressive results, but the authors don’t report how long it took to achieve these increases. Another missing aspect of this otherwise compelling case study is how they determined that the results were directly linked to the changes they had made in presenting their recruitment story. The authors acknowledge that the recruitment successes could have been the result of a “change in the mood of the recruitment market” rather than because of their “good practice,” however (p. 25). Previous research by Ullman (1966) who was one of the first scholars to study recruitment sources found that new employees who had been recruited through informal sources such as employee referrals were less likely to turnover than new employees who had been recruited through formal sources such as newspaper advertisements (Breaugh & Starke, 2000, p. 419), so it is logical that that a combination of these sources could be successful in recruitment. However, it seems that McKenzie and Glynn could have put in place periodic measures throughout the recruitment process, especially since they solicited

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8 I have chosen not to review the entire body of recruitment source literature since much of it pertains to sources such as employee referrals, direct applications, and placement offices rather than recruitment advertising, which is the focus of this study. When advertising appears in this literature, it is usually newspaper since much of the literature was written prior to or at the beginning the explosion of the Internet. For other examples of this literature, see Kalleberg et. al (1996), Vecchio (1995), and Williams et. al (1993).
qualitative feedback from successful hires. This additional data would have added validity to an already important contribution to the literature.

The recruitment story is also known by the terms employer brand promise (Fernon, 2000, p. 47) or realistic job preview (RJP⁹), and its purpose “is to encourage (implicitly or explicitly) the individual to think very carefully about whether the job/organization will be a good fit” (Wanous & Reichers, 2000, p. 441). As Gaddam (2008) candidly wrote, “Employer branding is not about people wanting to hear soft and fuzzy things. It is about disclosing the realities of the corporation and conveying its essence” (p. 49). When an employer delivers on the promises in its recruitment story, it has the potential of building commitment and loyalty with existing employees (p. 47). For example, Van Hoye (2008) conducted a survey of 112 nurses in four Belgian non-profit nursing homes in the same ownership group and found that nurses were willing to recommend their employer to others and were willing to provide testimonials in recruitment materials when they had a high perceived image of their employer (Van Hoye, 2008, p. 372). Therefore, every employee must be seen as a brand ambassador (Employer Branding Vital, 2007, p. 52), and employers’ brands must “align with the reality that exists for employees” (Gaddam, 2008, p. 49).

Freeman and Carpenter (1983) assert that the goal of health care recruitment advertisements is to “convey an impression that the hospital is a desirable place to work” since salaries and benefits are similar among medical facilities (p. 8). This may

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⁹ I have chosen not to review the extensive RJP literature here because when it addresses advertising, and it does not always, it primarily addresses the creative rather than media placement. For example, Colerelli (1984) compared brochures versus face-to-face contact and Wanous & Reichers (2000) examined new employee orientation programs.
be easier for some organizations than others because some organizations are already plagued by negative corporate images. Arnold et. al (1983) conducted an especially interesting study regarding the corporate image of the National Health System (“NHS” hereafter) in the United Kingdom. This qualitative study included 231 potential employees (students and individuals who had left their professions but who might be willing to return) in nursing, physiotherapy (i.e. physical therapy), and radiology with the goals of exploring perceptions of the NHS, the sources of these perceptions, the extent to which potential recruits identified with the NHS, and to suggest how the NHS could improve its reputation to support its recruitment efforts (p. 227). The researchers utilized focus groups and interviews, and a number of negative themes emerged: a) “continuing staff shortages and work pressure,” b) “lack of funds and/or other resources,” and c) long patient waiting lists (p. 229). However, there were also positive themes including: a) free health care for all, b) team work, c) job security/availability of jobs, and d) ability to move to another geographical location within the agency (pp. 229, 231). Because the majority of the population in the United Kingdom uses the NHS for their personal health care and because the NHS is the United Kingdom’s largest employer (p. 225), personal experience had a significant impact on the images the participants held of the NHS (p. 231). However, the participants identified the media as their primary source of images regarding the NHS, in particular television news although magazines and newspapers were also mentioned (p. 225), and they most frequently mentioned television recruitment advertisements when they expressed their awareness of the formal recruitment sources of the agency although many of the participants weren’t aware that the NHS
promoted itself at all. Participants also noticed additional “publicity” in other media such as newspaper, magazines, and radio, particularly when the advertisements promoted open houses or the celebration of a professional recognition week (e.g. Radiography Awareness Week). Some of these advertisements were viewed positively, but the researchers found that the perceptions of the NHS were still negative overall and that these perceptions were likely “contributing to the existing problems of recruitment and retention in the nursing, physiotherapy, and radiography professions and probably [italics added] other occupations as well” (pp. 232, 234).

This particular study did not conduct follow-up focus groups and interviews to ascertain whether or not the participants joined the organization and how their perceptions of the NHS affected their decisions. However, the authors made several recommendations to the NHS in order to improve their image. They had determined that negative images were salient in the media except when there was a conscious effort by the NHS to blend these negative images with positive publicity including recruitment advertising (p. 232), and the essence of their recommendations was to continue to combat these depictions with positive images such as the spirit of teamwork and lesser-known services that also receive less negative press such as home health care (p. 235) since positive publicity improves perceptions of organizations (Collins & Stevens, 2002, p. 1130). Organizations obviously have more control of their own communications such as recruitment advertising (Van Hoye & Lievens, 2007, p. 2028), and these communications are logical vehicles for delivering positive messages (Van Hoye, 2008, p. 367). Allen et. al (2003) conclude that there is an “interplay between image, reputation and identity” and that the NHS faces several
issues when attempting to manage its corporate reputation (pp. 235-236). The corporate reputation is just one part of the employer brand, however, and the acute need of this particular organization might warrant a large scale rebranding campaign, which is possible according to Van Hoye and Lievens (2005) who found in their study of 100 I/O psychology graduate students that recruitment advertisements and positive word-of-mouth can improve perceptions of organizations that have experienced negative publicity (p. 184).

Whether an organization has a new recruitment story to tell or is reinforcing its already strong employer brand, its ability to convey detailed information about the company, its philosophy, its benefits, and its job openings seems to be of paramount importance, but to do so organizations need a medium that allows them maximum space and exposure. Although newspaper was once the most important medium for recruitment advertising (Lawrence, 1972 as cited by Belt & Paolillo, 1982, p. 105), newspapers are losing circulation to the Internet (Bloomberg News, 2008, p. C3; Rauch, 2008, p. 29), which is now one of the most utilized sources of recruitment information for job seekers (Backhaus, 2004, p. 116). Organizations now use online job boards such as Monster.com, Careerbuilder, and Yahoo! HotJobs along with job postings on their own corporate websites. No longer are organizations faced with the space restrictions inherent in newspaper advertising or the binding limitation of the 30-second television spot, for the Internet provides ample space for building brand relationships between potential job seekers and employer brands.

A study of recruitment sources published by The Bureau of National Affairs in 1988 and cited by Breaugh and Starke (2000) found that employers frequently used
“newspaper ads, employee referrals, and direct applications” when recruiting employees in the “office/clerical, production/service, professional/technical, commission sales, and managers/supervisors categories” (p. 412). But times have changed, and it’s estimated that 90% of large employers now use the Internet for recruiting employees (Anderson, 2003 & Cappelli, 2001 as quoted by Thompson, Braddy, & Wuensch, 2008, p. 2385; Allen, Mahto, & Otondo, 2007, p. 1697; Backhaus, 2004, p. 116; Young & Foot, 2006, p. 44). The immediacy of the Internet allows recruiters to receive resumes the same day they post open positions, and the large number of applications generated by the Internet provides a greater chance to find the best-qualified candidates (Rudich, 2000, p. 21; Pearce & Tuten, 2001, p. 10). Additionally, employer profiles on sites such as Monster.com offer organizations the opportunity to share the “information necessary to understand the organization as an employer” (Backhaus, 2004, p. 116). However as with other forms of recruitment communications, employers need to be aware that the employer brands they project are psychological contacts, and organizations are wise to present a balanced view of their career opportunities and work environments (Young & Foot, 2006, pp. 65-66).

According to Backhaus (2004), high-tech organizations such as software firms rely heavily on descriptions of their activities, markets, and products to attract applicants, whereas service firms such as restaurants and retail outlets focus on guaranteed training and advancement opportunities as well as fun working environments to attract applicants (pp. 123-126). She determined this by creating and testing “a method for classifying corporate recruitment messages through content analysis” (p. 130), and she concludes that despite the differences among industry
categories, there are few differences among firms within categories suggesting that “the employer branding strategy has not successfully taken hold” (p. 131). However with at least 100,000 separate online job boards (Murphy, 1999, p. 13; Pearce & Tuten, 2001, p. 1), these findings, which are based on merely 20 randomly selected text-only corporate descriptions on a single online job board, might not be representative of corporate descriptions overall. In contrast, Young and Foot (2006) conclude that the majority of Fortune 500 companies use content such as value propositions10, objectives, and credentials on their career sites (the career pages of their websites) to try to “sell” their companies as employers and to establish themselves as employers of choice (pp. 45, 64). Organizations should nevertheless be cautioned because Allen, Mahto, and Otando (2007) state that the level of job information plays a role in the perceived attractiveness of an organization and increases candidates’ intentions to apply (p. 1704). And since Internet job hunting is second only to personal networking for candidates actively seeking positions (Feldman & Klaas, 2002, p. 182; Thompson, Braddy, & Wuensch, 2008, p. 2385) and because the only interaction potential job seekers might have in the early stages of the recruitment process are with an organization’s website (Allen, Mahto, & Otondo, 2007, 1700), employers should “make information readily available” (Collins & Stevens, 2002, p. 1131). This gives potential job seekers the upper hand, however,

10 An employee value proposition is what an employee receives for working at a company. One example from Young & Foot’s (2006) study is the following claim from Microsoft’s website, “Microsoft provides one of the most flexible and comprehensive benefit plans around…Our benefit plan and resources are designed to keep our most important assets—our employees—healthy, happy, and moving forward at optimal speed” (p. 57).
because they can either approve of or rule out organizations that don’t seem to be a good fit for them without ever actually speaking to a recruiter.

Since organizations might not get a second chance to engage a potential job seeker, Thompson, Braddy, and Wuensch (2008) assert that aesthetics such as “the formatting attractiveness of online job ads and organizational website usability” are essential in swaying potential job seekers to complete the application processes (p. 2394). Therefore, Backhaus’ (2004) decision to view text-only corporate descriptions to avoid “confounding variables presented by other Web page [sic] innovations like hyperlinks, videos, photos, and other graphics” (Backhaus, 2004, pp. 120-121; Dholakia & Rego, 1998) overlooks the fact that text alone does not depict an employer brand. Thompson, Braddy, and Wuensch (2008) attempt to explain the role of aesthetics on participants’ intentions to apply for jobs after viewing a fictitious organizational website through the aperture of psychology’s signaling theory, which claims that the interactions between recruiters and candidates shape job seekers’ impressions of organizations and impact their intentions to apply (p. 2388). In their scenario, they replace the recruiter with the organizational website as the representative of the employer, and their findings indicate that formatting attractiveness is actually more important than website usability. Their findings reinforce Allen, Mahto, and Otondo’s (2007) assertion, also derived through the lens of signaling theory, that actual (rather than fictitious) organizational websites might have a stronger affect on potential job seekers than their interactions with recruiters (p. 1705). When organizations fail to recognize the importance of the aesthetic elements and neglect these aspects of their brands, it gives potential job seekers
license to downgrade the organizations as less desirable than competitors that actively
manage the colors, graphics, and other audio/visual elements of their online
recruitment communications.

This isn’t to say that text-only online recruitment communications aren’t
valuable on their own. Pearce and Tuten’s (2001) study of the way recruiters at
Fortune 500 banks utilize the Internet to market their open positions found that banks
with strong corporate brands that are well-known in their geographical markets were
able to attract potential job candidates using the career pages on their own websites
whereas banks with less well-known corporate brands in their geographical markets
depended heavily on Internet job boards, which are laden with text-only job
advertisements, such as Monster.com in order to drive traffic to their websites (p.15).
Unfortunately, they make these claims based on recruiters’ opinions of the success of
their recruitment advertising, but they don’t define what success means and if it
means the same thing to all of the recruiters. Is success the number of qualified
applicants, the number of job offers made, or the number of job offers accepted?
Their research also doesn’t consider the fact that online job boards are places where
organizations compete against their rivals for candidates whereas organizations’ own
websites offer exclusivity and that these items might influence their findings, but
Yaveroglu and Donthu (2008) looked at this dynamic through online banner
advertising and found that organizations achieve greater click-through rates when a
single creative is repeated in a competitive environment but that rotating various
advertisements on noncompetitive websites achieves more click-throughs. They also
state that advertising repetition creates greater brand recall and intention to click, that
content-relevant websites increases ad recall, and that a single ad repetition strategy is more effective on content-relevant websites (p. 41). This research highlights the importance of both the advertising vehicle (e.g. a website) and the creative (i.e. the actual advertisement), indicating that both have the potential of impacting employer brands.

Although recruiters tend to favor job openings on their own websites (Pearce & Tuten, 2001, p. 16), they need to advertise on other sites to drive traffic to their career pages. There is no sure way to know which websites will be most effective and this “can be one of the most challenging aspects of web-based recruitment” (Schreyer & McCarter, 1998, p. S6; Cober et. al, 2000, p. 490). Cober et. al (2000) recommend that gaining feedback from online job seekers is essential in order to keep up with the ever-changing Internet environment (p. 490). I agree, as I have previously mentioned, that data from actual or potential job seekers would yield relevant and insightful data, and I also recognize that the current body of online recruitment research has depended heavily on quantitative data gathered from questionnaires given to university students rather then actual job seekers (e.g. Allen, Mahto, & Otondo, 2007; Collins & Stevens, 2002; Thompson, Braddy, & Wuensch, 2008; & Yaveroglu & Donthu, 2008). This is exactly why I have interviewed experienced registered nurses in the Chicago DMA regarding the ways they use the Internet for this study. Of course, recruitment advertising can be found in media other than the Internet or even newspaper, but scholarly research has largely ignored professional association media, trade publications, consumer magazines, radio, television, outdoor/out-of-home (e.g. billboards, transit advertising, and other signage), and the majority of websites and
other new media (e.g. podcasts and text messaging). And because “we still do not
know a great deal about why recruitment activities have the effects that they do”
(Breaugh and Stark, 2000, p. 430), this study attempts to scratch the surface of this
media menagerie by letting registered nurses evaluate these media in their own words
as possible venues for recruitment advertising and employer branding campaigns.
Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter outlines the methods I utilized in order to determine which media registered nurses in the Chicago DMA consume, whether or not these media are shared by registered nurses as an occupational co-culture, and which media lend themselves best for recruitment advertising and employer branding purposes. To make these determinations, this study depended on data from four sources: quantitative archival data from a proprietary database called The Media Audit\(^{11}\), data collected from a quantitative survey administered through SurveyMonkey.com\(^{12}\), data collected from 15 qualitative interviews, as well as data collected during 20 hours of observations. As I explain throughout this chapter, each of these sources of data is quite different. Yet together, they complement each other and create a vivid representation for this ethnographic account.

This chapter begins by chronicling the recruitment of participants and by detailing their age demographics, races, and socioeconomic statuses. Next, I explain why the quantitative and qualitative methods were chosen, and I detail the data collection. This is followed by a description of the coding procedures and a discussion about how the data was compared and contrasted before this chapter concludes with a summary of the theoretical base and ethnographic method of this study.

\(^{11}\) The Media Audit is a proprietary database of information relevant to media planners covering demographics, socioeconomics, and lifestyles (The Media Audit, n.d.b).

