

Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development

Project Group 7 - Sinnfluencer

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Management Summary

Social Media Campaign for
the Social Entrepreneurship Competition in Tourism



Social Entrepreneurship
Competition in Tourism
#care #create #change

Department: Sustainable Economy

Course of study: Sustainable Tourism Management

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Introduction

As part of the module *Sustainable Marketing Management Cases*, which was taught at the *Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development* in the summer semester of 2021, a social media marketing strategy was developed and implemented by a team of three master students for the third edition of the *Social Entrepreneurship Competition in Tourism*, henceforth referred to as SocEntre. This summary primarily serves to outline the implementation of the strategy and its results.

The Competition

Initiated by Prof. Dr. Claudia Brözel (Eberswalde University) the SocEntre was launched in 2019 and counts as the worldwide first competition focusing on social innovation and entrepreneurship in tourism and hospitality. It aims to support and empower social entrepreneurs from around the world by giving them access to expertise and international visibility. Given the new challenges facing the tourism industry because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus of the third edition is on supporting social tourism entrepreneurs in their efforts to help the sector recover and shape a sustainable future for tourism in their destination. For further information, please visit the competition website.

Method

During a Design-Thinking-Week the student team developed a challenge from which four objectives were derived. In addition, an analysis of the status quo of the competition landscape was carried out. Based on this, strategies were developed, which were implemented during a 3x1 week campaign in the period 12.04. – 28.06.2021. The strategies were developed to meet the challenge and objectives following the *step-by-step guide to creating a social media strategy* from the book *eMarketing- The Essential Guide to Marketing in a Digital World (7th edition)* by Rob Stokes. Specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were defined to measure the progress of the strategies. To better track the effects of the individual postings, a URL tracking link was integrated into the posts for Facebook (FB) and LinkedIn (LI) from the second campaign week onwards. For Instagram (IG) Linktree was used to integrate the URL tracking link. Furthermore, Google Analytics and the platform insights of all three accounts were continuously analysed to adjust measures if necessary and to evaluate the success of the strategy at the end of the period.

The Challenge

How we might reach out to Social Entrepreneurs in Travel and Tourism worldwide who follow the spirit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), increase awareness for the Social Entrepreneurship Competition by creating a social media campaign and inspire to participate.

The Objectives

The following objectives were derived from the Challenge.

- 1. To raise awareness for the competition*
- 2. To attract potential applicants from around the world.*
- 3. To globally increase the reach of the competition.*
- 4. To create a recognition value for the competition on all channels.*

Pre- Campaign Competition Landscape

The competition was launched as an online event at ITB Now on 09.03.2021. When the student team started working on the strategy and its implementation, the competition had already been running for two weeks. The competition had a website which had been promoted by some of the partner organisations through their social media channels to raise awareness for the competition. In addition to the website, there was a LinkedIn account with 63 followers and a YouTube account with four followers from the previous year. The LinkedIn account was taken over by the student team and integrated into the implementation of the strategy.

Implementation

As preparation for the implementation of the strategy the team created an editorial plan in excel, which served as a guideline to manage the three campaign weeks. All visuals were created using Canva and all captions were pre-written in a document. Strategies with corresponding measures were designed to meet the four objectives as shown in the table below. They were continuously tracked and adapted to achieve better results.

