

How The College of Charleston Uses YouTube

Based on a presentation by Melissa Whetzel
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You Tube and You
Comm 336
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Melissa Whetzel Factoids



- Graduate of James Madison University (communication and media studies)
- Worked previous as a television news reporter, including at WCIV-TV, Charleston
- From journalism/broadcasting, went into public relations and marketing with the Charleston Regional Development Alliance (Investor Relations Director) and the Charleston Home Builders Association (Marketing and Communications Director)
- Came to College of Charleston in 2007
- Initiated CofC's institutional presence on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube (shooting and editing first videos herself)
- Past President, Charleston American Marketing Association
- Named CofC's Outstanding Staff Member of the Year (March 2012)

Whetzel Quotes and Takeaways

- “Extra skills will make you so much more appealing and marketable to employers”
- “Writing, video and social media are intertwined” in today’s media/marketing world
- “Turn news into a social media post” is a needed skill in journalism/PR/marketing
- “YouTube levels the playing field”
- “Being familiar with Google Analytics, knowing how to use it, how to track with it, is a plus today.”

Believe It Or Not, Views of CofC YouTube Videos...

- ...are among the most at any U.S. university
- 1,000,000-plus total views
- No. 2 behind only Tulane
- Ahead of South Carolina, Clemson, Georgia, William & Mary, among others (May 31, 2013 data)



SHRIMP ON A TREADMILL [VIRAL VIDEO!](#)

What's the CofC Key?



- OPTIMIZATION!
- “We focus on content that makes sense for us,” Whetzel said. “We don’t make videos with the intent of going viral.”
- “We could try. But we don’t see the value of that. We focus on what makes the College of Charleston special, the factors that make our school special.”
- “We don’t want to look like one of the pack.”

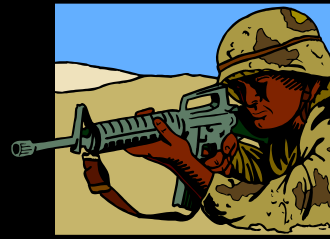
Top 5 Optimization Tips

- Key Words- careful selection and use of searchable words (metadata- data about data)
- Cross Promotion- spread word about video on Facebook, Twitter, Email, all social media
- Embed Videos on Websites- increases search hits and views
- Use Analytics- “to look for opportunities you didn’t know you had”
- Small is Big? Belief that several small videos on a topic are better than one long video

YouTube Analytics

- Insightful data can be gleaned in areas of:
 - Number of views
 - Geography/location of viewers- by country and U.S. states
 - Gender- male/female viewer breakdown
 - Top 10 monthly view count lists
 - Traffic Sources- CofC vids have been picked up or linked/reported by NBCsports.com, NPR.org, others (“We don’t have the resources to pitch stories to NPR, but NPR is finding us.”)
 - Retention rates- indicates how much of video viewers watch (a CofC video that had 5,000 views but only a total of 500 minutes of total view time was considered a failure and dropped)

Parting Shots



- Some CofC videos used to begin with a slate or title page
- But it was found that viewers stopped watching after a few seconds, apparently turned off
- Now, videos start with the “most dynamic frame of video”
- On average, people, on average, watch half of CofC videos, or about 1 minute-15-seconds
- Keeping a high retention rate is the goal
- One Honors School video, retention figures found 70% of viewers watched 90% of the video
- “Something was working”