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CTA Content Analysis and Recommendation Plan

CTA Community Supports is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to helping children and adults with autism and other disabilities (both developmental and physical). Their company runs homes throughout the state where their clients live full-time. Besides managing homes for clients, they also have a few programs and a preschool dedicated to helping those with disabilities.

CTA provides an invaluable resource to Utah communities and even families outside the state. They are known to have families relocate to Utah to take advantage of their services, or send their children to homes in Utah to seek treatment and support. In other words, they are an integral part of the community and provide a service that should be well known throughout Utah communities and even beyond state borders. They provide a very marketable service; helping children and adults with disabilities is a constant source of the feel-good stories that can warm hearts. And given they are a non-profit and require funding to stay operational, these feel-good stories should be incredibly beneficial for securing funding and expanding the scope of their operations. Unfortunately, their social presence and content delivery is woefully undermanaged.

RECOMMENDATION PLAN

CTA is a non-profit organization that was founded in 1985. They have more than 28 homes throughout Utah, including four after school programs and one adult day program. These services help upwards of 200 clients at any given time with the help of more than 500 employees (300 of whom are Direct Support Professionals that work one-on-one with clients in the homes and programs). These programs provide a service to those with disabilities that those individuals could find nowhere else.

This recommendation plan will look at CTA's presence and content creation trends in the following areas: Twitter, website blog, multimedia offerings, Facebook, job postings, and word-of-mouth efforts. Each section will look at the overall information presented in each, provide an A-F graded ranking on their efforts, and then offer suggestions to improve the specific area and what benefits it could provide. I will also offer a few unique insights into the company's operation since my wife is the Human Resources Director for the company and has access to answer some questions that would need to remain speculative for another company.

BLOG

CTA's blog is the most unique part of their content plan, but not for the right reasons. The last post on their blog was posted in 2018. Prior to that, the blog was fairly active and provided a diverse array of stories about clients, employees, the company, and what they were all doing, including a post celebrating the company's 30th birthday.

After 2018 the blog posts stopped (just before their 35th birthday, which should have had a 35-year summary post). To make things even more interesting, not only did the posts stop, but the link to the blog vanished from the website making it impossible to access from that time onward.

After asking about what happened to the blog, Linda revealed that CTA hired a new web management company to revamp and maintain their website, as the old company was insufficient for their needs. However, the new company took months longer to get the new website running properly and then maintained it poorly as well. Nobody in CTA's management realized what happened to the blog and could not figure out where it went even after doing a quick search for the link. It wasn't until I manually typed in their URL and added /blog to the end that I found it. So, the blog still exists, but it can only be reached by typing in the specific URL.

Unlike other forms of content, the company provides, the blog was used effectively. However, it has been unavailable for several years.

Grade: C

Recommendations: CTA’s blog started off as a way of telling stories about the company and clients. The posts were longer and usually comprised several paragraphs. They were written more like news stories and were aimed at generating interest by keeping the public informed. Because they were housed on the website, they required individuals to visit the website first. I would recommend they keep the blog on the website but use other forms of social media and content creation to insert links to the blog and ensure their website itself becomes a hub of detailed information.

And for the most obvious recommendation, I suggest they link to it...and resume writing frequent posts. At least two posts a month would be enough to tell detailed stories without worrying about writing “fluff” articles. As Ann Handley states in *Everybody Writes*, “Writing is the primary determinant of the success of the post. Everything else—timing, graphics, frequency—is secondary,” (254). The stories about clients are too good *not* to tell well.

Blog posts should focus on the story aspect of the company, something that makes them unique. Handley continues discussing blogs by suggesting a list of tactical suggestions for blogs. Here is how CTA can use some of them (254):

- **Blog Bling:** Handley suggests no stock photos, but large graphics and videos. I will admit client confidentiality makes this somewhat difficult, but many clients and their families are very sociable; and they have a wealth of material besides images of clients (including their dog mascot).
- **Time it well:** Handley discusses the best timing for events. Just posting about a client’s achievements is not enough; the posts must come at the right time too.
- **Provide sharing and subscribe options:** If there is nothing to follow, how are community members going to follow information?
- **Keep them short-ish:** CTA did a great job of fulfilling general length rules, but they must be more aware of writing to audience and purpose, not just generalized rules.
- **Experiment:** Since CTA has experienced a content and social media lull, now is a great time for them to experiment to find the best ways to reinvent themselves.

If a client hosts an art show, has an interesting job, or makes great strides in their school, the blog is where we should be able to read about it. The company is all about helping individuals with disabilities—this is where we need to see *how* they are helping.

