Determining the Best Practices of Social Media for a Small Business: A Case Study on The Salt Cave of Perrysburg

Michelle Timms
mtimms@bgsu.edu
DETERMINING THE BEST PRACTICES OF SOCIAL MEDIA FOR A SMALL BUSINESS:
A CASE STUDY ON THE SALT CAVE OF PERRYSBURG

BY: Michelle Timms

HONORS PROJECT

Submitted to the Honors College
at Bowling Green State University in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for graduation with

UNIVERSITY HONORS

April 27, 2022

Dr. Fei Weisstein of the Marketing Department
Primary Advisor Typed Name and Department

Professor Jennifer Stuart of the Applied Statistics and Operations Research Department
Secondary Advisor Typed Name and Department
TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ........................................................................................................ 2
INTRODUCTION ....................................................................................................................... 3
SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS ......................................................................................................... 3
  Internal Environment: ........................................................................................................... 3
  External Environment: ......................................................................................................... 4
  Competitive Analysis: ......................................................................................................... 5
MARKET RESEARCH ............................................................................................................. 6
  Defining the Research Questions ......................................................................................... 6
  Literature review ............................................................................................................... 6
  Survey Development: ......................................................................................................... 14
  Survey Results and Analysis .............................................................................................. 16
  Summary of Data-Analysis Findings .................................................................................. 17
PROPOSED ACTIVITY ........................................................................................................... 19
METHODOLOGY ..................................................................................................................... 20
EXPECTED RESULTS AND POTENTIAL CONCLUSIONS ................................................ 21
LIMITATIONS ........................................................................................................................ 21
SOCIAL MEDIA IMPLEMENTATION ..................................................................................... 22
  Social Media Schedule and Content................................................................................... 22
  Social Media Practices ....................................................................................................... 23
SOCIAL MEDIA RESULTS ..................................................................................................... 24
  Quantitative Results .......................................................................................................... 24
  Qualitative .......................................................................................................................... 32
  Summary of Results .......................................................................................................... 43
RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE BEST SOCIAL MEDIA PRACTICES .................................. 44
  Recommendation 1: Research .......................................................................................... 44
  Recommendation 2: Social Media Posting Practices ....................................................... 45
  Recommendation Conclusion ............................................................................................ 48
CONCLUSION .......................................................................................................................... 49
APPENDIX: ........................................................................................................................... 51
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ............................................................................................... 54
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Salt Cave of Perrysburg struggles with what many other small businesses struggle with which is having a strong engaging social media presence. That is why, through extensive primary and secondary research and surveying, my mission is to find which are the best social media practices for this small business. Through the use of a social media content calendar, I have created posts that have aligned with my research and survey patterns and have seen which social media practices can best improve the small business’s social media platforms. Though this is only performed on this small business, I want this case study to be a research and implementation guide for other small businesses to follow when choosing the best social media practices for their personal small business. At the end of my implementation, I have taken data of the social platforms prior to the implementation and after the implementation which have shown that my researched best practices have increased the engagement and impressions on the company’s social media platforms. This is dissected qualitatively and quantitatively in the Social Media Implementation Results that is featured toward the end of this paper. Something that was a big realization through this process though is that social media cannot be the only marketing outlet a company has. Due to COVID, their only strong marketing strategy being social media, and lack of awareness too late in the game, The Salt Cave of Perrysburg is unfortunately closing at the end of April this year. This is an important lesson for any small business, that though social media is a great asset to one’s marketing mix, it cannot be the only marketing method. It must be intertwined with other digital methods along with traditional methods. If I were to have more time, I would have liked to do a full marketing mix implementation.
INTRODUCTION

The company that this case study was on is The Salt Cave of Perrysburg. The Salt Cave of Perrysburg is a Himalayan salt cave that provides a halotherapy, also known as salt therapy, spa service in Perrysburg, OH. To elaborate, Himalayan salt caves are manmade salt caves where customers sit in a zero-gravity chair, usually, for 45-minutes while a halo-generator grinds up and pumps pharmaceutical grade salt in the air of the cave. The whole purpose for the session is for people to receive health benefits for one’s respiratory system, stress and anxiety, skin irritations, sleeping conditions, headaches, and much more. The Salt Cave of Perrysburg offers a relaxing service where one benefits from the mix of pharmaceutical grade salt and Himalayan salt. Along with their salt cave, they offer an infrared sauna service and a variety of products ranging from salt lamps to body care to jewelry to even teas. Their main target audience are women between the ages of 31-45 who want to receive the health and relaxation benefits of this service. The Salt Cave of Perrysburg was opened by Jennifer Lynch and Jessica Wagner in pursuit of being an all-natural healing spa closer to the people of Wood County. Jessica’s daughter, Janessa, was diagnosed with Lyme’s Disease when she was in high school and was recommended to a salt cave. Unfortunately for them, the closest salt cave was one hour away, but they wanted to try anything to help. To their surprise the salt cave was a great help to her disease. They were so impressed the owners wanted to share the healing benefits of this halotherapy service with others, so they decided to open The Salt Cave of Perrysburg. Based on their history, this business truly values the health of others through all-natural alternatives and wants to stress the health benefits of halotherapy to their customers. Below, is a SWOT analysis that will explain if this core value has been accurately captured through their social media and look at their social media appearance as a whole.

SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

Internal Environment

Strengths. The Salt Cave of Perrysburg does already have a relatively good number of followers on their Instagram and page likers on Facebook. This will provide a strong basis to start from when implementing a social media strategy to their platforms. They also do have a good color scheme that is eye-catching, but unfortunately that alone will not increase the customer engagement. During the month of May, they did bring awareness to Lyme disease given May is Lyme disease awareness month. This showcased their reasoning for opening the cave and their passion for this cause. They also run a special that is posted throughout their social media that says any child 15 years or younger is only $5. This was because when Janessa went to a salt cave for her Lyme Disease, it was very expensive, and when opening The Salt Cave of Perrysburg, they did not want to put that burden on a parent who is just trying to heal their child.

Weaknesses. The lack of brand awareness due to their traditional and digital marketing efforts. To start their social media only involves Facebook and Instagram. They have an appearance on Twitter, but they are not active, nor do they have a following. Their following on Instagram is
also only 735 followers and with an average of 5 likes per post compared to a competing salt cave in Pennsylvania with a 4,819 following and an average of 25 likes per picture. They also have inconsistent posting. Some weeks they will post every day and others not at all. All their postings seem to be promotional as well. They do not seem to be engaging with customers unless it is through the Instagram and Facebook stories. Also based on their values, it does not seem to show through their social media postings, for they are mostly promotional pieces talking about specials or deals. Adding more health benefits will need to be improved upon.

External Environment

Opportunities. Based off their current social media platform, there are a lot of opportunities they are missing in their current content posting. Currently, The Salt Cave of Perrysburg mainly publishes promotional pieces. On a social media platform, rule of thumb is 1/3 of postings should be promotional and 2/3 of postings should be anything other than promotional. Also, they have no postings that inspire customer engagement no do they use hashtags to help drive their posts to their target market. By not currently publishing this kind of content, there are many opportunities for The Salt Cave of Perrysburg to take advantage of in today’s current world. To start, they could do a social media giveaway. This is a great way to increase engagement on posts as well as reach more of an audience if one of the requirements for entering is to share the post. There also needs to be non-promotional postings such as funny memes, gifs, facts about the service in general, customer testimonials, about the employees, etc. Anything that aligns with the core values of the salt cave should be posted about in these non-promotional posts. They also need to start adding a variation of image types. The majority of their postings are still pictures that are made on an image making site, that do not usually include actual pictures of The Salt Cave of Perrysburg’s products and services. This is an opportunity to take advantage of video making and to use more useful imagery for the followers.

Threats. Social media provides a platform for a multitude of profiles, pages, and accounts. It can be hard to accurately reach the right target market when on social media, which the salt cave has already struggled with. On social media it is important to optimize one’s posts to the best of their ability. For example, a post with a “#perrysburg” will have a better chance of finding a resident of Perrysburg rather than a post with no indication of Perrysburg being their location. Though this is helpful, it does not mean these hashtags and location markings are going to target the market the company might want. Also, by increasing awareness on social media it increases the chance of negative commenting that can be seen by current and potential customers. Social media is a two-way real-time communication platform which has great advantages of being able to directly communicate with customers, but it also runs the disadvantage of not being able to shield the public from negative feedback. This threat is something that any business or person runs the chance of when exposing themselves to the public on social media. The only thing The
Salt Cave of Perrysburg can do to try and decrease this possibility is by treating their customers ethically and providing them with the best service possible.

**Competitive Analysis**

Currently the Salt Cave of Perrysburg is the only salt cave within 83 miles of the next salt cave which is why this analysis will be based on other salt caves close or within Ohio. To start, there is one salt cave called The Salt Cave in Pennsylvania with a 4,819 Instagram following and an average of 25 likes per picture. They post pictures nearly every day mainly consisting of customers trying the service themselves. Their promotional posting contains a post that looks like a flyer, but their customer postings seem to obtain the most engagement. They also have a Facebook page with 4,772 people who have liked their page but the engagement on the Facebook is much lower than the one on Instagram. They post the same content but the average reactions of their last ten posts are 3.5 reactions.

Another salt cave is Tranquility Salt Cave in Columbus which is about 90 miles away. They have a 1,942 following, but their content is not very engaging. The average like count of their last ten posts is 4.5 likes. The content consists of customer reviews, inventory, details, and health benefits involving few pictures of the actual service and more Canva made posts with a warm color scheme. They also have a Facebook page which is liked by 8,134 people with an average of 6.6 likes in the past ten posts. Their content on Facebook typically matched the content on Instagram besides a few extra posts about events they attended which are posted on Facebook.

The final salt cave I analyzed is The Van Wert Massotherapy and Salt Cave located about 84 miles away. The only have a Facebook page which consisted of 7,170 likes. In their last ten posts, they have an average of 30 reactions. Their content mainly consists of inventory usage, humor posts, simple text posts, reposting of content that aligns with their business, and deals they offer. This salt cave seemed to have the most diverse posting content which seemed to work in their favor as it showed in the number of reactions they received on each post.
MARKET RESEARCH

Defining the Research Questions

The purpose of this case study is to provide insight to determining the best social media practices of a small business. What will make this case study so unique, is that there are limited studies done on best social media practices for small businesses. Small businesses usually have very limited marketing budgets, which is why social media marketing is a great, mostly free method. I will have a hands-on approach by working with my place of employment, The Salt Cave of Perrysburg, a small business in Perrysburg, OH, to help find and implement practices that will best guide their lower budget social media marketing to reach its fullest potential.

Through the collection of primary and secondary data, I will be able to answer questions such as, *Who is the target market?* This question will help me understand the audience that the company wants to reach. I will use previously collected data over a three-year period to help me determine their main market. I will also be figuring out *What brings them to this service?* This question will help me discover what content is wanted by the customers and what will draw in potential customers as well. This question will lead me to *What platforms will be used to best reach the market?* Knowing what content is to be published will help guide what platform is to be used. From there, I took all the data and came up with social media practices and content that were implemented over a three-month period. All these questions will help me reach my overarching research question, *What are the best practices of social media for a small business?* My goal is to have this case study be a guide for other small businesses to follow when choosing the best social media practices for their business.

