

Social Media Technology Assignment

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Link to Lightner Museum's Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/LightnerMuseum/?eid=ARC1pOmZQf5eZ5KTQgMpd3yJ4Y33SbCtAj7176l31DV52yjnO0halb7mJ04DVY-4fNDRDhila15LY54>

Social Media Implementations at the Lightner Museum

After viewing the different social media sites operated by the Lightner Museum it was clear which one was most utilized. The Lightner Museum's Instagram page was heavily focused on the museum's wedding business. Rarely any photos on the Instagram page contained that of the Museum's collection. When visiting the Twitter account, it was immediately noticed that it had not been in use for some time. It contained only four Tweets and had not been updated since July 21, 2012. The only real active social media page is the Lightner Museum's Facebook page. The Facebook page on average has five posts a week added to their news feed. The features on the Facebook page make it interactive while generating public interest. Where their other accounts seemed to be lacking.



Screenshot of the Lightner Museum's Twitter page

Features of the Lightner Museum's Facebook page

The features of the Lightner Museum's Facebook page is informative, and some of the posts are interactive. On the main page under "About", the user can click on the link and find out the history of the museum, hours of operation, peak hours for the museum, prices of tickets, and a map of its physical location. The map is linked to Google Maps which makes locating the museum easy (parking is another story). Also, provided under that tab is the museum's phone number along with two different email address. When scrolling through the different tabs the "Videos" page is very entertaining. Located on that page are all the uploaded videos from the museum over the years. All are high quality and help pique the interest of the general public. Their current video post is about Edgar Degas and his collection.



Screenshot of the Lightner Museum's Facebook page

Audience

The Lightner Museum doesn't just want to be the ones to post messages on their Facebook page. They want the public to have fun too. By using Facebook as a social networking tool, they are actively trying to seek out and connect with the newest of museum visitors; Millennials. It has been noted that "Millennial audiences are dedicated to a radically participatory ethics, craving experiences that incorporate fun, discovery, and community" (Kerho, 2014) For example, one way that the Lightner engages with its visitors is by asking for their participation in different contests. One contest that was recently held was for World Emoji Day. The Lightner urged visitors to go through their collection take pictures and add emojis to

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the picture then tag the museum in it. Using “@LightnerMuseums” tag the pictures could be easily shared on their Facebook page. The results were comical. Below is one of the posts from a visitor where they used the “check-in” feature of the museum, participated in the online event, and ultimately was able to share their first-hand experience not only on their social media page but also on the Lightner’s. Thus, connecting the digital community.

One thing that was observed is that there is a majority of people composed of the Baby Boomer and Gen X generations that are utilizing the Lightner Museum’s Facebook page more than that of the younger generation. They tag themselves in pictures and “check in” at the museum’s different events. For example, the Lightner Museum on the last Thursday, of each month hosts “Lightner After Hours”. It is a free event open to the public where wine and hors d’oeuvres are served, and live music is performed. It is not uncommon for these groups of individuals to post about the event and tag their friends in it. It is a new way for them to invite their friends out while publicly sharing their active lifestyle. It is also a new form of digital bragging. Instead of the antiquated slide show, they now post pictures and videos to their Facebook wall. Being that Facebook is user-friendly and smartphones are more common than ever, accessibility is easier than ever.



Screenshot of Lightner Museum’s “Photos” Facebook page

Social Media Benefits

There are many benefits to a museum being active on social media and fostering a community of users with similar interest. “For smaller museums that face serious financial constraints, Audience participation is increasingly taking the form of crowdsourcing and crowdfunding.” (NMC Horizon, 2016, pp. 18) This is something that the Lightner Museum has yet to take advantage of. Part of the Lightner’s Strategic Plan for this year is to generate funding for their stained-glass collection on the second floor of the museum. Majority of the stained glass is from Tiffany and Company and some of the earliest pieces in the collection are from 1893. To restore the room and its artifacts the museum needs to raise \$25,040.00. One thing that the Lightner could do is utilize their Facebook page and link it to a GoFundMe campaign. One of the features on GoFundMe is that it lets people who donate money to post a message not only on their own personal Facebook wall but on the museum’s wall as well. It has been very successful for small museums to generate funds while bringing the community together. Below is an example of a very small museum that was looking for funds to restore their building. With help from their Facebook community, they were able to generate over \$75,800.00s in three years. All the Lightner would have to do is set up the GoFundMe account, take pictures of their beautiful stained-glass collection and then reach out to their 11,433 followers on Facebook and ask for help.

The beautiful thing about St. Augustine, Florida - where the Lightner Museum is located. There are “95.8 million visitors” (Jones, 2018) that vacation in St. John’s County yearly. Many of these visitors are from other countries where only a small majority of the area is made up of local residents. By opening this initiative on GoFundMe and publicizing it within the museum and on social media, the Lightner could generate global funding and raise more money faster. Because GoFundMe does not ask for any fees and it is free to set up an account there is no risk involved. Which means it is a win-win situation. The community gets to enjoy many more years of these beautifully preserved stained-glass masterpieces, while the museum benefits from the social media publicity that has the potential of generating interest and receive new visitors.



Screenshot Outsiders House Museum GoFundMe page

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