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Brunswick Schools Video Program Social Media Campaign

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Brunswick Schools Video Program Social Media Campaign

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School of Communication

Honors Research Project

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Brunswick Educational Access Television Situation

Backgrounder and Introduction

This strategic plan seeks to answer the research question: How can I increase a television station's presence on social media?

Brunswick Educational Access Television (affectionately called the “BEAT”) is known in the Brunswick Community as one of two public access television channels. The BEAT is headed by Brunswick City Schools Video Program advisor John Wasylo and is operated by students in the club as well as paid student managers. The Video Program, interchangeably called BEAT Team or simply the BEAT, offers opportunities for students to work in both television and print journalism, as well as learn about the communication industry through hands-on experience. The BEAT is self-funded and generates news for Brunswick City Schools in the form of print and broadcast media. The BEAT prides itself on training students in the field of backpack journalism—however, their social media presence needs to be strengthened.

The BEAT serves all of the Brunswick community, as student reporters pursue a wide variety of community interest stories. Their target audiences range from students to Brunswick-area residents, but in this strategic plan we will focus on increasing social media outreach to Brunswick students, parents, and sponsors as well as creating an outline that the client can expand to include additional publics. As public relations aims to create mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and its publics, this campaign will equip BEAT Team with the necessary tools to begin doing just that through the use of social media and other mediums.

In this strategic campaign, the ultimate goal is to expand student, parent, and sponsor understanding of the services provided by the Brunswick City Schools Video Program to both its students

and the Brunswick community. Our objectives are to increase understanding of the community services provided by the BEAT, generate a positive attitude and support for the BEAT within the identified primary publics, and to ultimately increase online viewership of their student-generated material by 10 percent within a six month period. Six individual strategies will be included in this plan, each designed to increase awareness, acceptance, and action within the three primary publics. Each strategy will further be broken down into two easy-to-execute tactics that will ultimately increase public awareness of the client.

This project will require one representative from The BEAT to coordinate, manage, and maintain at least two social media pages. The BEAT's student reporters only meet on Saturdays, so the timeline attached will primarily require the designated representative to work to actively execute this strategic plan on Saturdays.

The lack of The BEAT's social media presence stems from a team of professional, yet inexperienced, reporters. The students involved in this television station are between the ages of 10 and 18 and have little (if any) college education. The students have been provided opportunity to shadow professionals in both print and broadcast journalism, yet they have no experience in the field of public relations. By teaming up with The BEAT, I will provide the students a glimpse into an alternative field of communication. I will also provide the students with an outline that has the potential to continually increase their community outreach if the students continue to execute my plan beyond the outlined six-month period. This plan is designed to increase community awareness and the social media presence of The BEAT, which opens the door to potential sponsorships. Most importantly, this strategic plan creates the potential to expand The BEAT's influence while simultaneously incorporating two-way communication and public relations into a journalism-focused student program.

The personal benefits of this project are equally as important. I will gain experience working as a public relations representative to a media outlet that initially sparked my passion for communication. I will have the opportunity to further shape a student-driven program after I have graduated, and I

potentially have the opportunity to increase opportunities for future graduates by continuing to build upon positive community attitudes toward The BEAT.

The completed project will be bound in a binder with each section separated by tab dividers. It includes a table of contents, the strategic campaign itself, a breakdown of budget, and a timeline.

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Situational Analysis

Prepared for Brunswick City Schools Video Program

The Situation

After a detailed review of Brunswick Educational Access Television's brand, information and after interviews with Program Advisor John Wasylo and Managers Allison Rhoades, Alexis Gemelas, and Jonathan Yokiell, it identified a number of issues that come together to form the current social media communication situation.

Three main issues contribute to the overall situation, which is that the Brunswick City Schools Video Program wants to have greater social media presence amongst its constituents in the Brunswick area through increased social media activity by finding increased support from the community. The three issues impacting this campaign are (1) a lack of Facebook social media presence necessary among both parent and student publics for increased online engagement, (2) a lack of two-way communication between the student reporters and their readers, and (3) a lack of public awareness of their existing online webpages.

Because of the lack of knowledge of the BEAT's existing web pages, they would like to increase the amount of online engagement, specifically engagement by Brunswick students and their parents, however, there needs to be either a manager or a group responsible to make this happen. Since the BEAT is a local, student-driven program, most of their funds are received through grants and sponsorships. This means that the organization has a fixed income that varies from year to year, meaning that resources to pay a manager or group of managers to oversee this project may be nonexistent. This issue can be tackled by increasing the number of sponsors, which can help the BEAT expand their resources to allow them to continue to fund a yearly social media campaign. An increase in sponsors will also provide additional online pages to partner with, potentially furthering their online readership.

In regards to Brunswick students and parents, the BEAT would like to increase overall traffic from these publics to their online stories. However, this could be difficult due to a lack of knowledge of the program and what it provides to the Brunswick City School District. This is particularly important, as these groups are the primary demographics whom the students cater to with their video work.

