

Course: Public Relations Principles

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Communications Plan

#TheShoppersAreReal

Building Social Media Following

Part 1: Situation Analysis:

This report will begin with an analysis of Shoppers Drug Mart's (SDM's) social media presence through a SWOT analysis of SDM's Facebook and Twitter platforms.

Strengths:

SDM's Facebook and Twitter pages are both verified, giving the brand legitimacy as a Canadian business on social media. On Facebook, SDM uses high-quality photos and videos to promote its products. Its content is clearly directed at a female demographic, with its promotion of beauty products, inspirational quotes, "mom" humour and women's health information. SDM's Twitter page shares similar content as Facebook, although it focuses more on SDM's beauty products for a younger female audience. SDM also retweets charity initiatives at local SDM locations which helps local audiences connect with a national brand. Both platforms are complemented by its online store, an excellent location for calls-to-action.

Weaknesses:

While the visual media used on Facebook and Twitter is high quality, it also creates an impersonal, corporate experience for users because of its focus on products. SDM's photos and videos lack narrative and pictures of faces, stifling audience connection and trust. The copywriting also lacks questions and calls-to-action, which can facilitate audience engagement.

Furthermore, SDM offers a range of products and services including a drugstore, pharmacy, cosmetics, basic groceries and giftware. While SDM's multifaceted stores make them a convenient location for every consumer, this amount of product and service variety can lead to brand confusion and a convoluted target audience on social media.

Opportunities:

SDM's social media content can be maximized by incorporating the element of storytelling. SDM could generate narratives for specific age groups of women to gain new and engaged followers. Increasing engagement could also help SDM connect with other media

outlets. SDM could leverage the power of the “Second Screen” (Poltrack, 2014) during television shows by live tweeting during product placements or interview opportunities. Finally, it will be important to emphasize the social goals of its charity partnerships through compelling stories, because consumers could identify with a patient and their health struggle.

Threats:

While SDM’s retail competitors such as Rexall Pharmacy, Costco, Walmart or dollar stores will be taken into consideration as threats in the marketplace, SDM is ultimately competing with every business account for space on users’ social media newsfeeds. In addition, as social media is an important spot for customer service, the SDM pages must always be weary of vitriolic comments being left by visitors for all to see on this public platform.

Part 2: Research

SDM is a Canadian drugstore and a subsidiary of Loblaws, with more than 1,300 locations. Currently, it is running a campaign on social media called “Shoppers LOVE. YOU.” As recorded on its website, this campaign enforces a key message that encourages “women everywhere to make their own health a priority” (“About Us: Our Company,” SDM, 2017). Toronto-based agency, Manifest Communications, was hired to develop this campaign. They created key messages around women’s health, identified key charitable partners and hired “women’s health experts to conduct a national research study into how women perceive their health” (Manifest, 2017). As a function of this campaign, SDM also demonstrates a commitment to social responsibility through its contribution of more than \$57 million to seven different women’s health initiatives locally and nationally (“Social Responsibility: Community Investment,” SDM, 2017).

Before starting a new social media campaign, it will be helpful to run focus groups with Canadian consumers to measure perceptions of SDM’s impact on women’s health. In addition, focus groups among employees and customers will be a reliable way of gathering inspirational stories to turn into owned content for SDM.

It's also important to note that, in 2011, SDM launched its "30 Days of Beauty" event which allowed the company to put focus on its large selection of beauty products. The target audience for this campaign was women aged 18-54 (Maloney, 2011). Beauty products continue to be a dominant part of their marketing content, with cosmetics, hair products and SDM's "Holiday Beauty Gala."

SDM currently has 960, 894 likes and 900, 358 followers on Facebook. On Twitter, there are 73.3 thousand followers and 6, 546 likes. Google Analytics will be a vital research tool, to review all existing social media analytics and the interactions of specific audiences currently using those platforms. Women will continue to be SDM's ideal customers on social media. According to a 2017 report on Sprout Social, 83% of women use Facebook, compared to 75% of men. However, more segmented demographics of women will be targeted in different ways. While 88% of people age 18-29 use Facebook, it should not discount the 84% of people age 30-49, or the 72% of people age 50-64 who use Facebook (York, 2017). This is especially true considering Canada's aging baby boom generation. Secondary research of baby boomer consumers at SDM reveals their importance as a target audience, stating that, "prescription drug use goes up dramatically with age" (Warnica, 2013).

The female focus of an SDM campaign is also in line with current consumer trends in Canada. A 2016 consumer insights report from Nielsen states that, "women account for 60% of primary shoppers." In addition, "women are 15% more likely to visit social networking sites than men." The research also shows that women are more actively engaged on social media, through sharing content and participating in contests ("Female Connected Consumers in Canada").

