Agenda Analysis Report

INDIANA WESLEYAN UNIVERSITY

Alumni & Church Engagement

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Overview

Indiana Wesleyan University's alumni should not go forgotten. They should be updated on campus/alumni news and feel included in their school. This study was conducted to research what messages the IWU Community has been receiving, and to propose and implement a plan to enhance their storytelling.

Research Questions:

1. What agenda has the IWU Alumni Association set for its followers within the past five months on main social platforms?

2. Does the agenda being set by the IWU Alumni Association uphold Indiana Wesleyan University's mission and values?

To address these questions, posts from four most engaged IWU Alumni social channels were coded: E-Newsletter, Blog, Facebook and Twitter. The posts were taken from one random week in each month for the past five months. Coding categories were determined by using IWU's mission statement and core values and the IWU Alumni Association's mission statement and core values.

Coding Categories:

- Community
- Celebration
- Character
- Christlikeness
- Commitment
- Scholarship
- Leadership
- Service
- Stewardship
- Innovation

After retrieving preliminary coding results, the data was analyzed, a PR Action Plan was created and implemented, and a final evaluation took place.

Blog | iwualumniblog.com

Newsletter | alumninews.indwes.edu

Facebook | facebook.com/iwualumni

Twitter | @iwualumni

Agenda-Setting Theory

This project was grounded and built from Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw's mass/media communication theory called the agenda-setting theory. According to this theory, the mass media can transfer the salience of issues on their news agenda to the public agenda. It states that society looks to the news to tell them where to focus their attention. There is a cause-and-effect relationship between the media agenda and the public agenda, which means that the public create their own agendas off the agendas that the media set (Griffin, 2012).

The IWU Alumni Association social channels features certain news, alumni and stories. The types of people it features are setting the agenda for what is salient within the IWU community. They are the "media" setting the agenda for the "publics," or alumni followers. The overarching media evaluations and market research conducted served as written documentation of what agenda the IWU Alumni Association of the University was setting.

The data and analysis provided insight as to what messages were and should be portrayed as important. A social media guideline booklet was created to help set a particular agenda. Market research was also conducted, prior to the research, so the IWU Alumni Association could easily reference the audience for each social platform.

Griffin, Em. (2012). *A First Look at Communication Theory* (8th ed.). New York, NY: The McGraw-Hill Companies, Inc.

Market Research

Market research was collected from the time frame of the past five months. This data was not directly integrated into the study, but was used as additional information about the IWU Alumni Association audience. No data was available for the blog because Google Analytics was not yet set up. Google Analytics has since then been set up for the blog for future market research.

April 1, 2015 – August 31 2015

IWU Alumni E-Newsletter:

- 5,348 sessions, 4,766 users, 7,543 page views
- Age: 61.2% between ages 24-64
- Gender: 57.27% male , 42.73% female
- Location:
    - 30.78% Not set
    - 8.96% Marion
    - 3.35 Indianapolis
    - 2.54% Chicago
    - 1.31% New York
- Interests:
    - 7.10% News/Weather
    - 5.74% Employment
    - 5.6% Movie Lovers
    - 5.28% Arts & Entertainment/Celebrities & Entertainment News
    - 5.19% Jobs & Education/Education/Colleges & Universities
- Traffic
    - 38.48 referral
    - 35.68% direct
    - 19.69% social
    - 4.67% email
    - 1.48% organic search
- Social
    - 64.20%
    - 25.36%
    - 7.98%
    - 2.47%

Facebook:

- 63% Women, 36% Men
- 99% English Language
- Fan location:
    - 21% fans from Indianapolis
    - 16% Marion
    - 6% Fort Wayne
- Fans Reached:
    - 17% Marion
    - 15% Indianapolis
    - 5% Chicago
    - 5% Columbus
    - 5% Fort Wayne
- Highest post reach: 2,770, Lowest post reach: 1
- Highest total reach: 2,776, Lowest total reach: 7
- Highest likes: 92, Lowest likes: 0
- 9% page like increase
- Success of post types in order from highest to lowest
    - Average Reach: Link, shared video, photo, status
    - Average Post Clicks: Shared video, link, photo, status
    - Average Likes, Comments & Shares: Photo, link, shared video, status

Twitter:

- 54% Male, 46% Women
- 69% Married, 31% Single
- 99% English language
- 96% United States
- Region
    - 44% Indiana
    - 8% Ohio
    - 7% Illinois
    - 6% Michigan
- Education
    - 40% Completed high school
    - 41% Completed college
    - 18% Completed graduate school
    - Home ownership: 77% home owner, 23% home renter
- Interests
    - 65% Business and news
    - 61% Politics and current events
    - 59% Comedy (movies and television)
    - 52% Movie news and general info
    - 51% Christian and gospel
    - 49% Music
    - 43% Business and finance
    - 43% Business news and general info
    - 42% NFL football
    - 35% Technology
- Occupation
    - 39% Professional/technical
    - 28% Homemaker
    - 23% Self-employed
    - 18% White collar worker
    - 17% Health services
    - 13% Retired
    - 12% Sales/Marketing
    - 11% Tradesman/laborer
    - 11% Management
    - 7% Student

Coding Guidelines

IWU Alumni Association Mission Statement

To celebrate community reflecting the character of IWU by engaging alumni, developing resources, and promoting the University.

IWU Alumni Association Core Values

Community – Engaging alumni participation through empowerment
Celebration – Celebrating milestones, affinities, and encouraging relationships
Character – Servicing alumni and promoting the University

IWU Mission Statement

Indiana Wesleyan University is a Christ-centered academic community committed to changing the world by developing students in character, scholarship and leadership.

IWU Core Values

Christlikeness, Commitment, Leadership, Service, Stewardship, Innovation & Diversity

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10 categories for this study were taken from these guidelines.
These 10 categories include:

Community
Celebration
Character
Christlikeness
Commitment
Scholarship
Leadership
Service
Stewardship
Innovation

Initial Coding Report/Findings

This report shows the percentages of messages posted on each social platform from the months of April 2015 – August 2015. One week was taken from each month to collect data. The messages were coded under 10 different categories, grounded on the IWU mission and values and the IWU Alumni Association mission and values. The percentages show the percentage out of all posts from that channel that were coded under that specific category.

IWU Alumni Blog

Community	42%
Celebration	50%
Character	42%
Christlikeness	27%
Commitment	50%
Scholarship	38%
Leadership	65%
Service	19%
Stewardship	50%
Innovation	19%

IWU Alumni Newsletter

Community	77%
Celebration	45%
Character	40%
Christlikeness	29%
Commitment	54%
Scholarship	48%
Leadership	42%
Service	25%
Stewardship	50%
Innovation	29%

IWU Alumni Twitter

Community	83%
Celebration	40%
Character	41%
Christlikeness	33%
Commitment	45%
Scholarship	36%
Leadership	40%
Service	23%
Stewardship	35%
Innovation	18%

IWU Alumni Facebook

Community	84%
Celebration	53%
Character	45%
Christlikeness	32%
Commitment	37%
Scholarship	34%
Leadership	45%
Service	26%
Stewardship	39%
Innovation	26%

Categories: Highest to Lowest Percentage

IWU Alumni Blog

Upper Third Percentile (67% - 100%)

- Leadership

Middle Third Percentile (34% - 66%)

- Commitment
- Celebration
- Stewardship
- Community
- Character
- Scholarship

Lower Third Percentile (0% - 33%)

- Christlikeness
- Service
- Innovation

IWU Alumni E-Newsletter

Upper Third Percentile (67% - 100%)

- Community

Middle Third Percentile (34% - 66%)

- Commitment
- Stewardship
- Scholarship
- Celebration
- Leadership
- Character

Lower Third Percentile (0% - 33%)

- Christlikeness
- Innovation
- Service

IWU Alumni Twitter

Upper Third Percentile (67% - 100%)

- Community

Middle Third Percentile (34% - 66%)

- Commitment
- Character
- Celebration
- Leadership
- Scholarship
- Stewardship

Lower Third Percentile (0% - 33%)

- Christlikeness
- Service
- Innovation

IWU Alumni Facebook

Upper Third Percentile (67% - 100%)

- Community

Middle Third Percentile (34% - 66%)

- Celebration
- Character
- Leadership
- Stewardship
- Commitment
- Scholarship

Lower Third Percentile (0% - 33%)

- Christlikeness
- Service
- Innovation

Research Outcomes

After conducting this research, it seemed best fit to create a detailed plan for the next five weeks. Based on the desired agenda, a plan was created to improve the messages being delivered. Below is the PR Action Plan. This was implemented from October 18 – November 21, 2015.

