VCU Votes Campaign Strategies

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<u>Introduction</u>
NICK

2016's presidential election campaigns are unlike any we have seen in history before. Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton are two of the most animated and eccentric individuals that could have been nominated for presidential candidacy. Now more than ever, it is important that the citizens of the United States raise their voices and vote during this coming election. With visible support going to the Green and Libertarian parties, as well as lingering support former candidate Sanders, this election is revealing itself to be very unpredictable. The ultimate goals of our campus campaign is to get students registered to vote and provide them with ample resources to be able to vote when election day arrives. Among our primary objectives, the campaign will aim to spread awareness about upcoming dates, candidate policy and the importance of voting. Our campaign will utilize social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat and Instagram; as well as physical presence on campus. It is our hope that our efforts will increase student voter turnout and political awareness.

Online Campaign
COREY

Our team considers Social Media use an imperative part of the VCU Votes Campaign. Without an online presence, our campaign would be ineffective. Our presence on Social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat are necessary to this campaign. Also, occasional engagement on Reddit should be considered. As discussed in class, it is our team's opinion that social media accounts should be handed off between teams weekly. This would best serve to keep content from getting tired.

Facebook is more or less the catch all for social media. Most everyone has a Facebook, and different age groups are more Facebook-loyal than others. Facebook can be used to link and advertise other social media accounts with great efficiency. In our group's opinion, Facebook would be most effectively used as a catch-all for Twitter, Instagram, and Snapchat. Throughout the day, posts from these social networks should be cross-posted to Facebook. Luckily, it is very easy to link Instagram and Facebook; and upon some research, linking Twitter and facebook is easy too. In our opinion, we do not need to share every Tweet to Facebook, as not all Facebook users are interested in the constant updates Twitter offers. Snaps can be saved and posted to Facebook, but it would be best to focus on advertising our Snapcode, which links to our campaign Snapchat.

As mentioned earlier, Facebook content would be most effectively be developed through other social networks. In addition to this, a bi-daily Facebook exclusive update would be useful. So in conclusion, Facebook exclusive content should be updated bi-daily, Instagram posts should be cross-posted as they come out, select tweets should be shared a couple times daily, and the Snapcode should be shared regularly to gain followers.

Twitter is a social media network that resonates best with Millennials. Because of the immediacy of a Tweet, it is very useful for play-by-play or veritable political color commentary. Twitter content should be developed as a mixture of engagement between the user and journalists, retweets, and original content created by the team in charge of Twitter at the time. Twitter should be updated as frequently as possible, up to 15 times a day. This should be easy to do between original content, replies, and retweets. As always, the hashtag #VCUvotes should be used.

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Although Instagram is not a platform that will make or break a campaign, it would be unusual for us not to have an instagram. Just like Twitter, the hashtag #VCUvotes should be used in every post. Instagram should be updated 3x a day with photos from around campus and credited graphics.

Snapchat should be updated as frequently as possible. If possible, snapchat should be updated at the same rate as twitter. It would be easy for the team who is tabling to have control of the snapchat. As mentioned earlier, it would be good for snapchat to be advertised on facebook.

As proposed throughout the semester, social media accounts should be switched off weekly between the teams. Below is a proposed posting calendar for each of the social networks.

team		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Team 1	Facebook	3 original posts, 2 tweets	3 original posts, 2 tweets, snapcode	3 original posts, 2 tweets	3 original posts, 2 tweets, snapcode	3 original posts, 2 tweets	3 original posts, 2 tweets, snapcode	3 original posts, 2 tweets
Team 2	Twitter	Up to 15 tweets	Up to 15 tweets	Up to 15 tweets	Up to 15 tweets	Up to 15 tweets	Up to 15 tweets	Up to 15 tweets
Team 3	Instagram	3 posts	3 posts	3 posts	3 posts	3 posts	3 posts	3 posts
Team 4	Snapchat	Up to 15 snaps	Up to 15 snaps	Up to 15 snaps	Up to 15 snaps	Up to 15 snaps	Up to 15 snaps	Up to 15 snaps

- Teams rotate weekly with snapchat team in charge of in-person tabling

- All Instagram posts should be forwarded to Facebook

- 2 Tweets daily should be forwarded to Facebook

- Snapchat snapcode should be shared to Facebook every other day

Campus Campaign
MOIGE

While the social media aspect of this campaign is definitely important, the campus campaign is just as important. This is because while students don't necessarily have to follow VCU Votes on social media, they do come to campus because they have to come to class. So, we have to make our presence known, which will in turn make our social media campaign even stronger.

Lately, I've seen people on campus helping students to register to vote very regularly, which is awesome. It's created a climate on campus that entices students to want to vote. However, getting students to register to vote or change their address is only the first step. I think it would be great to partner with some of the organizations who are helping sign students up to vote, and maybe hand out some free VCU Votes merchandise once we get our hands on some. This could be a sticker, key chain, small info paper/business cards, etc. This merchandise would have a catchy slogan on it, as well as our social media handles so people are more likely to follow us, and know what we're all about.

As the election gets closer, I also think we should start tabling to talk to people about voting, especially how to vote on campus, how to find out where their polling place is, which identification is needed to vote, how to cast an absentee ballot, as well as information about why their vote matters and how it's counted. I know a lot of people are confused about the Electoral College, for example, so it might be fun/effective to have a day where we hang out in the Compass and educate people on how the Electoral College works. I think a lot of the campus campaign should be largely educational, so students can make educated decisions about who they're voting for.

Below is a campaign calendar, which assumes we begin our campaign on the week of the 10th of October, but it can be adjusted. I tried to give each team a week off of specific organizing activities to make the schedule a bit more flexible.

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Team 1	Tabling w/ campus org		Voter education: The Electoral College	Voter education: voting on campus
Team 2	Work on creating/designing VCU votes merch	Pass out VCU votes merch w/ campus org		Voter education: The Electoral college
Team 3	Order VCU Votes merch		Pass out VCU votes merch w/ campus org	Tabling: where's your polling place?
Team 4		Voter education: proper identification	Voter education: why your vote matters	Tabling: how to cast an absentee ballot

<u>Tracking and Evaluation</u>
MARCUS

In order to track and evaluate our results we need to apply a statistical method known as metrics in order to evaluate our progress. Time is also a serious factor that needs to be evaluated as frequently as possible in order to achieve optimization of the time we have left it is crucial that we record not only when people are visiting but this can be done in class since most of the social media sites provide some sort of data collection. The question then becomes whether the people are there because of the content or the time.

The best way to determine the difference between the two would be to post similar content at different times then evaluate when it got the most views and compare in order to see what the people like as well as when they like to see it. As for the on campus crew this evaluation will have to take on a different medium in order to evaluate its progress.

Each of the outside teams should record at the end of each hour how many people they were able to reach. In order to help organize, each of the teams should collect and convert the amount of individuals into a spreadsheet on Microsoft excel. With all the data we acquire we could then use the same mathematical methodology that the social media coordinator used in order to evaluate our progress.

Once all of these steps have been taken the class should be able to both evaluate and track the progress of how the campaign is being perceived by the student populous. The tracking would be backed up with numerical evidence and besides extraneous circumstances it should provide a more than accurate representation of how well the class achieved its overarching goal.

Other Suggestions

Although reddit is not a traditional social network but more of a meta info catch-all, it would still be useful to consider having a presence on reddit. We could post on r/vcu and r/Richmond. This could be done daily.