While SDM's Twitter page may not have as many followers as their Facebook page, Sprout Social reports that Twitter is still considered a hub for social engagement with businesses. A reported 25% of women have Twitter and it is notable that while 36% of people age 18-29 have Twitter, these numbers drop significantly to 23% for age 30-49, and 21% for age 50-64 (York, *Sprout Social*, 2017). Thus, a younger audience will be targeted on Twitter.

Part 3: Target Audience

Based on this research, the target audience for this campaign will be segmented into three groups: Working mothers between the ages of 30-49, middle-aged women between 50-64 and first-time mothers between 18-29. Facebook will primarily give focus to the older female age groups while Twitter content will interact with a younger female audience.

- 1) **Working mothers, age 30-49:** The main content on Facebook will be directed towards this audience, with a specific focus on middle class, working mothers, who are ultimately looking to navigate the struggles of work-life balance. This group can afford the products at SDM, but are still interested in a good deal. These women could also identify with a focus on women's health as they are starting to see the signs of aging in their own lives.
- 2) **Female caregivers, age 50-64:** This group includes women who are newly retired or nearing retirement, with busy lifestyles. They find SDM products and services helpful because they are taking care of grandchildren, caregiving for elderly parents and require an increasing amount of prescription and over-the-counter drugs themselves. For its social media platforms, SDM could also target this audience in a search for high-profile Canadian spokeswomen such as television personalities, health-care professionals or celebrities to speak with authority on self-care and SDM's products and services.
- 3) **First-time mothers, age 18-29:** This will be SDM's main target audience on Twitter, since the audience on that platform tends to be younger. This audience will include first-time mothers, who are highly concerned with protecting their new family's health, while also wanting to maintain the lifestyle they had before starting a family. SDM will position itself as a service that can help these women have both lifestyles of a new care-provider and self-care-provider.

Part 4: Goals

This campaign will work to achieve three goals:

- 1) Drive more fans to Facebook by the end of the season.
- 2) Drive more fans to Twitter by the end of the season.
- 3) Increase social media interaction and engagement with external publics by the end of the season.

Part 5: Objectives

To determine whether the campaign has met its goals, the following objectives will be set:

- 1) Increase the number of Facebook likes from 960, 000 to 1.1 million by December 30, 2017.
- 2) Increase the number of followers on Twitter from the current 73, 000 to 80, 000 by December 30, 2017.

Part 6: Strategies and Tactics

Strategy 1: #TheShoppersAreReal – Creating Owned Media

In this strategy, a social media campaign will be created around the hashtag #TheShoppersAreReal, which draws reference to the popular hashtag #TheStrugglesAreReal. This new hashtag will complement the existing campaign hashtag #ShoppersLoveYou by introducing content that focuses on stories of individual women in the three target audience age groups. #TheShoppersAreReal campaign will allow SDM to connect with audiences and gain their trust on a human level, while then providing health-related wisdom and inspiration through the #ShoppersLoveYou campaign.

Tactic:

This tactic will be executed on Facebook and Twitter accounts. To show audiences on Facebook and Twitter that SDM understands their daily struggles and desires, a series of short

10-15 second videos will be created. They will tell a different woman's story about their experiences or challenges with personal wellness and how SDM played a role in helping them build a healthy lifestyle around self-care. The videos will be tagged #TheShoppersAreReal and show everyday women from across Canada, sourced through Focus Groups. According to Hootsuite, videos are popular content on social media (Walters 2016), and can have subtitles added so viewers can still watch the video without sound. A short montage video will also be put together and loaded onto the Facebook page cover photo, with the caption, #TheShoppersAreReal.

Stories for the videos will be gathered through focus groups across the country, composed of women in our three target age groups and who are related to SDM, whether as internal or external publics, namely customers, employees and partner organizations. This way, the videos can be a platform to spread awareness of SDM's social goals in their communities, while also bringing greater focus to local SDM locations, as opposed to seeing them in their corporate light. Based on the gathered information, three different videos will be made and shared once a week for three weeks. These videos will also run as Twitter Ads and Facebook Ads in a Page Likes campaign, with each video targeting the specific audience that is represented in the main character's story. To encourage engagement, the copywriting will use specific call-to-action phrases such as:

- "What is your Shoppers Moment?"
- "Like and comment below to share how you're taking care of your health"
- "Retweet and tag someone who has inspired you to start your personal health journey"

Strategy 2: Win a Shoppers Spree through Facebook and Twitter Contests

This strategy will leverage the power of contests on Facebook and Twitter, giving away prizes each week that a new piece of video content is released on social media. The title of the contest will be "Win a Shoppers Spree". The prizes will be SDM gift cards, increasing in value each week, starting at \$100 and ranging to \$500, as well as two free tickets to SDM's annual Beauty Gala. The purpose for this choice of prize is to exclusively attract people to the social media page and contest who are interested in SDM services, rather than recreational

“contesters”. The gift cards will also extend the customer interaction by bringing them into a store to spend around holiday shopping season. Also of value, will be the start of promotions for SDM’s Beauty Gala – a charitable event in which customers can buy tickets for an in-store makeover. Half the ticket sales from this event are given to partner charities that fight against breast cancer.

