

B: Social Fall 2016

Team Alex



Beautiful Social Research Collaborative

Social Media Analysis: Twitter

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Summary of the Client Mission (ALSF)

The Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation Lemon Society believes that young, professional individuals can have a great impact on raising awareness for childhood cancer by means of their membership. Their goals are “raising money and awareness of childhood cancer causes, primarily research into new treatments and cures” and “encouraging and empowering others, especially children, to get involved and make a difference for children with cancer.” (Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation) Specifically, the Lemon Society focuses on engaging young professionals to contribute to their cause and be “a living embodiment of Alex's spirit of determination and hope.” (Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation) Although there are separate lemon societies in various cities, they all contribute to the foundation by following one common goal: “To continue Alex's legacy and dream of finding a cure for all kids with cancer” (Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation). This mission statement, held by ALSF and all of The Lemon Societies compliment the mission of the founder, Alexandra “Alex” Scott.

Summary of Social Media Messaging, Storytelling, and Spreading Messages

There are many suggested theories about the best practices for social media messaging, storytelling, and spreading messages. The majority of them focus on the different important layers of effectively conveying a message in a digital setting. All of these theories allow for the creation and displaying of content that is going to engage and retain an audience.

When spreading messages or telling stories, it is important to remember a few things about engaging an audience that is going to react to this information in a particular way. According to Joe Lambert, there are seven elements (point of view, dramatic question, emotional content, the gift of your voice, the power of the soundtrack, economy, and pacing) to effective digital storytelling. When all of these aspects are used together, the content becomes stronger and is able to better connect with an audience.

To further the connection with the audience or followers on social media platforms, it is important to keep in mind what information is going to be native and what might come as a surprise. According to Gary Vaynerchuk, it is important to have native content that doesn't interrupt or demand things of their followers too often. He says, “skillful native content has little to do with selling and a lot to do with skillful storytelling” (18). If the content seems too upfront or demanding, the audience might be turned away from the cause or account all together. Once this specific content is created, discovering ways to engage an audience can be difficult. However, according to “The Dragonfly Effect,” the most powerful ways to drive social media engagement would be for the foundation or organization to be authentic, to empathize, and to tell a story (Aaker and Smith). The best way to show this authenticity is to continuously display emotion in a way that creates a constant theme for the audience.

Additionally, although an individual person or a foundation, such as ALSF, has the ability to create and spread awareness through messages, the most effective way is to utilize a community of followers and active online participants. In the article “Finding the Multipliers,” John Hlinko emphasizes the importance of identifying multipliers, which are followers who frequently and consistently spread digital messages to a wider audience. For Twitter, it will be important to look for “retweeter repeaters” and “pay close attention to people that have a lot of followers” (Hlinko,

137). Once these followers are discovered and utilized, all of the stories and information will begin to spread much more easily.

Summary of Client Social Media Use

ALSF and The Lemon Society has a very large presence on many forms of social media. They can be found and followed on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, and LinkedIn, and subscribed to on YouTube.

The Lemon Society's audience needs to be taken into consideration when determining what social media platforms would be the best for them to use. Since they are primarily trying to engage young professionals, it is important for them to be very visible on the internet, where their audience primarily is.

The Lemon Society is currently utilizing Facebook to engage a wide audience in order to share information regarding their upcoming events and promotions, such as their 5K Run/Walk and the expansion of their travel fund. In addition to their promotional content, they post some pictures from events that they have had in the past, such as "Kendra Gives Back."

Although they have previously used Instagram, The Lemon Society is currently not updating their account. In the past, they have posted pictures from events and displayed promotional graphics. This content has now been primarily posted on Twitter instead. ALSF has their own Instagram account where they have been posting pictures of survivors, supporters, and promotional graphics.

Pinterest and YouTube also allow for contact through visuals. Pinterest primarily helps to organize their foundation and reveal a specific aesthetic to allow followers to further understand their mission. Their videos on YouTube are used to tug on the heartstrings of their followers and connect with them on a deeper level.

Lastly, ALSF uses LinkedIn because it is a great way to connect with young professionals that are looking to work for a nonprofit or feel passionate about children-centered causes.

Analysis of One Social Media Space: Twitter

The Lemon Society can be followed on Twitter under the username @LemonSociety. They originally joined Twitter in May of 2010. As of November 14, 2016, The Lemon Society has tweeted 2,486 times and has favorited other account's tweets 207 times. They have 803 followers, but are only following 709 accounts. The main purpose of their Twitter account is to post promotional graphics and videos about upcoming Lemon Society events and to share pictures with information about events that have happened in the past. All of their tweets are meant to initiate contact with their followers and to allow them to share opportunities for greater involvement within The Lemon Society.

