

CLOSING PROJECT REPORT

Written By: Hamsini Reddy Gunda, Sowmya Harini Devi Kumpatla, Sri Harsha Adapa, Sydney Roberson, Santhosh Reddy Angiti, Keerthi Reddy Chintalapudi, Sai Krishna Davuluri, Sai Charitha Reddy Gudibanda, Vamshidhar Reddy Pinnapareddy, and Pavan Manikanta Simhadri.

1. Project Overview:

Project Title and ID: IST Alumni Social Fall 2024

Project Manager: Hamsini Reddy Gunda

Project Manager Responsibilities:

Coordination with Faculty and Staff: Communicated with faculty, including Professor Damon Walker and Dr. Dinesh Mirchandani, to facilitate event promotions, including banners in the Rotunda and displays on campus screens.

Event Marketing: Collaborated with the ITCC Club to upload the event on Triton Connect, led internal marketing efforts targeting students and faculty, and ensured active registrations for the event.

Logistics Management: Purchased raffle ticket prizes and coordinated with the operations team to address updates and ensure smooth execution.

Event Oversight: Monitored overall preparations, resolved issues proactively, and ensured all activities progressed as planned.

2. Project Objectives and Goals:

- Provide a networking platform for students, alumni, and faculty.
- Engage alumni located near St. Louis to reconnect with the university community.
- Encourage professional connections and mentorship opportunities.
- Achieve a target attendance of 200 individuals, including students, faculty, and alumni.
- Promote the event through various channels such as Triton Connect, social media, and campus communication platforms.

3. Project Scope and Deliverables:

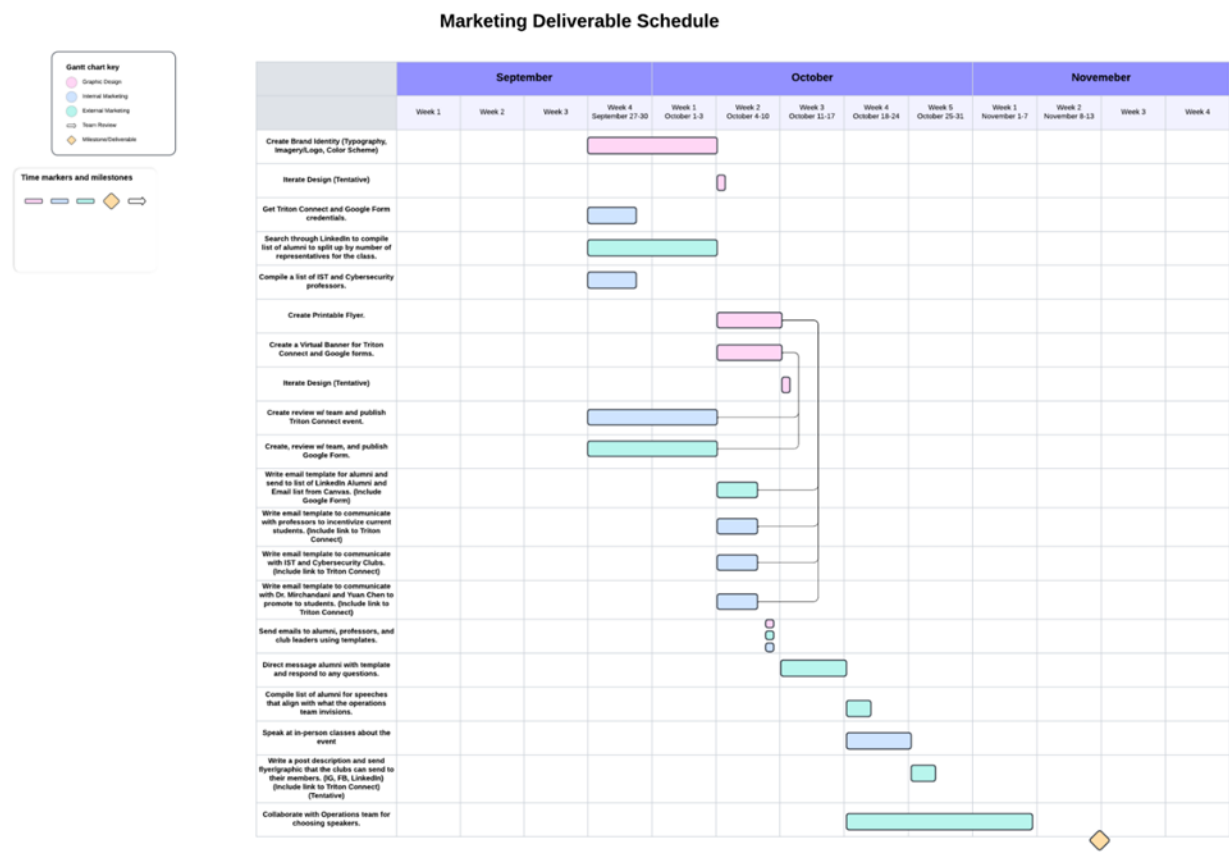
List and describe the deliverables produced as part of the project.