Literature Review

*Small Businesses.* Defined by the Small Business Administration, a business is considered a small business if it has fewer than 1,500 employees and a maximum of $38.5 million in annual receipts. Based on the industry of this case study’s business, it must not exceed over $7.5 million. (U. S. Small Business Administration, 24). This large number causes small business owners to make up 99.9% of all firms in America, but also result in 50% of those small firms to fail within the first five years (Davis, 64). According to Forbes magazine, Fortune magazine reported a careful survey that found 42% of startups failed due to a lack of need in the market (Forbes 2015). The Salt Cave of Perrysburg luckily has a niche service that has not yet been overpopulated in the industry.

*Need for the Small Business.* With an increased interest in healthier lifestyles over the years, Americans have become more conscious of how they treat their bodies and what they put in them. According to the 2020 Food & Health Survey provided by the International Food
Information Council, over the past decade, familiarity with the government’s Dietary Guidelines almost doubled from 23% in 2010 to 41% in 2020. Even in the year between 2019 and 2020, 43% of Americans followed a specific diet or eating pattern in 2020 compared to 38% Americans in 2019 and 36% in 2018. They also stated that “4 in 10 Americans...view processing as having more of an impact on their purchasing decisions than it did 10 years ago” (International Food Information Council). Grocery stores, such as Whole Foods, have benefited from this shift to healthy, organic living styles. According to the New York Times, between the years 1978 and 1997, they only had 70 stores in sixteen states. Today, Whole Foods has over 500 stores throughout the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom.

Increased consciousness of eating habits is not the only improvement to many lifestyles. The use of all natural, homeopathic remedies, commonly referred to as alternative medicines or therapies, have been slowly becoming a more popular practice. According to the CDC in 2004, 36% of adult Americans use some method of complementary or alternative medicine (CAM). This small percentage can be due to the lack of knowledge on CAM. In 2016, a study posted by the Pew Research Center, recorded that of those who have not heard or read anything about CAM, 96% never tried it, but of those who knew a lot about CAM, only 24% have never tried it (Funk 2016). There are many forms of alternative medicines including reflexology, acupuncture, chiropractic care, halotherapy, and many more. Many of these types of businesses are small businesses due to their lack of awareness and skepticism in America, so it is important for them to have a strong marketing mix to make sure not only their brand, but their services are made aware of by their target market.

Service’s Purpose. As for research on the company and their practice, I used their website, the knowledge I have gained from working there since August of 2020, and secondary data found in scholarly articles through Google Scholar and EBSCO. The Salt Cave of Perrysburg, opened in May of 2019, is a small business located in Perrysburg, OH. The owners saw a need for a local holistic therapy service called halotherapy, or salt therapy. They picked Perrysburg because that was their place of residence and there was no competing service within an 80-mile radius. They found a need for a salt cave due to the owner’s daughter using salt therapy to help treat her Lyme disease. The reason for this service is that it is an all-natural, alternative treatment that has emerged in helping chronic respiratory diseases as well as many other illnesses (Uysal, Ulusinan 2020). An article published in 2014 did a study on halotherapy, given studies have shown that this treatment has been connected to the improvement of psychological conditions, respiratory efficiency, and mucus elimination. Though their studies came inconclusive to whether or not halotherapy is directly connected to health benefits, it does support the lifestyle of relaxation and stress relief (Zajac 2014). Especially since COVID, this type of service can be very beneficial to people. An article published in the Journal of Clinical and Experimental Investigations, researched how salt therapy may be useful in the respiratory issues COVID 19 has caused an infected person. In its conclusion it stated that, “scientific studies for the treatment of COVID-19
patients are recommended in areas where the ST and speleotherapy are actively carried out.” ST stands for salt therapy and speleotherapy is referred to as cave therapy. To bring closer understanding of the two, salt therapy happens during cave therapy (Uysal, Ulusinan 2020).

*Target Market and Demographics.* To understand the demographics of the salt cave I used primary and secondary data to understand the type of people within the radius which ultimately directed me to answering the questions such as *Who is my target market?* and *What brings them to this service?* According to the United States Census Bureau, the average household income in Perrysburg, OH is $90,633 with a population of 21,626 residents at a median age of 37.4 years old. As for my primary data, I used waivers that have been filled by customers during their first visit since May of 2019 all the way until October of 2021. Due to the large quantity of over 2000 papers, I organized all of them by year: 2019, 2020, 2021. I counted how many papers were part of each year then took a random sample of 25% of each year. That 25% sample was where I pulled information from past and present customers such as their age, place of residency, and what they hope to get out of this service/their reason for coming in. Though the waiver states that it is their reason for coming, on many occasions I have heard customers make comments on how “that would be nice if it helped” and “that sounds good” which indicates to me they did not come for that reason but would like to get that out of the service if possible.

*Exhibit 1a: Reason Results: Percentages come from the group divided by given year*
Exhibit 1b: 2019 Age Results: Percentages come from the age groups per year
Exhibit 1c: 2020 Age Results: Percentages come from the age groups per year

Exhibit 1d: 2021 Age Results: Percentages come from the age groups per year
**Social Media Importance.** What is social media marketing and its significance? About thirty years ago many people noticed that traditional mass marketing approaches were becoming less and less effective for companies. This concern was largely due to, the later named term, Web 2.0. This Web 2.0 was given its name by Tim O’Reilly in 2005, which meant that the internet was in the next stage of evolution. According to Tim O’Reilly, “Web 2.0 is a set of economic, social and technology trends that collectively form the basis for the next generation of the Internet, a more mature, distinctive medium characterized by user participation, openness, and network effects” (Constantinides 2014, 41). This Web 2.0 involves the popularity of the social media era which started about 15 years ago with the launches of LinkedIn (2004) and Facebook (2005). Companies saw this as an opportunity to engage with their customers (Pradiptarini 2011). To express the reliability and validity of the use of social media marketing, a recent study done by University of Massachusetts in 2018 showed that less than one percent of the Fortune 500 companies did not have a presence on social media. This meant that less than five companies out of 500 companies did not use social media. Those companies were also towards the bottom of the Fortune 500 list (UMass Dartmouth 2018). This active involvement of companies using social media platforms as part of their marketing and promotional strategies is what is known as social media marketing (Pradiptarini 2011).

**Different Types of Platforms.** The next question is how one knows which media platform(s) to reach their target audience. There are hundreds of social media platforms out there which can make it hard to pick which sites are best for one’s company. Currently the Salt Cave of Perrysburg is active on Instagram and Facebook. With secondary research, I found statistics on Statista, a database specializing in market and consumer data, that ranked the top five most popular social media platforms based on active users. Facebook leads the industry with 2,853 million active users followed by YouTube with 2,291 million, WhatsApp with 2,000 million,
Instagram with 1, 386 million, and Facebook Messenger with 1,386 million active users. I know this business would not use WhatsApp given that it is a platform to direct messages with people, usually, in different countries at no cost if one is connected to the internet. Given this business is not international nor needs the purpose of texting, WhatsApp would not be a logical platform to incorporate into this business.

With further investigation, a book called *The Social Media Guru: A Practical Guide for Small Business*, published on EBSCO, gave me a report of the most useful practices out of the other platforms published. According to this book, “Facebook should be used to grow and maintain a community…it is not a sales page (but) an extension of your brand’s personality” (The Social Media Guru 23). Facebook also appeals to all ages due to their achievements of connecting people together through photo and video sharing, messaging, commenting, and activities. This site is best known for entertainment, information sharing, medium appeal, self-documentation, and socialization according to a study done among university students (Kircahburun 2018).

YouTube is a form of media, mainly for longer, helpful, and entertaining video content. It is useful because the number of hours people spend watching videos on a mobile device is up 100% every year. (The Social Media Guru 57-58). YouTube is also used for content creating, social interactions, and information seeking (Kircahburun 2018)

Finally, Instagram is useful to visually build one’s brand. Through Instagram, 41% of their users follow a brand for perks and giveaways and 70% of user’s have already taken part in a contest according to a management tool for scheduling posts and recording data of actions taken (The Social Media Guru 28). Instagram appeals to the creativity side of social media and brings a sense of “coolness” to the users (Kircahburun 2018).

Based on the primary research of the customers and the time restraint, Instagram and Facebook are the best outlets for this case study. I ruled out YouTube because given the time restraint on this project and there is no following, it will be hard to determine within four months if YouTube was a useful promoting outlet. Also, YouTube is best for longer videos. This is not something that requires an hour-long tutorial. Instead, a salt cave tutorial can be given in a minute video. For the sake of time, I have decided to stick with Facebook and Instagram. I can use the following that has already been built and, in the content, I post I can add more information in the captions, given this is a service not many people are familiar with. Lengthy information descriptions can be hard to do through other platforms such as YouTube or Twitter.

**Best Practices.** With my determined media platforms, I have used secondary research to see what the best social media practices are. According to a research paper, *Social Media Marketing and Small Business*, published in 2019, using more videos, integrating offline and online advertising, message adaptation, and offers and discounts are some of the best practices when creating
content for the social media of a small business (Kaur 2019). So, what do each of these mean? 100% of viewers spend more time on pages with videos and videos help companies reach consumers in emotional and personal ways that no other mediums can. (Walter 46). Though videos are a great source, you must watch the length of the video to make sure they are not too lengthy and lose the interest of the customer. Video stories can be a great time to post a Q&A and give the customers real time answers and responses. (Walter, 73).

Regarding integrating offline and online advertising, it means to promote offline or traditional marketing methods or events to online platforms. It can also mean sharing customers’ experiences online (Kaur 2019). Using testimonials of customers is effective because real consumers are telling their personal experience with the brand in question (Belch, 299). Consumers tend to trust other consumers’ words over the company’s word. “Advertising testimonials featuring actual service customers stimulate personal communications between people and are thereby a credible way to communicate…” (Zeithaml 430). Welcoming customer responses can bring in negative responses, but that is in no way a negative effect. By wanting and asking for customer feedback that can actually strengthen customer loyalty because it shows transparency, which in turn increases customer’s trust (Cox 2012).

Message adaptation refers to the customization of messages between different platforms (Kaur 2019). This involves knowing who the target market is and what social media platforms one is using. The content displayed on one social media site should be different from the content on another, otherwise a customer can feel as though they are being bombarded and spammed. This also means to not always post the same content. Social media is about the firm interacting with the consumers and consumers interacting with each other. Therefore, the content should not just always push promotions but a mixture of content that will open conversation to consumers. A business wants their message to reach as many people as possible (Cox 2012). Through message adaptation, this can happen.

Finally, using social media to promote offers and discounts is a good way to create a following especially if they are social media exclusive discounts. It can also increase customer engagement by including a contest involving sharing and commenting (Kaur 2019). This can increase the engagement for a company’s social community.

