

Flavor of SLO 2012:
Applying Concepts from the Communication Discipline
to the Marketing and Execution of a Local Event

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Introduction:

In four of the most formative years of my life, I have had the opportunity to live in the beautiful city of San Luis Obispo, and receive an amazing education in Communication Studies from the California Polytechnic State University. For my senior project, I knew I wanted to do an applied project so that I could go beyond the pen and paper, and see a variety of concepts and skills from the communication discipline put into action and practical application. Throughout the planning and execution of this event, I saw tactics and strategies of persuasion put to use, and experienced small group dynamics over an extended period of time, all while working towards the goal, the United Way of San Luis Obispo benefit event, Flavor of SLO.

Origin:

Flavor of SLO is an event that was created by Jessica Sisco as her senior project in 2009. “Flavor of SLO is a non-profit promotional fundraising event benefitting San Luis Obispo ALPHA, Inc. and the United Way of San Luis Obispo. This event was created ... with the purpose of stimulating interest in local restaurants and wineries of San Luis Obispo County ...” (Sisco). Ever since, it has been adopted each year by a new group of students for their own senior project. Over the past four years, the event has evolved and expanded greatly. However, the heart and mission of highlighting what the local area has to offer, all while giving back to the community, has remained the same.

This year’s event has been in the works since the end of spring quarter in 2011. This is when we first contacted United Way of San Luis Obispo County about taking on the Fourth Annual Flavor of SLO. Similar to its start three years ago, Flavor of SLO remains today as a local food, wine and beer tasting event in which all proceeds go towards benefiting the community through the local nonprofit, United Way. United Way of San Luis Obispo County,

which has been around for over fifty years, seeks to create lasting change in the community by focusing on the building blocks for a good life: education, income and health. Their mission is to “improve lives by mobilizing the caring power of the community” (“Vision, Mission and Goals”).

Coming to the end my fourth year of living in San Luis Obispo, I have grown to care very much about this city. It has truly become my home during my college years, and not just a place where I go to school. Last spring and summer, I had the opportunity to intern with the Parks and Recreation Department of San Luis Obispo for their 32nd Annual SLO Triathlon. It was my first time really getting involved with the San Luis Obispo community beyond the college limits. As a student, I think it is easy to get caught up in my own school and social experiences that I forget that the college is only one part of the city. I have participated in numerous club fundraisers and events without always recognizing that there is a larger community that I can be supporting.

Along with learning about getting involved in the community, I also learned that sometimes it is not always clear where the money raised at charity events goes. One of the most important aspects of the Flavor of SLO benefit to me was best summarized by the catch phrase, “what’s raised here, stays here.” Having the money go directly back into this community was something that impressed me early on about the event. This inspired and motivated me throughout the entirety of my project because I was thrilled about the opportunity to serve the community that I call home. What better way to support the San Luis Obispo community than by bringing its local businesses and people together.

The Team:

Group communication defined in *Working In Groups* by Engleberg and Wynn is, “the interaction of three or more interdependent members working to achieve a common goal” (4).

Although there is a set minimum of people needed for a group, there is no maximum. However, as I learned in small group communication, an ideal group size tends to range between five and seven members. This isn't necessarily a perfect number, but group dynamics become more challenging as the group size grows. This is because, "as groups grow larger, individual satisfaction with and commitment to the group often decrease" (5). A group of six of us joined together to make the 2012 Flavor of SLO team. The team was comprised of six Communication Studies seniors: Allison Sasscer, Alyssa Santos, Lisa Hillebrecht, Quinn Thompson, Sarah Cooper, and myself. The United Way staff members that we worked alongside with were: Charlene Rosales, Chief Operating Officer, and Jessica Blum, AmeriCorps Member. The United Way staff members brought us to eight members total, but it was the six of us students who interacted with one another most often, and made for an ideal sized team. Although it is encouraged to have an odd number of members for voting purposes, it worked to our advantage to have an even six so that people could be paired up for each of the different roles.

The team roles for the six students were divided into three different categories: vendors, event coordinators, and marketing. Quinn and Sarah took on the vendor coordinator roles. They split the work up by having one person in charge of food, and the other one in charge of beverages. The responsibilities of vendor coordinators were: to contact the local restaurants, wineries and breweries, ask if they would like to participate in our event, and from there act as the liaisons for getting committed participants and the necessary paperwork. Event coordinators, Allison and Lisa, had a slightly more broad set of responsibilities. Between the two of them, they were in charge of coordinating music, volunteers, auction items, and keeping track of meeting agendas. Their tasks revolved mainly around things that would be taking place the day of the event. Alyssa and I were in charge of marketing. We were responsible for social media outreach,

printed materials, website design and management, ticket sales and other forms of advertising and outreach. Tasks that I worked on specifically were the following: Facebook social media outreach, video promo, advertisements for *New Times* and *Tolosa Press*, emailing previous attendees, acquiring UGS sponsorship, Communication Studies Department email, Cal Poly Portal announcement, poster/ sign making, committee shirts, professor invitations, and print material distribution.

In one of our first meetings with United Way, we discussed the potential limitations of having the team made up of students all from one major. In notes from the previous year, it was mentioned that it would be beneficial to have more diversity in majors on the team, due to some of the skill sets needed for this project. The main part of this suggestion was recommending that there be a member with a Graphic Communications or Design background as well as someone with web design and management experience. With a team already consisting of six members, we were hesitant to add any more. Our biggest concern was that adding more people to the team would increase the likelihood of communication breaking down within the group. Although none of us possessed the needed design or web skill sets, we opted against adding another member. Our rationale for this decision was that what we lacked in our own skill sets, we made up for with our connections and ability to communicate with people who do. Between six of us students, we had an abundance of names and connections with people who we knew we could call on for assistance.