The deliverables produced as a part of the marketing plan were the template emails, direct messages, social media posts for internal and external communication. Event branding virtual and physical flyers, schedules and event information flyers for day of event, registration links from both Google Forms and Triton Connect, and coordination between clubs for marketing materials to current students since we didn't create a social media page.

4. Project Schedule/Timeline:

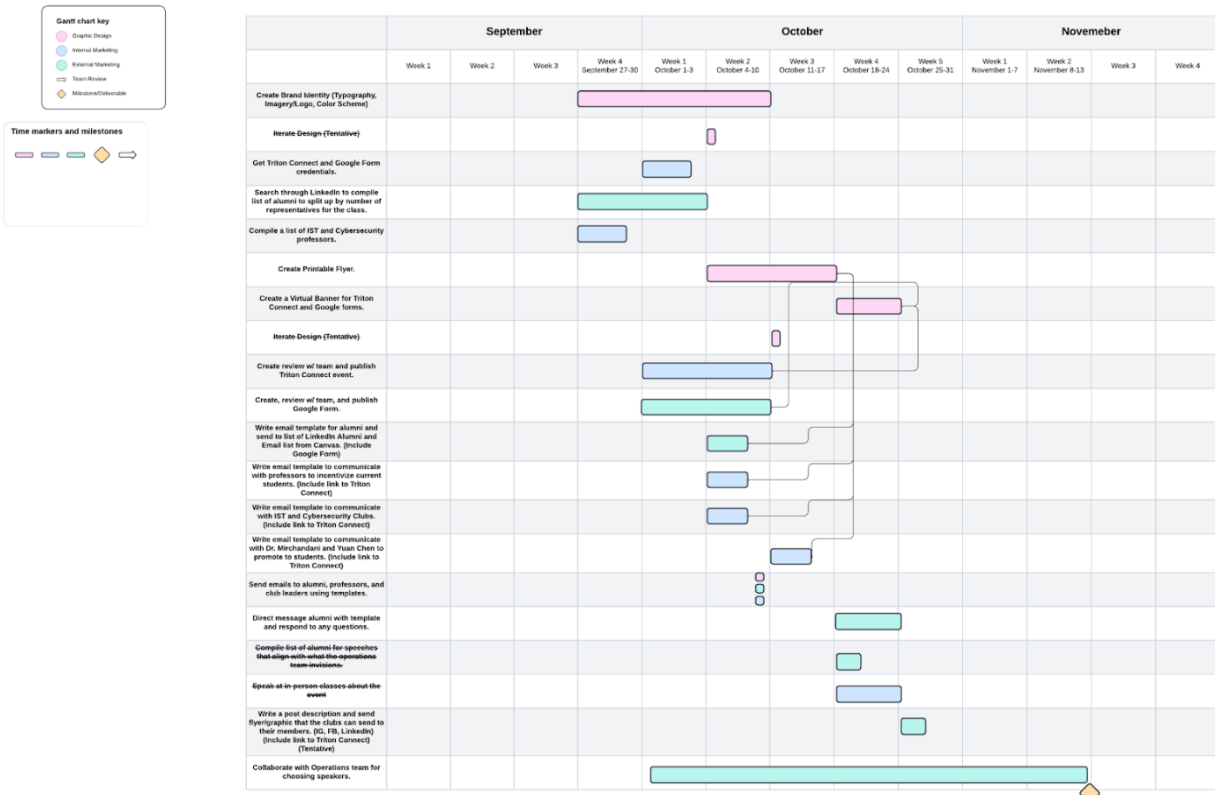
Compare the planned schedule versus the actual timeline for project activities.