\(^{12}\) SurveyMonkey.com is a website that allows users to create and conduct online surveys (SurveyMonkey, n.d.).
Participants

Participants for the quantitative survey administered through SurveyMonkey.com and the qualitative interviews were recruited using the snowball sampling technique. This sampling technique is used primarily for exploratory studies because the representativeness of the sample compared to the overall population cannot be guaranteed when participants are found through a referral process (Babbie, 2007, p. 185). Initial contacts were acquaintances as well as those made through a number of nursing professional organizations, academic organizations, and medical facilities. Contacts were sent an email that explained the study, asking them to either take the online survey or volunteer for face-to-face interviews if they were registered nurses between the ages of 25 and 54 who lived and worked in one or more of the counties in the Chicago DMA. These counties were listed in the email along with the link to the survey, my contact information, and a request to forward the information to registered nurses in the Chicagoland area. In addition, announcements were posted on the bulletin board in the nursing department at DePaul University as well as on my personal Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter accounts. An announcement was also posted on a forum on Nurse.com, the website of trade publications, Nursing Spectrum and Nurse Week. Additionally, the call for participants was heralded by ADVANCE for Nurses who posted (i.e. tweeted) the survey link on their Twitter feed, and they also granted permission to post the call for participants on their Facebook page. RN Magazine offered to publish the survey link in their April e-newsletter, but recruitment goals were met before the link would have been published.
The Media Audit uses the random selection sampling technique, a form of probability sampling, to ensure that every household with a listed or unlisted telephone number in a market has an equal chance of being included in the surveys (Babbie, 2007, pp. 187-191; The Media Audit, n.d.b). Therefore, comparing data from The Media Audit to the data derived from this study’s survey conducted through SurveyMonkey.com or the qualitative interviews might seem a bit like comparing apples to oranges since this study’s participants were recruited through the snowball sampling technique, a form of non-probability sampling (Babbie, 2007, pp. 183-185). And in some respects, it is. The comparison of these data was not meant to necessarily validate or discredit the data in The Media Audit. This comparison was merely meant as a way to look more narrowly at registered nurses than what The Media Audit currently offers and to gauge The Media Audit’s usefulness as a media planning tool for recruitment advertising campaigns. The variety of methods enhances this study rather than hinders it.

One hundred A25-54 registered nurses completed the survey on SurveyMonkey.com between March 15 and April 8, 2009, and the survey was automatically deactivated once the 100th survey was completed. Some of the respondents skipped one or more of the questions, for a completion rate of 97%. Of the 99 respondents who answered the question regarding age and gender, 91 (92%) identified themselves as female, and eight (8%) identified themselves as male. 30 (30%) were between the ages of 25 and 34; 32 (32%) were between the ages of 35 and 44, and 37 (37%) were between the ages of 45 and 54. Of the 98 respondents who answered the question regarding race, the respondents self-identified in the following
ways: 86 (88%) Caucasian/white; two (2%) black; two (2%) Hispanic; six (6%) Asian; one (1%) American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Pacific Islander; and one (1%) other-biracial Caucasian/white with Native American. 98 respondents answered the question regarding household income, and the responses were as follows: one (1%) under $15,000, two (2%) between $25,000 and $34,999, two (2%) between $35,000 and $49,999, 20 (20%) between $50,000 and $74,999, 28 (29%) between $75,000 and $99,999, 32 (33%) between $100,000 and $149,999, and 13 (13%) $150,000 plus.

The qualitative interviews were conducted between March 21 and April 20, 2009 and included five registered nurses between the ages of 25 and 34, five between the ages of 35 and 44, and five between the ages of 45 and 54. These quotas were not necessarily representative of the characteristics of the population (Babbie, 2007, p. 185). They were chosen to ensure that informants would span the entire A25-54 age demographic, and recruitment ceased when the quota of five per age range was met. 12 (80%) of these informants self-identified as female, and three (20%) self-identified as male. In regards to race, the informants identified themselves in the following ways: 13 (87%) Caucasian/white, one (7%) Asian Indian, and one (7%) Hispanic. These registered nurses worked across five different health systems and one public school system, and their household incomes were broken out as follows: five (33%) between $50,000 and $74,999, three (20%) between $75,000 and $99,999, six (40%) between $100,000 and $149,999, and one (7%) $150,000 plus.

Observations were conducted between March 23 and May 15, 2009. One health care system granted me permission to conduct observations in the cafeterias of two of their hospitals, and observations were also conducted at two restaurants near
the medical campus of an additional health care system. It was not necessary to obtain permission to conduct observations in the restaurants since these locations constitute public places (Susan Loess-Perez, Director of the Office of Research Protections at DePaul University, personal communication, March 6, 2009).

Research Design

Quantitative Data Collection

The Health/Medical Services Industry category of The Media Audit contains several occupational titles such as administrative assistant, chiropractor, paramedic, pharmacist, social worker and nurse (RN$^{13}$) (LVN$^{14}$) (Appendix Table 1), and the A25-54$^{15}$ category includes all adults regardless of occupation. Although both broad, I chose these two categories because they are most representative of registered nurses and of working adults within The Media Audit. From these two categories, several cross tab reports$^{16}$ using the Live in Metro-Chicago, IL$^{17}$ geographical designation were compiled regarding demographics, socioeconomics, race, and media exposure. The cross tab reports were exported into Excel and were turned into a series of tables and graphs to be analyzed and compared to the other data in this study (Appendix Tables 2-4 & Graphs 1-2). Media exposure in The Media Audit is generally measured

$^{13}$ Registered nurse  
$^{14}$ Licensed vocational nurse  
$^{15}$ As a reminder from Chapter 1: Introduction, A25-54 denotes adults between the ages of 25 and 54.  
$^{16}$ A cross tab report allows users to compare targets (The Media Audit, n.d.a). The A25-54 crosstab used the base of Live In Metro-Chicago, IL, and the primary target was Adults-Age 25-54. The Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry crosstab used the base of Live In Metro-Chicago, IL with the primary target of Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry.  
$^{17}$ The Media Audit’s label for the Chicago market. “The general concept of a metropolitan area is that of a large population nucleus, together with adjacent communities having a high degree of social and economic integration with that core” (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.).
by the amount of time spent with a medium in an average weekday, but each medium
is measured a bit differently. The individual measures are footnoted in Chapter 4:
Findings as each medium is discussed and are also included with the media exposure
graphs in the Appendix (Appendix Graphs 1-2).

Because the categories in The Media Audit are broad, I determined that a
supplemental quantitative survey regarding the media exposure of registered nurses as
a stand alone occupation was needed since surveys are ideal for collecting
information for comparisons (Fink, 2003, p. 1). I administered this short 10-question
survey regarding age demographics, race, socioeconomics, and media exposure
through SurveyMonkey.com. I designed the questions to elicit similar data to what
was available in the 2007 national aggregate occupational release of The Media
Audit, but the SurveyMonkey.com media exposure questions were slightly more
general. The questions only asked respondents whether or not they were exposed to a
particular medium daily, weekly, monthly, occasionally, or never\(^{18}\). I felt that it
would be easier for participants to recall their media usage in terms of “daily” or
“weekly” rather than asking them to estimate an average amount of time spent with a
medium on any given weekday as The Media Audit does. Despite this difference,
both The Media Audit and the survey administered through SurveyMonkey.com
employed a cross-sectional design because they sampled a population that recalled
consuming media at one moment in time with the intent of describing media
consumption habits overall (Babbie, 2007, p. 102). Of course, a snapshot in time

\(^{18}\) The exception was when I asked them to estimate the amount of direct mail they receive. I believed
that since direct mail is something tangible that they might be able to estimate the number of pieces
they receive.
cannot reasonably represent or predict behavior over longer periods of time, especially when the survey design is retrospective (Babbie, 2007, p. 102; Fink, 2003, p. 17). However, a snapshot can be an excellent starting point for future longitudinal studies. The results of the SurveyMonkey.com survey were downloaded into Excel and were turned into tables and graphs to be analyzed (Appendix Tables 2-5 & Graph 3).

Qualitative Data Collection

The qualitative portion of this study moves away from the thin descriptions of The Media Audit and the quantitative survey into thick descriptions that reflect on meanings (Geertz, 1973, p. 7). The interviews consisted of 26 major semi-structured, open-ended questions with an additional 32 sub-questions designed to: 1) make a distinction between specific media utilized, 2) denote whether or not this occupational co-culture shares media, and 3) indicate the receptiveness of registered nurses in the Chicago DMA to recruitment advertising in these media (i.e. their affinity for advertising, Smit & Neijens, 2000). These interviews took place in two homes, two offices, and nine coffee houses, wherever the informants were most comfortable meeting. Interviews ranged from 45 to 90 minutes, depending on how much the informants elaborated. The interviews were recorded on two digital voice recorders, and field notes were also taken. Each recording was reviewed three times to ensure accuracy in the transcription and was disposed of once each transcription was complete. Unlike the quantitative data in this study, the qualitative data was not ready to be placed into Excel immediately. Therefore, this data had to be coded, and the coding procedures are detailed later in this chapter.
As Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (1995) stated, “Ethnographers are committed to going out and getting close to the activities and everyday experiences of other people” (p. 1). Therefore, one qualitative element of this study was to spend time in routine settings such as cafeterias and other public spaces with registered nurses because ethnographic research “involves both being with other people to see how they respond to events as they happen and experiencing for oneself these events and the circumstances that give rise to them” (p. 2). A total of 20 observation hours were completed: 10 hours (5 hours per location) were conducted at the two hospitals, and 10 hours (5 hours per location) were conducted at the two restaurants. These observations were carried out over the lunch and dinner periods when the cafeterias and restaurants were likely to be busiest. During these observations, I made handwritten field notes that recorded the types of media registered nurses used during their breaks (e.g. newspapers), the specific media they used (e.g. The Chicago Tribune), the amount of time spent with these media, and whether or not discussions with other registered nurses took place regarding media. I noted the estimated ages, races, and sexes of those I observed as well. And although I recognized registered nurses based on name badges and/or uniforms, I did not record their names in my field notes.

**Coding Procedures**

Excel’s columns and rows inherently are perfect for organizing large amounts of data. The Media Audit and SurveyMonkey.com both offer reports to be exported to Excel that don’t require additional coding. Therefore, when I coded the qualitative interviews and observations, I also used Excel. This allowed me to create tables and
graphs, all of which can be viewed in the Appendix, that looked similar to each other although the data for each came from the different sources that I’ve outlined in this chapter. This similarity made comparing and contrasting data possible.

Although some categories were anticipated based on the interview and observation protocols, several of the categories didn’t become evident until I had conducted a number of interviews and a few hours of observations. This is a common feature of grounded theory as is the relationship between the categories and the coded data (Lindlof & Taylor, 2002, p. 218). Grounded theory, also known as the constant-comparative method, begins early in the research process so that meanings are not lost (p. 219). In the current study, one example was Johnson & Johnson’s Campaign for Nursing’s Future. This campaign was mentioned by four (27%) of the 15 interview informants, and a category was established during the open coding period specifically to accommodate these responses. A codebook listing all of the categories, specific instances of each, and other relevant data (p. 220) was created and used throughout the analysis. Axial coding was conducted to integrate the categories and variations were observed (pp. 221-222).

Data Analyzation

Age, household income, and race tables along with media exposure column graphs were created from each data source. These were compared and contrasted against each other and notes regarding the differences and similarities were taken. The coded qualitative data was then compared to the findings from the quantitative comparison. When the qualitative data supported or deviated from the quantitative
findings, it was noted. These analyses and conclusions are described in Chapter 4: Findings and Chapter 5: Discussion.

Theoretical Base

This study draws upon the concept of the affinity for advertising that refers to people’s receptivity, attitudes, and emotions toward advertising in various media vehicles (Smit & Neijens, 2000, p. 35). This concept allows media planners to choose media based on the target audience’s exposure to and receptivity of advertising in/on a particular medium based on the degree to which people find advertising in/on that medium irritating, informative, or entertaining (p. 42). Smit and Neijens (2000) found in a telephone survey of 1,065 Dutch respondents that the affinity for advertising had a direct correlation to the affinity towards the medium carrying the advertisement (pp. 41-42). This was significant because the researchers noted that most previous studies had not made a distinction between media types (p. 36). This concept has not been heavily explored in consumer/product advertising, and I have failed to find it referred to in previous studies on recruitment advertising or employer branding although it is certainly “a promising concept for segmenting the audience within the context of media planning” (p. 36).

This study also draws upon signaling theory from psychology as applied to recruitment advertising by Allen, Mahto, & Otondo (2007) suggesting that “early communications may serve as signals about other job and organization attributes” (pp. 1697-1698). This theory which suggests that “job seekers facing uncertainty and incomplete information use the information available as signals about job and
organizational attributes” (Attributed to Rynes, 1991 & Spence, 1973 by Allen, Mahto, & Otondo, 2007, p. 1697) might also explain a target audience’s receptivity to advertising in/on a particular medium due to the level of specificity that is possible due to space or time limitations inherent in each medium. For example, might registered nurses have higher opinions of hospitals that announce their job openings, benefits, and other job information using half page full color advertisements in *ADVANCE for Nurses*, a trusted trade publication, than a smaller 40-line text-only advertisement in a general daily newspaper such as the *Chicago Sun-Times*? If so, do registered nurses perceive the jobs and companies advertised in *ADVANCE for Nurses* more favorable than those advertised in the *Chicago Sun-Times*? Allen, Mahto, and Otondo (2007) found that the attitudes of participants toward the websites of organizations were significant predictors of their attitude toward the organizations (p. 1704). Therefore, the preferences registered nurses have for media might impact their perceptions of employer brands, and these employer brands are essential in attracting experts in the field (Gaddam, 2008, p. 46).

**Ethnographic Method**

Ethnography is both a method and the written account of the data (Van Maanen, 1995, pp. 4; Wolcott, 1995, pp. 82-83). In a broad sense, the term ethnography expresses the researcher’s desire to describe a group’s culture (Wolcott, 1995, p. 103), and people belonging to a single occupation can function as a group (Fink, 2003, p. 16) that shares a culture including “actions, ways of thinking, practices, stories, and artifacts” (Eisenberg, Goodall, & Tretheway, 2007, p. 127). Registered nurses have been studied as a group sharing an occupational co-culture in
the past (e.g. Brooks, 1999, p. 348), albeit rarely from an employer branding or recruitment advertising perspective as far as I have been able to ascertain (A few exceptions: Arnold et. al, 2003; Brodie et. al, 2005; Freeman & Carpenter, 1983; Postuma & Campion, 2005; Van Hoye, 2008; Williams et. al, 1993). Therefore, it has previously been unclear whether or not sharing the same occupation influences the idiosyncratic media consumption habits of registered nurses and whether or not these media consumption habits vary from others in the A25-54 demographic who are not registered nurses. For these reasons, I hope that this written narrative of the results of the qualitative interviews together with the interpreted quantitative data and the insights gathered from the observations will be valuable for recruiters, recruitment advertising agencies, and scholars alike. A written account is ethnographic “if it is put forth by its author as a nonfiction work intended to represent, interpret, or (perhaps best) translate a culture or selected aspects of a culture for readers who are often but not always unfamiliar with that culture” (Van Maanen, 1995, pp. 4, 13-14; Wolcott, 1995, pp. 82-83); and since the purpose of this study is to interpret the media consumption habits of registered nurses, I present it as ethnographic.
Chapter 4: Findings

As I stated previously, comparing data derived from a proprietary quantitative database called The Media Audit, a quantitative survey I conducted using an online service called SurveyMonkey.com, qualitative interviews that I conducted with 15 registered nurses, and observations might seem a bit incompatible. Yet, I argue that these four sources compliment each other and build a rather interesting three-dimensional look into the ways that registered nurses as an occupational co-culture utilize and share some media as well as some opinions regarding recruitment advertising. For these reasons, I move through this chapter by weaving the results of all of these data sources together rather than analyzing each separately. I begin by looking at these data in relation to the medium of newspaper since it was once a vehicle most employers used for their recruitment advertising, assuming that it was an effective means to do so (Rafaeli & Oliver, 1998, p. 342). The other media reviewed here are: trade publications; radio; Internet and digital media; outdoor/out-of-home (e.g. billboards); broadcast and cable television; consumer magazines; and direct mail, career fairs, and other traditional marketing tactics. As I move through each medium or group of media, I also analyze and discuss registered nurses’ affinity for advertising (Smit & Neijens, 2000) and how each medium is, at times, symbolic to this occupational co-culture, contributing to or subtracting from perceptions of employer brands.
Analysis

Newspaper

Until two weeks ago, I had received the Chicago Tribune for 30 years. We just canceled it because…it’s not a real newspaper anymore. I read it, and I learn nothing. It’s a terrible disappointment to me because I always loved, LOVED, reading the newspaper, and my favorite page was the editorial page (Laura, personal conversation, April 1, 2009).

Laura, a school nurse with 34 years of experience in various medical settings who lives and works in a north suburb of Chicago, likes to be informed. In the A45-54 age demographic, Laura would be considered more likely to read the newspaper than her younger colleagues, although newspapers have been losing readership even among older demographics (Somerville, 2001).

Heavy exposure to newspaper is estimated at 15% for the A25-54 population in the Live In Metro-Chicago, IL market, and newspaper ranked last among media in the 2007 national aggregate occupational release of The Media Audit with Internet, outdoor, radio, direct mail, and television all achieving greater exposure to this key target, in this case “heavy” media usage.

