DEMOCRACY IN ACTION



Website and Social Media Analytics

Marketing 484 - Marketing Analytics
Fall 2017

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SAN MARCOS
DISCOVER LIFE'S POSSIBILITIES

California State University
SAN MARCOS

Marketing and Social Media Analytics

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BACKGROUND

PROJECT SUMMARY:

Community members of all ages and backgrounds increasingly use digital platforms as a way to connect to each other and the issues they care about. As the city's primary digital portal, the city's website serves as an information hub to residents and is often the first experience a resident or visitor has with the City of San Marcos. Similarly, social media is part of a foundation for a new type of democracy and community participation. In order to provide accessible public information, the City of San Marcos has been increasing the use of these communications channels and social media marketing tools to reach residents, businesses and visitors. The city's goal is to make it easy for residents to connect with services and programs, and provide visitors and businesses with an instant impression of what San Marcos is all about. As such, it is critical that the city develops a data-driven approach to understanding website visitors and the information desired; through analytics, this project will provide insight into how the city can best communicate information to visitors and residents.

DEMOCRACY IN ACTION

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California State University
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Democracy in Action

Final Report

#DiscoverSanMarcos Campaign
& Millennial Importance

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California State University SAN MARCOS

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Executive Summary

The city of San Marcos has a plethora of all the main social media accounts and has seen a steady incline for each account over the past couple of years. However, there is never a chance in which one can't seek improvement. After assessing every social media the platform the city has, one of the most poignant issues that should be tackled was focusing some more attention and focus on the millennial demographic. We wanted to know if millennials were using the city's website, what ways to further reach the younger audience and ways to further community engagement as a whole and for the millennial demographic.

Background

San Marcos has multiple social media platforms that provide various information about city updates and events. Instagram, the city's newest social media platform, was created February 6th, 2016. With 1,354 followers and counting, this social media platform has the potential to reach multiple audiences and convey messages in a way that Facebook and Twitter may not be able to.

The city's instagram page actively uses the #DiscoverSanMarcos hashtag to help promote social media engagement and encourage their followers to show off their San Marcos pride. The hashtag is also heavily used to promote events and inform followers of how their tax dollars are being spent around the city.

Social Media

Each social media platform attracts a different audience. With Instagram being the newest platform the city has created, focusing on the main demographic that uses it would be beneficial in gaining likes and new followers. Based on the regional profile of the city on the website, the demographic with the largest presence in San Marcos come from the ages 20-29, being 29 percent.

According to Pew Research Center, 59 percent of online users ages 18-29 use Instagram, nearly double the share among 30- to 49-year-olds, with only 33 percent online. More importantly, Instagram uses with millennials is seven times higher than ages 65 and up, with only 8 percent actively using the platform to obtain information. As you can see, Instagram has the most presence from the millennial age group, and so does San Marcos. Focusing on this social media platform and gearing it to the likes of a younger audience would not only

be beneficial for the city, but for their main users.

#DiscoverSanMarcos Hashtag

The city first promoted the #DiscoverSanMarcos hashtag on Instagram on September 1, 2016, and again on July 20th, 2017. Based on the graph titled "Average Likes by Month", you can see a spike of likes starting after the initial promotion in September. From September 2016 to October 2016, the amount of likes on the Instagram page grew from 30 to 43.12 likes on average. Also, the second promotion of the hashtag in July helped the Instagrams page reach the highest amount of likes per post with 61.28 likes on average in the month of July.

Most popular posts using the hashtag

You can see that posts encouraging community engagement have the most positive response, with over 132 likes. Both of the top posts use an inviting tone, and use that hashtag to help. By using the #Discoversanmarcos hashtag, it gives meaning to the hashtag, telling the people to discover the town and become more involved.

Most comments using the hashtag

It is not surprising that the post that has the most engagement is a post that uses the word "giveaway" and "win". Adding an incentive to get involved and sign up for spring break camps helped promote community involvment and engagement.

Focusing on Millennials

Why should the city of San Marcos focus on targeting Millennials with its social media campaign? There are a few reasons why the city should pay extra close attention to this specific demographic. This target market has specific aspects that differentiate them from any other age-group segment. They bring many features that can benefit the city of San Marcos.

Largest Living Generation

According the Pew Research Center, Millennials are now the largest living group in the United States, surpassing Baby Boomers. With an estimated population of 79.8 people in 2016, makes this living generation the majority. With this fact

alone, it makes it even more crucial to focus the city of San Marcos' social media campaign towards them. Millennials are those from the ages of 18 to 35. Although they are not the majority of the households by head, it is important due to the other benefits that they can offer.

Driving The Economy's Future

Millennials will be shaping the future of the economy. According to an editorial published on Penn State's website, the article points out that with "tens of thousands of Americans turning 21", they will enter the "adult world" and automatically continue to contribute to the economy. Millennials are the first generation to be considered tech natives, which adds further value because they can use it to better enhance productivity. It's another dimension that other demos cannot replicate. They will be driving growth and having a substantial population of this group will better position the city of San Marcos to fiscally grow.

Community Service

Research shows that Millennials are more engaged with their community than any other age group. Based on a study done by the Associated Press that was published by Forbes, individuals under the age of 30 "are more likely to say citizens have a 'very important obligation' to volunteer." The city wants to have its residents to participate with their city, so attracting this demographic is important.

The article continues to emphasize how Millennials have been raised in a society that has integrated community service with schools, which has embedded the idea of public service. Unlike other previous generation that were not exposed to this way of thinking. This translates into more engagement between the city and residents and that will yield positive results. The city wants to hear feedback from its inhabitants because it will only better the communication, which is what cities want to accomplish.

Social Media Engagement

According to Nielsen, Millennials are extremely engaged on social media. On average, they spend over 6 hours a week on social media platforms. Most likely, they are on their smartphones. 39% of social media users believe in finding out about "services is an important reason" to use social media platforms. This means

that users do use Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc. to find out about new services, which could translate into services provided by the city.

Millennials are active on social media. This is crucial because it makes them an accessible market for the city to target. By properly utilizing the city's branded hashtag, the city of San Marcos has the potential to reach and engage with its Millennial demographic.

Google Analytics

Website Traffic

According to the findings on google analytics the highest bounce rate, is unfortunately between the ages of 18 and 34, with just over a percentage rate of 59. This can be somewhat of a setback in an attempt to reach the millennial demographic. However, the younger audience also ranks high in first time users with just over 26%.

The fact that a younger audience is one of the highest in first time users is a great sign for the city of San Marcos, which can be because of San Marcos large millennial presence and college community. The number of first time millennial users can only increase if given the proper tools, which we will delve further into later.

Instagram Findings

Average Comments by Day of the Week

On average, Wednesdays are popular days to post and get adhesion to likes. In reference to the #DiscoverSanMarcos hashtag, it would be preferable to dedicate event postings on Wednesdays as well as scenic pictures. Monday and Saturday are also days the social media coordinator should take advantage of in order to increase community engagement and consistency.

Average Likes by Day of the Week

In regards to the amount of likes the city's account, a pivotal fact to note is that unlike the city's website traffic most of the attention on the weekday, in

particular mondays and wednesday. Those two days are the most prominent for likes on the city's instagram account.

Average Likes by Post Type

It should be noted that Instagram is no longer just postings of photos. That is important for a many reasons, in particular the fact that just single images are the least popular for the city. In fact, the most popular are the posts featuring the carousel option, which allows users to post up to 10 photographs or videos at once. This new feature helps group similar photos together. Videos posted to the account are at a close second.

Likes by Time of the Day

According to the data we found there is a large spike in the number of likes on the city's Instagram account, which is at around 4PM. Time in the morning are the most stagnant, the first incline of attention happens at around 1PM and continues to slowly increase until 4PM, then again making another incline around 8 p.m.

Average Likes by FIlters

On Instagram, filters are used to help enhance a photo and make it more appealing. Ludwig, in this case shows promise, in that it it has the best impression on scrollers. This filter is known to make photos warmer, and is best for enhancing cityscapes, buildings, and sunsets. Sierra comes in second and shows hows it can also be a good filter to use in order to increase likes. Making sense of how different aspects affect likes on an Instagram picture, the fact that particular filters make an impression on followers and likes can give the city a better understanding of how to take advantage of them and appeal to their audience.

Recommendations

As a way to encourage more business engagement, data shows us that observing what type of customer to target is important to consider. That is why relating to 18 to 29 year olds will benefit Instagram interaction for the city of San Marcos. Posting Instagram pictures using the #DiscoverSanMarcos hashtag promotes community events and is linked to more engagement on posts and ventures

happening around the community. Taking advantage of a dynamic hashtag like #DiscoverSanMarcos will upsurge relations with San Marcos businesses as well.

Moreover, adding an Instagram live feed on the homepage of the City of San Marcos website will be beneficial for increasing followers on this social media platform since the website has most traffic coming from 18-34, based on findings from the city's website data. The live feed will entertain website visitors and keep them interested, making them more inclined to come back to the website.

Analyzing the data also demonstrated the effective times to post on Instagram were measured around 4 p.m. and 8 p.m., the times where people are getting off of work and after dinner. Scheduling Instagram posts around these times would help maximize reach and increase likes significantly.

Lastly, since Instagram likes and followers are highly sought after, visually appealing images show off what San Marcos has to offer outmaneuver other posts and attain more likes. We recommend reposting popular social media accounts who use the hashtag accordingly. By doing this, it will not only show the followers that the San Marcos instagram page is active, but will also will add an incentive for followers to use the hashtag in hopes of getting reposted.

Scenery

In regards to garnering the most amount of likes and social media attention we discussed certain ways to do so, such as particular time of day, or week, or using a particular hashtag. However, a small recommendation that we also found to be quite important is photo selectivity. With the social media platform, Instagram, in particular photo selectivity is very crucial and lucrative to the amount of attention your posts and your account as a whole can receive.

San Marcos has a lot to offer as a city especially in regards to outdoors and scenery, and to expose that allows others to see the beauty of the city and showcases pride amongst its community. For the city of San Marcos's instagram account the photos that showed the best of the city's beautiful scenery were uncoincidentally the ones that received the most notoriety.

Finally, if you encourage those in the community to continue to use the #Discoversanmarcos hashtag, while simultaneously showcasing the city's best to offer, you continue to promote community engagement and pride within.

Local business

In order to further improve upon reach within the community and on social media taking the next step to improve community engagement is very important. Including other aspects of the city, like the 240+ restaruant and 8 brewies in the community can further improve the overall reach of the city of San Marcos and their social media following, especially with those of a certain demographic.

For instance, the urge common house and the city of San Marcos both use the hashtag, #Discoversanmarcos, it could serve as pivotal promotion for both parties to include each other.

For the city, it promotes community and engagement and for the local businesses it can help them reach a different audience. Promoting local business starting with urge can hopefully lead to more local business promotion in the future.

Conclusion

After conducting our research, we found that Instagram can provide significant benefits to the cities social media presence. Millennials are easily accessible and crucial for maximizing social media reach. The #DiscoverSanMarcos hashtag increases community engagement through visually appealing posts. In San Marcos, creating pride within the community is crucial. By targeting the city's largest demographic, this can be the first step in achieving that goal. The city's Instagram page has great potential in becoming the most popular social media platform.

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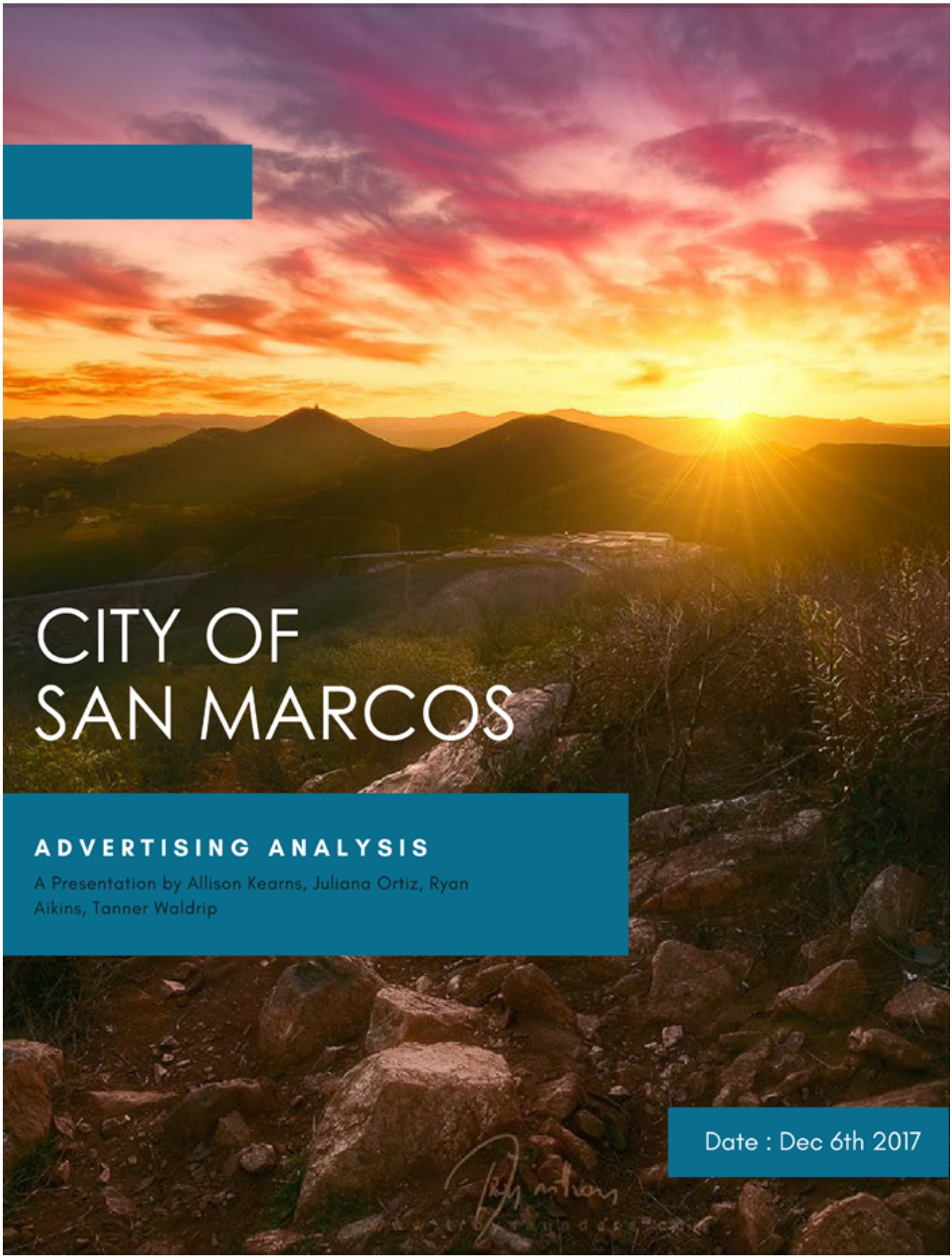

CITY OF
SAN MARCOS
ADVERTISING ANALYSIS
A Presentation by Allison Kearns, Juliana Ortiz, Ryan Aikins, Tanner Waldrip
Date : Dec 6th 2017

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Executive Summary

The City of San Marcos, with a population of 90,000 plus currently uses its Office of Communication to provide its residents information about their programs, projects, services, employment, businesses and events. Through its various communication channels it hopes to promote and provide an understanding of their goals, events and operations.

The aim of this document is to provide analytic metrics to assist the City of San Marcos on understanding the impact of their advertising initiatives, provide performance comparisons and provide insights on what metrics the city should be using. This data was collected through the city's Facebook advertising channel. Through this data collection, observations and recommendations were made on campaign ads metrics, content and return on investment. This data also allowed us to provide the City of San Marcos data-driven recommendations that can be used for future advertising decisions.

Background

The basis of our project focuses on the challenges and needs of the City of San Marcos' advertising initiatives. The city currently advertises on Facebook and spends those advertising dollars on campaigns that relate to events, brand awareness, PSA and employment opportunities. These campaigns have focused anywhere from educational courses, outdoor recreation, and community participation. Due to lack of human capital and available time, resource allocation and time management has primarily been reserved for advertising project execution, and limited on advertising analysis. In this analysis we will help determine the impact that these advertisements have on the city's objectives and will give a set of recommendations to improve future Facebook ads.