In Malcom Gladwell's, *The Tipping Point*, he discusses an idea he calls, "The Law of the Few." This law introduces three types of people: connectors, mavens, and salesmen. Connectors are those "people with a special gift for bringing the world together" (38). Although Gladwell applies this title to certain individuals, I started to see our team as a whole embodying the role of

a connector. Between the six of us, as well as Charlene and Jessica, we knew of many people and resources that we were able to reach out to and utilize to execute the event.

Another important aspect of a connector according to Gladwell is not only in the number of people one knows, but the kinds of people that person knows. This involves the ability to “occupy many different worlds and subcultures and niches” (48). As a whole team, with eight different people, the connections and resources we had access to came a variety of diverse groups. For example, with Jessica being a part of Americorp, she was able to connect us with older crowds of people, which worked towards mixing up our volunteer team with both older and younger forces. Charlene, having a significant role with United Way, had connections with the local businesses and professionals of the community on more personal levels. Her access to these different circles of people in San Luis Obispo was vital to our event. Through Charlene, we acquired generous donation items, and were able to reach and publicize to more non-college members of the community. Alyssa and I, through our own personal friend connections, knew many Graphic Communication and Design students that were willing to help us. Many other aspects of the event, including musical guests and getting the necessary equipment and supplies, were gathered together through the various connections of other members of the team.

Aside from some minor complications of not having a designated graphics and web design team member, the distribution of team roles was relatively simple. With each of us having different skills and experiences with the various classes, internships and jobs, we found it very easy to determine which role and assignment went with each person. Personalities and interest in a particular aspect of the event helped with the decision making process. There was also an enormous amount of flexibility and cooperation from everyone to make things work.

Engleberg and Wynn divide the different basic types of groups into eight categories, including: primary groups, social groups, self-help groups, learning groups, service groups, civic groups, work groups, and public groups. “You can identify each type of group by observing its setting (where and when the group meets) and its membership (who is in the group)” (11). These categories are not exclusive, and often times the various types of groups overlap. Based on the definitions of each group type, I saw our Flavor of SLO 2012 team falling within five of the categories of different group types.

First and foremost, this group was a work group, specifically an ad hoc committee. A work group’s purpose is “to achieve specific tasks and routine duties on behalf of a business or organization” (12). Within the work group category there are committees and work teams. What classifies a group as being a committee is that it is “given a specific assignment by a larger group or by a person in a position of authority, common in the work environment, [and] are often used by service groups to accomplish specific tasks” (12). Even more specifically, we were an ad hoc committee. Ad hoc committees “form for a specific purpose and disbands once it has completed its assignment or task” (12). Once our event was done and all concluding meetings occurred, we no longer met as a team. Following this category, our team was also a service group because we worked “to support worthy causes that help people outside the group” (12). The event was put on to benefit United Way of San Luis Obispo County, which as a nonprofit organization, works towards helping the community.

As we took on the event in a Cal Poly “learn by doing” fashion, we found that our team also fell under the category of a learning group. The purpose of a learning group is “to help members gain knowledge and develop skills” (12). This experience was all about trial and error, supporting and helping one another by using skills and knowledge we have acquired through

work, internships, and the classroom. We met as a team on a regular basis to discuss progress, but at the same time were able to discuss what we were learning throughout this process.

Something that was unique to our team was that we all had personal relationships with one another prior to forming this team, and because of that, we could also consider ourselves under the categories of a primary group and social group. A primary group's purpose is "to provide members with affection, support, and a sense of belonging and confidence" and a social group's purpose is, "to share common interests in a friendly setting or participate in social activities" (12). We all know one another through classes in the same major, but we have also all been good friends for many years with a variety of connections. For example, three of us, Allison, Lisa and myself, have been roommates for the past four years; Allison and Sarah have been friends since high school, Lisa and Alyssa are both coworkers and co-bible study leaders, Quinn, Allison, Lisa and Sarah are part of the same bible study, and Alyssa and I were in the same bible study during the summer. All these different relationships that were formed before, provided a sense of support and belonging that is essential in a primary group.

For us, the primary group continues into a social group. Although forming this group for Flavor of SLO was first and foremost to put on the event, we found ways of having fun and bonding with one another while working on the event. One example that comes to mind is our team photo shoot that we had early on in the year. The photo shoot was necessary for the project, but we didn't just immediately split off once this task was complete. We all went out to eat and spent time hanging out with one another after.

Knowing what type of group you are a part of and its purpose can help you have a clear understanding of what the group's expectations and goals are. Whether it was issues we struggled with at times, or tasks we excelled and thrived at, we learned the importance of balance

within our team. Engleberg and Wynn express that, “an ideal group succeeds because it achieves balance” (16). Balance is achieved through “an understanding of the interplay of the contradictory forces [group dialectics] that operate in all groups” (17). For this team, the blending of different group types demonstrates an achievement in balance within the group dialectic of task dimensions and social dimensions. Being a work, learning and service group kept us focused on the goal of our efforts, and being a primary and social group allowed us to remember the importance of the interpersonal relationships and social dimensions of group dynamics. “When groups balance work and play, they are more productive” (20).

Working with a group on a project as extensive as this is both a necessary and challenging experience. Like any group, working with others has both its advantages and disadvantages. However, it is important to note that the planning of this event would not be possible without a team. The amount and challenges of the different tasks and responsibilities would have been too much for any less than the six-person team we had. It was also a major advantage that close relationships between group members already existed because we were able to bypass some of the primary tension that exists in groups that are not as familiar. Some may argue that mixing professional and personal can create difficulties, but reflecting on our overall group performance, it worked in our favor to have a team so supportive, flexible, and comfortable communicating with one another.