	Objective 1- awareness	Objective 2- attract potential applicants	Objective 3- increase reach	Objective 4- recognition value
Strategy	a) continuous informative content on all platforms b) involvement of community through call to actions	a) “advertisement” of strong partner network and prices b) call to actions c) timing of campaign	a) to build a community on multiple social media channels b) engagement with target group c) inclusion of social media profiles of partners d) increase visibility	a) Uniform appearance on all channels
Measures	a) creation of posts about the competition b) direct and prompt wording	a) introduction and linking of partners b) inclusive and prompt wording/ catchy phrases c) two of the three weeks were implemented before the end of the application process	a) new social media platforms→ Instagram and Facebook and Use of existing platform (LI) to draw attention to new platforms b) like and comment content of the target group c) tagging and mentioning of partners, sharing/ reposting of their content d1) paid post. d2) Use of specific and frequently used hashtags	a1) same content on all platforms a2) Creation of a style guide (Colour scheme, font, symbols, logo) a3) tool: Canva
KPI's	-post clicks -interactions (likes, comments, shares, post visits, saves) -number of informative posts -returning users to website	- total number of applications in comparison to the previous year -country of origin of applicants	-increase in followers on different platforms -total reach of the paid post -total reach of organic posts -total number of website users through platforms	-no suitable KPI

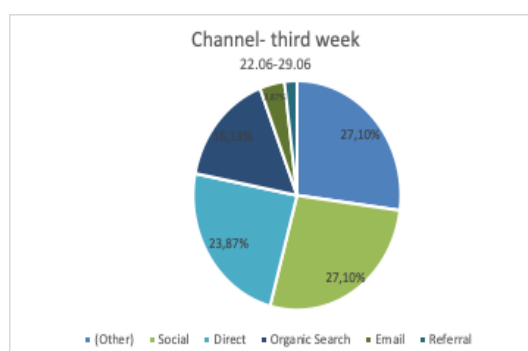
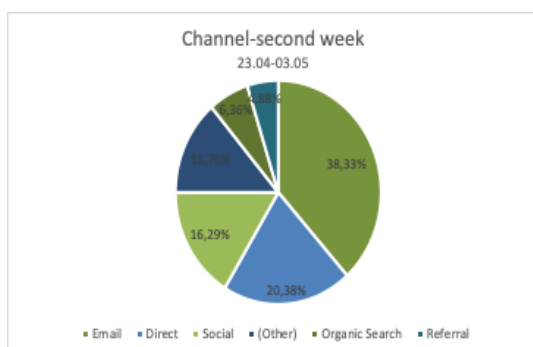
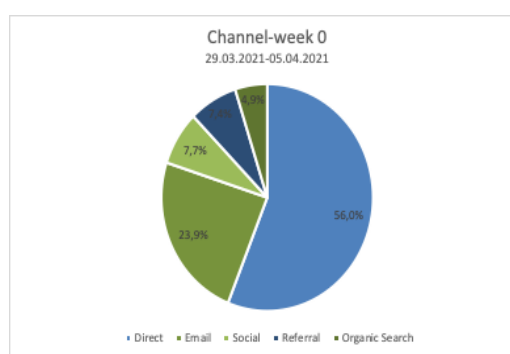
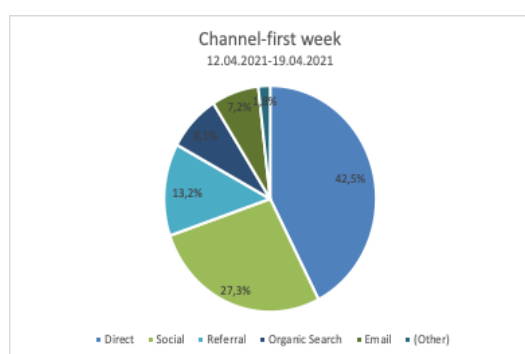
Evaluation

At the end of the application period, a total of 132 applications from 49 countries were received, the top four countries being Germany, USA, South Africa, and Kenya. In comparison: in 2020, a total of 82 applications from 39 countries were received. Of course, the increase in applications and countries cannot be attributed solely to the social media presence, but it can be assumed that it has contributed to attracting participants from around the world.