According to their Followerwonk bio word cloud, The Lemon Society most frequently use the words "cancer," "Philadelphia," "life," and "love," which can be explained by the fact that they are using this social media platform to raise awareness for childhood cancer, but also like to

embrace positive concepts such as life and love within their tweets. Additionally, many of their tweets reference Alex’s Lemonade Stand in general since they are a smaller group that supports the larger foundation.

Based on the information that The Lemon Society shares on Twitter, such as 21+ events and fundraising opportunities, it is apparent that their Twitter target audience is young adult professionals (Figure 1). Because they have a very specific focal point, they are able to create content in a way that attracts that audience to the foundation. In addition to targeting an audience of potential new members, The Lemon Society Twitter is also used for reminding members of committee meetings and future events that they may already be involved in.



Figure 1. The Lemon Society Annual Wine Mixer



Figure 2. The Lemon Society Donation Tweet

The connection that is made with The Lemon Society’s followers through their tweets represents what Vaynerchuk was writing about when he discusses native content and follower interruption. The Lemon Society has developed an aesthetic that directly compliments and reinforces the goals and mission of the society and ALSF. Their followers know exactly what to expect when they are viewing tweets from The Lemon Society, which is helpful for the formation of their identity. Although The Lemon Society does not primarily use their account to tell stories the way that ALSF does, they still have consistency in telling the story of the young professional members that run these events and donate to the cause. They also are able to ask for donations and get followers interested in fundraising without being demanding.

Everything is written and posted in a fun and exciting way, which contributes to the overall experience of following The Lemon Society (Figure 2).

Continuing with their specific theme, The Lemon Society uses their Twitter account to tell stories in a nontraditional way. ALSF focuses primarily on children and families who are affected by childhood cancer; however The Lemon Society highlights members of the community who have been significant contributors to the society and foundation. Additionally, they tell stories about the members and supporters by means of pictures and “thank you” tweets posted after each event. Their positive and upbeat tweets are still extremely genuine and remain a good representation of the society, foundation, and their mission as a whole.

Aside from highlighting the members and supporters of the society, The Lemon Society often tweets information about the importance of volunteering, how the community can help, and the children that are being helped through events and fundraisers. These are just a few many ways that they thoroughly engage their audience.

According to “The Dragonfly Effect,” the most powerful ways to drive social media engagement would be for the foundation to be authentic, empathize, and tell a story (Aaker and Smith). Their authenticity is shown primarily through their appreciation posts and ALSF retweets that display community members conducting lemonade stands, donating, or spreading their mission (Figure 3). The appreciation posts show that they care about their supporters and followers in a way that is deeper than surface level interactions. They also empathize with the children they are helping and represent them in a way that promotes hope, not pity. Lastly, their posts often tell stories about previous events and the foundation, in general.



Figure 3. Alex’s Lemonade Stand Appreciation Tweet

The Lemon Society Twitter account primarily utilizes photographs from events and within the community to create awareness of their foundation and spread their mission. The photos typically show children, supporters, members of the society, and organizations that collaborate with the foundation. Putting a face to a cause is one of the best ways to gain an emotional response from their followers and potential donors. The Lemon Society is definitely excelling in connecting their mission and theme to the advocates of childhood cancer.

Although the bright colors and youthful appearance of the society and Twitter account can easily attract new people to their cause, their more emotional posts definitely have a more significant impact on their followers and make them feel closer to the children and the cause (Figure 4). Their picture posts and pictures are specifically in accordance with Aaron Walter in “Design for Emotion” when he talks about the need for feeling a “human-to-human communication” when a follower is viewing a certain platform (30). The Lemon Society uses their Twitter account to create a



Figure 4. The Lemon Society Lemon Ball Tweet

unique personality that makes it always feel as though their followers are a part of a larger community of supporters. Although the pictures do effectively create this connection, human interaction can be improved with more communication among the followers and the person

coordinating the social media so that users will not feel as though they are using a social media platform to communicate.

For a foundation the size of ALSF, The Lemon Society Twitter account should be able to attract followers easily and have plenty of interactions. However, it does not seem as though they are reaching a large amount of people. In their last 100 tweets, some tweets posted by The Lemon Society have been “favorited” over 20 times and others have received little to no attention by followers not directly associated with or working for the foundation. Additionally, the majority of these tweets were not retweeted and did not encourage communication between the user running



Figure 5. Alex’s Lemonade Stand Twitter

the account and the followers. Since ALSF is such a large foundation and has approximately 70,800 followers on Twitter, The Lemon Society should be picking up much more traction in the digital world (Figure 5). Committed supporters should want to follow both accounts because they

share different, but important information. Referring to best practices and Followerwonk data, there are some strategies that can be utilized for stronger engagement.

