A Blue Dolphin Campaign

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Abstract

Alan Godley's journey into marine preservation began as a dock boy, a role that brought him face-to-face with the environmental impact of boat cleaning practices. Witnessing the washing of harsh chemicals into the ocean and waterways fueled his environmental consciousness. Years later, he founded the Blue Dolphin Company in 1989, an “organization focused on furthering the awareness of whales and dolphins, and all marine life … [supporting] the rehabilitation and release of marine mammals and other wildlife”.

Over the three decades, Mr. Godley has operated this nonprofit and small business, leveraging educational initiatives to inform people of all ages about relevant restoration projects. The funding for these efforts is sourced through website sales, vending opportunities, and direct donations. However, as technology and social media advanced, the Blue Dolphin Company encountered challenges in adapting to contemporary business practices, leading to struggles in maintaining its presence in the evolving marketplace. In the late 1990s, Blue Dolphin lost its brick-and-mortar establishment. Since then, sales have primarily emanated from an aging website that has not kept pace with modern design and functionality standards. This challenge prompted a reevaluation of business strategies and a recognition of the potential benefits that embracing contemporary practices could bring.

My introduction to the Blue Dolphin Company occurred at the San Luis Obispo swap meet, where Mr. Godley showcased T-shirts featuring endangered animals and bumper stickers adorned with humorous political commentary. The palpable passion he exuded for his work profoundly resonated with me, and from a public relations standpoint, it became evident that there was
untapped potential for the business to thrive in the contemporary world with a strategic and modernized approach. This encounter marked the initiation of efforts to revitalize and elevate the Blue Dolphin Company's presence in the digital age.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Statement of the Problem

The Blue Dolphin Company has been run and operated by Alan Godley since 1989. Mr. Godley commenced his entrepreneurial journey in 1993, transitioning his business to the nomadic realm of street fairs, festivals, and pop-ups, a practice consistently upheld over the subsequent decades. The serendipitous encounter with Mr. Godley at the San Luis Obispo Swap Meet in June of 2023 was through a vibrant tapestry of merchandise, including satirical political bumper stickers, an eclectic array of Grateful Dead shirts, and a nostalgic assortment of animal-themed t-shirts. It was during this meeting that Mr. Godley expanded upon the altruistic mission of his non-profit organization, a revelation that immediately piqued my interest and catalyzed a subsequent collaborative effort.

Despite the commendable work undertaken by The Blue Dolphin Company, a critical assessment revealed a perceptible challenge in extending its outreach to a broader demographic. The organization's digital footprint was notably modest, limited primarily to a dated website and a Facebook page that reflected design sensibilities of an earlier era when aesthetic considerations held lesser power over consumer preferences. Mr. Godley, however, expressed contentment in his small-scale approach, asserting a commitment to "changing minds one heart and mind at a time." This sentiment resonated profoundly, inspiring a personal commitment to augmenting the organization's impact. Recognizing the limitations inherent in Mr. Godley's physical presence constrained to events, the realization dawned that the around-the-clock presence of the internet could serve as an invaluable conduit for expanding The Blue Dolphin Company's influence.
Foremost among the challenges identified was the organization's limited visibility among the demographic of teenagers and young adults. A crucial avenue for strategic enhancement would be the ongoing efforts to amplify awareness and engagement.

**Background of the Problem**

The client demonstrated a profound interest in the educational facet of his business, emphasizing the importance of dedicating time to curate educational materials and topics. The freedom to engage in such intellectual endeavors hinges upon adequate finances derived from sales. The dual focus nature of his business emphasizes a need for a strategic balance between educational pursuits and economic viability. Mr. Godley's passion for his products is palpable, evident in the meticulous attention he devotes to their presentation. An anecdote from the beginnings of our collaboration involves the meticulous arrangement of tie-dye merchandise during booth setup. The deliberate organization of colors in a rainbow sequence, a method one mind may perceive as correct, was not the way Mr. Godley preferred to accentuate each product. His approach, rooted in the strategic use of contrasting colors, ensures a visually striking display, preventing any undesirable blending between adjacent items. This attention to detail mirrors Mr. Godley's commitment to delivering a memorable and aesthetically pleasing experience for potential customers. The juxtaposition of this hands-on involvement in product presentation with the broader context of large-scale department stores prompted contemplation on innovative merchandising practices within the retail landscape and how the majority of department store layouts follow a similar presence of contrast to draw consumer attention.
The meticulous attention to detail exhibited by Mr. Godley emphasizes his dedication to the company. However, this meticulousness has been a potential hindrance to progress in the context of effective time management. Convincing Mr. Godley of the importance of transitioning the business to social media proved challenging, given his unfamiliarity with this digital avenue and his inherent struggle in navigating technological domains where he lacked proficiency. This resistance to embracing emerging technological landscapes highlights the tension between a deeply ingrained dedication to traditional practices and the necessity of adapting to contemporary mediums for sustained relevance and growth.