Process and Overview of Event Planning:

During fall quarter of 2011, we met with United Way about once a month. These preliminary meetings were used to become familiar with the United Way staff we would be working with, establish our commitment to the project, lay out a broad timeline of future meetings, and discuss and assign important tasks. These meetings were important in establishing

our group goals and setting our expectations of what we wanted this process and product to look like. We discussed general roles of each team member and reviewed different aspects of the previous year's event.

Starting winter quarter of 2012, we began to meet more regularly and were in the midst of all the official planning. As the student team, we met every week to check in with one another, update everyone on what we had been working on, what we had completed and things we needed help with. We would then take the time to divide new tasks, and plan action steps for our next meeting with each other as well as for our meetings with United Way. In terms of collaboration meetings, we met every other week with United Way staff members, Charlene and Jessica. These meetings would discuss more official deadlines and responsibilities that needed to be completed. Our student team worked hard on putting this event together, with United Way acting as a guide for what worked before and what needed to change this year and taking care of some of the city paperwork and larger purchases needed for the event. This collaboration between student group and official nonprofit is what I think makes this an exciting applied project and experience. To work with a well-known organization and have an already established event simplified things. It did not mean organizing this event was easy, but it allowed us to gain experience without getting bogged down by things such as paperwork details.

During spring quarter of 2012, the quarter in which our event actually took place, both meetings as a student group and collaboration ones with United Way, were held weekly. As things came down to the wire, good communication was very important. Many of our tasks began to intertwine with one another. To ensure that we were being efficient with our time, we needed to communicate well to make sure we were not doubling up on the tasks and responsibilities. For example, vendor coordinators had to ask many different places to

participate, and for those who declined, we asked if they would be interested in donating something for the auction. Constant communication was needed between vendor coordinators and event coordinators who were also approaching businesses for donations. We wanted to remain as organized and professional as possible in not accidentally asking the same business twice. This was also in hopes of leaving a good impression so that a business might consider participating next year. Our team shared files and emails to ensure clear communication with one another occurred. Both vendor coordinators and event coordinators also needed to be in constant contact with Alyssa and I with updates for posting on social media. During spring quarter, we maintained a very constant upkeep on all of our social media outlets. In order for us to communicate the public properly, we needed strong communication from the team.

Tasks and Application:

With a general overview of the event planning process, here is a look at specific tasks and situations that I was involved in, and how communication concepts are applied.

Consistency

One of the main focuses of our advertising was on what we wanted to do for our logo. For the previous three years, the logo has changed every time. Going on its fourth year, we believed the event was becoming more established and that we could try to start “branding” the event. One definition for branding is “a purposeful strategy for identifying what an organization does, communicating who it does that for, and establishing understanding of why those two things are important” (Arozian 9). This definition is supposed to be applied to an organization as a whole rather than to an event, but essentially, we were looking at branding in terms of making the logo identifiable and well known. We really liked the logo that was developed last year, and decided for the first time, to keep it the same as the previous year, and just make some

modifications to posters, postcards, and the website. We all agreed that this logo was a good representation of the event and that staying consistent was key in making the event recognizable. In all the emails, press releases and postings on online community news boards, Facebook and Twitter, and website, we made sure that the logo was updated and the same. Although consistency is key, we also wanted to update and give it a fresh spin. We wanted to balance out the logo being recognizable, but fresh and exciting at the same time. The website was given a makeover with a new layout and an added color that we were able to incorporate into our print material.

The article, “Branding for Nonprofits,” discusses “how a community nonprofit can establish a presence among those it serves and those it depends on for support by linking its name to a very recognizable symbol” (Arozian 9). In the section entitled, “The Key is Consistency,” it recognizes that funding is not always abundant for nonprofits, but what can be done is keeping things consistent. The author advises, “make sure you convey the same message with all of your brochures, with every email you send, with any signs you may create, and even when you’re just talking to people. Use the same logo, the same typefaces, and similar layouts on every single piece you print” (Arozian 9).

After we gained access to all the marketing responsibilities, the first thing Alyssa and I worked on was making sure everything stayed consistent. This meant that everything that was published or sent out had that same red logo. On some of the online community boards that had already been posted on, some had the old logo from two years ago. Alyssa and I made it a priority to make those updates and changes. From that point on, everything that we did for visual advertising we used the same red logo. Along with the logo, whenever possible, we also tried to stay consistent with our font use. The font we used for the website we included on our printed

materials as well as our advertisements and thank you advertisements in *New Times* and *Tolosa Press*. “This dedication to consistency is called message discipline. It is the key to building a brand for your group when you don’t have a lot of money to spend... it will amplify and protect your investment by making sure all of your communications complement and reinforce one another” (Arozian 10).

One of the things that we tried to implement during our planning process was to be informed and aware of what other team members were posting. Part of the reasoning behind this was to once again present a consistent message and strong group effort in planning the event. When you “retweet” someone on Twitter, it means you are posting that person’s original “tweet” onto your own page so that it is shared with your own network of friends. When you “like” someone’s status or post on Facebook, it shows up on both your page and the other person’s page that you “liked” the post, therefore informing your friends about something you are interested in.

By “retweeting,” and “liking” one another’s statuses, and by posting about Twitter on Facebook or vice versa, we kept with that idea of message discipline in reinforcing our communication. This reinforcement helped spread the word and reach out to more of our friends and followers. Additionally, we also thought that high group awareness would make things more professional because it would show us as all being informed and in the know about the event at all times.

