**Internship**

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Casa Central

Marketing Intern

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2 credit hours

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1. **BACKGROUND**

**CASA CENTRAL**

Casa Central is a non-profit organization based in Chicago, Illinois, that provides comprehensive programs and services to individuals and families in need. Founded in 1954, the organization is committed to helping individuals achieve self-sufficiency and improve their quality of life through education, support, and empowerment (Exhibit 1).

Casa Central's programs are designed to address the needs of the community and provide a range of services that focus on education, health, social services, and community development (Exhibit 2). The organization's programs include:

1. **Early Childhood Education**: Casa Central offers high-quality early childhood education programs for children aged 6 weeks to 5 years old. The program focuses on building strong foundations for children's future success by providing a nurturing environment, individualized attention, and opportunities for social, emotional, and cognitive development.
2. **Youth Services:** Casa Central's Youth Services program provides after-school programs, mentoring, and educational support for children and teens aged 6-18. The program aims to help young people develop their academic, social, and emotional skills and prepare them for future success.
3. **Elder Services:** Casa Central's Elder Services program provides a range of services to support seniors' health and well-being, including meal delivery, case management, and transportation services. The program aims to help seniors maintain their independence and improve their quality of life.
4. **Community Development:** Casa Central's Community Development program works to improve the quality of life in the community by providing affordable housing, job training, and economic development opportunities. The program aims to create sustainable change by empowering individuals and families to achieve economic stability and self-sufficiency.
5. **Environments Affecting the Industry**

Casa Central is a non-profit organization based in Chicago that provides comprehensive social services to individuals and families in need. As with any non-profit organization, the industry in which Casa Central operates is subject to a range of external factors that can impact its ability to achieve its mission and goals. Here are some of the key environments affecting Casa Central:

**Economic Environment:** The economic environment can significantly impact the funding and resources available to non-profit organizations. Changes in economic conditions, such as recessions or budget cuts, can lead to reduced funding for social services and increased demand for Casa Central's services.

**Social Environment:** The social environment refers to the attitudes, beliefs, and values of the community in which Casa Central operates. Changes in social attitudes and trends can impact the demand for social services and the most needed services.

**Political and Legal Environment:** Non-profit organizations are subject to a range of laws and regulations that can impact their operations. Changes in laws or government policies can have a significant impact on funding and the types of services that Casa Central is able to offer.

**Technological Environment:** The technological environment can impact the way that Casa Central operates and delivers its services. Advances in technology can enable new modes of service delivery, while also creating new challenges around data privacy and security.

**Natural Environment:** While not directly related to Casa Central's operations, the natural environment can impact the community's need for social services. Natural disasters, such as hurricanes or floods, can create an increased demand for emergency assistance and support.

The company is present in different social media domains like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube and has been finding success with them. They are reaching out to more people and growing rapidly. They have to find ways to increase engagement to further their cause to higher levels.

1. **Company/ Organization’s Marketing Mix**

Casa Central is a non-profit organization based in Chicago that provides comprehensive services to individuals and families in need. The organization has been in operation since 1954 and has become a trusted resource for the community it serves. While the marketing mix for a non-profit organization like Casa Central may differ from that of a for-profit business, it is still an essential part of the organization's operations.

**Product:** Casa Central offers a variety of services, including early childhood education, youth and family services, employment services, and senior services. These services are designed to meet the needs of the community and provide support to those who need it most.

**Price:** As a non-profit organization, Casa Central does not charge for its services. However, the organization relies on donations and grants to fund its operations. Casa Central has a number of fundraising events throughout the year to raise funds to support its programs.

**Place:** Casa Central is located in the Humboldt Park neighborhood of Chicago and serves the surrounding community. The organization has a physical location where individuals can access its services, and its website provides information about its programs and services.

**Promotion:** Casa Central uses a variety of marketing and outreach strategies to promote its programs and services. The organization uses social media, email marketing, and its website to reach its target audience. Additionally, Casa Central hosts community events and participates in community outreach to raise awareness about its programs and services.

**People:** The staff and volunteers at Casa Central play a crucial role in the organization's success. The organization employs a team of professionals who are dedicated to serving the community and helping individuals and families in need. Additionally, Casa Central relies on volunteers to assist with its programs and events.

Casa Central's marketing mix focuses on providing quality services to its community while raising awareness and funds to support its operations. Through a combination of outreach, fundraising, and community involvement, Casa Central has become a valuable resource for individuals and families in need in the Humboldt Park neighborhood of Chicago and is growing steadily.

Casa Central partners with many organizations and companies and has a lot of donations happening both through individuals and companies (University of Chicago, 2022).