Some goals of the City of San Marcos we will discuss will be;

- Maximize reach
- Engaging residents
- Maximizing participation in city programs, events and activities

With an in-depth analysis of these advertisements, observations can be made about the return on the investment of the ads, and allow for more educated cost allocation of their future advertisements. In addition to the location of the advertisements, the type of, and

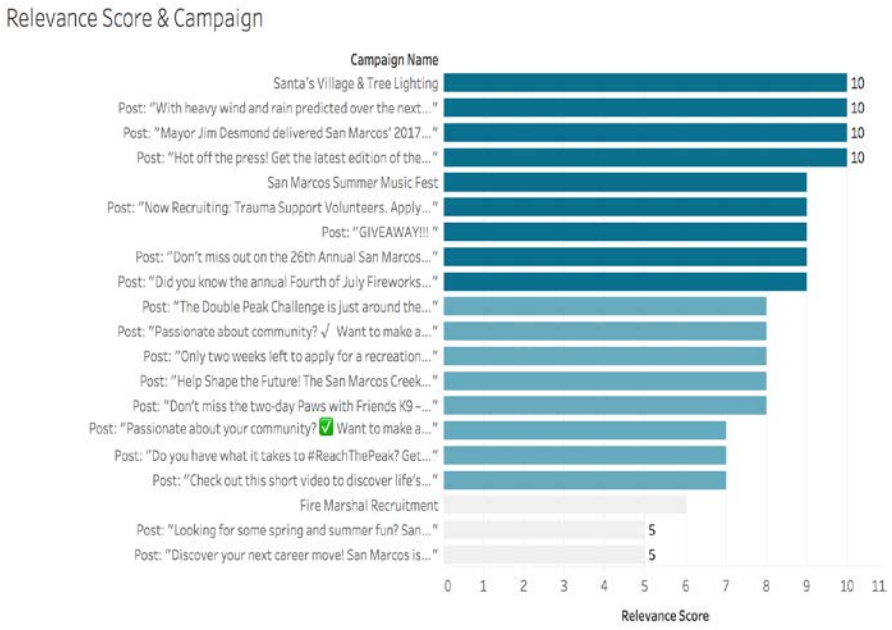
content of the advertisement will be another beneficial analysis to assist with future campaigns.

Analysis

Relevance Score

Facebook advertising for the City of San Marcos is an investment, not only a cost. Like any investment, an organization expects a good financial return along with metrics to help measure the impact of that return. One such metric that will be discussed will be Relevance Score, which is a number from 1-10 (ten being the highest and one being lowest) that tells you how relevant your Facebook ad will be to your target audience. This score is calculated based on how your audience reacts to your ads and whether those reactions were positive or negative. Due to the metrics recency we were only able to analyze a portion of the cities Facebook ads as only 33% percent contained a score. What we discovered was that 47% of those ads analyzed contained a score of 6 or less. This led us to believe that the City of San Marcos was not fully maximizing their advertising budget based on their current ad execution. As multiple advertisers are trying to reach overlapping audiences, it's key that advertisers pay attention to this scoring as ads with the most relevant scores will win that audience. Another reason to pay close attention to this metric is that a higher score means that the ad will reach a wider audience at a lower cost. A study done by AdEspresso showed that ads that achieved a higher relevance score resulted in over 400% better ROI.

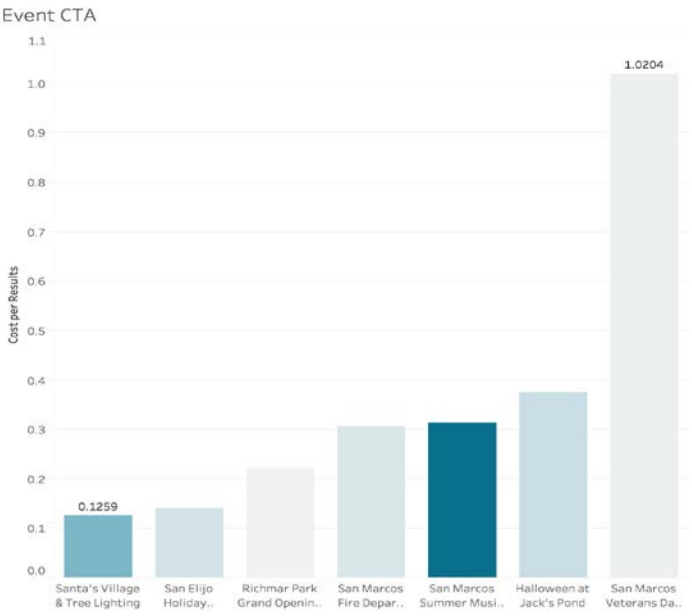
We will further explore possible causes that we identified that could have led to a lower relevance score as well as lower return on investment for the cities campaigns objectives.



Event CTA

One type of campaign that we analyzed were event ads, these were ads that were placed by the City of San Marcos to promote an event occurrence and encourage community participation. There were 7 specific events that we looked at it, two which had significant differences in cost per results. The event "Santa's Village & Tree Lighting" had a lower cost per results (.1259) versus "San Marcos Veterans Day" (1.0204). What we found was that;

- Santa's Village spent $19.77 in 30 days
- Veterans event spent $50 in 18 days
- Both events had exact demographic targeting when it came to cities and age ranges



One high contributor to the difference in cost per result was due to the lack of targeting that was included for the Veterans Day event. The event did not contain additional targeting as with the Santa's Village. Similar posts that related to the Veterans Day Ceremony were found to have a better cost per result along with results achieved when targeting was included. The results achieved versus were 20 to 1.

Another observation that was made when looking at all event ads had to do with demographic segmentation. As it stands when targeting Facebook ads one metric that was used was age, and in most of the event campaigns the age range is between 13 to 65. The issue we identified was that the City of San Marcos Facebook audience consisted of people between the ages of 25 to 44. We also found that Facebook current overall audience is between the ages of 25 to 54 which meant that the current targeting was not segmented enough to really reach the most effective audience.

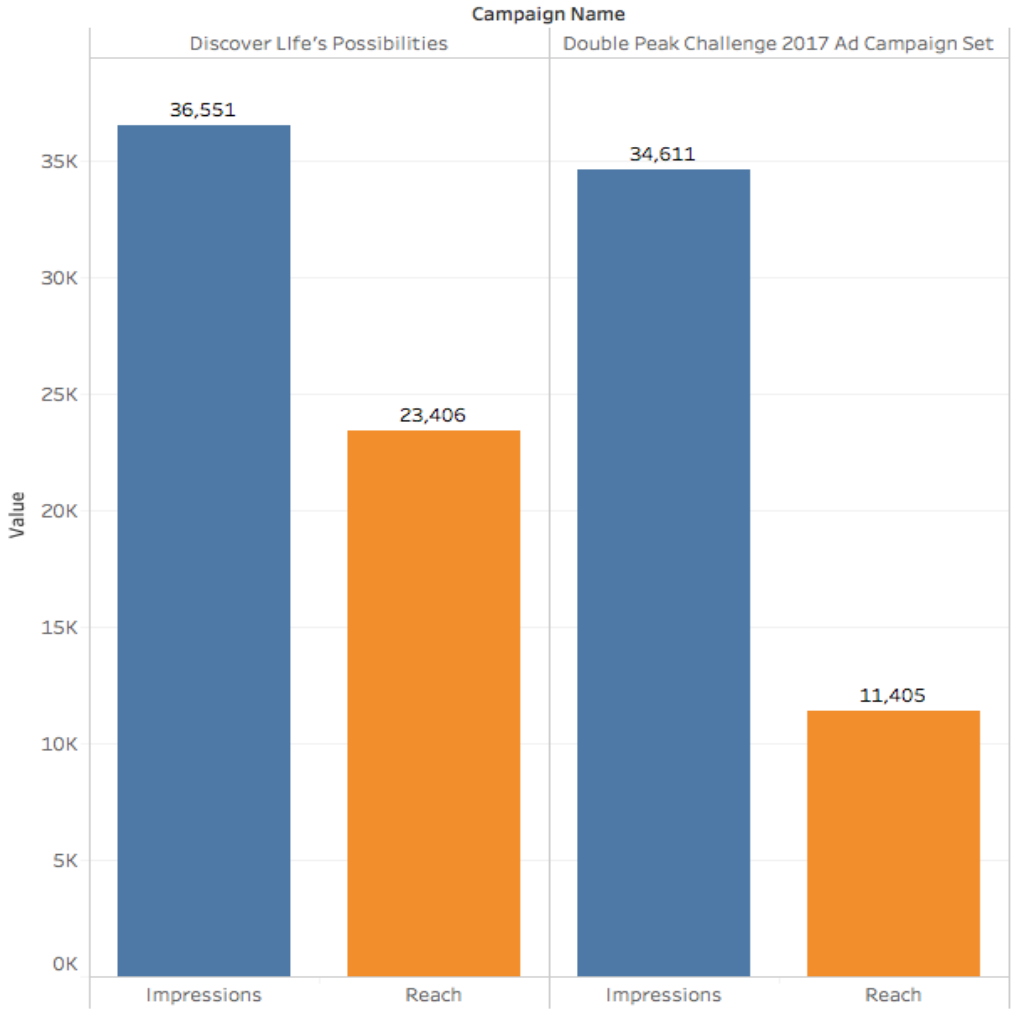
Based on these two concerns we recommend that the future ads contain segmented specific targeting to increase ROI. When choosing a specific target audience, they should be defined by thinking about different aspects:

- Demographics
- Interest
- Behaviors
- People who have a connection to your page, event or website

- From current list such as emails or data sets that contain friends of the city (this can be downloaded into Facebook Ad Manager to create a custom audience)

Brand Awareness

We analyzed the advertisements with the campaign objective of "brand awareness", and found a few key differences regarding the performance of some of these ads, specifically with the impressions and reach. Reach is the total number of people who see the ad, as opposed to impressions, which counts when the same person sees an ad multiple times. Two of the primary ads that we focused on were the most successful in terms of reach, Discover Life's Possibilities (23,406), and the least successful, which was the Double Peak Challenge (11,405). Looking at the chart below, the impressions were very similar but the reach was surprisingly almost double for Discover Life's Possibilities.



Looking at the actual content of these ads, the difference can be explained with one reason: video vs. static image. Discover Life's Possibilities had a video to promote the brand awareness, and on the other hand the Double Peak Challenge was just a static image. Studies have shown that videos are more effective, and here are a few of the supporting reasons:

- Facebook users find videos 5 times more engaging than images
- Users prefer short form video content
- Videos increase the level of joy by 1.4 times
- Video content must be compatible on all forms such as mobile and desktop

Recommendation: When it comes to future advertising initiatives for the City of San Marcos, we recommend using short form video content as much as possible. For example, next year when advertising for the Double Peak Challenge, we believe it would beneficial to post a short video with aerial images, action shots, scenery, and interaction along with some music to show the challenge from the previous year or years. Not only is this beneficial for the audience that the city is targeting, but it is also more cost effective as well. The cost per results for the two campaigns are as follows:

- Discover Life's Possibilities: $0.03 per result
- Double Peak Challenge: $0.10 per result

The use of video content maximizes the return on the investment for the advertising campaigns, and is also the preferred content of the Facebook audience.

Offer Promo

There was only a single offer promo, the promo did not particular fare well. The advertisement was not aimed toward any particular group of people. The topic and type of the advertisement are not relative to the season. Due to this and the vague demographic it was targeted towards, we do not believe that the advertisement was approached properly.

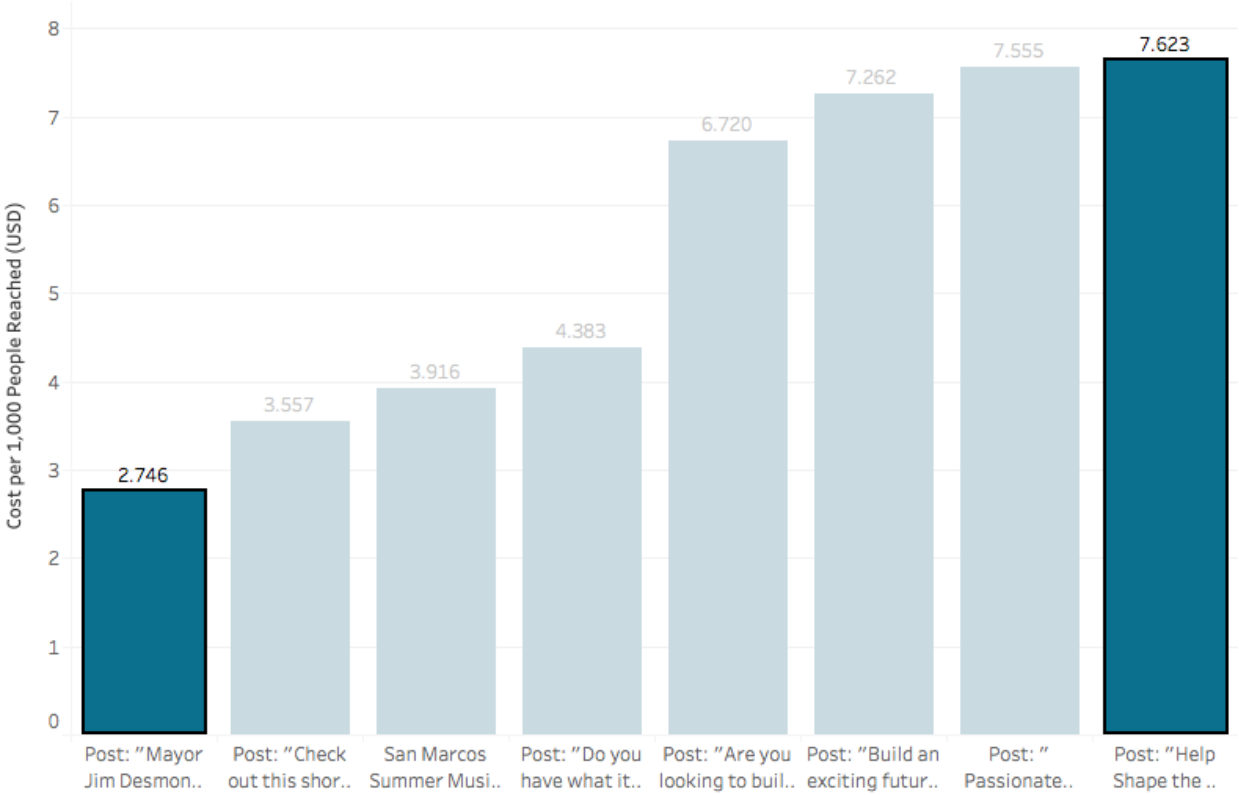


Video Campaigns

Another campaign objective that we analyzed was "video views". Not only is having videos essential, but the content within those videos is key. Studies show that the first 3-5 seconds are the most significant in capturing and keeping the viewers attention. Again, we analyzed the top and bottom performing ads, this time with the campaign objective of video views.