In part with keeping everything consistent was keeping everything easily accessible. All of our social media and online outreach were all connected with one another. Our website linked to our Facebook and Twitter pages and our Facebook and Twitter had the link to the website posted periodically as well. Anytime we mentioned, “buying your tickets,” we would include the

website link, even though it was already on the page. We wanted people to have immediate access so that there was no chance of disconnect.

Another example of branding and keeping logo and image of the event consistent was making the Flavor of SLO committee shirts. These shirts were made for just the student team. The shirts allowed us to present ourselves as a united group, representing the event, but also setting us apart from all the other volunteers and United Way staff during the event. During the advertising and marketing phases, we wore the shirts to the United Way board meeting, the Soapbox Chamber of Commerce meeting, and for various club meetings on campus. These Flavor of SLO shirts were well received. Guests at the event even asked if there was a way to purchase one for themselves, something that next year's team might consider.

Influence

Persuasion is defined by Charles U. Larson in his book, *Persuasion: Reception and Responsibility*, as, “the process of cocreating a state of identification between a source and a receiver that results from the use of verbal and/or visual symbols” (11). In promoting an event, persuasion plays a crucial role for gaining attendance and support.

In Robert Cialdini's book, *Influence Science and Practice*, Cialdini discusses several different principles that influence people's decision making. Some of his principles and concepts that I found applicable to my experience were: contrast principle, social proof, and liking. In his first chapter, Cialdini introduces the concept of the contrast principle that “affects the way we see the difference between two things that are presented one after another” (12). It explains that when placed together, the second item will seem “more different than it actually is” (12) because it is set next to the first. As one of the two marketing coordinators, one of my jobs was to monitor ticket sales. Deciding pricing and spreading the word was a team effort, but Alyssa and I

were the ones who were constantly checking our sales progress. Since the capacity of our event site, The Jack House & Gardens, was three hundred (including volunteers and vendors) we were aiming to reach about two hundred and fifty guests. We expected there to be some sales at the door, so our goal for presale tickets was two hundred. Although this was an event for the entire community and not just college students, we found that when marketing to our peers, we really pushed for them to purchase presale tickets with the reason that the price would increase ten dollars at the door. As a team, it was decided that thirty dollars for presale student tickets was a fair price, but I know that for most college students that is still seen as a lot of money. Our hope was that in comparison to the fifteen dollar difference for general admission and ten dollar increase at the door, the presale price would seem much more reasonable and affordable.

Another principle we tried to utilize with our peers was social proof. “Classic and contemporary theorists have argued that individuals’ attitudes at a given moment are at least partially derived from the opinions perceived in their immediate social context” (Catherine et al. 957). In other words, the principle of social proof states, “that we determine what is correct by finding out what other people think is correct” (Cialdini 99). It also states that “the greater the number of people who find any idea correct, the more a given individual will perceive the idea to be correct” (108). Through the use of social media and word of mouth, one of our main strategies for getting our friends and peers to attend was by informing them of all the other people who were going. If we could convince a person that all their friends were going, it would be much easier to sell the person a ticket.

Another element of social proof is similarity. Social proof works more effectively when people are under the impression that they are “observing behavior of people just like us” (Cialdini 118). Alyssa and I tried to apply this aspect of the principle in a couple of different

ways. The first way our team put this method to work was by having a team photo shoot. Part of this was for team bonding, but the marketing importance to this tactic was to create a way of personalizing the event to us as a team. I made signs for us to represent the event (logo and date) and we took pictures at one of the local wineries. We posted these pictures on Facebook as a way of introducing us as the new team, show that the event planning was on its way and that we were all really excited. We also used these pictures for our team page on the website. With the pictures, we included sections for each of the three teams and a little bit about each of us individually. Especially amongst the student population, it helped not only make us recognizable as the people working on the event, but also the personalization worked towards showing our peers that we are students just like them working towards putting on this local event.

Social media combined the usage of both social proof and another principle: liking. The principle of liking explains, “as a rule, we most prefer to say yes to the requests of people we know and like” (Cialdini 142). Facebook works well for this principle because regardless of how well you know a person, all your connections are labeled as “friends.” The team would send out invites and messages to all of our “friends” and we received many responses. Just like social proof, similarity is an element that falls under the principle of liking. “we are more likely to comply when requesters are dressed in a manner similar to us, are physically attractive, have recently done us a favor, or interact with us using first names” (Burger 35). Put simply, we like those who are or we see as being similar to us. With this in mind, we also appealed to the students in our major by asking Dr. Winebrenner to send an email to the entire Communication Studies Department advertising our event. With the whole team comprised of Communication Studies students, he was willing to help us out and forward the email. Our team also made an

announcement at the Communication Studies Club meeting. Our efforts paid off because there were many Communication Studies students that attended the event.

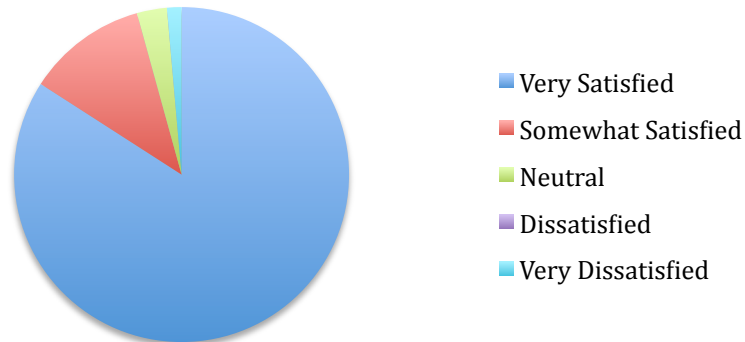
Results:

Success can be defined in a variety of ways. It can be described and measured in both qualitative and quantitative forms. The qualitative form breaks down into categories of completion and execution, as well as vendor, guest, and team satisfaction. The quantitative aspects include: number of attendees, growth from previous years, money earned, and people reached.

