Research Centers Struggling to Communicate: SOCIAL MEDIA as a New Pathway

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The Center for Urban and Regional Affairs (CURA) is a university research center that was created in 1968. By applying non-profit and business marketing theories, CURA’s online engagement with stakeholders has spiked.

Top Tips and Takeaways

1. Make it a tradition in your organization.
   Research shows numerous benefits of social media, but it takes a group commitment.
   77% of public relations specialists value social media as a vital tool. Less than 20% nonprofits are using it fully.

2. Become an informative news source.
   News searching is the 2nd most practiced online activity. Social media is the 1st. The Internet has outstripped TV as a news source. Most individuals trust/use social media as their main news source.

   Most posts are just links or texts. Multimedia posts stand out among small organizations. Tagging other orgs and creating a network exponentially boosts views.

WARNINGS

1. Offer a balanced news report.
2. Create an accurate image of your organization.
3. Don’t seek dialog right away.

Further Studies

- Does FB engagement translate to real-world discussion?
- Does this apply to larger organizations?
- How do you extend theories to all Web 2.0? (email, newsletters, Twitter)
- Can a standard handbook be created for university research centers?

Limitations

This study was restrained by time. Environmental scans (survey, focus group) was skipped. The study only tells the tale of one organization. A more systematic literature review is necessary.

Selected Reference


Ethnic Populations

• Fusing culture and community

Affordable Housing

• Empowering residents

Urban Agriculture

• Growing communities

United Identity

BEFORE

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What could a filmmaker, Minnesota’s American Indian community and the social services sector have in common? The common thread is Lann Briel and the valuable, CURA-funded, community-based research she is doing with the American Indian Family Center (AIFC). Whether you’re a student, community member or nonprofit partner, read on. #CURAStudents #RelevantResearch #UnfairProud #CURARingTheWeek

1.3K People Reached
10X Above Average
223 Post Clicks

UNDERSTAND: USERS ENGAGED BY BOTH THEME AND STYLE OF POSTS

Engagement

April
May
June
July

138
108
81
50
21
11
9
5

TRIO
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Piktochart