In a video ad regarding “Mayor Jim Desmond’s State of The City Address”, the video had appealing aerial images from the beginning, along with upbeat music. In contrast, a video ad regarding the “San Marcos Creek District Workshop”, the video has unappealing images and isn’t nearly as enticing as there is construction, empty land, traffic, and flooding signs. This resulted in a much weaker performance for this ad, and a higher cost per 1000 people reached. Here are the costs per 1000 people reached for each of the two ads:

- Mayor Jim Desmond’s State of The City Address: $2.75
- San Marcos Creek District Workshop: $7.62

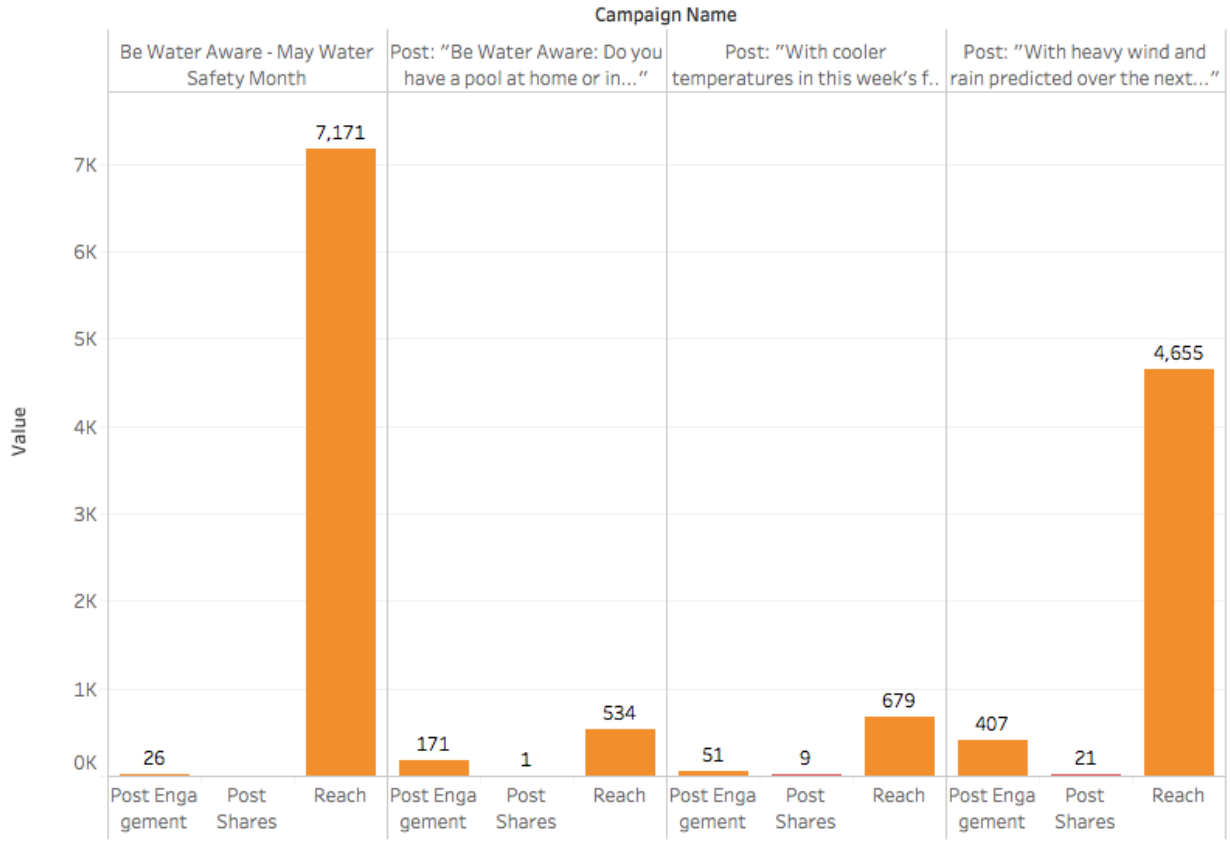


The content within these videos was the key factor in the differences of return on investment. Additionally when it comes to video view designed ads, it is beneficial to add another metric to better determine the performance of the ads. For example, at the end of some of the videos, there are desired call to actions such as “visit the website” or “sign up” but the setup of the ads aren’t calculating that metric. Here are our recommendations:

- Focus on quality content
- Ensure top content is in the first 3-5 seconds
- Include additional metrics/measurements for a better understanding of performance

Public Service Announcements

Another aspect of the Facebook advertisements that we analyzed were the public service announcements (PSA). There weren't many of these, but still found some surprisingly contrasting information. The two primary ads that we analyzed and found differences in were "Be Water Aware" and "Heavy Wind and Rain." Because these are public service announcements, it is important to keep them as such, and not make them seem like a traditional ad or promotion. This graph below shows the results of each campaign:



The "Be Water Aware" ad did perform well if you just look at reach, but the post shares and post engagement show that it didn't necessarily hit home for the audience. They saw it, but didn't interact or engage with it at all. On the other hand, the "Heavy Wind and Rain" ad had a good amount of reach, but had 21 shares and over 400 post engagements. To determine the reasoning for this difference, we looked at the content of the ads. The images below show "Be Water Aware" on the left and the "Heavy Wind and Rain" on the right:





When looking at the content of these images, the left looks like a stock photo, and could be a typical ad that people on Facebook just scroll over. On the other hand, the image on the right shows a real-life gloomy day, that catches peoples attention. This causes them to like, share, react, and engage with the post overall in order to spread the public service announcement. For future PSA ads, here are our recommendations:

- Use real impactful images (such as the one on the right)
- Ensure the content is relative to the message
- Avoid posting “stock” images
- Use short-form videos when possible
- Present it in the perspective of the community sharing the post
- AB testing is recommended in order to provide better insight on how campaigns can perform.

Parks and Recreation

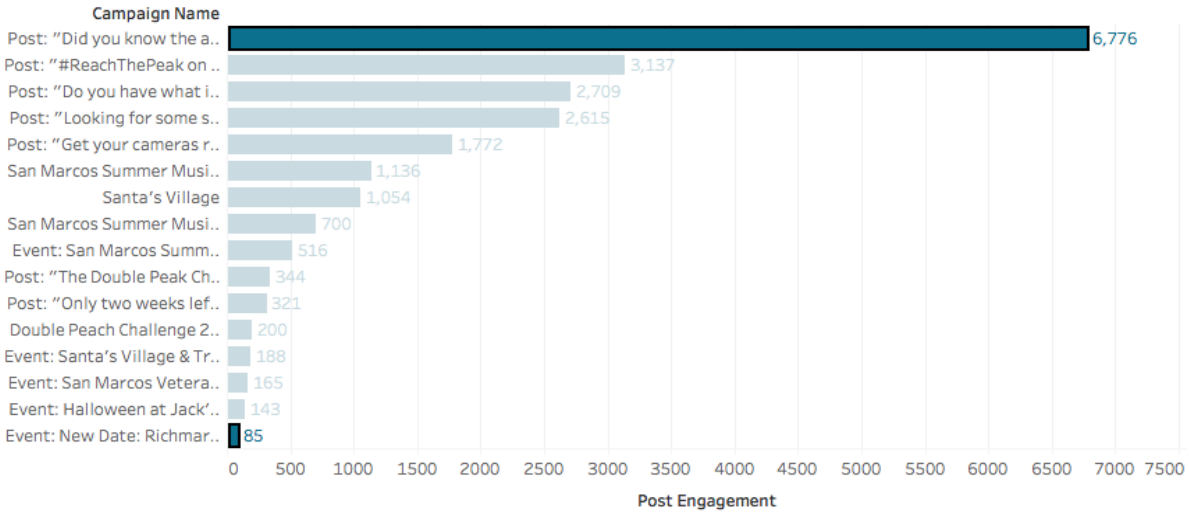
We analyzed advertising efforts specifically for the Parks and Recreation posts. We measured the post engagement to see how effective each advertisement was for the department. On Facebook, post engagement is where people may click, like, comment, or share a specific ad or post. However, just because a post has high engagement, does not necessarily mean that the post was successful or the engagement was positive.

The post that had the highest engagement, with results of 6,776, was about the Fourth of July Fireworks Extravaganza. The post was informing followers that the fireworks show is completely funded by donations and posted a GoFundMe link for people to make donations. The post received 2 shares and 20 likes. The engagement most likely came from the people clicking on the GoFundMe link. The post that had the least engagement, with results of only

85, was informing residents about the opening of Richmar Park. There were 3 shares and only 8 likes/reactions.

Possible causes of these differences could be amount of time the advertisement was running for. The Firework Extravaganza was posted for approximately six weeks whereas the post about the opening of Richmar Park was only posted for two days. Here are our recommendations:

- Increase the advertisement promotion time
- Increase interaction with people who share or comment on posts



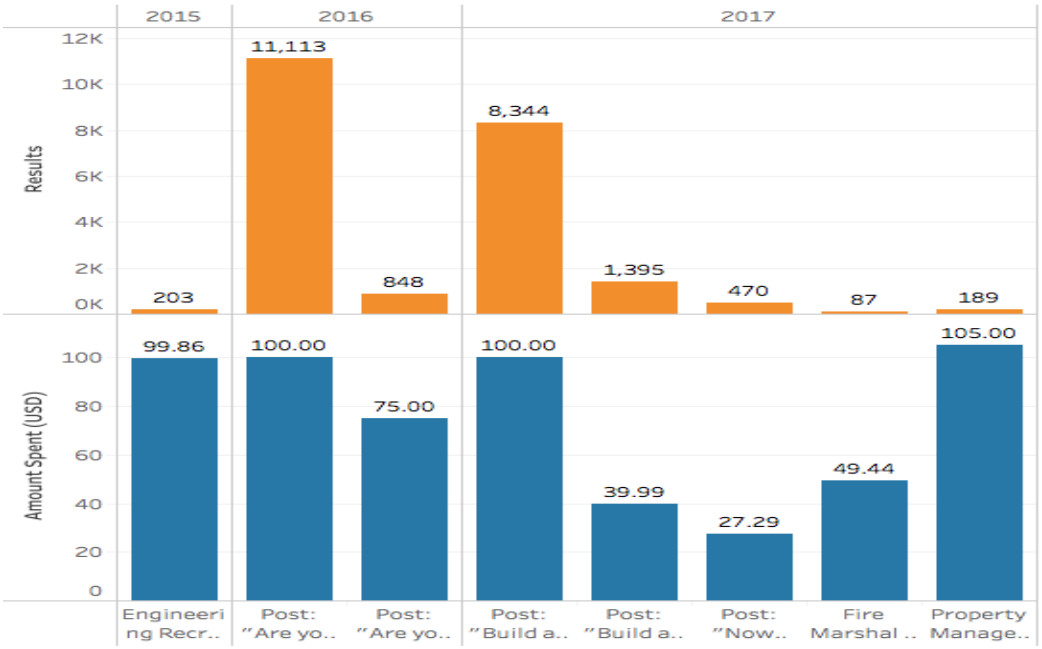
- Respond to negative comments quickly with a possible solution

HR

With the HR campaigns we found that post that had wording that engaged the audience had a tendency to perform better than their counterparts. The posts that were asking the audience to reflect on themselves performed about 70 percent higher than any other their counterparts. This is why its key to make Facebook copy about your audience and what's relevant to them especially when it comes to their employment aspirations. Another key aspect is providing the audience with feedback and progress on the positions that are filled.

Many of the advertisements did not have a target audience, and they mainly relied on broad targeting from the ages of 13-65 for their posts. Without accurately targeting a specific demographic with each ad, the advertisement may not engage the audience properly. As other aspects of the report show, video content has a large impact on views and the engaging posts, the property manager post did include a video, however it was a

slideshow video that may have reduced responses. Overtime, the engagement in HR post's have been decreasing, even with increasing investment into their advertisements. In general adding investment into advertisements will not always solve the problems.



Summary

Using Facebook advertising as a medium to communicate the city objectives to its constituents is the right social platform for the job but only if its used in the most effective manner. Based on the analysis we conducted on the social platform we found that the City of San Marcos is going in the right direction but has to improve certain aspects of its implementation in order to be more effective and gain a better ROI. In order to improve results and ROI the City of San Marcos must take the time to properly segment their audience before placing an ad. This will improve objectives achieved, engagement and possible higher participation. Adding video content to more ads will boost the response rate for each post and encourage the community to share the content. All video must be relevant to the topic and have impactful visuals in the first 3 seconds of the video. This is how quickly viewers decide if the video is relevant to them. Another takeaway is using stock photos in ads when communication PSA messages, using generic or stock photos or copy may not necessarily garner the attention that is needed to get the most engagement. This is why it's imperative to look at what the audience will be looking for in order to pay attention to the ad. Facebook Analytics and A/B testing are particularly strong ways to

gauge how specific ads may perform overall. Quarterly analytics and A/B testing can gauge how an advertising campaign may function in different environments. A/B campaigns are when two campaigns are run simultaneously with different variables to determine how they both perform. Using tools and recommendations like these it may improve the results.

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SAN MARCOS
DISCOVER LIFE'S POSSIBILITIES

E V E N T S

MARKETING PROPOSAL



Prepared for | Sarah Macdonald, San Marcos City Communications Officer
By | Nicole Leonesio, Jorge Marquez, Tyrah Victorin

- DEMOCRACY IN ACTION -

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Executive Summary

The City of San Marcos is a growing California suburb in Northern San Diego that is looking to better understand their Internet presence and ability to communicate to the city. California State University San Marcos students in the Marketing Analytics class are doing active research using Google Analytics and raw Instagram and Twitter data to find **informational sentiment** for the City of San Marcos' Communications Officer, Sarah Macdonald.

Introduction

Because San Marcos is a growing city the population and demographics are growing and changing, too. With more people come more reasons to ensure the population can find the answers they need through the city when they need them. With the use of technology being the quickest and most easily-accessible form of information, it's important to measure the impact of the newly redesigned City of San Marcos website.



Main Goal

To discover current, new, and potential Insights of how efficient the website is in communicating information about **events** to current and future residents. Our proposal will contain the project scope as well as deliverables and the data used.

Project Scope

The scope of the project will focus on the **five** most significant events that San Marcos creates, hosts, supports, and funds for the city's residents.

- Fourth of July
- Double Peak Challenge
- Veterans Day
- Santa's Village
- Summer Music Festival

Data related to these events on the city's website and social media accounts will be analyzed using Google Analytics and statistical models. Specific things we will be looking at are how people found out about those events, which routes and references they came from, and what kind of activity and attention they create. Key insights will be gathered in order to better understand how residents interact with the City of San Marcos events sections of the website and what the data tells us about those specific people.

Deliverables

Research Questions

- What special events have the most website traffic?
- How do events affect website/ social media traffic?
- What are the main referral sites for event-related traffic on the site?
- How well event-related posts perform in attraction to follower attention

Background

➢ The “events” tab on Google Analytics is not connected to the San Marcos website

➢ Instagram data started in February of 2016

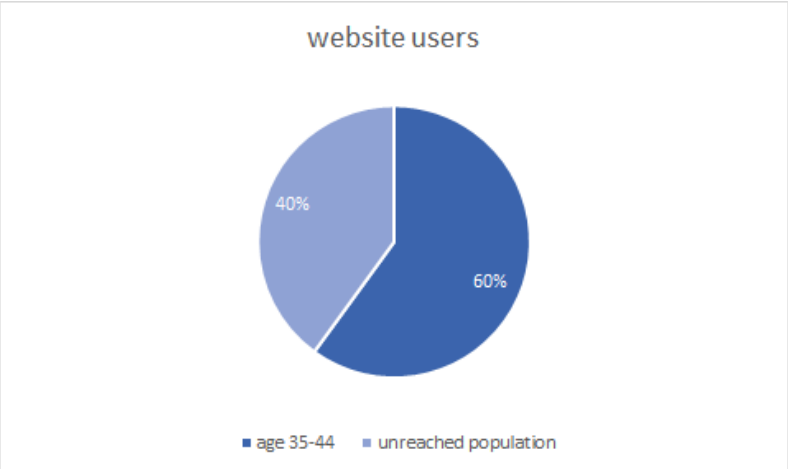
Findings

Google Analytics Analyzed Timeline: January 1, 2017 - December 2, 2017
Social Media Analyzed Timeline: January 1, 2017 - October 24, 2017

- Summer months have the highest activity and website traffic
  - July 4th has **the highest** of all dates and holidays
  - Right before weekends (thursdays and fridays)
    - This could mean that hosting more summer events *around* fourth of july could bring significant revenue

- Calendar has a 13% unique searchers for that search term even though the calendar is on the main page of the San Marcos website
  - This could mean that it isn't noticeable, appealing, or placed correctly for people to be searching still

- The age demographic of those who use the website the most are from ages 35 - 44 at 29% while 26% of those are new users.
  - San Marcos' population is 95,361. The 25 - 44 year olds using the website account for approximately 56,415 people. That is 40% (38,946) people of San Marcos not being reached.



- ➢ 63% of total likes for all of the Instagram data are event-related likes
    - *Not surprisingly,* advertising events through Instagram is both efficient and informative

- ➢ With a total 1315 followers on Instagram and less than 50 likes on each picture, that's reaching less than 25% of the total following.

- ➢ 23% of all likes on Instagram occur on the weekends while 77% occur on weekdays. Posts with the most likes are posted after 4 PM
    - The analytics company Simply Measured found that posting between the hours of 5:00 PM and 6:00 PM will result in the most views and likes.

Fourth of July

- The website Data for searches about 4th of July events and "4th of July fireworks" showed the most data from all the events, for the past two years. With 20 unique searches relating to the event in 2017 and 18 unique searches in 2016.
- Traffic on website for this event starts on July 1st and spikes on July 3rd & the 4th.
- The data from Instagram shows only two posts about this event for the year of 2016, First post on July 1st with 38 likes and second one on the day of the event, with 34 likes.
- This year there was four posts regarding this event and accumulated a total of 298 likes, the highest one being the post of the day of the event which received a total of 115 likes.

Summer Music Festival

- Regarding the website data for searches about this event while showed only 11 unique searches in 2016 and 13 unique searches in 2017, it also showed a trend on the traffic for this event to happen in late May (specifically May 25th) and early June (June 9th & 10th).

- According to the Instagram data in 2016, there was only three posts promoting this event and started on June 3rd with only 11 likes and the second post on June 8th with 5 likes and the third post on June 10th with 11 likes, adding up to a total of 27 likes over all for the post regarding for this event

- This year there was only two posts promoting this event and the first post was in May 17th and accumulated 36 likes which is more than the total likes of all three-posts last year; The second post was June 6th, and in total this year the posts for this event accumulated 65 likes.

Double Peak Challenge

- In regards to website traffic there was minimal on the city's website for any landing pages or search terms for "Double Peak Challenge". It is inferred the public gathers information about this event through a 3rd party site.