The continuous growth of followers, which was recorded on all three platforms throughout the period; IG 0 → 187; FB 0 → 80; LI 63 → 226 indicates that awareness and reach were increased for the competition. Another clear indicator of increased reach are the results of the paid post. It was advertised on FB and IG with a total of 30 EUR, on LI for 50,62 EUR and for

a duration of five days. The aim was to increase the number of visits to the website shortly before the end of the application phase. It had a total reach of 56.771 on IG, 59.059 on FB and 2249 on LI. The following countries and regions were explicitly targeted with the post: Kenya, Namibia, Tanzania, South Africa, Gambia, Caribbean, Aruba, Curacao, USA, Europe, UAE. The top three countries that were reached were Tanzania, Gambia, and Kenya for all platforms. The URL tracking link to the website was clicked 388 times in total on IG and FB and 21 times on LI. Only 53 new users (from all channels together) made it to the website from which the average session duration was 26 seconds. Why only such a small number of users arrived at the website is unclear.

Furthermore, the pie charts below demonstrate the sources of the website users called “channel”, meaning where they came from before and during the three weeks of campaign and their proportion of the total share. The light green part shows the share of social media. The proportion of users who came to the website via social media increased compared to the period before the campaign was launched. However, the actions of the other sources influence the portion. For example, Travel Massive sent a newsletter via email (light blue) during the second week. This newsletter has a large audience, part of which belongs to the target group of the competition. This could be an explanation for the decrease of the share during the second week. Also, some of the users from direct (turquoise) and organic (dark blue) were possibly triggered by social media platforms and researched about the competition by themselves, through a searching machine (organic) or directly typing in the link (direct) instead of going through the link in social media.



The results presented here show that the measures of the strategies have achieved positive results for the competition. The four objectives and thus the challenge can be considered achieved. The evaluation of all collected data can be viewed in the complementary document "Evaluations".

Learnings

The following learnings can be drawn from the implementation of the social media campaign.

- Posts with more personal content, such as pictures of people, are better received (higher interaction)
- hashtags on Facebook and LinkedIn have no effects on reach.
- Through engaging with other social media profiles by linking, tagging, sharing, the reach of posts can significantly be increased.
- Sponsored posts must be well thought out and integrated into the strategy from the beginning, if possible. Spontaneous implementation does not necessarily achieve the desired result.
- The platform insights from Instagram can only be traced back up to a maximum of 30 days. Everything that lies beyond the 30 days can no longer be viewed.

Recommendations

Even though social media is not the biggest channel that draws users to the website yet, it is an important one which should be kept active. Therefore, a social media marketing campaign with extensive content for the competition in 2022 is recommended. The integration of paid posts is also recommended as they can contribute to an increase in reach and followers. They should be an integral part of the strategy and integrated into the planning process from the beginning. Thus, a paid post at the beginning of the application phase could possibly have a greater effect on the number of applications than one at the end of the application phase, as was the case here. Regarding the engagement with partners and (former) participants it is recommended to actively engage with them and ask for sharing, commenting, liking posts, as this does not necessarily happen automatically. It would also make sense to contact influencers that are active in the field of sustainable development, travel and tourism and social entrepreneurship. In this way, the overall reach and visibility could possibly be increased.

Part of the strategy was to plan the content a week ahead. However, it is recommended to plan some posts further ahead, while still being flexible to adapt posts when current information needs to be added. A social media marketing and management dashboard like Hootsuite is recommended as it could assist with planning and publishing of the content.

More interactive content with prompt wording and more precise call to actions, to create a higher engagement with the followers, through for example questionnaires, is recommended

for Instagram. To increase visibility, it would also help to comment and like other accounts within the target group, ideally half an hour before and after posting content.

Regarding Google Analytics, it is recommended to find someone who has more extensive knowledge about it and is interested in following up with the evaluation. Here, the person could dive deeper into the user behaviour to optimize the strategy even further.

Complementary Documents and Links

- Competition Website <https://socialtourismcompetition.com/About>
- Editorial Plan
- Style Guide
- Evaluations
- Sample GA Tracking Link Spread Sheet
- Visuals
- Caption Document
- Tool Descriptions