19 Laura and all of the other informants are identified by pseudonyms. When quotes are used, three periods in a row denotes that something has been omitted. Omissions are generally meaningless sounds like “um”, repetitive words or phrases, or lines of text that move away from the subject at hand.
20 The Media Audit defines heavy newspaper exposure as 60 minutes or more in an average weekday (The Media Audit, n.d.a).
21 A common demographic range in consumer and recruitment advertising
22 The Media Audit’s database label for the Chicago market. They do not denote the counties included in their definition of the Live In Metro-Chicago category.
23 Based on the horizontal percent, the percent of the target audience (either A25-54 or Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry Category in the Live In-Metro Chicago, IL market) that engages in a target, in this case “heavy” media usage.
demographic. Newspaper fared only slightly better at 18% heavy exposure in the Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry category, just ahead of television at 16%.

The results of the SurveyMonkey.com quantitative survey, which asked registered nurses how frequently they read a daily newspaper such as the Chicago Tribune, the Chicago Sun-Times, or the Daily Herald, showed a slightly higher penetration into this narrow occupational category. 23% of respondents\textsuperscript{24} professed to reading a newspaper every day; 31% admitted that they read a daily newspaper on a weekly basis, and 30% stated that they read a daily newspaper occasionally. An additional 8% said that they read a daily newspaper once a month, and 8% said that they never read a daily newspaper. During the 20 hours of observations in hospital cafeterias and restaurants near medical campuses, I witnessed one registered nurse reading a single section of a newspaper for roughly a quarter of an hour. Yet, this is significant because this was the only instance of mass media exposure that I observed\textsuperscript{25}.

Newspaper consumption varied among the registered nurses who participated in the qualitative interviews as well. Four of the informants (one in the A25-34 age range, two in the A35-44 range, and one in the A45-54 range) reported that they don’t read the print versions of any daily or weekly newspapers. Of the informants who read newspapers, four primarily read the RedEye, a free tabloid-sized newspaper

\textsuperscript{24} The term “respondent” is used when referring to the participants in The Media Audit and SurveyMonkey.com surveys, and the term “informant” is reserved for participants in the qualitative survey.

\textsuperscript{25} I additionally observed registered nurses reading their own hospitals’ newsletters and using their cell phones.
published Monday through Saturday by the *Chicago Tribune* (RedEye Quickfax, n.d.). The majority (65%) of its readers are under the age of 44, but Ian who is in the A45-54 age range occasionally picks up a *RedEye* too (Ian, personal conversation, March 27, 2009; RedEye Quickfax, n.d.). Other newspapers mentioned by informants were the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, and the *Skokie Review*, which is a suburban newspaper in the Sun-Times News Group (Skokie Review, n.d.). In addition, Claire, a Bulgarian immigrant, reads Bulgarian language newspapers published for North America (Claire, personal conversation, March 30, 2009).

General newspaper readership does not denote that these individuals actually read the employment sections of these newspapers, however. Kimmi, an oncology nurse in the A35-44 age demographic, reads both the *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Sun-Times* every day, but she never looks at the employment sections (Kimmi, personal conversation, April 20, 2009).

There didn’t seem to be a correlation between age demographics and attitudes toward recruitment advertising in newspapers. For example, despite the fact that Laura canceled her subscription to the *Chicago Tribune*, she still believes that “the newspaper is a good place to look for jobs” (Laura, personal conversation, April 1, 2009). Whereas, Ian who is also in the A45-54 age range, thinks that advertising job opportunities in a newspaper is “a little outdated” (Ian, personal conversation, March 27, 2009). Opinions varied within this occupational co-culture and within the age ranges, but some registered nurses shared distinct opinions about the types of jobs advertised in newspapers.

Brandy, an A45-54 registered nurse who isn’t specialized but who works in an
educational position within a hospital, reads the *Skokie Review* on Thursdays because her son is frequently in the sports section since he’s on his high school’s football and track teams. She also reads the *Chicago Tribune* on Sundays. Although she has been at her current hospital for her entire 26-year career and although she isn’t looking for a new job, she looks at the recruitment ads in each newspaper. If she was looking for a new job though, she says she wouldn’t turn to the newspaper. “I would tend to go to the nursing magazines…Maybe I think it’s a more prestigious job that’s in [nursing magazines] rather than the flunkier jobs that are in the *Tribune,*” (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009). Two registered nurses in the A25-34 age demographic agreed. Jenny, a neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) nurse stated, “I feel like all of those [employment ads in the newspaper] are nursing home jobs, or you know. They’re not the jobs I would really look for” (Jenny, personal conversation, April 14, 2009). Ashley echoed Jenny’s sentiment. “[The newspaper doesn’t have] the most desirable jobs. You know; they’re nursing home jobs or night shifts...What would I look for?” Ashley recently moved from working a variety of shifts as a staff nurse to being an electrophysiology nurse who works with pacemakers, defibrillators, and other electronic devices in a cardiology department at a major research hospital where she works a Monday through Friday day shift (Ashley, personal conversation, April 14, 2009). As Kimmi, an oncology nurse in the A35-44 range noted, “Schedules seem to be a big issue because I work with a lot of younger girls who want every weekend off” (Kimmi, personal conversation, April 20, 2009). Indeed, why would Ashley, Jenny, or Brandy look for jobs in newspapers if they expect to find less desirable ones than they currently have?
Brandy wasn’t sure why she’d turn to the nursing magazines over newspapers if she was looking for a job, but she thought that “maybe it’s the color ad[s] [in the trade publications]” (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009), and Heidi, a home health nurse in the A35-44 range stated, “The help wanted ads in the papers I think are harder to read, or just so many of them, so I don’t think that I’d personally look there. I’d look in the nursing publications or online” (Heidi, personal conversation, April 7, 2009). These comments indicate that the aesthetics of newspapers might be seen as less attractive than other media, especially trade publications, and this is problematic for newspapers since previous studies have found that individuals prefer jobs that are promoted in media they find attractive (e.g. Allen, Mahto, & Otondo, 2007; Thompson, Braddy, & Wuensch, 2008). It also appears that the language used by the informants represents the characteristics of the media and shapes the way the members of this occupational co-culture understand their meanings (Eisenberg, Goodall, & Tretheway, 2007, pp. 127, 128). As Claire, the Bulgarian immigrant who is a pediatric nurse in the A45-54 age range, reinforced, “I think that more nurses read the nursing magazines than the Chicago Tribune. That’s the right place to look for a nursing job” (Claire, personal conversation, March 30, 2009).

**Trade Publications**

The Media Audit does not include business or trade media in its annual national aggregate occupational release. Therefore, I did not include a question regarding trade media in the online survey because there would not have been anything to compare the results against. In the qualitative interviews, media associated with professional
organizations and independent trade media were discussed, and some interesting data emerged.

Nine of the 15 registered nurses who volunteered to be interviewed belonged to professional organizations, and these organizations varied depending on their area of practice. Some of the organizations mentioned were the American Society of Critical Care Nurses, the Association periOperative Registered Nurses, and the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing. The publications associated with these organizations were generally valued for their content. Carla, an A45-54 doctorate-prepared pediatric nurse practitioner, lauded *Nursing Research*, the journal of the Eastern Nursing Research Society, as the “top tier, number one, elite one,” but she doesn’t usually read the recruitment ads in it “because they’re all [out of the Chicago area] academic positions.” (Carla, personal conversation, April 9, 2009). Many of the journals that are distributed by professional organizations are national publications rather than local publications, so the positions advertised within them are often outside of the Chicago DMA. Instead, these publications have the ability to target registered nurses by specialty as Tess, a home health nurse in the A35-44 age demographic pointed out when I asked her opinion of recruitment advertising in trade media: “I think it’s smart…when those nurses are looking at it, they know they aren’t looking at a lot of ads for positions that they wouldn’t be interested in. It’s very narrowed down” (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009).

Nevertheless, the informants often preferred nursing publications that offered a local focus more so than a focus on area of practice. Debbie is a labor and delivery nurse in the A25-34 age range who was originally from southern Illinois. Although
she’s a member of the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN), she would turn to independent general nursing publications that serve the Chicago community such as *ADVANCE for Nurses, The Nurses Lounge, and Nursing Spectrum* \(^{26}\) if she was looking for a job. “I would choose them…because it’s mostly local…organizations advertising in there, and it tends to be where the majority of the hospitals in the area go.” (Debbie, personal conversation, April 2, 2009). Informants also appreciated the local content of these publications. Aasha, an A35-44 home health nurse, stated that, “I like reading *ADVANCE [for Nurses]* because it’s just strictly...about Chicagoland and [the] Midwest area, so you see like what different hospitals are doing” (Aasha, personal conversation, April 7, 2009).

Additionally, Tess likes that these publications “spotlight” area nurses (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009) such as Brandy’s sister who was featured on the cover of *Nursing Spectrum*. As Brandy said, “it’s always nice to see one of your own…in the magazine. So it puts it more to home, which is nice” (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009).

**Radio**

The importance of local media and local jobs was reiterated by Josh in regards to recruitment advertising on the radio, “I think there’s a little bit of a distance rule. So if it’s local, I think it makes sense. If I was in my car driving around the Loop\(^ {27}\), and I heard them advertising for jobs in Washington state, [it would be odd]” (Josh,

\(^{26}\) All three of the independent nursing publications listed publish local content and advertising in multiple U.S. markets.

\(^{27}\) The downtown financial district of Chicago
personal conversation, April 8, 2009). For a few of the informants, however, their biggest concern in regards to radio wasn’t locality. It was how radio could affect the images of the employers.

According to The Media Audit for the Live in Metro-Chicago, IL market, 23% of A25-54 and 21% of those in the Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry are heavily 28 exposed to radio. These statistics are rather low in comparison to the results of the quantitative survey of registered nurses conducted through SurveyMonkey.com, which indicated that 71% of this occupational co-culture listens to broadcast 29 radio daily. These comparisons can not be seen as conclusive since their measures are not identical 30, but the qualitative data provides some evidence in support of these results that deepen our understanding of the way registered nurses utilize radio.

The informants listed 12 31 different broadcast radio stations across a variety of formats during our interviews, and the listening habits of some informants were almost as diverse as the compilation of the all of the results. Monica is a Hispanic A35-44 registered nurse who listens to both English language and Spanish language stations:

I like anything from the 1940s to the current stuff. A little bit of everything. Rock, country, some of the new hip hop and dance stuff.

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28 The Media Audit defines heavy radio exposure as 180 minutes or more in an average weekday (The Media Audit, n.d.a).
29 For the purposes of this study, broadcast radio is defined as non-satellite radio (i.e. XM) and radio that is not streamed over the Internet or mobile device (i.e. iPhone).
30 See Chapter 3: Methodology for a discussion regarding the difference between The Media Audit’s “heavy” media exposure and the “daily” media exposure designation in the SurveyMonkey.com survey.
31 Informants were unable to identify five additional or, perhaps, duplicated stations they listen to by name, call letters, or frequency.
I’m kind of eclectic: old, old rock & roll, swing. And then in Spanish, the same thing. From like very old to like the current stuff. Again, a little bit of everything: urban, country, romantic stuff, hip hop kind of trendy stuff. They have the same genres, just in a different language. Because she has these diverse musical tastes, she isn’t loyal to a single radio station. “I just jump to different stations...It’s a toss up between English and Spanish, depending on whatever song they’ve got going on” (Monica, personal conversation, April 18, 2009).

But for the most part, the informants listened to stations and formats that matched their age demographics. “Elvis, The Who...that’s my era. Steve Perry...Rascal Flats. My daughter would be like aaarrggghh,” said Brandy with a laugh. This A45-54 registered nurse listens to oldies on the radio but couldn’t remember the call letters or frequency of the station she listens to. She also listens to country on US99 (WUSN-FM 99.5) and news on News Radio 780 (WBBM-AM 780) (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009). Ashley who is in the A25-34 age range listens to a pop\(^{32}\) station known as 103.5 KISS FM (WKSC-FM 103.5) and B96 (WBBM-FM 96.3), a hip hop\(^{33}\) station. However, Ashley also listens to US99 as Brandy does. The country format permeated each of the three age ranges (A25-34, A35-44, and A45-54) and was mentioned by nine of 15 informants. The top format among informants, however, was news/talk including National Public Radio, which was mentioned by 10 of the 15 registered nurses. Another top format was adult contemporary, which was listened to by five of the informants. These listening

\(^{32}\) The official format of WKSC-FM is contemporary hit radio (CHR) (Clear Channel, n.d.).

\(^{33}\) The official format of WBBM-FM is rhythmic contemporary hit radio (CHR) (CBS Radio, n.d.).
preferences are not unique to registered nurses, however. Adult contemporary, news/talk and country are three of the top formats for the A25-54 demographic nationwide (Format Trend Report, 2007).

When asked about the prospect of hearing recruitment advertising on the radio, Tess who listens to *WLIT-FM 93.9*, an adult contemporary station, during the day since it is one station that all of her coworkers can agree on said, “I wouldn’t think negatively of an employer for advertising on the radio, as long as it’s not like that OxyClean guy that screams at you. That’s just annoying” (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009). Monica agreed, “If the advertiser had someone who’s doing the commercial and sounded more like a cheesy car salesman, then I don’t think it would be appropriate” (Monica, personal conversation, April 18, 2009).

Ashley also expressed concern over the appropriateness of recruitment advertising on the radio, “I think in the morning shows, the advertising that you generally hear would be like for Luna Carpet or So-in-So Tires or something like that. To put that in the same genre as a hospital advertising for employment for a professional job, I think wouldn’t go that well together. That’s why I say mornings probably isn’t [sic] the best time” (Ashley, personal conversation, April 14, 2009).

These registered nurses had previous experiences with radio that impacted the way they viewed the medium as a potential venue for recruitment advertising. Again consistent with the findings of Allen, Mahto, and Otondo (2007) as well as Thompson, Braddy, and Wuensch (2008), the attractiveness of the medium (this time audio rather than visual attractiveness) appears to be a predictor of the informants’ affinity toward recruitment advertising in/on a medium. The concern over airing recruitment advertisements that
sound as if a “cheesy car salesman” recorded them is also consistent with Smit and Neijens (2000) study that found “that broadcast advertising is more irritating and less informative and (slightly) less entertaining than print advertising” (p. 38). Smit and Neijens did not include the Internet and other digital media in their study, but the present study indicates that the affinity for advertising concept also applies to these new media.

**Internet and Digital Media**

Despite being a medium that reaches into every corner of the globe, the Internet can be exceedingly local. It has the ability to target users geographically and demographically (Joshi, 2007, p. 4). And with 73% of Americans now online (Pew Internet & American Life Project, 2007) and with broadband Internet now in approximately 57% of American homes (Frenzel, 2009, p. 24), “organizations have already adjusted their recruitment practices to address this trend” (Young & Foot, 2006, p. 44).

When I asked Tess if she uses the Internet, she exclaimed, “Oh god, yes!” As a matter of fact, all of the registered nurses who volunteered for the qualitative portion of this study stated that they are online. Yet, The Media Audit reports that merely 38% of A25-54 and 34% of the Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry categories have heavy\(^{34}\) exposure to the Internet. The SurveyMonkey.com survey results show that 94% of the respondents are exposed to the Internet daily, and this, coupled with the Internet usage of the qualitative respondents, denotes that heavy

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\(^{34}\) The Media Audit defines heavy exposure to the Internet as 480 minutes or more in an average week (The Media Audit, n.d.a).
Internet exposure might be quite a bit higher than The Media Audit indicates.

Registered nurses are online. But because there are so many websites to choose from, few websites were mentioned by multiple informants in the qualitative interviews. However, seven of the registered nurses professed to being Facebook users. As Dave, a critical care nurse in the A25-34 age demographic, exclaimed, “Facebook is Huge!” (Dave, personal conversation, April 6, 2009). Yahoo! was mentioned by six informants; Google was mentioned by six, and several mentioned going to news websites such as BBC, CNN, and MSNBC. Aasha said, “Sometimes I’ll skim the Chicago Tribune online but not regularly” (Aasha, personal conversation, April 7, 2009), but Josh reads it frequently (Josh, personal conversation, April 8, 2009). Although there are these few sites that are shared by these registered nurses, most Internet consumption appears to be idiosyncratic, however.

Josh reads the online version of a Swiss newspaper called the *Neuezürcher Zeitung* because he lived in Switzerland for a while, is married to a Swiss woman, and is seeking Swiss citizenship (Josh, personal conversation, April 8, 2009). Although registered nurses share an occupation, the lives of the informants in this study were distinctly individual. “I’m a Michigan Fan. I go to the MGoBlue.com site,” stated Debbie, a University of Michigan graduate who also looks at wedding sites because she’s currently planning her wedding (Debbie, personal conversation, April 2, 2009). Kimmi reads The Broken Heart of Rogers Park, a blog that chronicles the north side Chicago neighborhood in which she grew up, and a blog called Second City Cop because she and her boyfriend have several friends that are cops (Kimmi, personal conversation, April 20, 2009), and Monica reads PrezHilton.com, a celebrity
gossip blog (Kimmi, personal conversation, April 20, 2009). With over 65 million websites to choose from (Farrows, 2006, p. 3), it’s no wonder that there is such diversity in the media consumption of registered nurses on the Internet.