Planned Schedule:



Actual Schedule:

Marketing Deliverable Schedule



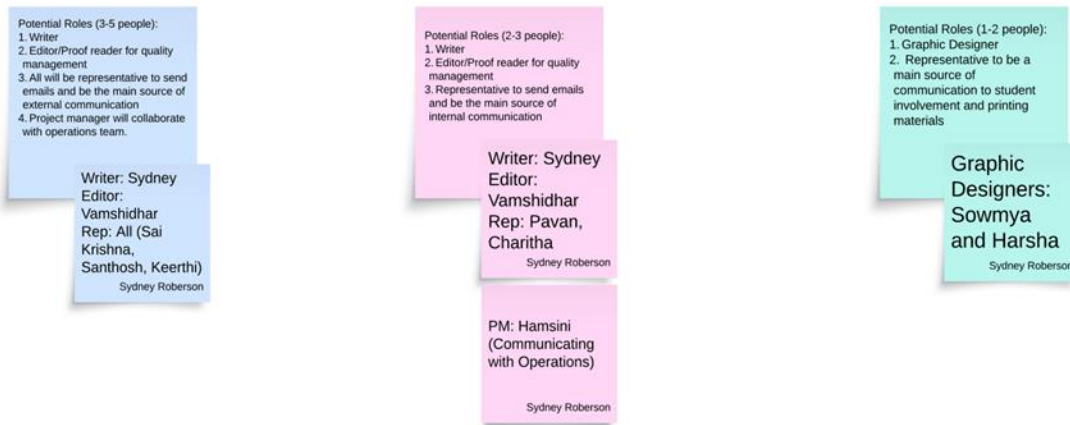
5. Resource Utilization:

1. Human Resources Allocation:

For our project, the team was divided into three subgroups: Graphic Designers, Internal Team, and External Team. Each team member was assigned roles based on their interests and skills:

- **Hamsini** served as the Project Manager, responsible for communicating with the operations team and professors, ensuring seamless coordination.
- **Sowmya** and **Harsha** worked as Graphic Designers, creating flyers, banners, logos, presentations, and social media post designs to enhance the project's visual appeal.
- **Sydney**, **Vamshidhar**, **Charitha**, and **Pavan** formed the Internal Team, focusing on writing descriptions for Triton Connect, drafting social media posts, and preparing email templates for professors and alumni.
- **Santhosh**, **Sai Krishna**, and **Keerthi** made up the External Team, tasked with finding email addresses, sending invitations to alumni via LinkedIn and email, and monitoring the attendance list.

This structure ensured an equitable distribution of responsibilities and maximized the strengths of each member.



2. Technological Resources:

To efficiently manage the project, the following tools were utilized:

- **Canva:** Used to design flyers, banners, logos, and social media posts, ensuring professional and appealing visuals.
- **PowerPoint:** Utilized for creating presentations for faculty members.
- **Lucid Chart:** Used to design the Gantt chart, enabling time tracking and task management.

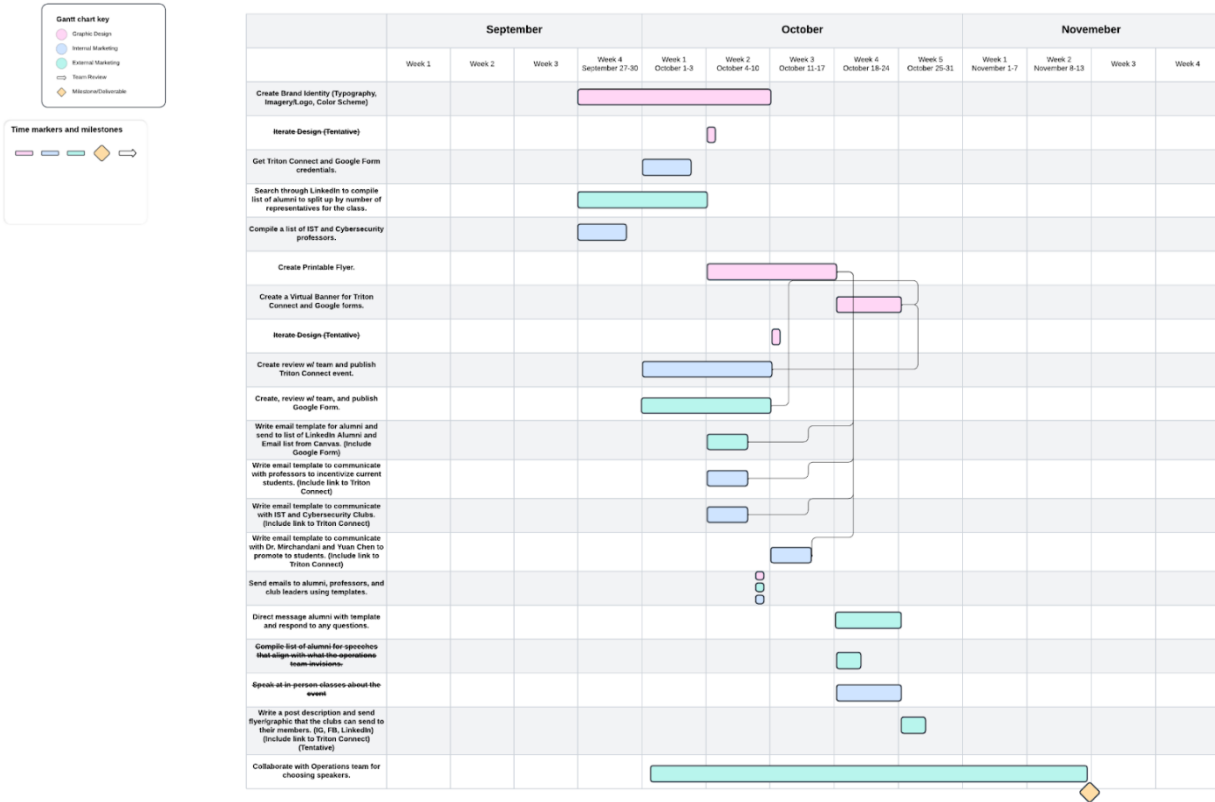
3. Material and Infrastructure Resources:

- For marketing, A4-sized printed flyers were distributed and displayed on notice boards across the campus.
- A banner was designed and strategically placed at the Rotunda in the Millennium Student Center (MSC) to attract attention and effectively promote the event.
- Flyers were displayed on televisions across the campus to enhance event visibility.
- The event was promoted through various social media channels, including LinkedIn, Instagram, and Facebook.
- Dr. Dinesh Mirchandani and Dr. Vivek Singh promoted the event through alumni groups and LinkedIn.

4. Time Allocation:

- A comprehensive Project Plan and Charter was prepared at the outset to facilitate precise planning and task distribution among team members.
- A Gantt chart was created using Lucid Chart to track progress and ensure adherence to deadlines, helping the team stay organized and on schedule.

Marketing Deliverable Schedule



6. Budget Overview and Analysis:

1. Initial Budget Estimates:

Initially, the project was planned with a \$0 marketing budget because we collaborated with the ITCC student organization. Student organizations have access to free banner printing through UMSL's OSI (Office of Student Involvement).

Category	Item	Estimated Cost
Variable costs	Printing (Flyers, Logos and banners)	\$0
Miscellaneous	Unexpected Expenses	\$0
Total		\$0

2. Actual Expenditures:

However, UMSL OSI stopped providing free banner printing services to student organizations, requiring us to print the banner externally for \$104. Additionally, to encourage attendance, we introduced Raffle Prizes, which were added to the project expenses.

Category	Item	Actual Expenditures
Costs	Printing (banner)	\$104
Raffle	Prizes	\$257
Total		\$361

3. **Budget Adjustments:**

The operational team had an additional \$500 remaining from the total allocated budget, which allowed us to allocate resources for raffle prizes and cover unexpected costs. These adjustments ensured we addressed emerging needs while staying within the overall budget.

7. **Issues and Challenges:**

1. **Banner Printing Costs:**

Initially, the marketing budget relied on UMSL OSI's free banner printing services. However, the sudden unavailability of this service led to unexpected costs of \$104 for external printing.

Resolution: The team swiftly adjusted the budget, utilizing remaining operational funds to cover the expense. Despite this unforeseen cost, the banner was printed and displayed on time, ensuring no disruption to event promotions.

2. **Last-Minute Deliverables:**

Some tasks, including promotional materials and logistics coordination, were finalized close to the event date. This created time constraints and stress for the team.

Resolution: Effective use of the Gantt chart and focused team coordination allowed tasks to be completed without compromising quality. Team members stepped in to support each other, ensuring deliverables were ready on time.

3. **Team Communication Gaps:**

With team members divided into subgroups (Graphic Designers, Internal Team, External Team), occasional lapses in communication led to minor delays in task handoffs.

Resolution: Regular check-ins and quick updates through group meetings were implemented to streamline communication and prevent further delays.

4. **Alumni Engagement:**

Identifying and reaching out to alumni via email and LinkedIn proved challenging due to incomplete or outdated contact information.

Resolution: The External Team worked collaboratively to gather email addresses and actively followed up with alumni through LinkedIn. Faculty members also supported outreach by sharing event details with alumni groups.

