PR Campaigns

Group Meeting (Nick Thompson, Preston Eberlyn, Stacy Diri, Molly Kelly, Jake Miller)

Meeting Minutes:

February 17, 2015 @ 12:30 pm

* Designation of group member roles:

Nick Thompson: Group Manager

Preston Eberlyn: Research Director and Senior Event Coordinator

Stacy: Associate Group Researcher

Molly Kelly: Researcher and Event Coordinator

Jake Miller: Secretary

* Our Project Group Bio:

As a PR team we strive to improve public recognition for the companies we work with. It is our goal to create a working plan to improve participation from or with the community in regards to these companies and thereby make them more lucrative and successful at disseminating their individual company messages.

For this particular project, working with New Beginnings Church out of Marysville, Ohio, we want to create a more recognizable and engaging brand that will improve their image in the Marysville community and thereby increase public participation in their events and church services.

Individual Team Member Bios:

* + Nick Thompson: I am a junior Public Relations major. Currently I am a PR intern in the Marketing and Communications Office at The University of Findlay. This past summer, I was a business development intern for Soothsayer Analytics, which is a data analytics company in Columbus, OH where I assisted in problem solving solutions for the creation and growth of the company.
  + Preston Eberlyn: I a double major in Political Science and Theatre with minors in Public Administration and Political Communication. He has worked on serval political campaigns. Also, he has held internships wherein he has developed new and innovative public relation techniques for the non-profit and governmental entities he served. He has extensive mass communication experience both on the local and state level.
  + Staci Diri: I am a sophomore Public Relations Major, I recently volunteered at a food pantry event at the University of Findlay campus. I also volunteered to attend an international cultural briefing at the Findlay high school, for fifth and tenth graders, in order to expand their diversity.
  + Molly Kelly: I am a junior at The University of Findlay. I am a Western Equestrian Studies and Public Relations double major. I am a member of the University’s Public Relations Student Society of America and am currently working on a public relations campaign to brand popcorn for the University.
  + Jake Miller: I am a Senior Public Relations Major and varsity Track & Field athlete at The University of Findlay with a minor in Psychology. A large majority of my work experience involves Video Production and Editing. I am currently Co-Owner of an Outdoor Videography company (shared by my younger brother).
* Situation Analysis:

Problem/Opportunity Statement:

* + New Beginnings Church of Marysville has a vast amount of untapped potential for reaching out into the community and increasing participation in their events and church services. Currently there is no outreach to new publics for expanding the church community (Rogan). As a faith group they, organizationally, have not made great strives to brand themselves in a way that would lend itself to the overall growth of the church (Rogan). There are many areas that could be improved or created in order to improve its recognition to the Marysville community, increasing its congregation and making it a more competitive church in Union County.
  + Problems:
    - Unrecognizable brand in the Marysville Area (Rogan)
    - Unkempt Online presence (Rogan)
    - Untapped Demographic Involvement/Support (uscensus.gov)
    - Small congregation (Rogan)
  + Opportunities: (via discussion)
    - Untapped Demographic Involvement/Support
      * Veterans, Japanese, Women, Impoverished (uscensus.gov)
    - Existing Website and social media presence
      * No need to start from scratch (newbeginnings4u.org)
    - Space for events and community outreach (Rogan)
    - Hope Center involvement (Rogan)
    - Contemporary church (Rogan)
    - Development of Youth Group activities (Rogan, Class Discussion)
      * Outreach to community youth
      * Attract “new families” to the congregation
    - Marysville is a growing community (uscensus.gov)
      * More people to “market” to

Discussion: Need to …

* + - Redesign a recognizable and relevant Logo
    - Revamp social media and website
      * Relevant photos
      * Updated statuses
      * Updated and clearly stated mission
      * Expand social media participation
    - Concrete event schedule (annually)
      * Events need to be timely and relevant
      * Choose specific target publics

Organizational Analysis:

* What is the situation facing the organization?
  + New Beginnings Church is facing a general issue of having a small congregation. This limits the size of events they can host as well as the number of these types of community events that can be put on each fiscal year. Stemming from this is the churches unrecognizable presence in the Marysville community, due to their small size and lack of major events, etc.
* What is the Background of the situation facing this organization?
  + Marysville is a growing community with steady population increases each year. Marysville is also a community with several other churches of different denominations that have been in existence for much longer than the recently formed New Beginnings Church. Its infancy and its small congregation make it difficult to reach out to the “un-churched” in their community.
* What is the significance or importance of the situation for this organization?
  + The situation will determine whether or not the church develops the potential and the ability to grow its congregation and thus its presence in the Marysville community.
* PR Audit:
  + Strengths:
    - Offers personal environment due to relatively small congregation
    - Close pastor relations (why can’t we be friends?)
    - Open-minded congregation
    - Centrally located
    - Space to grow
    - Positive atmosphere
  + Weaknesses:
    - Small congregation (inability to host events)
      * Not a lot of outreach
        + Untapped populations
    - In a “competitive” market
      * + Many churches in the area
    - Unorganized event planning
    - Lack of a mission endorsement in the community
    - Digital Media presence
  + Internal Environment Analysis
    - Performance: Church services offered

