Truck Town Thunder 2013 Media Plan

The promotion of the ideas and values of the FIRST organization are the foundation to Truck Town Thunder, FIRST Team 68's mission. The team's media mission statement is, to brand T3 as a team that leads, discovers information, and creates content that is relevant to the growth of students and the FIRST Organization. In order to succeed at our mission we have an evolving plan for a strategy, content, and engagement to be used in the digital world.

Strategy

Consulting with professional social media agency http://www.room214.com/, is one of varied and interactive components. One component is we were guided to connect all sites together so that people could access each social media site we are on, quickly and efficiently. Our main digital media channels that our team uses is FaceBook, YouTube, and our new website. The other channels of digital media that our team has been working with include; Twitter, Pinterest, and Google+ Community. These digital media channels are in their developmental stages. Another component to our strategy was to keep our followers up to date with every event that the team was involved in, posting pertinent information, before and after events. The team also used Google Drive to created a document where each group received an area that was open for them to plan and discus according to the groups that the students chose. The media group used their document to brainstorm posts, so they were then thought through, approved by our lead mentor, and then given a posting date.

Content

Truck Town Thunder strives for entertaining, engaging, and educational information on each of our digital web channels and encourage new viewers to follow the FIRST Community. One of the most significant changes that our team has seen can be viewed on ourYouTube channel. On YouTube, we have changed how things are labeled, arranged, and displayed, we have gone as far as to Tag every video that the team creates and posts to allow better access to our videos. Our Team also fills out the description box with information on what each video is about and chose a relevant category that the video falls under. We also have featured each of the differing levels of FIRST YouTube channels. Truck Town Thunder also encourages the cross relationships between FRC Teams by subscribing to Teams. Our team has subscribed to multiple FRC teams hoping to become friends with them and also for informational purposes. Even though our team is 15 years old, our team can still learn from others.

Along with YouTube, Truck Town Thunder is striving to connect with the community, as well as other teams, through FaceBook. On this social media trendsetter, our team up dates our 'likers' on events that our team participates in. We also are trying to reach as many viewers as possible by broadcasting about science events, education related information, scholarship opportunities and other videos that seem of interest. Examples of items that we have posted would be FIRST Robotics competitions, FIRST Lego League, Jr. FIRST Lego League, and VEX competitions that our students have participated in. But everything isn't always about the competition; some posts are funny and entertaining. FaceBook is also a place to make friends and see what is happening in the FIRST community.

The FIRST community has exploded on FaceBook and this is a way that we can become friends and learn about other teams from around the globe. Our team has ‘liked’ other teams pages in hopes to encourage on lookers to see what FIRST is about. This also introduces our ‘likers’ to other teams out there and may also inspire them to join a team near them.

Truck Town Thunder’s website changed in looks, posts, and who helps create the content for the page. The site may look a little different; however, it is essentially the same in content and spirit. We have focused on making navigation easy through the use of tabs and drop down menus. Our identification on each page is clear and easily understood by anyone. It’s very functional from links to USFIRST.org, media, videos, resources, outreach, and widgets that connect to our other digital media sites. We chose to move our website to weebly.com so that the media group of students working on the site could have a more hands-on approach to handling and editing the site. We cross-connected the content on our websites to see who was interested in what and who was interested in the FIRST community. Google Analytics has allowed us to see who interacts with our website on a live basis.

Engagement

The digital media world has created a place where people can track who, where, what, and why people are interested in the content provided. Analytics on YouTube shoed that with a modest amount of work, we were able to increase views by approximately 10, 357.14%. All this took was the use of tags and relevant descriptions. Due to our organization our subscriptions have increased by
43.75%. Analytics have showed us what we already assumed, that our interested viewers were more male than female (65% v. 35%). The demographics for outreach shows us that our highest age group is 45-64 year olds, with 13-17 year olds coming in second. The analytics for administrators on FaceBook is much more limited. One can see how many ‘likes’, engagement and reach of viewers, and how many people have been reached with the posts and content. They give us an idea if the videos and posts will go viral, if they are organic, and if they have been shared and viewed. On FaceBook analytics, we have found that are expectations were met again with male viewers being larger than female (51.9% v. 47.8%). However, demographics did not reach our expectations. The highest percentage of viewers came from the 18-24 year old age group, with 45-54 year olds coming in second. We had expected that the 45-54 year olds would have again been our highest outreach.

Along with the analytics from our two major channels, we used Google Analytics to track who engages with our website. This tool allows us to see in real time who is on our website and where they are located in the world. The analytics available are extensive. Languages, countries, time-of-day, devices, browsers, and screen resolution are all different analytics given through Google Analytics. Because Google doesn't require a profile, we do not know the exact demographics, but can guess by our posted information on what they would be. We know that when we post to the Chief Delphi Forum we receive spikes on our website traffic. This allows us to know that male and the ages 15-35 are our leading demographics.

Wrap-up

The experience of creating a media team has given the students the chance to learn much about the world around them. This experience has taught them much about the media profession, promotion, how math is important in analyzing the data and that FIRST isn’t just

about a robots. We have decided to track our entire social media and promotion on our webpage under Media Analytics.

Truck Town Thunder’s media plan is one that will be ever growing and changing as the digital world evolves. We will continue to create content that helps, inspires, and grows the students who participate in FIRST, but more importantly the students who will be our future innovators and problem solvers.