5. **Event-Day Logistics:**

On the day of the event, minor issues arose, such as delays in setup and ensuring all equipment was in place.

Resolution: The team worked closely with the operations staff to address these issues quickly, ensuring the event proceeded smoothly.

Despite these challenges, the team's adaptability, communication, and problem-solving ensured the event's success.

8. Risk Management Evaluation:

1. Risk Identification and Planning:

The project team proactively identified potential risks during the planning phase, such as unforeseen costs, alumni outreach difficulties, and delays in deliverables. These risks were documented, and contingency plans were developed.

2. Mitigation Strategies:

- **Budget Adjustments:** The team allocated extra funds for unexpected costs, such as banner printing and raffle prizes, which allowed them to address unforeseen expenses without jeopardizing the budget.
- **Communication Tools:** Regular use of tools like shared task boards and team meetings reduced coordination gaps, ensuring tasks progressed as planned.
- **Outreach Backup Plans:** Faculty support and alternative communication channels, such as LinkedIn, effectively mitigated challenges in reaching alumni.

3. Real-Time Risk Management:

- **Quick Decision-Making:** When issues such as banner costs and registration glitches arose, the team acted promptly to implement solutions, avoiding disruptions.
- **Team Support:** Subgroups collaborated effectively to redistribute workloads during crunch times, ensuring critical deliverables were completed on time.

4. Effectiveness of Contingency Plans:

While the project faced unexpected challenges, preemptive measures, such as maintaining a buffer budget and leveraging faculty support, enabled the team to address risks effectively without derailing the project.

5. Lessons for Future Projects:

The project highlighted the importance of anticipating last-minute changes and maintaining strong internal communication. More detailed workflows and regular risk assessments could further enhance future risk management efforts.

9. Project Outcomes:

Evaluation of Quality

1. **Alignment with Objectives**

The project deliverables successfully aligned with the objectives of promoting the event, engaging alumni, and ensuring robust participation. The flyers, banners, presentations, and email templates effectively communicated the event details and inspired attendance.

2. **Adherence to Standards**

The quality of deliverables adhered to the standards set during the planning phase. The designs created using Canva were visually appealing and consistent with the university's branding guidelines. Flyers and banners displayed professional quality, and all email templates maintained a clear and concise tone.

3. **Stakeholder Feedback**

Feedback from professors, alumni, and attendees highlighted the clarity and attractiveness of the promotional materials. Social media posts and emails were particularly praised for their engaging visuals and well-written content. Attendees expressed appreciation for the event organizers and the thoughtful raffle prizes.

4. **Effectiveness of Deliverables**

- Flyers and banners were instrumental in creating awareness across the campus, resulting in increased student interest.
- Email invitations sent to alumni through LinkedIn and direct email effectively reached a broad audience, contributing to a higher turnout.
- Social media posts were widely shared, boosting online engagement and awareness.

5. **Timeliness**

All deliverables were completed on schedule, ensuring that promotional materials were distributed in advance of the event. The use of a Gantt chart for time tracking helped manage deadlines effectively, even when unexpected challenges arose, such as changes in banner printing arrangements.

6. **Innovative Approaches**

Leveraging Canva for high-quality designs and LinkedIn for alumni engagement proved to be innovative strategies that enhanced the project's effectiveness. These methods allowed the team to maximize impact within a limited timeframe and budget.

Metrics to Measure Success

1. **Attendance Metrics**

The event saw significant attendance from students, professors, and alumni. Pre-registered attendees, estimated at 150-200 people, matched closely with the actual turnout, showcasing the effectiveness of the marketing efforts.

2. **Engagement Metrics**

- Social media posts garnered substantial engagement across platforms such as Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook, with a noticeable increase in likes, shares, and comments.

- Emails sent to alumni had a strong open rate, and many recipients responded positively, expressing interest in attending or promoting the event.
 - Our professors shared flyers and invitations in alumni groups to encourage attendance at the event and promote networking opportunities for students.
3. **Raffle Participation**
The raffle attracted a large number of participants, demonstrating high attendee engagement during the event. The prizes encouraged attendees to remain active throughout the session.
 4. **Stakeholder Satisfaction**
Surveys and informal feedback revealed high satisfaction among professors, alumni, and students. The event was praised for its organization, quality of promotional materials, and the value provided to attendees.
 5. **Quality of Deliverables**
A checklist of design standards was met, including visual appeal, clarity, and branding alignment. Each deliverable received positive feedback from the team and professors before distribution.
 6. **Budget Utilization**
The budget was utilized efficiently, with \$361 spent out of the total allocated budget of \$500 for banner printing and raffle prizes. \$104 was used for banner printing, and \$257 was spent on raffle prizes. Effective planning and adjustments ensured that emerging needs were addressed without exceeding the budget.
 7. **Impact Analysis**
The event successfully fostered connections between students, alumni, and faculty. Triton Connect and social media platforms saw post-event discussions, indicating a lasting impression among attendees. Alumni expressed interest in future engagements, validating the project's impact.

