



## Arkansas Alumni Association 2010 CASE III Awards Program

X. World Wide Web and Electronic Communication:  
52. Social Media Integration

### **Objectives**

In 2010 the Arkansas Alumni Association saw an opportunity to create an integrated social media marketing strategy to improve the Pride of Arkansas Tour (POAT) event for the year. The POAT is an event with multiple stops throughout Arkansas and regional states to connect alumni and friends with each other and to reconnect them to their alma mater. Members of the communications and programs teams met in early January 2010 to begin identifying the opportunities for how social media such as Facebook, Twitter, Blogs, Flickr, YouTube and Emails could be integrated into the overall marketing and event strategy. This new integrated social strategy created the opportunity for us to:

- 1) Increase awareness of the POAT event.
- 2) Engage alumni and friends who would otherwise be unable to participate.
- 3) Establish better one-to-one connections with our alumni and friends via social media.

### **Methods**

Our integration started with a YouTube trailer of the premiere movie to be shown at each stop of the tour. We also included social media action calls within our pre-event communications and added a social mashup to the online event site. Social media sites like Facebook, Twitter and blogs were used to spread the word and encourage event registrations, too.

The Association also decided to utilize the true value of social media, one-to-one connections, to help encourage alumni and friends attend the POAT events nearest them. This was done through multiple social channels including personal emails, Facebook sharing, tweets and more by key staff members who

were traveling to familiar locations. For example, Tammy Tucker, director of communications, returned to Helena, AR, her hometown, during one of the stops and she was able to reach out via personal emails and social connections to let her friends in the area know that she was coming and that they could all attend and come visit with her and the University. This allowed Tammy to reinforce her connections with her hometown along with introducing them to a person so they would feel a stronger one-to-one personal connection with the University of Arkansas.

We also integrated social media into the actual events and post event activities, starting with on-location event tweets by the association staff members at the POAT events. Along with tweeting, staff also maintained blog articles and photos of each event location. Flickr played a key role in helping us share our POAT photos online with everyone along with allowing staff to upload them from the road.

We finished our integration strategy with post event follow-up emails to all those who had registered with information on viewing the photos, reading the blog articles and taking a short survey to help us improve it for next year. These emails were segmented by the registration levels to speak directly to the recipients and encouraged them to engage online via the blog comments and share their stories so they could be a part of the event – especially if they didn't attend. This quickly became known as a possible solution to the "alumni event paradox" where alumni want more events but are unable to attend them. We also had social thank you messages sent out across Twitter and Facebook when one-to-one connections were made.

### **Staff Resources**

4 full-time staff members (5% of time) planning social integration opportunities and evaluating workload feasibility.

3 full-time staff members (10% of time for two days) each week throughout January and February; and 1 full-time staff member (25% of time) each week throughout January and February.

### **Budget**

The association didn't have any additional expenses for the addition of the social media integration into the overall POAT (besides additional staff time).

### **Results**

#### *Pre-Event Results*

2 comments left on "Watch the Trailer" blog article with YouTube premiere video trailer.

335 view of the premiere movie trailer on YouTube.

26 tweets sent by the Association about the POAT.

15 Facebook updates were made by the Association about the POAT.

57,201 emails were sent promoting the POAT trailer with Social Sharing features.

#### *During Event Results*

14 of blog posts were written about POAT stories on the road.

1649 photo views on 384 photos in 42 Flickr sets.

29,414 event specific emails were sent by the Association.

25,837 personalized emails sent by staff members to start conversations.

236 one-on-one conversations were held with just one staff member from personalized emails.

### *Post Event Results*

1 additional story was shared via the blog comments on the POAT story article.

555 alumni and friends were sent personalized follow up emails about the blog and photos.

39 alumni and friends engaged with our post event survey.

### *Summary Results*

12 retweeted the overall Pride of Arkansas Tour site on Twitter.

27 shared the overall Pride of Arkansas Tour site on Facebook.

1.45% of unique site traffic visitors came from social media channels.

Hundreds of personal one-to-one connections were formed or reinforced by Association staff members.