

[REDACTED]

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Internship

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SDMM Action Research

Introduction:

In the year 2011, a eleven year old [REDACTED] had her first encounter with an email address. It was the first day of summer bridge, a program ran for kids who are new to the high tech school system. Before coming to High Tech Middle/High, I never knew the importance of an email. An up until eleventh grade, I wasn't quite sure how sure how to write a proper one. In public school classrooms proper email etiquette is far from what they are teaching. For High Tech High proper email etiquette, can take a whole class of writing seminar for day. I realize many people must discover email and how to write professional emails by themselves or seek out help to be educated on the subject. So when do people learn about email if they don't they seek help to in high school? Is there really a college class or seminar for students to be able to write and create emails?

I realize now that email is another form of universal communication that we are fortunate to have at our fingertips. I also realize how privileged I am to be able to go to a school that teaches you how to use and email, and how to draft them. I have lots of applicable skills that High Tech High has taught me, which apply very nicely to the real world. Emails are truly a



skill to be mastered, although it may not seem so at first especially to an eleven year old; but they will be used almost on a daily basis to keep up to date with task, meetings, interviews, scheduled, events, promotions, and business.

A person's inbox can tell you a lot about who they are, depending on the received mail. Even though email is something everyone uses, most emails sent to the average person seemed to be neglected. Whether the person lets their emails sit and muster in their email, or they empty out their inbox every hour and disregard ninety percent of their emails. When interning at San Diego Model Management checking my company email, was the first task of the day. Due to the fact that the rest of my task when in all my new received emails. When having a discussion with my mentor and teacher, it came to my attention, that our email system need a bit of revamping. Not only to increase business but to also avoid or business associates disregarding emails from the agency. So the question I have is this, How can we change the format and style changes can be made to relay information in a unique, creative, and informative way?

Background:

Essential Questions: How can we change the format and style and what changes can be made to relay information in a unique, creative, and informative way?

For thirty-two years, San Diego Model Management has been an agency for the masses. Producing great models and building great relations in the industry. Not only do they produce models of all ages and backgrounds, but they also provide a platform for actors and actresses. Through the agency they have built an empire of models, photographers, actors, and actresses



leading to the renowned La Jolla International Fashion Film Festival. They are a great representation of of business and fashion platform. With such an influential and large platform they must utilize a system for professional communication for various clients.

Emails are what most businesses use to get information across for business deals, to clients, newsletters etc. In 2016 it was analyzed that each US Business associate belonging to a company have an average of 1.2 email accounts per user (Radicati 2016). San Diego model management is one of these participating users. The problem within the company is keeping up with advancements in use of communication. The system set in place works, yet it is a bit outdated. As a result San Diego Model management has realized, the time has come to upgrade their system for clientele in order to keep up with advances in social media, marketing, and networking. The new email would include: Shout outs to new faced models, target areas, an editorial calendar, and newsletter content. San Diego model management wants to go through a marketing branding plan, and one of the crucial steps of this is reformatting emails. A newsletter is my main subject of focus, a newsletter normally consist of information available to the reader who signed up for the subscription. The textbook definition refers to “a bulletin issued periodically to the members of a society, business, or organization. (Dictionary.com)” The newsletter sent SDMM is meant to be a source of connection for clients, models, and other associates in the industry. While the newsletter is great way to spread information professionally

the issues seems to be, who the letter gets sent to. An article published by forbes refers to a study done based on email responses. Since mobility is now exsitent for emails, about 50% of responses are sent in less than 60 minutes due to mobile emailing (Forbes.com). Since SDMM target audience is mainly adults the statics from forbes showed that “If you’re emailing someone between 20 and 35, the average response will be 16 minutes. The response time goes up to 24 minutes for individuals ages 35 to 50. (Forbes.com) In Reference to older adults “ People over age 50 take an average of 47 minutes to reply, but they tend to write longer messages compared to their younger counterparts. (Forbes.com)” After understanding the facts and data of response, you must take into accountant the visual aspect of a newsletter. Writing shorter emails, seems to be a good key according to this article “The sweet spot for email length is between 50-125 words, all of which yielded response rates above 50% (boomerangapp.com).” As far as visual aspect, a few of my interviews eluded that a nice and simple eye catching design is important to our receipts especially within this field of work. Overall these are the necessary components of an emailed newsletter. Through the rest of research I explore more into depth, and find tools and data that will benefit SDMM.