In FY 2021, Casa Central raised 18 million dollars in donations. The total number of individuals and families reached via Casa Central's community events, educational programming, and direct, family-centered, services throughout the FY 2021 is 5584. Casa Central has impacted these many people through all the different programs they offer: 224 Adult Wellness centers, 1616 Home Care Services, 899 Violence Prevention and Intervention, 1106 School Age Program and Early Learning Academy, 486 Interim Family Housing Program (La Posada), 966 Intact Family Services (Child Welfare), 287 Referral and Services. (Reference #4).

One example of those partners is Preparing for Life, which aims to provide the best possible family assistance, and Casa Central implements Preparing for Life's curriculum. Community stakeholders and families have the chance to weigh in on the construction and adaptation of the program, ensuring that it is extremely relevant to the clients it serves. With input from partner researchers, PFL, Casa, and other community stakeholders, world-class researchers planned and oversaw a rigorous, long-term, respectful, and person-focused RCT. (Preparing for Life, 2020)

**IV SWOT Analysis**

SWOT analysis for Casa Central, a non-profit company, can provide insights into its current position and help identify potential areas for improvement (What You Need to Know. Oct 5, 2020). Here is a detailed SWOT analysis for Casa Central:

**Strengths:**

* **Established Reputation:** Casa Central has a strong reputation as a reputable non-profit organization that has been serving the community for many years.
* **Wide Range of Services**: The organization offers a comprehensive range of services, including childcare, elderly care, education, employment assistance, housing, and behavioral health programs, which enhances its value proposition.
* **Diverse Funding Sources:** Casa Central has a diversified funding base, including government grants, corporate sponsorships, individual donations, and fundraising events. This helps to reduce reliance on a single funding stream.
* **Experienced Staff and Volunteers:** The organization benefits from a dedicated team of experienced professionals and volunteers who are committed to its mission and contribute their expertise.
* **Strategic Partnerships:** Casa Central has established collaborations and partnerships with other community organizations, which helps to extend its reach and impact.

**Weaknesses:**

* **Limited Marketing Resources:** As a non-profit organization, Casa Central may face limitations in terms of marketing budget and resources, making it challenging to promote its programs and services effectively.
* **Lack of Awareness:** Despite its long-standing presence, Casa Central may have limited awareness among certain target audiences, which could be hindering its ability to reach and engage potential beneficiaries and donors.
* **Dependency on Funding:** The organization heavily relies on external funding sources, which may subject it to potential financial uncertainties if there are changes in funding priorities or reductions in government support.
* **Need improvement in Social Media:** The organization has been active on different social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and YouTube but needed to create improved content to get more user engagement. Deep-dive analysis was missing.

**Opportunities:**

* **Growing Demand for Services:** There is an increasing demand for the types of services provided by Casa Central, particularly in areas such as childcare, elderly care, and affordable housing. This presents opportunities for the organization to expand and enhance its programs to meet these needs.
* **Strategic Marketing Initiatives**: Casa Central can invest in targeted marketing efforts, including digital marketing, social media campaigns, and community engagement events, to increase awareness and reach new audiences.
* **Collaborative Partnerships:** The organization can seek to establish new strategic partnerships with corporations, foundations, and community organizations to access additional funding, resources, and expertise.

**Threats:**

* **Competition from Similar Organizations:** Casa Central faces competition from other non-profit organizations and social service providers operating in the same geographical area, which may limit its market share and potential funding opportunities.
* **Economic Challenges:** Economic downturns or changes in government funding priorities can impact the availability of funds for non-profit organizations like Casa Central, making it more challenging to sustain and expand services.
* **Regulatory and Compliance Requirements:** The organization must comply with various regulations and reporting requirements, which can add administrative burdens and consume resources that could otherwise be directed toward serving its beneficiaries.

**V Statement of Benchmark and Marketing Goal:**

Statement of Benchmark:

Based on the information obtained from Google Analytics, Casa Central's website has experienced significant growth in terms of pageviews, unique pageviews, and average time spent on each page compared to the previous period. The benchmark data reveals that in the span of 5 months in 2023, Casa Central's website received 59,391 pageviews, with 47,633 being unique pageviews. Additionally, users spent an average of 2 minutes and 47 seconds on each page, an improvement from the previous average of 2 minutes and 13 seconds (Exhibit 3). When this information is compared to the last period, the number of users was 22471 with an average time spent is 2 minutes 13 seconds. Casa Central should aim for getting 100000 pageviews on the website by 2024 if the growth continues at the current rate.