For the overall event, Flavor of SLO 2012 was definitely a success. On the most basic level, our team of six alongside with United Way of SLO County were able to put together and execute a food, wine, and beer tasting event that lasted the entire three hours on the scheduled date of May 6, 2012. All twenty-two food and beverage vendors who were confirmed to be at the event were present, both musical performances provided the needed equipment and entertainment as promised, and the raffle and silent auction occurred as planned. All aspects that were supposed to be included in the event were delivered. On a less objective measuring scale, I felt we were able to execute a smooth running event with relative ease. The few hick-ups that did occur were minimal and were able to be taken care of without a hindrance to the event.

Shortly after our event, we sent out a survey to all the guests and vendors in attendance. Although the number of responses did not match the numbers who attended, the overall feedback was very positive. For the question, "Overall, how satisfied were you with Flavor of SLO 2012?" eighty four percent of survey responders answered, "very satisfied."

Overall, how satisfied were you with Flavor of SLO 2012?



The written in comments had some good feedback and suggestions to keep in mind for next year such as “more seating” or “providing free water,” but overall, most comments were very complimentary of the team and the event. Some of these included:

- “You are in the building stage of an amazing local event...keep it up!”
- “It was truly a lovely event. It was so well run and I believe seeing the gals in red T’s running around and also trying to mingle was a sign that they kept things running smoothly and efficiently. Thank you so much for a wonderful day!”
- “Team was outstanding! Everyone, including vendors and musicians, felt taken care of. Beautiful day!”
- “None [suggestions], Everything was great, good music, very good food and generous servings, wine and beer tasting good, great raffle. And most of all friendly and helpful staff and volunteers. This year’s location was much nicer then last year at the park. The entire event was extremely well organized, did you hire a professional company? Keep up the good work and we look forward to next years event.”

In terms of quantified measures of success, in its fourth year, Flavor of SLO has really hit its stride as a local nonprofit event. As a marketing coordinator, I was very pleased with the ticket sales because it was a quantitative way of measuring the success of our marketing. At the ideal location of the Jack House, we reached the full capacity with our vendors and guests. Our goal of two hundred and fifty guests was met with two hundred presale tickets and an additional fifty at the door. We exceeded last year's ticket sales by \$1000.

After calculating our expenses, our overall profit did not match that of last year's. However, when reviewing the budget, we realized we had a couple of large expenses that were not included in last year's expenses, but were all necessary for the success of this year's event. Some of these additional expenses included newspaper ads, a banner for Marsh Street, and most importantly—new wine glasses. Our hope is that some of these items will be around for next year, such as the banner and left over wineglasses, so next year's event will hopefully be able to exceed us in profit since they will have fewer expenses.

For personal results, there were two tasks in particular that I was in charge of that had successful results. These two projects were Facebook outreach and securing a print sponsorship with University Graphic Systems (UGS).

Facebook was the social media outreach on which I focused. We kept the same page from last year, but went to work on updating all the information, and spreading the word to all of our friends and family. I made the transition of the page to the updated "timeline" version of Facebook, and tried to post things once or twice a week, depending on what was needed. Updates included: newly acquired donations and vendors, information on musical guests and sponsorships, different event promotions such as radio interviews and club meeting announcements, as well as pictures of the team working and planning the event. I also kept up to

date with “liking” all the businesses that joined us for the event. The Facebook page started at slightly over fifty “Likes” from the previous year, and were up to nearly two hundred and fifty by the time of our event. Other results were how many people we were reaching through Facebook. Between January and early March our page had a high point of reaching less than two thousand people. During March through May, we increased that to a high point of over five thousand people.

In terms of the UGS sponsorship, for most events, Flavor of SLO included, printed materials are needed to help spread the word. Social media and other online advertising would reach many, but not necessarily all the demographics we were shooting for. Having physical posters hung up and displayed, as well as handing out postcards, had a different kind of appeal than an advertising campaign that was purely digital and web based. Although Alyssa took on a majority of the actual design, I worked on gaining our print sponsorship with UGS. As with any event, we were trying to keep our costs down as much as possible while still reaching as many people as we could. Although I looked at the contacts listed on the website, I also asked a friend who works at UGS who the best person would be to get in touch with to avoid any communication break down. Once she gave me the name, I contacted him both by phone and email.

I approached UGS with a couple of different strategies, both that seemed to work and successfully gain us our sponsorship with them. I first appealed to the manager that UGS has worked with us in the past, establishing a sense of tradition or pre-investment with the event. Overall, the manager seemed enthusiastic and very willing to help, but also expressed some concern in the way things had gone the previous year. (There had been some confusion or discretion in what was to be provided in exchange for their services.) I made sure to be very clear

in what we were able to offer, and told him that we would be very prompt about providing what was promised.

In this case, in exchange for printing all of our posters and postcards, we would give them website and social media recognition and provide two complimentary tickets to the event. We worked out preliminary numbers and paper types but I let him know ahead of time that I would need to double check. I tried to keep him as informed as possible throughout the design and printing process. He switched me over to talk to another manager, and the rest of the transaction was carried out with her. When we received the proofs of both the posters and postcards we were thrilled. We did have to change the number of postcards needed, but this was not a problem because UGS was still coming out ahead for the monetary amount in printing they were sponsoring us with. All of our printing came out wonderfully, and everything that was promised on our side was delivered. Overall, it turned out to be a very successful sponsorship deal.