Methods:

When collecting data I tried to use multiple methods of collecting. The first being phone call interviews. There were a total of three interviews conducted, transcription of these can be



seen in the appendix below. These interviews were the essential target questions, to help me formulate answers and general results for my analytic surveys. I was able to decide questions based on outside data I collected from other sites. A quote taken from an outside source states, “One of the biggest problems with email newsletters is that they're often cluttered and unfocused because they're supporting every aspect of your business.(Blogspot.com) This lead me to focus in on the question to our recipients on whether or not our they wanted our newsletters to only help them with their careers in specific, being that we have many contact groups with various professions; Versus being sent an email that connects them to all forms of the network SDMM has. Outside research, also led me to explore other content based question. Emotion in emails plays a role in responses, “ Emails that were slightly to moderately positive OR slightly to moderately negative elicited 10-15% more responses than emails that were completely neutral (boomerangapp.com) .” This amongst other research allowed me to formulate questions revolving stylistic choices while still focusing in on the needed content. Through my outside sourced I was able to research what other successful business in their approach to newsletters.

Analysis / Discussion :

As Businesses tend to grow, the action of relaying information becomes essential to staying relevant in an ever changing generation of social media. Newsletters are one the best observed ways to communicate with clients. To receive feedback and responses, to newsletters specifically, SDMM must modernize techniques used to present the newsletters to recipients. When competing with other agencies it is important to, compete with information and access to the industry. Which SDMM has a vast pool of connections. Modernizing the letter will not only help the SDMM as a company, but will expand its connection within the industry even more and keep the company as one of the leading agencies in California. The newsletter is meant to showcase the company as a reliable and successful. If the newsletter is utilized correctly it would be a great opportunity to spread awareness about the company. As stated by my mentor in an interview “We want to let them know were here, and let them know what resources we have to offer (Interview 1)”. When discussing with potential clients, most wanted the same thing representatives of the company did; “ Models looking to hire photographers, maybe events where photographers are able to get together and do shoots Existing or interested models as contacts (Interview 4) .” Due to the nature of these responses of both parties, the topic of information needed in the newsletter can result to having resourceful information as part of the contents. In a study conducted 24.2% of people said they wanted more informative information (Campaignmonitor.com).” “While 23.9% wanted more personal offers (Campaignmonitor.com).” In relation, the data and interviews correspond with each other. Informative information should be included not only about the company as well in benefit to the



recipient. If the information is there, then the look of the look of the newsletter is the next topic of focus.

Many companies nowadays, are ahead of the game when it comes to staying on trend to stay prevalent. While having the info is significant, the look of the letter can pull it altogether. Being in such a creative field, with creative minds the best way to get the information across is to catch the eye by a design. As stated in a interview conducted “Definitely if had exciting or captivating images. Not so much video. Also a section on giving photographers or videographers tips on how to generate more business with models. Something that would connect models and photographers (Interview 4). In a study done by Zabisco, it is reported that “40% of people will respond better to visual information than plain text (Blogspot).” This being said, both ways of information distribution are valid, and when put together they would in theory create a fantastic newsletter. Another way of getting responses is now making the move from just digital to mobile. Obviously emails if set up properly, should go to most people’s phones by now. How can the company use mobility to advantage? According to forbes, “Respondents using a laptop tend to take almost twice as long as mobile phone users (Forbes).” When trying to expand a network pool, the best way seems to be trying new things. Keeping up with what is trendy and relevant. Visuals will always stay relevant it's our one of the main sources of the public media in the world today. But as mobile devices keep branding, companies should be to. Staying in step with mobility, will create a bigger reponse turn out as proven above. When looking into modernization, the next course of action is getting clients to read and open the emails.