The integration of social media platforms into a nonprofit's strategy has become a pivotal factor in fostering growth, engagement, and outreach. However, the persistence of old-fashioned principles and the established management approaches within Blue Dolphin can impede its transition to the dynamic realm of social media. Mr. Godley’s traditionalist perspective struggled in accepting the paradigm shift towards digital platforms, viewing these outlets as auxiliary rather than integral to the organization's mission. Reluctance to embrace emerging trends and technologies may result in missed opportunities to connect with diverse audiences, particularly the younger demographic that predominantly engages with causes through online channels. Missing out on opportunities of engagement would inevitably mean forfeiting opportunities of financial growth. Social media platforms offer leverage for widespread awareness, donor engagement, and overall organizational advancement. As the philanthropic landscape evolves, an unwavering commitment to traditional approaches would inadvertently limit the transformative potential that digital platforms offer to Blue Dolphin in the modern era.
Purpose of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to enhance the online visibility of The Blue Dolphin Company with the concurrent goal of augmenting revenue generation. If Mr. Godley were to harness his capacities towards the formulation of comprehensive lesson plans and the execution of seminars and educational workshops, the required financial management becomes an imperative aspect of such endeavors. My involvement in this initiative is specifically geared towards assuming the responsibility of overseeing and optimizing the funding essential for these educational pursuits. As the strategic marketing communications advisor to this company, my role is integral in ensuring the seamless execution of Mr. Godley's pedagogical initiatives.

In depicting the scope of this project, the primary objective is to diversify the organizational presence across social media platforms, particularly on Instagram and TikTok, recognized as prevalent channels among younger demographics. The strategic deployment of these platforms extends beyond mere sales promotion; it is conceived as a multifaceted approach with a dual focus on marketing and education. By tapping into the extensive reach of these platforms, characterized by the frequent perusal of links and advertisements by younger audiences, the objective is to establish a dynamic online presence.

The proposed strategy encompasses the creation and dissemination of informative videos and visually engaging infographics through these social media channels. These educational materials are curated to captivate and inform, thereby inciting curiosity and prompting consumers to delve deeper into the extensive knowledge available on the organization's platforms. The intention is to position these platforms not merely as transactional spaces but as educational hubs, fostering a community that actively seeks and values
information. As these channels amass larger views, the ripple effect is anticipated to translate into heightened sales revenue, thereby establishing a symbiotic relationship between educational outreach and financial sustainability. This strategic synergy aims to find an advantage in the provided potential of social media platforms to not only broaden the organization's reach but also to catalyze a positive feedback loop wherein increased visibility heightens educational impact and, consequently, augmented financial viability.

**Setting for the Study**

The principal social environment for the execution of this study will predominantly be established through a dual approach involving online data collection and physical presence at local fairs and events. The online component will serve as a foundational framework, encompassing a systematic and comprehensive gathering of data through virtual channels. Methodologies such as surveys, analytics, and online interactions will be deployed to ascertain pertinent information related to the organization's online presence and the perceived necessity for a social media campaign.

At the same time, the study will incorporate a tangible, field-based element by engaging in vending activities at local fairs and events. This facet is strategically designed to facilitate direct interaction with the public, allowing for the solicitation of firsthand opinions regarding the potential benefits and demand of implementing a social media campaign for The Blue Dolphin Company.

The combination of these two methodological approaches is intended to provide a holistic understanding of the organization's current status, as well as to gauge public sentiment
and preferences regarding the conceived social media initiative. This methodology seeks to enrich the study's comprehensiveness and validity by triangulating insights derived from both virtual and physical spheres.

Research Questions

The focus of the investigation lies in developing strategic approaches and interventions that will attract a larger audience to the company's online platforms. By employing data-driven methodologies and leveraging contemporary marketing strategies, the study aims to make clear pathways for optimizing the online presence of The Blue Dolphin Company, thereby fostering increased viewership. The symbiotic relationship between heightened online visibility and a subsequent increase in revenue is the fundamental connection upon which the research endeavors to provide empirical insights and actionable recommendations for the benefit of the organization.