10. Lessons Learned:

We learned a lot about teamwork and project management from the IST Alumni Social event project.

Having good communication with external stakeholders, such as students, lecturers, and alumni, was one of our main achievements. Attendance at the event was higher than anticipated, and a wide range of people took advantage of the opportunity to network. Obtaining participant feedback proved the impact of the event and confirmed the importance of our work.

Together, we rejoiced in the event's accomplishment, but this journey also taught us important lessons. Communication and cooperation within the team were essential. Managing differing viewpoints and organizing both individual and group projects were necessary when working as a team. Although it was occasionally difficult to come to an agreement, it served as a reminder of how crucial it is to put the group's objective ahead of personal preferences. It was difficult but worthwhile to manage schedules and responsibilities, highlighting the value of flexibility and cooperation in accomplishing common goals.

Even though the event went well, there was still opportunity for improvement in a few areas. One such difficulty was making last-minute plans. The necessity of careful advance planning was made clear by the quick succession with which some deliverables were finalized near the event. Furthermore, better internal team communication might have decreased delays and improved coordination overall. Future projects

would be even more successful if clearer workflows were established and regular collaboration was promoted.

11. Closure of Project Activities:

The IST Alumni Social event activities were officially concluded with the following steps:

- **Final Event Debrief:** A post-event meeting was conducted with all team members to assess the outcomes, collect feedback, and address any pending tasks. This session helped in consolidating the lessons learned and ensuring all aspects of the project were evaluated.
- **Documentation and Reports:** All project documents, including marketing materials, attendance lists, and budget reports, were compiled and archived. This documentation will serve as a reference for future projects.
- **Feedback Collection:** Surveys were distributed to attendees to gather feedback on their experience, and informal feedback was collected from stakeholders such as professors and alumni.
- **Budget Reconciliation:** The project utilized \$361 from the remaining budget of \$500 made available by the operations team, leaving a balance for future use.
- **Acknowledgments:** All team members, stakeholders, and contributors were formally acknowledged for their roles in the project's success.
- **Event Evaluation Summary:** A comprehensive evaluation was prepared, highlighting the event's success metrics, such as attendance, engagement, and stakeholder satisfaction. This was shared with key stakeholders.
- **Handover for Future Reference:** All relevant data and insights were handed over to the ITCC student organization and project leads for potential replication and improvement in future events.

No outstanding tasks remained, marking the project as officially closed. The successful execution and comprehensive closure ensured the project's objectives were fully achieved.

12. Final Recommendations:

Based on our experiences, we offer a few suggestions to improve upcoming initiatives.

- **Establish Clear Objectives Early on:** To coordinate all team efforts, establish a specific project goal at the beginning. Knowing the project's goals aids in prioritization and guarantees a consistent course from the start.
- **Improve Team Communication:** Create strong channels of communication between groups. Communication platforms and shared task boards are examples of tools that can enhance group collaboration and information exchange. Additionally, this would guarantee that no important tasks are underestimated.
- **Thorough Resource Planning:** At the beginning of the project, identify and arrange all available resources. Teams will be able to use the tools, platforms, and procedures more efficiently and encounter fewer last-minute problems if they have a clear picture of what is available.
- **Simplify Task Assignment:** Assign tasks that balance group and individual responsibilities while taking team members' schedules into consideration. Maintaining this equilibrium proactively can lower stress and guarantee that tasks are finished quickly.

- **Continuous Feedback Loops:** To resolve issues, modify plans, and guarantee alignment, schedule frequent team feedback sessions during the project. This iterative process will improve teamwork and quickly resolve any obstacles that may arise.

Future projects can benefit from better communication, more efficient execution, and even better results by concentrating on these areas. In addition to offering insightful lessons, the IST Alumni Social event laid the groundwork for future improvements in project management techniques.

13. Acknowledgments:

The successful completion of the IST Alumni Social Fall 2024 project was a result of the collective dedication, hard work, and support of various individuals and teams. We extend our deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed to the event's success.