Before conducting the research, the Alumni Relations Director and the researcher agreed that they desired for the most salient messages to fall under the categories of:

Christlikeness, character, celebration, leadership, and community

Within the past five months of data, the lowest of these 5 categories was:

Christlikeness:
- 27% Blog
- 29% Newsletter
- 33% Twitter
- 32% Facebook

Since character, celebration, leadership and community all fall within the middle third percentile, this plan did not focus on those four. The plan focused on the largest issue seen after the initial research: low salience of messages that fall under the "Christlikeness" category.

PR Action Plan

Goal: To improve the agenda of the Indiana Wesleyan University IWU Alumni Association social platforms.

Objective 1
Increase "Christlikeness" salience on IWU Alumni Blog by 50% between October 18 and November 21, 2015.

Strategy 1
Publish devotional content on blog.

Tactics:
1. Write encouraging devotional content once a week for the blog.
2. Publish the post in time to get pulled into the weekly E-Newsletter.

Strategy 2
Ask alumni to write devotionals, and publish them on the blog.

Tactics:
1. Obtain recommended alumni from Rick Carder who would be interested in writing a devotional.
2. Contact those alumni and give them a topic to cover in their devotional.
3. Publish the devotionals in time to get pulled into the weekly E-Newsletter.

Objective 2
Increase "Christlikeness" salience on IWU Alumni E-Newsletter by 25%, Twitter by 25% and Facebook by 25% between October 18 and November 21, 2015.

Strategy 1
Share Biblically inspirational posts.

Tactics:
1. Share devotional every week on Facebook, Twitter, and the E-Newsletter.
2. Share additional Biblically inspirational posts created outside the IWU Alumni Relations channels.

Strategy 2
Integrate Christian viewpoints into blog posts.

Tactics:
1. Discuss alumni walk with Christ during interviews for featuring posts on the blog, even if the article is not focused on their relationship with God.

PR Action Plan (cont.)

Evaluation

To evaluate the success of the implemented plan, the preliminary research process was conducted a second time. The only difference was the change in the weeks of data being collected. Once the data was compiled, the new percentages were compared to the goals and the initial data. Once everything was compared and evaluated, future recommendations were created.

Final Coding Reports/Findings

This report shows the percentages of messages posted on each social platform from the months of April 2015 – August 2015 compared to the percentages from October 18 – November 21, 2015. The comparison tables show percent change. Blue shows an increase and red shows a decrease.

3/4 objectives from the PR Action Plan were reached.

Objectives Met:

- Increase “Christlikeness” salience on IWU Alumni Blog by 50% between October 18 and November 21, 2015.
- Increase “Christlikeness” salience on IWU Alumni E-Newsletter by 25% between October 18 and November 21, 2015.
- Increase “Christlikeness” salience on IWU Alumni Facebook by 25% between October 18 and November 21, 2015.

Objective Not Met:

- Increase “Christlikeness” salience on IWU Alumni Twitter by 25% between October 18 and November 21, 2015.

IWU Alumni Blog

Category	Initial Results	Final Results	% Change
Community	42%	78%	86%
Celebration	50%	56%	12%
Character	42%	83%	98%
Christlikeness	27%	83%	207%
Commitment	50%	78%	104%
Scholarship	38%	56%	47%
Leadership	65%	67%	6%
Service	19%	61%	220%
Stewardship	50%	78%	56%
Innovation	19%	50%	163%

IWU Alumni E-Newsletter

Category	Initial Results	Final Results	% Change
Community	77%	78%	1%
Celebration	45%	35%	- 22%
Character	40%	41%	3%
Christlikeness	29%	43%	48%
Commitment	54%	57%	6%
Scholarship	48%	42%	- 13%
Leadership	42%	45%	7%
Service	25%	29%	16%
Stewardship	50%	40%	- 20%
Innovation	29%	22%	- 24%

IWU Alumni Twitter

Category	Initial Results	Final Results	% Change
Community	83%	78%	- 6%
Celebration	40%	49%	23%
Character	41%	34%	- 17%
Christlikeness	33%	38%	15%
Commitment	45%	49%	9%
Scholarship	36%	38%	5%
Leadership	40%	44%	10%
Service	23%	25%	9%
Stewardship	35%	29%	- 17%
Innovation	18%	13%	- 28%

IWU Alumni Facebook

Category	Initial Results	Final Results	% Change
Community	84%	84%	0%
Celebration	53%	45%	- 15%
Character	45%	47%	4%
Christlikeness	32%	55%	72%
Commitment	37%	61%	65%
Scholarship	34%	45%	32%
Leadership	45%	39%	- 13%
Service	26%	33%	27%
Stewardship	39%	47%	21%
Innovation	26%	18%	- 31%