Consumption of nursing-specific websites was equally idiosyncratic. Brandy, Carla, Debbie, and Josh are all in education positions, although Carla, Debbie, and Josh balance their education responsibilities with practice (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009; Carla, personal conversation, April 9, 2009; Debbie, personal conversation, April 2, 2009; Josh, personal conversation, April 8, 2009). These informants visited the websites of professional organizations more so than the other informants to find materials to distribute to their coworkers, but Debbie expressed frustration with the website of the Association of Women’s Health, Obstetric, and Neonatal Nurses (AWHONN), “The AWHONN site annoys me. Everything is chargeable. I can’t get access to many resources or articles even with my membership. It’s usually…with an additional fee. The stuff I can get for free is nice. But to me, it seems very limited” (Debbie, personal conversation, April 2, 2009). This frustration keeps Monica from visiting the websites of professional organizations, “because you sometimes have to be a member to access a lot of their information…other than their main webpage.” If looking for nursing-specific information online, Monica often visits the website of Nursing Spectrum over the websites of professional organizations that require membership (Monica, personal conversation, April 18, 2009). In general, the informants found nursing-specific websites, whether associated with professional organizations or independent of affiliations, informative. Tess, who does not belong to a professional organization,
said, “I do like both of them [The American Nurses Association website & Medscape, an independent source of medical information]. I feel that they are informative, and they do help keep you current with different issues” (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009). Despite informants’ interest in the information contained on these sites, they were less interested in receiving emails containing the information from them. Dave, who is in the A25-34 age demographic contended that, “I’m more of a hands on [person]. In this Internet age, I subscribe to magazines, and I like that much better….I do not like e-newsletters.” Aasha felt that she gets too many email blasts and that she doesn’t have time to look at all of them. “The ANA [American Nursing Association], I usually just delete…I just don’t have time to wade through all that stuff.” Aasha also faces an additional hurdle. Her organization restricts Internet access, and the email blasts she receives at work are filled with hyperlinks that she can’t access. (Aasha, personal conversation, April 7, 2009). For Heidi, the hyperlinks in the email blasts that direct her to interesting articles are the main reasons she visits nursing-specific websites, but she sometimes has problems navigating the websites once she gets there because as she said, “I’m probably less of a computer person than probably younger people.” Heidi is merely in the A35-44 age demographic. (Heidi, personal conversation, April 7, 2009).

I was surprised to find that although nursing is based heavily in science and technology that most of the informants weren’t technologically savvy when it came to media. Only Dave and Josh, both in the A25-34 age range, subscribe to any podcasts, for example. Podcasts are digital audio files that can be downloaded from the Internet onto a personal computer, MP3 player, or other mobile device (Haygood, 2007, p.
Dave and Josh both get a number of podcasts from National Public Radio (NPR) and Public Radio International (PRI). Dave subscribes to The Moth, Speaking of Faith, This American Life, and This I Believe (Dave, personal conversation, April 6, 2009), and Josh subscribes to Sound Opinions, This American Life, and Wait! Wait! Don’t Tell Me (Josh, personal conversation, April 8, 2009).

Podcasts were the pinnacle of media technology for this occupational co-culture, however. Even the informants in the A25-34 age range weren’t familiar with RSS (rich site summary) feeds, a format for delivering text information over the Internet (www.whatisrss.com, n.d.) or widgets, a small application that contains code that opens into a larger application (Webopedia, n.d.). As Tess, who recently purchased an iPhone\(^\text{35}\) claimed, “I’m a technology infant” (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009).

When I asked the informants how they would feel about receiving text messages on their cell phones that advertise job openings, many were surprised that it was possible. Laura who is in the A45-54 age demographic doesn’t even own a cell phone, and Kimmi who is in the A35-44 age range has never received a text message of any kind (Laura, personal conversation, April 1, 2009; Kimmi, personal conversation, April 20, 2009). Even those respondents who own cell phones and have received personal text messages in the past expressed horror at the thought of receiving advertisements on their cell phones. “This is my personal [cell phone]. I don’t want advertisements. I don’t [want] crap on my cell phone. For me, it’s my communication for who [sic] I want to communicate with. I don’t want my number

\(^{35}\) At the time of this study, the iPhone is one of the hottest gadgets on the market.
out there. I don’t want all that stuff over my phone,” asserted Brandy who is in the A45-54 age range. “And I wonder what the 20 somethings [sic] say versus the 40 to 50 year olds,” she added with curiosity (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009). The possibility of receiving text messages for recruitment purposes was strongly rejected by the majority of the informants regardless of age. Variations of the word “annoying” were used by five of the informants, but other reactions were equally as negative. Josh who is in the A25-34 age range said that receiving a recruitment advertisement on his cell phone would make him “pretty unhappy” (Josh, personal conversation, April 8, 2009), but Ashley was a bit more open minded to the idea of receiving a recruitment advertisement on her cell phone. She said, “If I was specifically asking for text messages about jobs, then I would be perfectly fine with it. But if it was something random, sent out to everybody, I would be upset” (Ashley, personal conversation, April 14, 2009). Luckily for the Ashley and the other informants, the Controlling the Assault of Non-Solicited Pornography and Marketing (CAN-SPAM) Act went into affect in 2005, making unsolicited text messaging illegal (FCC, 2008). The Mobile Marketing Association also recommends obtaining consent (opt-in) according to their Global Code of Conduct (Global Code of Conduct, 2008). Employers that consider text messaging campaigns need to be aware of these rules and need to explicitly ask cell phone owners for permission to send them text messages so that the messages aren’t seen as annoyances that could potentially impact the employer brands negatively because as Gatewood, Gowan, and Lautenschlager (1993) found, corporate image is related to individuals’ interactions with employers through exposure to advertisements (p. 424).
When asked how they would feel about seeing recruitment advertising on their favorite websites, informants were not opposed to the possibility as long as the ads would not be the “ones that pop into what you’re trying to do” as Heidi asserted (Heidi, personal conversation, April 7, 2009). Laura noted, “Well, I think they’re already there. I’m just so good at tuning things out” (Laura, personal conversation, April 1, 2009). She wasn’t the only one who said that she doesn’t pay attention to online advertising. Josh, for example, said, “I see it a lot, but I tend to ignore it as I tend to ignore most online advertising. I guess you just train yourself after a while to focus on the content that you’re looking at and not be distracted.” Yet, he made one exception, “The banners at the top of pages, I do notice more” (Josh, personal conversation, April 8, 2009). Jenny had a similar thought, “I probably wouldn’t look at [online recruitment ads] either. I would glance, and…then move on. So, it would have to be something to catch my attention” (Jenny, personal conversation, April 14, 2009).

Capturing attention and interest may be even more challenging in environments such as online job boards. “With Monster and with Careerbuilder, when I’ve gone to websites like that, I put in RN, and you get just tons of different positions,” reported Tess. She went on to say, “You get nurse’s aid positions. You get nurse anesthetist positions. And virtually all of the positions are hospital-based.” Tess is a home health nurse, and she would like to be able to filter out jobs that aren’t appealing to her by specialty and by salary range, but she doesn’t believe that the big job boards allow her to do so (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009). A way for registered nurses to see job postings only aimed at their specialty is to visit the job boards of
professional associations. Josh has been to the Association of periOperative
Registered Nurses (AORN) website to use their salary survey tool, and he stated,
“that would certainly be my first stop for looking for employment opportunities”
(Josh, personal conversation, April 8, 2009). Nonetheless, eight of the 15 informants
have never been on an online job board of any kind. One of the reasons might be that
all but one of the informants in this study were not presently looking for new jobs, but
“effective recruiting strategies are built on the premise that a passive job seeker
would change jobs for the right opportunity” (Flanigan, 2008, p. S3). Therefore,
employers need to instigate strategic media plans that drive active and passive job
seekers to their career sites and inspire them to complete the application process.

A career site is the section of an organization’s website on which, “companies
present compelling descriptions of the company, employee benefits, [and] workplace
culture, along with other information which may increase the likelihood that
individuals will adopt a positive image of the organization and perhaps submit an
application” (Young & Foot, 2006, p. 45). The space career sites offer to provide this
level of detail could potentially set an organization apart from its competitors unlike
job postings that are highly restrictive (Cober et. al, 2000, p. 482). Technically,
posting job openings on an organization’s own website is not advertising since the
organization does not buy time or space from anyone in order to promote itself
(American Marketing Association, n.d.). But since one of the foremost goals of
recruitment advertising is to drive traffic to organizational career sites and since
organizational websites can often provide the earliest exposure to an organization, the
informants in the qualitative interviews were asked about their experiences with these
sources (Cober et. Al, 2000, p. 482).

In some cases, registered nurses have an idea where they want to work, as was the case of Monica when she looked for her current nursing job 13 years ago. “And what I did was I took out a map and you know how they sometimes have all the hospitals on the map? I’m like, ‘Okay! Here we go!’ and I applied to all of them [within a certain radius of home]…‘cause I’m not into driving long distances or sitting in traffic for an extended period of time” (Monica, personal conversation, April 18, 2009). But in a market the size of Chicago, there are a great number of employment opportunities in any direction, and as Ashley said, “It’s so easy to find a nursing job, in terms of you just pick a hospital; you look at their HR websites, or you go into HR...and they’ll probably have a job for you” (Ashley, personal conversation, April 14, 2009). Therefore, Jenny narrows down her choices. “I also go to the companies’ websites; I guess, if I know their reputation or something” (Jenny, personal conversation, April 14, 2009). Tess admitted, “We compare job duties. ‘I wouldn’t work there. That place is terrible. They make you do XYZ,” and these discussions impact her interest in organizations as employers (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009). Reputation, as an integral component of an employer brand, is “an intangible asset” of a company that needs to be managed in order to get people like Jenny and Tess to visit their career sites and consider their organizations’ employment opportunities (Ambler & Barrow, 1996, pp. 189-190). Combating negative word of mouth that takes place on a micro level is a difficult task. Mass media is one way to reach a large number of possible job seekers with employer
branding messages. But as this study continues to reveal, these media also open up employers to scrutiny.

**Outdoor/Out-of-Home**

Monica wasn’t the only registered nurse in the qualitative study to limit her employment choices by driving distance (Monica, personal conversation, April 18, 2009). Brandy only applied at hospitals within a 30-minute drive of her home as well (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009). This seems reasonable in a metropolitan area with an average estimated commute of 33 minutes, the second longest commute in the country according the U.S. Census Bureau (Buckner, 2004). Despite this claim, most of the informants in the current study commute less than 30 minutes each way, but their relatively short commutes did not deflect their criticisms or praises of outdoor advertising.

Outdoor and out-of-home are often used interchangeably. According to Clear Channel Outdoor, out-of-home encompasses, “all advertising signage found outside the home, including bulletins and posters.” Bulletins are generally 14 feet tall by 48 feet wide and are “positioned on highly visible, heavy traffic locations such as expressways, primary arteries, and major intersections,” and posters are smaller versions of these signs located on “secondary arteries” (Clear Channel Outdoor, n.d.). There are many sizes and shapes of signage in this category, but the registered nurses I spoke with only referred to transit advertising in addition to the types of outdoor listed above.

Outdoor, as it is referred to in The Media Audit, ranked number one among the measured media in terms of exposure in the Occupation-Health/Medical Services
Industry. An estimated 34% of this category is heavily\textsuperscript{36} exposed to outdoor in the Chicago DMA compared to 33% in the general A25-54 category. In addition, the SurveyMonkey.com survey indicated that 80% of the registered nurses see outdoor advertising daily and that an additional 16% believe they see outdoor on a weekly basis.

One topic that emerged from the qualitative data was a concern over the cost of recruitment advertising, and this theme manifested itself three times in the outdoor category. “I don’t know if I would really want to see job openings [on outdoor], and I would think that it would be a very expensive venture for them too because billboards [are] up for a month at a time,” worried Brandy (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009). Ashley described several reductions in pay and benefits that her hospital enacted during her tenure and went on to say, “I know billboards are very expensive. So I would think if I saw something like that that, they would kind of have to back up what they’re doing: good pay, benefits, that kind of stuff” (Ashley, personal conversation, April 14, 2009). Additionally, Josh wondered why a hospital would spend so much money on recruitment advertising in the first place, “It makes me think about the cost effectiveness. I can understand placing a newspaper ad when you have a few positions to fill. When you’re placing a billboard, you’re probably not trying to fill one position. And then if you’re trying to fill 20 positions, why do you have to fill 20 positions?” (Josh, personal conversation, April 8, 2009).

\textsuperscript{36} The Media Audit denotes outdoor exposure as anyone who has the opportunity to see outdoor advertising by the number of miles driven. Heavy outdoor exposure is defined as someone who drives 350 or more miles in the past 7 days (The Media Audit, n.d.a).
Tess didn’t necessarily object to recruitment advertising on outdoor, but she reserved her judgments for specific examples. As the informant with the longest commute (1.5 hours), she remembered a billboard she had seen along the expressway between Northwest Indiana and Chicago, “[It says] ‘You could be home by now if you worked at so-and-so hospital,’ and it shows a big...gas gauge with the needle almost on E on the billboard, which is kind of clever.” Regardless of the creative, however, Tess objected to electronic billboards with moving images, calling them “distracting” (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009). The type of outdoor was also important to Ian and Jenny who both welcomed the idea of recruitment advertising on the inside of the El and buses. Ian, an A45-54 critical care nurse who takes public transportation on the days he doesn’t get a ride to work, said, “Actually I think it’s good…I’m usually bored. I have a little more time to read it, pay attention to it. And it might prompt me to go look further, but I don’t see [recruitment advertising on the inside of the EL and buses] very often” (Ian, personal conversation, March 27, 2009). Jenny agreed, “I think they’re great advertising. I mean, you’re bored. You’re sitting there staring. You don’t want to stare at the person across from you. So, I actually do read those even if I’m not interested in them” (Jenny, personal conversation, April 14, 2009).

**Broadcast and Cable Television**

When not being entertained by out-of-home advertising during their commutes, many registered nurses watch television at home as they relax at the end of the day. Of the multitude of programs on broadcast and cable television, Ian knew where he’d advertise if he was hiring registered nurses. “I probably would try to advertise on
television during *Grey's Anatomy*. Seriously, I think all nurses, at least those 35 and under, watch that show,” he claimed (Ian, personal conversation, March 27, 2009). Although probably not watched by all nurses under the age of 35, *Grey’s Anatomy* was the sixth most watched television show among U.S. households for the week of May 4 to May 10, 2009 according to Nielsen Media Research (Zap2It.com, n.d.), and it was mentioned by seven of the 15 informants in the qualitative interviews. The storyline of *Grey’s Anatomy* surrounds Seattle hospitals, but Brandy says, “It’s not truthful to hospitals. Although it’s funny. My husband thinks they’re all true: what happens on TV really happens in the hospital….We’re sleepin’ all over and kissing in the halls and having affairs and stripping off clothes, and I’ve never seen that happen once in hospitals. So…what can I say?” (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009). The incongruence between television and actual reality is a subject of discussion. Kimmi admitted, “Sometimes, we chat about *Grey’s Anatomy*, how ridiculous it is and not realistic at all” (Kimmi, personal conversation, April 20, 2009).