When speaking with average person most tend to disregard about 50% of what is in there inbox and move on. This is without taking more than a glance or even opening the email itself.



Companies need to be aware of all possibilities to create a successful email format, this includes getting others to interact with emails sent. Otherwise the purpose of emails is null void. In interviews conducted, a topic focused on was subject line matter and responses. Stated by and interviewed photographer when asked what subject line gets the attention of a reader, “Models looking for expertise, or photographers needed. Only if it applies. If it's going to bring me business. I would open to new technology, or new avenues to explore in models or in photography (Interview 3).” Here is another interview in response to the same subject : “New Models! (Interview 4)” Both of these excerpts have something in they both relate to the industry SDMM is involved in, when thinking back to the personalization aspect the subject line is apart of that as well. In a study done by a marketing company it is revealed that “Subject lines with only 3-4 words (excluding email conventions like Re: and Fwd:) received the most responses (boomerang app.com)” This being said shows what it takes to get responses from the very first step on email. It is important to focus in on the subject line because, that is the first thing the readers eyes will see. This will make or break whether they want to open the email. After the subject line, if opened how does the company draw the reader interested in to continue reading, or response, and or interact? How the information is structured in the email is an important component to take into account. Studies show that, “We found that emails that asked 1-3 questions are 50% more likely to get a response than emails asking no questions (boomerangapp.com)” This data presented information such as “The sweet spot for email length is between 50-125 words, all of which yielded response rates above 50% (boomerangapp.com).” Through this data it is clear that, if an email is being sent out there are few points readers like to come across. While considering the structure the form of organization is still on the table. When



creating and curating an email format or newsletter, it is important to know who you are sending the information to and how that information can continuously build onto the number of recipients and feedback received. In an a marketing interview study here are a few experts reported “ For example, if you have a blog, every time you publish a new post, you can notify your list, which will help increase repeat traffic (Campaignmonitor.com).” Another interview states “Building an email list is crucial because it’s the best way to build a relationship with potential customers in an intimate way. You’re not just a status update that’s there and gone, you’re right in someone’s inbox (Campaignmonitor.com).” These points are from Ceo from other successful businesses, if it is working for them. It is most likely proven to work for another company. As company find their particular style it is then important for them to find others who appreciate that style and would like to be apart of the budding process of network connections. Lastly connecting the company's multiple networks is the final aspect assess.

As for connecting all points of the industries, a newsletter is a perfect way to find and connect with other clients. As a business spreading the word about the company is the main goal. Without awareness of a company, there is no company. Creating a business community through media and marketing is how companies thrive, and continue to expand. If you connect others with each other they are bound to share information with more business associates. Which gains companies more connections in preferred industries. A few points reviewed in the interviews taken for this paper show, “I think as long as part of the information is relevant to me, an overall network of people and contacts, would also be valuable (Interview 2).” Another excerpt states, “ All of them, they all apply. I work with all of them I do video, photography, I work with models.



I try to work with them all. (Interview 3).” Through these the company can create networking through newsletters and email, with the industry being so large it is important to have a trustworthy connections. As this discussion comes to a close, the possibility of creating a great newsletter is on the horizon. In doing this, the main topics to craft and create are : Personalized info, modernization, distribution, and network connections.

Action Plan / Conclusion :

For SDMM, I would suggest a few things based upon the format of a newsletter and emailing system. The first being a curated list through my research online and interviews, I found that this part of marketing is a main principle to really create a system. Most people that I interview seemed willing to receive a newsletter if it helped their career. I would say creating a list of people who would like to more about our SDMM and would want information that we can provide. This could be done by an intern making phone calls to the list already crafted, and collecting emails to start a confirmed list. From there we can go about sharing the letter each time it goes out. I also took notice to the sign up for the newsletter on the site, the statement above the pop-up box seems to be directed towards models; I think changing that could help widen the horizon for recipients of the newsletter. If we moved this box to somewhere more visible I believe that would help as well. Another component is the specific information, I think that letter should remain monthly and be sent out to all forms of the network. With this being said I think every other month or every few months, we should curate newsletters for specific clients like photographers, actors and actresses, models and so forth. This would help with personalized information but still connecting all forms of the industry together. For the look of



the letter, I think adding visuals to each month letters would help grab readers attention, and make the want to continue. For the mobile format, I think SDMM should look into some stylistic headers and borders, to spruce up the look of emails and letters. As well as checking to making sure the format in place displays nicely on phones. These few points should be a great way to kick-off a new and improved newsletter.

