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SNC Events

Introduction

Technology is and always will be ever changing. The vast types and numerous platforms are truly amazing and thought provoking. It is incredible to know that we can create, share, and find any piece of information online. Specifically, posting stories on a digital platform is a great way to share experiences from different perspectives and cultural backgrounds. Also, making a space to spread information to an audience quickly and in a way that grabs their attention and peaks their interest is incredibly beneficial. This is what we accomplished with our Instagram page, snc.events. By describing what SNC Events is, sharing our inspiration for the idea, showcasing what elements of digital storytelling our idea included, analyzing how our audience engaged with our account, and reflecting on what we learned during the process we have shown that our Instagram account snc.events has been a success.

Description

SNC Events is an Instagram page for students, faculty, and staff to follow. It allows the campus community to stay up to date with any and all events happening in the near future. Each organization is able to promote their upcoming events on a social media platform that would be seen by a larger audience in order to attract new members who are interested. Having one place to look to for events, especially on social media, is very convenient for current students.

The account is set up to have poster/flyer submissions through Instagram's Direct Messages. Each club would send their image and important event details that would be used in the caption to the account knowing it would be promoted and not forgotten. If we came across an

event that was not submitted, then we would essentially repost said organization's flyer and caption on our page.

In regard to captions, we kept the same structure for familiarity purposes. Each one led with the organization's name and had a row of periods underneath it. After a blank line was added for organization, we copied the original caption with the important information each club thought was necessary. After this, we used the words "Feel free to SHARE and COMMENT..." with different phrases attached such as "if you are excited to go" or "if you plan on attending". These small changes and additions were to create a cohesive caption based on the original. After another blank line for organization, we always credited where the original post and caption came from. Additionally, we tagged the organization to inform them of the post.

In a short period of time, SNC Events has accomplished a great deal. We currently have 57 followers and ten posts on the platform, all from different clubs/groups on campus. Our first post is by a new club on campus, the SNC Knight Strikers. They were having their first bowling event, and we thought it would be great to spread awareness of it to our followers. We also have posts including Knight Theatre's artistic board applications, a toy making event for Pause for Paws, the student vs. staff ultimate frisbee tournament for the Ultimate Frisbee Club, SNC Football's food drive, Women in Business's period project event, the 8th annual block party, Cupcakes with the Bruess', and end of the year events from the Emmaus Center and Cru.

Though we accomplished many things, the project looks a bit different to what we originally planned it to be. We started with a different idea that eventually had to be scrapped, as it was not working out as we hoped. This made our final idea have much less time than we would have ideally liked, but we made it work. With more time and more resources we believe that we could have reached more SNC students to give them information about events in a new way. We

had very little resources given to us, as no one submitted an event they would like to promote. This made us have to seek out events, which was not our original plan and took more time than we thought.

It also came to our attention that SNC is creating a new program that would involve all groups and clubs on campus starting next year. This program is an app that allows all organizations to post about events and other activities on campus. We believe that the knowledge of this app circulating within each organization's e-board did not let our Instagram account take off at the same rate it would have if this app was not launching. We may have gotten no submissions from groups, because they knew that learning the new platform would take time and they did not want to waste it on an Instagram account that would not be as helpful next fall.

Inspiration

We had many inspirations for this idea as we came up with it. We realized that not many people read the SNC Communications emails that are sent three times a week, which holds a large amount of information that is unseen by most of the community. The email throws this information at students without an attention grabbing element. Students tend to mark the email as read, delete it without reading it, or not check their email at all. Also, the printed posters hung up around campus often blend into the background or become overwhelming to students. Each poster is fighting for people's attention with loud colors, bold fonts, and big graphics. It can become overstimulating to the point where people just ignore them. We wanted to create a place where students can go and actively want to visit that shares information on events or ways to be involved on campus. This way, students could learn about organizations they have never heard of before and be exposed to new opportunities at their fingertips 24/7.

Another inspiration was St. Norbert College's Instagram account. They have a highlight for events, but do not always post every event they are tagged in or come across. One of our group members has first hand experience of this, as they are on the e-board of an organization on campus. They would always tag the official Instagram page in their posts, but they would not always be shared. We thought that if SNC had a place solely for promoting all events on campus, it would be more beneficial to its community as a whole. SNC could still include a few events for the week just as they do now on their stories, but then link the SNC Events page at the end for more information and events.