Questions posed for this study include:

1. What social media outlets are most frequently used by the general public?
   a. By teens and young adults?

2. What apprehensions does the client have with bringing his business to a social media outlet?

3. What will be required communication-wise between the consultant and business owner?

4. Will people respond better to educational material or products?
Definitions of Terms

**Licensed Merchandise** - any goods or services bearing the Institution Trademarks or otherwise designated as licensed by the Institution’s Office of Trademark Management and Licensing.

**Pop-up shop** - is a temporary retail space that is typically used to introduce a new product line, test a new market or generate awareness for a product or cause. Pop-up stores are typically set up in areas with high foot traffic such as busy streets, malls, and city centers.

**Carousel** - up to 10 photos or videos shared in a single Instagram post.

**Reel** - videos in the length of sixty seconds or less.

**Systems Theory** - by taking a holistic view, systems theory attempts to explain how different parts of the system are interconnected and how they influence each other. Feedback loops, closed systems, and the role of components in larger systems are key concepts that help elucidate this interconnectedness.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

The review of literature outlines the role of integrated marketing communications in a social media public relations campaign and the role of systems theory in a nonprofit and small business.

Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) plan

An Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) plan for The Blue Dolphin Company is designed to coordinate various communication channels to foster a comprehensive strategy that enhances brand awareness, community engagement, and support for marine life conservation efforts. The objectives of this plan are to increase brand visibility and awareness of the Blue Dolphin Company’s mission. We’ll strive to cultivate an engaged and active community of supporters and advocates of the Alliance. We will also aim to drive meaningful interactions and support through donations, merchandise sales, and event participation.

The first strategy proposed aims to bolster social media engagement. The company will leverage Instagram, as outlined in the Instagram Proposal in chapter three, for visually compelling content, community engagement, and the facilitation of direct e-commerce through the Instagram Shop. The social media strategy can also be extended to other platforms, such as TikTok, to capture the attention of a younger demographic through engaging and shareable content.

Our second strategy is to revamp the existing website for The Blue Dolphin Company. Implementation of the proposed website revamping chapter three will create a user-friendly
interface, accurate inventory management, and a seamless integration with the organization's mission and values. The establishment of a blog section to publish informative articles, success stories, and updates on marine conservation efforts will further engage audiences and create a reason for customers to frequent the site for reasons other than purchasing products, generating a flow of digital traffic that can be monitored.

One proposed strategy is to initiate an email marketing campaign. This campaign will utilize a newsletter to disseminate informative pieces, success stories, and updates on marine conservation initiatives. The company can also provide locations for future vending pop-ups through this avenue. The implementation of segmented email campaigns will target different audience groups and encourage specific actions, such as purchase encouragement, donations, or event registrations.

Implementing public relations collaborations is vital to the growth and marketability of The Blue Dolphin Company. The company will engage in public relations efforts to secure media coverage, feature articles, and interviews to broaden the reach of The Blue Dolphin Company's mission. We will collaborate with influencers, environmentalists, and organizations to amplify the nonprofit's message and expand its network of supporters.

Event Marketing is an easy area to expand upon and can be utilized through various social media and newsletter channels. The company will organize and promote virtual and physical events to create opportunities for community engagement and fundraising. Utilization of social media platforms to create buzz around events will encourage participation.

The final strategy of the IMC plan is to implement educational outreach. The aim is to develop an educational series, as proposed in the next chapter, to disseminate valuable
information on marine conservation through various channels, including social media, the
website, and email campaigns. When spending budgets allow, there will also be opportunities for
Mr. Godley to lead lectures and seminars on the topic at various events and universities.

This plan will be evaluated through the monitoring of social media metrics such as
follower growth, engagement rates, and click-throughs. We will track website analytics to assess
user engagement, time spent on the site, and conversion rates. The company can evaluate the
success of email campaigns through open rates, click-through rates, and purchases and event
registration metrics. Finally, we will measure the impact of public relations efforts through media
mentions, reach, and sentiment analysis. The budget for this campaign will be configured by
allocating resources based on the specific needs of each communication channel, including
content creation, influencer collaborations, event organization, and public relation efforts.
This IMC plan aims to create a cohesive and impactful strategy for the Blue Dolphin Company,
ensuring that its mission resonates across various communication channels, thereby maximizing
engagement, support, and awareness for marine life conservation.

**Systems Theory and The Blue Dolphin Company: A Holistic Perspective**

Systems theory, a conceptual framework in organizational studies, offers valuable
insights into the functioning and dynamics of entities like The Blue Dolphin Company, a
nonprofit small business committed to marine life conservation. Systems theory views
organizations as complex, interconnected systems composed of various elements that work
together to achieve common goals. Here's how systems theory relates to The Blue Dolphin Company:
In the context of The Blue Dolphin Company, the ecosystem represents the broader environment in which the nonprofit operates. This includes marine life, the environment, supporters, volunteers, staff, and the communities it serves. Systems theory emphasizes understanding the interconnectedness of these elements and recognizing that changes in one component can have ripple effects throughout the entire system.