Before employers decide to call their local *ABC* affiliates to purchase advertising time during *Grey’s Anatomy*, it should be noted that registered nurses watch a vast variety of programs on broadcast and cable networks. The registered nurses in this study watch *Fox News, Seinfeld* reruns, *Project Runway, House Hunters, Manaña es Para Siempre, Dateline*, and many other programs. Additionally, the data from The Media Audit implies that television is a weak medium for reaching people in the Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry category. Television ranked last among the six media included in the database with only 21% of
respondents reporting heavy\textsuperscript{37} television exposure. Heavy television exposure in the A25-54 category trailed behind all media other than newspaper at 17%. The SurveyMonkey.com results showed that 67% of registered nurses watch television daily and that an additional 21% watch television weekly. These statistics aren’t as colorful as the informants’ own descriptions of the importance of television in their lives, however. For many of the informants in the qualitative study, television was seen as an escape, and there were certain shows that the registered nurses would never miss. As Dave said gleefully, “I like to watch Intervention. I’m addicted to Intervention, no pun intended” (Dave, personal conversation, April 6, 2009)

As much as these registered nurses love their television programs, several aren’t necessarily open to seeing recruitment advertising within them. Kimmi thought it would be “weird” to see recruitment advertisements on television (Kimmi, personal conversation, April 20, 2009), and Claire thought that recruitment advertising on television would be a sign of desperation (Claire, personal conversation, March 30, 2009). Heidi, on the other hand, thought that television might be a venue for differentiating an employer from its competitors, “As with Internet or radio, it’s kind of like, ‘Okay, how’s this job different from any other?’ But maybe TV would allow you to, you know, get that piece of it, and be better than some of the other commercials you have to watch all the time” (Heidi, personal conversation, April 7, 2009). The themes of desperation and of using television to create and/or reinforce employer brands are further explored in Chapter 5: Discussion. For the time being, it is evident that although there is an affinity for television that there is less of an

\textsuperscript{37} The Media Audit defines heavy television exposure as 300 minutes or more in an average weekday (The Media Audit, n.d.a).
affinity for recruitment advertising on it. This may be because television advertising is viewed more negatively in general than advertising in other media (Smit & Neijens, 2000, p. 38). Consumer magazines are one of these “other” media, but the current study did not find that the affinity for recruitment advertising in these magazines should be envied by any of the other media vehicles.

**Consumer Magazines**

Consumer magazines were not included in the 2007 national aggregate occupational release of The Media Audit, and, therefore, were not included in the SurveyMonkey.com quantitative survey. In most circumstances, consumer magazine readership among the informants in the qualitative interviews was very much related to their age and socioeconomic status. Consumer magazines tend to be those that are available at newsstands. For example, Ian and Aasha both read financial magazines such as *Kiplinger’s*, and they both have household incomes of $100,000-$149,999 (Aasha, personal conversation, April 7, 2009; Ian, personal conversation, March 27, 2009). Claire who is in the A45-54 age demographic reads *Better Homes and Gardens*, a magazine whose readers have a median age in the order of 49 (Better Homes and Gardens Media Kit, 2009; Clair, personal conversation, March 30, 2009). However, there were a few idiosyncratic variations. Laura who is in the A45-54 age range and who has a household income of $75,000-$99,999, reads *National Geographic* because she is “fascinated with other cultures and other places and other ways of thinking” (Laura, personal conversation, April 1, 2009), but Josh who is in the A25-34 age demographic and who has a household income of $100,000-$149,999 also reads *National Geographic* for what he calls “general interest.” Josh was an
archeologist before becoming a registered nurse, and he likes to keep abreast of news from the field (Josh, personal conservation, April 8, 2009). Another interesting variation was Brandy’s readership of People and Us Weekly. This A45-54 mother grudgingly admitted to reading them because her teenaged daughter is “hooked on those” (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009). Whereas Ashley who is in the A25-34 age range wholeheartedly admitted that Cosmo and Us Weekly are her “pleasure reading” (Ashley, personal conversation, April 14, 2009). Yet despite the diversity of publications and the deviances from what might be expected in terms of readership, the informants were unified in that they wouldn’t expect recruitment advertising in these types of publications.

Ian could not picture a recruitment advertisement for registered nurses in a magazine like Kiplinger’s, but he thought it was a good idea (Ian, personal conversation, March 27, 2009). Laura on the other hand said, “It seems like a poor fit. I would think they don’t know their target audience” (Laura, personal conversation, April 1, 2009). Dave concurred, “I think it’s a far cry and probably not that great of a place to work if they’re advertising in a magazine” (Dave, personal conversation, April 6, 2009). Unlike trade publications, the majority of the informants didn’t view consumer publications as a viable home for recruitment advertising. Consumer magazines tend to be national publications38, but the informants didn’t allude to this issue as a defining factor in forming their opinions as they did in the trade publications section. Additionally, the aesthetics of consumer magazines are similar to the aesthetics of trade publications, which informants seemed to favor over

38 Regional and local advertising is available in many national consumer magazines, but it is unlikely the informant were aware of this possibility.
newspaper. The only explanation I have for this seeming contradiction is that the informants generally did not accept recruitment advertising in venues that weren’t specific to nursing. Other ways to target registered nurses is through the use of direct mail, career fairs, and exhibiting at professional conferences. Although not advertising, these marketing tactics deserve attention in this study because they have the ability to target registered nurses both by geography and by profession and because these factors have been shown to be important to the informants in this study.

**Direct Mail, Career Fairs, and Other Traditional Marketing Tactics**

“I’ve gotten invitations to open houses to different hospitals and certain places. And if I’m not interested in [it], I just shred it,” conceded Tess (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009). According to the Direct Marketing Association, response rates for what the public often labels as *junk mail* is somewhere between 2% and 6% depending on the purpose of the mailing (Direct Marketing Association, 2007). It’s unlikely that Laura will be one of these few that respond. She barely let me finish asking her how she felt about receiving recruitment advertisements in the mail before she said, “I don’t like it, and I’m in the process of writing back all of these people who send me stuff, asking them not to send me any more mail. I find them a burden, not a gift” (Laura, personal conversation, April 1, 2009). Approximately 22% of A25-54 and 21% of those in the Occupation Health/Medical Services Industry in the Chicago DMA read direct mail at least weekly according to The Media Audit, and the SurveyMonkey.com results show that registered nurses receive an abundance of direct mail, with 28% receiving more than 21 pieces per month. Not all of the respondents reacted to the question as negatively as Laura, but Brandy’s response was
representative of the group, “I end up recycling most of them” (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009). Like newspapers, direct mail also had the stigma of marketing less desirable jobs: those in home health, nursing homes, or jobs too far from the informants’ homes or out of the Chicago area altogether.

Employers also attend events such as career fairs trying to connect directly with potential job seekers. Eight of informants had never been to career fair, and all but one of the informants who had been to a career fair only had done so while they were students or immediately after graduation. Of the seven who had attended career fairs, one had actually found a job through the fair she attended. Like career fairs, professional conferences offer employers the opportunity to exhibit for recruitment purposes, but none of the informants had ever visited the booth of an employer while at a conference.

Van Hoye’s (2008) study of Belgian nursing homes suggests that “enhancing nursing employees’ perceptions of employer image is an effective means to increase their willingness to recommend their organization as an employer and to testify in their employer’s recruitment communications” (p. 373). Of course, it doesn’t hurt to offer an employee referral program (ERP) as well. Tess described her employer’s program, “When we were short, we were told by our director, ‘If you refer an RN, you will get a $1,500 bonus: $750 after the first 6 months and $750 after the second six months’” (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009). Yet, Brandy who works in the same health system as Tess stated, “We do have an employee referral program. It’s not advertised as well as it could be, so I couldn’t tell you what our current program is or how much you get” (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009).
Clearly, there is a need for internal marketing to this organization’s employees. As Van Hoye and Lievens (2007) found, word of mouth is powerful even when employers also utilize recruitment advertising (p. 2039), so it seems exigent that employers market their employee referral programs internally to supplement their external employer banding campaigns since seven of the informants in the present study said that they usually find out about job openings through word of mouth and networking. Employers may underestimate the importance of their current employees when making advertising decisions (Gilly & Wolfinbarger, 1998, p. 86), but nurturing the current employees’ perceptions of the employer brand encourages employee endorsements (Van Hoye, 2008, p. 373).

**Summary of Findings**

The analysis of the data creates an interesting look into the way that registered nurses in the Chicago DMA consume newspaper; trade publications; radio; Internet and digital media; outdoor/out-of-home; broadcast and cable television; consumer magazines; and direct mail, career fairs, and other traditional marketing materials. The findings indicate that Internet and outdoor/out-of-home are the top two media in terms of media exposure across the general A25-54 and the Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry categories of The Media Audit as well as the quantitative survey administered through SurveyMonkey.com and the qualitative interviews. However, the analysis also reveals that there are idiosyncratic variations from these findings and that the affinity for advertising varies between media. These findings are addressed along with the results of this analysis in Chapter 5: Discussion.
Chapter 5: Discussion

The analysis in Chapter 4: Findings leads to several key conclusions that provide answers for each of the five research questions and addresses each of the four hypotheses. In this chapter, the research questions are answered in the order of their original appearance in Chapter 1: Introduction along with data to support each of the conclusions. The hypotheses are also answered in their original order but are intertwined in the discussion as relevant. Following the results, I further explore themes that emerged in the qualitative data that reveal that although the term employer brand is jargon reserved for scholars and those who work in the recruitment industry, the registered nurses in this study had some insightful and quixotic ideas of what an employer brand should be and how it should be communicated.

Results

R1 asked, “In what ways does the 2007 national aggregate data of The Media Audit parallel the media exposure of A25-54 registered nurses in the Chicago DMA as indicated by the 100-participant quantitative survey, and in what ways does the data differ, if at all?” The comparison of the data revealed differences in the percentages of media exposure between the primary targets of The Media Audit and the quantitative survey administered to registered nurses through SurveyMonkey.com but also revealed that Internet and outdoor were the top two media for each (Appendix Graphs 1-3). The Media Audit reports that A25-54 in the Live In-Metro Chicago, IL market are most heavily exposed to the Internet (38%) followed by outdoor (32%) and that those represented by the Occupation-Health/Medical Services
Industry are most heavily exposed to outdoor (34%) followed by the Internet (32%). Although these two media are juxtaposed between the A25-54 and Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry categories of The Media Audit, the percentages indicate that media exposure is similar between the two categories. The quantitative survey administered to registered nurses in the Chicago DMA through SurveyMonkey.com indicates a higher level of exposure to the Internet (94%) and outdoor (80%), but these statistics are based on daily exposure whereas the definition of heavy varied between media in The Media Audit. Nonetheless, the top two media, in one order or the other, in all three cases (the A25-54 and Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry categories of The Media Audit and the SurveyMonkey.com survey of registered nurses in the Chicago DMA) were Internet and outdoor. In each of these reports, radio ranked third in terms of exposure. However, there was a little more variation between direct mail, television, and newspaper. The Media Audit indicated that the primary targets of general A25-54 and Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry are both exposed to direct mail (22% & 21% respectively) more so than television (17% & 16% respectively) and newspaper (15% & 18% respectively), but the SurveyMonkey.com results indicated that registered nurses have greater exposure to television since 67% of the respondents reported watching television on a daily basis. This is significantly higher than the 28% of the SurveyMonkey.com respondents who reported that they receive 21+ pieces of direct mail per month (less than one piece per day). Yet, I conclude that although the results of the comparison between The Media Audit and the

39 See each media section’s in Chapter 4: Findings footnotes for these definitions.
SurveyMonkey.com survey reveal some variations, they are minor considering the differences between the measures. As previously noted in Chapter 3: Methods, media exposure in The Media Audit is generally measured by the amount of time spent with a medium in an average weekday, but each medium is measured differently. I have provided footnotes that define these measures in Chapter 4: Findings as each medium is discussed, and these measures are also included with the media exposure graphs in the Appendix. The SurveyMonkey.com survey did not ask respondents to recall how much time they spent with a medium. Instead, the survey asked respondents simply whether or not they were exposed to a particular medium daily, weekly, monthly, occasionally, or never. I felt that it would be easier for respondents to recall their media usage in terms of “daily” or “weekly” rather than asking them to estimate an average amount of time spent with a medium although I understood that these measures would be slightly different from those of The Media Audit.

R2 asked, “What are the idiosyncratic media habits of individual registered nurses compared to the two surveys?” As the results of The Media Audit and SurveyMonkey.com survey show, the Internet and outdoor achieve the greatest exposure to the general A25-54 category, those in the Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry category, and A25-54 registered nurses in the Chicago DMA according to the results of the SurveyMonkey.com survey. The qualitative interviews revealed similar results. All of the registered nurses who were interviewed are online and all of them commute to their jobs either by bike, public transportation, or car.

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40 The exception was when I asked respondents to estimate the amount of direct mail they receive. I asked them to recall the number of pieces they receive monthly since direct mail is something tangible rather than abstract.
These were the only two media to which all of the informants had exposure. Thus, the top two media in terms of exposure for these informants were Internet and outdoor (Appendix Graph 4). Of course, there were deviances from these data by individual registered nurses in the study, but “exceptions to any social regularity do not mean that the regularity itself is unreal or unimportant” (Babbie, 2007, p. 12). For example, although radio ranked third in terms of exposure in both categories of The Media Audit and the SurveyMonkey.com survey, Laura reported listening to National Public Radio “constantly” (Laura, personal conversation, April 1, 2009) whereas Dave reported that he doesn’t listen to the radio at all (Dave, personal conversation, April 6, 2009). Throughout Chapter 4: Findings, these types of idiosyncrasies emerged, and these “are no less real simply because cases don’t fit the general pattern” (Babbie, 2007, p. 13). Therefore, H1 which stated, “Although deviations from The Media Audit’s 2007 national aggregate occupational data occur in the media habits of individuals, these things do not happen often enough to seriously threaten the observation of social regularities” (Babbie, 2007, p. 13) was supported. Furthermore, the similarities between the media exposure data from the A25-54 and Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry categories of The Media Audit, the data collected from the SurveyMonkey.com survey, and the data from qualitative interviews lends support toward utilizing The Media Audit as a directional media planning tool for recruitment advertising campaigns.

R3 asked, “Do registered nurses consume media together as an occupational co-culture? If so, what media and in what ways?” The results of this study indicate that registered nurses don’t share most media as an occupational co-culture. The
majority of registered nurses appear to be online, but their online behaviors appear to be idiosyncratic based on their differing interests, which also differ between age ranges and socioeconomic statuses. Ashley who is in the A25-34 age range with a household income of $50,000 to $74,999 gets the Chicago Tribune on Sundays for the department store sales flyers and the grocery store coupons, which is vastly different than Ian’s readership of Kiplinger’s, an investment publication. Ian, however, is in the A45-54 age range and has a household income of $100,000 to $149,999 (Ashley, personal conversation, April 14, 2009; Ian, personal conversation, March 27, 2009). Media consumption was related to ethnicity as well. Claire was the only informant to use Bulgarian media; Josh was the only registered nurse pursuing Swiss citizenship and using Swiss media; and only Monica consumed Spanish language media (Claire, personal conversation, March 30, 2009; Monica, personal conversation, April, 18, 2009; Josh, personal conversation, April 8, 2009). This data supported H2 which stated, “The media habits of registered nurses are related more so to their demographic (e.g. A25-34 of A45-54) and/or their socioeconomic background (e.g. Hispanic with a household income of $50,000-$74,999) than to their occupation.”

Nevertheless, several of the informants visited major news websites, and several of them listened to news/talk radio stations. They only occasionally share these media together, however. “You know, the whole thing with like Blagojevich⁴¹. That was a big one,” said Dave when I asked him if he ever discusses the stories or

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⁴¹ Democratic Governor, Rod Blagojevich was removed from office by the Illinois Senate on Thursday, January 29, 2009 amid charges of corruption (Long & Pearson, 2009).
advertisements he sees in the Chicago Tribune with other registered nurses (Dave, personal conversation, April 8, 2009). As previously noted in Chapter 4: Findings, Grey’s Anatomy seems to be one television program that many of the informants watch and discuss with other registered nurses, but there were others mentioned by informants to a lesser degree. Claire, for example, said, “We talk about Oprah’s shows. Very often she has Doctor Oz and…she’s bringing up things that interest us as medical staff like controlling the weight...Everything is interesting on Oprah’s show. So we discuss: Did you see this? Did you see that? And that was so cool or whatever” (Claire, personal conversation, March 30, 2009).

Trade media were shared slightly differently because some employers encouraged the informants to read and share the publications and websites. Tess explained, “We also at work have...something kind of like a book club except it’s a current nursing article, and every quarter one of the staff members pulls an article or Xeroxes an article. We all read it, and then we discuss it. [The articles] can be off an online thing or out of the professional journals. And so that’s interesting.” Her employer also places trade publications on a table and encourages employees to read them even during their shifts (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009). These publications permeate the nursing community; they are used within work settings as educational materials, and they are shared together. Therefore, H3, which read, “At least in the cases of professional organization media and trade publication media, registered nurses consume media as an occupational co-culture” was supported.

R4 asked, “Does encountering recruitment advertisements in media venues preferred by registered nurses influence their perceptions of the organizations’
employer brands? If so, how is this relationship mediated?” I conclude that the media vehicles used to advertise the job openings directly influence perceptions of employer brands. Some venues are more valued than others, and the attributes of each venue appear to be transferred to the jobs and, therefore, the employers. In particular, recruitment advertising placed in mass media designed to reach broad audiences rather than registered nurses is often seen as a sign of desperation. The exception to this is when media is used to celebrate nurses/nursing, and this paradox is explored later in this chapter.