First and foremost, we would like to thank **Dr. Dinesh Mirchandani**, whose unwavering guidance and support as a faculty lead provided us with the confidence and direction needed to execute this project effectively. A special acknowledgment is also due to **Professor Damon Walker**, whose mentorship and insightful feedback were invaluable throughout the planning and execution phases. Their encouragement and expertise were instrumental in navigating challenges and ensuring the project's alignment with its objectives.

We express our heartfelt appreciation to our esteemed speakers: **Ed Deuser, Michael Stewart, Tammy Hawkins, Kerrine Nelson, and Vidushi Yog**. Their inspirational speeches and willingness to share their journeys not only elevated the event's impact but also strengthened the bond between current students and alumni.

A sincere thank you goes to our project manager, **Hamsini Reddy Gunda**, for her exceptional leadership and meticulous planning, which ensured the smooth execution of every project milestone. We are grateful to our team members: **Sydney Roberson, Sowmya Harini Devi Kumpatla, Sri Harsha Adapa, Santhosh Reddy Angiti, Keerthi Reddy Chintalapudi, Sai Krishna Davuluri, Sai Charitha Reddy Gudibanda, Vamshidhar Reddy Pinnapareddy, and Pavan Manikanta Simhadri**. Each member brought unique strengths to the team, from creating compelling marketing campaigns to handling operational logistics, contributing immensely to the event's success.

Our gratitude extends to **Sodexo** for their excellent catering services that added a warm and welcoming touch to the event. The cooperation and assistance provided by the UMSL Touhill (Terrace Lobby) staff were pivotal in setting up and managing the venue, ensuring that all attendees had a seamless experience.

Lastly, we acknowledge the alumni, students, and faculty members who attended and participated in the event. Your enthusiasm and engagement brought the event to life and reaffirmed the strength of the UMSL IST community.

This project was truly a collective effort, and its success is a testament to the collaborative spirit of everyone involved.

14. Conclusion:

The IST Alumni Social Fall 2024 project stands as a remarkable milestone in fostering connections between alumni and students of the UMSL IST community. This event provided a unique platform for networking, sharing knowledge, and celebrating the achievements of alumni across different years, fulfilling its objectives with outstanding results.

The project's primary goals—engaging alumni, inspiring current students, and promoting a sense of belonging within the IST community—were achieved through a well-orchestrated combination of marketing efforts, operational excellence, and active participation. With a target of 200 attendees, the event not only met but exceeded expectations, marking a significant step in enhancing alumni-student relations.

Throughout the project, the team encountered challenges such as ensuring effective communication across diverse outreach channels, mitigating technical risks, and managing logistical details. However, these challenges were met with resilience, innovation, and teamwork. By leveraging risk management strategies, allocating resources effectively, and adhering to a clear communication plan, the project delivered a high-quality experience for all stakeholders.

The insights and lessons learned from this project, such as the importance of early stakeholder engagement, the value of detailed planning, and the need for proactive problem-solving, will serve as a blueprint for future initiatives.

In conclusion, the IST Alumni Social Fall 2024 was more than just an event; it was a celebration of the UMSL IST legacy and its ongoing impact. The dedication and collaborative efforts of the project team, faculty, and alumni have left a lasting impression, setting a strong foundation for continued success and growth within the UMSL IST community.

15. Appendices:

1. Communication Plan

Audience	Communication Channels	Key Messages	Communication Schedule	Responsibility
Students	Flyers, posters, social media (Instagram, Facebook), campus TV screens, Triton Connect, announcements in IST classes	Connect with IST alumni, Learn about career paths, Win raffle prizes, Free food and drinks.	Flyers and posters: 2 weeks before the event. Social media: Ongoing, starting 3 weeks before the event. Triton Connect: 3 weeks before the event. Class announcements: 1 week before the event.	Internal Team (Sydney, Vamshidhar, Charitha, Pavan)

Alumni	LinkedIn, email, alumni association newsletters	Reconnect with UMSL. Network with students and faculty. Share your expertise. Enjoy an evening with fellow IST alumni.	LinkedIn posts and messages: 3 weeks before the event. Emails: 2 weeks before the event. Alumni newsletters: 4 weeks before event	External Team (Santosh, Sai Krishna, Keerthi) with support from Dr. Mirchandani and Dr. Singh
Faculty	Email, in-person meetings, presentations	Encourage student attendance. Network with alumni. Showcase IST program success.	Initial email: 4 weeks before the event. Follow-up emails: 2 weeks and 1 week before the event. Presentations: As needed	Hamsini Reddy Gunda, Sowmya Harini Devi Kumpatla, Sri Harsha Adapa
Speakers	Email, phone calls	Confirm speaking engagement. Provide event details and logistics. Coordinate presentation topics and materials.	Initial contact: 6 weeks before the event. Follow-up: 2 weeks and 1 day before event	Hamsini Reddy Gunda