- In order to better track engagement it is recommended to set up tracking on 3rd party site to gather data.

- It is also important to gather ticket sales data and compare with website traffic as well as referral traffic from Facebook.

Veterans Day

- Major finding include the number of searches in 2016 which were 115 of which 69% were new users and 92 searches in 2017 of which 80% were new users

- In regards to Instagram posts there were only 1 in 2016 for this event and 6 in 2017

- It can be assumed that residents needed to search about the event more when there were less posts on social media and of those that did search not many were new users in 2016

- For 2017 there were less posts as there were more posts on Instagram which can infer the public was more informed and also uses social media to be up to date for events

Santa’s Village

- Santa’s Village related Instagram postings resulted in 47% of the total likes for 2016.
    - Being almost half the total likes, more santa’s postings could attract more attendees

- Facebook has the most Network Referrals for Santa's Village at 73%

- Santa’s Village does not register with a significant number under search terms at less than 1%.
    - This could mean that Facebook is the most efficient way that people get information about it or that non-facebook users don’t know about it enough to search it

Recommendations

- Connecting the events tab with Google Analytics will help better track promotions and how effective sentiment analysis is getting to the public.

- Facebook and Instagram posts content are the same, URLs do not work on Instagram
    - an effective way to advertise URLs on Instagram is to put in the caption, “Link in bio.”

- Post equally on all social media channels to maximize reach of users

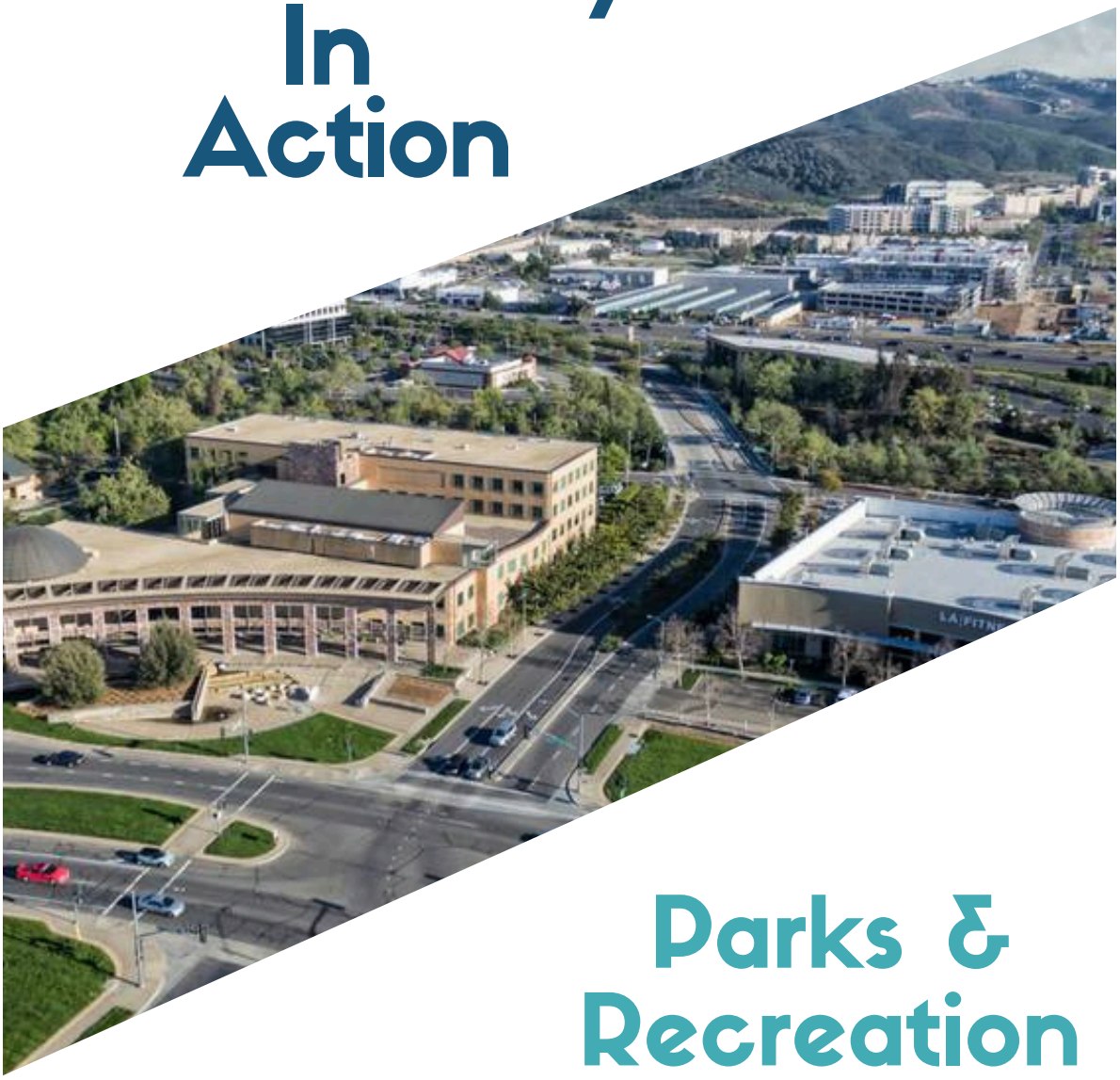
Further Questions

- Does website traffic correlate to higher event attendance?

- How does event attendance vary throughout the year?

For both of these questions to be analyzed, knowing exact attendance numbers to the events would be necessary information.

Democracy In Action



Parks & Recreation

KAMB SOLUTIONS, Inc.

Prepared for the City of San Marcos:
December 6, 2017

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Executive Summary

Our team was given the opportunity to analyze the San Marcos Parks and Recreation website data using Google Analytics. The information we found will help us determine the effectiveness of the website in regards to informing and recruiting residents to become more involved with the various activities Parks & Recreation has to offer.

Via request of the Parks & Recreation department, we have consolidated the data from 12 sub departments down to 8. Our report will cover specific aspects of data we found to be of vital importance for the department. Because the website was modified this year, we chose March 19 – November 13, 2017 for our data analysis. We will begin by discussing the data displayed by our Tableau dashboard, present our key findings and wrap things up with our recommendations for the San Marcos Parks & Recreation website.

Tableau Dashboard

Our Tableau Dashboard focuses on four main metrics used to track performance on the Parks & Recreation website. In addition, there will also be other capabilities that the user will have when using this dashboard. The data used for this dashboard is from March 19, 2017 - November 13, 2017. There are three pages to this dashboard: Community Services Traffic Data, Department Information, and Source Data.

Tracking Performance Metrics using Tableau: (Google, 2017)

1. Page views: view of a page on your site that is being tracked by Google Analytics tracking code

2. Unique page views: the number of times a page was viewed during a certain amount of time (typically 30 minutes)

3. Average time spent on page: The average time users spent viewing this page or a set of pages

4. Bounce rate: the number of visits in which a person leaves your website from the landing page without browsing any further

5. Exit percentage: tells you how many people leave your site from a particular page

Pages

Community Services Traffic Data

The first page the user can see the community services traffic by day, traffic by region, whether the traffic is composed of New Users vs. Returning Users, and the type of device the traffic is coming from.

Department Information

The second page of the dashboard gives detailed metrics on the different departments under Parks & Recreation. All the user has to do is highlight the department in the bubble map and that departments metrics will be displayed in the metrics box. If the user wants to compare their department to another, they can just take the mouse off of the bubbles and all of the department metrics will be displayed.

Source Data

The final page of the dashboard will give an even deeper look into the data showing the source of the traffic for the community services site and the separate departments. This page will show the user whether the traffic is coming from social media sources, Google, Bing, Yahoo, and other sources.

Next Steps

These three dashboard pages will be useful for the Parks & Recreation department because the users can easily check the performance of the separate departments by the metrics used. The user will be able to check the amount of traffic the site is getting, the amount of traffic every department is getting, and where this traffic is coming from. This information can be used to better target advertising or posts that the departments want to be seen.

We were unable to connect our Tableau dashboard to live information because of administrative account privileges. So, if the Parks & Recreation departments wants to connect their data to this dashboard they will have to make sure the names of the data match the names in Tableau. Our team would recommend using this dashboard as a guide to build a similar dashboard with live data for the Parks & Recreation department after they have made changes to their website.

Key Findings

Usability

From the beautiful color palette within photos of the sunset, to the small drop down menus on the left hand side, the Parks & Recreation website displays qualities of a user friendly online experience. As we dive deeper into the website we can see that the website is informative for new users, helpful for residents and is desktop friendly. However, we noticed that there were some things that could improve on the website as well. By browsing the different sub departments, we began to notice variations in picture quality, event information, damaged links and mobile friendliness. The data we found shows us that there is an average of a 72% bounce rate within the Parks & Recreation department, meaning users are exiting pages without performing any other actions. Given the Tableau demographic data already uploaded on the San Marcos website, we can see that the largest demographic in the city is 20-29 year olds. Our research not only confirmed that a large portion of this group is looking at the website, but they are also accessing it from their mobile devices. More information to be discussed in our Traffic section.

Incentives for enhancing website usability: ("Why You Should Care About Website Usability", 2013)

- 85% abandon a site due to poor design
- 83% leave because it takes too many clicks to get what they want
- 40% never return to a site because the content was hard to
- 50% of sales are lost because visitors can't find content

Links

Although it may seem minor, broken links can be damaging to the reputation and professionalism of your website. It takes one link to negatively impact your search engine optimization, site user experience, lost customer interest and revenue, or most harmfully, all of the above. While examining the site, we have discovered a total of 21 broken or dead links scattered through the department's website. It is important to note that Special Events was the second highest viewed page between the sub departments with 31,556 views. However, this section alone has 10 dead links. From our research, the most commonly related errors are renaming or moving web pages. We also found that some pages did not make necessary changes, linking PDFs and

videos, and linking to outside sources and third parties without properly changing the URL.

Incentives for fixing the broken links: ("Why Fixing Broken Links Is Important For Your Website", 2015)

- It's a source of frustration for the user
- It gives the impression that you don't do regular housekeeping
- It can harm your credibility as an authority
- It could hurt your SEO and page rankings

Traffic

The Parks & Recreation website accounts for about 20% of the San Marcos website's total page views. There was a total of 153,837 views on the Parks & Recreation website alone from March 19 - November 13, 2017. All mobile users totaled 88,472 page views. This is important in regards to making sure our content is mobile user friendly. Although the Sports page had the highest amount of views with 32,058, the Special Events page and Facilities came not too far behind. An important note is that most of the referrals came from an organic Google Search. This is interesting because the department had originally thought most of the traffic was derived from their social media accounts. It also important to note that since most of the referrals are coming from Google, it would prove beneficial if the web pages were cleared for SEO rankings. Having multiple pages that contain the same name as other pages within the San Marcos website could make it difficult for a user to quickly find the page they are looking for.

Social Media

While looking through the Social Media data we realized that there were not specified unique identifiers for each one of the different departments. The City of San Marcos has one account for all of the posts that they have. So when trying to identify the posts for the Parks & Recreation sub departments it was hard to determine which ones belong to which. This is important because each sub department enjoys analyzing which post procure the most engagement from followers. We were also aware that the Social Media data had to be extracted manually from each individual social outlet.

Recommendations

Google Analytics Goals

Our first recommendation is for the Parks & Recreation department to set-up "Event tracking" through Google Analytics. Only a person with "Administrative Access" can set up these particular events. In the context of Google Analytics, an event is the user's interaction / activity with a web page element that is being tracked in Google Analytics. This is a way we can track tangible elements for intangible actions on the website. Think of Google Analytics "goals" as the overarching achievement you want on your website, and "events" as the steps to get there. Google analytics is capable of customizing unique tracking and duration events for a website. We suggest multiple tracking events be implemented for Parks & Recreation and its various sub departments which involve the following suggestions below. Here is also a guide on how to set up Google Analytics Goals/Events: https://support.google.com/analytics/answer/1032415?hl=en

Registration

Tracking registrations online should be the first goal to set up for the website. By setting up event tracking for registrations, the department will be able to see how well that particular item is being advertised or promoted. Since the City of San Marcos' website normally uses a third-party vendor for event RSVP's and class registrations, Google Analytics will not have tracking information on those actions, but they can set-up events to track the number of clicks to the link or the button to the third-party vendor's site. This will not provide 100% accurate numbers to the registrations and RSVPs, but it will give the department a good idea on the amount of interest in the event or activity, where the traffic is coming from, and their audience demographics. From this constant tracking, they can adjust any marketing strategies if they see that they are not working or not drawing in as much traffic as hoped. By setting small goals for completed online actions, it's easy to see how this could help the Parks & Recreation department. Event tracking could also be useful in promoting big events throughout the year in order to make sure that people know about it and will come.

Newsletters

Setting up tracking events for newsletter sign ups would benefit the department greatly. If the department is notified that a certain amount of people has signed up for a newsletter in a particular area, they can begin promoting future events, city insights and engaging content for people located in different areas around San Marcos. Especially when they live at or around a nearby park location.

Social Media Referrals

One of the most useful marketing tools today is Social Media. In order to keep up with new trends, event tracking should be implemented for Social Media referrals and gateways. Set up an event every time someone connects to the website using the Parks & Recreation's Instagram, Twitter and Facebook page, or vice versa if users are going to the Social Media platforms from the website. This could be a very useful tool to gage whether or not a particular piece of content is working as well and is reaching the desired audience.

Brochures

Tracking the amount of brochure downloads within a set amount of time can give specific departments insight on how relevant a particular event is to the community. One way to measure the success and turnout for the event could be directly connected to the amount of downloads a brochure has online. Set an event to notify the Parks & Recreation website on how many clicks have been processed from a download button.

Reserving a Park or Facility

Tracking reservations for a park or facility can not only help the department trace the popularity of a location, but also make adjustments to increase the value and relevancy of other locations. Perhaps pushing a Social Media campaign for new or existing locations. Or the data can simply show a particular demographic that is reserving often, giving insights for future event opportunities.

Quality Assurance

Another recommendation that would be very useful is to set up routine quality assurance testing the overall Parks & Recreation website. In our findings we had discussed that there are 21 dead links, outdated information from months prior, as well as distorted photos. We believe that if there are scheduled quality assurance checks (monthly at the most), the Parks & Recreation department will avoid any confusion for visiting users. This would also create a seamless experience in finding the information that residents need. By incorporating these quality assurance sessions into a mandatory action, the Parks & Recreations department can make sure their website is constantly looking and working at a remarkable level. Creating quality assurance sessions monthly will help also limit the information on the website at one time. For example, instead of uploading two - three months' worth of information at one time, information can be added as it becomes relevant, creating a cleaner, and more user-friendly website.

Furthermore, we recommend the Parks & Recreation department:

- Validate all links
- Test using popular devices
- Validate all online forms
- Upload equally quality pictures
- Review metadata
- Update missing or incorrect content on a monthly basis

Social Media

In order to help all the different subdivisions of the Parks & Recreation department know how efficient their social media engagement strategies are, we would like to recommend that the posts from social media platforms contain unique identifiers, such as hashtags or keywords. Using these unique identifiers would make it easier to track the efficiency of posts and which sub-divisions are obtaining the most online engagement. In order to better identify posts, we also recommend that the departments post according to their 8 new subdivisions. For example, with Enrichment Classes and Adventure Camps, we could combine them by using a common hashtag, like #childsplay. By combining similar departments, the team can draw conclusions about their audiences efficiently and more effectively.

Here are hashtag recommendations for each department:

- Adults 50+ #AgeHappySM (existing)
- Aquatics #PoolHappySm
- Enrichment & Adventures Day Camp #ChildsPlaySM
- Outdoor Adventure #PlayOutsideSM
- Parks & Trails #HikeHappySM (existing)
- Preschool #TinyTotsSM
- Special Events #SanMarcosSpecials
- Sports #SanMarcosSports

Conclusion

Our team understands the need for the Parks and Recreation department to stay up-to-date with the latest trends and community activities. We believe the website is a fantastic resource for city residence to find and participate in exceptional activities that ultimately bring the community closer together. From our data driven findings with usability, links and traffic, to our recommendations for creating Google Analytics goals/events, Quality Assurance testing and Social Media unique identifiers, we can't wait to see the outcome. Every great work of art requires constant revision and revising. Although the Parks & Recreation website is a fantastic resource for the community, we know it has the potential to be the best city website to date. Being a resource for so many people and college students, we want our city's online presence to represent the best, so we can retain the best, in hopes of cultivating a lasting community filled will people whose eyes are set on a sustainable future. Marketing Analytics has given us tools to make impactful decisions, and we hope the information provided in this report will help San Marcos Parks & Recreation do the same.