R5 asked, “Which media venues best lend themselves to recruitment advertising when trying to recruit registered nurses in the Chicago designated market area?” All recruitment advertising venues weren’t viewed as equal by the registered nurses in this study. They assigned negative attributes to the types of jobs that are advertised in the newspaper calling them “flunkier” and “less desirable” (Ashley, personal conversation, April 14, 2009; Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009; Jenny, personal conversation, April 14, 2009), but they were more open to the jobs advertised in trade publications. As a matter of fact, Tess excitingly exclaimed, “Nurses Lounge is where I got my job!” (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009) because as Brandy noted, “If it’s an upstanding publication, I think people are attracted to that” (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009). The importance of nursing-specific media as a host for recruitment advertising was expressed explicitly by Monica, “If [an employer] bought some advertising space in a particular nursing-geared website, then okay. But just on any website? I’m not so sure” (Monica, personal conversation, April 18, 2009). Therefore H4, which read
“Registered nurses will be more receptive to recruitment advertisements viewed within their preferred media and that this will lead to positive perceptions of organizations’ employer brands,” is supported with the following caveat. Registered nurses are more receptive to recruitment advertising in preferred *nursing-specific* media.

These results, as previously stated, provide some evidence that The Media Audit might be a valid directional tool for media planners as they decide which media vehicles to utilize in recruitment advertising campaigns. Also, the results indicate that Smit and Neijen’s (2000) concept of the affinity for advertising might be applicable in recruitment advertising and employer branding studies, which might stimulate further research into “the largely ignored question of how to attract attention to recruitment materials” (Barber, 1998 as quoted by Breaugh & Starke, 2000, p. 413).

Additionally, this study expands the application of signaling theory in recruitment advertising from examinations of recruitment material specificity (e.g. advertisements and career sites) to the inferences potential employees make about employers based on the media the employers choose to advertise in/on. I suggest that Allen, Mahto, & Otondo’s (2007) final adjusted model of web-based attraction (p. 1704) could easily be adapted to include the possibility that the recruitment vehicle used to communicate the recruitment message impacts employer brands, and the original model along with my conception are in the Appendix (Appendix Figures 1-2). The unification of these concepts and this theory provides a kaleidoscopic lens for continued explorations in this dynamic area of study.
A Trilogy: Affinity for Advertising, Employer Branding, and Signaling Theory

As Allen, Mahto, and Otondo’s (2007) final adjusted theoretical model of web-based applicant attraction indicates, attitudes toward a medium (in their case, websites), affect attitudes toward an organization as well as application intentions. However, the attitudes toward a medium in their model are directly impacted by the amount of job and organizational information provided (p. 1704). The results of the current study indicate that one’s attitude toward a medium as an appropriate or inappropriate vehicle for delivering the advertising message also might impact the attitudes toward the organization and the intent to apply for employment regardless of advertisement specificity. As Allen, Mahto, and Otondo (2007) apply signaling theory, individuals use the information available in recruitment advertisements to make conclusions about job and organizational characteristics that are not explicitly detailed in advertisements (p. 1698). When asking the informants in the current study about traditional recruitment media such as newspapers, trade magazines, and the Internet, the informants had a basis for their opinions because they had seen recruitment advertising in these venues previously. Once the questions moved into non-traditional recruitment media, the informants, in most cases, didn’t have prior experience to draw upon. In the absence of any job or organizational information, they were forced to make inferences about jobs, employers, and employer brands based on their experiences with the media vehicles alone. The themes that surfaced from these interviews are incisive and have implications for employers and scholars alike.
Desperation

Advertising in mass media that reaches all adults regardless of occupation concerned several of the informants in the qualitative interviews. Ashley said of employers, “They must be kind of desperate to do such a mainstream, broad advertisement” (Ashley, personal conversation, April 14, 2009), and Brandy proclaimed, “I would think that they’d be just looking for bodies…that they would take anybody. Anybody and their brother that would see that, so I don’t know how selective that would be…I, personally, would want to gear my advertising to get the most bang for its buck and to get a good quality person. I don’t think advertising on a big billboard is the way to do it” (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009). Monica expressed a similar sentiment in regards to the prospect of employers advertising their job openings on the radio, “But I don’t want them to sound desperate either. ‘Cause you want to attract the best of the best. And I think it depends on the radio station you’re doing it on too” (Monica, personal conversation, April 18, 2009). The notion that recruitment advertising in mass media designed to reach broad audiences could be a sign of desperation and/or looking for quantity over quality was mentioned by eight of the 15 informants. The words “desperate,” “desperately,” or “desperation” appeared in the transcripts 11 times, and phrases such as “quantity or quality,” and “You want to attract the best of the best,” also appeared throughout the responses from these eight informants. Especially interesting is that Arnold et. al (2003) discovered the same theme of desperation in their study of the National Health System’s Return to Nursing campaign in the United Kingdom (p. 233). But this seeming dislike of media such as billboards and radio isn’t necessarily a reason to
avoid these media. As Monica said, “I guess it depends on the approach and the pitch” (Monica, personal conversation, April 18, 2009).

**When It’s Okay to Use Mass Media: Employer Branding Done Right**

Smit & Neijens (2000) divided their respondents into: the “rejecters,” the “enjoyers,” and the “general dislike” groups. These *affinity groups* have general attitudes toward advertising (p. 40-41), and Dave is what the authors would call a rejecter. His affinity for recruitment advertising is almost nonexistent. “I tend to think that places that have to advertise for positions…aren’t drawing in nurses by their reputation. And that’s because [my current employer] has such a good reputation that…they never have to…advertise for job positions because they always have nurses coming to them seeking out positions.” When Dave graduated from nursing school five years ago, he was interested in two employers in Chicago due to their reputations, and he went directly to their career sites. “They have good websites because they kind of say what their philosophy is in nursing [and] what their magnet credentials [are].” According to Dave, magnet credentials signify excellence in nursing as well as the level of autonomy and respect nurses receive in a hospital.

When it comes to the magnet status, Dave has a different opinion about advertising. If he was trying to recruit registered nurses to work in his hospital, he said he’d advertise on billboards, at bus stops, and on the El*, but the message would not be, “Come for work us.” It would be “We’re a magnet hospital” (Dave, personal conversation, April 6, 2009).

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*The El is the name of the *elevated* train and subway system in Chicago.*
When hospitals celebrate nursing and the nurses that work for them, the informants in this study expressed a greater affinity for advertising. Johnson & Johnson’s Campaign for Nursing’s Future was mentioned by four of the 15 registered nurses in this study, and Debbie mused, “Johnson & Johnson did that ad campaign...that was promoting nursing as a career...I did see some TV ads, but it would have been nice to see some billboards too” (Debbie, personal conversation, April 2, 2009). Johnson & Johnson launched the Campaign for Nursing’s Future in 2002 to combat the nursing shortage that had resulted from decreased graduations from nursing schools in the late 1990s (Donelan et. al, 2005, p. 151), and by 2005, expenditures on the campaign had exceeded $30 million (Smith, 2005, p. 199). Carla approved of Johnson & Johnson’s investment, and she rewarded them by purchasing their products. She wished that employers would embark on similar campaigns. “I would feel better about advertisers who try to do some educating of the public about the profession...sort of like the Johnson & Johnson ads. I’m a Johnson & Johnson buyer just because of those. You know what I mean? I think that’s a responsible way of spending their money.” Creating an association between an employer and feelings is imperative because this is the essence of a brand relationship (Heath, Brandt, & Nairn, 2006, p. 412), and Carla’s loyalty to the Johnson & Johnson brand is an example of how this brand relationship can be successful. The Johnson & Johnson ads serve as a model for what kind of advertising these registered nurses want to see. Carla went on to say, “And the billboards that I see that I don’t object noxiously to are billboards that celebrate the nurses at the hospital...[The ads for one hospital] don’t say, ‘We have openings.’ They say, ‘We have great nurses. We love them.’ So,
not only does it make me want to bring my kid there; but if I was looking [for a job],
that would be a place I would go” (Carla, personal conversation, April 9, 2009). Smit
and Neijens (2000) did not address the possibility that the perceived goal of a
campaign might influence one’s affinity for advertising in/on a medium. Their study
was limited to exploring a series of belief statements such as, “For me advertising
on/in…repeated too often” and “Advertising on/in…provides me with useful
information about bargains” and how these belief statements related to four media:
radio, television, newspaper, and magazines (p. 37). However in the current study, it
seems that the goal of advertising campaigns (i.e. recruitment versus overall
branding) affects the affinity an individual has for the advertising in a particular
medium. As an example, informants generally thought recruitment advertising on
television was a sign of desperation, but Monica welcomed her hospital’s television
advertising that promoted its health care services as a positive representation of
comradery and respect between health care workers. “[My health system] has quite a
bit of commercials on TV, and they portray the physicians and the nurses in a very,
very good light. They talk about patient cases and how they all collaborated together
to have really good outcomes for the patients” (Monica, personal conversation, April
18, 2009). If organizations use mass media to highlight qualities such as autonomy,
relationships, and respect rather than for recruitment-specific messages, they might be
able to duplicate the positive effects of the Johnson & Johnson campaign by building
their employer brands and nurturing brand relationships.

43 Unlike the quotes from transcribed interviews, the series of periods in the belief statements are taken
directly from Smit and Neijens (2000).
From Internal Audience to External Representatives

Employees will differ from the general public in their interpretations of their organizations’ product, service, or recruitment advertising due to their prior experiences with the organizations (Gilly & Wolfinbarger, 1998, p. 86). Josh recalled radio advertisements for his organization that he heard while working in the operating room of his hospital. “And we always have a laugh when we hear an ad put out by our own hospital. I never heard an employment ad though” (Josh, personal conversation, April 8, 2009). Instead of finding amusement in her health system’s advertising, Brandy expressed pride, “Even when we did our advertising campaign at the hospital here, it was really, really fun, probably because we had an invested interest in it. It was really fun to see all the creative ways our marketing department, you know, put twists on our tagline and the pictures they took. You know, usually when I see billboards for other organizations, I wonder if they’re truly employees that are working at the organization or if they’re fill in people. So, I kind of like to see real people that work at those organizations” (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009). Once again, as in the case of the trade publications discussed in Chapter 4: Findings, Brandy expressed her desire to see local nurses featured in media, and Monica agreed. “I like to see the faces of the people that work there because a picture of a building doesn’t tell me much. I want to look at the people. How happy are they? You know, what do they have to say about the facility? Because they can also tell, ‘Oh, we have this. Oh, we have that,’ but, you know again, I don’t know how the comradery is, or I don’t know how the teamwork is. But if you have a nurse telling me, ‘I love it here. I love my coworkers,’ that says more to me than, ‘Yeah, we have

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all of this state of the art equipment” (Monica, personal conversation, April 18, 2009). Featuring employees in advertisements might be interpreted as a sign that employers value their employees as long as the employees perceive that they are portrayed accurately (Gilly & Wolfinbarger, 1998, p. 75). Not all employees are willing to appear in their employers’ advertising, however. As Van Hoye (2008) found in his study of Belgian nursing homes, nurses who perceived their employers to be competent were more willing to testify about their work experiences and appear in their recruitment materials (pp. 372-373). When employees are willing to be brand ambassadors, organizations should tap into them. However, Monica, who loves her organization and would love to be in her hospital’s advertising, sadly admitted, “No one’s ever asked me if I wanted to be in any of the advertisements” (Monica, personal conversation, April 18, 2009).

**Recruitment Advertising Ideas from Registered Nurses**

The final question I posed to each of the registered nurses who volunteered for the qualitative interviews was, “If you were trying to hire [registered nurses], how would you advertise your job openings to reach them? Why?” Many of the informants seemed to enjoy this question, and their answers were thoughtful and, at times, creative. Monica, who is in the A35-44 age range, suggested “maybe like a virtual tour on our website.” The virtual tour would include testimonials from associates degree-prepared to advanced practice registered nurses who work at her hospital. She also thought that the hospital should do more promotions during
National Nurses Week, “For Nurse’s Week\textsuperscript{44}, we don’t get much. I would give out really cool t-shirts or sweatshirts, baseball caps, something that’s really nice and not a chotchkey, to like my really good nurses, so they can walk around and do free advertising. I would totally wear a sweatshirt from here or a t-shirt or something if it was cute and good material, good quality” (Monica, personal conversation, April 18, 2009). Tess disagreed about the chotchkeys, “I will tell you that nurses love free stuff: pens, sticky note pads with the business on them, cookies, candy” (Tess, personal conversation, March 21, 2009). However the top recommendation, mentioned by five informants, was print and online trade media. Brandy said, “I’m old fashioned. I would take the...recognized nursing publications and choose that as my avenue to put [recruitment advertising] in because that goes to every registered nurse household. And I think you’re just more focused into that. I don’t know that I would waste the money in the [\textit{Chicago Tribune}] or a larger publication like that. I think if people are looking, they’re looking in what’s familiar with them…with what’s straight nursing” (Brandy, personal conversation, March 25, 2009). Informants made other suggestions such as posting open positions on organizations’ own career sites and depending on word of mouth, but they also recognized that advertising can only do so much. As Kimmi noted, “But when you’re talking about the job, it’s really the same everywhere. So, I think it would be…hard to advertise and recruit nurses” (Kimmi, personal conversation, April 20, 2009), once again alluding to the importance of the employer brand.

\textsuperscript{44} National Nurses Week is celebrated each year from May 6, National Nurses Day, to May 12, the birthday of Florence Nightingale (American Nurses Association, n.d.).
Perceptions of Co-Culture

As the results of this study indicate, registered nurses don’t appear to share media as an occupational co-culture except in the case of trade media. To supplement my own analysis, I also asked informants what they believed they shared in common with other registered nurses, if anything at all, and how alike or different they felt their media habits were to those of other registered nurses. Besides sharing their profession and experiences, five registered nurses used terminology such as “caring” or phrases such as “help other people” to describe nurses. But although several informants recognized this commonality, most did not believe they consumed media in similar ways unless they were in the same age groups. Consistent with the findings of this study, Debbie, who is in the A25-34 age demographic, stated, “I think to nurses my age, [media consumption habits are] the same. I think a lot of the nurses that are older; it’s totally different. You know, I’m more apt to be getting stuff on the computer, you know, checking email, texting, those kinds of things. And some of the older nurses here, it’s just foreign to them” (Debbie, personal conversation, April 2, 2009). Heidi, who is in the A35-44 age range, agreed that age was a defining factor in the media consumption habits of registered nurses, “Some...might be more computer savvy, especially if they’re a little bit younger than me” (Heidi, personal conversation, April 7, 2009). There were a few of the informants who thought the media consumption habits of registered nurses tended to be similar since they talked about some of these media together, and I observed two occasions during which registered nurses discussed prime time television programming in the cafeterias of hospitals. However, the majority of the informants thought that there were differences
in media usage due to ages or personalities. As Carla sarcastically responded when I asked her how alike or different her media habits were to the media habits of other registered nurses, “Hmmm…well, since there’s like 5 million [of us], I don’t know” (Carla, personal conversation, April 9, 2009).

Summary of Results and Discussion

Based on the analysis outlined in Chapter 4: Findings, several conclusions have been made. The results indicate that the general A25-54 and Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry categories of The Media Audit also represent the smaller occupational category of registered nurses in the Chicago DMA. Of course, the results also reveal that there are variances due to the individual interests and personalities of the informants, but these do not occur frequently enough to diminish the aggregate data (Babbie, 2007, p. 13). Additionally, these results indicate that registered nurses share trade media as an occupational co-culture but that their media consumption of general market mass media (e.g. Internet, television, etc.) tends to correlate with their age demographics, races, and socioeconomic statuses. Informants verified this conclusion when they commented on the differences in Internet use between older and younger nurses, for example. Finally, the results testify to the fact that registered nurses in the Chicago DMA make inferences about jobs and organizations based on the media vehicles used for recruitment advertising campaigns and that registered nurses are more receptive to recruitment advertising in respected trade publications than in general market mass media. Eight of the 15 informants in this study felt that recruitment advertising on media such as billboards and radio was a sign of desperation. However, the informants were receptive to employer branding
campaigns that celebrate nurses or that educate the public about the profession in/on these mass media. Furthermore, the informants had an assortment of recommendations for recruitment advertising and promotional campaigns. These results have implications for recruitment advertising and employer branding campaigns as well as future research, and these implications are discussed in Chapter 6: Conclusion.
Chapter 6: Conclusion

The culmination of this work is Chapter 6: Conclusion. It begins with a review of the purpose of this study and its research design. Next, several limitations are addressed and suggestions for future research are integrated in this discussion. This chapter, and indeed this research report, concludes with a brief summary of the results and emergent themes, a look at the possible theoretical significance of these findings, and implications for employers and scholars alike.

