Mimic Final Social Report

Social Media Strategies

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**Target Audience Selection**

 Starting out the simternship, we were provided with basic information about Buhi regarding their brand voice, products, target markets, and objectives. The first step that I took was selecting a target market. For any digital marketing campaign this is one of the most crucial first steps. Without having a target audience in mind, you will likely end up running in circles with no end goal. The target persona that I chose was “Energetic Jill”. Her market profile described her as:

* Female
* Age 18-27
* With interests that included yoga, aerobics, and teaching dance lessons

 Additionally, “Energetic Jill” is in the market for a versatile duffel or tote bag that can work well as a gym bag and carry-on bag. While Jill only makes up 13% of Buhi’s market, I chose her as my target because her demographics make up a very large majority of each social media platform’s audience. Therefore, I concluded that using her age and gender to my advantage would provide me with the greatest reach on social media.

**Rounds at a Glance**

 Each round of the simulation focused on a different type of social media marketing, as well as different objectives.

**Rounds one through three** focused solely on organic social posts. These first rounds really emphasized the importance of brand awareness in the beginning stage of the consumer decision journey and the AIDA funnel. In these three rounds I focused a lot of my budget and efforts on Facebook and Instagram. According to Buhi’s Social Media Audit, these platforms were the most effective means to reach my target audience. I learned very early on that using Facebook for organic posts was much more successful than using Instagram for this type of content. I also experimented with Pinterest a little bit. However, Pinterest did not prove to be effective for me in the organic rounds.

 **Rounds four through six** focused on paid social posts, as well as engagement and conversions. I found these rounds to bring me more success. Again, I put most of my efforts and budget into Facebook and Instagram with a small amount towards Pinterest and Tik Tok. During these rounds I created a Social Media Content Calendar. This really was a game changer for me. It allowed me to maximize my budget and implement various holiday campaigns. I learned that while Facebook thrived with organic posts, Instagram brought more success through paid social posts.

 **The next three rounds** were geared toward engagement and conversions through influencer marketing campaigns. This campaign objective brought about many challenges and learning curves. Many of the influencers that would seem to appeal to my target audience proved to be unsuccessful at doing so. Instead, I had to think outside of the box and seek to entertain my audience, rather than educate them. For this reason, the micro-influencer, “World Travelers”, seemed to appeal to “Energetic Jill” the most.

 **The final two rounds** brought all three of these campaign types together. With the budget I was given, I had free reign to allot it wherever I decided it would be the most effective. After reviewing my past performance, I saw that paid social posts brought in the most success, more specifically, paid social Instagram posts. Therefore, I put most of my budget into paid social posts with Instagram. I also implanted a few paid social posts with Tik Tok. For organic posts, I focused on Facebook and Pinterest. With the remaining funds that I had; I purchased a few posts from “World Travelers”. However, seeing as the influencer campaign were not the most effective, I was not particularly focused on them.

**Key Metrics and KPIs**

Understanding the importance of key performance indicators, KPIs, and how to track them is the key to ensuring that you are constantly gearing and refining your campaigns toward success and growth. For this simulation, I based much of my success off conversions, engagements, and revenue. I learned that impressions are more of a vanity metric. While the high number made me feel good, it really did not explain my performance in a way that helped me to understand if the efforts I had put forth were affective. For this reason, I looked more closely at engagements and conversions. I wanted to know what types of content got my target audience talking and acting. Measuring engagements showed me what piqued my target’s interest and inspired them to interact. Especially in the organic social rounds, I tried to make my audience feel like their voice was being heard and valued. The next step to measuring my success was measuring the conversions. This was not a metric that was particularly important in the first three rounds when my goal was to simply produce brand awareness. However, as the consumer progressed in the buyer’s journey, conversions became more critical to examine. I needed to see if the engagement that I was receiving was adding up to action being taken and ultimately revenue being brought in. Tracking conversions was my way of measuring this.

**Performance Analysis**

 Looking at the key performance indicators that were discussed above, conversions overall had a significantly higher range each round. However, engagements tended to vary much more from round to round. One main cause for this could be the content I was choosing to post. When I scheduled to post interactive content, such as posts with questions or posts that encouraged the sharing of customers’ personal experiences, engagements skyrocketed. One trend that was consistent with both conversions and engagement was that, during the influencer rounds, they both plummeted, along with all the other metrics that Buhi presented. I believe this is because, during those three rounds, I had very minimal control over the content that was being shared. On the contrary, the numbers for both metrics were the highest when paid social posts were being implemented. Therefore, it is safe to conclude that overall paid social media posts provided Buhi with the greatest success.

**Content Analysis**

 When reviewing my best performing content, these forms of content achieved much more in terms of the KPIs I have allowed to define the success of each campaign:

* Content that is engaging; that asks questions and encourages direct interaction on the post
* Content that promotes a live or upcoming sale
	+ Especially those around and during the holiday season
* The inclusion of emojis
* The incorporation of relevant hashtags

Overall, I found that the content that is the most human and relatable performed exceedingly better than the content that came across as a sales pitch.

On the other hand, video content did not perform well in my campaigns. This came as a surprise to me, based on the recent spike in the success of video-form content.

**Performance by Platform**

 Based on Buhi’s social media audit, I determined which platforms would reach my target audience, “Energetic Jill”, the most effectively. Looking at the charts provided, I concluded that my two best platforms to utilize would be Facebook and Instagram. Additionally, one of the most active groups on each of these platforms, based on age, was the group with ages ranging from 18-24. This is the category that my target audience falls into. Facebook outperformed Instagram in the Organic Social Post rounds. However, Instagram came out on top in the Paid Social Post rounds. Along with Facebook and Instagram, I worked with Pinterest and Tik Tok. I was excited to work with Pinterest because my target audience made up almost the entirety of Pinterest’s most active audience. However, I was disappointed to see the end results. Pinterest simply just did not bring in the conversions and revenue that I was hoping for. Tik Tok, on the other hand, seemed to perform well when used at the right time. I focused on this platform during the times that I did not have any holiday campaigns to promote, such as my Black Friday and Cyber Monday campaigns or my Christmas sale campaigns. When I used Tik Tok as a space to share human and relatable customer testimonials is when I saw the most success on this platform.

The Buhi Social Media Simternship that Stukent provided was an excellent, hands-on way to experience the role of a social media manager from the shoes of a current digital marketing student. It provided education on each key aspect of running a social media marketing campaign, as well as allowing us to experiment with each of those fundamentals.

Coupled with the textbook that Stukent also provided, I was able to not only learn the fundamentals of Social Media Marketing, but also apply them and exercise the knowledge I gained from the text. As I moved along in the simulation, I routinely referred to my notes that I had taken from reading the textbook. These notes were a wonderful guide along the way as I came across concepts that I struggled with.

The step that I took in the beginning that truly set me up for success was studying my buyer personas and choosing which one to optimize each post and campaign for. While, as a marketer, you may think the way to success is reaching as many different people as possible, that leads to more harm than good. Instead, choose **one** buyer persona for each campaign. Focus on putting yourself in their shoes. This focus allows you to reach them more personally and, therefore, more effectively.

To summarize this experience, I could briefly state my key takeaways as follows:

1. Not every campaign will meet your performance expectations. Use that as a learning opportunity and continue to experiment.
2. Budget allocation is key. Optimize the use of your budget across your channels to have the greatest impact.
3. Be human. Focus less on getting your product into the faces of potential customers and more on reaching your customers on a personal and relatable level.