Thank you for the opportunity to work with the city of San Marcos. – KAMB Solutions

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Appendix

We created a sample Social Media Tableau dashboard to use as a guide if the Parks & Recreation department chooses to use unique identifiers in their Social Media posts. The story shows Sports, Aquatics and Outdoor Trails Instagram activity rated between each department. The pages display Aquatics Instagram post by likes, Sports Instagram posts by likes, and Outdoor Trails Instagram posts by likes.

In order to do this with all departments, one must set up a calculated field to sort through unique identifiers or hashtags. Here is a link on how to create a calculated field in Tableau, and determine how to sort posts using unique identifiers:
http://onlinehelp.tableau.com/current/pro/desktop/en-us/calculations_calculatedfields_create.html

Social Media & Community Engagement Marketing Analytics Report

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Prepared for: The City of San Marcos

Prepared by: Andrew Diaz, Asia Mccullough, Brianna Galloway, Michelle Hoang

December 6th, 2017

California State University San Marcos

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Executive Summary

The City of San Marcos has been developing rapidly over the past several years, and the rate of growth is only increasing. In order to to engage and communicate with its citizens, the city uses three main social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. The primary focus of this project is to determine how effectively each social media platform is being used and if any recommendations can be offered to encourage more engagement with its viewers. This will be accomplished by analyzing data provided by the City of San Marcos relevant to audience engagement. The analysis should produce valuable insights about the city's audience, including demographic and psychographic information. In addition, the identification of target audiences that might be missing will be considered and recommendations provided as to how the city might adjust their marketing strategy to further their reach and increase engagement.

The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that are targeted throughout this research for each social media platform are engagement, reach, conversions, and leads. These are relevant KPI's that provide answers to many of the research questions that are considered. When analyzing the data for engagement we include the amount of followers, clicks, likes, shares, comments, and profile visits that have taken place since the platform's launch. Conversions compare the number of profile visits to followers, while reach analyzes impressions and traffic data. Leads indicate the initiation of viewer interest on each platform.

As social media can be time consuming and the amount of data overwhelming, it is important to find out how the city staff can most efficiently allocate their time to better connect with residents. As it is the platform with the most engagement, the City of San Marcos Facebook page is definitely the strongest platform that the city has. The City of San Marcos' Twitter account has many followers but the least amount of engagement out of all the platforms.

The Twitter account might be better used for quick updates then average posts like that for Facebook and Instagram. Instagram in particular attracts a significant portion of the City's audience and therefore has great potential for engagement. As marketing efforts and services are targeted to all of San Marcos' residents, it is important to acknowledge how to optimize the use of this platform to get the most out of its marketing efforts.

Ultimately, it is expected that this analysis produces effective solutions for the city to improve on its community engagement campaigns. New campaigns are recommended as ways to target different audiences and bring more followers to each platform. Partnerships with key community areas are advised so as to build relationships as well as to increase overall unity of the city of San Marcos.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

KPIs are measurable values that demonstrate how effectively a company achieves key business objectives. In other words, they evaluate success in reaching targets. KPIs can be used at any and all levels of an organization, and there are dozens of metrics on social media that can be measured varying from industry to industry and business to business. Therefore, it is important to identify and correctly select the most relevant KPIs to focus on according to the industry one is in, and the area of the business one is seeking to track.

Social media is a valuable tool for building personal relationships between the brand and the audience. In addition, it has is a very helpful factor in increasing revenue, reach, and overall return on investment. Therefore, it is important to understand how we can quantify these increases.

Focus on Key Performance Areas of Engagement, Reach, and Leads

The key performance areas that the City of San Marcos should focus on are engagement, reach, and leads. Engagement is by far the most significant key performance area where they should focus their metrics to generate meaningful insights. It is the catalyst for improvement in all the other social media KPIs that will be further discussed. Engagement measures the amount of likes, shares, and comments that content receives.

Having a large reach with a low amount of engagement is a negative indication that the brand does not have a marketing message or content that resonates with others. Although reach is important, it can often be misleading because it essentially only gives an estimate of how many people *potentially* saw your content, rather than giving an exact number as to who actually did. Measuring engagement gives definitive numbers and allows us to precisely quantify social media performance.

Eliminate Vanity Metrics

When evaluating KPIs, the City of San Marcos should do their best to eliminate vanity metrics. Vanity metrics are numbers that look and sound impressive; however, they fail to correlate back to your long-term goals or bottom line. For example, the number of "likes" on a Facebook update, or the number of views on a pricing page. We have been programmed to gain instant satisfaction and excitement over witnessing numbers like these hit an all-time high. The misconception that people often make, is thinking that higher numbers in likes or followers correlate to higher levels of success. However, an increase in followership does not justify any meaning behind the growth that took place.

Additionally, with Facebook and Instagram's updated algorithm, the level of engagement ultimately affects how many people have the opportunity to see your company. The higher the engagement, the more likely your content will be seen. Therefore, audience size is less important than the ability to provide valuable content that keeps people engaged, which will enable the following to grow organically and generate more leads.

Key Metrics of Engagement

Under the area of engagement, the actual KPIs that City of San Marcos should focus their attention on are likes, shares, comments, brand mentions, and active followers. Likes lead to more attention because people naturally gravitate towards things that are most popular. As a result of the algorithm, the more likes that a post has, the more likely it will get bumped up and reach more people. However, hitting the "like" button has become a mindless and passive action; when someone shares, retweets, or reposts your content, they are actively going out of their way to put that content in front of another set of eyes. Whether it is for a personal recommendation or just to share information, this metric is meaningful and a great indication of the quality of your work.

Additionally, when content is relevant, interesting, and appealing, it organically sparks conversations in the comment section. In fact, it is better to have critical comments, rather than no comments at all. Any type of discussion focused on your content is exposure, which is a positive thing in the world of marketing. In addition, receiving comments on your comments is a great and reliable indicator that your content is hitting all the right points of interest. The City of San Marcos should take advantage of the fact that they are able to communicate directly with their residents, and join in on conversations that are relevant to them. They can even ask for direct feedback from their community through social media platforms. This would undoubtedly

increase satisfaction among those in the community, because they understand and value the time taken by city staff to invest in a meaningful conversation with them.

Branding is what people say about you when you are not in the room. Tags or mentions are great indicators that your brand is a topic of conversation, even when you are not there. Ultimately, this KPI measures relevance. Establishing a presence as a brand, and staying relevant is especially important in regards to attracting and maintaining the interest of future residents.

It is also important to note the difference between followers and active followers. An active follower is considered to be a user that has logged into their account and engaged with your content at some point within the past 30 days. Measurements of active followers indicate those who are loyal, interested, and engaged, enabling you to tailor content accordingly to continue satisfying your audience. In addition, feedback from this audience can improve your content in the future, leading to more growth.

Key Metrics of Reach

Reach is the total number of people following an account on social media, regardless of engagement. This number only indicates the amount of people that could potentially see a given post, and have actively indicated they would like to; it does not mean that they actually did.

Impressions are the number of times a person had the opportunity to view a piece of content, however, it does not provide any indication of the people who have actually noticed it and took the time to engage with it. This only shows how many times your piece of

content showed up in a user's news feed or timeline due to the fact that they are already following you or because someone they know has liked or shared your content.

Traffic Data is the key metric that the city should focus on primarily. This metric indicates the percentage of traffic to your website that came from social media. The City of San Marcos should make sure that the percentage of traffic is reflective of the effort required to maintain social media accounts. Google Analytics and other third party analytics tools can identify traffic data. If there is not a large portion of incoming traffic from social media, the city may want to find ways to expand their reach.

Measuring Lead Generation

It is crucial to figure out how much of your engaged audience are actually interested in making a purchase. Down the line, how does a large following convert to new sales and acquired customers? If leads are not being generated from social media efforts, this is either not the correct platform or the content is not engaging to the buyer's persona. The sooner the issue is identified, the better. Valuable insight can come from looking into the demographics of the people who are viewing and responding to your content.

Engagement and reach are tangible KPIs to measure. However, leads and the overall acquisition of growth will help the city paint the full picture of social media usefulness and emphasize effective decision-making, focused on long term goals. The purpose of measuring KPIs should not solely be to justify the marketing strategy. It should be measured with the goal of improving it.

Social Media Engagement Report & Analysis

Facebook

The City of San Marcos Facebook page has the largest engagement of the city's social media platforms. As of November 30, 2017, with a 4.3 out of 5 star rating and 5,186 followers, this proves to be a relatively well formatted site with appealing posts that is captivating for its audiences. Key information is also up to date regarding City Hall's location, website, phone number and operation hours which is vital for openness with the community. Compared that with other Facebook sites from other cities in the county, there are many similar reports and announcements made with little variation other than the geographical area for each city. This means that San Marcos keeps up to date and is contemporary with any trends that arise.

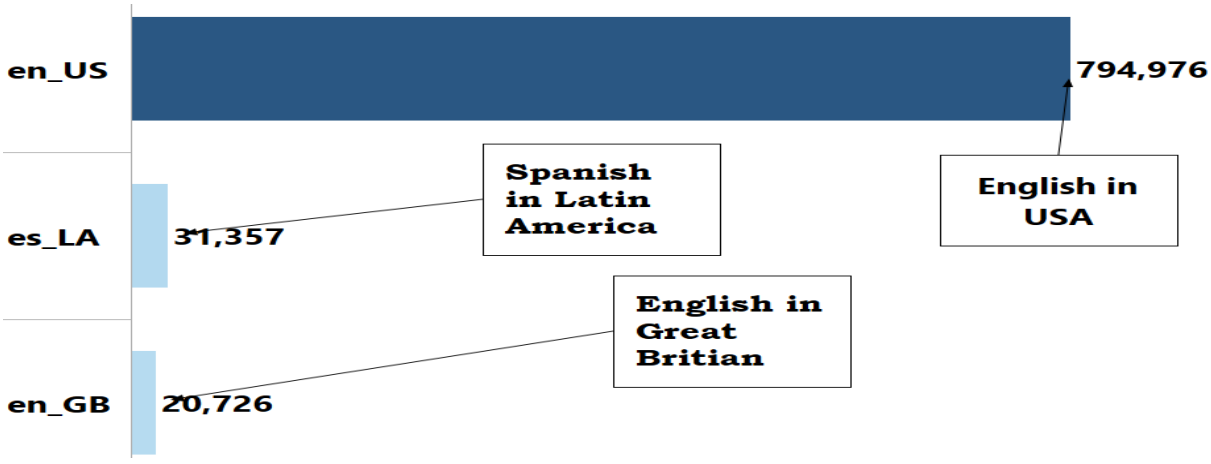
The following analysis looks at key demographics as well as the overall reach Facebook has created for the city since its launch. The first demographic we explore is the largest language groups that Facebook reaches on its site as well as how this might be a key factor in the recession of engagement with recent posts. The second demographic that is age groups and how they can give the city insight into the community as a whole, revealing who uses this social media site. These demographics help recognize different cultures and backgrounds within the community and will enable better judgment and usage increasing the optimization of the city's Facebook page overall.

Facebook Analysis

Language

In Figure 1, the graph shows the three largest language groups that the city engaged with from May 2017 to October 2017 based on the amount of likes per month. The most popular language group by far is English speakers in the USA with 794,976 total likes. However, there is also a large amount of Spanish speakers that the city is engaging with as well, with 31,357 total likes. The city should then factor that the community is a bilingual community, which can help better address viewers and increase community engagement targeting the different cultures of the region. The third largest language group is English in Great Britain, which might be helpful in regards to those from other countries who might be interested in moving to California and look for prime destinations to live. The city could then use the site as an advantage in marketing San Marcos as a well founded, safe, and influential area.

Figure 1: Facebook Language Reach



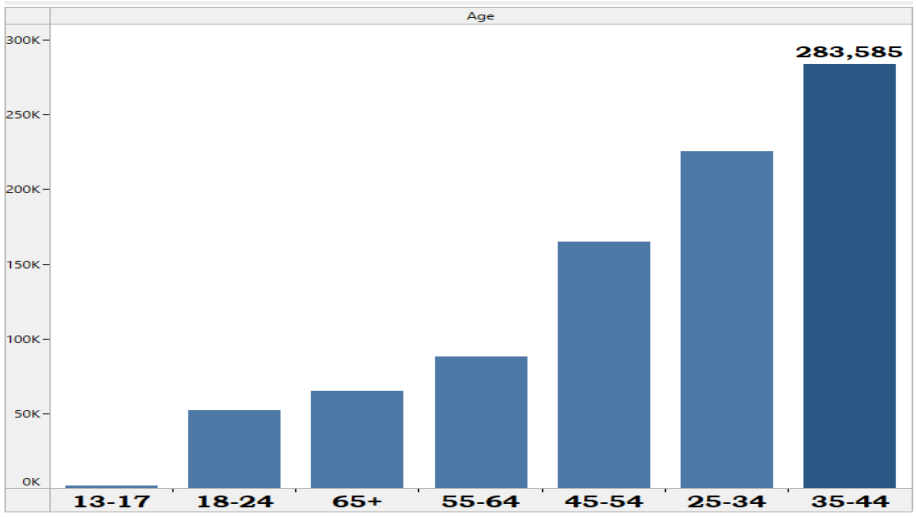
Age Groups

As shown in Figure 2, some age groups that the city is engaging with on Facebook are more popular than other age groups. Based on the amount of likes per month from May

2017 to October 2017, viewers aged 35 to 44 provided the most likes with a total of 283,585 likes, while the second largest age group was between 25 to 34 with 225,448 likes. Age groups past the age of 44 did not engage as much on Facebook which means that people who are middle age or are in their mid-20 are most likely to be searching through Facebook and react to posts from the city. This could also mean that posts that are most relatable to families and a younger generation will gather a larger amount of engagement compared to other posts. However, reaching a younger crowd, such as those who are aged 13-25, might not be as beneficial as those came in as the least likely to engage on the site. One possible reason for this lack of engagement could be that they use different social media platforms. Further research is recommended, as this age group represents the future of the community.

Figure 2: Facebook Age Reach

Age	
35-44	283,585
25-34	225,448
45-54	165,091
55-64	88,098
65+	64,815
18-24	52,351
13-17	1,441



Engagement & Reach

From the time of the city's first social media launch in 2015, there has been much engagement with the community and as time has gone by it has grown. From Figure 3, this graph

shows how the city's Facebook page compares to its overall engagement from 2016 to 2017. Viewers positively respond to posts and the city is effectively engaging with the community. However, although engagement is high, the overall reach into the community has significantly dropped, as shown in Figure 4. That graph outlines the number of viewers that Facebook has reached each month from the start of its launch in May 2015 to November 2017. Summer months show the largest growth, especially from April to May of 2017. However, there is a heavy decline since that time period all the way into November. New campaigns as well as an increased variety of content to spread the gap between quality over quantity of posts might raise the performance of reach as well as engagement for Facebook.