Purpose and Research Design

The purpose of this ethnographic study was to explore the ways that registered nurses in the Chicago DMA consume media, to examine a proprietary database called The Media Audit as a potential media planning tool for recruitment advertising, to discover whether or not registered nurses share media consumption as an occupational co-culture, to gauge their receptiveness to recruitment advertising in these media venues, and to determine if the media vehicles used to deliver recruitment messages impact perceptions of employer brands. Using Smit and Neijens’ (2000) concept of the affinity for advertising and signaling theory as applied to recruitment advertising by Allen, Mahto, and Otondo (2007), I compared data from the A25-54 and the Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry categories of the 2007 national aggregate occupational release of The Media Audit to data that I collected from a survey I administered to 100 registered nurses through SurveyMonkey.com. I also compared the data from The Media Audit and the SurveyMonkey.com survey against data I collected during 15 qualitative interviews.
with registered nurses and 20 hours of observations that I conducted in the cafeterias of two hospitals and two restaurants near an additional major medical campus.

**Limitations**

As with all research, this study has several limitations. The Chicago DMA is the third largest market in the United States (Clear Channel Outdoor, n.d.; TVB.org, n.d.), and the media consumption habits of registered nurses as well as their affinity for advertising may be vastly different in both smaller and larger markets. In addition, although this study indicated that The Media Audit might be a viable media planning tool for the recruitment of registered nurses, these results might not translate to other occupational groups. Therefore, future research should examine the media consumption habits of registered nurses as well as other occupational groups in other markets or perhaps in multiple markets.

Four of the informants in the qualitative interviews described nurses as “caring.” I agree with their self-assessment wholeheartedly. I was overwhelmed by the response I received from the nursing community of the Chicago DMA, and I was able to meet my recruitment goals of 100 respondents for the SurveyMonkey.com quantitative survey plus an additional 15 informants for the qualitative interviews in just over a month. These sample sizes might seem rather small considering that the population of the Chicago DMA is 7,134,499 (Clear Channel Outdoor, 2007; Market Demographics, n.d.) and that the city of Chicago on its own has an estimated 29,416 registered nurses (Baldwin & Metcalfe, 2000, p. 3-7; National Research Corporation, 2007, pp. ii, v). Additionally, conducting observations at merely two hospitals and
two restaurants could not possibly cover the entire geography of the Chicago DMA, which spans northeast Illinois up to the Wisconsin border and across northwest Indiana to the Michigan border. Yet, “representativeness has no precise, scientific meaning” (Babbie, 2007, p. 189). The Media Audit’s data is trusted by more than 1,500 clients despite the fact that 1,271 respondents represented all A25-54 and merely 200 respondents represented all adults in the Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry in the Live In Metro-Chicago, IL market of the 2007 national aggregate occupational release. Nevertheless, if the current study were duplicated using additional participants, the findings of this study would be strengthened.

As addressed in Chapter 3: Methodology, the sampling designs and measures were different between the archival data from The Media Audit and the original research I conducted. The Media Audit relied on the random selection sampling technique, a form of probability sampling, to recruit participants for their phone surveys because they were not looking for members of a specific group45 whereas I used the snowball sampling technique, a form of non-probability sampling, to recruit respondents that met the criteria of being a registered nurse between the ages of 25 and 54 who live and work in the Chicago DMA for the SurveyMonkey.com survey and the qualitative interviews. Additionally, The Media Audit measures heavy media exposure in terms of the number of minutes, for example, that respondents spend with a particular medium (e.g. radio), but I measured media exposure in terms of daily, weekly, monthly, occasionally or never. Future researchers may wish to parallel the

45 The Media Audit selects the A18+ with the most recent birthday in the household regardless of occupation or other criteria to participate in the phone surveys (The Media Audit, n.d.a, p. 70).
methods and measures of The Media Audit to ensure that their results are indicative of the archival data. However, I argue that my research design yielded data that both supported and complemented The Media Audit.

The respondents in the SurveyMonkey.com survey and the qualitative interviews spanned the entire A25-54 age range, represented several races, and had various specializations, but registered nurses come from a wide variety of academic backgrounds as well (Freeman & Carpenter, 1983, p. 7). As one participant noted, “to be an RN is just…a legal thing, it’s not an academic degree” (Carla, personal conversation, April 9, 2009). Level of education was not a question that I asked participants in either the quantitative or qualitative portions of this study, but several of the interview participants mentioned their education during the course of our conversations. Education ranged from associate degree-prepared to doctoral degree-prepared registered nurses; and in hindsight, a question regarding education might have been an interesting addition to these inquiries.

Another limitation regarding the sample was that there was no way to monitor whether or not the respondents who completed the online survey or volunteered for the qualitative interviews were indeed registered nurses between the ages of 25 and 54 who lived and worked in the Chicago DMA and who had not already participated in another portion of this research although I outlined the criteria for participation in all of the communications and explicitly asked participants to either complete the online survey or volunteer for an interview. It is even possible that participants had also taken part in a phone interview for The Media Audit, although I am not aware that this was the case for any of the volunteers. My preference was to keep the
samples for each of the data sources separate so that I would have a larger overall sample. Furthermore, I did not track the cities or counties where survey respondents lived or worked. I only required them to live and work in the Chicago DMA. In the qualitative interviews, however, the informants disclosed their locations to me. 12 of the 15 informants lived in this city of Chicago, and 13 worked in the city. Therefore, the sample was heavily urban, and the suburbs of Chicago were underrepresented. This disparity may have impacted the results of this study because urban life and suburban life may be intrinsically different in regards to the time it takes to commute to work and, therefore, the amount of exposure to outdoor advertising, for example.

Finally, although symbols do not inherently have meanings, individuals assign meanings to them (Babbie, 2007, p. 381). This study lacked intercoder reliability because I conducted all of the data collection, coding, and analysis myself. Therefore, it was inevitable that my own perceptions impacted the evaluations and the subsequent ethnographic account. Despite these limitations, I believe that several sound conclusions were made.

Results and Conclusions

The results of this study provide some evidence that the A25-54 and Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry categories of The Media Audit fairly represent the media exposure of registered nurses in the Chicago DMA. Accordingly, The Media Audit has potential as a directional tool for recruitment media planners, and this is good news because, “Effective strategy plays a significant role in recruiting strategy” (Freeman and Carpenter, 19983, p. 12). However, the results also
indicate that registered nurses interpret media as symbols that have their own attributes, and these attributes shape the understandings registered nurses have of their world (Barley, 1991, p. 53; Eisenberg, Goodall, & Tretheway, 2007, p. 128). For example, the informants in the qualitative interviews demonstrated that they have an affinity for recruitment advertising in nursing-specific trade publications, whereas they have negative connotations toward recruitment advertising in mass media unless “the hook would be not so much advertising jobs but advertising who you are” (Dave, personal conversation, April 6, 2009).

Previously used to study consumer advertising, Smit and Neijens (2000) concept of the affinity for advertising seems well suited for determining an audience’s receptivity to recruitment advertising, but I argue that the concept needs to intersect with signaling theory as a way to understand how individuals interpret the attributes of media and transfer them to the employer brands of organizations that advertise in/on these venues. This application of signaling theory is slightly different from Allen, Mahto, and Otondo’s (2007) final model of web-based applicant attraction that assumes that potential applicants have job and organizational information that impacts their perceptions of organizational websites and application intentions. Of course in an actual recruitment situation, potential applicants would likely have this information, and prior research has focused on this assumption. A review of recruitment literature by Breaugh & Starke (2000) found that “an organization’s image can clearly influence organizational recruitment” (p. 431). However, I don’t

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46 As a reminder, consumer advertising promotes products such as Toyota automobiles or services such as financial planning through Vanguard.
believe that other researchers have considered the possibility that the media vehicles themselves might contribute positively or negatively to perceptions of employer brands. Therefore, future research should certainly test my proposed adaption of Allen, Mahto, and Otondo’s (2007) model and its possible relationship to the affinity for advertising (Appendix Figures 1-2.)

I judged the importance of an interview response by the number of times it appeared during the open coding period as well as the nature of the discussion at the time it occurred (Arnold et. al, 2003, pp. 228-229). Johnson & Johnson’s Campaign for Nursing’s Future as well as the sense of desperation are two emergent themes that accentuate the importance of identifying the type of advertising an audience is receptive to in addition to discovering effective advertising venues. I did not expect registered nurses to have such clearly defined notions of employer branding or the consequences of employers’ advertising choices. Yet, some of the respondents had clearly thought about these issues in the past although some admitted that our discussion was the first time they had pondered these questions. The themes, however, reveal that employers would be wise to supplement data from The Media Audit or other directional media planning tools by asking employees for their opinions regarding the appropriateness or inappropriateness of various media vehicles for recruitment-related campaigns although “advertising decision makers may underestimate the importance of the employee audience for advertisements” (Gilly & Wolfinbarger, 1998, p. 86) and because health care organizations that want to encourage positive word of mouth need to do so by influencing antecedents (Van Hoye, 2008, p. 373). Several of the informants in the qualitative interviews thanked
me for my interest in nursing and were very enthusiastic about sharing their advertising and promotional ideas with me. Some of these informants also were excellent brand ambassadors who identified strongly with their organizations such as Dave who heralded his organization’s magnet status and Monica who would love to testify in her organizations’ advertising (Dave, personal conversation, April 6, 2009; Monica, personal conversation, April 18, 2009). I have no doubt that other employees would make excellent resources as well since they have a vested interest in the success of their employer’s recruitment advertising and employer branding campaigns.

Of course, organizations will find that employees don’t always agree about where to advertise and what messages should be conveyed. As this study demonstrates, media consumption habits correlate more so with an individual’s age, race, and socioeconomic status than with their occupation. Also, idiosyncratic interests impact media usage. Therefore, employers should adopt media planning strategies that use a media mix, especially since using multiple recruitment sources might be able to convey more information and, therefore, more realistic job information than a single source (Williams et al., 1993 as cited by Breaugh & Starke, 2000, p. 412). Although employers were once able to rely on newspaper alone when recruiting employees, it is no longer viable to rely on a single source. Employers need to adopt a recruitment advertising philosophy that relies on media planning strategies similar to the types of strategies used when promoting their products or services. If they conceive their employer brands as critical facets of their overall corporate brands, they should see an increase in applications because their advertising would
reach an audience receptive to the advertisements and because “positive results should follow good practice” (McKenzie & Glynn, 2001, p. 25).

This ethnographic account began in Chapter 1 by introducing the purpose of this study, which explored the ways registered nurses in the Chicago DMA consume media. Five research questions and four hypotheses were presented that allowed me to examine whether or not media consumption was shared by this occupational co-culture and also to examine the relationship between media consumption, recruitment advertising, and employer branding. Following this introduction, a review of recruitment advertising and employer branding literature from across several academic disciplines was presented in Chapter 2 before moving into a discussion of the methods chosen for this study in Chapter 3. The analysis of the data compiled from The Media Audit, the SurveyMonkey.com survey, the qualitative interviews, and the observations were integrated together in Chapter 4, and the results were detailed along with a number of emergent themes in Chapter 5. Finally, I reviewed all of these elements along with this study’s limitations and suggestions for future research in Chapter 6.

I truly hope that this work not only contributes to the academic literature on recruitment advertising and employer branding but that it will also be a resource for employers. It is essential that organizations define and communicate their unique employer brands because as Kimmi stated, “When you’re talking about staff nurses,...we know what the job entails. So as far as advertising goes, there’s really not a whole lot you can say unless you can offer something really unique” (Kimmi, personal conversation, April 20, 2007). If employers heed the advice of the registered
nurses who volunteered for this study, they may be able to identify the ideal media vehicles to deliver their recruitment advertising and differentiate themselves from their competitors so that they can meet their recruitment goals.
References


Fallows, D. (2006, February). On any given day, about 40 million Internet users go online just for fun or to pass the time [Memorandum]. *Pew Internet & the American Life Project, 1-6.*


Widget. (2007). Retrieved May 17, 2009, from Webopedia:


Appendix

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry</th>
<th>List of Occupational Titles</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>Language Pathology (medical)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistants</td>
<td>Mediator &amp; health (ND) (see code 1)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendants in Hospital</td>
<td>Medical Technician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Auditors</td>
<td>Medical Transcriber</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bacteriologist</td>
<td>Metallurgist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bookkeepers</td>
<td>Nurse (RN) (LVN)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chiropractor</td>
<td>Optometrist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer Data Entry</td>
<td>Osteopath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor (CD)</td>
<td>Paramedic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counselor (employment service), arbitrator,</td>
<td>Pathologist (Medical)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Service Representative</td>
<td>Personnel Worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental Assistant (clerical)</td>
<td>Pharmacist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dieticians</td>
<td>Recreation Workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispatchers</td>
<td>Social Worker (CD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctor</td>
<td>Specialist (not specific) (CD)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Druggist</td>
<td>Surgeon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examiner</td>
<td>Technician (X-ray, refract)</td>
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<td>Language Pathology (medical)</td>
<td>Therapist (CD)</td>
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Table 2

**The Media Audit General A25-54 Category**

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<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Frequency</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
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<tr>
<td>Adults 25-34</td>
<td>34.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults 35-44</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
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<td>Adults 45-54</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
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answered question: 1271
skipped question: NA

**The Media Audit Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry Category**

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<tr>
<td>Adults 35-44</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
<td>52</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults 45-54</td>
<td>26.0%</td>
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answered question: 200
skipped question: NA

**SurveyMonkey.com Quantitative Survey**

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<td>Adults 25-34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults 35-44</td>
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<td>Adults 45-54</td>
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answered question: 99
skipped question: 1

**Qualitative Interviews**

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<tr>
<td>Adults 35-44</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adults 45-54</td>
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answered question: 15
skipped question: 0
### Table 3
#### The Media Audit General A25-54 Category

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</tr>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Under $15,000</td>
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<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000-$24,999</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000-$34,999</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000-$49,999</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>338</td>
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<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>70.4%</td>
<td>246</td>
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<tr>
<td>$75,000-$99,999</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000-$149,000</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 Plus</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>121</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>answered question</strong></td>
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#### The Media Audit Occupation-Health/Medical Services Industry Category

<table>
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<th>Response Count</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Answer Options</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under $15,000</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000-$24,999</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000-$34,999</td>
<td>12.5%</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000-$49,999</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000-$99,999</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000-$149,000</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 Plus</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>answered question</strong></td>
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#### SurveyMonkey.com Quantitative Survey

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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>Under $15,000</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000-$24,999</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000-$49,999</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000-$99,999</td>
<td>28.6%</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100,000-$149,000</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000 Plus</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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#### Qualitative Interviews

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<td>0</td>
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<td>$15,000-$24,999</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$25,000-$34,999</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000-$49,999</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>$50,000-$74,999</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000-$99,999</td>
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<td>$100,000-$149,000</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td>$150,000 Plus</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>answered question</strong></td>
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<td>15</td>
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### Table 4

#### The Media Audit General A25-54 Category

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<th>Response Count</th>
<th>If other, please specify</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>70.7%</td>
<td>899</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>8.2%</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
<td>75</td>
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*answered question 1271
skipped question NA*

#### The Media Audit Occupation-Health Medical Services Industry Category

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<th>Response Frequency</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
<th>If other, please specify</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>71.5%</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>NA</td>
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<td>Black</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
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<td>Asian</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>8.5%</td>
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*answered question 200
skipped question NA*

#### SurveyMonkey.com Quantitative Survey

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>87.8%</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
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*If other, please specify White/Native American*

*answered question 98
skipped question 2*

#### Qualitative Interviews

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<th>Response Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White or Caucasian</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
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<td>NA</td>
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<td>Black</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>NA</td>
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*If other, please specify Asian Indian*

*answered question 15
skipped question NA*
Table 5
SurveyMonkey.com Quantitative Survey

