

Social Media Campaign Proposal

My social media campaign serves to raise support for TCU's men's basketball team. I would like to bring attention to the stark contrast of support for basketball and other sports on campus. At a school of almost 9,000 undergraduate students—currently 8,894, according to tcu.edu—the highest season average attendance prior to 2014 for men's basketball games was 6,341 during the 1986-87 season, less than 75% of the student body (TCU Athletics)—this percentage assumes the attendance only included students but, in reality, the statistics account for both students and other attendees. Though numbers increased after the grand opening of TCU's new Schollmaier Arena, they are still low in proportion to the total number of students enrolled and, especially, in comparison to the attendance statistics for TCU football. (The highest average attendance for TCU football games prior to 2015 was 46,047 in 2012, according to TCU's own "Football Fact Book".) Hopefully the new stadium, new coach, and new uniforms will cause a natural rise in attendance, but I do believe it will take more to motivate the students to come support the players themselves, as fellow Horned Frogs.

The team's statistics, given, are not great, but I would like to argue the importance of fan support regardless of performance. I do not seek to raise support in the form of monetary donations, but rather would like to see, specifically, an increase in attendance at basketball games. I (attempted to) play greatly with emotional appeal, and I hope the pathos of personal testimonies/interviews of the athletes and Coach Dixon can convince audiences to believe the number of fans can (and does) directly affect the players themselves. I decided to include personal statements of other athletes—though, unfortunately have only been able to get them from one athlete so far, (Scotty Newton), as I am waiting on a response from others—such as this one appearing in a blog on website of the *Star-Telegram*: "'You notice when you walk out of the tunnel,' junior defensive tackle Joey Hunt said. 'They get the environment going, and people do feed off of attitude. If you are around sad people, you are down. If you are around happy people, you are happy. It can definitely help us. It gets the sideline going, and then we get going. The more people the better.'" The Telegram claims "most [football] players notice the atmosphere, and play with greater sense of urgency when the place is full," but I would argue the same is true for participants in all sports, especially those at the university level. The low numbers at games directly affect the mental state of players, correlating to their motivation and pride/ownership of the game and the team.

When I asked students why they do not attend games, I got responses such as "I have no interest in basketball," "busy," "no motivation," and "I'm just not a sports person." However, one student in particular responded by saying "I'm not a huge collegiate basketball fan but if we keep winning I'll be there." TCU itself has attempted to address the issue of support for basketball (and motivation for game attendance) by sending out numerous emails advertising free products given away by The Purple Haze at games for the first (#) students. However, I believe this technique has been ineffective because it has failed to make the issue personal to the players. Anyone viewing the email who has no interest in the advertised product or in the sport of basketball has no further reason to attend. I propose hearing from the players about their passion and need for support might create a unity feeding the inner-Horned Frog in each student. (Not to be cliché, but there is something to say about school spirit and relatability amongst students, however dissimilar.)

I also incorporated some information about the positive effects of fan support on fans, themselves. For example, an article in the *Science & Technology Libraries* journal cites Dr. Daniel L. Wann, a professor of psychology at Murray State University in Kentucky, "Fans who make a connection with a local team have better societal connections. Identification with local teams have been shown to be related to lower depression, lower loneliness and feelings of alienation, higher self esteem, higher energy levels and greater levels of trust in people, as well as greater satisfaction in social life" (Eells).

I targeted TCU students and, because different social media platforms are more popular amongst different students on campus, created a video which, in theory, is shareable across platforms. I thought a video would be the most accessible, engaging, and shareable piece for students, accompanied with tweet-like quotes or short bits of writing (to quote, summarize, elaborate on, etc.), and photos. I focused primarily Facebook, as this seems to be the place where most videos are circulated and viewed by TCU students. (However, as I mentioned, the content I create for Facebook will work nicely on other platforms as well.) But I also made a Twitter page to contain shorter excerpts of the longer pieces I post to Facebook (though the Facebook posts are not extremely long either, as I know students are not as likely to read long passages on their phones, where they usually browse social media sites).

I named my campaign, the Facebook page and Twitter account “Support Our Boys,” and used both this title and the phrase “comethruTCU” as my primary hashtags. A twitter search for the hashtag (#ourboys) brought up many results unrelated to TCU men’s basketball, but, though I think using a hashtag with higher frequency creates better odds for people to accidentally happen upon the campaign, raising the chances of higher circulation, I decided to create a hashtag more unique and identifiable/memorable. The primary information source, will be my Facebook page, but both the page and the Twitter account hold all of the information including:

- Short pieces utilizing hashtags and tagging other related pages (other, official pages for the university like Frog Army and the men’s basketball team at TCU) encouraging students to attend the games and providing information,
- the video—the primary/focal piece for the campaign—highlighting the men’s basketball facility and team, and incorporating segments from interviews (press conference) with athletes and coach about the importance of fan support,
- (retweeted/shared) other video clips and tweets/posts,
- quotes and visuals which provide individualized motivation to attend games,
- individual game specifics, results, rankings, etc.

The structure of the Facebook page provides for participation through features like liking, commenting, and sharing, and Twitter, similarly, allows for favorite-ing, retweeting, responding, and quoting.

I used pathos primarily, as I mentioned before, by incorporating personal testimonies about the importance of fan support to individual athletes and Coach Dixon. I’m hoping these interviews provide some content relatable to viewers who have ever played a sport before (or, even, viewers who have experienced moral support in some way). The ethos lies in the fact that the athletes themselves, along with Coach Dixon, speak in my video and quoting. I did not incorporate social media containing this article, but did find an article on *Sports Illustrated* containing an interview with Dixon, in which he expresses his passion for the university and its team. I wanted to be sure to get him in my video and social media because I thought his passion would be a great source of motivation, and possibly hope, for fair-weather fans. He says in the interview, “it’s a new TCU [...] the last 20 years aren’t really a reflection of where the university is and where it’ll be going forward (Gardner). I believe the nature of the campaign itself invites action, as I present the problem (low attendance at TCU men’s basketball games) and the solution (attend more games) simultaneously, through persuasive motivation.

Additional Notes

- I utilized TCU’s brand standards guide for my color choice in the cover photos.
(http://www.marketingandcommunication.tcu.edu/pdf/TCU_brandstandards.pdf)
- For the picture of the arena pinned to top of the Facebook page, I included a citation in the comments below the post.
- The quality of the video is best on mobile devices. At first, I was upset at the quality on a computer, but then I realized it is fine because my primary audience will, most likely, be viewing

the social media on a phone. Unfortunately, I had trouble exporting the video from iMovie and preserving the sound, so I had to upload it, temporarily to my personal Facebook page, and just give you access to it. (Click [here](#) to access my page.)

- In order to access the Twitter account I created, go to [Twitter](#) and type “#comethruTCU” into the search bar. “Support Our Boys” will come up and, once you request to follow, I can accept it and you will have access to all of the content on the account.
- For access to the Facebook page, I have made you an admin, so you should be able to see all of the content on the page, though it is set to “unpublished” for public. Just search “Support Our Boys” if you need to find the Facebook page.

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