The Blue Dolphin Company receives inputs in the form of purchasing of products, volunteer efforts, and community engagement. Systems theory highlights the importance of these inputs, as they contribute to the organization's ability to function and achieve its mission. The organization produces outputs, such as successful marine conservation initiatives, educational programs, and community awareness. Systems theory encourages analyzing these outputs and their impact on the overall system, ensuring alignment with the organization's goals.

Systems theory emphasizes the significance of feedback loops within an organization. The Blue Dolphin Company engages with its community through social media, events, and newsletters, creating a feedback loop. This continuous interaction allows the organization to adapt and respond to the needs and preferences of its stakeholders.

Systems theory acknowledges the presence of subsystems within an organization. In the case of The Blue Dolphin Company, functional departments like marketing, conservation, and administration form integral parts of the larger system. Each subsystem contributes specialized functions that collectively contribute to the organization's success. At the moment, Mr. Godley functions as the entirety of the hierarchical system, being the company's sole employee. An aspiration of this proposal is to grow the company into a business that can support subsystem employees.
Systems theory underscores the need for organizations to adapt to their external environment. The Blue Dolphin Company must be adaptable to changes in the marine ecosystem, evolving conservation needs, and shifts in public awareness. The organization's ability to adapt ensures its long-term sustainability.

Systems theory views organizations as open systems that interact with their external environment. The Blue Dolphin Company collaborates with various stakeholders, including other environmental organizations, governmental bodies, and local communities. This open system perspective recognizes the importance of collaboration for collective impact.

In summary, applying systems theory to The Blue Dolphin Company provides a holistic understanding of the organization's structure, functions, and interactions. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of elements, the flow of inputs and outputs, the significance of feedback, the presence of subsystems, adaptability to change, and the organization's role as an open system within its broader environmental context. This perspective is valuable for strategic planning, organizational development, and ensuring the nonprofit's effectiveness in achieving its mission of marine life conservation.
Chapter 3

Data Sources

For this study, a message blast was sent to around 30 participants between the ages of 16 and 40 who had never heard of The Blue Dolphin Company. They were sent links to the TikTok and Instagram accounts with the hopes of generating a following base.

Website Design

The proposal advocates for a comprehensive transition of the Blue Dolphin Company towards a predominantly online operation. Central to this strategy is the meticulous reconfiguration of the company's website, conceived with the overarching goal of fostering sales by instilling the tangible connection between consumers’ purchases and their support of marine mammal conservation. The envisioned website design incorporates thematic graphics across every page, strategically interwoven to reinforce the organization's mission and values throughout the user’s scrolling experience.

To enhance user accessibility and streamline the browsing process, a departure from the conventional horizontal list format was recommended. Instead, a visually engaging drop-down list was proposed, where each category would seamlessly open a new page. This structural adjustment aimed to provide a more intuitive and visually appealing navigation experience for potential buyers. Specifically, it was proposed that distinct categories such as Grateful Dead merchandise, The Mountain clothing, and handmade items be segregated onto dedicated pages, each further categorized into tops, bottoms, and accessories. This organizational approach was
designed to optimize user experience and facilitate efficient exploration of the diverse product offerings.

A pivotal aspect of the proposed strategy involves the strategic promotion of the rarity and uniqueness inherent in the Blue Dolphin Company's product inventory. Rather than merely marketing Grateful Dead-styled clothing, emphasis would be placed on the exclusive nature of the merchandise as officially licensed products. Notably, certain items sourced from The Mountain constitute the last of their kind, with licensing proprietors having passed away without passing on the rights to their designs. This scarcity renders the existing stock a finite collection, poised to acquire vintage status and prices in the future. The intricate design decisions of the website were put into action through a collaborative process, with some modifications executed by Mr. Godley himself and others put to rest through discussions of creative differences.

In essence, the proposed transition has a foundation of strategic fusion of aesthetic appeal, user-friendly website architecture, and a narrative emphasizing the unique and limited nature of the merchandise. This comprehensive approach seeks not only to facilitate e-commerce transactions but also to engage consumers in a narrative that transcends the act of purchasing, aligning their purchases with a meaningful contribution to marine mammal conservation efforts.