Along with these interactive aspects, I also looked at the best posting times. According to the Sprout Social, the best times to post on Facebook and Instagram are depicted in the pictures below (Arens 2021). Due to the time restraint on the implementation, I do not want to involve too many different practices, for if I do, I will not be able to determine what practices truly worked and what did not.
Exhibit 2a and 2b: Social media best posting times

Content. This is all great information, but this is still not enough to know what content should be published. As stated, I already have the average age, residency, and benefit they wish to receive out of this service from the waivers. I also have stated practices that have seemed to be more engaging based on past research. The last element to see what will directly drive customers to engage more with the posts, was a survey that was distributed at the salt cave and on their Instagram and Facebook accounts, throughout December. This will help guide me towards the content that will attract the target market of the service through social media marketing. I will use this information to help form the content of the postings.

Survey Development

I have created a six-question survey that have been posted within the stores and also four-question surveys on the company’s Facebook and Instagram pages. On Dec. 31st, I ended the survey and organize the responses to help further determine the content that people want to see and read. This survey will also help me differentiate what type of people want to see which content on which platform.

In Store Survey

“Our employee, Michelle, is a local BGSU student who is completing her senior year! As part of her Honor’s graduate requirements, she must complete a Capstone Project. Her focus is on the best practices of social media for a small business. We would really appreciate your help in filling out this survey for her project to be a success!

Privacy Disclaimer: All identities are kept confidential and the only information that is used will be your responses to the questions.”

In Store:

1. What drew you in today? A. Health reasons B. Time to relax C. Other
This question will help gain an understanding of why a customer came in today. It is important to know what information customers want to read about when creating content for the social media platforms, and this question will help by telling me what the initial reason for their visit was.

2. **Do you know our company has a FB or Instagram page?**
   This will help determine if the reason for low social media interaction is due to the lack of awareness about their social media. If this is the case, it will suggest that the business must advertise their social media accounts better in store, for it is the in-store customers that will be the ones to follow and like the business.

3. **Between the two, which one are you more likely to follow?**
   This is an important one because paired with the age range question, it will give me a better idea of which age groups of the business’s customers use which social media platform.

4. **If you follow us on Facebook or Instagram what is the information you want to see?**
   A. Health Information B. Discounts C. Inventory Updates D. Customer Testimonial E. Supporting a Small Business F. Pictures and Videos G. Service Information
   This will be a multiple checkbox question. The purpose of this is to better define what customers want to see on their social media feed.

5. **If you want to receive information about The Salt Cave of Perrysburg which channel is the best way you would want to be reached?**
   A. Facebook B. Instagram C. Text D. Email
   This question will give me insight of where people want to receive information about the business. I added text and email to see if the informative content should be something that is given to customers personally instead of on their social media.

6. **What is your age range?**
   I included the age range again in this survey because it will let me know which age group I should be targeting on each social media platform.

---

*Instagram and Facebook Surveys*

“Our employee, Michelle, is a local BGSU student who is completing her senior year! As part of her Honor’s graduate requirements, she must complete a Capstone Project. Her focus is on the best practices of social media for a small business. We would really appreciate your help in filling out this survey for her project to be a success!

Privacy Disclaimer: All identities are kept confidential and the only information that is used will be your responses to the questions.”

1. **Why would you come into the Salt Cave of Perrysburg?**
   A. Health reasons B. Time to relax C. Other
   Again, question will help gain an understanding of why a customer came in today. It is important to know what information customers want to read about when creating content
for the social media platforms, and this question will help by telling me what the initial reason for their visit was.

2. **What is the information you want to see?**  
   A. Health Information  
   B. Discounts  
   C. Inventory Updates  
   D. Customer Testimonial  
   E. Supporting a Small Business  
   F. Pictures and Videos  
   G. Service Information  
   Again, this will be a multiple checkbox question. The purpose of this is to better define what customers want to see on their social media feed.

3. **How could we improve our current Facebook/Instagram Page?** ________________  
   Since this will be distributed on the business’s Instagram and Facebook, this question is to ask current followers and likers what they think we need to change to better engage them.

4. **Age range**  
   I included the age range again in this survey because it will let me know which age group, I should be targeting on each social media platform.

**Survey Results and Analysis**

The survey was collected on January 1st. From the results, there were 20 completed in person surveys, 9 completed Instagram surveys, and 36 completed Facebook surveys. The graphs of the survey results are found in the Appendix under Facebook Survey Results, Instagram Survey Results, and In-Person Survey Results.

**In-Person Survey Results.** Based on the results of the in-person survey, 45% of people came in for relaxing benefits while 30% came in for both relaxing and healing benefits. This shows that most people who come to the cave want a feeling of relaxation more than the health benefits that come from the service. In the second question, it was found that 65% of people did not know we had a Facebook nor an Instagram. This data showed that the business had a lack of awareness on social media. This also means based on this survey, 65% of customers that come in are found by other methods of marketing, leaving a huge opportunity open to better utilize their social media marketing. In the third question, 60% people said they would most likely follow their Facebook page. This is good to know to help guide which platform might better reach the target market of the salt cave. The results of the fourth question were found interesting given that most people came for relaxing benefits, but when asked what type of social media postings they would want to see, the highest ranking of 29% was health information. The second highest ranking with 22% was discounts and the third highest with 20% was supporting small businesses. This question will better help guide the content that will be posted during the implementation stage. In question number four when asked how they would best like to be reached, 45% of respondents said email. Though this case study is on social media, this was useful information for the business to know and possibly use during promotional campaigns. Finally, in the last question, 35% of people who took the in-person survey ranged between the ages 46 and 60 while 30% ranged between the ages of 31 and 45. This lines up fairly well with the age range from the waiver over the past three years and confirms that this age range is still the target market.
Facebook Survey Results. Based on the results of the Facebook survey, 59% of the respondents said they would come for relaxation reasons while the remaining 41% said they would come for health benefits. As aligned with the in-person survey, most people would want to come for the relaxation benefit, but there is a higher-ranking health benefits in this survey. In question number two, 22% of people wanting to see postings about discounts, 16% wanted to see postings about health benefits, and another 16% wanted to see posting about supporting a small business. Just like in the in-person survey, this question will help guide what content will best catch the attention of the audience the business is targeting. The third question was a fill in the blank that asked the respondents how they believe The Salt Cave of Perrysburg could improve their postings, and only fifteen out of the thirty-four responded. 27% of the respondents replied with wanting to see more of the deals and to start giveaways. 20% of the fifteen respondents said they like it the way it is, and 13% said they wanted to see more about the health benefits and another 13% of the respondents wanted to see more pictures. This question was crucial to the survey since this is what will help guide what kind of content I will be posting and what social media methods the respondents want to be improved upon, added, or taken away. Finally, in the fourth question 47% of respondents fell between the ages of 31 and 45 which is a crucial market compared to our waiver recipients and our in-person survey recipients.

Instagram Survey Results. Though Instagram did not have many respondents to the survey, it was still important to include in the research because Instagram will be one of the platforms that will include the implementation. Based on the results of the Instagram, 56% of respondents said they would come to the salt cave for health benefits. This is the first survey that chose health benefits over the relaxation benefits. In question two, 19% of respondents would like to see health information and another 19% of respondents would like to see discount information. This information will be taken into account when creating the social media calendar that will lay out what type of content will be posted each day. For their third question, respondents were asked to fill in a response to how they believe The Salt Cave of Perrysburg could improve their posting, and only five of the nine respondents answered this question. All the answers on Instagram were varied. The first person wanted more postings. The second person wanted more engaging activities such as polls, giveaways, and contests. The third person wanted more basic info and videos and photos of what to expect. The fourth person wanted frequent stories, and finally, the fifth person wanted the typos on the current postings to be fixed. What is interesting about this is that not one person had the same comment, but they did have similar responses to those that were made on Facebook. Finally, in the fourth question 78% of respondents were between the ages 31 and 45 which again is a crucial market compared to our waiver recipients and our Facebook and in-person survey recipients.

Summary of Data-Analysis Findings

Based on these results, I have better gained an idea of what content the target market wants and expects and who the target market is across in person, on Facebook, and on Instagram. Across all
three surveys, a large portion of their age range was between the ages 31 and 45. Another similar trend across all three surveys was that most people wanted to see content on health information and discounts. The Instagram and Facebook survey were more diverse than the in-person survey when it came to this question, but their highest percentage was health information and discount updates.

After these two questions the rest of them start to vary, and one of them that stood out was the first question on the survey about why a person would or did come to the salt cave. The Facebook survey was more aligned with the in-person survey stating most people wanted to come for the relaxation benefit whereas in the Instagram survey majority of the respondents would come for the health benefits. When it comes to the content posted this will be kept in mind to possibly change the content between the two platforms. This information aligns with my past research of the customization of messages between different platforms.

The question that was only posted on Instagram and the Facebook survey that asked about how to improve the profile was also quite insightful and important more so for Facebook. Facebook respondents wanted more postings about specials and giveaways, while Instagram was very diverse in all their answers. Facebook also wanted more pictures of the service and the health benefits. The one thing that did stick out on the Instagram profile was that there was a response that stated they wanted more engagement, but when given an engagement opportunity, the survey that was sent out in December, there were only nine responses.

Finally, the in-person survey showed that not many customers knew about our social media meaning there needed to be an increase of awareness. It also showed that if the target market would follow the salt cave, they would most likely follow them on Facebook, which means we should be seeing a higher increase in followers or engagement. Also, something that was not directly related to social media but important information to know was the response to the in-person survey about how people would like to be contacted and the highest response was by email. This means in the future rather than direct messaging on social media or texting, the target market would rather be personally reached through email.
PROPOSED ACTIVITY

My activity involves implementing content that I think will most drive customers to engage with the business’s social media platforms. As mentioned above, I will use what I have learned about the best practices as well as the primary data information from the survey results and the waiver forms. With the use of a social media content calendar, I will be able to track which posts gain the most traction and attention through likes, shares, comments, and interactions from the profile insights. I will use this information to see which practices and content engages the customer most. My goal is to have an increase in social media interactions with customers.

With the data I have collected, the knowledge of knowing only 1/3 of postings should be promotional, the use of a social media content calendar, and a tracking of day popularity, which over the past three months has been on Tuesdays and Thursdays, I have come up with a content posting system. On Mondays and Wednesdays, I will post a promotional piece which will involve inventory updates, deals, specials, and service pricing. Tuesday will then be dedicated to employee and customer appreciation. This will allow a break between the promotional pieces and bring in the sense of community a small business has to offer. On Thursdays, I will create a funny post, most likely a meme, relating to relaxation. On Fridays, I will inform the audience about the health and relaxation benefits the salt and sauna has to offer. Then on Saturdays, I have dedicated this day to the giveaway’s postings. With the permission of my boss, I can do monthly giveaways to increase social media engagement with customers. Finally, on Sunday, I will post inspirational current short stories in the news. As a small business, they have a social responsibility to be aware of the world around them and express that through their social media. With these content ideas in place, there will be some days there are double postings based on holidays or urgent news.

Finally, I will start the first four weeks testing good posting times for their customer. The first week will have postings at 7am, the second week will have postings at 12pm, the third week will have postings at 6pm, the fourth week will have postings at 3pm, and then the following weeks’ posting times will be based off what post engagement was highest in the weeks prior on the two different platforms.
METHODOLOGY

For my methodology, I have used primary and secondary data that involves qualitative and quantitative research. I used multiple secondary resources stated in my literary review to gather information about not only the importance of this research, but also ways social media can be a huge tool in the world of marketing. Through this collected research I was able to find practices that I will test for myself.

