Confluence Discovery Park: Branding Paper

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COMM 715: Research and Professional Development in Strategic Communication

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May 4, 2020

Overview

The Allegheny Arboretum at Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) is a living museum for plant-life that covers all 374 acres of the IUP campus since 2005. The museum is used for education, conservation, and ecological benefit. The mission of the arboretum is to create a learning environment for people to understand and appreciate the flora of the Allegheny region. The Arboretum Board at IUP was first appointed in January 2000 under the direction of Jerry Pickering. The board focuses on collaborating with the university and other organizations to create a public and geographical arboretum for both the Indiana community and western Pennsylvania ("The Allegheny Arboretum," n.d.). In 2015, the Allegheny Arboretum was ranked 10 out of 50 for the most beautiful college arboretums ("Best College Reviews", 2015).

Keywords: Arboretum, flora

Organizational Component

Within the Allegheny Arboretum, we have been tasked with focusing on the Confluence Discovery Park. The Confluence Discovery Park will be a demonstration of landscape transformation, transforming post-industrial lands into beautiful ecologically rich environments. The park will take up 39-acres of land located near the Kovalchick Complex, between S 13th Street and Wayne Avenue (bordered by Rose Street to the south, Pratt Drive to the northeast, and S Fisher Avenue to the northwest).

Confluence Discovery Park will be meant to provide academic, community, and ecological benefits.

Academic Benefits

- The current area already academically benefits many IUP students who conduct field research with their professors. However, the completed park will promote non-research and cross-curricular educational opportunities. Students in the departments like Art, Communications Media, Education, Sustainability, Environmental Engineer, Geoscience, and Biology will not only be able to use the park to enhance their learning experience, they will also be able to collaborate across departments to work on projects ("The Allegheny Arboretum", 2019).

Community Benefits

- Confluence Discovery Park will be within 1 mile of most residences which will allow many of them to walk, bike, take a bus, or drive to the park. The park will be meant as a shared-resource where community members will have the opportunity to hike, bird watch, run, picnic, and learn about the natural setting ("The Allegheny Arboretum", 2019). And as

mentioned in the grant proposal, the park will also provide an economic stimulus by bringing in tourism that will purchase goods at local stores (Pickering, n.d.).

Ecological/Environmental Benefits

- Confluence Discovery Park will benefit Indiana, PA by providing ecological services such as stormwater management, stream restoration, carbon sequestration, habitat provision, urban heat island effect mitigation, and biophilic exposure for visitors ("The Allegheny Arboretum", 2019).

Analysis

Annual Reports

There are 11 annual reports that show the progression of the arboretum in that year, developing a vision for Confluence Park and what is being planned for the upcoming years. The reports give a summary of the arboretum and the benefits the museum will bring. The reports give recognition to those who've contributed to the arboretum by having trees planted and plaques placed on benches. The reports published news that's related to the arboretum such as the construction of green space, plans of the new science building, and the stormwater education partnership (Pickering, 2019). Lastly, it has a form for the reader to fill out and give a generous donation to show their support of the arboretum.

Allegheny Arboretum Academic Committee

The Allegheny Arboretum Academic Committee supports, coordinates, and evaluates education with the arboretum. The committee usually has a faculty member from each department and students being active in certain arboretum activities. Work is done by the Anthropology Department, Art, Biology, Geography Planning, and Geoscience departments, which can be from planting and sampling trees, monitoring water flow, and flying drones.

Grant Proposal

The grant proposal described the project, owners, location and how it'll benefit the community. The completed project with bring economic stimulus to the community because it will bring tourism and stimulate spending in local businesses. The park will assist with physical, mental and spiritual wellness through recreation opportunities for the community. The proposal

incorporated a map of the project, a timeline, and a budget sheet. Multiple letters were included in the grant from White Township, the House of Representatives, Senate of Pennsylvania and Borough of Indiana Pennsylvania, all giving their support for the project. Letters from Jerry Pickering were also included requesting a fund for Phase 1 (Pickering, n.d.).

The Confluence Discovery Park 2030 Master Plan

The Master Plan highlights how the Confluence Discover Park project will restore, foster, create, construct, demonstrate, celebrate and catalyze the local space. It creates an understanding of the site's history, as well as it's current conditions and improvements. It also details the vision for the park and how goals will be implemented to aid the completion of each construction phase ("The Allegheny Arboretum", 2019).