2. Meeting Minutes

Date: November 5, 2024

Attendees: Hamsini, Sydney, Sowmya, Harsha, Santosh, Sai Krishna, Keerthi, Charitha, Vamshidhar, Pavan

Topics Discussed:

- Finalized speaker lineup and presentation topics.
- Reviewed marketing materials and distribution plan.
- Discussed progress on alumni outreach and registration numbers.
- Addressed concerns about potential budget overruns due to banner printing costs.
- Assigned roles for event day setup and registration.

Decisions:

- Approved the final designs for flyers and social media posts.
- Allocated additional funds from the operational budget for raffle prizes.
- Decided to create a sign-in sheet for attendees to gather contact information.

Action Items:

- Sowmya and Harsha to send final marketing materials to the printer by November 8th.
- Santosh to follow up with alumni who haven't responded to the invitation by November 10th.
- Vamshidhar to confirm venue setup and A/V equipment with Touhill staff by November 12th.

3. Lessons Learned Log:

Date	Situation	Lesson Learned	Recommendations for Future Projects
October 28, 2024	Difficulty securing the initial venue choice due to scheduling conflicts.	Start the venue booking process earlier, at least 3 months in advance.	Create a list of alternative venue options with contact information.
November 15, 2024	Confusion among team members about roles and responsibilities for social media posting.	Clarify roles and responsibilities in the communication plan. Use a shared content calendar to improve coordination.	Assign a dedicated social media manager to oversee all online content.
December 2, 2024	Ran out of time for Q&A with speakers during the event.	Allocate more time for audience interaction in the event schedule.	Use a timer to keep track of time and ensure all planned activities are covered.

4. Marketing Materials

Flyer: A visually appealing flyer with key event details (date, time, location, speakers, registration link). Distributed on campus and shared online.

Banner: A large, eye-catching banner displayed prominently in the Rotunda at the Millennium Student Center. The banner includes the event name, date, time, and a compelling tagline to attract attention.

Social Media Post: An engaging social media post with a captivating image and a call to action to register for the event. Shared on Instagram, LinkedIn, and Facebook.

Email Template: A professional email template used to invite alumni to the event, highlighting the benefits of attending. Personalized with recipient names and sent through LinkedIn and direct email.

5. Stakeholder Feedback (Summary):

Overall Event Satisfaction:

- 92% of attendees rated the event as "Excellent" or "Good."
- 85% of alumni expressed interest in attending future IST alumni events.

Key Feedback Themes:

Positive:

- Engaging and informative speakers
- Excellent networking opportunities
- Well-organized event
- High-quality promotional materials

Areas for Improvement:

- More time for Q&A with speakers
- More diverse food options.

16. Sign-Off:

Project Name: IST Alumni Social Fall 2024

Project Manager: Hamsini Reddy Gunda

By signing below, the project manager and key stakeholders confirm that the **IST Alumni Social Fall 2024** project has been completed successfully and is now officially closed. All project objectives have been met, and the project is considered finished.

Name	Position	Signature	Date
Hamsini Reddy Gunda	Project Manager	[Signature]	[Date]
Prof. Damon Walker	Professor	[Signature]	[Date]
Dr. Dinesh Mirchandani	Professor	[Signature]	[Date]
Sowmya Harini Devi Kumpatla	Team Member	[Signature]	[Date]
Sydney Roberson	Team Member	[Signature]	[Date]
Sri Harsha Adapa	Team Member	[Signature]	[Date]
Santhosh Reddy Angiti	Team Member	[Signature]	[Date]

Keerthi Reddy Chintalapudi	Team Member	[Signature] [Date]
Sai Krishna Davuluri	Team Member	[Signature] [Date]
Sai Charitha Reddy Gudibanda	Team Member	[Signature] [Date]
Vamshidhar Reddy Pinnapareddy	Team Member	[Signature] [Date]
Pavan Manikanta Simhadri	Team Member	[Signature] [Date]

This confirms the official closure of the **IST Alumni Social Fall 2024** project. All involved parties have reviewed the project outcomes and agree that it has been successfully completed.