As mentioned above, I have used the previously filled out waiver forms that I organized and collected data from. This was important to help determine the target market because without defining a target market, all marketing efforts would be a waste of time and money. With the waiver information, I saw the top two cities that visit the Salt Cave of Perrysburg which include Perrysburg and Toledo, with Toledo being most frequent.

With this data I have created a ten-question survey that has been posted within the store and The Salt Cave of Perrysburg’s Instagram profile and Facebook page. On Dec. 31st, I ended the survey, and by January 3rd, I organized and analyzed the survey responses to help further determine the content that people wanted to see and read. This survey also helped me differentiate what content should be posted where and give me a deeper understanding about the target market of the salt cave. Once I gathered and sorted this information, I came up with a layout of what each post’s content will include along with which social media practices will be integrated.

During the implementation process, I will use a social media content calendar. Before the execution of the social media practices and found content, I have filled out the content calendar three month prior with the content and statistics of past media postings of both platforms. Once the practices are in use, I will collect the same information and compare the new post statistics with the old post statistics to see if there was an increase in followers and/or post interaction. If the interaction rate has gone up, I will have successfully answered my research question of What are the best practices of social media for a small business.

Exhibit 3a: Research Data Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Data</th>
<th>Qualitative</th>
<th>Quantitative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>1. Social Media Calendar</td>
<td>1. Waiver Forms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2. December Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Engagement and Impression Metrics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>1. Best Practice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Small Businesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Social Media Marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXPECTED RESULTS AND POTENTIAL CONCLUSIONS

With my implemented strategy I want to prove that though there are so many different social media sites along with practices, a small business owner does not have to do it all. Given the small amount of time to implement the practices I have chosen. I hope to increase the traffic on the social media sites that will ultimately bring more customers in. I will use the social media calendar to compare the traffic between the two sites from before the implemented practices and after. This will show me if there was an increase on the sites. My research is showing the importance of marketing research especially for small businesses who have limited budgets and do not have the money to just guess the best marketing practices. When reaching the audience through social media, one must know who they are targeting and how to do that.

LIMITATIONS

Given the short period of time, I was unable to do as much as I wanted. If I had more time, I would have added two more small businesses to the experiment, collect data from all the waivers, implement more than just best social media practices (such as help with the website and their marketing strategy as a whole). Marketing is an important field when owning a small business, and though social media is a great way to reach customers you need much more than just social media to have a successful marketing plan. Therefore, if I was given the time I would have started from the beginning. Throughout my project, it showed the rest of their marketing efforts needed to be strengthened.
SOCIAL MEDIA IMPLEMENTATION

I started this implementation on January 10, 2022, and ended it on April 1, 2022. This gave me roughly three months to implement the practices and revised content across The Salt Cave of Perrysburg’s two social media platforms, Instagram and Facebook, to see what practices and content was most engaging to the followers and likers.

Social Media Schedule and Content

For my implementation, I followed the one third rule and posted close to one third of promotional postings and two thirds non-promotional postings included employee and customer appreciation, facts, funny memes, inspiration, and giveaway content. I discovered the most scheduled appointments were on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Based on this availability the current customers have, I put my promotional posts on Mondays and Wednesdays to make the customers aware of the specials the day before the busiest days. The promotional posts were split up between promoting the services, promoting deals, and promoting inventory. In the beginning of the implementation, I used a social media calendar to have preplanned posts and to keep track of when something was posted and of what content. As mentioned before, I posted my promotional pieces on Mondays and Wednesdays. On Tuesdays, I posted content about the employees or customers, and on Thursdays I posted a funny meme relating to the relaxation of the cave. On Fridays, I posted facts about salt caves in general, and on Saturdays I posted about the giveaways. Finally, on Sundays I posted inspirational posts or current events that I felt was necessary for a business to acknowledge. In Exhibit 4a, there is a sample of what the social media content calendar looked like.

Exhibit 4a: Social Media Content Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Post Time</th>
<th>Post Topic</th>
<th>Facebook Post Text</th>
<th>Instagram Post Text</th>
<th>Insta Image/Video/GIF</th>
<th>Facebook picture</th>
<th>Call to Action Link</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Intro</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>Employee Appreciation</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Service Promotion</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>Employee Appreciation</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday</td>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Giveaway</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday</td>
<td>10:00 AM</td>
<td>Service Promotion</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday</td>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Giveaway</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
<td>Mendelssohn</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Social Media Practices

Along with the schedule, of the practices I have researched, I incorporated the practices that I deemed best suited for this small business. One of these practices including what were the best posting times for each platform. I did this through posting at 7am the first week, 12pm the second week, the third week at 6pm, the fourth week at 3pm. The following weeks I posted at the times based off what post engagement was highest in the weeks prior on the two different platforms. On top of finding optimal posting times, I incorporated at least one video per week. Most of the giveaway posts were videos and some of the promotional posts were videos as well. I also incorporated offline and online advertising by posting more pictures of actual customers. This allowed the customers to speak for themselves in the comments of the picture they were posted in and allow other customers to see what they have to say. As researched, customer testimonials are more trustworthy to others than if the company was to speak on their own behalf. I also incorporate the social media QR codes within the shop and on the doors facing the outside, so current and potential customers coming in or passing by have easy access to the salt cave’s social media platforms.

Another practice that was mentioned in my research that I performed was message adaptation. I made sure to differentiate the posts at least once a week between Facebook and Instagram, so the followers did not feel as though they were bombarded with spam posts. For example, every Thursday I posted a funny meme that the salt cave’s target market could relate to, but the meme would be different on each platform. Finally, the last practice I involved was promotional exclusivity to the social media platforms. This was done through the giveaways that were held in January, February, and March. The only way one was able to enter the drawing was through steps they had to take on social media which included liking the post, tagging a friend in the comments, adding the post to their story, and finally direct messaging The Salt Cave of Perrysburg “Done!” once completed steps 1-3.
SOCIAL MEDIA RESULTS

Before I delve into the explanation of the results, I want to mention that in the last month of implementation it was announced on social media that their store would be closing due to not being able to keep profits up since the mandatory lockdown in 2020.

Through the gathering of results, it was clear the data would be broken up into qualitative results and quantitative results. The qualitative results will only be looking at the posts that were part of the implementation and no other post from before. From those posts they will be evaluated by what content gained the most attraction, the best posting times and days, and what media content was most engaging for customers. The Instagram qualitative results came from each post’s like count, number of comments, number of accounts reached, number of actions taken, number of shares, and if the content involved a video, the number of views then compared those results to the post content which was kept track on the social media content calendar. The Facebook qualitative results came from each post’s like count, number of comments, number of accounts reached, number of shares, and if the content involved a video, the number of views then compared those results to the post content which was kept track on the social media content calendar.

On the other hand, the quantitative results will include overtime results of before implementation and after, so therefore will look at the posts from the past as well as posts that were part of the implementation. It will also show which months seemed to gain the most engagement and impressions. The Instagram quantitative results came from each post’s like count, number of comments, number of accounts reached, number of actions taken, number of shares, and if the content involved a video, the number of views from before and after implementation. The Facebook quantitative results came from each post’s like count, number of comments, number of accounts reached, number of shares, and if the content involved a video, the number of views from before and after implementation. Then, across both platforms, I kept track of the how many people were following or liking The Salt Cave of Perrysburg page over time. Finally, I took the results of the engagement and impression metrics and put it up against the number of followers for each month to see if the ratio went up or not based on the new social media strategies.

**Quantitative Results**

*Follower Increase.* The first prevalent trend that showed after the implementation was the increase in followers on Instagram and page likers on Facebook. Exhibit 5a displays the follower count on Instagram before and after implementation, which started on January 10th. As displayed, the follower count on Instagram was at a steady increase with an average of about 7 followers every month between September 10th, 2021 and January 10th, 2022. After the implementation took place (the lines in red), the average amount of followers jumped from 7 to about 27 followers per month. The same trend happened on Facebook, which is displayed in Exhibit 5b. The average number of people who liked The Salt Cave of Perrysburg’s page per month before my implementation was about 7 likers. After the implementation, that number rose to about 38 new likers per month. What is notable is that from the month March to April there
was a plateau in likers. This might be due to the shorten month given this month was between March 10th to April 1st instead of April 10th, or it could have been due to the announcement of the business closing.

*Exhibit 5a: Instagram Followers over the months (red line is when the implementation started)*

![Instagram Followers Chart]

*Exhibit 5b: Facebook Page Likers over the months (red line is when implementation started)*

![Facebook Page Likers Chart]

*Engagement Metrics.* The next data set that was effected by the implementation was the engagement metrics, which are the ways the followers engaged with the posts or The Salt Cave of Perrysburg’s profile. For Instagram, Exhibit 5c displays how the average number of likes, comments, actions taken, and shares increased during the first month of implementation. The average number of likes during January 10th through February 10th nearly tripled the average
from the month prior. All engagement metrics continued to increase the second month of implementation, but by the third month all metrics declined since implementation, but was still above the metrics of the pre-implementation phase. In the third month, the big giveaway (worth $500) did end and was replaced by another giveaway about five times less the value of the first one. This could have had a decrease in numbers along with the postings that brought awareness to their closure at the end of April. For Facebook, Exhibit 5d exhibits the average likes, comments, and shares each month. These results were quite shocking compared to Instagram’s results. Between December and January (the month before implementation), there was a drastic increase in the amount of average likes, almost five times more likes than the month prior. This was shocking for there is no change in the posting content from the month before. During the time between January and February, there was only about a 20% increase in the average like count, an 8% increase in the average number of shares, and over a 300% increase in the number of comments. This increase in comments was largely due to the requirements one must have done to have been entered into the giveaway drawing. What was found interesting was in the second month of implementation, Instagram’s highest engagement metrics (February to March), there was a decrease in all three metrics on Facebook. The large giveaway was still in effect, but that did not seem to raise more attention. Finally, in the third month of implementation, the metrics of the average number of shares and comments were at an all time high whereas the number of likes still continued to decrease slightly. This is the month that news of their closing was placed into effect which brought a lot of attention on Facebook compared to Instagram, which could have been a factor to this increase.