Digital Storytelling

Essentially, digital storytelling's goal is to use multiple aspects of digital elements such as social media, pictures, and film which tell a narrative story with them. This was obviously our goal for our digital storytelling project while using the Instagram account to create SNC Events. There are five key principles of digital storytelling. Those principles are; serial structure, personal presence, social framework, multiple proscenia, and platform affordances (Alexander, 2017). Within our project we were able to identify and use all five principles.

The first principle present in our work was serial structure. Serial structure is the idea that many digital stories and storytelling approaches arrange content as separate repetition over time (Alexander, 2017). As a group we thought that when an organization posts a poster, physically on a board or digitally, too far in advance of the actual date many people forget about it. Our goal with this project and its posts was to be able to post the poster or information about an event closer to when it is actually happening. For example, our post about "Cupcakes with the Bruess" was posted the day before the event to remind people about it. With the school year ending and

students being very busy with classes, it was another opportunity to use our account to give reminders to individuals.

The second principle is personal presence. Personal presence is the representation of a character within digital storytelling (Alexander, 2017). With our account, snc.events, we gave other groups and organizations the opportunity to have their own personal presence on our account by reposting, sharing, and tagging them as well as having their poster on our feed.

Next was social framework. We were able to take physical posters of organizations' events and post them on social media to get more people to see them. Groups who did not have a poster made for their event, we created or chose a photo to represent the event and still posted the information to our account.

Multiple proscenia was also a component in our project. The detail that a story can be accessed on many different platforms is what makes up multiple proscenia (Alexander, 2017). When we took pictures of physical posters on a board and posted them to our account or using posters from a different organization's account, we were partaking in multiple proscenia. This ability gave more users and individuals who use media the opportunity to see something on a common platform that they might have missed hanging on a board with dozens of other posters.

Finally, we had platform affordances. Platform affordances allow each digital story to use the "advantages" of the platform it is on (Alexander, 2017). For our project, snc.events' platform was Instagram. By using Instagram it allowed us to post pictures and posters easily into the user's feed. This also allowed organizations to get in contact with us to post about their events. For organizations and groups that had their posters posted it allowed users to get engaged by seeing a picture rather than just reading text. Instagram also allowed users to like, comment, repost, and save pictures.

Engaging Audiences

Engaging Audiences is an essential part of any project in social media, especially one that engages the ideas of digital storytelling. The goal when pursued in engaging audiences was to get groups on the SNC campus to follow our account on Instagram and to get them to share events that we posted.

As a group we thought it would be beneficial to only follow groups on campus (Sports teams, Greek life, Etc.) in order to not look like a spam account. We agreed that oftentimes when we saw an account that was following many more accounts than people following it looked unprofessional and that we would not get a wide range in our following.

Two of our posts got a good amount of engagement. First, our block party post did well. We got 6 likes, 65 accounts reached and almost half of the people that were interacting with our post were not our followers. Additionally, in our post about the block party we put in information to contact Alli Engels' by email if they had questions. Alli got 3 separate emails saying that they saw the post and asked questions on the block party after seeing the post. Second, our Cupcakes with the Bruess' post did well. We got 5 likes, 62 accounts reached with 32 being followers, 30 being non followers.

Overall, our goal was to reach a wide range of SNC students and groups. We did a good job of trying to get out to the groups, but the groups generally did not reach out to us. We had to find the events by ourselves and post with hope we would get engagement from sharing the post or sending the post via direct message, but this was not the case. We were hoping that through the process of sharing we would gain more followers and we did gain some individuals that followed, but maybe not the amount that we hoped to gain.

Experiential Learning Addendum

Throughout this project there were a few new skills each of us members were able to learn. When it came to the digital platform we used, Instagram, we all had to learn how to change and manage a business profile account. By changing the account to a business account, we were able to view the insights of each post. How many shares, likes, saves, and how many people the post reached. This was very helpful in our work and helped us see how we could reach the biggest audience. Next, also with Instagram and having a public source information account, we had to learn how to “work” even when we’re not working. We had to constantly keep an eye out for new posters from organizations or events happening on campus so we were able to keep our account up to date and really promote other organizations.

Conclusion

Overall, our group believes that our project with SNC Events was a success. We were able to effectively portray digital storytelling through out Instagram account. Along with digital storytelling we were really about to engage an audience from the community around us at St. Norbert. SNC Events is a great tool and resources for students, staff, faculty, and the whole college community that we hope will continue to grow and inspire other similar ideas.

References

Alexander, B. (2017). *The new digital storytelling creating narratives with new media*. Praeger, an Imprint of ABC-CLIO, LLC.