The research done in this paper can relate to not only SDMM but also other small businesses with the same type of platform. I also think this information will benefit interns looking to go into business and marketing. This paper could be used as a resource for future interns that SDMM has as well. As for questions that remain, I would have like to explore my own survey data. So maybe exploring what more, I could have done to insure survey responses. Most of the questions I have left pertain to, what will happen after SDMM sends out a new and improved letter. I think do another study as to what specifically works well for SDMM would be beneficial to the company.

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Appendix:

Peveto, Daryl. In-Call interview. December 8, 2017

Q: Do You receive newsletter or informational email from sdmm inbox ?

A: I don't believe I do, No.

Q: Would you like to?

A : No, most of the talent I need is out of philly or new york.

Q: What information would you like sdmm management to send you?

A: If real models were included in the newsletter, I create still photography. But I shoot the models doing live actions. So typically models that I could work with.

Q: Would you like to receive a newsletter specific to your career or would you like to receive a newsletter that includes information for all forms of network through sdmm?

A: I think as long as part of the information is relevant to me, an overall network of people and contacts, would also be valuable.

Q: What subject line gets your attention ?

A: Usually, Something out of the ordinary. What I tend to gravitate towards our a. Not everyday. Once a week or once a month. Things that are not direct pitches.

Q: What draws you to respond to an email?

A: I think things that understand where I coming from better, versus ones that seem generic. I get a lot of things that have no relevance.

Q: Would you be open to answering an emailed survey by me?

A: Sure.

Adamo Denise . In-Call interview. December 8, 2017

Q: Do You receive newsletter or informational email from sdmm inbox ?

A: No, I don't think so.

Q: Would you like to?

A : What's in the newsletters? Possibly, I can't say yes or no.

Q: What information would you like sdmm management to send you?

A: Models looking to hire photographers, maybe events where photographers are able to get together and do shoots. Existing or interested models as contacts.

Q: Would you like to receive a newsletter specific to your career or would you like to receive a newsletter that includes information for all forms of network through sdmm?

A: All of them, they all apply. I work with all of them I do video, photography, I work with models. I try to work with them all.

Q: What subject line gets your attention ?

A: Models looking for expertise, or photographers needed. Only if it applies. If it's going to bring me business. I would open to new technology, or new avenues to explore in models or in photography.

Q: What draws you to respond to an email?

A: Definitely if had exciting or captivating images. Not so much video. Also a section on giving photographers or videographers tips on how to generate more business with models. Something that would connect models and photographers.

Q: Would you be open to answering an emailed survey by me?

A: Yeah, I do surveys that I take every now and then.

Lemon Bill. In-Call interview. December 10, 2017

Q: Do You receive newsletter or informational email from sdmm inbox ?

A: No, I don't believe I do

Q: Would you like to?

A : Yes

Q: What information would you like sdmm management to send you?

A: I do a lot of work in San Francisco, so models that may be coming up north to my area. I also go down to southern california, so when models need photographers to build their portfolio and are interested in shooting done in southern california.

Q: Would you like to receive a newsletter specific to your career or would you like to receive a newsletter that includes information for all forms of network through sdmm?



A: I would really like to keep the letter personal to my career and line of work. I think there are lot of opportunities available for models and photography. So that's what I liked to focus on.

Q: What subject line gets your attention ?

A: New Models!

Q: What draws you to respond to an email?

A: Mainly Subject matter, if the email seems to appeal to me and offer me work. Instead of trying to pitch or sale something.

Q: Would you be open to answring an emailed survey by me?

A: Yes, I would .