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The Place of Forsyth County

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P1: Organization Summary

The Place of Forsyth County (TPFC) is a 501© (3) charity located in Cumming, Georgia and was the first charity that was located in Forsyth county after it was started in 1975. Originally TPFC was founded as a religious organization but have since disaffiliated from all religion. Currently, TPFC offers many community outreach programs including senior programs, youth programs, a thrift store, emergency financial assistance, workforce development programs, and a food pantry (Granados). The staff of TPFC itself is small, but a majority of the work for programing, outreach programs, and the thrift store are provided by court order community service. This is one of the rehabilitation programs that TPFC provides, including housing, workforce development, and financial assistance, to convicted felons. The majority of work for TPFC is accomplished throughout court ordered community service; however, there are plenty of volunteers. On average TPFC accrues 4,200+ hours of volunteer work each year (Granados).

TPFC has two different mission statements to cater to their different audiences, one for the donors which states, “The Place assists people of the Forsyth County area with essential needs to be self-sustaining” ("The Place of Forsyth County"). The secondary mission statement says TPFC is somewhere, “where every person, dollar, and hour has a purpose” ("The Place of Forsyth County"). This message was designed to better connect with the general public and demonstrate their .92 cents initiative. The .92 cents initiative says that of every dollar earned (whether it be from the thrift store, donors, or government assistance) .92 cents of it goes back into programming and services for the organization.

P2: PR Suggestions

Increased Social Media Consistency

The first and arguably most important PR suggestion for TPFC would be to increase their consistency on social media, which also fits with their goals of increasing their presence on social media and increasing their visibility with new demographics. At the moment TPFC appeal to people over the age

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of thirty with families, and a lot of younger people who are in need in the greater Forsyth area are unaware of their services, this would change with increased social media usage (specifically Instagram and Twitter). Users on these platforms tend to be between the ages of 18-29, making up 59% of Instagram users in 2017 (“Social”, 2017). As far as the execution of this plan goes, the best way to implement it would be investing in a program like Hootsuite or Sprout in order to keep all social media accounts managed in one place. This would allow for TPFC to create backlogs of content at the beginning of the month without needing frequently managed. Upfront this would take more time and some financial backing, but as more customers are brought into TPFC’s thrift store from the exposure it will more than repay the up-front cost.

Video Ad Campaigns

The second strategy to be put in place with be the creation and release of video ad campaigns to appeal to people’s emotions. One of the concerns with this method would be financial ability of the organization; however, there is a way around that problem though. TPFC is willing to partner with an unspecified local university to offer an internship to a crew of film students and potentially extend it to theater students. This would count for an internship credit while still producing high quality work for TPFC to use and advertise. This method would tie into their goals of creating marketing to appeal for both client and donor while also increasing their visibility. If ads are broadcasted on local stations and shared on social media, it will increase the people who are aware of the brand in the community since TPFC is still a local organization. This would effectively meet goals set by the organization with the content of the ads as an emotional appeal will show both people who are in need that there is an association available to help while also showing donors what services are provided through TPFC.

“The Place” Bags

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The last method to boost TPFC's would be to re-instate the reusable bag campaign that TPFC ran in 2017. It was highly successful and involved the production of three-hundred-and-fifty recyclable bags and all of them sold, stating that if customers returned to shop with the bags, they would receive 10% off their purchase. Despite being a campaign run in 2017, the bags are still being repurposed amongst customers. It was proposed that another set of reusable bags be sold; as this was a successful campaign originally, it will increase the organizations goals of visibility. It is projected that people will act much of the same way, purchase the bags, use them as a general reusable bag, and bring them back. The more bags in circulation amongst people, the more their brand will be exposed.

In relation to the marketing aspect of increasing the visibility, the next way to do that is throughout marketing. This relates back to readings from Sargeant that states that, "marketing can improve the levels of customer satisfaction attained amongst non-profit organizations" (Sargeant 2014). It also allows the non-profit organization to appear more competitive on a professional level to distinguish themselves as a brand. Another reading that relates to Marketing within a non-profit is a study done in 2015 that talks about the correlation between brand image and increased marketing. The more that consumers see a brand is the more likely they are to interact (Dijkmans, Kerkhof, Buyukcan-Tetik, & Beukeboom 2015).

P3: Literature Connection

The main goals of the organization revolve around social media, marketing, and visibility of the brand as a whole. Starting with the theory of masspersonal communications, it is a current developing theory that consists of the perceived number of people a communicator expects to view their message and then the receiver's subjective perception of the personalization of a message, or the view of how closely a message is tailored to an individual (French and Bazarova 2017). This relates to TPFC because as they continue to increase their social media presence the organization will have to increase its planned

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or expected audience while still attempting. They will have to plan for both the audience they have in order to keep the feelings of individualizing their posts towards consumers.

P4: Case Study Conclusion/Summary

Overall, TPFC is a very successful organization, pulling in many loyal consumers and donors throughout their years of operations. The main struggle that they have is finding ways to market while still staying within their budget and staying true to their mission statements. Throughout the communication with the organization they have made it very clear that their primary goals are increasing awareness of their brand, increasing social media activity, and finding ways to market towards both donors and clients. The above ideas that have been suggested, becoming more consistent with social media, creating video ad campaigns, and making another campaign of reusable bags will be the best way to accomplish the goals that the company has for public relations.

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