Figure 3: Facebook Yearly Reach (2016 vs 2017)

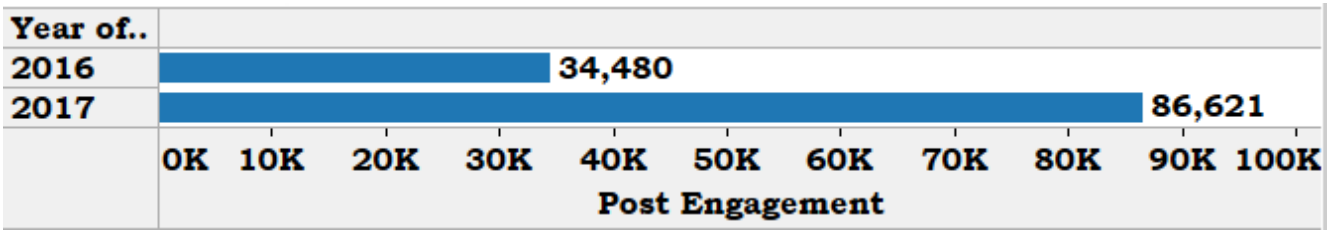
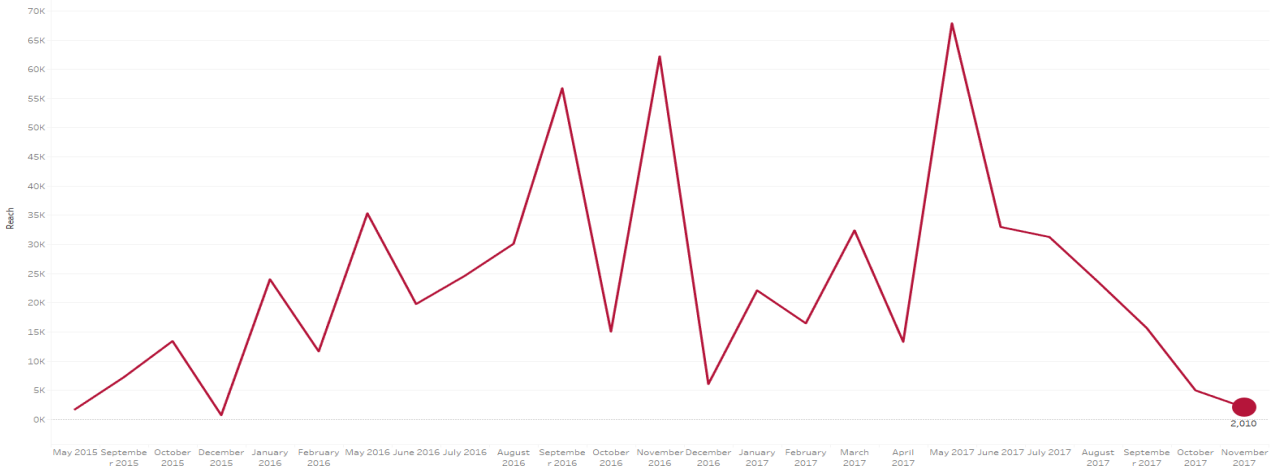


Figure 4: Facebook Overall Reach (2015- 2017)



Twitter

The City of San Marcos has 4,381 followers. However, these followers do not engage much with the city's account. The most engagement from followers on this account comes from media views. The tweet "Build an exciting future -- yours! Two positions now open: Financial Analyst & Streets Maintenance Supervisor. Apply: https://t.co/LY9qr9NuuH https://t.co/QiWuqAfaBo" earned the most engagement with 463 likes. The next tops tweets include information about wildfires, upcoming jobs workshops, and information on California State University San Marcos. Although 463 seems like a good amount of engagement, only 3% of the posts analyzed reached any engagement over 70. This includes likes, retweets, post views, and impressions. When analyzing posts that did engage the audience, it was found that The City of San Marcos followers prefer updates about fires, jobs openings, and events coming up in the community or at local schools.

Twitter Analysis

Figure 5: Twitter Views

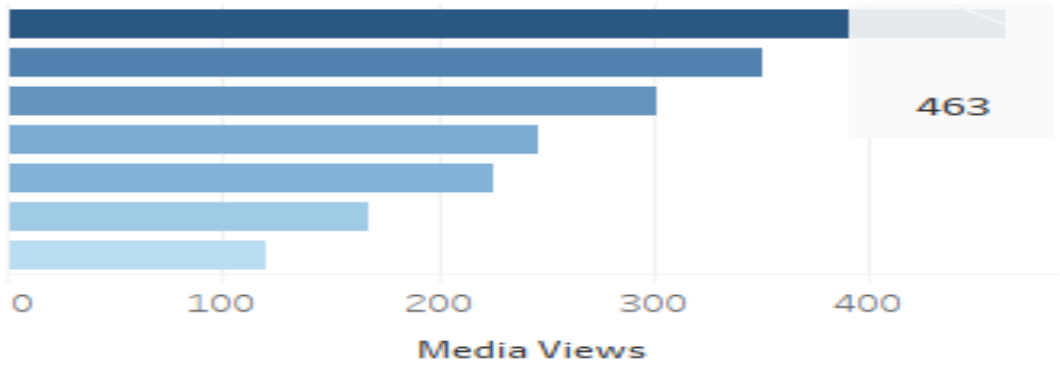
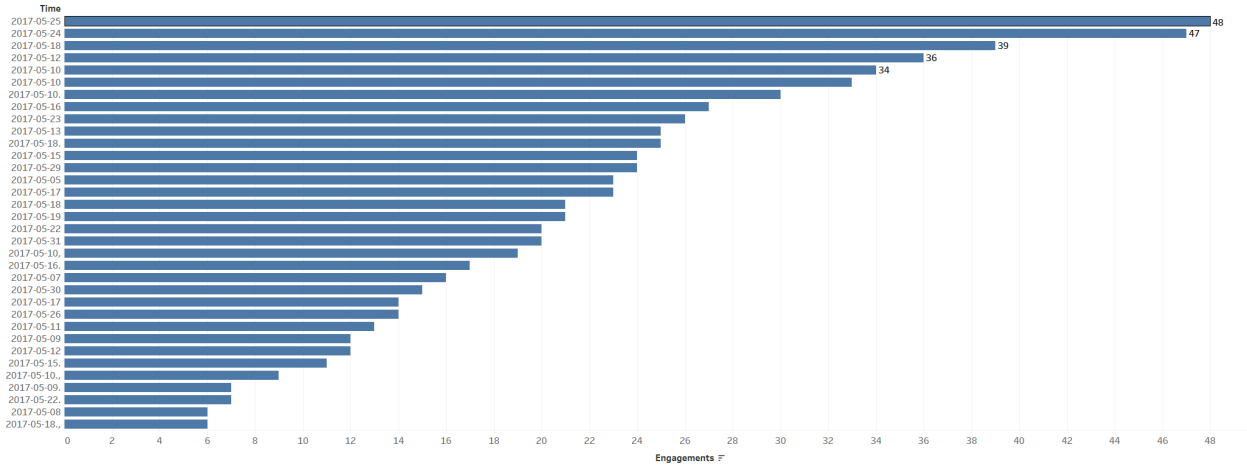


Figure 6: Twitter Engagement (May 2017)



3. Instagram

In our analysis of the City of San Marcos' Instagram presence, we referenced the cities of Carlsbad and Irvine as benchmark accounts on this platform. In addition, we wanted to look into other cities San Marcos was interested in, so we searched further into the accounts they followed on Instagram to find the cities of Vista and San Diego. These cities seemed to have an up-to-date social media presence, and neighbor San Marcos, so we decided to include them in the comparison.

To our surprise, we discovered that the two benchmark cities, Irvine and Carlsbad, actually had a poor social media presence on Instagram. We had expected them to be the most successful and engaged with their audience due to the fact that they had such a large amount of followers in comparison to other cities. In addition, they established their presence on Instagram approximately 4 or 5 years ago, whereas San Marcos and Vista had just created their accounts earlier this year, in 2017.

Another surprising finding was the fact that Vista, the city with the lowest amount of followers and the newest to Instagram, had the highest engagement rate out of all the cities compared. Despite the fact that they had only been on the platform for approximately 7 months,

their engagement rate was more than double the engagement of neighboring cities.

The City of San Marcos Instagram account currently has an engagement rate of 3.55%, which is about average for city governments. However, improvements are indeed attainable. Although San Marcos' engagement rate is not as high as Vista's, the follower count is growing the fastest (10.2%) compared to any other city compared. We also found that San Marcos' rate of engagement was the second highest of the four cities. Interestingly, the two benchmark cities again lagged in performance. Although they had a large following, their posts received little to no communication at all. The two cities both had engagement growth rates that were declining. We researched further into the city of Vista to find out what type of content worked for them, and how we could apply that to our platform.

In our analysis, we found that the content that did the best in terms of engagement, likes, and follows was information on the services the city provides that give back to the community. In addition, content that showcased the scenery in the city performed well, such as the sunset or park. These posts performed the best, and therefore, we recommend they city create more content of that nature.

Figure 7: **Competitive Overview (November 2017)**

	@sanmarcoscity	@cityofirvine	@carlsbadcagov	@vistacagov	@thecityofsandiego
COMMUNITY					
Total number of followers	1,353	2,697	3,425	761	1,413
Total follower growth (last 30 days)	33	25	45	24	34
Total number of followings	74	145	158	78	110
CONTENT					
Media posted (last 30 days)	24	12	2	4	7
Posts the most on	Mondays at 9am	Mondays at 12pm	Tuesdays at 6pm	Tuesdays at 8am	Thursdays at 3pm
First media posted on	06/02/2016	01/02/2013	09/04/2014	03/05/2016	16/09/2015
Latest media posted on	03/12/2017	02/12/2017	10/11/2017	03/12/2017	29/11/2017
ENGAGEMENT					
Total number of likes (last 30 days)	1,143	663	277	248	418
Total number of comments (last 30 days)	11	12	5	9	10
Average number of likes (last 30 days)	48	55	139	62	60
Average number of comments (last 30 days)	0	1	3	2	1
Engagement rate (last 30 days)	3.61%	2.10%	4.16%	8.58%	4.37%

Figure 8**: City of San Marcos Follower Growth & Post History Data (Nov 5 - Dec 3 in 2017)**

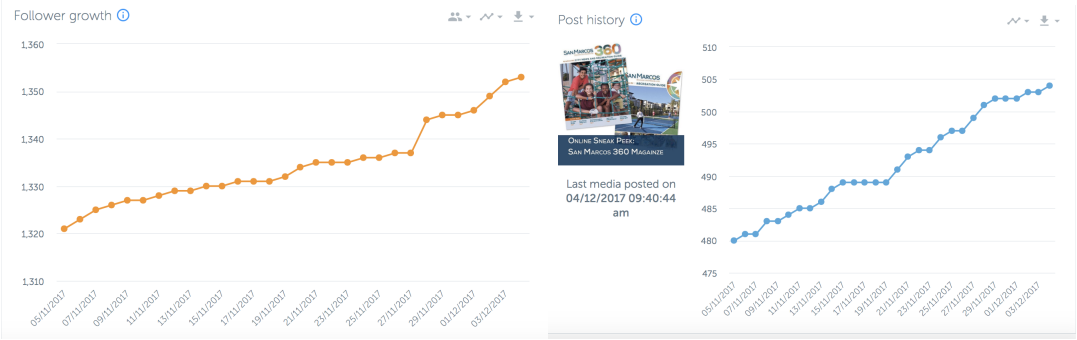


Figure 9: **City of San Marcos Engagement Insights (November 2017)**

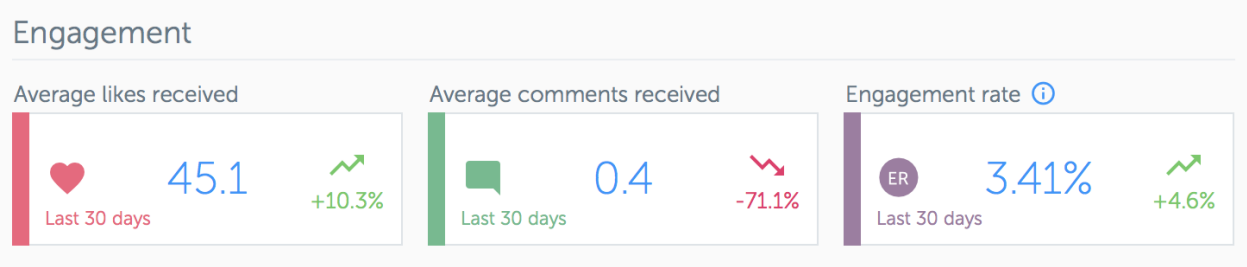


Figure 10: **City Comparison Engagement Rate Overview (Nov 5 - Dec 3 in 2017)**

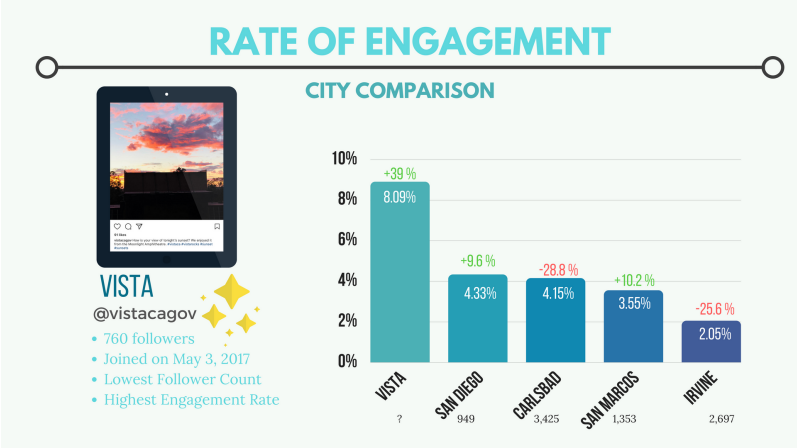
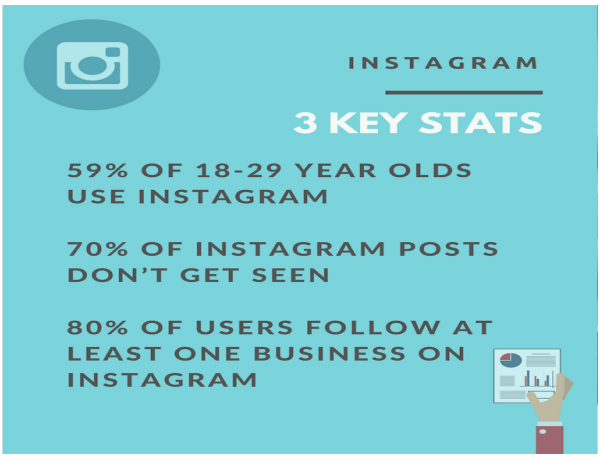


Figure 11: **3 Key Statistics Every Marketer Using Instagram Should Consider (Aug 2017)**



Implications & Recommendations

Monitoring Social Media Analytics

When determining whether or not the content being posted is engaging, it is imperative that social media marketers have a way to monitor individual posts. Monitoring social media ensures the city knows which posts will keep its followers engaged. Because of the challenging nature of monitoring posts, we provide three different options. The first is to continue using Hootsuite. However, Hootsuite does not have some of the benefits that other software options provide, like downloading capabilities and affordability. An alternative software option

that will allow The City of San Marcos to schedule, organize, and plan social media efforts is Buffer. Buffer is simple to use and affordable. The free account allows users to find the best time to post content and engage users, as well as the ability to find out what is performing well and what is not. This analysis is done by measuring the KPIs relevant to this project: engagement, reach, and leads. The last recommended software, Iconosquare, contains the most features overall. Iconosquare is a social media management software that, apart from the basic features, offers the ability to: draft posts and let Iconosquare post them when you desire, receive notifications when the post goes live to track engagement, easily run Instagram video and photo contests, determine top followers marketers should be engaging with, track the performance of competitors, and other benefits. The only drawback of using Iconosquare is the inability to share work with team members.

Marketing Strategies to Improve Social Media Presence and Community Engagement

In order to fully optimize the use of these social media platforms it is suggested that reach be a central focus for each in order to increase a broader communication with the community. Target audiences already engage with certain platforms. However, expansion into other groups would benefit the city. To increase reach performance, new campaigns are encouraged for all sites to use and bring more quality in what kind of posts are being displayed. One campaign idea that may interest the City of San Marcos is “Where Wednesday”. This allows sites to feature a certain business location within San Marcos every Wednesday, such as a popular restaurant, shopping center, school or governmental department. This will not only build relationships with different audiences, but also build recognition for businesses as a whole and increase awareness

of key locations in San Marcos. Promotion for local businesses allows the city to become more involved with the community and gain a reputation for caring about the interests of its citizens. Another campaign that the city might consider is "Throwback Thursday." A very popular campaign that is widely used by the public, Throwback Thursday posts could encourage engagement from target audiences. The city would become more in sync with popular trends for social media and would give viewers the opportunity to learn more about the past history of the city of San Marcos as well as see old photographs of locations that have beautifully transformed to the community we see today.

Facebook

Although this platform has the highest engagement rate out of all the other platforms, there is room to increase the amount of viewers reached. We recommend the city recognize an highlight the different cultures and backgrounds of viewers that visit their site. As shown from the demographics of age groups and language, a variety of audience factors might be harness to increase the value of each post created. We recommend creating new campaigns and posting fewer similar daily reports in order to hold viewer engagement.

Twitter

Twitter has the second largest amount of followers; however, it also has the lowest engagement of the three platforms. The city spends more time on faster paced engagement with viewers than on posts. We recommend Twitter be used for alerts and quick updates, as the most engagement received were on posts with valuable updates for citizens. It might also be beneficial to have Twitter participate in some of the campaigns but with more succinct posts compared to that of the city's other social media platforms.

Instagram

Instagram holds a lot of potential for improving community engagement, as this social media platform grows in popularity. As many in the younger generation use Instagram, it makes sense to create more content that is relatable to millenials and a younger demographic.

In response to key statistics showing that a large percentage of posts do not get seen, it would be beneficial for the City of San Marcos to implement more campaigns to provide a variety of content that is consistent, increases exposure, and entices their audience to engage with them. Focusing efforts to increase community engagement with the city's content is key to improving the likelihood that future posts will be seen. One campaign idea the city might explore is to showcase volunteers and those who participate in community service. A representative from the city could choose one person every week to be spotlighted on the city's Instagram account for their good deeds and character. The city could name this campaign "Good Samaritan Sunday."