Video and Website

On the Allegheny Arboretum's IUP page there is a video that dates back to 2014. It shows Jerry Pickering giving the history of how the arboretum started, how many acres of land it covers at IUP and the mission of the Allegheny Arboretum board members. The remainder of the video gives a drone view of the arboretum, which includes the university. The website presents the mission, history and facts about the arboretum. It displays four goals for how the museum will be beneficial to the public and how it will create a relationship with the Indiana community and IUP. There is also an honor roll of arboretum donors that recognizes donors who have given generous gifts to show their support for this project.

Focus and Problem Statement

The initial problem presented to us was that there was a lack of materials that promoted Confluence Discovery Park to the members of the IUP and Indiana communities. Through our analysis of the already existing materials, we found that there was a tremendous amount of materials relating to the park. But we also found that nearly all of the materials appealed to people who are either in or are interested in industries related to sustainability and ecology. They use industry jargon that makes it difficult for non-industry people to understand. They are also mostly only accessible through IUP's website, which already hosts so much information.

In correspondence with the initial problem, we want to focus on meeting people where they are: where their level of understanding ecologically and sustainability is and where they are looking for information. By doing so, we hope to raise awareness about Confluence Discovery Park and the Allegheny Arboretum amongst the IUP and Indiana communities.

Recommendation

We recommend that it would benefit the Confluence Discovery Park to have a social media chairperson. As to be laid out, we recognize that our plan requires a lot of work so we suggest two chairpersons to divide responsibilities. In the modern world, one of the best ways to raise awareness about an organization is to be active on social media. You're able to brand your organization, reach out, and make connections with other businesses and people who may find what you're doing interesting and share it with others. These people can either be students or people on the board who are familiar with using social media. They should be knowledgeable of or have an interest in communications and ecology, and having strong writing skills is a must. The chairperson(s) will be paid if they qualify for federal work-study which will help students to finance their costs for postsecondary education.

Social Media Platforms

With this plan, we want to be able to reach the IUP and Indiana communities. To do this, we use the following social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and Twitter. These platforms will allow us to reach both our younger and older segments within both of our audiences (Appendix A). We have come up with five distinct types of social media posts that we recommend the chairpersons use across all four platforms with adaptations depending on aspects of the platform like usage-audience and word-count. Each mock post should include the hashtags #IUP, #ConfluencePark, and #IUPAlleghenyAbr so viewers are able to easily click a hashtag and be sent to other posts related to IUP, Confluence Discovery Park, and the Allegheny Arboretum.

Community News

Community news posts will highlight a local organization or event that is well known amongst the community. These posts will focus mainly on the IUP and Indiana communities, presenting them as heroes because it puts them on a pedestal. It will demonstrate that the masterminds behind Confluence Discovery Park care about the community and would never promote something that harms the community. Appendix B is a mockup of what a community news post would look like on Facebook.

Throwback Thursday

Throwback Thursday is a common and popular hashtag that companies and people use to highlight moments from their pasts and post on Thursdays. By highlighting the past of IUP and Indiana communities, we paint a story of these communities being heroes and help them feel a connection to this organization. All, which ties back into the Brand Story model we have discussed in class. Promoting IUP & Indiana Community and holding them as heroes, just by mentioning them. Appendix C is a mockup of a Throwback Thursday post on Twitter.

Future Friday

Future Friday posts will show people what they can anticipate seeing from Confluence Discovery Park in the near future. Posts can range from architectural visualization, what the board is planning, and what to expect from the arboretum and the park. These are made to make the audience feel included and informed about the project. This post can be made every two weeks. Appendix D is a mockup of a Future Friday post on Instagram.

Trivia Tuesday

The Tuesday Trivia posts are meant to be fun, informative, and short videos (roughly 30 seconds) about the Allegheny Arboretum and Confluence Discovery Park and posted on Tuesdays. We recommend that Norm and a board member of the Allegheny Arboretum be featured in these videos. Norm is a recognizable figure amongst both audiences and would be able to help get the attention of our social media followers. A board member should be featured as well to help humanize the Allegheny Arboretum. The selected board member will introduce themselves, Norm, and tell the viewers a fun fact about the arboretum or Confluence Discovery Park. Though one member could be featured in all of the videos, we recommend that members cycle through appearing in videos so that the followers get to know the people handling the arboretum and the park.