Data Comparison: Categories Highest to Lowest Percentage

Initial Data	Final Data
IWU Alumni Blog Upper Third Percentile (67% - 100%) - Leadership Middle Third Percentile (34% - 66%) - Commitment - Celebration - Stewardship - Community - Character - Scholarship Lower Third Percentile (0% - 33%) - Christlikeness - Service - Innovation	**IWU Alumni Blog** Upper Third Percentile (67% - 100%) - Christlikeness - Character - Community - Commitment - Stewardship - Leadership Middle Third Percentile (34% - 66%) - Innovation - Celebration - Scholarship - Service Lower Third Percentile (0% - 33%)
IWU Alumni E-Newsletter Upper Third Percentile (67% - 100%) - Community Middle Third Percentile (34% - 66%) - Commitment - Stewardship - Scholarship - Celebration - Leadership - Character Lower Third Percentile (0% - 33%) - Christlikeness - Innovation - Service	**IWU Alumni E-Newsletter** Upper Third Percentile (67% - 100%) - Community Middle Third Percentile (34% - 66%) - Commitment - Leadership - Christlikeness - Scholarship - Character - Stewardship - Celebration Lower Third Percentile (0% - 33%) - Service - Innovation

Data Comparison: Categories Highest to Lowest Percentage

Initial Data	Final Data
IWU Alumni Twitter Upper Third Percentile (67% - 100%) - Community Middle Third Percentile (34% - 66%) - Commitment - Character - Celebration - Leadership - Scholarship - Stewardship Lower Third Percentile (0% - 33%) - Christlikeness - Service - Innovation	**IWU Alumni Twitter** Upper Third Percentile (67% - 100%) - Community Middle Third Percentile (34% - 66%) - Commitment - Celebration - Leadership - Christlikeness - Character - Scholarship Lower Third Percentile (0% - 33%) - Stewardship - Service - Innovation
IWU Alumni Facebook Upper Third Percentile (67% - 100%) - Community Middle Third Percentile (34% - 66%) - Celebration - Character - Leadership - Stewardship - Commitment - Scholarship Lower Third Percentile (0% - 33%) - Christlikeness - Service - Innovation	**IWU Alumni Facebook** Upper Third Percentile (67% - 100%) - Community Middle Third Percentile (34% - 66%) - Commitment - Christlikeness - Character - Stewardship - Celebration - Scholarship - Leadership Lower Third Percentile (0% - 33%) - Service - Innovation

Evaluation/Recommendations

Evaluation

The goal was to increase the salience of Christlikeness messages by 50% on the blog and 25% on the newsletter, Twitter, and Facebook. Christlikeness increased 207% on the blog, 48% on the Newsletter, 15% on Twitter and 72% on Facebook. All platforms exceeded expectations except for Twitter. Though Twitter did not reach a 25% increase, it did increase. The most probable reason for it not exceeding 25% is because of the nature of the social platform. It is not desired for Twitter to have a very high "Christlikeness" agenda because it serves as a professional networking tool.

For the other three platforms, the blog, newsletter and Facebook, the strategies and tactics laid out in the PR Action Plan were successful. Weekly devotionals improved Christlikeness salience effectively. They also received great traffic among outside channels, proving good quality and purpose.

The overall IWU Alumni Association agenda improved in more ways than just Christlikeness, even though emphasis and direction were only set for that particular category. This seems to be because there was finally a direction set in place. Though there were no specific strategies or tactics for increasing the salience of the other nine categories, most increased anyway. This is most likely because the Alumni Relations Director and the IWU Alumni Blog Manager were aware of the messages they *wanted* to send. Once they knew their desired agenda, they were subconsciously producing those messages.

Recommendations

Weekly Devotionals: Continue producing weekly devotionals on the IWU Alumni Blog and distributing them to the newsletter, Twitter and Facebook.

Quarterly Check-Ups: Four times a year, filter through posts and decide whether the IWU Alumni Association platforms are creating the correct agenda for their followers. Read through the 10 categories at least once a month to keep them the center of your messaging.

Improve "Service" Category: According to results, ""innovation" is usually the lowest percentage. According to the desire of the Alumni Relations Director, "innovation" should be the least salient. The next lowest is service, which should be increased. To increase the "service" category, keep alert for projects the IWU community is involved in and share those stories. Write devotionals that integrate a message of service.

Keep it up! The IWU Alumni Association is producing an agenda very close to its desired/recommended agenda. Stay on track and continue forward in this direction.