Instagram content should also focus on showcasing the beauty of the city and its locals, as these types of content have proven to be the most appealing to their audience. It is also extremely beneficial to those who may be looking into residing in this city in the future. Residents seem to respond well with content that showcases city departments and what they are doing to give back to the community. The city should continue to document more of those moments to keep residents in the loop and aware of events going on in their city.

The last recommendation we have for the city of San Marcos is to consider local businesses interested in cross-promotions. The city has voiced their support for small and local businesses; therefore, cross-promoting with them would increase exposure and benefit both parties. In addition, we noticed that the city of San Marcos does not follow California State

University San Marcos (CSUSM). The University is the perfect opportunity for cross-promotion. After all, the students at the university make up a large amount of the demographic in San Marcos. An idea for content could be to showcase this Democracy in Action research project, for example. Many people would love to hear about the opportunity our class received to work with the City of San Marcos and apply the concepts we learned in class to tangible community benefits. This content could also be promoted on CSUSM's Instagram account, which has a significant following. In addition, the content surrounding this collaboration would be relatable and appealing to the younger demographic present on social media.

Conclusion

The City of San Marcos can improve its community engagement by establishing a strong social media presence on various platforms. The analysis of the city's social media presence on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram has revealed valuable audience insights on demographics and psychographics. Recommendations were given so as to more fully attract their target audiences to these sites and how to better reach any audiences that might be overlooked. Adjustments in marketing strategies will allow the city to better fulfill the overall reach and engagement needed to better communicate as well as become more attentive to its community. During this research, we found several areas of improvement, particularly on the Instagram account. We expect that the report's findings will produce effective solutions to the city's desire for stronger community engagement through social media platforms.

City of San Marcos

Google Dashboards

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December 5, 2017

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Executive Summary

KPVL has created a dashboard through Google Analytics to help The City of San Marcos facilitate innovations to the website by gathering the most significant analytic metrics to make the best decisions to attain the following goals:

- Maximize Reach
- Enhance Public Information Sharing
- Engage Residents
- Maximize Participation

Google Analytics was leveraged to find key insights about the residents of San Marcos. The data-driven decisions were made to simplify the online process residents go through as they connect with services and programs. The following are the dashboards created for this report:

- The Marketing Analytics Dashboard reveals who the user is with details such as age, gender, and location
- The Performance Dashboard compares the pageviews per page and displays the highest searched terms to give the City of San Marcos a better understanding of what the user is searching on the website
- An Engagement Dashboard was created to demonstrate how users are engaged with the website content by measuring and analyzing the duration of each session

The key findings lead to recommendations that will help enhance The City of San Marcos' ability to fulfill its goals.

Introduction

The following report was completed by four students at California State University San Marcos. This report has outlined each of the three dashboards that have been created for the City of San Marcos, as well as the purpose for each dashboard. Also included are the findings within each of the dashboards created, as well as a way these dashboards can be leveraged to gain insights on San Marcos' residents who visit the site. This report will also include recommendations that can help the City of San Marcos better understand and track what residents want from their city government.

Findings

The key findings will be summarized by the following dashboards:

- Marketing Analytics Dashboard
- Performance Dashboard
- Engagement Dashboard

Marketing Analytics Dashboard

The marketing dashboard was created to answer who the visitors are and who is and is not on the City of San Marcos' website. The dashboard includes the following metrics: user, gender, location, age, and device.

Surprisingly, there are more sessions on the site during the week than there are on the weekend. This trend remains consistent week after week for the month of November. This makes sense because this correlates with the highest performing page on the site (business license). This remains consistent with new users, as well. This information could be useful to know when to post social media content, or to understand the high traffic days on the website to use for optimization purposes.

Figure 1: Total Users

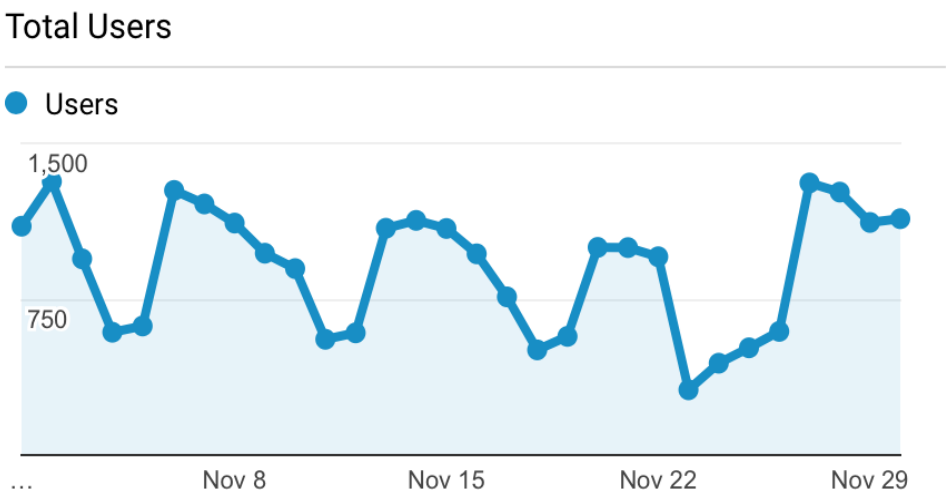
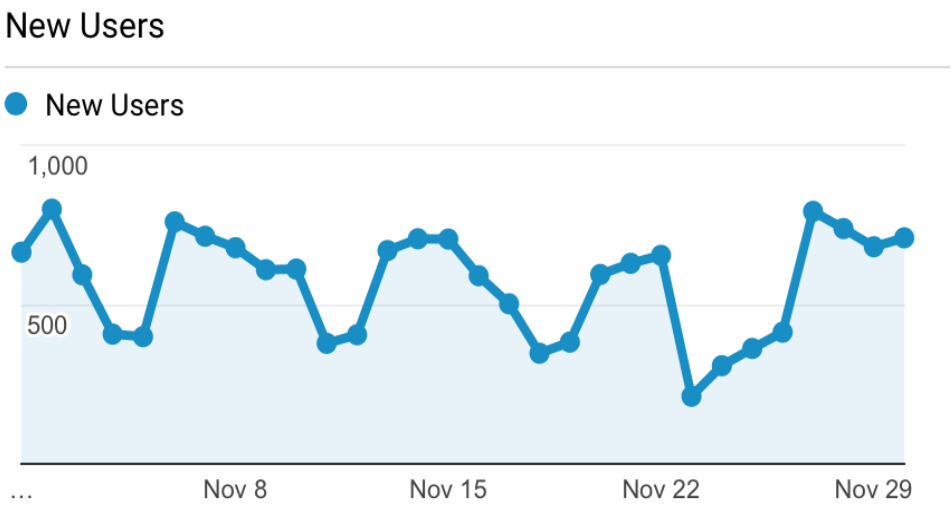
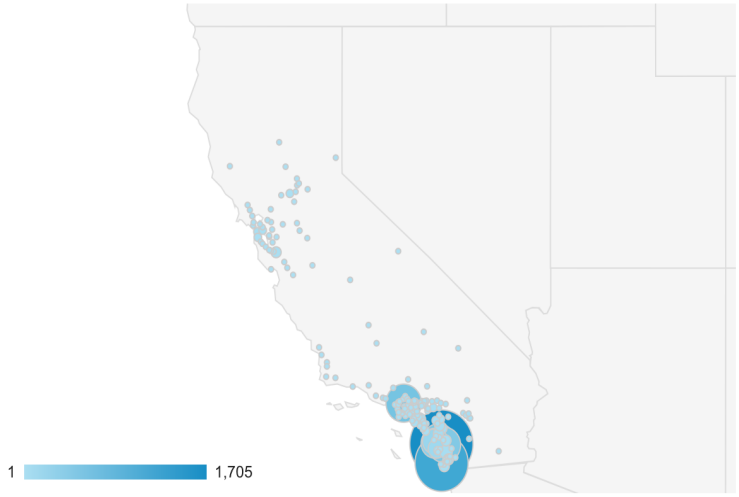


Figure 2: New Users



The next metric to track is the location, that is where the users are searching the website. This is a useful metric to track and understand where a majority of the traffic originates. Unsurprisingly, a majority of traffic comes from North County, with the top visit being the City of San Marcos, followed by the City of San Diego. Surprisingly, the City of Los Angeles was the third highest city. This information is relevant to measure because it can show where users may be visiting, planning on moving, or creating a business in San Marcos.

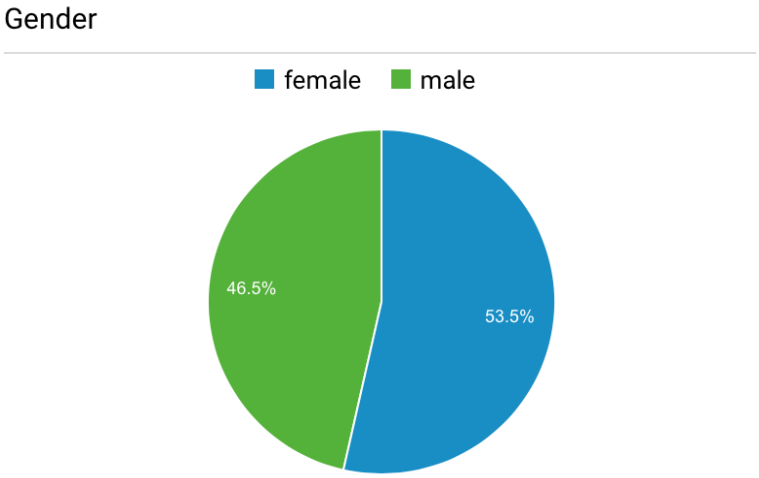
Figure 3: Location of Users



A widget was created to track the user's gender. For the month of November, 53.5% of users were women and 46.5% of users were men. It would be interesting to track this metric over time. There could possibly be times of the year where women are on the website more than men. This could be a valuable insight to use in advertising or social media efforts. This metric can also be compared to other months to gain insights, as well. An example of when this metric can be

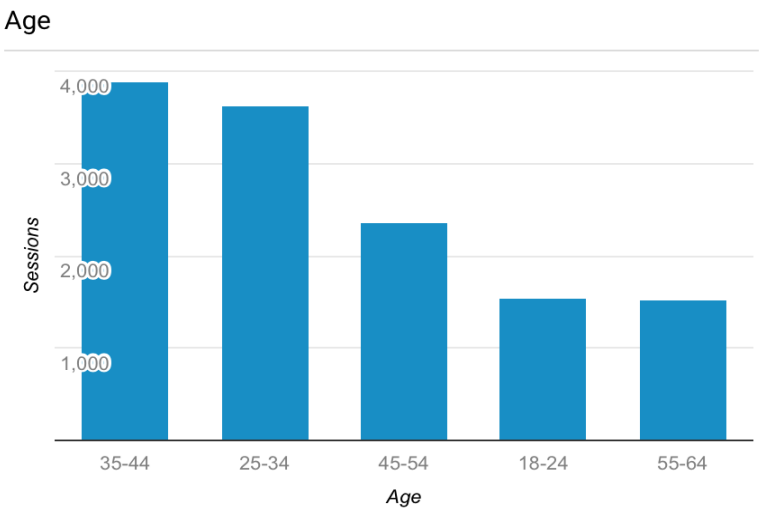
useful is when a social media or advertising campaign is implemented that may target women versus men. This metric can be used to track the outcome. This will help the City of San Marcos understand what the female and male San Marcos residents want and what those differences are.

Figure 4: Sessions Based on Gender



Age is another very important metric to track. As the city is already aware, the most popular age demographics are ages 35-44. However, these lower three sessions show an untapped market. Millennials would be a very useful age demographic to try and engage. Currently, they have the second to least amount of sessions on the website in November. Why might the city wish to market to millennials? One reason is information spreads like wildfire amongst this demographic, so targeting them would be a great way to maximize reach (one of the city's goals).

Figure 5: Sessions Based on Age



The last metric measured within the marketing dashboard is device. With the world going mobile, this is a crucial metric that should be tracked in order to understand the residents of San Marcos. In Figure 6, the device with the highest number of sessions is the desktop. Mobile devices follow not far behind. Residents use their mobile devices almost as often as they use their desktop to visit the city's the site. Even more surprising, average time spent on each page is higher for mobile devices versus desktop. This can either mean the content on mobile devices is difficult to find or very easy to find. AB testing can be done to figure out this problem, and now that there is a metric to track this, finding a likely cause will be much easier. Knowing that mobile is an obvious metric to track, device and time of day is what should be looked at next.

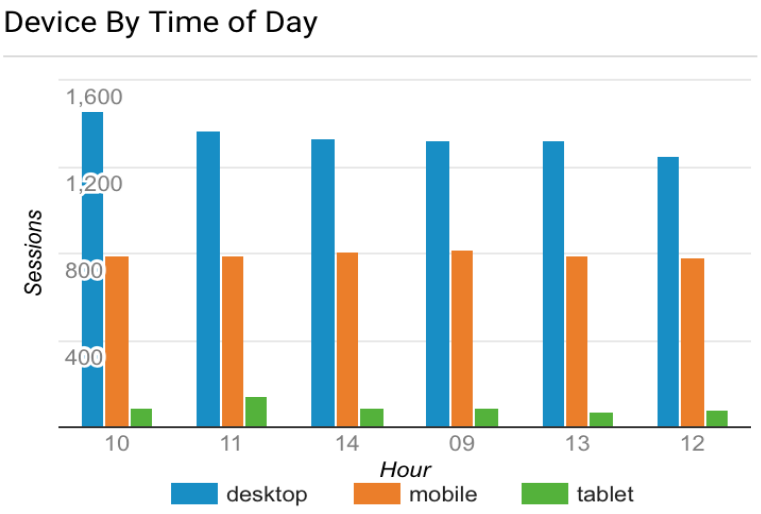
Figure 6: Device Based on Sessions

Device

Device Category	Sessions	Avg. Time on Page
desktop	15,758	00:01:26
mobile	13,269	00:01:31
tablet	1,641	00:01:19

In Figure 7, the widget tracks the time of day compared to device. It tracks the highest performing hour based on desktop and compares that to tablet and mobile usage. Desktop seems to be most prevalently used during the workday. A small increase can be seen around 12pm-1pm, likely due to lunch breaks. Knowing this can help direct website design to be more user friendly on a mobile, tablet or desktop device, depending on the time of day.

Figure 7: Device Based on Time of Day

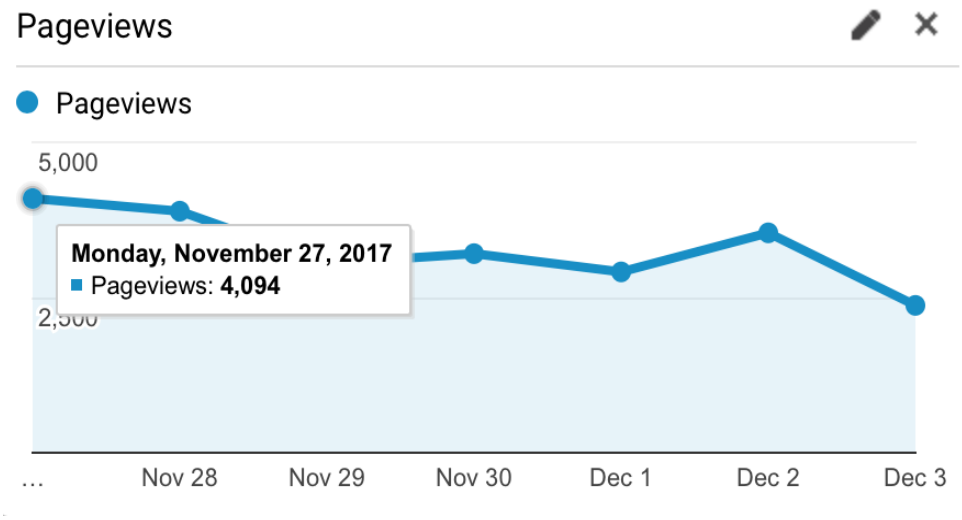


Performance Dashboard

Measuring how well the pages are performing and determining which pages need improvements will help maximize the amount of public information being shared by measuring which pages are performing the best. To facilitate these measurements, it is recommended to analyze site content, site search, and exit pages as these measures will help monitor key insights about residents and their activity on the website. The performance dashboard will compare page views, top search terms, top pages, and top exit pages to understand what the user is searching on the website and to maximize reach.