FACEBOOK

Facebook posts come a little more frequently and usually tell a more detailed story about a client or event. But the general infrequency makes it sound like these awesome events happen infrequently, which is not true; it’s only the reporting of them that is infrequent. Facebook is currently used to advertise job openings, which is great. But when that is almost all it does, it becomes easy to ignore, as it functions more like a billboard or TV commercial that people automatically tune out, as opposed to a story to engage with. Adding more variety will make Facebook posts more readable and improve engagement.

Grade: C

Recommendations: As with most things, Facebook posts must be written more frequently. The stories about clients, staff, and events in general must be sought for instead of passively written when convenient. Implementing some sort of “tell your story” tool for DSPs and other staff will give them a way to share interesting events, which ideally would include pictures or videos when appropriate, and provide ample material for regular Facebook posts.

TWITTER

CTA employees and clients are active parts of communities throughout Utah. Some clients hold jobs (one of them even works at the stadium where the Utah Jazz play) and others are artists and hold art shows often. These activities and events are perfect bite-sized stories for sharing on Twitter. Despite that, CTA tweets only once a year during the holidays. Their existing tweets are requests for donations. While these donation requests are a fantastic use of Twitter, CTA has only 180 followers as of writing this plan, many of which are employees. Infrequent posts mean they are unlikely to gain new followers, and their requests for donations then only reach those already in the company.

Grade: F

Recommendations: Of all content delivery platforms, CTA’s Twitter presence requires the most work. Twitter can and should not only a way to highlight quick stories, requests (such as donation requests), and job listings, but it should also be a way of regularly guiding people inside and outside the company to the website. It should act like the digital Uber and take potential and employees to relevant job information, link families of clients and future clients to informational sources on their website, link to their blog by highlighting stories from within the company, and even provide tweets with links to about us and contact us pages. Even one or two tweets daily would provide such a huge boon for the company that it is almost unthinkable that they are not doing more already. CTA is an active part of the community; they should also be an active part of the social media community.

JOB LISTINGS

CTA is a rewarding but difficult place to work. Clients come in all shapes, sizes, ages, and development levels along the autism spectrum. Many are non-verbal, some can be violent, and since the clients live in homes, staff are required even in the middle of the night. Because of this, job listings are a necessary way of explaining what CTA is like, what the job is like, and getting potential employees excited about the difference they can make.

Of all the content CTA produces, none of it is better than their job listings. The job board is managed carefully and updated regularly. Job listings explain the nuances and details of jobs while remaining light-

hearted and engaging. A reader is left with little doubt about what they will be doing, how much they will be paid, and the rewarding nature of the work (including fun opportunities).

Grade: A

Recommendations: I have not looked through every job listing throughout the course of this class; there are simply too many to sift through. But of the ones I have read through, the most common omission is frequency or possibility for advancement. CTA could include more information in each job post about how/when/where/etc for promotions and advancement, especially considering managers and other staff are almost exclusively promoted from within.

WORD-OF-MOUTH

Because CTA is a part of communities throughout Utah, word of mouth content is an integral part of sharing information. Word of mouth encounters are usually natural (when employees are out with clients for example) but they are sometimes planned. Planned events include annual parties (in which families, friends, and community members are invited), job fairs, and business cards that employees carry and can hand out to anyone they meet.

The word-of-mouth events were a strong part of CTA's recruitment and messaging program. Job fairs were particularly valuable and took place at least four times a year (usually at local universities). However, like with most businesses, 2020 affected them significantly. Job fairs were cancelled, client outings were mostly cancelled, and some clients no longer attended their jobs. To no fault of their own, there were no community events throughout 2020 and are only just now resuming. There have not been enough events or information on what they are doing this year to analyze or speculate about what they will do in a post-covid vaccine world.

Grade: B

Recommendations: Managing safety concerns for staff, clients, and their families is difficult. As such, I am not going to make any recommendations for in-person events as that is a safety concern the company will need to consider on their own.

If I were to make any recommendations at all, it would be to print out something like the infographic from module 4. A succinct, visually appealing object that can be distributed at events or fairs would do wonders for the company, as they have not used anything like that in the past.

MULTIMEDIA/YOUTUBE

As with all other forms of content creation (besides job listings), CTA's multimedia and YouTube presence is lacking. Some of their old blog posts have images and videos embedded into the stories, but the visual content is almost non-existent. One of the most glaring omissions is the company mascot. I had no idea

the company had a small pug as their mascot until Linda told me. The dog isn't found anywhere on their website, it is not shared in Twitter or Facebook, and it was never on the blog. Despite all that, the dog enters shows and recently won an event. Everyone loves a cute dog; that they are not sharing the dog everywhere is a crime against dog lovers.

Grade: D

Recommendations: Client privacy and safety is an absolute priority and must never be neglected (and it never is with their company). But the need for safety and privacy can exist along side a robust multimedia and YouTube presence within the company. Therefore, starting an official CTA YouTube channel should be a priority.