Monthly Updates (Progress Reports)

Confluence Discovery Park is in a unique position. Most marketing tactics involve displaying the completed product, but this product (Confluence Discovery Park) is not set to be completed until 2030. To combat not having a finished product, we want to demonstrate the progress of the park being constructed, so our audiences know that progress is being made. This will help people who might donate (or have donated) to feel more comfortable that their donations are going to a project that is progressing. We recommend that these posts be made at the beginning of each month and summarize the accomplishments made the previous month. This will give the social media chairpersons time to create, collect, and adapt materials for these posts. Appendix E is a mockup of a Monthly Update post on LinkedIn.

Print Advertising

This particular recommendation focuses solely on social media marketing, however, we do understand that there is a segment of our audience that does not use social media. Print advertising would be an alternative for reaching those audience members. If the social media recommendations are taken by the chairpersons, they will be left with plenty of materials that they could adapt to print forms like flyers and newspaper articles.

Gaining a Following on Social Media

A common problem that many new social media accounts come across is gaining a following. When one account or page starts, it starts with a following of zero. To solve this issue, we recommend that the social media chairpersons follow local social media accounts. Confluence Discovery Park will have academic, community, and ecological benefits, so the local accounts that the chairpersons choose to follow fall under these three categories. After following these accounts, the chairpersons need to interact with them (liking posts, retweeting posts, highlighting them in the Community News posts, etc.) so that these accounts return the favor and expose the arboretum's account to their followers. Appendix F is a table of 15 local social media accounts (per category) the chairpersons should search for, follow, and interact with. Some of these organizations fall into more than one category which is to our advantage. For example, the IUP SEEDS Club falls into all three categories, which means that the accounts that follow them on social media are likely to have an interest in academics, the community, ecology, or some combination of the three. The more angles (categories) we can attract followers from, the more likely the followers will be in what the arboretum has to offer.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we recommend that two social media strategists be working to create brand awareness about Confluence Discovery Park as well as the Allegheny Arboretum. In 2020, a presence on social media is imperative for companies or organizations looking to build brand awareness. Social media allows them to quickly engage with their audiences, inform them, and excite them. Different social media platforms appeal to different types of age groups, so the Allegheny Arboretum and its social media chairpersons need to adapt their messages depending on the platform.

References

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Appendix A

Choosing The Right Social Media Platform For Your Business

https://us.accion.org/resource/choosing-right-social-media-platform-your-business/

Appendix B

A mockup of a Community News post on Facebook.

Appendix C

A mockup of a Throwback Thursday post on Twitter

Appendix D

A mockup of a Future Friday post on Instagram.

Appendix E

A mockup of a Monthly Update post on LinkedIn.

Appendix F

An organizational chart that lists the different organizations the social media chairs should search on social media, follow their accounts, and interact with their accounts. These organizations are categorized by the consumer benefit (how different people will benefit from Confluence Discovery Park).

ORGANIZATION BY CATEGORY (CONSUMER BENEFIT)			
	Academic	**Community**	**Ecological**
Organization Names	- IUP SEEDS Club - IUP ECO - The Biology Club - Comm Media Department - Geoscience Club - Sigma Gamma Epsilon - IUP Alpha Chi Sigma - IUP Biology Club - IUP Beta Beta Beta (Biology Honor Society) - IUP Student Film Association (SFA) - IUP Student Photography Association (SPA) - IUP Association of Early Childhood Educators - Student Art Association - Geology Society at IUP - IUP Physics Club	- Downtown Indiana - Indiana Garden Club - Indiana Tourist Borough - Indiana County Chamber of Commerce - IUP SEEDS Club - Indiana County Farmers Market - Four Footed Friends, Inc. - Indiana Road Runners Club - Indiana Elks Lodge #931 - Indiana County Humane Society - Herb Study Group of Indiana County - Habitat for Humanity of Indiana County - Indiana Business and Professional Women's Club - Indiana Coin Club, Inc. - Indiana Gazette	- Stormwater Education Partnership - IUP SEEDS Club - Indiana Garden Club - Indiana County Farmers Market - Sustainable Indiana County - Indiana County Conservation District - Indiana Tourist Bureau - Geoscience Club - IUP Biology Club - IUP Beta Beta Beta (Biology Honor Society) - Geology Society at IUP - Evergreen Conservancy - Western Pennsylvania Conservancy - Environmental Service Lab Inc - Eco Club IUP