Exhibit 5c: Instagram’s Average Engagement Metrics per Month

![Instagram's Average Engagement Metrics per Month](image-url)
Impression Metrics. The third data set that was prevalent to finding if the best social media practices and content that were chosen succeeded were the impression metrics of both Instagram and Facebook. The impression metrics involve the number of accounts the post reached on a given platform and based on if the post was a video or GIF, how many views it had received. For Instagram, depicted in Exhibit 5e, there was no video postings prior to the social media strategy implementation, therefore, all the views were at zero. During the months of implementation, the first month averaged about 106 views and continued to increase in the second month, but by the third month it plummeted just like in the engagement metrics. Again I have hypothesized this was caused due to the lack of a high-valued giveaway prize, the news of The Salt Cave of Perrysburg closing, and the shortened time period. Based on Exhibit 5f, both impression metrics were at an all-time high for The Salt Cave of Perrysburg’s Facebook page. Opposite of Instagram, Facebook took a decline in impressions in the second month of implementation, but then went back up in the third month. It is to be noted that there was more commenting and sharing of the “Store closing” posts on Facebook compared to Instagram, which could have caused this increase. For example the “store closing” post on Facebook reached about 1100 accounts whereas the store closing post on Instagram only reached about 150 accounts.
**Exhibit 5e: Instagram’s Average Impression Metrics per Month**

**Exhibit 5f: Facebook’s Average Impression Metrics per Month**

**Before and After Metrics.** The fourth sets of data are more of conclusive graphs that is divided into the average engagement and impression metrics before the implementation of the social media strategy and the metrics after the social media strategy was implemented. In Exhibit 5g, it depicts an easy-to-read graph of the average engagement metric with blue representing before
implementation and orange representing after implementation. Starting with “FB # of shares” and ending with “Insta # of Likes,” the percentage increase is as follows: 88%, 519%, 133%, 5500%, 514%, 3571%, and 166%. Also, from before implementation 5 out of the 7 engagement metrics did not even average 1, but after implementation only 1 out of the 7 engagement metrics did not average 1. In Exhibit 5h, it depicts a graph of the average impression metrics with blue representing before implementation and orange representing after implementation. The “FB # of accounts reached” and “Insta # of accounts reached,” the percentage increase are as follows: 19% and 88%.

*Exhibit 5g: Average Engagement Metrics of Before and After Implications*

*Exhibit 5h: Average Impression Metrics Before and After Implementation*
Engagement and Impression Metrics to Number of Followers per Month. The final set of quantitative data shows the metrics to follower ratio. This is to discover if the increase of followers on both platforms, influenced the increase in engagement and impressions or if it only seemed like an increase because there were more followers. Based on the information shown in Exhibits 5i and 5j, the impression metrics (number of views and number of people reached) to the number of followers ratio had increased whereas the engagement metrics (number of likes, comments, actions taken, and shares) to the number of followers ratio has seemed to stay constant with only minimal increase in certain areas particularly on Instagram. This information means the social media strategies did good in raising awareness to their page but failed to succeed in the increase of engagement from their customers. For if they were to have in increase in engagement, the engagement to follower’s ratio would have increased rather than staying the same.

In Exhibit 5i, you can see that the ratio for the number of Facebook users reached to number of followers had the same declining trend in the second month of implementation (as shown in Exhibit 5f), and then increased again in the third month of implementation. The number of views to number of followers ratio also had the same trend of increasing in the first month, decreasing in the second, and then increasing again in the third month as shown in Exhibit 5f. The first month of implementation reached an all-time high for impression and engagement metric to follower ratio for Facebook. There quite a decline in the second month, and if discovered sooner there would have been reason to reevaluate the social media marketing strategy on Facebook.

In Exhibit 5j, every metric to follower ratio followed the same trends as shown in Exhibits 5e and 5c. In the first month of implementation, it increased and continued to increase in the second month, but by the third month the numbers fell even lower than the first month of implementation but stayed higher than any time before implementation. Also, the impression metrics to follower ratio had the most drastic increases which indicated that the social media strategy did increase more impressions than compared to before the strategy. As for the engagement metrics to follower ratio, it also increased but not nearly as drastically as the impression metrics to follower ratio. Though there was an increase it was not a large enough one to say that the social media strategy was due to this increase.
Exhibit 5i: Facebook's Engagement and Impression Metrics to # of Page Liker Ratio per Month
**Qualitative**

Based on the number received and the noticeable increases of metric numbers after the implementation, this section will take a deeper look to see which content and media files were most engaging and impressionable. In this section it will be split up by the different types of content that was posted and the different types of media that were used.

**Content of Posts (Refer to Exhibits 6a, 6b, 6c, and 6d for this section)**

In this implementation it has already been stated that the one-third rule has been used, which means one-third of postings are promotional, while the other two-thirds are non-promotional.
The following list is what each content type was broken into: Promotional, Informative, Giveaway, Customer/Employee Appreciation, Funny (Memes), Inspiration, and Misc. (holidays, hours of operation, etc.). Like in the quantitative results, I broke up the qualitative results into the engagement metrics, which include each platforms number of shares, comments, likes, and (specifically to Instagram) actions taken, and impressions metrics, which include each platform’s number of accounts reached and if a video was posted, the number of views. *Note: the missing 2.3% was two posts that had to be taken down due to a scheduling matter. Also the after-implementation average is referring to Exhibits 5g and 5h.*

**Customer/Employee Appreciation posts (10.2% of postings):** This type of content that brought the second most likes, and the second highest average of comments on Instagram, were the customer and employee appreciation posts. These posts were either spotlighting the employees, thanking the customers, or simply posting pictures of the customers enjoying the service. On Instagram, these types of posts averaged 13 likes per post and on Facebook they averaged about 9 likes per post. The other engagement metric that appears worth mentioning is the Instagram comments. The average was 2 comments per post, which was still under the after-implementation average depicted in Exhibit 5g but was higher than the average before implementation. Other than that, the rest of the engagement metrics did not seem to be as significant since they did not even reach 1.00 per post.

Based on the impression results, customer and employee posts seems to have reached a significant amount of people on Facebook but that was based on just one video. The average reach of Facebook, did fall behind the posting average in Exhibit 5h, but the average reach of Instagram was higher than the posting average in Exhibit 5h. This shows that the number of accounts reached a significant number given it was an above average.

**Funny (Memes) (10.2% of postings).** Based on the engagement results, funny posts did post below average compared to the after-implementation average. The Facebook likes even dropped below the before implementation average (Exhibit 5g), but they were higher than the before implementation average on Instagram. I incorporated one GIF on Instagram that I did not on Facebook, and it ended up being the most successful funny post. This GIF was the last meme of the implementation, and if I were to redo it, I would incorporate more GIFs, for the one I did post, indicted that they would be a successful content. The rest of the engagement metrics were not significant enough to suggest that the implementation of funny content, drove the overall metrics.

Based on the impression results, funny content had the second highest reach on Facebook, and was higher than the after-implementation average by about 20 more accounts. On the other hand, Instagram was not as successful for they fell behind the after-implementation average by about 40 accounts. This is interesting given that Instagram had few reached accounts, but much higher engagement actions than Facebook. Finally, the views on Instagram were only based on one GIF, so therefore the average view count is insignificant in this data, it only suggests that GIF’s could have possibly raised the viewing average given the one GIF had about 80 more views than the after-implementation average.
**Informative (19.3% of postings).** This content posting’s metrics were very similar to promotional, but just slightly lower, which means based on engagement metrics all this content’s engagement averages were below average. This is surprising based on the survey that was distributed in December. The Facebook survey had 31% of respondents wanting to see health and services information. The Instagram survey had 36% of respondents wanting to see health and services information. Finally, the in-person survey had 37% of respondents wanting to see health and services information. With these percentages, I am shocked that the informative postings did not have a higher engagement.

As for their impression results, this content had above average metric on Facebook. On average, this content reached about as many people as the giveaway posts did, and had the highest average views. Instagram was nowhere near these numbers that Facebook had. With such high impression counts on Facebook, it suggests that there was a disconnect since not a lot of engagement was involved.

**Promotional (29.5% of postings).** Before looking at promotional content’s metrics, it must be noted that this content had the highest postings of the other seven content sections, possibly causing lower or higher ratings than some of the other content. Based on the engagement results, nothing was above the after-implementation average, but this content’s Instagram like average was the fourth highest average of the 7 content sections. This content also averaged about 2 actions taken per promotional post, which was the third highest average after giveaways and miscellaneous. It is also worth mentioning that the average share was about 1 for both Instagram and Facebook, which was the second highest average right after giveaway content.

Based on the impression results, promotional postings did not have high results. All impression metrics were below the after-implementation average, which is shocking given this content had the second highest sharing average. Also, based on the low viewing count, it could suggest the videos were too long causing viewers to exit out of them early.

**Inspirational (12.5% of postings).** These postings media type was different from the two platforms. Facebook had a link to a current inspirational story, and Instagram had typically two pictures, with the first one of pictures and a quote correlating to the link on Facebook and the second one was of picture of the person who said the quote. To begin, based on the engagement metrics, Instagram had about 8 likes per post while Facebook only had about 3. These average likes are below the after-implementation average. With the information of the two different media type, I hypothesize that Facebook was not as engaged with a link as they would have been with pictures. Also, the average likes are the only engagement metrics that met a whole number. This means that inspirational content did not even average a 1 of each of the actions per post besides likes.

As for the impression metrics, the inspirational content reached more people on Facebook than it did on Instagram. This is shocking given there was more engagement on Instagram. Like in the informative content, there had to have been a misconnect, and I hypothesize it was due to posting a link to Facebook rather than a picture. With that being said, the average reach per post on both
platforms did not meet the after-implementation average, and there were no videos posted for inspirational content so therefore there are no average view counts.

*Mis*cellaneous (3.4% of postings). This content was not a huge part of the implementation for it only involved holiday postings and an hour of operation posting. The average engagement posting was below the after-implementation average besides the average amount of this content’s number of actions taken on Instagram, which was about 3 actions above the average. As for the impression metrics, the reach of this content on Facebook surpassed the average reach, but unfortunately it did not on Instagram. As a small business, this content is important to show you are keeping up with current times and keep customers in the loop about one’s business hours.

*Giveaway posts (13.6% of postings)*. Finally, based on the engagement results, the giveaway posts took the lead with the highest average of all engagement metrics. The average like count for Instagram about 26 likes per giveaway post and Facebook was about 13 likes per post. This telling information because it shows that the giveaway posts had a high effect on the overall averages displayed in the quantitative results. For example, most of the other contents’ average likes for Instagram fall somewhere between 6 and 10 likes, whereas Facebook is anywhere between 2 and 6 likes. The average of 26 likes is about double the amount of the other content that was posted on Instagram, and the average of 13 likes is also about double the amount of the other content that was posted on Facebook. Also, the giveaway posts and employee/customer appreciation posts were the only two posting content to reach above average results. This information suggests that the data could have been heavily skewed by the giveaway content, but it was a great way to better encourage people to engage.