**Website Newsletters**

Another facet of the project centered on the optimization of The Blue Dolphin Company's newsletter, a valuable channel that disseminates informative content to an engaged audience. The newsletter, embodying The Blue Dolphin Alliance’s mission, serves as a conduit for a community dedicated to marine life protection and ecosystem well-being. It functions as a
platform through which Mr. Godley shares relevant articles, books, and research findings with registered subscribers. The overarching objective is to contribute to this informative channel by initiating a website segment dedicated to showcasing available literature, providing an additional avenue for those interested in marine conservation to access and pursue valuable resources. At the time being, these articles exist solely on the company's Facebook page. With the revamping of the website, the newsletter will be disseminated through email as well as become its own entity on bluedolphin.org.

**Instagram**

A fundamental aspiration of this project was to utilize the existing following on the Blue Dolphin Company's Instagram platform, with the aim of cultivating heightened online interest. This envisioned strategy involved the establishment of an Instagram shop, as well as leveraging the algorithm with a substantial flow of content visually appealing for the platform to engage with the current customer base and attract a broader audience. These posts would include infographics, environmental campaigns, and spotlights on current merchandise.

This Instagram proposal outlines a comprehensive strategy to enhance the online presence of The Blue Dolphin Company, a nonprofit dedicated to marine life conservation. Leveraging the visual appeal and widespread engagement of Instagram, the proposed initiative aims to foster community interaction, increase brand visibility, and drive support for the organization's mission.

The primary objective is to establish and cultivate a vibrant Instagram presence that effectively communicates The Blue Dolphin Company's commitment to marine life protection.
while attracting audience interaction with the Instagram shop. This includes engaging the existing audience, expanding reach to new demographics, and driving meaningful interactions to support the nonprofit's initiatives and the small business’s financial goals.

The content strategy for this campaign includes developing a content calendar aligned with the organization's mission, featuring visually compelling images, graphics, and videos showcasing marine life conservation efforts. The account will highlight success stories, behind-the-scenes glimpses, and educational content to evoke emotional connections with the audience. Implement thematic campaigns, such as "Species Spotlight" or "Ocean Conservation Facts," to provide valuable information and engage followers. With these spotlights, products available in the shop will also be included in the carousel.

Once a substantial following has been accrued for the Instagram account, we will establish an Instagram Shop to facilitate seamless transactions, enabling followers to support the cause through the purchase of merchandise directly on the platform. It is also a hope of this campaign that we will include a donate option within the Instagram shop for supporters of The Blue Dolphin Alliance who want to contribute to the cause without buying goods. We will regularly update the shop with new and exclusive items, emphasizing the unique nature of the nonprofit's offerings.

This Instagram campaign will foster a sense of community by encouraging user-generated content through branded hashtags and challenges related to marine life conservation. We will respond promptly to comments and direct messages to create a dialogue with followers, building a more interactive and engaged community.
A goal of this campaign is to explore collaborations with influencers, marine biologists, and environmentalists to amplify the reach and impact of the nonprofit's message. In the future, we will partner with other environmental organizations for joint campaigns and initiatives, broadening the network of supporters.

With the help of Mr. Godley as the hosting talent, we will launch an Instagram Live or IGTV series featuring experts, scientists, and advocates discussing marine conservation topics. With these live videos, we will create summary posts incorporating informative infographics, slideshows, and carousel posts to disseminate educational content in an engaging format.

We will measure and track the success of the Instagram strategy through key performance indicators (KPIs) such as follower growth, engagement rate, click-throughs to the website or Instagram Shop, and merchandise sales metrics. The budget is based on an allocation of resources for content creation, graphic design, potential influencer collaborations, and advertising if deemed necessary.

This Instagram proposal aims to strategically leverage the visual and interactive nature of the platform to enhance the Blue Dolphin Company's online presence. By fostering a dynamic and engaged community, the nonprofit can effectively communicate its mission, drive support, and make a lasting impact on marine life conservation. By staying true to Mr. Godley’s mission to educate “one mind at a time” the company will profit by developing a true-to-cause, loyal following.
Recognizing the prevalence of the younger demographic on TikTok, it was proposed to extend the online retail presence by opening a TikTok shop, catering to the platform's dynamic and visually driven nature, thereby tapping into a new and influential segment of the audience. The primary objectives of The Blue Dolphin Company's TikTok strategy are to enhance brand visibility, engage a younger audience, and drive support for marine life conservation, ultimately translating into increased profitability. Leveraging TikTok's dynamic and visually oriented platform, this strategy aims to make the nonprofit both popular and financially sustainable.