Marketing Goal:

Building upon the positive trends observed in website engagement, Casa Central's marketing goal is to further enhance online user engagement and drive meaningful interactions with its website content. The objective is to continue increasing both the quantity and quality of website visits, encouraging visitors to spend more time exploring the organization's programs and services. The aim is to leverage the implemented marketing strategies and optimize the marketing mix to achieve the following goals:

* **Increase Website Traffic:** The primary marketing goal is to boost the number of pageviews and unique pageviews on Casa Central's website by a specific percentage or number over a defined time period. This can be achieved through targeted digital marketing campaigns, search engine optimization (SEO) strategies, and online advertising.
* **Improve Average Time Spent on Each Page:** The marketing objective is to increase the average time users spend on each page of the website. By creating compelling and informative content, optimizing user experience, and enhancing website navigation, Casa Central aims to encourage visitors to engage more deeply with the content and spend more time exploring the organization's offerings.
* **Enhance User Engagement:** Casa Central seeks to improve user engagement metrics such as click-through rates, form submissions, and downloads. By implementing effective calls-to-action, user-friendly forms, and interactive elements, the organization aims to increase visitor interactions and conversions.
* **Expand Reach and Awareness:** Another marketing goal is to increase brand awareness and expand the reach of Casa Central's services. This can be accomplished through targeted digital marketing initiatives, social media campaigns, content marketing, and community partnerships.
* **Drive Conversion and Donor Engagement:** Casa Central aims to convert website visitors into active supporters and donors. The marketing goal is to optimize the website's donation process, create compelling donation appeals, and implement donor engagement strategies to increase the number of online donations and donor retention.

By setting these marketing goals, Casa Central aims to strengthen its online presence, effectively communicate its mission and programs, and ultimately increase its impact in serving the community. Regular monitoring and analysis of website analytics will be crucial to measure progress and making data-driven adjustments to marketing strategies (Porter, M. E, 2008).

A few strategies implemented to increase user engagement:

* **Compelling Content:** Created and shared high-quality, engaging content that aligns with Casa Central's mission which resonated with the target audience on different social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube. This includes impactful stories, success stories, testimonials, and informative posts related to our programs and initiatives. Casa Central highlighted the positive impact it is making in the community. Casa Central utilizes **Sprout Social** to keep tabs on social media performances and has received over 147,900 impressions from Jan 2023 to April 2023 from all of the platforms combined. It also has 9409 user engagements, 2806 post link clicks, and a 6.3% engagement rate from the impressions. Facebook is the best working social media tool for Casa Central (Exhibit 4). The total Audience is 10,294 for the same time period, with a 52% increase in net audience growth (Exhibit 5).
* **Calls to Action:** Casa Central included clear and compelling calls to action in social media posts (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn) and encouraged users to like, comment, share, or tag others who might be interested. It utilized specific hashtags related to its initiatives to increase visibility and user engagement which led to a 52% increase in net audience growth.
* **Collaborate and Cross-Promote**: Identify and collaborate with other relevant organizations, influencers, or community partners to amplify the reach of our social media content. Cross-promote each other's posts, share relevant resources, or co-host events to expand the audience and generate more engagement.
* **Consistency and Frequency:** Regularly update social media platforms with fresh content to maintain audience interest. Create a content calendar and schedule posts in advance. Consistency in posting frequency and timing helps establish a predictable presence and keeps the audience engaged.
* **Social Media Advertising:** Consider utilizing targeted social media advertising to reach a wider audience and drive engagement. Platforms like Facebook and Instagram offer sophisticated targeting options to help you reach specific demographics and interests aligned with our mission.
* **Analyze and Optimize:** Regularly monitor social media metrics and analyze the performance of different types of content. Identify trends, engagement patterns, and the preferences of your audience. Use this data to refine your social media strategy and optimize content to maximize user engagement. Use Google Analytics 4 and Sprout Social Analysis to better optimize these and should be done more and often as possible.

**References**

1. “Casa Central – GuideStar Profile”. GuideStar, 2019, <https://www.guidestar.org/profile/36-2728618>
2. “UChicago Economics Center Partners with Casa Central to support Chicago Families”. University of Chicago, 2022, <https://cehd.uchicago.edu/?p=6537>
3. “Chicago Home Visiting Partnership”. Preparing for Life, 2020, <https://www.preparingforlife.ie/chicago-home-visiting-partnership/>
4. FY annual report on the Casa Central website (<https://www.casacentral.org/assets/1/6/Annual_Report_FY2021.pdf>).
5. Nonprofit SWOT Analysis: What You Need to Know. (2020, October 5). Donorbox. <https://donorbox.org/nonprofit-blog/nonprofit-swot-analysis/>
6. Porter, M. E. (2008). Competitive strategy: Techniques for analyzing industries and competitors. Simon and Schuster.

**Exhibits**

**Exhibit 1**

Highlights the story and programs on the website.

Graphical user interface, website, timeline

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<https://www.casacentral.org/>

**Exhibit 2**

Graphical user interface, application

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This highlights the awards Casa has received over the years. More information below

<https://www.casacentral.org/our-story/awards/>

**Exhibit 3**

Google Analytics report for Jan 1, 2023 to May 1,2023

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**Exhibit 4**

Total impressions and engagements through different social media platforms

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**Exhibit 5**

Total Audience Growth from Jan 1, 2023 to May 1, 2023

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