Best practices for Twitter suggests tweeting at 5 PM for more retweets and noon and 6 PM for a higher click-through-rate. It is also important to keep in mind that young adults will also most likely be using Twitter on their commute to and from work if they live in a city. Business professionals may also be using it during their lunch break. Followerwonk also supports this best practice method by providing information regarding when The Lemon Society’s followers are typically online. Currently, The Lemon Society’s followers are mostly online from 10:00 AM - 10:59 AM and 5:00 PM - 5:59 PM (Figure 6).

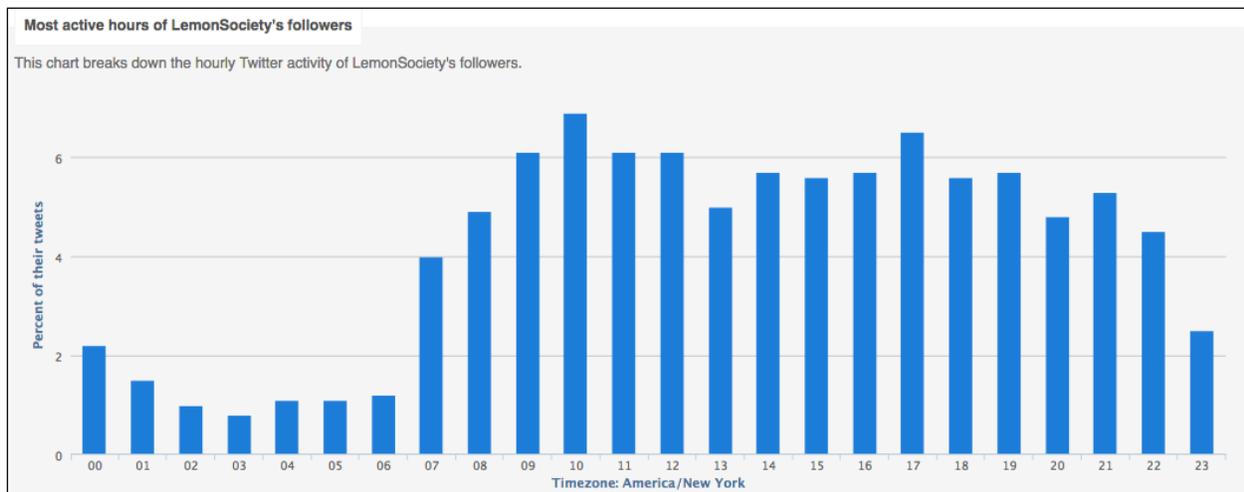


Figure 6. The Lemon Society’s Followerwonk Active Hours Data for Followers

The Lemon Society account typically does not post or try to contact followers around these times, which could explain the lack of interaction. Many of their tweets are posted around 8:00 AM or later in the evening, around 9:00 PM, which results in their tweets being missed by their followers (Figure 7). It is important to utilize resources such as Followerwonk in order to understand the wants and needs of followers in order to best serve a particular audience.

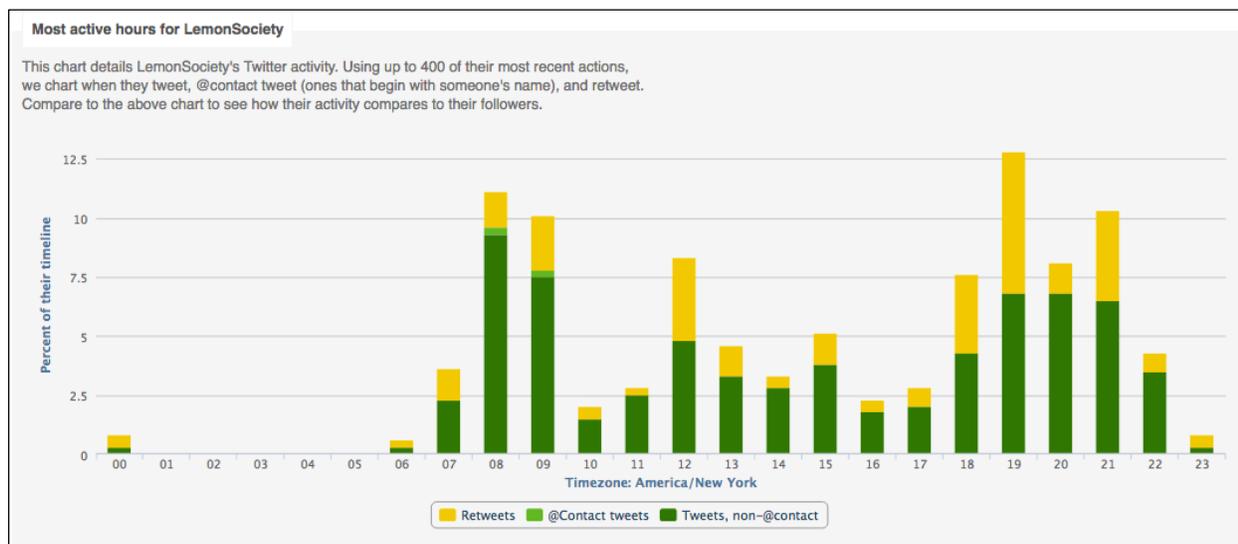


Figure 7. The Lemon Society’s Followerwonk Comparison Data

Conclusions and Suggestions

The Lemon Society is currently effectively spreading their mission online by utilizing various mainstream social media platforms. Specifically, their Twitter account is constantly being updated with ALSF retweets, photos from events, and updates about The Lemon Society. They typically utilize “thick” tweets, which is a best practice strategy for social media (Figure 8). They also provide information for each fundraiser in a way that can get their followers excited and wanting to know more.



Figure 8. Example of The Lemon Society Thick Tweet

Most importantly, they stick to a specific theme and image throughout all of their posts, pictures, and features of their Twitter account, which allows a specific group of followers to be targeted and remain interested. This consistency makes it very easy for followers to become more interested in the society and the foundation as a whole. It also helps them to identify with the cause more personally when they see related events or fundraisers offline.

Although they do have a growing Twitter presence, there is room for improvement for engaging with their followers on a regular basis. There are very few opportunities for followers to give their input or reply to the account in a way that sparks conversation and connects the follower to the cause on a deeper level. This can be seen in the limited time frame that The Lemon Society tweets directly to their followers and the content that they are posting. More interactions may even get followers to join the society, which could be equally beneficial.

Another suggestion for improvement would be to better connect social media platforms the way they do with YouTube so followers from one platform will be encouraged to follow the

foundation on another platform. This will help build a community who are constantly liking and sharing the posts to a wider range of friends in hope to gain more interactions.

Finally, the last suggestion for improvement is for The Lemon Society to update Twitter around 10 AM, noon, and 5 PM. This should attract the largest audience and really spread their messages among the social media platform. Specifically, The Lemon Society should directly reach out to followers that have a lot of followers around this time (Figure 9). It will help spread the message and get new people interested in the account. By using best practices, Followerwonk, and followers will a large digital voice, The Lemon Society Twitter account can thrive greater than ever.

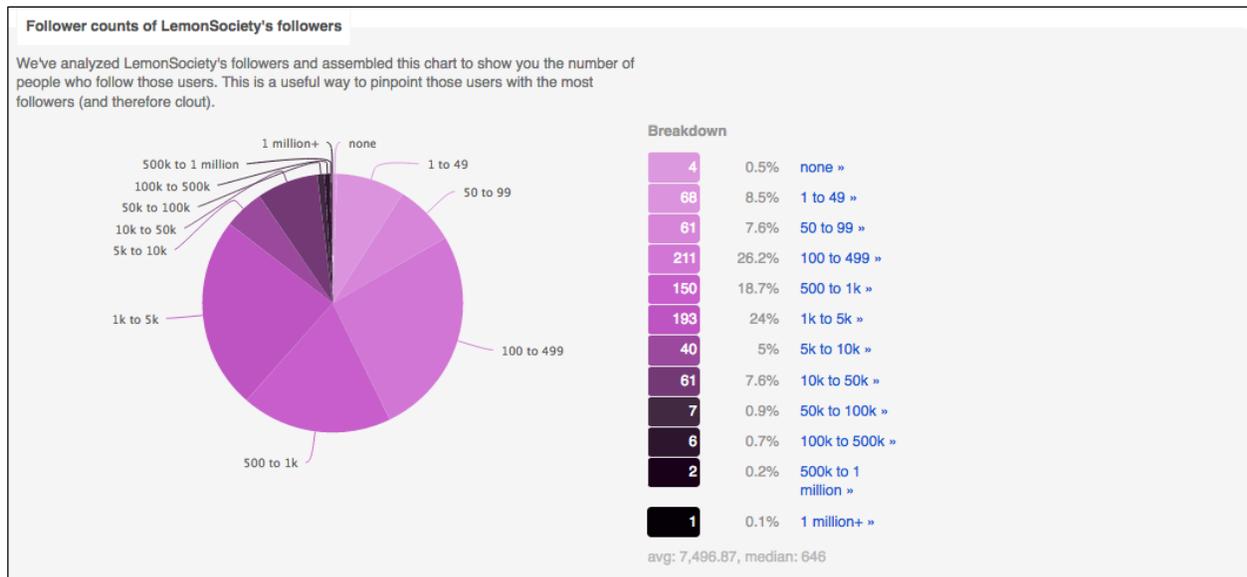


Figure 9. The Lemon Society's Follower Count Followwonk Data

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