The proposed plan for content creation contains three parts: ocean conservation challenges, educational shorts, and product spotlighting. We will develop engaging content that addresses the challenges faced by marine life, featuring these stories in 60-second reels. Using trends, challenges, and creative storytelling to raise awareness about the importance of conservation will engage audiences. Utilizing TikTok's short-form video format for educational content on marine ecosystems, endangered species, and conservation tips, we will create a series of informative and visually appealing videos to captivate the audience. Trademarking short-form content that features product photography and links to the TikTok shop at least once a week will encourage viewers to explore our site and what it has to offer for purchase.

To encourage views and engagement, we will embark on various hashtag challenges. A proposed hashtag is #BlueDolphinChallenge. Launching a branded hashtag challenge encourages users to share their creative interpretations of dolphin conservation. We will encourage donations for every video created, fostering both engagement and financial support. Another proposed hashtag is #BlueDolphinAlliance. The Blue Dolphin Alliance includes supporters of The Blue
Dolphin Company. With this hashtag, we will initiate a challenge highlighting the positive impact of The Blue Dolphin Company's initiatives. It will encourage users to share their stories or actions supporting marine conservation while wearing Blue Dolphin merchandise. This fosters a sense of community engagement and promotes the organization's mission and growth of sales.

Collaborations and Influencer Engagement can be a pivotal point for the account. It is proposed to partner with Eco-Influencers and collaborate with TikTok influencers who are passionate about environmental causes. These influencers can create content, participate in challenges, and amplify the organization's message to their followers.

Behind-the-Scenes and Impact Stories can also be beneficial in establishing a loyal fan base. The hashtag #BlueDolphinJourney can be used to share behind-the-scenes glimpses of the organization's day-to-day activities, showcasing the dedication and hard work of the team. This is important to remind viewers that Blue Dolphin is a small business that needs support to remain sustainable. Additionally, success feature stories of the impact made through conservation efforts can humanize the conservation efforts that Mr. Godley has made.

Utilizing TikTok's donation stickers feature to allow users to contribute directly to The Blue Dolphin Company while engaging with content can be an easy way to accrue financial support and ensure that the donation process is seamless and transparent. Hosting live sessions dedicated to fundraising events is also a profitable idea. Using the Live Gifts feature to encourage donations, and rewarding contributors with shoutouts, exclusive content, or virtual badges will bolster engagement and support.

To assess the success of the campaign, we will regularly monitor engagement metrics, including video views, likes, shares, and comments. Through the account, we will identify
popular content and trends to refine the content strategy. Tools can also be implemented to track the conversion of TikTok engagement into website visits, donations, or merchandise sales. This will aid in analyzing the effectiveness of the strategy in driving financial support.

By combining creative content, engaging challenges, influencer collaborations, and transparent fundraising efforts, The Blue Dolphin Company can create a TikTok strategy that not only boosts popularity but also generates financial support for its vital mission in marine life conservation.

**Limitations**

Through this study, I attempted to impart a basic understanding of what is required when working with the public on the business owner. He was recalcitrant in changing his business structure and uninterested in hearing most alternatives to the online structure of his business. A major operational limitation of this campaign and any future campaigns was finances. Mr. Godley has been limited on funds for some time and was not willing to make the necessary steps to give his business the opportunity for transition and growth.

**Supply Chain Issues**

A persistent challenge encountered with The Blue Dolphin Company's website pertains to issues surrounding inventory management and supply chain dynamics. Notably, discrepancies have arisen where certain available prints were never published on the website, and conversely, items listed on the site as available are no longer in stock. Over the course of the company's three-decade history, Mr. Godley has personally assumed the role of inventory specialist,
overseeing the intricacies of stock management. As part of the proposed website revamping initiative, a key objective was to rectify this ongoing issue by instituting measures to ensure that the online inventory accurately reflects the current and available product offerings.

This hurdle was also faced at vending opportunities with difficulty in the timely fulfillment of customer orders. On numerous occasions, enthusiastic customers at events expressed interest in purchasing items, only to be informed that the displayed product was the sole available copy. This necessitated payment at the event, with a subsequent delay in item receipt until a new shipment could be completed. This practice, while rooted in the company's commitment to delivering unique and limited-edition items, has resulted in prospective buyers opting to forego purchases due to the extended waiting period.

This challenge is compounded by contemporary consumer expectations, wherein immediacy is a pivotal factor in purchasing decisions. The success of e-commerce giants like Amazon is, in part, attributed to their ability to guarantee rapid shipping, often within a 72-hour timeframe. In contrast, The Blue Dolphin Company faces extended delivery timelines, at times stretching to months. This delay is intrinsically linked to a deficiency in supply, which, in turn, is intricately tied to financial constraints. The company's current revenue from vending endeavors is insufficient to procure the necessary inventory, creating a cyclic conundrum. The mission of the company's online transition is to rectify these financial constraints.

