Communications:  
(Facebook)

Introduction:

The social media team at the Office for Sustainability (OfS) includes communications via the following platforms: Facebook (FB), Instagram, and Twitter. As a new member of the social media team, it has been my role to coordinate Facebook communications - this includes: scheduling social media communications under the guidance of Anne Copeland, developing content, tracking down photos that accurately depict our message, and adjusting social media posts to accurately reflect new or developing events or programs.

During the semester we gather data on our social media posts to examine their effectiveness and further advance our communications strategy. This report examines the data gathered from the OfS Facebook communications during a selected portion of the fall 2015 semester: September 1 through November 12, 2015.

Our primary Facebook audience is almost evenly divided between the genders at 57% female and 41% male. Age data supports that the majority of our followers are college-aged students and WMU affiliates. This allows us to tailor our messages appropriately.

We currently have 1,127 Facebook followers. This is a 4.83% increase from September 3, 2015.

Procedures and Results:

In order to improve the effectiveness of our Facebook posts, data was collected from the Fall 2015 semester posts. There were 27 posts between 9/1/15 and 11/12/15. In social media, effectiveness is gauged by number of clicks and likes. Categorizing posts by type, we can see which posts are more effective.

Posts were categorized into four types: recognition, involvement, external contents, and events. Recognition posts were posts that recognized accomplishments of students, staff, or the office as a whole. They also show appreciation for our on campus sustainability partners. Involvement posts are focused on how people can get involved with the office, EcoMug participants, and campus tabling events. External content posts were made up of general holiday announcements, posts supporting the WMU athletic events, or interesting facts. Event posts informed community members about sustainability events taking place on and off campus such as talks, markets, luncheons,
dinners, etc. Event posts were not limited to Office for Sustainability events, but rather included the greater Kalamazoo community to broaden our reach.

Involvement and recognition posts had much farther reaches than external content or events. This supports the data that our FB audience is mainly comprised of WMU affiliates and indicates their interests are specific to WMU related topics. According to the data, both the external and the event posts had a singular outlier that improved their average reach, while the involvement and recognition posts each had consistent interaction from people. Again, as with social media, the more likes, shares, and comments, the higher the reach of the post.

The involvement post dated 11/9/15 regarding internships had a record of 19 shares. This is could be due to the continuing promotional efforts of the internship coordinator Nikki Ledbury who has consistently been recruiting interest in the internship program. We cannot prove whether it was word of mouth or personal recruitment efforts that gave people prior awareness of the internship program, encouraging a higher FB response but it seems to support the idea that employing multiple platforms of communication increase the general awareness and interest in Office for Sustainability programs and initiatives.

### Average Reach by Post Type

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Post Type</th>
<th>Average Reach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Recognition</td>
<td>642.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Involvement</td>
<td>667.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>External Content</td>
<td>467.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td>229.75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Average Reach by Post Type**

**RECOGNITION**

- Likes
- Shares
- Comments

**INVOLVEMENT**

- Likes
- Shares
- Comments
Commentary/Reflection, and Next Steps:

Front desk staff will continuously encourage OfS staff to promote posts about events or projects in which they are involved. This will improve the effectiveness of our posts by expanding our reach, in hopes of increasing community member involvement.

Although we can see how many people like our page and posts, the Office for Sustainability does not utilize source-tracking measures. I suggest that the office test a post event or program communication survey. This can be achieved by either mining post event emails or a random sample of FB followers with a simple survey asking, “How did you hear about this event?” Gathering such data would provide information that will allow us to make changes or improvements in our FB and social media engagement, while also offering insights that could help advance the OfS Communications Plan.

Recognizing the need to organize the flow of communication, the Communications team recently created an event communications form, which is currently being tested. The form includes fields that will be used to gather the specific information needed to create a communications piece for an event, project, or initiative. Products include social media as well as press release and website pages. The beta version of the event form will be tested during Spring Semester 2016.

The front desk staff plans to hold weekly meetings starting Spring Semester 2016 to discuss progress and organize the Social Media Calendar. The Social Media Calendar is located in the WMU Webmail platform. This will allow us to maintain fluidity and structure in the communication process of publishing, because we will have consistent, relevant posts. By combining the use of the event form and the calendar, we can easily have access to the information of an event, and know ahead of time when to publish.