Reflection:

In our final meeting with United Way, both Charlene and Rick London, Chief Executive Office of United Way of San Luis Obispo County, expressed how pleased they were with our execution and efforts in making this event happen. Rick commented that continuing and expanding an already established event versus creating an event from scratch takes very different types of people and efforts. He said that our group had done an excellent job this year and Charlene added that we had set the bar very high.

Rick also emphasized how impressed he was with our group dynamics. He compared us to the popular television show, *Friends*, in that we worked and collaborated so well and that it was truly an ensemble and team effort. Each person played an important role and was vital in the success of everyone else, highlighting that important aspect of interdependence in a group. Rick

exclaimed, “If you were a television series, you would run for many seasons!” It is during these times of reflection that demonstrates success is measured in so many more ways than just numbers and monetary gain. Charlene told us that next year’s team has some large shoes to fill, and added that we reminded her how much she loves working with college students.

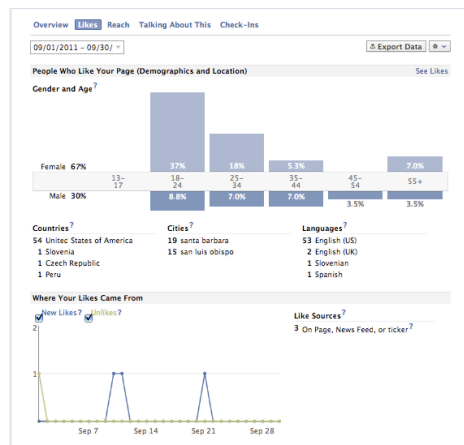
I am so proud of our team as well as my own personal contributions to this event. It was such an amazing experience in which I learned so much about event planning, group dynamics, and myself. We worked hard for over six months and all of our efforts paid off with a very successful event. We raised over eight thousand dollars, and I am so thrilled with this contribution we were able to make to the city and community that I love so much. As Allison mentioned in her portion of the soapbox presentation at the Chamber of Commerce, “Flavor of SLO gives people the opportunity to care, and care well for our neighbors in need.” Coordinating the event allowed us to live this out in a very hands-on way. Working with United Way to put on this benefit opened up the opportunity for me to do something that reached beyond myself and went towards helping others, an opportunity for me to understand what it means to “live united” (“Vision, Mission and Goals”).

Works Cited

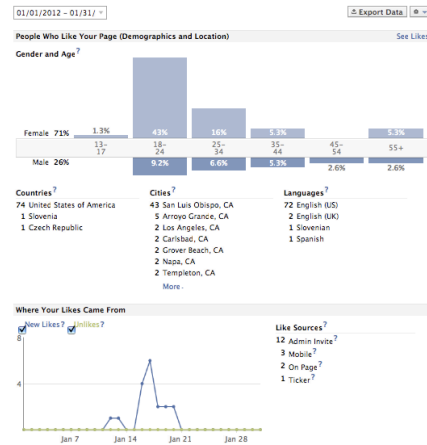
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Appendix A