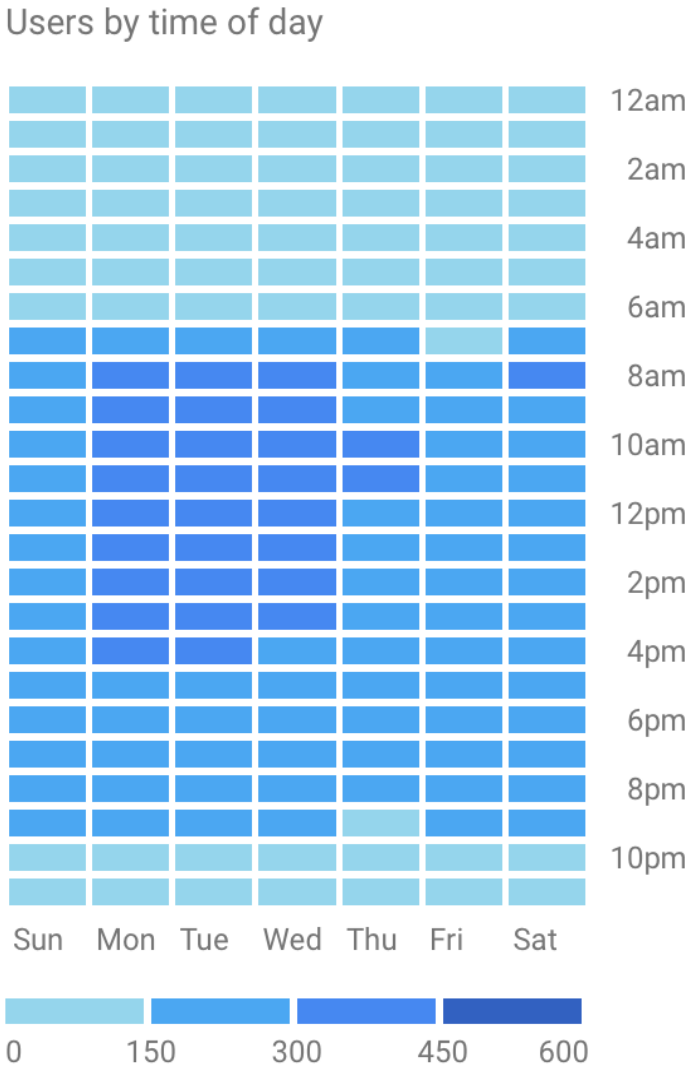
Surprisingly, Figure 1 demonstrates pageview performance to reach the highest peaks during the weekday.

Figure 1: Pageviews



KPVL decided to further analyze the time & day in which users visited the site. Figure 2 demonstrates the highest usage indicated by the dark blue. Surprisingly, there is less traffic on the website during the weekend. In order to understand why there is less traffic during the weekend, further research was conducted by analyzing the top search terms to better understand the user.

Figure 2: Time & Day



Top search terms specify users' interest, which can help the City of San Marcos maximize participation based on specific interests. Figure 3 demonstrates the top three searches as parade, zoning map, and Christmas parade. Based on this data and Figure 2, it is safe to infer that parents are searching the site on the weekday for holiday events to attend during the weekend. This data can help the City of San Marcos create "monthly highlights" on the homepage to attract visitors and engage more residents based on the month and the goals.

Figure 3: November Top Search Terms

Top Search Terms

Search Term	Total Unique Searches	% Exit
Parade	7	37.50%
zoning map	6	14.29%
Christmas parade	5	0.00%
zoning ordinance	5	42.86%
business license	4	20.00%

Using past data can also help enhance the website for the future. Reviewing the top search terms for October compared to those of November demonstrate traffic change in just a period of two months. This is why it is important to consistently measure the website's performance. Understanding that users navigate the site for different reasons will help The City of San Marcos satisfy viewer's search. October consisted of users interested in a business license, calendar events, and sunset park as displayed by Figure 4.

Figure 4: October Top Search Terms

Top Search Terms

Search Term	Total Unique Searches	% Exit
business license	20	9.09%
calendar	18	13.64%
Sunset park	18	9.52%
zoning	17	0.00%
hours	15	15.00%

Measuring top pages will allow the City of San Marcos to understand what pages are most important to users. If the website needs any improvements, the top pages will have the most impact on residents. This knowledge can help determine what type of content to create as innovations are made. As represented by Figure 5, users visited the website in search of adult sports and city jobs for the month of October. In November, users were more interested in upcoming holiday events such as Santa's village.

Figure 5: October vs. November Top Pages

Top Pages

Page	Pageviews	Unique Pageviews
/home	17,354	13,447
/departments/community-services/sports/adult-sports-league	3,999	3,509
/how-do-i-/apply-for/city-jobs	2,577	2,075
/departments/community-services	2,284	1,801

Top Pages

Page	Pageviews	Bounce Rate
/home	3,010	34.38%
/departments/parks-recreation/special-events/holiday-events/santa-s-village	1,444	83.38%
/departments/parks-recreation/special-events/holiday-events/santa-s-village/-fsiteid-1	813	86.09%
/play/special-events/holiday-events	765	33.39%

It is just as important to measure the top exit pages as the top pages. Top exit pages determine from where users leave the site after they have visited multiple pages. It can be difficult to measure whether an exit page signifies a success or a failure. A page can have a high exit percentage if the user found what they were looking for, or it may be the complete opposite and signify that the page was irrelevant. Figure 6 compares October and November top exit pages. The best way to determine whether these percentages indicate a positive or negative solution is to establish goals.

Figure 6: October vs November Top Exit Pages

Top Exit Pages

Page	Exits	% Exit
/home	6,546	37.72%
/departments/community-services/sports/adult-sports-league	3,347	83.70%
/how-do-i-/apply-for/city-jobs	1,910	74.12%
/about-us/doing-business-with-san-marcos/bids-rfps	963	79.98%

Top Exit Pages

Page	Exits	% Exit
/departments/parks-recreation/special-events/holiday-events/santa-s-village	1,154	79.92%
/home	989	32.86%
/departments/parks-recreation/special-events/holiday-events/santa-s-village/-fsiteid-1	587	72.20%
/play/sports/adult-sports-league	440	86.79%

Engagement Dashboard

It is important to measure user engagement because it helps to monitor and report website activity. Analyzing engagement can be done by answering how users accessed the website, if they are engaged in the website content, and if they immediately exited upon entering the website. Through Google Analytics, these questions and measurement tools can be answered by looking at referrals, source medium, and bounce rate. The Engagement Dashboard will measure the average session duration, average pages per session, bounce rate, number of pageviews per session, traffic type, and the slowest loading pages.

The average session duration is the average amount of time that a user spends on the website during one sitting. As seen below in Figure 7, the average session duration for the month of November was around two minutes. Alone, this finding cannot answer any of the questions used to measure engagement. However, this is finding is still relevant because, when combined with other metrics, the questions can start to be answered.

Figure 7: Average Session Duration

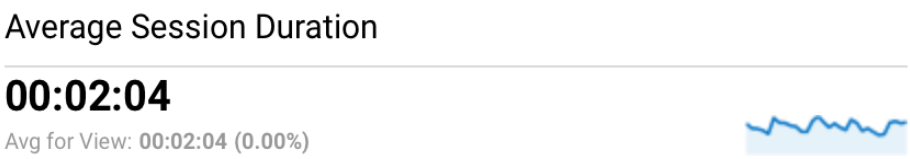


Figure 8 shows the average number of pages that a user viewed during their time on the website. As seen below in Figure 8, the average pages per session is about two and a half. However, Figure 9 breaks down the actual number of pageviews per session on a scale from 1-5. It is noted that 54.5% of users in the month of November only viewed one page during their time on the website. This can mean either a good or bad thing. If users only view one page per session, it could mean that they are not exploring everything the City of San Marcos' website has to offer. On the other hand, if a user only views one page during their session, it could mean that they landed directly on the page they were looking for, found all of the information they needed, and did not need to spend more time exploring the website. Because of this ambiguity, it is important to utilize the functions in Google Analytics to compare and combine different dimensions and metrics.

Figure 8: Average Pages per Session

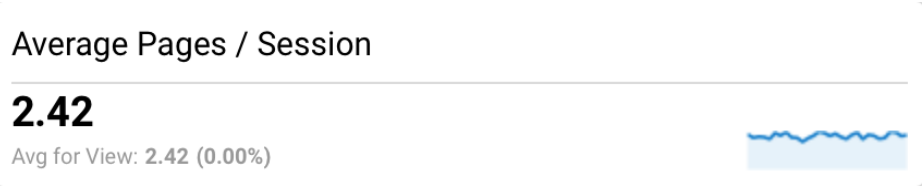
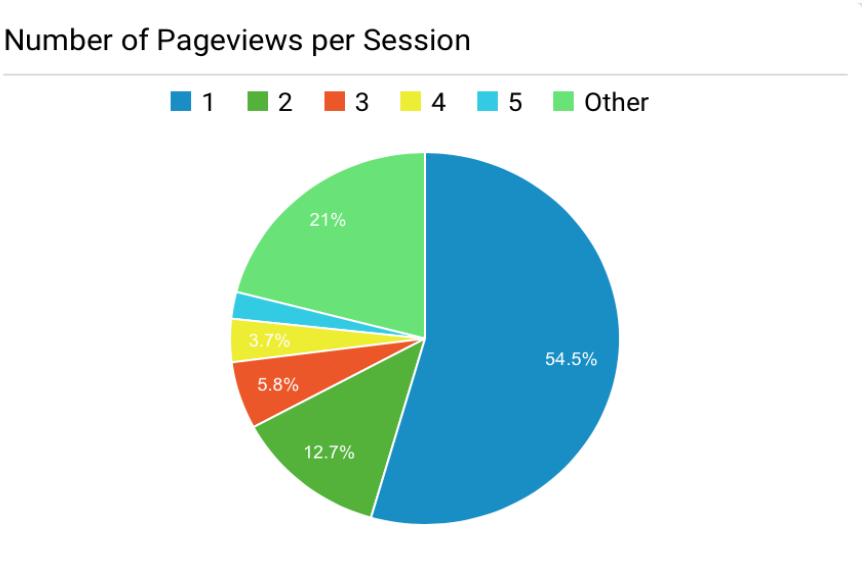
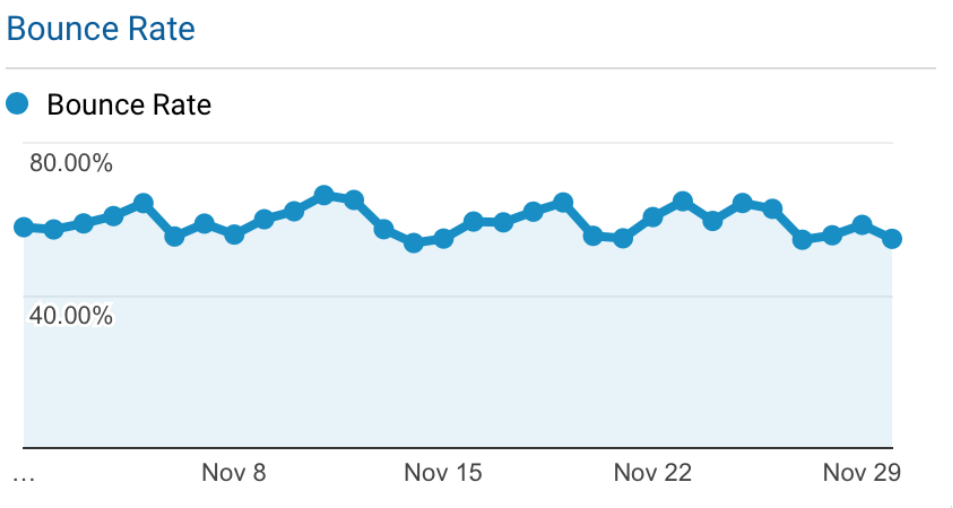


Figure 9: Pageviews per Session



Bounce rate measures the percentage of users who immediately exited upon entering the website without viewing any other pages. Figure 10 shows the fluctuations of bounce rate over the month of November. There is a noticeable increase in bounce rate during the weekends and a decrease during the weekdays. This could mean that users do not want to spend as much time on the website during their leisure time. Also, it is important to note that the average bounce rate for the month of November was 58.31%.

Figure 10: Bounce Rate



Traffic Type shows how the users came across the City of San Marcos' website. Users can search organically, directly, or through a referral. Referral searches mean that user found a link that lead directly to the website. An example of such referral could be Facebook. Direct searches mean that a user directly typed the City of San Marcos' website's URL into their search bar. Organic searches mean that users typed something in their search bar that brought the City of San Marcos' website to the search results page. The user would then have to click on the website from the search results to be considered organic.

As seen below in Figure 11, 74.2% of users searched organically, which is about ¾ of users. Having a high percentage of organic searches could indicate that the website's SEO (Search Engine Optimization) is performing well, which means that the content on the website is relevant to users' searches.

Figure 11: Traffic Type

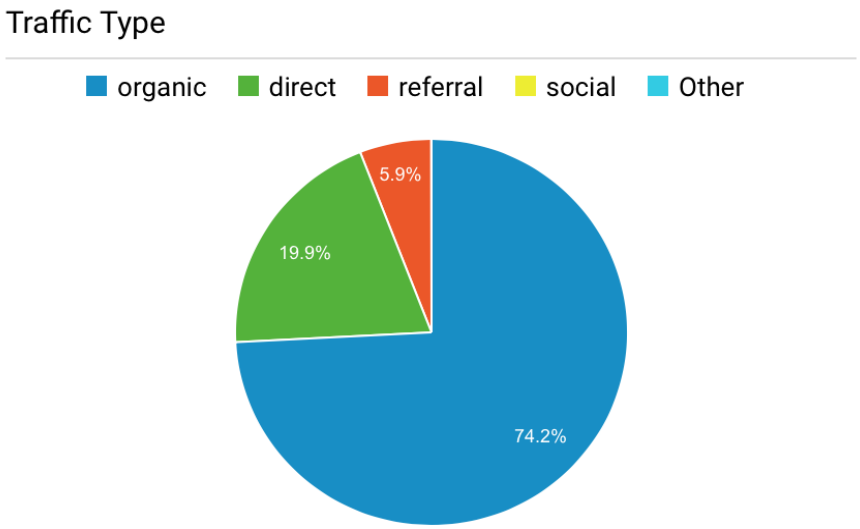


Figure 12 shows the top two slowest loading pages on the City of San Marcos' website in the month of November. Both of the pages were search results pages after a user searched for the terms "public facilities fees" and "prevailing wage." The public facilities fees search results page took, on average, around eight minutes to load. The prevailing wage search results page took about three minutes on average to load. This is an important finding because users can be turned off from slow page loading times. Understanding this finding, checking it on a regular basis, and responding to slow loading pages can keep customers from getting turned off by slow loading pages.

Figure 12: Top Two Slowest Loading Pages

Slowest Loading Pages

Page	Avg. Page Load Time (sec)
/live/advanced-components/search?q=public facilities fees	498.56
/live/advanced-components/search?q=prevailing wage	205.53

Recommendations

To maximize the offerings in Google Analytics, KPVL has two major recommendations for the City of San Marcos to utilize. Below are the two tools within Google Analytics in which KPVL recommends the City to enable:

- Search Console
- Goal Creation

Search Console

In Google Analytics, search console is a tool which can be enabled to track what users are searching for in Google prior to entering the City of San Marcos' website. During the month of November, 74% of searches for the site were done organically, or in other words, in Google. By enabling Search Console, reports on the top trending searches in relation to the site can be created. These reports can be also compared to a variety of other metrics, allowing the marketing team to gain insight on which search terms keep users most engaged on the site. The marketing team will also be able to categorize user behavior by search terms, also known as queries.

Goals

The second recommendation, is to create goals within Google Analytics. Goals are a feature which allow an individual to measure how well the site is fulfilling target objectives. In other words, a goal represents a completed activity that represents the success of the overall site. Imagine if one of the site's objectives is to provide business licenses to users because this act brings more business into the community. A goal can be created, which records the number of times each differing business license is downloaded on the website. Partnering with the reporting available from the search console tool, the marketing team could analyze how many users are searching for a key term like "restaurant business license" and compare these key terms to how many business license downloads are completed. A low number of goal completions, also known as conversions, could indicate a problem with users wanting to open a restaurant business in San Marcos, a high number can alert the San Marcos staff that there is an uptick in restaurant-related business licenses being downloaded. Because the City of San Marcos' website has many differing objectives, there are many opportunities to record these objectives via goals.

Conclusion

Overall, the three custom Google Dashboards will aid in tracking users online behavior, help in understanding and interacting the community, aid the marketing team to better meet the needs of the user, and ensure the site functions are systematized to better meet the needs of the site's users. The Google Dashboards will serve as a check to ensure the site's functions are organized and properly working. These dashboards are up and ready to be utilized. KPVL believes these tools will empower the City of San Marcos' marketing team to tailor social media and advertising to mirror website interests, behavior, and demographics to increase overall community engagement.