: Outreach events minimal

* + - Niche: Faith base religious organization lacking diversity
    - Structure: Solid mission that is not advertised
    - Ethical Base: Stagnant but on the same page
    - Obstacles: See weaknesses
  + External Environment Analysis
    - Supporters: congregation members
      * Other local churches and church pastors
    - Competitors: Satan
    - Opponents: those “too lazy” to attend church services
    - Obstacles: people are set in their ways
      * + Financial constraints

Analysis of the Publics (Rogan & Pastor Dan Steepe)

* Key Publics:
  + Veterans:
    - High population
    - No current veteran outreach program in local churches
  + Young Families (families with school aged children)
    - Median age is 33 years
      * Supports idea of many young families in the area (city-data.com)
* Secondary Publics:
  + Existing Members
  + City/State/Federal Gov.
  + First Church of God (Anderson IN)
* Opinion Leaders:
  + Church Council (Elders)
  + Church Members
* Latent Publics:
  + Unchurched (disenfranchised)
* Aware Publics:
  + Inactive members
* Active Publics:
  + Active members (event volunteers)
  + Church Council
  + Marysville Area Ministerial Association

Research Plan:

In the beginning… we started considering all the possible publics we could target in the Marysville area to increase the membership of New Beginnings Church. We established that there were 5 strong populations as potential targets and these included the Japanese, US armed forces veterans, women, the impoverished, and young families. Based on census information we decided not to pursue the Japanese because, though an increasing population, their increase is only to a little more than 2% of the population, which becomes insignificant. Most are also in the area because of the Honda plant, so church pay not be a priority. The impoverished were also eliminated as a specific target public because reaching out to them would require a lot of events and programs, and therefore a lot of resources that New Beginnings at this time does not have. We also decided that women in general, though a majority of the population (over 50%), could be better reached by pursuing appealing to more young families. This, while not included in the census, was urged as a specific target public by Pastor Dan and enables us to reach out to single moms. As for the veteran population, they are significant group in the Marysville area (15%). Another determining factor is that the Marysville community, while supporting the Veterans Day Parade, does not host many events to support them, according to church member Amy Rogan.

Key Findings:

New Beginnings Church is a recently established church in the Marysville area and because of this it does not have a very large congregation. Our task is to evaluate the membership and increase it by targeting publics that New Beginnings can tailor their outreach to. The most prominent barrier facing them is their lack of organization, that is to say that they do not have a concrete plan for outreach, event planning, and general growth. We have narrowed down, based on research from the US census and member input, to two target publics: Veterans and young families.

Barriers and Potential Breakthroughs:

* Barriers
  + Low congregation membership total
  + Lack of financial resources
  + Large population of other church organizations in the Marysville area
  + Lack of community outreach programs
* Potential breakthroughs
  + Increase in visiting members from the community
  + Established annual events that brings community support
  + More financial stability due to increased congregation total
  + Gaining interaction and establishing relationships with the “un-churched”

PR Goal:

Our goal is to rebrand New Beginnings Church in Marysville, Ohio, so that they are more recognizable in the community and display better attendance and participation in church services and events.

Plan Evaluation:

* Objectives
  + To gain/provide support in community
  + To increase attendance (services and events)
  + To reach out to un-approached publics (see target publics)
  + Develop a colorful/recognizable brand tag line/logo
  + Increase their online presence
* Strategies
  + Designing a new logo and creating an original tag line
  + Plan annual outreach event(s) specific to target publics
    - “Push” their new brand in community
  + Revamping social media, website, and maintaining it (keep up to date)
  + Advertise in community (more than placemat ads)
    - Billboards, flyers, pamphlets, etc.
* Rationale
  + We believe that in order to increase church participation New Beginnings needs to reach out to more people in a personable and innovative way. Based on research from the US census and interviews with existing church members we found two target publics that provide this opportunity, namely veterans and young families. By reaching out to these groups it allows New Beginnings a great opportunity to rebrand itself and its image to accommodate for and cater to these types of publics, ultimately allowing it to grow in size.
  + With these publics decided upon we now have an opportunity to address the problems in church marketing and their online presence.