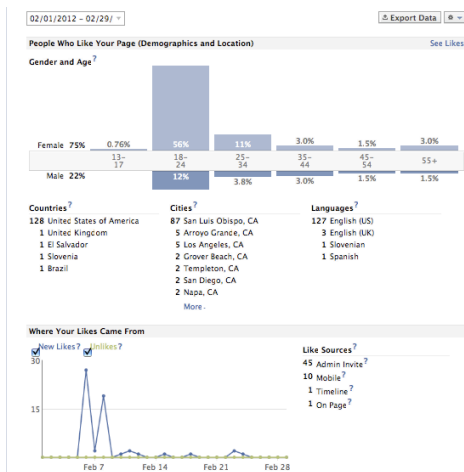
Facebook “Like” Statistics



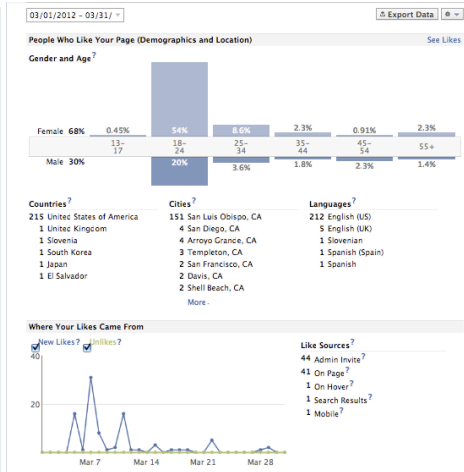
September 2011



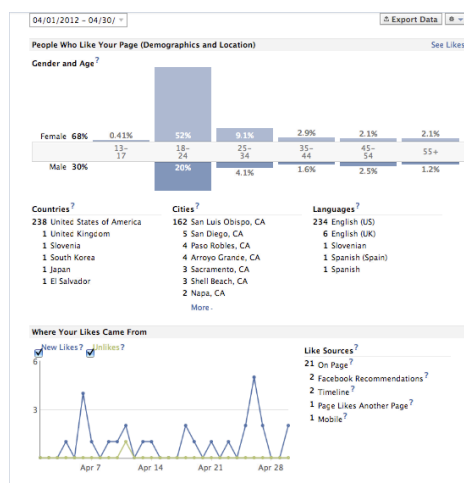
January 2012



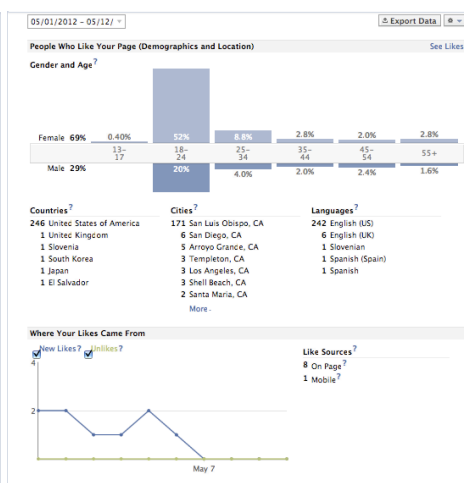
February 2012



March 2012



April 2012

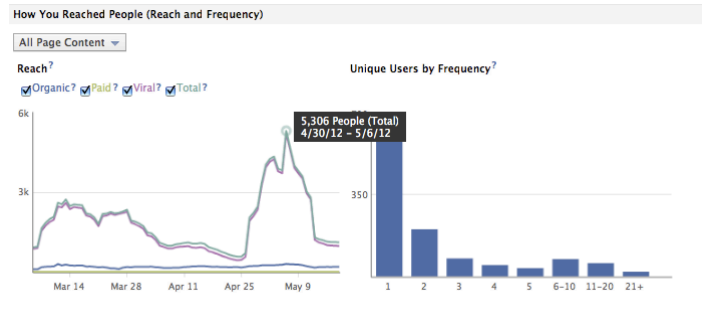
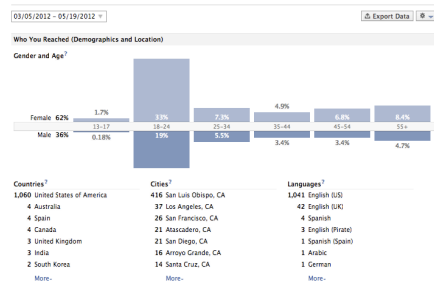


May 2012

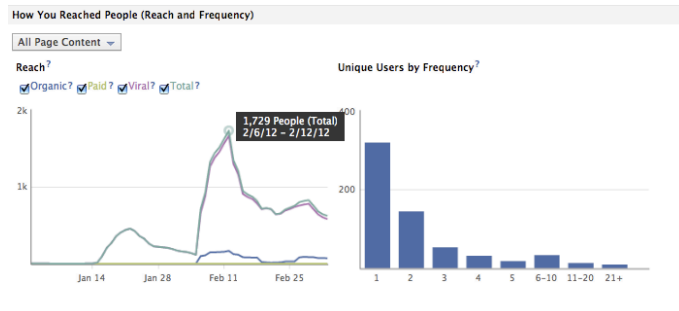
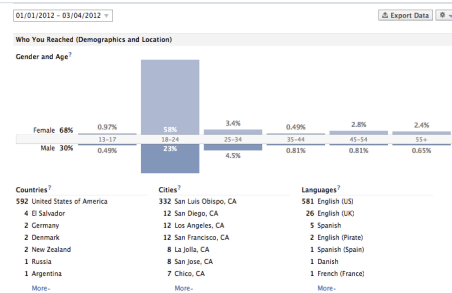
Appendix B

Facebook Reach Statistics

March 2012- May 2012



January 2012- March 2012



Total

The number of unique people who saw any content associated with your Page (including any Ads or Sponsored Stories pointing to your Page) from 3/5/12 to 5/19/12. Each point represents the unique people reached in the 7-day period ending with that day.

Viral

The number of unique people who saw a story about this Page published by a friend from 3/5/12 to 5/19/12. These stories include liking your Page, posting to your Page's Wall, liking, commenting on or sharing one of your Page posts, and taking other actions related to your Page that their friends could see. Each point represents the unique people reached in the 7-day period ending with that day.

Organic

The number of unique people who saw your content in News Feed, in ticker, or on your Page from 3/5/12 to 5/19/12. This includes people who have liked your page and people who haven't. Each point represents the unique people reached in the 7-day period ending with that day.

Paid

The number of unique people who saw an Ad or Sponsored Story that pointed to your Page from 3/5/12 to 5/19/12. Each point represents the unique people reached in the 7-day period ending with that day.

Appendix C

Flavor of SLO Website (Screenshots)



What We're All About

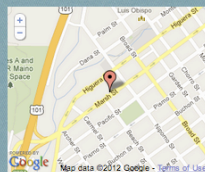
Enjoy an afternoon at the beautiful and historic Jack House and Gardens in downtown San Luis Obispo while sampling some of the best food and wine the Central Coast has to offer! Each year, this event raises thousands of dollars to benefit United Way of San Luis Obispo County, which seeks to create lasting change in the community by focusing on the building blocks for a good life: education, income and health. Join us as we host the fourth annual Flavor of SLO on May 6th from 1-4pm.



Registration Information

Where Is It?

Jack House and Gardens
536 Marsh Street
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401



What Does It Cost?

pre-sale:

\$30 - Student
\$45 - Adult

at the door:

\$40 - Student
\$55 - Adult

Guests must be 21 or older.

Students must bring a valid Student ID and Drivers License.