Based on the impression results, giveaway posts, on average, reached the most amount of people on Instagram. About 100 more people were reached per giveaway post than any other post type. Giveaway posts also average the most views per post on Instagram compared to all other content. On Facebook, the giveaway posts did not do as well than they did on Instagram, for they were the third highest average of accounts reached and accounts viewed per post. The giveaway average numbers were also not too far ahead of the fourth highest averages. Both metrics were much lower than Instagram, which helps support the idea that giveaway postings are better suited for Instagram.
Exhibit 6a: Average Engagement per Post Based on Content Type on Instagram

![Average Engagement Based per Post on Content Type on Instagram](chart)

- **Misc. (Holidays, Hours of Operation)**: 0.67, 0.33, 5.00, 7.67
- **Inspiration**: 0.18, 0.06, 8.18
- **Funny (Memes)**: 0.33, 0.11, 9.56
- **Customer/Employee Appreciation**: 0.25, 1.13, 13.00
- **Giveaway**: 0.82, 1.94, 11.83, 14.33
- **Informative**: 0.35, 0.35, 14.33, 16.25
- **Promotional**: 1.08, 0.44, 2.00, 9.36

Key:
- Insta # of Shares
- # of actions taken
- Insta # of Comments
- Insta # of Likes
Exhibit 6b: Average Engagement per Post Based on Content Type on Facebook

Exhibit 6c: Average Impressions per Post Based on Content Type on Instagram
Media Type of Posts

Videos (29% of postings). Video content was highly suggested in my research to improve a social media page. From the results listed in Exhibit 7a, it would suggest that this statement is correct. The only metrics that were below the after-implementation average were Instagram number of views, and Facebook’s number of people reached. Every other metric was above the after-implementation average. Also compared to all other media types, videos had the highest averages besides Facebook’s number of people reached, images had the highest reach in that metric. Finally, I want to mention that I posted one GIF on Instagram on the last week of implementation, and though I cannot make a concluding statement it suggested to have been a success given it gained 16 likes and had 189 views.

Exhibit 7a: Average Video Metrics per Post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>Average Video Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insta # of Likes</td>
<td>15.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insta # of Comments</td>
<td>5.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insta # of accounts reached</td>
<td>210.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of actions taken</td>
<td>7.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insta # of Shares</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insta # of Views</td>
<td>112.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB # of Likes</td>
<td>8.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB # of Comments</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB # of Shares</td>
<td>1.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB # of people Reached</td>
<td>195.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB # of views</td>
<td>110.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Links (10% of Facebook postings). Links were only posted on Facebook which is why they only make up 10% of the postings. All these posts were made up of current inspirational stories, but they lacked in engagement which is displayed in Exhibit 7b. Not one person ever commented on the postings, and they only averaged about three likes per post, which is about the same Facebook like average from before implementation (see Exhibit 5h). These results suggest that this type of media content was not successful, and not a good differentiation from what was posted on Instagram on these days, which were regular still-images.

Exhibit 7b: Average Metrics of a Link Posting per Post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average Link Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FB # of Likes</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB # of Comments</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB # of Shares</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB # of people Reached</td>
<td>161.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Still-Images (61% of postings). The media type that made up most of the postings were still images. Based on the Facebook and Instagram metrics, these types of posts performed below average (see Exhibits 5g and 5h), but as stated in the content section, giveaway posts suggested to skew the results giving higher engagement and impressions averages on both platforms. If compared to the before implementation metric average (see Exhibit 5g), these numbers performed well-above average. For example, the average likes per post on Instagram before implementation were about 4 likes and with the implementation, the average like of a still-image was 10 likes.

Exhibit 7c: Average Metrics of Image Postings per Post

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average Image Metrics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Insta # of Likes</td>
<td>9.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insta # of Comments</td>
<td>1.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insta # of accounts reached</td>
<td>124.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td># of actions taken</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insta # of Shares</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB # of Likes</td>
<td>6.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB # of Comments</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB # of Shares</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FB # of people Reached</td>
<td>271.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other Posting Practices

Hashtags. Hashtags were something that was incorporated in every posting this time. The use of hashtags can increase the chances of targeting the target market on social media. Therefore, for all promotional posts, I would use a location hashtag, hashtags of what was being promoting, and then hashtags of relaxation or health. For non-promotional postings I would do hashtags that related to the post content. I used about five to ten hashtags per post. In Exhibit 8a, is an example of a promotional posting and the hashtags I used, and Exhibit 8b, is an example of a non-promotional posting and the hashtags. Though I was unable to measure how much or if the hashtags have increased the impression, I thought it was worth mentioning that this could have helped increase The Salt Cave of Perrysburg’s awareness to their pages.

Exhibit 8a: Example of promotional posting’s hashtags

Exhibit 8b: Example of non-promotional posting’s hashtags
Days. In Exhibits 8c and 8d, the tables show the average metrics per post of Facebook and Instagram by the days of the week. In Exhibit 8c, you can see that Facebook’s most popular day was Saturday. Earlier evidence has pointed out that giveaway posts heavily influenced the metrics, and Saturdays were dedicated to posting the giveaway. The highest average liked posts for Facebook were on Monday. This is interesting because according to Exhibit 6a, employee and customer appreciation posts were the highest liked posts besides the giveaway posts, but according to the days of the week Monday, which is a promotional posting, was the highest averaged posts. Something that was also interesting was that though Monday had the highest average like count, it had the second lowest average reach count. This seems to suggest high impression numbers does not always equal high engagement numbers.

As for Exhibit 8d, Instagram’s most average liked posts on a given day, besides Saturday, was Tuesday. This aligns with the results in Exhibit 6a because Tuesday is employee and customer appreciation day which is the content that gained the highest average likes. This table also supports the conclusion that Instagram has continuously outperformed Facebook even every day of the week. Instagram continuously has higher average metrics and tends to average at least 1 across all engagement rates most of the time.

Exhibit 8c: Facebook Average metrics per post on a given day of the week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week</th>
<th>Total Likes</th>
<th>Shares</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Views</th>
<th>Reach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday (promo)</td>
<td>8.08</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>26.23</td>
<td>165.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday (employee/customer)</td>
<td>6.57</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>25.57</td>
<td>248.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday (promo)</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>35.17</td>
<td>247.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday (funny)</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>274.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday (facts)</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>9.21</td>
<td>273.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday (giveaway)</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>6.92</td>
<td>99.33</td>
<td>270.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday (Inspirational)</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>161.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exhibit 8d: Instagram’s Average metrics per post on a given day of the week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day of week</th>
<th>Total Likes</th>
<th>Shares</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Views</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Reach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday (promo)</td>
<td>10.85</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>35.38</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>153.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday (employee/customer)</td>
<td>11.07</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>9.21</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>126.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday (promo)</td>
<td>8.64</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>24.36</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>110.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday (funny)</td>
<td>9.18</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>17.18</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>156.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday (facts)</td>
<td>7.62</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>15.54</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>98.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday (giveaway)</td>
<td>25.25</td>
<td>10.92</td>
<td>15.25</td>
<td>132.33</td>
<td>13.58</td>
<td>283.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday (inspirational)</td>
<td>8.18</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>112.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The last qualitative results I wanted to look at was the best posting times. In Exhibits 8e and 8f, it once again shows the average metrics of both Instagram and Facebook at a given time. In Exhibit 8e, it shows 1p.m. as the highest like, share, comment, views, and reach rate besides 6p.m. This is because there was only one posting and it was a post about who the giveaway winner was. Most of Instagram postings occurred at 7a.m., 12p.m., 3p.m., and 6p.m. This is because those were the highest average metric ratings for Instagram. 10a.m. also had high ratings but it must be noted that two out of the three postings were about a giveaway winner and the store closing, which includes content that tends to gain high traction. Finally, 6p.m. had the highest ratings because the content at 6p.m. were giveaway posts, which generally gained the most engagement and impressions.

As for Exhibit 8f, the highest liking time was at 10a.m. for Facebook. As mentioned, two of the three postings included a giveaway winner and the announcement of the store closing. Again, this content tends to gain much attraction. The second highest liking average for Facebook was the 1p.m. that was about the first giveaway winner, and the third highest was the 6p.m. posting times which were the giveaway posts.

*Exhibit 8e: Instagram’s Average metrics per post at a given time*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Total likes</th>
<th>Shares</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Views</th>
<th>Actions</th>
<th>Reach</th>
<th>Total Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6am</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7am</td>
<td>10.75</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>37.10</td>
<td>2.15</td>
<td>153.20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8am</td>
<td>7.17</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>13.50</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>105.50</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9am</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>72.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10am</td>
<td>10.33</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>50.67</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>50.67</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11am</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>42.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>68.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12pm</td>
<td>9.48</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>1.14</td>
<td>114.43</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pm</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>94.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>184.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3pm</td>
<td>12.13</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>22.80</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>148.20</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6pm</td>
<td>16.94</td>
<td>6.00</td>
<td>9.12</td>
<td>79.59</td>
<td>7.71</td>
<td>204.47</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exhibit 8f: Facebook’s Average metrics per post at a given time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Total likes</th>
<th>Shares</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Views</th>
<th>Reach</th>
<th>Total Post</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6am</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>279.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7am</td>
<td>6.71</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>33.43</td>
<td>245.43</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8am</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>22.17</td>
<td>125.83</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9am</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>220.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10am</td>
<td>17.33</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>212.33</td>
<td>625.00</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11am</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>48.00</td>
<td>96.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12pm</td>
<td>5.41</td>
<td>0.48</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>10.15</td>
<td>251.22</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pm</td>
<td>9.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>88.00</td>
<td>193.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pm</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3pm</td>
<td>5.58</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>21.50</td>
<td>190.92</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4pm</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5pm</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>190.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6pm</td>
<td>8.11</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>3.68</td>
<td>57.32</td>
<td>214.11</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7pm</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8pm</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of Results
Based on the quantitative and qualitative data, this implementation was a success in terms of raising more awareness and engagement on the platforms, which is depicted in Exhibits 5g and 5h. Between these graphs there is must higher improvement on Instagram than there was Facebook. Though there was an improvement, the improvement was not as high I predicted it to be. Also, by looking at the metrics to follower ratios (see Exhibits 5i and 5j), there was minimal increase on the Facebook platform, and there was even a decrease in the third month of implementation. On Instagram, the ratio had better improvement, which showed even with the increase of followers, there was still an increase in engagement and impressions on the platform.
RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE BEST SOCIAL MEDIA PRACTICES

Based on the pre-implementation research and the post-implementation results, this section proposes a response to the research question of *What social media practices are the best for a small business*.

**Recommendation 1: Research**

The first recommendation to find the best social media practices, is to research before implementing any practices. This is because what might work for The Salt Cave of Perrysburg, might not necessarily work for all other businesses. Before implementation, it was important to answer those defining questions of who the target market is, what brings customers to this service, and what social media platforms will be the best for this business. By leaving these questions unanswered, it would have been more difficult to create content that will reach the right target market. Even with research it is still hard to reach the desired target market on social media, but postings have a much higher chance of reaching the target market than if a company were to post without any prior research. Not only was pre-implementation necessary but so was during-implementation research. The three pre-implementation research sections each small business must do is define the target market, explore which social media platforms best suits their small business, and what posting content is desired from the target market. The during implementation section involves constant tracking and analyzing.

**Define the Target Market.** Before any implementation takes place it is important to find the target market of the small business. This can be done through primary and secondary research. To find the general demographics of the people within the area a business is located, The United States Census Bureau is a good resource to use. Also, if a business uses waiver forms, like The Salt Cave of Perrysburg does, this is useful information to collect more specified demographic information of the current customer base. The waiver forms that customers had to fill out for The Salt Cave of Perrysburg included their reasons of visit, where they lived, and their age. Another source of information to better define a business’s target market is by creating a survey that is made up of questions to better answer the question of *Who is your target market?* These three sources of information will help define the target market which will help guide what social media platforms to use and what kind of content to post.