The situation that the BEAT is facing would be considered to be an opportunity because there is room for growth, change, and education. There is an opportunity to expand their social media presence while increasing general awareness of the program. This is also an opportunity to provide additional outreach for sponsors. The students will always have news being distributed and read or watched--this campaign provides the chance to further circulate it amongst the primary publics. However, there are a few barriers to leveraging this opportunity. The Video Program students have little experience in social media marketing, though they are proficient at navigating the necessary websites. So, in order to overcome these barriers, the BEAT will have to become proficient in promoting their social media in news articles and videos as well as regularly brainstorm how to further enhance two-way communication.

The award-winning Brunswick City Schools Video Program was founded as an AV Club that would produce content for Brunswick Educational Access Television in 2000. However, it soon evolved into a backpack journalism program that trains students to write and produce news stories and segments. In 2011, the program expanded into a student driven and managed organization complete with paid positions. Currently, there are three paid managers and more than three dozen students. They operate the production studio every Saturday, though interviews for written stories take place throughout their school week.

The BEAT airs on Channel 22 in Brunswick, but its videos can be streamed from anywhere on their website, TheBeat22.com. Students in this organization provide free coverage for community figures and programs, such as the Federation of Police's Shop with a Cop event, in exchange for on-the-job reporting experience. Video coverage typically allots for around 5 minutes per news story, though it

varies based on a student's level of production experience and the topic being addressed. Written stories range from around 500 words to feature-length, and have been distributed and published by dozens of local publications, including the Medina Gazette, Brunswick Sun Times, Medina County Post, and Medina County Lifestyle. Cleveland-area news stations are also apt to publish student material on their websites.

About the Organization

Since 2000, Video Program students have been provided countless honors. To name a few recent highlights, the program earned \$100,000 for the Brunswick City School District by winning the State Farm's 2N2 video contest, they partnered with Green Schools to produce a "Bulldog BEAT" program that mirrors their own, and representatives from the program have co-hosted Ramona's Kids segments on Channel 19.

In the 2015-2016 school year, the students published 247 news stories and videos in local media hosts. The high number of content that they produce attests to the program's affluence and quality.

The students' skills include, but are not limited to, AVID and Final Cut Pro editing, camera operation, directing shoots, working as on-camera talent, and switchboard operation. The students have produced commercials, music videos, and sporting events.

The Video Program is unique in that it does not have many similar programs with whom it can compare. It helped launch a sister program in Green, Summit County, though the program is still in its infancy.

Some internal communications limitations may hinder the execution of this strategy. Without an existing social media manager, the role will have to be absorbed or divided amongst designated students. Regardless of how the role is divided, it will require regular email communication between the manager

and the program advisor. Timely communication could be challenging to achieve with the students currently committed to working only Saturdays.

The BEAT is a community-driven organization, as it draws its stories and ideas from its community and Brunswick residents. This organization and its students want to help publicize and highlight events and important community figures as well as educate the general public and prospective sponsors on the value of providing a communication-based program to middle school and high school students.

Some internal impediments that keep this organization from reaching their goals is the lack of management, as there are only three existing managers and, as of yet, no social media manager. Currently, there is not an existing budget to incorporate a fourth full-time manager, which alludes to a need for additional sponsors. Another issue is the general lack of awareness of the BEAT's online presence. These items prevent the Video Program from reaching its full potential, though they are not permanent impairments.

Currently, the Video Program has a fully operative website and a Twitter account. Smart Insights reported through Statista in April 2016 that Facebook has the highest number of global users (1,590 million active users), the most growth, and the most engagement as compared to other competing social media platforms. Statistics overwhelmingly reveal a decrease of growth in Twitter, as well as nearly half as much daily engagement. This is due, partially, to active Twitter users accessing the social media platform once or twice a day, if that. The average Facebook user accesses the social media platform circa eight times per day, according to ComScore-provided charts on Smart Insights. Its dominance is impressive, and worth noting when evaluating the effectiveness of social media platforms. Unfortunately, their Twitter account offers no statistics on reach or engagement.

Word of mouth contributes greatly to the reputation of this prestigious program. As groups and individuals are introduced to the BEAT by its student reporters, they tend to distribute information

amongst their social group and further awareness of the program. Traditional media platforms, including newspaper and newscasting, spread awareness as well.

Publics

There are a variety of different publics that are expected to consume the Brunswick City Schools Video Program's content. The *primary group* consists of the publics that are the main consumers and are affected most by this organization. This includes Brunswick City Schools students, parents, and sponsors. These parties produce and make news, and then consume the news stories produced by the students. Without them, the program would serve little students. The Video Program students, managers, and advisor are also primary publics, as they hold the most stake in this situation.

The next set of publics that carries influence are the *secondary publics*. One of the groups these publics consist of is the grant providers. Typically, these parties operate outside of the Brunswick-area circulation (such as in Akron or Cleveland), and see little of what goes on "behind the scenes." Reporters and publishers would also be a secondary public, as they provide opportunities for the program to spread awareness and distribute content. They act as an opinion leader, and they are able to choose which content is worthy of distributing to the general public.

Tertiary publics are the last category of publics that this strategy analyzes. These groups act as a middleman, and communicate ideas between an organization and key publics. Brunswick City Schools would fall in this category, as they alone bear the opportunity to engage both students and parents in communication almost simultaneously. They hold the least stake in the group's success, though they do actively strive to provide it support.

Though this campaign will only aim to highlight three publics, these additional groups have been outlined and identified for future use. This campaign is assembled loosely enough that students may plug in different publics and easily alter the campaign for future community relations pursuits.

The following publics will be the focus of this social media campaign:

Key Public 1: Brunswick City Schools High School Students

This group has been identified as a key public because they are among the highest consumers of social media--and one of the BEAT's primary audiences. This plan will target high school students in the Brunswick area between the ages of 14 and 18. According to the Brunswick High School website, an estimated 2,500 students attend the school at a given time. Pew Research Center reports that 71 percent of teens 13 to 17 are active on Facebook, followed closely by 52 percent on Instagram. Other social media platforms have reported usage of 30 percent or below. However, it states that middle and upper class teens tend to use Instagram more regularly than lower class teens, who favor Facebook. As Brunswick is a diverse community in terms of annual income, these statistics may be skewed, but are worth considering as the client moves forward with the execution of this plan. ²

The benefit about seeking to engage this public is that the majority of them can be expected to be active on social media, and with such a background it is beneficial to encourage awareness to facilitate dissemination of social media content produced by the BEAT.

Key Public 2: Parents of Brunswick High School

Currently, parents have the most reported interest in the BEAT. They actively seek out recordings of events and stories relating to or starring their child, and are expected to be reliable for word of mouth marketing. However, their awareness of the Video Program and what it is is likely minimal, and can be greatly improved. Adults are expected to be active users of Facebook, though they are likely less active on other social media platforms.

Key Public 3: Sponsors

Sponsorships are key to the Video Program's success, as it is self-funded. In order to expand upon their success and to further invest in additional communicative and social media efforts, additional sponsorships are necessary. It is important to retain current sponsorships and strive to obtain new

sponsorships. This public has invested in the Video Program knowing that they will provide publicity, but additional readership and a wider circulation resulting from an active social media campaign adds value to their investment.

Research

The Brunswick City Schools Video Program meets only once a week on Saturdays, and with a tight budget and limited communication resources they have not been able to thoroughly research the publics and the psychographics of those publics outlined in this case.

However, it has been identified that relationships amongst the designated publics are in need of improvement. Most students are unaware of the existence of the Brunswick Schools' news outlet, parents are unlikely to discover online stories with the BEAT's current online presence, and sponsors are not renewing contracts of support from year to year. This campaign seeks to address these issues while improving relationships between the BEAT and its public.

The research collected for this campaign came from both a series of interviews with BEAT management as well as an analysis of online Facebook activity provided from *Medina County Lifestyle Magazine*, a local interest-specific magazine that provides publishing opportunities to BEAT students.

Through the establishment of a Facebook page, the BEAT will have access to statistics regarding online activity, engagement, and readership. This will equip them with the means to conduct additional research to analyze and improve the success of this campaign.

Goals and Objectives

The goal of this campaign is to increase understanding of the services provided by the Brunswick City Schools Video Program to both its students and the Brunswick community.

Target Public 1: Brunswick High School Students

Objective 1: To have an effect on awareness, specifically to increase comprehension about the BEAT and the services it provides to the Brunswick Community among students unaffiliated with the BEAT by 10 percent in the next six months.

Objective 2: To have an effect on acceptance, specifically to increase support of the BEAT by 10 percent in the next six months among students unaffiliated with the BEAT.

Objective 3: To have an effect on action, specifically to increase the number of students who interact with BEAT social media by 50 unaffiliated students within the next six months.

Target Public 2: Parents of Brunswick High School Students

Objective 1: To have an effect on awareness, specifically to increase comprehension about the BEAT and the services it provides to the Brunswick Community among parents of students unaffiliated with the BEAT by 10 percent in the next six months.

Objective 2: To have an effect on acceptance, specifically to increase support of the BEAT by 10 percent in the next six months among parents of students unaffiliated with the program.

Objective 3: To have an effect on action, specifically to increase the number of parents who interact with BEAT social media by 50 unaffiliated parents within the next six months.

Target Public 3: BEAT Sponsors

Objective 1: To have an effect on awareness, specifically to maximize comprehension among sponsors of the services the BEAT provides to both students and the community by 10 percent in the next six months.

Objective 2: To have an effect on acceptance, specifically to increase sponsors' involvement with the Video Program by 10 percent in the next six months.

Objective 3: To have an effect on action, specifically to generate a behavior of referring their clients to published BEAT content (videos or articles) by 10 percent in the next six months.

Strategies and Tactics

Strategy 1: Audience Interest Strategy

Addresses: Public 1, Objective 1

Using an audience participation strategy that appeals to the curiosity of Brunswick High School students, we will communicate the importance that the Video Program has to the distribution of both Brunswick and Medina County news throughout local media outlets.

The client would like students who experience this strategy to understand the Video Program. We want them to learn about the services it provides, how many students are in the program, and what it has done for the school.

The key message of this strategy will be, “You should understand what the BEAT is and what it does, because it is an important Brunswick media outlet.” As part of this key message, we will highlight select accomplishments of Video Program students and how they personally impact Brunswick students.

This strategy will last for one month and will include highlighting the Video Program in an in-school assembly at Brunswick High School and the establishment of a Facebook page.

Tactic 1: Establish a Facebook Page

The Video Program will have a manager create a Facebook page for Brunswick Educational Access Television. The page should include daily posts that emphasize the message that the Video Program is an important group of journalists to be aware of. The imagery on the page should be BEAT-produced. Blue and white should be abundant in whatever photographs are chosen as the profile picture and banner. It should have content posted once a day.

Message: The message of this page should be that the Video Program is important, and that it produces content that Brunswick-area residents should read. This should be emphasized by weekly sharing of stories written or directed by Video Program students.

Execution: A manager will create the Facebook page and begin uploading necessary content. The page should publish at least one update a day. Posts may include fun facts, stories written by local students, photographs or selfies depicting in-studio antics, online videos, and “Did you know?” information accompanying an appropriate photograph. Posts can be scheduled in advance during Saturday meetings by writing a message in the status bar, clicking the drop down menu beside the Publish button, and selecting “Schedule.” An estimated 15 minutes of employee work will be needed to establish the page, though one to two hours of weekly work is necessary to maintain page activity.

Timeline: On January 7, a manager should establish the Facebook page and schedule its first week of content. Content should be scheduled by a social media manager or team weekly until July, when the program advisor should assume the position until the following school year.

Tactic 2: Pep Rally

The Video Program will have its advisor and a manager make a presentation to high school students during a pep rally. The speech should highlight what the program is, when it was established, who it provides press for and where that information is distributed, where the studio is located, why it trains students as backpack journalists, and how it is self-funded and partners with members of the community. A PowerPoint presentation may be prepared by the advisor with imagery depicting BEAT accomplishments over the years. No stock photos should be included in this presentation.

Message: This tactic highlights the message, “The Video Program is an important part of your community, and you need to know about it because you will encounter it.” The presentation should be followed by social media information and how to connect with the program and how to apply to be a member.

Execution: The student managers will prepare a presentation based on the provided information, and will provide the information to the Board of Education via the High School Principal as soon as it is completed. An estimated 1 to 2 hours of managerial work is required to complete this project.

Timeline: Planning will begin January 14 and should be completed by the end of the work day. The presentation should take place before the end of the semester, though the actual date of presentation is dependent upon when the pep rally is scheduled.

Strategy 2: Audience Participation Strategy

Addresses: Public 1, Objectives 2 and 3

Using an audience participation strategy that appeals to high school student interest in BHS-specific news, we will communicate the ease of keeping connected with the BEAT.

We want students who encounter this strategy to like the BEAT page on Facebook or follow the BEAT page on Twitter. We want to create within this audience a positive attitude toward content created by BEAT students.

The key message of this strategy will be, “The BEAT is an asset to your community, and it is important and easy for you to connect with them.” As part of this strategy, the BEAT will strive to engage the audience in two-way communication by encouraging them to like, comment on, or share their content.

This strategy will last for the six months of this campaign and will include poster distribution and a monthly contest.

Tactic 1: Keep Cool and Connected Posters

A BEAT student with Photoshop skills or the program advisor should design a blue and white poster advertising the newly established Facebook page. This poster will be displayed in the four grade-level principal offices, the advising office, the Board of Education meeting room, the two cafeterias, and within the school computer labs. The imagery in the poster should either be BEAT-produced or should feature BEAT students.

Message: This poster will contain the message, “Keep Cool and Connected!” The headline should be followed by a subheading announcing the new page. It should be followed by a bullet point list of what the page features, including behind the scenes sneak peaks, announcements, videos, news articles, and contests. The poster will contain a QR code that can be scanned by smartphones. This can be created for free at Unitag QR: <https://www.unitag.io/qrcode>.

Execution: The student or advisor will design the poster based on the provided information, and will have the poster printed online by FedEx at <http://www.fedex.com/us/office/online-printing.html>. The poster

should be created as a PDF file with proper bleed settings. It should be printed “flyer size,” or 8.5x11 inches. Finished posters will be displayed in select areas throughout the High School.

Budget: Printing by FedEx is estimated at \$13.80 for 20 posters.

Timeline: Poster design will begin the week following January 14 and should be printed and displayed by January 28. The posters should be displayed throughout the duration of the strategy and ideally should be taken down at the end of the school year, but may be displayed longer if the ink is still vibrant.

Tactic 2: The “Neat Beat”

The social media manager will host a once a month “Neat Beat” contest, where Brunswick City Schools students have the opportunity to be featured in a Brunswick School News segment. The contest will “open to submissions” on the 15th of each month and will close two weeks later. In the contest, students with an interesting hobby, background, or accomplishment will submit a few paragraphs about themselves. Those with newsworthy stories will be selected as contest winners and featured in Brunswick School News. The news segment should include a promo encouraging viewers to connect via Facebook for a chance to tell their story.

Message: This contest will reinforce the message, “We appreciate your support, and we want to support you and your endeavors, too.” To align with this message, there can be as many winners as the BEAT management team sees fit. Only students with stories deemed “newsworthy” by the management team should be featured.

Execution: Every Saturday preceding the 15th, the social media manager should be sure to schedule a post with the contest details and instructions to submit entries to John Wasytko. As Brunswick School News segments are produced featuring “Neat Beats,” links to the videos should be shared via Facebook and Twitter.

Timeline: This contest should be repeated monthly throughout the duration of the strategy.

Strategy 3: Audience Interest Strategy

Addresses: Public 2, Objective 1

Using an audience interest strategy that appeals to parents' interest in BHS-specific news, we will communicate that the BEAT is an outlet for news regarding their child's education.

We want parents who encounter this strategy to obtain awareness that the BEAT produces content that they can access via Channel 22 or TheBeat22.com. We want to create within this audience a positive attitude toward the BEAT and its students.

The key message of this strategy will be, "As a parent, you want to stay informed. As a journalistic program, we want to help." As part of this strategy, the BEAT will strive to expose parents of high school students to their webpages.

This strategy will last for the six months of this campaign and will include partnering with Brunswick High School staff.

Tactic 1: Emphasize that the BEAT provides school news.

A BEAT manager should contact the Brunswick High School web manager regarding their hyperlink on the school's homepage. The link currently says, "The BEAT." It should be adjusted to say something along the lines of, "Brunswick School News" or "The BEAT School News." This is more apt to grab parent attention, as it is less ambiguous.

Message: This tactic emphasizes the message, "The BEAT distributes news regarding your child's school that you need to be aware of."

Execution: The program manager should work with the webmaster to adjust the hyperlink. It will take an estimated 10 minutes of employee work time.

Timeline: This updated link should outlast the duration of this campaign. It may be permanent if the advisor chooses to keep the change.

Tactic 2: Social Media Teamwork

The social media manager will provide at least one Facebook post a week to the Brunswick City Schools Public Relations Manager to be shared on the Brunswick High School and Brunswick City Schools pages. The post may include a story or fun fact accompanied by a link to the BEAT website or Facebook page.

Message: The message of this tactic is, “The BEAT provides news coverage of your community that you want to read and/or watch.” To align with this message, the social media manager must be sure to provide regular, weekly updates to the Public Relations Manager for Brunswick City Schools.

Execution: Every Saturday, the social media manager should follow social media updates with an email addressed to the Public Relations Manager of Brunswick City Schools. The email should include specific text that should be posted as well as links. The links should differ from week to week.

Timeline: This should be repeated every Saturday through the duration of this strategy.

Strategy 4: Audience Participation Strategy

Addresses: Public 2, Objectives 2 and 3

Using an audience participation strategy that appeals to parents’ interest in BHS-specific news, we will communicate the ease of keeping connected with the BEAT.

We want parents who encounter this strategy to like the BEAT page on Facebook or follow the BEAT page on Twitter. We want to create within this audience a positive attitude

toward content created by BEAT students while establishing an interest in consuming future media produced by the BEAT.

The key message of this strategy will be, “The BEAT provides exclusive news coverage for your child’s school, and it is important and easy for you to obtain that news.” As part of this strategy, the BEAT will strive to engage the audience in two-way communication by encouraging them to ask questions.

This strategy will last for the six months of this campaign and will include news coverage of parent night.

Tactic 1: Parent night.

A BEAT student should be assigned to attend and write a story about the January 18th Parent Night that covers SAT/ACT, AP, and college-related questions. In advance, Miss Jaime Camino should be provided a paragraph to say a few words about how the information being presented that night will be covered by a BEAT student. She will provide to the social media manager a list of deadlines and important dates regarding these topics. Camino should announce that the BEAT’s Facebook page will include updates and reminders as deadlines approach, and she should include information about how to connect with them.

Message: This tactic will emphasize the message, “The BEAT provides important information to you, and it is easy to be connected with the journalistic group.”

Execution: BEAT managers should choose a qualified student to attend and publish a story regarding this event and important dates. The social media manager or group should be in contact with Jaime Camino at least one week before the event and be sure to have a list of updates scheduled before Parent Night even takes place.

Timeline: Planning for this should begin January 7 to ensure enough time for participants to communicate.

Tactic 2: Parent's Pick

Once every week or two, the social media manager should post a “parent’s pick” themed story. It should be a news segment or story that features something that may be of particular interest to parents. The video or article should be accompanied by a short message saying something along the lines of, “Parent’s Pick: Did you know your child’s gym class is now studying lacrosse?”

Message: Parent-themed posts will reinforce, “The BEAT wants to keep you informed and involved in your child’s school.”

Execution: Managers should discuss with students during meetings who they think their stories would be most interesting to. Allow students to choose which stories would be of particular interest to parents, and incorporate a lecture about the importance of understanding your audience.

Timeline: This theme should be repeated weekly or bi-weekly for the duration of this project.

Strategy 5: Audience Engagement Strategy

Addresses: Public 3, Objective 1

Using an engagement strategy that highlights sponsors’ involvement in the Video Program, we will accentuate the value of their investment.

We want sponsors who encounter this engagement campaign to display a physical artifact to attest to their sponsorship. We want to create or reinforce this audience’s sense of pride at what their sponsorship provides, and we want them to feel that their sponsorship is worthwhile and valued.

The key message of this strategy will be, “I am a PROUD Blue Devil, and I sponsor something that other Blue Devils value.” As part of this strategy, the BEAT will distribute posters and email blasts to members of this audience.

This strategy will last for five months of this campaign and may be expanded to include summertime email blasts following the completion of this campaign.

Tactic 1: Stories and Sponsors Email Blasts.

Beginning on the first Saturday in February, the program advisor should sit down and author a monthly email blast to sponsors. It should be titled *Stories and Sponsors*, followed by a subheading of “Our Stories & Your Stories.”

Message: This tactic will emphasize, “Your sponsorship is important and provides a lot of good to the community--here is what you should know.”

Execution: Beginning on February 4, the program advisor should author a monthly email blast to sponsors. It should provide updates on accomplishments and contests that the BEAT has entered while highlighting several unique news items or milestones from the previous month. Overall, the chosen topics should demonstrate that the sponsors’ investment is being put to good use. You should end each blast with, “Do you have a story to tell? Contact John Wasylko at jwasylko@bcsoh.org with information to be featured in our next email blast to our extended BEAT family!” As press releases are submitted, they can be turned into a Brunswick School News segment as well as featured in the next month’s email blast.

Timeline: Planning may begin January 28 and should be executed on or before February 4. Email blasts should be repeated monthly until July 1.

Tactic 2: Sponsor Poster

The program advisor should print and distribute the poster created by Nikki Rhoades to sponsors.

Message: This tactic will include the message, “I am a PROUD Blue Devil! My contribution to the BEAT provides...”

Execution: The advisor will print the poster included on page 19, and will have the poster printed online by FedEx at <http://www.fedex.com/us/office/online-printing.html>. The poster should be printed as a PDF file with proper bleed settings. It should be printed “flyer size,” or 8.5x11 inches. Finished posters will be provided to sponsors for display.

Budget: Printing by FedEx is estimated at \$30 for 50 prints.

Timeline: Printing and Distribution should be complete by March 4.

I am a

PROUD

Blue Devil!

My contribution to The BEAT provides:



Published Brunswick School News to the community.



Responsibility to backpack journalism students.



Opportunity for students and organizations to get the media coverage they deserve.



Unique experience for young journalists to run a TV studio.



Direct, hands-on training for middle and high school students.

TheBeat22.com

Strategy 6: Audience Participation Strategy

Addresses: Public 3, Objectives 2 and 3

Using a participation strategy that encourages sponsors' involvement in the Video Program, we will accentuate the value of their investment through one-on-one and social media interaction.

We want sponsors who encounter this engagement campaign to engage in direct participation with students. We want to create or reinforce this audience's sense of pride at what their sponsorship provides, and we want to establish a close working relationship between sponsors and the BEAT.

The key message of this strategy will be, "I sponsor an organization that produces news people value." As part of this strategy, the BEAT will engage sponsors in presentations and social media interaction.

This strategy will last for four months of this campaign and may be expanded to include summertime email blasts following the completion of this campaign.

Tactic 1: Email Blasts Utilization

At this point, *Stories and Sponsors* should be in its second month. John Wasytko should include with it a request for sponsors to come in and tell a group of sixth graders about their organization. The sixth graders can then practice writing stories, and the best story can be published.

Message: This tactic will emphasize, "Your sponsorship is valuable to both you, our sponsor, and our students.."

Execution: Beginning on March 4, the program advisor should include in a monthly email blast to sponsors a “casting call.” It should explain that the Video Program is seeking sponsors to provide a short, 10 to 30 minute presentation to a group of sixth grade journalists. The casting call should explain that students will then write a story about the organization that will then be distributed to local media outlets.

Timeline: The first email casting call should be distributed March 4, and presentations may begin as soon as March 11.

Tactic 2: Social Media Exchange.

On April 8, the social media manager should send a message to sponsor Facebook pages asking if there are any particular posts that they would like to promote. Then, the manager should share the requested posts on the BEAT Facebook page and request that the sponsor share a link to at least one BEAT article before the school year ends.

Message: This tactic emphasizes the message, “Your sponsorship is important to us, and we want to work with you to provide as many benefits to you as possible.”

Execution: The social media should reach out to active sponsor Facebook pages and/or Twitter accounts with a message that says, “Hello, _____! My name is _____, and I am the social media manager for the Video Program. As part of my job, I would like to encourage a tight network between the BEAT and its sponsors by sharing your posts or promoting events that your organization is hosting. Is there anything in particular that you would like us to share with our audience?”

Timeline: The first round of communication should take place with sponsor April 8 and should continue until the social media manager has contacted all sponsors.

Example Social Media Posts

- Happy National Camera Day from all of us at the BEAT! (Include imagery depicting BEAT students)
- Did you know that 15% of newspaper revenue comes from online media? Check out our online news at: http://www.brunswickschoolsvideoprogram.org/cgi-bin/school_news_2011.pl
- Want to join the Video Program team and beginning producing your own news stories? Visit http://thebeat22.com/documents/program_ap.pdf to apply.
- 53% of adult Twitter users read the newspaper during the week. Like our print news? You'll love our Twitter feed! (Insert a link to your twitter account, and upload a corresponding picture.)
- We won the Safe Driving Grant! Thanks for your support and votes. Get the full story here: http://www.thepostnewspapers.com/brunswick/local_news/bhs-wins-k-safe-driving-grant/article_4d0f1414-8a80-51f3-a169-4df50126a180.html
- Congratulations to Alexis Gemelas, BEAT manager who just graduated as class valedictorian! (Include a professional headshot of Alexis.)

Students should use these posts as a model and use their own judgement and creativity to create posts.

The social media manager may brainstorm with students when he or she so wishes.

Timeline

January 7: A manager should establish the Facebook page and schedule its first week of content. A student should be assigned to cover the Parent Night event.

January 11: Jaime Camino should have a script of information to say during parent night.

January 14: Pep rally planning should begin, and the social media manager should schedule a week of content. From here, the social media manager should make this a weekly routine.

January 15: Poster design should begin.

January 18: Parent Night presentation should be made, and a student should write a story about the event.

January 28: Posters should be on display. Email blast planning should begin.

February 4: First email blast should be sent out.

March 4: Printing and distribution of sponsor posters should be complete. An email casting call should be distributed to sponsors.

March 11: Sponsor presentations may begin, and may continue through the completion of this campaign.

April 8: The social media manager should begin contacting sponsors to establish a social media network.

July 1: The final email blast should be sent out, and all other campaign activities should officially conclude until the following school year.

Discussion

Budget

To execute this campaign, a total of less than \$50 is needed to print posters. Its success and execution depends entirely on employee commitment and work hours. If the budget needs readjusted at any point during the campaign, the social media manager should continue weekly scheduling, but other activities may be pushed forward by one or two weeks until funding is available to complete them.

As soon as the school year resumes, this campaign is considered completed. However, the social media outreach strategies may be repeated yearly if deemed successful.

Education

This campaign allows student journalists the opportunity to engage in public relations work at a young age. It improves the value of sponsorships and furthers their education regarding the services provided by the Video Program.

If the management team sees fit, they can incorporate the strategies outlined in this plan into meeting lectures to educate students on the importance of social media in journalism. What this campaign provides to students is a first-time glimpse into two-way communication between the program and its publics. Establishing networking opportunities allows audiences to ask questions and demonstrate support, and it provides young journalists an advanced understanding of what their readers and viewers look for in news stories and respond well to.

Statistics

As the editor of Medina County Lifestyle, I have published and promoted Video Program stories. The performance of student-written stories is comparable to other stories published by local authors in terms of reach.

Below I have included statistics provided by Lifestyle Publications to reflect the potential performance of a social media page run by a Medina County news outlet.

Type	Average Reach
 Photo	148
 Link	66

Image 1: *On average, photos perform nearly twice as well as links in terms of reach. It is important to consider that both should be shared to cater to visual learners and active readers simultaneously.*

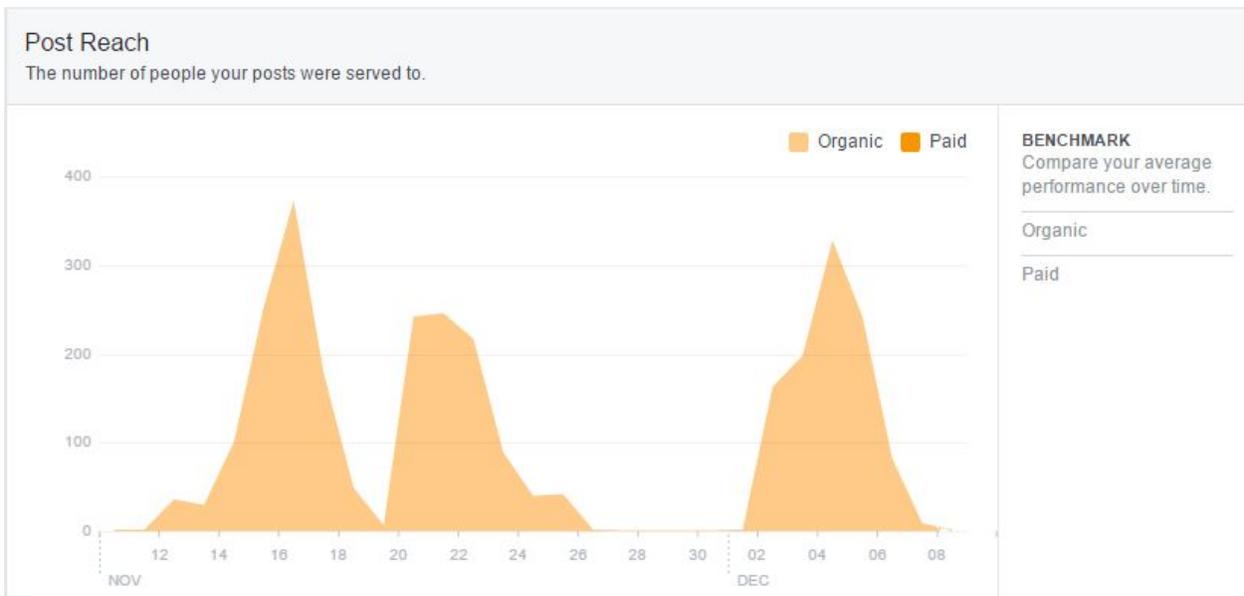


Image 2: *In Medina County, an average post from a publication may reach between 30 and 400 people.*

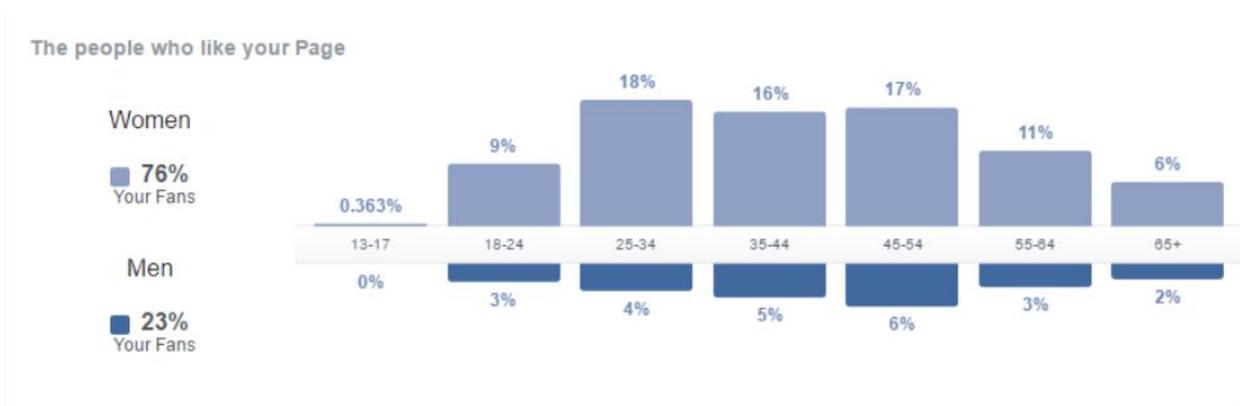


Image 3: *It is important to know that, in Medina County, women are more likely to use social media. Women between the ages of 25 and 54 are most likely to engage and interact with media outlets, and it is important to keep this in mind when brainstorming content.*



Image 4: *Medina County users are most active on Facebook at 9 p.m., a statistic which is useful when considering best times to publish content.*

08/30/2016 7:00 pm		Angela Ina, a local skin care expert, offers advice to keep your skin beautiful.			136		7 2	
08/29/2016 4:45 pm		Medina County Lifestyle shared Spokes of Medina's photo.			32		3 0	
08/29/2016 12:13 pm		Medina Public Square Historic District at sunrise 🌅			32.3K		2.1K 2.8K	 

Image 5: *Viral marketing is important--items may go viral at any time if you observe and react to the needs of your audience! This picture gained nearly 32k views in August of 2016.*

Additional publics

As outlined early in this case, there are primary, secondary, and tertiary publics that hold stake in the Video Program. These individuals were not all targeted in this campaign, though its outlined strategies will likely appeal to at least some of these audiences.

If the Video Program chooses to complete the social media strategies each year, they may consider altering the strategies to appeal to some of these groups. Publics including prospective sponsors, BEAT-affiliated students and parents, and even Green Schools may be targeted in future campaigns.

Additional Sources

1 SmartInsights. "Global Social Media Statistics Summary 2016." *Smart Insights*. 08 Aug. 2016. Web.

2 Lenhart, Amanda. "Teens, Social Media & Technology Overview 2015." *Pew Research Center: Internet, Science & Tech*. 09 Apr. 2015. Web.