Tactic:

A contest page will be built on the SDM website titled *Enter to Win in a Shoppers Spree*, which will serve as a submission form for contest entrants. As an immediate incentive in addition to the prize for people to enter the contest, there will be a free PDF available for download to all who enter the contest and agree to sign-up for SDM e-flyers. The PDF will be an official document about how to conduct self-breast exams, how women can support loved ones who are going through breast cancer treatments, and a list of foods and natural supplements that have been proven to help prevent breast cancer. The document will be created by an expert organization on breast cancer, such as one of SDM’s charity partners, Beauty Gives Back, which is supported by SDM’s Beauty Galas.

This contest page will also have several call-to-action buttons to follow or like SDM on Facebook and Twitter. This web page will be used in posts on Facebook and Twitter, promoted through boosting those individual posts to new audiences, to gain new followers. To enter the contest, contestants must submit their response to the question, “What is your #RealShoppersMoment when Shoppers Drug Mart helped you take care of yourself or someone else? #TheShoppersAreReal.” This will be useful in gaining user-generated content. On this page, there will also be a link to ticket sales for SDM’s Beauty Gala. Furthermore, the winner will be asked to post a picture with #TheShoppersAreReal hashtag after their “Shoppers Spree”.

Strategy 3: Host a Twitter Party during *The Marilyn Denis Show*

To expand the reach of the campaign’s awareness, SDM will seek a wider audience by pitching a spot on *The Marilyn Denis Show*. This event will be surrounded by social media activity on Twitter and Facebook.

Tactic:

A spot on *The Marilyn Denis Show* will be a strategic opportunity to communicate to the target audience, but through a different media platform. This award-winning show shares SDM's middle class, female target audience and airs across Canada, focusing on topics relevant to the SDM audience, such as beauty, self-care and women's health journeys. Marilyn Denis is also an advocate in the fight against breast cancer. SDM will have Marilyn's crew film live from the SDM in the Toronto Eaton's Centre, which will air on Friday November 3rd, which is one day before the annual Beauty Gala. During the location visit, SDM will arrange for a breast cancer survivor to share her story and receive a makeover on air, to demonstrate what happens at the Beauty Gala. SDM could also offer a makeup artist representing SDM products, to inform audiences of the show about makeup trends for the 2017 holiday season.

The segment will be pitched and a media kit will be sent to the network's communications team, specifically, CTV Network Publicist Matthew Almeida. This media kit will include a press release, a backgrounder on SDM's #TheShoppersAreReal campaign and the Beauty Gala, a fact sheet about SDM's philanthropic commitments, the downloadable PDF about breast cancer prevention and tickets to the Beauty Gala. To leverage the holiday season, an advent calendar will also be sent with free beauty samples in every calendar day, along with a quote from a breast cancer survivor printed on each flap. These advent calendars will also be offered as gifts for Marilyn's live studio audience. Once this placement is secured, it will provide exciting new content to promote on SDM's Facebook and Twitter pages.

To focus on driving traffic to Twitter during this event, SDM's marketing team will hold a Twitter party during this show. This will be promoted on social media channels three weeks in advance. SDM's Twitter will tweet out Gifs and quotes from *The Marilyn Denis Show*, run live polls about the audience's favourite beauty products, share healthcare tips, retweet audience members and most importantly, give away a pair of tickets to one of Marilyn Denis' sought-after Christmas giveaway episodes. To enter the ticket giveaway, contestants must tweet words

of encouragement to breast cancer patients cared for by SDM's Beauty Gives Back, with the hashtag #TheShoppersAreReal. That content will be used in a montage video summing up the events surrounding the Beauty Gala to share on social media, and to share with viewers after the event.

Strategy 4: Use Periscope and Facebook Live to interview Canadian celebrities and experts

Throughout the entirety of the campaign, SDM will focus on gaining followers by generating weekly engagement with external publics. These entities will include charity partners who benefit from the Beauty Gala and *The Marilyn Denis Show*. In addition, SDM will reach out to social influencers with lifestyle or healthcare tips and gain new audiences by giving these high-profile Canadians a spot on SDM's Facebook Live and Periscope videos.

Tactic: On a regular basis, SDM's will tag their partner charities in posts, include them in story content and share their content on SDM's Twitter and Facebook pages as well. This will increase awareness of SDM's social goals and clarify how customer support of the Beauty Gala helps real women. To generate more engagement with younger audiences on Twitter, SDM will reach out to health care professionals, healthy lifestyle influencers and relatable celebrities to have them do a social media takeover twice a month on #WellnessWednesdays, using Periscope from local SDM locations across Canada. These influencers to be pitched to, will include individuals such as Cynthia Loyst, a relationship expert and host on CTV talk show *The Social*; Registered Holistic Nutritionist and television personality Julie Daniluk; fitness expert Nik Vasilyev; or Canadian musician Jan Arden, who has survived heart health struggles.