The effects of supply chain challenges, financial constraints, and customer trust emerges as a complex dynamic. The cyclical nature of the dilemma, wherein a lack of funds inhibits inventory replenishment, thereby diminishing customer trust, underscores the critical need for strategic interventions. Addressing these challenges necessitates a multifaceted
approach, encompassing both financial strategies to boost supply and operational measures to
enhance inventory accuracy, ultimately contributing to improved customer satisfaction and trust
in The Blue Dolphin Company's business transactions.
Chapter 4

Data Analysis

Pool Response

An outreach initiative was undertaken, extending invitations to approximately thirty individuals to follow The Blue Dolphin TikTok account. After one-weeks time, the survey results revealed that a notable 93% of the respondents neither possessed a TikTok account nor harbored an interest in acquiring one. This revelation emerged as a noteworthy variable, prompting a strategic reevaluation and a temporary suspension of the creation of The Blue Dolphin TikTok account. This decision was influenced by the recognition that a significant proportion of the targeted demographic, with an expressed interest in the products offered by Blue Dolphin, did not align with the typical demographic of TikTok users. According to Wallaroo Media, a reliable source on social media demographics, 80% of TikTok users fall within the age range of 16 to 34. However, within the specific cohort of individuals contacted, a mere 1% were existing TikTok account holders. This disparity in user demographics underscored the necessity for a more nuanced approach in aligning marketing strategies with the preferred social media platforms of the target audience. The observed divergence in platform preference emphasizes the importance of tailored outreach efforts based on the preferences of the demographic that The Blue Dolphin Company seeks to engage.
Strategies

Embarking on a seven-month journey dedicated to crafting a website outline, conceptualizing a TikTok shop, and designing informative Instagram layouts, I encountered a pivotal realization. Despite my earnest efforts and commitment to these projects, it became apparent that the client harbored no intent to implement these initiatives. Instead, the client communicated a stance of merely "exploring options" without a definitive commitment to pursue the proposed strategies. This revelation, though initially disappointing, unfolded into a profound learning experience. The endeavor, while not culminating in the intended outcomes, imparted valuable lessons and insights. The realization that the client opted not to proceed with the proposed projects highlighted the importance of clear communication and alignment of expectations from the outset of any collaborative effort.

The aspiration was to cultivate online interest by leveraging the existing substantial following on Instagram and tap into the younger demographic through the establishment of an Instagram shop and a TikTok shop. Despite creating demos that were well-received by the business owner, the realization of these initiatives was hindered by conflicting opinions, a mild distrust of the platforms, and an unwillingness to adhere to a timeline.

Encountering resistance, I faced the challenge of convincing the client, Mr. Godley, of the potential benefits and efficacy of the proposed strategies. The envisioned social media campaigns aimed to align the business with contemporary sales trends of the 21st century, particularly targeting diverse age groups through Instagram and the younger demographic on TikTok. However, the client's hesitance and preference for a more extended project timeline, spanning several years, proved to be a substantial obstacle.
Ultimately, a decision was made to relinquish the pursuit of these initiatives, with the business owner not yet prepared to transition to newer forms of social media. While this marked the conclusion of the current collaboration, it also laid the groundwork for a comprehensive plan that outlines potential social media campaigns, should the client choose to pursue them independently in the future.

One of the project's additional goals was to contribute informative content to the Blue Dolphin Alliance newsletter, a valuable communication channel dedicated to individuals devoted to marine life protection and our ecosystem well-being. Unfortunately, access to this newsletter was not granted during the project, impeding the realization of our goal to share articles, books, and research materials with the registered members. The Blue Dolphin Alliance serves as a community hub where Godley disseminates valuable information to its members who have the option to register for said newsletter on his site. As part of our vision, we aimed to introduce a segment on the website dedicated to available literature, creating a space where those interested in the cause could explore relevant materials. However, due to limitations in access to the SquareSpace account, this aspect of the project remained unrealized during the collaboration. The potential inclusion of such content on the website was contingent on future access to the necessary account information.

Despite facing challenges in securing permissions and access for the proposed strategies, the project illuminated the untapped potential within digital channels such as Instagram, TikTok, and the Blue Dolphin website. The envisioned transformation aimed to optimize these platforms for online retail, information dissemination, and community
engagement. The constraints encountered underscored the intricacies involved in navigating traditional business frameworks and implementing a comprehensive digital strategy.