Alright, I'm In register [here!](#)

or

purchase via check:

please mail payment, earmarked for Flavor of SLO, to:
United Way of San Luis Obispo County
PO Box 14309
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

Contact Information

Flavor of SLO Team
United Way of San Luis Obispo County
flavorofslo@gmail.com
(805) 541-1234

Spread the Word:



site designed in 2012 by trevor hutton

[home](#) | [register](#) | [meet the team](#) | [photos](#)



Marketing

Alyssa Santos & Courtney Wen

Alyssa has been thrilled to aide in design of the brand new Flavor of SLO Website and other promotional materials. Her past experience in event outreach and public relations has proved to be extremely helpful in the marketing strategy of the 2012 event. Courtney's passion for connecting people and her love of the San Luis Obispo region fuels her desire to support the core values of United Way. After graduation, Alyssa hopes to travel and plans to further her work in the marketing field while Courtney seeks additional service-oriented opportunities.



Contact Information

Flavor of SLO Team
United Way of San Luis Obispo County
flavorofslo@gmail.com
(805) 541-1234

Spread the Word:



site designed in 2012 by trevor hutton

Appendix D Flavor of SLO Website (Screenshots) continued

Vendors & Sponsors



Donors

United Way Board Members
Cerro Caliente Cellars
Fresh & Easy Neighborhood Market
Saucelito Canyon Vineyard
My Pillow Pets
Beverly's Fabrics
Pizza Solo
Hearst Castle
Louisa's Place

Open Air Flowers
SLO Vintner's Association
Wine Wipes by Borracha
Tolosa Winery
Eureka Burger
Donna Wolfe Designs
Glassed Over
Sally Loo's

Firestone Vineyards
Frolicking Frog Cellars
Petit Soleil Bed and Breakfast
Vintage 1255
Park Lane Jewelry
Paso Almonds
Picking Daisies
Amnesia

Appendix E New Times and Tolosa Print Advertisements



Join us May 6, 2012
Jack House & Gardens
536 Marsh Street, SLO

Annual tasting event showcasing the very best food, wine and beer of the central coast to benefit United Way of San Luis Obispo County.

For more information & tickets follow us at: flavorofslo.com




Thank You
to our sponsors, vendors, donors, band and musician, and guests for making this year's Flavor of SLO a success! We hope you had fun and we will see you next year!

Visit flavorofslo.com to view pictures from the event.




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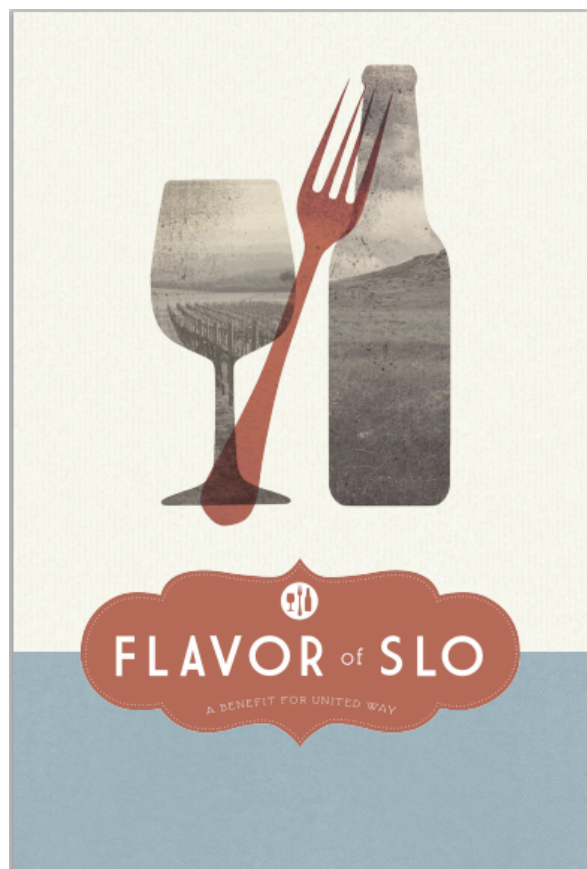



Thank You to our sponsors, vendors, donors, band and musician, and guests for making this year's Flavor of SLO a success! We hope you had fun and we will see you next year!

Visit flavorofslo.com to view pictures from the event.



Appendix F
Flavor of SLO 2012 Postcards



Front



Back

Appendix G

Flavor of SLO Posters



2012



2011

Appendix H
Flavor of SLO Banner



Appendix I
Flavor of SLO Flyer



Join us May 6, 2012
Historic Jack House & Gardens
536 Marsh Street, SLO
1-4pm

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit us at
www.flavorofslo.com

Appendix J

Flavor of SLO 2012 Professor Invites, Committee Shirts, Additional Signs



Appendix K United Way Newsletter

United Way of San Luis Obispo
County

LIVE UNITED

May 2012 eNewsletter

GIVE.

ADVOCATE.

VOLUNTEER.

Flavor of SLO at its Best

The 4th Annual Flavor of SLO was a huge success! On Sunday, May 6, the efforts of six Cal Poly students, United Way staff, 40 helpful volunteers, and a wide variety of food, wine and beer vendors brought an afternoon of entertainment to our community. Ticket sales this year have exceeded the years past by \$1,000, and all proceeds will benefit SLO County health and human service programs. Thank you to our sponsors [The Mortgage House](#), [The Krush 92.5 FM](#), and [UGS](#) for their contributions, and thank you to Dave Burns and [History of Painters](#) for providing the enjoyable music. Look for photos and next year's Flavor of SLO date on [Facebook](#).

Contact Us

United Way of SLO County
P.O. Box 14309
San Luis Obispo, CA 93406
Office (805) 541-1234
Fax (805) 543-5317
info@unitedwayslo.org
www.unitedwayslo.org

Quick Links

[United Way of SLO County](#)
[Live United](#)
[VolunteerSLO](#)
[Opportunity Exchange](#)