Key Messages:

The struggle is real. So are the Shoppers. #TheShoppersAreReal

- 1) At Shoppers Drug Mart, we understand the daily struggle to make your health a priority in life's busyness, and we are here to help you do that.
- 2) When you shop at Shoppers Drug Mart, you are investing in your own health and the health of other Canadian women.

- 3) Every woman's journey with self-care is valuable and each unique story should be shared to empower women in their personal health journeys across Canada.

Evaluation:

The communications plan will first be measured half-way through the campaign, on October 13th. At this stage, the communications plan will be considered successful if an on-air spot has been secured on *The Marilyn Denis Show*. Communications will have been made with the Toronto SDM location in the Eaton Centre to prepare for their on-air debut of the Beauty Gala. Furthermore, a cancer survivor in one of SDM's partner charities will be confirmed to be on the show.

By this point, the social media contest will also be completed and the video content will have been made. SDM will have acquired at least three new stories to continue the cycle of content based on the user generated content from the posts and the contest. In addition, the SDM communications team will have secured dates in later November with a minimum of two spokespeople to do holiday-themed segments on the #WellnessWednesday Periscope and Facebook Live events.

The Facebook followers will be at the halfway mark, with a minimum of 70,000 new page likes. The expectations for this platform will be higher than Twitter at this stage, because there are more users on Facebook, especially for the age group being targeted in the videos and the contest. The Twitter page, will have acquired 3,000 new page followers. Google Analytics will be a vital tool in conducting this evaluation.

At the end of the campaign, this Twitter number will have increased to its full goal of 7,000 new followers, especially through the Twitter party during *The Marilyn Denis Show* and the #WellnessWednesday Periscope videos with health experts and social influencers. The #WellnessWednesday lineup will carry content until the end of February by this point and will be continually generating its own new followers. Also, by December 30th, the Twitter party during *Marilyn* will have brought in a minimum of 2,500 followers and the Beauty Gala and Christmas season will have finished, bringing in the remaining 1,500 followers.

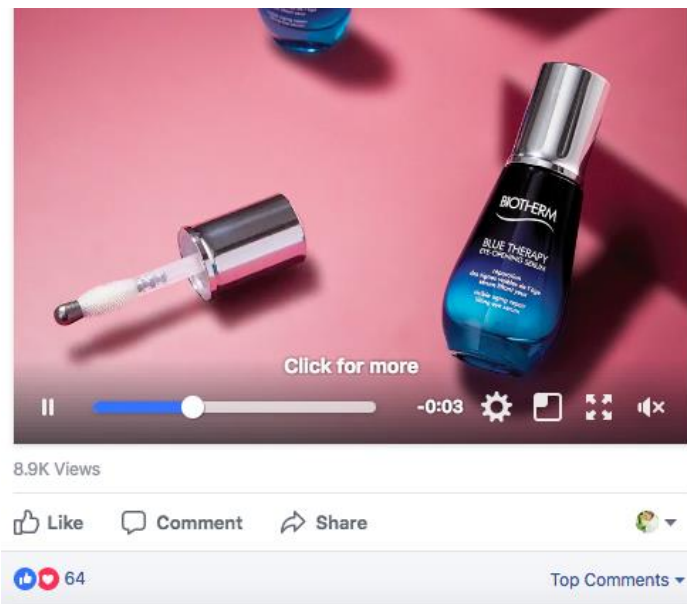
On Facebook, success will be attained if the full 1.1 million new likes have been acquired, and engagement on posts has increased by at least 50%. In addition, it will be ideal to have contest winners tweet or leave Facebook posts about their experiences with the prizes.

Appendix: Shoppers Drug Mart Communications Plan

Women's calorie intake can vary in each pregnancy stage. Learn more about pregnancy nutrition from #SHOPPERSLOVEYOU partner The Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada - SOGC & try these Lemony Salmon Cakes to get your intake of Iron & B12: <http://bddy.me/2gKbruK>



Shoppers Drug Mart uses trendy and high quality photos to attract audience attention, and often pairs them with health or self-care tips for its female audiences. While these posts do garner a significant amount of user engagement, the post could be improved by adding women's faces to the posts and incorporating an element of storytelling for female audiences to connect with. This would help Facebook and Twitter audiences feel understood by the brand.



Shoppers Drug Mart promotes a large variety of products on its Facebook and Twitter pages, ranging from beauty products, anti-aging products, food products and Optimum Points. This is a weakness because when it is choosing to promote content for a variety of age groups, the brand loses a focused audience on social media.

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