**Define the Desired Content.** After the target market is defined, then a small business must understand how their target market views them and what kind of content the target market wants to see. The way I did this was by sending out a survey in December in the store and on Facebook and Instagram. Part of this survey questioned why they would come to the salt cave and what kind of content would they wish to see posted on our social media platforms. By the end, I collected 65 completed surveys that guided me in the direction to what The Salt Cave of Perrysburg’s customers wanted to see. To also find the desired content, one must know what works best on each of the platforms. For example, Instagram would be a good platform for a trendy new boutique because Instagram gives a “coolness” factor which is what a trendy
boutique would want to express. The Salt Cave of Perrysburg related that “coolness” factor by showing an all-natural service to improve one’s health.

*Define the Social Media Platforms.* After the decision of what content will be posted, it is important to choose what kind of platforms are most beneficial for one’s business. Each social media platform has its strengths and weaknesses, so it is important for a small business to research what types of social media platforms will best reach their target market and display their content. The Salt Cave of Perrysburg chose Instagram and Facebook. Instagram was chosen because of the age range of their customers, also because Instagram visually builds a brand which is what The Salt Cave of Perrysburg needed. They need to build brand awareness within the community. Also, Instagram is a good platform for giveaways which is one of the practices that was implemented. As for Facebook, it was chosen because it is good platform to grow and maintain a community. Facebook was also the platform that most of the current customers would follow if they were to follow us on a social media platform according to the survey that was distributed in December. Another reason these two platforms were chosen was because The Salt Cave of Perrysburg already had a presence on these two social media platforms and a current following. Again, these were the reasons why Instagram and Facebook were chosen, but for another business, such as an auto shop, they must do the research to see based on their clientele and service or products they provide what platforms would best suit their business. An Auto shop might be inclined to extend to YouTube which has a higher male market, and is a good platform to show longer videos such as how-to’s of car detailing and repairing.

*Track and analyze.* With social media it is necessary to track and analyze how content is doing, and if there needs to be a change to the posting content or the times and days of the postings. Once all the pre-implementation research is done, that does not mean the research stop there. During the whole implementation process, there is data collection and research throughout. If I would have seen no change in the social media metrics within the first month of implementation, I would have had to gone back and changed my strategy. This change could have involved changing the days certain content is posted or going back over the surveys to see if I missed the mark on the desired content. Fortunately, there was an increase until the last month. If I were to have continued I would have gone back and reevaluated the days certain content was posted. Overall, tracking and analyzing is a constant in social media marketing, so one must put the time aside to track it and make sure the time and effort that is put into the creation of the postings are not going to waste.

**Recommendation 2: Social Media Posting Practices**

The second recommendation is directed towards what practices incorporated on social media best worked for The Salt Cave of Perrysburg based on the research in Recommendation 1. Throughout the process, I implemented many new tactics to The Salt Cave of Perrysburg’s social media including social media giveaways, using hashtags, posting memes, customers, and videos, and using a social media content calendar.

**1/3 Rule.** This practice is something that all small businesses should abide to. This 1/3 rule means that one third of content should be promotional, while the other two thirds should be
anything else. Before this implementation, the content that was posted was most, if not all, promotional with the average likes per post on Instagram being about 4 and about 3 likes per post on Facebook. After the implementation, the average likes for strictly promotional posting went up 9 likes per post on Instagram, and 6 likes per post on Facebook. These averages were just for promotional postings, but overall averages had Instagram at about 11 likes per post and had Facebook at about 7 likes per post. This alludes to the idea that incorporating different content like employee, customer, funny, and inspirational, made The Salt Cave of Perrysburg’s social media pages more engaging. Not only was the promotional higher than the overall average liking per post before implementation, but it was also lower than the overall average liking per post after implementation. If it was lower this means, there was other content that brought more likes and engagement from people that the salt cave was missing out from before. Overall, this one-third rule has made it clear that incorporating different content is very important for a social media page.

**Video Content.** If you refer to Exhibit 7a, the video content on Instagram was approximately 5 likes more than the overall average (see Exhibit 5g for the overall average) and on Facebook the average like count for a video was approximately 2 likes more than the overall average (see Exhibit 5g for the overall average). Also, the one GIF that was posted, was the most liked “funny” post with 16 likes on Instagram. If I would have incorporated GIFs sooner, I would have liked to see if the video averages would have gone up based on the short-timed video. To conclude, based on the higher average count, this data suggests that video incorporation to social media is a wise decision to increase engagement metrics.

**Exclusivity.** The exclusivity on social media was expressed through the giveaway. This giveaway was only offered to social media users. This element of “exclusivity” gives a sense of benefit for engaging with a company’s social media. Based off the results, this was by far the most engaging type of content on both platforms. This content’s average liking on Instagram was about 26, which is more than double the overall liking average of approximately 11. On Facebook, this giveaway content’s average liking was 13, which once again is more than double the overall liking average of 6. With these high results, it is noted this could have quite possibly skewed the results, for without the giveaway, our overall averages probably would have decreased, but it also shows how much of a benefit adding such content to one’s social media platforms can be. It must be noted, that the first giveaway was valued at $500, whereas the second giveaway was only valued at around $100. Much more engagement was received from the first giveaway compared to the second one, but to boost engagement on the second giveaway, I added a surprise gift to the giveaway. This post that consisted of the surprise gift ended up receiving the most engagement out of all the other posts about the second giveaway. To conclude, these giveaways that are exclusive to social media, returned very high social media engagement from people.

**Employee/Customer Appreciation Content.** Based on my research, integrating online and offline advertising was one of the recommended practices. To incorporate this practice, I used customer and employee appreciation posts. The employee appreciation posts showcased the accomplishments of our employee outside of work and the customer appreciation posts showcased pictures of real customers using the service. Having pictures of customers and
employees enticed more commenting by the customers that were posted and by the people congratulating the employees on their accomplishments. Also, these comments showed other followers and likers comments of real customers thoughts of the cave. On Instagram, this type of content averaged about two comments and thirteen likes per post which was the second highest comment and liking average based on what content was posted (giveaway content was the highest average). As for Facebook, this content had the second highest liking average of 9 likes per post and the third highest commenting average of about .4 comments per post (informative had .5 comments per post and giveaway had about 8 comments per post). Based off these results, this practice seems to be a successful way of increasing engagement on one’s social media platform.

Hashtags. Though there is not hard data to back this information, the number of accounts reached on Instagram nearly doubled after implementation, and on Facebook, the average reach count went up by about 40 accounts reached (see Exhibit 5h). Though other factors may have influenced these results, it is important to have hashtags. This helps people who are on social media looking for certain kinds of services and products to better find those services or products. For example, Perrysburg and Toledo were common hashtags after finding that is where most of the clientele is from. Relaxing and respiratory health were also popular hashtags in the postings because from the survey, relaxing was a main reason for coming in while respiratory health was also very important according to the client waiver forms and December survey. Overall, though there is no clear concluding evidence as to how many people were reached because of hashtags, there is evidence to suggest that it would have been a factor based on the increase in reached accounts.

Social Media Content Calendar. The final practice that should be practiced with any type of small business is a social media content calendar. A content calendar helps with the scheduling and organization of postings. This is to be used before the content is posted, so when the day it is supposed to be posted all that needs to be done is the copying and pasting of the content onto each social media platform. In Exhibit 9a, there is a picture of what type of information should be collected on a social media content calendar. I usually created the postings and their captions one to two weeks out, then would see how the postings were doing. I would gather the best posting times, and then repeat the process with the optimized posting times. When it came to the data collection, this set up made it very easy to collect best days to post, best times to post, and the most impressionable and engaging content.

**Exhibit 9a: Social Media Content Calendar Example**
**Recommendation Conclusion**

Overall, based on my research, there are two key factors of optimizing a small business’s social media. One is to do the research, which includes defining the target marketing, define the social media platforms, define the desired content, and track and analyze throughout the implementation process. The other key factor is to then implement the practices, which are following the 1/3 rule, using video content, exclusivity on social media, employee/customer content, using hashtags, and using a social media content calendar. By doing these recommendations, a small business will be using the best social media practices to better optimize their presence on social media.
CONCLUSION

Overall, this case study has given a layout of the best social media practices for a small business. First it is necessary to define the target market of the small business. This can be done with census research, waiver forms, or surveys. Next the business must decide what content will best suit their target market. This can be done by surveying the customers. After the content is decided, then the business must decide what platforms will best work for the type of content they will be posting. This can be done by knowing what social media platforms the target market is inclined to use, which can be done through surveying and knowing the basic demographic of the target market. If the business’s content is going to be mainly how-to videos, then YouTube would be a strong contender, but if the videos are going to be under sixty seconds, then Instagram would be a better avenue.

After the small business has identified the target market, chosen the content that is to be posted, and picked what platforms to post the content on, then the business must create a content calendar to start making posts for the week. This calendar will include, the content type of post, where it was posted, the caption, the picture, the posting’s time and day, and the media type that was used. Through the creation of posting it is important to use videos, employee and customer appreciation posts, hashtags, and posts that give people on social media a benefit, such as a giveaway. While these practices are being incorporated into the posting content, a small business must also follow the 1/3 rule, which means one third of the postings are promotional whereas the other two thirds are non-promotional. This equals out to about two promotional postings per week.

Finally, once all this has been accomplished, it must be kept in mind that all postings should be tracked and analyzed to make sure that the current social media strategy is moving the metrics in a positive direction. To track the postings, a business must look at a post’s engagement metrics, which include likes, comments, shares, and actions taken, and the impression metrics, which include the number of accounts reached and the number of views if a video was posts. As shown above in the results section, the first to months of implementation was on an increase, which showed the at current strategies in place were working, but by the third month, there was a decrease, which if given a fourth month I would I looked to see if the current days for certain content should have been changed. This is how one would track and analyze the data. This is a practice that is constant and necessary for social media because without it, a small business could be wasting a lot of time, effort, and potentially money if they pay someone to do this.

Overall, by following these practices, a small business will increase their chance of optimizing their social media and community awareness. It must be mentioned that social media marketing should never be the only marketing effort of a small business. Social media marketing should be part of a marketing mix that involves traditional marketing and digital marketing as well. Unfortunately, The Salt Cave of Perrysburg, did not have a full marketing mix, which is something I soon came to realize while working on this project. If given more time I would have liked to come up with an overall marketing plan for The Salt Cave of Perrysburg. In part to this lack of marketing efforts, The Salt Cave of Perrysburg is closing indefinitely on April 30th, 2022.
Ever since COVID-19 it was hard for them to gain appointment bookings again, and unfortunately, this eventually led to their decision to close in April. This case study gave them hope to increase the number of appointment bookings and bring in enough people to keep the business afloat, but I believe they have over-estimated the power social media has on generating in-store action. Though this was very saddening news, its has given this case study an extra element of uniqueness by demonstrating that even if a small business’s social media page/profile is doing well and exhibiting positive moving numbers, that does not mean it will necessarily bring in that amount of traction in store. Social media is a great tool to raise awareness, but it must not be the only marketing method for a small business.
APPENDIX:

Survey

In store survey.