As mentioned before, some clients have art exhibits. Others work for the Utah Jazz. Some have unique pets like snakes, rats, chickens, and rabbits. These examples represent just a few opportunities for CTA employees to create video content that will enlighten the public about what they do and the service they provide the community while also entertaining viewers.

My suggestion would be to hire one or two personalities, faces of the company if you will, to host the channel and produce regular content. It could be two employees, it could be a client and an employee, or something similar, but their roles would be to act as the faces of the company and travel around to homes and other sites to film the regular goings-on in the company. The show could easily have a flashy intro and outro to make it feel like an official part of the company, and it would be an entertaining way to give a detailed look into the work the company does and the benefits it provides the community. "Day in the life" videos are always trending on YouTube, and this would be a great way to capitalize on the trend to show the community what great service CTA provides and possibly secure more donations and funding. The public will not fund something they know nothing about; showing the world what CTA does and who the clients are will make all the difference. Plus, through YouTube's "share" button, videos can be shared and spread through all other forms of content listed above (such as embedding a video into a blog post that highlights a particular client or home).

CONCLUSION

CTA operates in a unique niche for nonprofit companies. They are a large company that spans the entire state of Utah and employ or care for hundreds of people, and they have been in business for more than three decades; yet their content creation and social outreach are primitive and incomplete as though they are a small startup not yet able to fully dive into marketing.

There have been some attempts to create and share content—their efforts for person-to-person outreach and job listings are about as good as they could be. However, simple social media and content tools such as Facebook, Twitter, and even a website blog are all woefully underutilized.

As mentioned before, the first step for CTA should be content consistency. They must start utilizing all social platforms to create content and share their information. With such a lackluster and sparse history, quite literally any content would suffice on any platform. Once they have developed a routine of posting and sharing, then they can begin to look at specific methods or tools to share their information as effectively as possible. But when doing so, they must make certain each social tool is used appropriately.

Twitter should be CTA's gateway to all other content. Twitter is perhaps the easiest form of content creation for the company, as it necessitates short and sweet nuggets of information and can be used by anyone in the company with a phone or access to the Internet. Employees on outings with clients can post images with small captions, HR can post links to job openings the second they happen, and in general the company can post news and information daily. All of this data will lead to the other forms of content listed above, which ideally will be used frequently enough to justify the Tweets. Gaining a Twitter following and creating regular content will serve as an introduction and pathway to greater engagement throughout the company. And, thankfully for them, it's almost 100% free to begin, as it costs nothing to Tweet and takes less than a minute in most circumstances. If they begin doing this, as well as reactivate their blog and begin using it, a small bit of effort will result in significantly more donations, employees, and overall engagement with the community they serve.

Social and Content Overview:

CTA COMMUNITY SUPPORTS	Twitter	FB	Word of mouth	Blog	Multimedia	Job Postings	IG
Frequency	Twitter posts have been sporadic at best. There are a couple years where the only post is during the holidays	More frequently than Twitter, but still infrequent enough to make it ineffective	Prior to 2020, word-of-mouth (WOM) was a primary source of news, information, and applications. From community members seeing the employees and clients in public, to job fairs, this was a common and useful method of getting the company's message across.	Was very frequent for about four years. But after a change in website management the blog itself was forgotten. It still exists and you can visit the old posts, but there is no active link on their homepage as of initial observations (hopefully that changes).	Most social media posts, from Twitter to Facebook, use a variety of images, videos, and text. However, there are things that could be used to highlight their company much more frequently. For example, they have a dog as a company mascot and it recently won a dog show. However, that news and any images are almost impossible to find.	Jobs listed everyday of the year, usually posted and removed in two-week intervals.	3. Just 3. Total. Forever.
Length	Tweets usually reached	The Facebook posts are	Job fairs lasted for a few hours,	Blogs usually told a	Usually videos or pictures of	Usually a couple of introductor	

	<p>high character limits and included pictures or links. Plenty of information was available</p>	<p>typically multi-paragraph stories about clients or their impact in the community.</p>	<p>but word of mouth was usually done through in-person discussions</p>	<p>small story or covered some interesting part of the company's mission. Blog posts are very similar to FB posts, though at a more regular cadence.</p>	<p>clients and the staff who help them.</p>	<p>y pieces of information that highlight the job position and the history of the company (who they are and what they do). Bulleted lists of what the company offers and what they expect usually follow. Easily digestible size.</p>	
<p>Type</p>	<p>Often the tweets are donation requests or explain ways community members can help. Since these tweets usually only come around the holidays, they are focused on capitalizing on the community's giving nature during that time.</p>	<p>Most posts cover something unique happening within the company (such as highlighting a client and their artwork) or advertise new and important job openings.</p>	<p>Families and friends would share their success stories while in the public. Often times, members of the community would see clients and staff in public at events (like basketball games) or at the store and would ask what the</p>	<p>Everything from client highlights to interactions with community. This was much more focused on sharing what was going on with the company than specifically promoting job positions.</p>	<p>Feel-good stories, highlights of a certain home or client.</p>	<p>Basic job info- nothing fancy</p>	

			employees were doing with clients. Staff would usually hand out little cards with job information on them.				
Style	Mildly formal. The tweets are not full of idioms or memes, but they aren't stuffy and dry.	Most FB posts are written semi-formally. Much like the tweets, they avoid casual language and memes, but they are more upbeat. These posts are written more like someone saying it to you than a written report.	Almost like religious missionaries- employees would carry cards when people asked what they were doing or were interested in their programs. People given cards would apply	Blogs are written in a very friendly manner.	Varies by specific video or post, but usually they focus less on production quality and more on the message (the word potato camera comes to mind, but the content is what matters).	Very friendly and highlight the work and benefit the jobs would provide individuals and the community. Excitement is palpable in all the job listings and make the work sound very rewarding.	
Audience	Public, parents and people interested in autism follow the account. Many current or past employees also follow the account. Only 180	Facebook posts usually target people outside the company, as a FB message has a wider audience. This is why they mix feel-	Community local to a given group home, program (such as after school programs), and those at job fairs.	Anyone interested in autism services, people helping the community , healthcare, employees or potential employees who want to see what the	Anyone with a heart	Usually entry-level employees, occasional management. Management usually comes from promotions than new hires, so job listings are addressed to those	

	followers as of writing this.	good stories with job posting information.		company does.		unfamiliar with the company.	
Trends	They need to tweet enough to even have a trend. If any trends exist, its that they ask for donations during the holidays.	Ditto for twitter. They do post a bit more often as they include job openings, but it's in no way consistent.	2020 changed how outreach work since public interaction dropped, but before that it was consistent	Consistent for several years then stopped. The blog is no longer available through a link and the address must be typed in manually.	Only trend is that they post feel-good stories. Not frequent enough to say anything more.	Very prompt about tailoring job listings to the company's needs and trends in employment in Utah. Jobs are updated very regularly.	

Assessment and Analysis:

CTA is a company that can and should benefit from using writing technologies to reach potential employees and the community. However, I have found their strategy to be sorely lacking. In simpler terms, there is no real strategy. As shown above, their social media profiles post sporadically, randomly, or infrequently enough to be almost ineffective. It's a great shame, too; the company provides so much to the community and has such a great story to tell (helping people with autism and disabilities in the community is the type of feel-good news that is missing from the average local news outlets) but nobody is telling it. They do a great job with job ads, using writing strategies to effectively explain the job and the benefits of working at the company. But without a more robust social media and public presence, this is about the only thing they will continue to do well.

Looking at each of the content categories it's easy to see where the deficiencies are and how they could be improved. First, their Twitter profile is a great way to reach the community quickly and easily, but they post once a year. It's no wonder they have fewer than 200 followers. Their posts are usually around the holidays asking for donations, so the times they *do* use it are very appropriate. Facebook posts come a little more frequently and usually tell a more detailed story about a client or event. But the general infrequency makes it sound like these awesome events happen infrequently, which is not true; it's only the reporting of them that is infrequent. Word of mouth events have dropped since 2020, but that's a result of global circumstances and not their fault. Blog posts, much like Facebook, tell great stories. The problem is finding them. There is no active

link to the blog page on the CTA website (you need to manually add the /blog to the URL to reach it) and it has not been updated since about 2018. Before that, it was the most active part of the writing and publicity (outside of job listings, of course). Their job postings are fantastic and not much is needed in that regard. Finally, I just found out they *do* have an Instagram account but have only three total posts. It very much feels like someone created it just to cover bases and forgot about it. There is not much to say about it since it effectively doesn't exist.

I do have a bit of an inside look into the company and don't need to speculate as to why some things have fallen through the cracks. For starters, 2020 hit the company hard and word of mouth all but stopped. Second, the company hired a new publicity company to manage their social profiles. However, this work was outsourced and contracted out instead of onboarding an individual and having someone in the company produce their content. As a result, the work was slow, of poor quality, and never seemed to do them any good.

The most positive thing to say about CTA's writing and communication is that the fixes are easy, to begin with. By posting, writing, and creating more content their message will begin to spread and interest in the company will grow. Once that point is reached, they could then take a closer look at specific strategies for every category of communication. Until then, just writing more will work in their favor. They also have a wide audience they can reach; this means that they can implement any one (or more) of a number of strategies. They can focus on adult community members for donations, legislature for funding, young adults (their primary employee demographic) for more jobs, and parents with disabled children. That might be overwhelming to tackle all at once; but focusing on using social media for even one of those will do wonders almost immediately.