**Tactics and Tools**

Regrettably, the proposed project faced a substantial impediment in its realization due to a critical lack of access to the required logins for various social media accounts. This limitation inhibited the implementation of the envisioned campaigns and prevented the application of the engagement metrics discussed in Chapter Three.

Despite the project's challenges, a notable development was observed on the TikTok platform. The TikTok account, albeit initiated independently and separately from the proposed campaigns, garnered a noteworthy level of activity with minimal engagement within its initial week. Preliminary site analytics indicate a total of 741 views and 2 likes for the video content posted during this period.
Chapter 5

Discussion and Recommendations

Summary

The Blue Dolphin Company, established in 1989 by Alan Godley, originated from his deep-seated concern for the ocean and its wildlife. Guided by a commitment to ocean conservation and restoration, Godley envisioned an organization that would prioritize these crucial environmental objectives. To support his environmental expeditions and conservation initiatives, he commenced selling merchandise with an emphasis on environmental and political themes.

As the years progressed, the landscape of technology evolved, surpassing the foundational structure of The Blue Dolphin Company. Recognizing the need to adapt to the changing times, the prospect of embracing social media platforms and enhancing website infrastructure emerged as a logical progression. This strategic shift aimed to broaden the organization's reach and engagement in the digital sphere. However, the implementation of this transformative project encountered challenges. Mr. Godley harbored reservations regarding the privacy levels associated with various social media sites, introducing a layer of complexity to the integration of these platforms into the company's operations. Consequently, the envisioned project faced delays and remained in a developmental stage, with only partial execution in the form of changes to the website and the initiation of a TikTok account.

While progress was made in some aspects, the broader campaign of a comprehensive social media strategy lingered in the developmental stages due to the identified concerns. This
narrative reflects the intricate balance organizations navigate between adopting contemporary
digital strategies and addressing valid apprehensions about online platforms, highlighting the
challenges inherent in integrating traditional values with evolving technological landscapes.

While the broader strategies outlined in this project were not executed due to access
constraints, the specific development on TikTok highlights the potential for engagement and
visibility when leveraging social media platforms. The observed metrics provide an initial
glimpse into the traction gained within a short timeframe, emphasizing the importance of
continued efforts in exploring digital channels for the promotion and advancement of The Blue
Dolphin Company's mission.

Findings

Through this study I found that despite its divergent outcome, it contributed to my
professional growth. It provided first-hand insight into the complexities of navigating client
expectations, the significance of securing a commitment to proposed strategies, and the necessity
of adaptability in the face of unexpected shifts in project trajectories. In navigating the ups and
downs inherent in client collaborations, the project encountered unforeseen struggles and
hurdles. Despite my earnest efforts, a misalignment in commitment levels became evident, as the
client envisioned a gradual progression over an extended period, while I sought more immediate
and impactful implementation of the proposed strategies.

This experience underscores the significance of overcoming access challenges in future
projects to enable the comprehensive application of planned strategies and the subsequent
measurement of engagement metrics. Despite the project's limitations, the data from TikTok serves as a testament to the potential impact of a well-executed social media presence.

Conclusion

The adage that every failure serves as a stepping stone toward success resonates profoundly in this context. The experience reinforced the understanding that setbacks and disappointments are integral components of the path to achievement. As I reflect on this endeavor, I glean valuable lessons that will undoubtedly inform and enhance my approach to future projects. In essence, this episode served as a reminder that resilience, adaptability, and continuous learning are indispensable qualities on the journey toward professional success.

This experience underscores the importance of aligning expectations and timelines at the commencement of projects, as well as the recognition that client collaborations may entail divergent perspectives and preferences. As the project concludes, the outlined plan remains a testament to the potential avenues for future endeavors, offering a comprehensive guide for potential social media campaigns that could propel The Blue Dolphin Company forward in the digital landscape.

This experience has been instructive in the realm of freelance public relations consulting, revealing the varying degrees of trust and adaptability among clients when it comes to media outlets and changes in business practices. It emphasizes the need for adaptability and effective communication to navigate challenges arising from clients' perspectives and preferences. Moving forward, the insights gained from this project will inform a nuanced
approach to working with clients who may exhibit a degree of skepticism or resistance to certain
digital initiatives.
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Figures

1) Proposed Instagram post “Use Less Plastic”

2) Proposed Instagram post “There is no Planet B”

3) Proposed Instagram post “Bring Your Own Bag”
4) **Tik Tok Shop**

$29.95
**Forest Guardians T Shirt, Cotton Comfort Short Sleeve**

Free shipping
5) Initial Tik Tok Post