Registered Nurse Specializations-Responses As Entered by Respondents

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<tr>
<th>Answer Options</th>
<th>Response Frequency</th>
<th>Response Count</th>
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<tr>
<td>I am not specialized</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am specialized</td>
<td>86.5%</td>
<td>83</td>
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<tr>
<td>If specialized, please specify</td>
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<td>83</td>
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</table>

answered question 96
skipped question 4

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Neurology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Family Nurse Practitioner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>psychiatric mental health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Labor &amp; Delivery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Women's Health/OB-Gyne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>APN, midwifery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>midwife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>L&amp;D &amp; Home Birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>obstetrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>pediatric endocrinology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>OB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Obstetrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>critical care</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Emergency Department</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Emergency Department and Nursing Education</td>
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<td>16</td>
<td>od</td>
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<td>17</td>
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<td>26</td>
<td>or</td>
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<td>27</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>Labor and Delivery</td>
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<td>ED</td>
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<td>PICU</td>
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<td>40</td>
<td>Postpartum Nursing</td>
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<td>41</td>
<td>Pediatric Intensive Care</td>
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<td>42</td>
<td>od</td>
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<td>43</td>
<td>Emergency/Trauma</td>
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<table>
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<td>labor and delivery</td>
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<td>OB/GYN</td>
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<td>Infectious Diseases</td>
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<td>Emergency room</td>
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<td>49</td>
<td>L&amp;D</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>palliative care nurse...nurse educator Z Hematology/Oncology/Stem Cell Transplant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Transplant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52</td>
<td>Pediatric Oncology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Hem/Onc/SCT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>Pediatric Oncology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>oncology</td>
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<td>56</td>
<td>pediatrics</td>
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<td>57</td>
<td>Pediatric Palliative Care</td>
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<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>school nurse</td>
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<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>ICU</td>
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<tr>
<td>61</td>
<td>school nurse</td>
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<td>62</td>
<td>Critical Care</td>
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<td>74</td>
<td>ICU</td>
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<td>Psychiatry</td>
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<td>pediatric oncology and stem cell transplant</td>
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<td>Womens &amp; Childrens Nursing Program Coordinator &amp; Labor &amp; Delivery Nurse</td>
</tr>
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<td>79</td>
<td>corn SURGICAL INTENSIVE cARE</td>
</tr>
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<td>80</td>
<td>icu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81</td>
<td>cardiothoracic surgery</td>
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<td>82</td>
<td>Surgical nursing (Operating Room)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83</td>
<td>Recovery room</td>
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<tr>
<td>84</td>
<td>cardiothoracic surgery</td>
</tr>
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<td>85</td>
<td>Surgical nursing (Operating Room)</td>
</tr>
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<td>86</td>
<td>Recovery room</td>
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<td>Brandy</td>
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<td>Ian</td>
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<td>Claire</td>
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<td>P5</td>
<td>Laura</td>
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<td>P6</td>
<td>Debbie</td>
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<tr>
<td>P7</td>
<td>Dave</td>
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<td>P10</td>
<td>Josh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P11</td>
<td>Carla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P12</td>
<td>Jery</td>
</tr>
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<td>P13</td>
<td>Ashley</td>
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<td>P14</td>
<td>Monica</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P15</td>
<td>Kimm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Media Audit General A25-54 Category

Media Exposure

Direct Mail Weekly Readership
- Read Well 75% or More
- Read Well 50%-74%
- Read Well 25%-49%
- Read Well 1%-24%

Internet Exposure Average Weekday
- Heavy 430 Minutes or More
- Medium 200-429 Minutes
- Light 1-199 Minutes
- None 0 Minutes

Newspaper Exposure Average Weekday
- Heavy 60 Minutes or More
- Medium 30-59 Minutes
- Light 1-29 Minutes
- None 0 Minutes

Outdoor (Billboards) Exposure Opportunity
- Based on Miles Driven in Past 7-Days
- High Mileage Driven 350 Miles or More
- Heavy Mileage Drive 200 Miles or More
- Medium Mileage Dri 100-199 Miles
- Light Mileage Driver 1-199 Miles
- None 0 Miles

Radio Exposure Average Weekday
- Heavy 180 Minutes or More
- Medium 60-179 Minutes
- Light 1-59 Minutes
- None 0 Minutes

Television Exposure Average Weekday
- Heavy 300 Minutes or More
- Medium 180-299 Minutes
- Light 1-179 Minutes
- None 0 Minutes

Source: The Media Audit Software Guide, n.d., p. 75
The Media Audit Occupation—Health/Medical Services Industry

Media Exposure

The Media Audit Media Exposure Measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Mail Weekly Readership</th>
<th>Outdoor (Billboards) Exposure Opportunity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Read Weekly 75% or More</td>
<td>Based on Miles Driven in Past 7-Days</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Weekly 50%-74%</td>
<td>High Mileage Drivers 350 Miles or More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Weekly 25%-49%</td>
<td>Heavy Mileage Drivers 200 Miles or More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Read Weekly 15%-24%</td>
<td>Medium Mileage Drivers 100-199 Miles</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internet Exposure Average Weekday</th>
<th>Radio Exposure Average Weekday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heavy 430 Minutes or More</td>
<td>Heavy 180 Minutes or More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium 200-429 Minutes</td>
<td>Medium 60-179 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light 1-199 Minutes</td>
<td>Light 1-59 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None 0 Minutes</td>
<td>None 0 Minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Newspaper Exposure Average Weekday</th>
<th>Television Exposure Average Weekday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heavy 60 Minutes or More</td>
<td>Heavy 300 Minutes or More</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium 30-59 Minutes</td>
<td>Medium 180-299 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Light 1-29 Minutes</td>
<td>Light 1-179 Minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None 0 Minutes</td>
<td>None 0 Minutes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Media Audit Software Guide, n.d., p. 75
Graph 3

SurveyMonkey.com Quantitative Survey

Media Exposure

Note: Although "heavy" media exposure was based on various measures in The Media Audit, heavy media exposure in the SurveyMonkey.com survey was denoted by daily exposure to a medium except in the case of direct mail. Heavy direct mail exposure was based on receiving 21+ pieces of direct mail per month.
Graph 4

Qualitative Interviews
Media Exposure

Note: Although "heavy" media exposure was based on various measures in The Media Audit, this graph only demonstrates that the informants in the qualitative interviews had some media exposure.
SurveyMonkey.com Quantitative Survey Questions

1. Advertisers usually plan and buy their advertising to reach specific targets such as adults 25 years old to 54 years. Which of the following categories best describes you?

   A. Male 25-34
   B. Male 35-44
   C. Male 45-54
   D. Female 25-34
   E. Female 35-44
   F. Female 45-54

2. Advertisers often plan and buy their advertising to reach audiences that fall within various income ranges. Which of the following categories best describes your household income?

   A. Under $15,000
   B. $15,000-$24,999
   C. $25,000-$34,999
   D. $35,000-$49,999
   E. $50,000-$74,999
   F. $75,000-$99,999
   G. $100,000-$149,000
   H. $150,000 Plus

3. Advertisers often plan and buy their advertising to reach individuals of a certain race. How do you identify yourself?

   A. White or Caucasian
   B. Black
   C. Hispanic
   D. Asian
   E. American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Pacific Islander
   F. Other

4. As a registered nurse, are you specialized? For example, are you an emergency department (ED) nurse or an oncology nurse?

   A. Yes
   B. No
5. How often do you use the Internet?
   A. Daily
   B. Weekly
   C. Monthly
   D. Occasionally
   E. Never

6. How often do you see outdoor or out-of home advertising such as billboards or advertising on trains and buses?
   A. Daily
   B. Weekly
   C. Monthly
   D. Occasionally
   E. Never

7. How often do you listen to terrestrial (regular...non-satellite) radio?
   A. Daily
   B. Weekly
   C. Monthly
   D. Occasionally
   E. Never

8. How often do you watch TV?
   A. Daily
   B. Weekly
   C. Monthly
   D. Occasionally
   E. Never

9. How often do you read a daily newspaper such as the Chicago Tribune, the Chicago Sun-Times, or the Daily Herald?
   A. Daily
   B. Weekly
   C. Monthly
   D. Occasionally
   E. Never
10. How much direct mail (e.g. pizza coupons or carpet-cleaning offers that you receive in your mailbox) do you receive?

A. 4 or fewer pieces per month
B. 5-10 pieces per month
C. 11-15 pieces per month
D. 16-20 pieces per month
E. 21+ pieces per month
Qualitative Interview Questions

1. Advertisers usually plan and buy their advertising to reach specific target audiences such as adults 25 to 54 years old. Which of the following categories best describes you?
   
   A. Male 25-34  
   B. Male 35-44  
   C. Male 45-54  
   D. Female 25-34  
   E. Female 35-44  
   F. Female 45-54

2. Advertisers often plan and buy their advertising to reach target audiences that fall within various income ranges. Which of the following categories best describes your household income?
   
   A. Under $15,000  
   B. $15,000-$24,999  
   C. $25,000-$34,999  
   D. $35,000-$49,999  
   E. $50,000-$74,999  
   F. $75,000-$99,999  
   G. $100,000-$149,000  
   H. $150,000 Plus

3. Advertisers often plan and buy their advertising to reach individuals of a certain race. How do you identify yourself (e.g. white, black, Latino, Chinese, etc.)?

4. As an RN, are you specialized? For example, are you an emergency department (ED) nurse or an oncology nurse?

5. How many years of experience as an RN do you have?

6. As an RN, do you feel a connection with RNs with whom you work, other RNs in the Chicagoland area, and/or RNs nationwide? If so, in what ways?

7. What do you have in common with other RNs, if anything at all?

8. Do you belong to any professional associations such as the Illinois Nurses Association, the National Black Nurses Association, or the Emergency Nurses Association, and/or do you visit their websites or read any of their publications?
8a. If so, please tell me about your experiences with these websites and publications. What is your opinion of these media?

8b. How do you feel about seeing help wanted advertising in the media of professional associations? What do you think of employers that choose to advertise their open RN positions with professional organizations?

8c. Have you talked about these media with other RNs? If so, in what way?

9. Do you read any trade magazines such as Nursing Spectrum, The Nurses Lounge, RN Magazine, or Advance for Nurses, or do you visit their websites? Why or why not?

9a. If you read any trade publications, what do you like about them? What makes you want to read them?

9b. How do you feel about seeing help wanted advertising in trade publications? What do you think of employers that choose to advertise their open RN positions in these media?

9c. Do you know other RNs that read these magazines too? If so, do you ever discuss stories or advertisements you’ve seen with them? What kinds of things do you talk about?

10. Besides publications about nursing or the healthcare industry, do you read any other magazines on a regular basis? If so, what magazines?

10a. What is it about these magazines that you like?

10b. What would you think of seeing help wanted advertising for RNs in these magazines, and how would you feel about the employers?

10c. Do you know other RNs that read these magazines too? If so, do you ever discuss stories or advertisements you’ve seen with them? What kinds of things do you talk about?

11. Do you read any daily or weekly newspapers such as the Chicago Sun Times, the Chicago Reader, the Chicago Tribune, RedEye, the Daily Herald, or the Pioneer Press? If so, which newspapers?

11a. What is it like for you to read the newspaper? When do you read it? Where do you read it? What sections are your favorites?

11b. How do you feel about the help wanted section of the newspaper as a place to learn about RN job openings, and what are your opinions of employers who advertise job openings in the newspaper?
11c. Do you know other RNs that read the newspaper too? If so, do you ever discuss stories or advertisements you’ve seen with them? What do you talk about?

12. Do you listen to the radio?

12a. If so, when do you listen to the radio, and where do you listen? Do you ever stream radio over the Internet?

12b. Which stations do you listen to? What types of music are your favorites? Who are your favorite artists? Do you listen to any of the morning radio shows?

12c. How would you feel about hearing commercials about RN job opportunities on the radio? How would you feel about the employers?

12d. Do you know other RNs that listen to the same radio stations as you do? If so, do you ever discuss music, advertisements, or other information that you heard on the air together? If so, what kind of things do you talk about?

13. Do you watch TV?

13a. What do you like to watch on TV? What makes watching TV enjoyable for you?

13b. How would you feel to see advertisements about RN job opportunities during your favorite TV shows? How would you feel about the employers?

13c. Do you know other RNs that watch the same TV shows that you do? If so, do you ever talk about these shows together? What kinds of things do you talk about?

14. Do you spend time on the Internet?

14a. How do you spend your time online? What websites, blogs, or other destinations are your favorites, and why?

14b. Do you subscribe to any podcasts, RSS feeds, or widgets? If so, which ones? Please tell me more about them and why you subscribe to them.

14c. How would you feel about seeing advertisements for RN job openings on your favorite websites? How would you feel about the employers?

14d. Do you visit any online job boards such as CareerBuilder, Monster, or the career centers of professional associations such as the Illinois Nurses Association? Other examples are Craigslist, Nurse.com, MedHunters.com, & ChicagoJobs.com. What is your general opinion of online job boards? Do you like certain ones over others? If so, why?
14e. Do you ever visit the websites of employers to see if there are any current job openings? If so, please tell me what your experiences have been like.

14f. Do you ever talk about visiting specific websites with other RNs? Have you ever recommended a certain website to another RN, or has an RN recommended one to you? Do you feel that you share similar online experiences with other RNs? Why?

15. How do you commute to work, and how long is your commute? What is it like?

15a. How do you feel about seeing help wanted advertising aimed at RNs on out-of-home advertising such as billboards along the expressway, on buses, or on train platforms? What is your opinion of employers who advertise job openings on these media?

15b. Have you ever told another RN about a billboard or other form of outdoor that you had seen, or has another RN told you about one? If so, please tell me about that conversation.

16. Do you own a cell phone?

16a. If so, have you ever received a text message advertisement of any kind? What was the advertisement for?

16b. How do you feel about receiving help wanted advertising on your cell phone? Why?

16c. Have you ever talked about text message advertisements with other RNs? If so, please tell me about that conversation.

17. How do you feel about receiving emails that advertise RN job openings, and how do you feel about employers who try to communicate with you through “email blasts?”

17a. Have you ever forwarded an email that advertised products such as scrubs or RN job openings to another RN, or has another RN forwarded one to you? If so, please tell me what has been forwarded and why.

18. What is your opinion of receiving advertisements about RN job openings through regular U.S. mail?

18a. Have you ever given an advertisement you received in the mail to another RN, or has another RN given you a piece of mail he or she received? Have you ever discussed pieces of mail advertising RN job openings with other RNs? Please tell me about your experiences.
19. How alike or different do you feel your media habits are to the media habits of other RNs?

20. How do you normally find out about RN job openings, and how do you prefer to learn about job openings? How do you think other RNs prefer to find out about job openings?

21. How did you find your current position, and how long have you been with your employer?

22. Does your company have an employee referral program? If so, how does your employer let its employees know about job openings and the reward for referring people they know?

23. Do you see, receive, or hear advertisements from other employers hiring RNs? Please tell me where you’ve seen or heard these ads and what you’ve generally felt about them?

24. Do you ever attend conferences/conventions for healthcare or nursing, and have you ever visited the booth of a potential employer at one of these events? Please tell me about your experience.

25. Have you ever attended a career/job fair when looking for an RN position? If so, what was the experience like for you?

26. If you were trying to hire RNs, how would you advertise your job openings to reach them? Why?
Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval

Research Involving Human Subjects

NOTICE OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD ACTION

To: Sheri TerMolen, Graduate Student, College of Communication
Jessica Tornelli-Presto, PhD, Faculty Sponsor, College of Communication

Date: March 11, 2009

Re: Research Protocol #ST02769COM
"An Ethnographic Study of the Media Consumption Habits of Registered Nurses in the Chicago Designated Market Area (DMA)"

Please review the following important information about the review of your proposed research activity.

Review Details
☑ Original Review
☐ Amendment
☐ Unanticipated Problem Report

☑ Exempt Review, under 45 CFR 46.101

Your research project meets the criteria for an exemption under the following categories:

Category of Review: 2, 4

☐ Research involving the use of educational tests (e.g., diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior, unless:
☐ Information criteria is removed in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and the disclosure of the subjects’ responses would place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects’ financial position, employability, or reputation.
☐ Research involving the collection of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is acquired in the course of a treatment relationship, unless:
☐ Information criteria is removed in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

Approvals Details
☑ Approved ☑ Approved (Previous contingencies have been resolved.)

Approval Date: March 11, 2009

Reminders

• Under DePaul’s current institutional policy governing human research, research projects that meet the criteria for an exemption determination receive administrative review. Once projects are determined to be exempt, the researcher is free to begin the work and is not required to submit an annual update (continuing review). As your project has been determined to be exempt, your primary obligation moving forward is to resubmit your research materials for review and classification/approval, before they are implemented in the research, if you propose substantive changes to the project. Substantive changes would include changes in the design or focus of the research project, revisions to the consent/information sheet for participants, addition of new measures or instruments, and any change to the research that might alter the exemption status (either add additional exemption categories or make the research no longer eligible for an exemption determination).

• Once the project is complete, you should submit a closure report to the IRB.
The Office of Research Protections would like to thank you for your efforts and cooperation and wishes you the best of luck on your research. If you have any questions, please contact me by telephone at (312) 362-7593 or by email at sloesspm@depaul.edu.

For the Board,

Susan Loess-Perez, MS, CIP, CCRC
Director, Office of Research Protections
Academic Affairs, DePaul University
1 East Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, IL 60604

Office Location: 55 E. Jackson Blvd. 22nd FL