1. What drew you in today? A. Health reasons B. Time to relax C. Other
2. Do you know our company has a FB or Instagram page?
3. Between the two, which one are you more likely to follow?
4. If you follow us on Facebook or Instagram what is the information you want to see?
   A. Health Information B. Discounts C. Inventory Updates D. Customer Testimonial
   E. Supporting a Small Business F. Pictures and Videos G. Service Information
5. If you want to receive information about The Salt Cave of Perrysburg which channel is the best way you would want to be reached? A. Facebook B. Instagram C. Text D. Email
6. What is your age range?

Instagram and Facebook Surveys

1. Why would you come into the Salt Cave of Perrysburg? A. Health reasons B. Time to relax C. Other
2. What is the information you want to see? A. Health Information B. Discounts C. Inventory Updates D. Customer Testimonial E. Supporting a Small Business F. Pictures and Videos G. Service Information
3. How could we improve our current Facebook/Instagram Page? ______________
4. Age range

Facebook Survey Results Graphs:
**Instagram Survey Result Graphs:**

1. Why would you come into the Salt Cave of Perrysburg?

- Health benefits: 56% (5)
- Relaxing: 35% (3)
- Other: 0% (0)
- NA: 11% (1)

2. If you follow us on Facebook or Instagram what is the information you want to see?

- Health: 15% (3)
- Discounts: 10% (2)
- Inventory: 10% (2)
- Specials: 12% (2)
- Pics: 17% (4)
- Support: 14% (3)
- 0% (0)
- Other: 0% (0)

4. What is your age range?

- 1 to 15: 11% (1)
- 16-30: 11% (1)
- 31-45: 78% (7)
- 46-60: 0% (0)
- 61-75: 0% (0)
- 75+: 0% (0)

**In Person Survey Result Graphs:**

1. What brought you in today?

- Health benefits: 15% (3)
- Relaxing: 45% (9)
- Other: 10% (2)
- Both: 20% (6)

2. Do you know our company has a Facebook and Instagram page?

- Both: 65% (13)
- Facebook only: 20% (4)
- Instagram only: 15% (3)
- Neither: 0% (0)
3. Between the two platforms, which one are you most likely to follow?

- Facebook: 50%
- Instagram: 30%
- Other/NA: 20%

4. If you were to follow us and based on your previous answer, what is the information you want to see on that given platform? (Choose Multiple)

- Health Info: 29%
- Discounts: 22%
- Inventory: 4%
- Testimonial: 2%
- Support: 20%
- P&L: 10%
- Service Info: 8%
- Other: 0%
- NA: 6%

5. If you want to receive information about The Salt Cave of Perrysburg which channel is the best way you would want to be reached?

- Email: 45%
- Facebook: 20%
- Instagram: 15%
- Text: 10%

6. What is your age range?

- 1 to 15: 3
- 16-30: 15%
- 31-45: 30%
- 46-50: 35%
- 51-75: 10%
- 76+: 5%
- NA: 5%
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY


This was a textbook I used in my Marketing Communication and Promotion course. In chapter 9, it discusses the various types of marketing execution styles. These styles include dramatization, slice of life, demonstration, humor, and testimonials. I used this source to emphasize the advantage of using testimonials. The strength of testimonials is very powerful, for people tend to rely on other customers’ opinions. Though this is my second source cited on testimonials, it also states other of the execution styles, but I paid attention mainly on testimonials since that is one of the practices I was focusing on. Testimonials were also used in my survey to see if this is something that will be wanted by the Salt Cave of Perrysburg customers.


This paper was written by an Associate Professor of Digital Marketing at the University of Twente, and received his PhD from the University of Twente in E-Marketing. This paper touched upon the foundations of social media marketing, which is of importance to me in the research for this project. This paper differentiated from the rest of my sources because it gave me great insight as to how the transition to Web 2.0 was strongly influenced by social media. This new web era is in part to the rise of social media which just shows how much of an influence social media can have on a culture, therefore making it a very essential tool for the future of marketing. I used this in the research of my literary review to show the importance of incorporating social media to a marketing plan.


This source was a Master's Thesis written by Sarah Cox and published by Purdue University. This thesis addresses the importance social media can have on a small business and supports the concept of how often many businesses simply do not know how to market to their target market, which eventually causes them to fail. Her work helped me identify the purpose of what social media is to do for a small business which is to reach as many people and users as possible and to encourage customer feedback no matter if it is good or bad. Bad comments help companies know what they need to improve on. With any marketing methods this is important, but with social media it is especially more achievable when using the right practices and sharing the right content.

This is a doctoral study done by Jasmine Davis at Walden University. It was reviewed by three Doctors of Business Administration Faculty at Walden University. This study was done to explore effective marketing strategies to guide them to grow sustainable businesses. I used this study to learn more about small business. This is where I gained a better understanding of the importance of small businesses. This helped support my literary review part of my paper. Though not quoted in my paper, it also showcased the importance of social media and how it can play a key role in enhancing one's marketing strategy.


I used this chapter to help represent the trend of Americans moving to alternative medical ways and how the knowledge of alternative medicines that a person has increases the use of them. Halotherapy, which is what the Salt Cave of Perrysburg offers, is a type of alternative medicine. It has been said to help with many respiratory problems along with many other things like skin conditions, stress levels, and more. This information came from the Pew Research Center which is described as a “nonpartisan fact tank.” It provides information on social issues in the world and trends that are happening. This is important to my paper because it helps show the increasing trend in alternative medicines, and how those educated on the topic are more typically going to use them. This knowledge is something the small business might want to use in their social media content to entice customers.

https://doi.org/10.31142/ijtsrd21501

This article was published by the South Asia Management Association and National Research Foundation. In this article, there were listed five main social media practices that can be best used by small businesses. It is written by Ramandeep Kaur who is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Business Management at Gujranwala Guru Nanak Institute of Management & Technology in Ludhiana, Punjab, India. I used this article as a basis for what practices I will be implementing during my process of integrating the best social media practices. Along with the support of many other articles, this article was a good starting point with limited practices, which I need given my time restraint. Though, testing more practices would be ideal, given the time I have to do so, would not result in the most accurate and thorough data. It would result in more breadth than depth. Therefore, using this article's five practices, from which I chose four which were common throughout many articles that I have cited, I will be able to implement
researched practices along with the content I see most suitable and see if the same results show to be true in my research.


This journal publication was written by Kagan Kircaburun who is receiving his PhD in Phycology from Nottingham Trent University. This article outlines a study that was done to see what certain personality traits and motives are exhibited by individuals and how it correlates to which social media platforms they tend to prefer. This gave more support to my other source The Social Media Guru. The difference with this one was it was a research study done on a sample of 1008 people. This gave me a better understanding of why people use certain social media platforms. This information provided my research with support as to why I chose to stay with Facebook and Instagram as my two main social media outlets. It has also given me a guide to know what information and content people tend to look for on the two platforms. Though it is very similar to my other source about social media platforms, one can see why it is essential for this work and how its slight similarities provide useful content.


This source was helpful for me when doing research to understand the term "Social Media Marketing." This research journal was written by a student as part of their undergraduate research and reviewed by marketing faculty member Stephen Brokaw from University of Wisconsin La Crosse. As part of my literary review, it was important to help my audience understand what social media marketing is and what it means to a company. This source also describes the effectiveness of social media based on its content, which is what I will be measuring when implementing the social media practices and content that I have found through primary and secondary resources to be most effective.


This book is by The Social Media Guru who is made up of two people who are experienced and well-versed in marketing, for they have been trained by the Institute of Direct and Digital Marketing and Google. I found this book posted on the EBSCO database from the BGSU online library. It was perfect for what my research project is based on. Chapter two of the
book gave me the most help when deciding which platforms to use. This is the main source I used to gather information about the best uses for each platform and why this resource vastly differs from my other collected sources. Based on this research and the time restraint, I ended up sticking with Facebook and Instagram for my social media outlets.

Timms , M. (2021, December 31). This is a survey that was implemented at the start of December 2021 to better understand the social media behaviors of The Salt Cave of Perrysburg current customers. Perrysburg; Ohio. This data comes from real customers' answers. These answers will further provide help to determine the ways The Salt Cave of Perrysburg can better reach and engage their customers. This survey is crucial for determining the published content that is wanted by their customers. Without this specifically tailored survey, the research project would lack real insight to what the customers really want to see on their feed and how to get it to them. I will give a deeper dive into defining the target market, which is one, if not the, most important thing when creating content for a business.

Timms, M. (2021, October 22). These are waivers that every new customer had to fill out over the three years of operation. I divided all the waivers by year (2019, 2020, 2021), then randomly chose 25% of the waivers from each of the three years to gather information on residency, reason for coming, and age. Perrysburg; Ohio. This is raw data that I compiled from real customers from the Salt Cave of Perrysburg. This raw data includes a rough estimate of where the customers live, what their age is, and what they hope the service provided will help. This information is vital to my project because it will help determine the target market. By determining the target market, it helps me understand what content the customers want to see on their social media feed. Without defining the target market, all marketing efforts will be a waste of time and money. Though it does not give me all the information, it is a good starting point to understand the basics of the company's target market.

Timms, M. (2022). I used a social media content calendar to track which posts' traction and attention through likes, shares, comments, and interactions from the profile insights. I will then compare those statistics to the postings' statistics from before the new practices were implemented. Perrysburg; Ohio. The purpose of this social media content calendar is to track each post's likes, shares, comments, and interactions from the profile insights. I will do this to all posts 3 months prior to the implemented practices I come up with and then collect the same data from the posts three months while the posts are using the practices. I will be able to track which posts gain the most traction and attention through the profile insights. So not only will the social media
content calendar allow me to see if there was a difference in engaging the customers, but it will also show me which practices seemed to work best based on the collected information.


This source was written by Burhanettin Uysal, who holds a PhD in Hospital Management, and Ebrar Ulusinan, who studied at Bilecik Şeyh Edebali University of Health Management. The information in this research article helps give support that Halotherapy, what this company offers, is a legitimate service that has had correlation to health benefits. This is important, because part of running a business means the owner has a duty to be truthful to their customers. I wanted to pull research to show that Halotherapy is a working and ethical service, and not just a scam of a business. This is also very important because it is a recent article that connects Halotherapy to helping COVID-19 related diseases. This service provides a less invasive way to build immunity without taking pills and medication.


This book is written by Ekaterina Walter who is a best-selling author, business innovator, and international speaker. She is the Best-Selling Author of the book Think Like Zuck. In this book she discusses how to focus one's time and resources into the right practices when it comes to building your social media. This book was very beneficial to the success of my research because it reiterates the importance of using videos when promoting on social media. This source helps support the notion of videos being a successful practice on social media. She discusses this in mainly two of her chapters of the book. This source differs from my other sources by going in depth on the success videos have on gaining consumers attention in platforms that are usually quick to lose it.


This book was used as a textbook in my Service Marketing course at Bowling Green State University. This textbook was a great overall source, but my main use of it was to gather support of the importance of customer testimonials. Customers tend to trust the word of other customers over the word of the promoting company. It has been shown to be an effective practice when using social media. Therefore, I added this topic to the survey that I distributed to the Salt Cave of Perrysburg customers. Like anything, though it has
been shown to be an effective practice, I added it to the survey to see if this is what they want to see on social media.

Bibliography:


