

A Public Relations Proposal for: Mount Aloysius College

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March 31, 2010



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Executive Summary

As a sophomore, journalism major pursuing a career in the field of public relations, I am proposing that Mt. Aloysius College further incorporate social media into its PR plan. These social media tools, as outlined in this proposal, include blogs, Twitter and a YouTube channel, all of which are free to establish and use. Enhancing MAC's existing Facebook page to host widgets, or links, connecting it with the institution's main website and the other social media pages would create a web-based network of communication among users.

(A list of terms and definitions can be found in appendix C)

Goal

To improve communication between the university and students, faculty, prospective students, parents of students/prospective students and alumni at Mt. Aloysius College through interactive social media.

Targeted Publics

Students, faculty and staff, prospective students, parents of students/prospective students and alumni

Statement of Purpose

Incorporating social media into the public relations plan at MAC could only benefit the MAC community. By linking all of the social media websites together using the main website as the "hub" and the other websites as the "spokes" (appendix A), a great network of communication could be created. Another option in creating these databases would be to include tutorials on how to use professional networking sites such as LinkedIn, which if used correctly could be greatly beneficial to students looking to network for an internship or a job.

Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and YouTube channels are all great tools for easy, accessible communication. Although each have their own purpose, the social media tools collectively provide an internet-based network where students and faculty can converse, share ideas, promote groups and events and interact with alumni.

Finally, once any of these social media websites are established, they can be linked together to provide easy access from one page to another. For example, widgets and links can be inserted into the information section of MAC's existing Facebook page that would lead someone directly from that page to any other one.

Situation Analysis

MAC has a great public relations strategy as it stands from an outside opinion. The existing Facebook page certainly serves the purpose that it should. The institution currently uses YouTube for sports, and creating a YouTube channel for MAC in general could greatly benefit the college. Furthermore, the use of Twitter, a blog and other social media tools would

create great communication among students, faculty, prospective students and alumni at relatively no expense to the college.

Objectives and Tactics

- I. Facebook Group
 - a. Allows for a creator of the group and as many administrators and officers as desired to edit the content of the group at any time, as assigned by the creator
 - b. Group members (students, faculty, prospective students, alumni, etc.) can post comments, feedback and suggestions at any time, providing that the individual has an account of their own and is a member of the group
 - c. Events can be promoted, information about the college can be posted, and pictures can be added by the creator, administrators and officers at any time
 - i. Members of the Facebook group can post pictures onto the Facebook wall at any time, which can be edited by the creator, administrators and officers

- II. Twitter
 - a. By having a Twitter account, MAC can post information regarding events, schedule changes, etc. up to 140 characters per post
 - i. Any Twitter member following MAC on Twitter will receive that post directly to their feed
 - b. From MAC's Twitter account, you can follow the students at Mt. Aloysius and see what they're posting as well
 - c. MAC can follow other colleges, universities, etc.

- III. Blogs
Tumblr, WordPress, StumbleUpon, etc.
 - a. Could be used for a variety of purposes
 - i. Promotion of events
 - ii. Student-of-the-week theme
 1. A feature about a certain student demonstrating excellence in academics, sports, community service, etc.
 - iii. Accept a student's blog each week to feature
 - iv. Have a specific topic each week for students to blog about (even on their own page that could be linked to MAC's blog)
 - b. Anyone who is subscribed to MAC's blog will receive posts on their own feed each time a new post is made

- IV. YouTube Channel
 - a. Have a series of videos updated weekly or bimonthly
 - i. Interview professors, current students, athletes, etc.
 - b. Students could submit their own videos from campus events
 - c. *IUP 360*^o (appendix B)

- V. Link it together
 - a. Having links (or widgets) on MAC's homepage for all of its social media tools will enable visitors to easily access all of the other websites
 - b. Incorporating links (or widgets) on each of the social media websites to link to the other pages will create a network of communication among each of the social media outlets
 - c. Each individual social media tool serves a specific purpose along with the universal function of integrating user-generated content

- VI. Include tutorials on any or all of the social media websites
Explanations of how to use professional social media websites could be included in any of the sites.
 - a. For example, LinkedIn is a professional networking website where users can post basic information about themselves accompanied with a resume and other professional documents and network with professionals worldwide
 - b. These tutorials could encourage students to use websites like LinkedIn where they can brand and promote themselves to potential employers

Appendix A

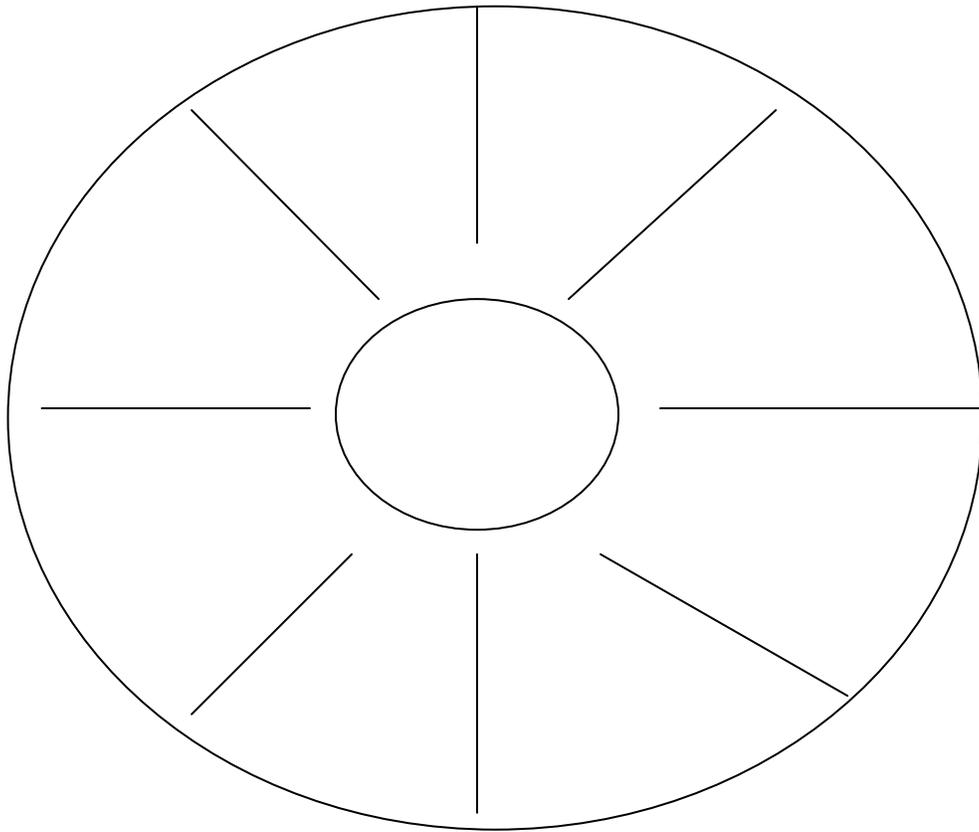


Figure 1: The diagram above represents an online community. The circle is the central hub, where all potential members will be directed. In this case, the hub will be MAC's website. Each spoke represents one form of social media that MAC will use to connect with members, such as Facebook, Blogs, Twitter and YouTube. The hub and all spokes are necessary for the online community to be successful.

Appendix B

<http://www.iup.edu/iup360/>

IUP 360° takes you behind the scenes in all aspects of college life—from the best places to eat on campus to what it's like to be in a theater production. All videos are shot by students and edited into a 2-3 minute clip, so it gives a very real feel to the series. The videos are posted on *IUP 360°'s YouTube channel*

Appendix C

All information provided in appendix C comes from PC Magazine's website. More elaborate definitions, details and examples can be found at <http://www.pcmag.com/encyclopedia>.

1. Blog

(1) To write a blog entry. Blogs (definition #2 below) became so popular that the noun was turned into a verb; for example, "I'll blog about that subject next month."

(2) (WeBLOG) A Web site that contains dated text entries in reverse chronological order about a topic (most recent entry first). Blogs serve many purposes from personal journals to online newsletters to "ranting and raving." Written by one person or a group of contributors, entries contain commentary, observations and opinions and may include images, audio, video, links to other sites and even a search facility for finding earlier entries. See [audioblog](#) and [vlog](#).

Blogs may invite comments and feedback similar to the Internet newsgroup discussions that started long before the Web came about (see [newsgroup](#)). For bloggers who want to develop a relationship with readers, user feedback is essential. Blogs often support RSS syndication, which automatically notifies users when new blog entries are posted (see [syndication feed](#)).

More Personal, But Corporate Too

The blog is often a passionate expression of one individual's thoughts, and blogs are expected to be totally truthful. Although increasingly included, ads have traditionally not been on blogs. Informality and off-the-cuff opinion are what set blogs apart from [Web sites](#), e-zines and other electronic publishing formats (see [e-zine](#)).

Companies also encourage employees to write internal blogs to share knowledge, and they use public blogs to keep abreast of [customer](#) satisfaction and other issues. Customers often have great faith in employee bloggers. For example, a CEO who writes a blog may greatly enhance the company image as long as there is no extreme bias or obvious marketing.

2. Facebook

A very popular social networking site founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. The name Facebook comes from the paper document often issued to college freshmen to help them get acquainted on campus.

Initially targeting Harvard students, it was later opened to other universities and then [high schools](#). In 2006, Facebook allowed everyone to join and added a News Feed feature that would broadcast changes in members' pages to all Facebook users identified in their personal network of friends. It turned Facebook into a personalized social news [service](#) that by 2009 had more than 200 million members.

Using the search facilities on Facebook, members can locate other Facebook members and "friend" them by sending them an invitation, or they can invite people to join Facebook.

3. LinkedIn

A business-oriented social networking site that enables users to connect with colleagues, look for a job or business relationships and get answers to industry questions. LinkedIn users invite people they know and trust to become "linked in" to them, and the business connections of invited users are in turn linked. However, in order to reach connections down the line, requests for introductions have to be made.

Officially launched on May 5, 2003, the five founders invited 300 contacts to become members and wound up with 4,500 by the end of the month. By year end, more than 80,000 members were linked in, and six years later there were more than 35 million members in 200 countries.

4. Twitter

A very popular instant messaging system that lets a person send brief [text messages](#) up to 140 characters in length to a list of followers. Launched in 2006, Twitter was designed as a social network to keep friends and colleagues informed throughout the day. However, it became widely used for commercial and political purposes to keep customers, constituents and fans up-to-date as well as to solicit feedback.

After establishing a Twitter account at www.twitter.com, individuals can import their [e-mail](#) addresses as well as use the Twitter search to locate and invite people. Twitter messages ("tweets") can be made public and sent to anyone requesting the feed, or they can be sent only to approved followers.

Messages can be sent and received via cellphone [text messaging](#) (SMS), the Twitter Web site or a third-party Twitter application. A MySpace account can also be updated. To follow a Twitter feed, the Twitter site and feed name become the URL; for example, Microsoft's Twitter feed is www.twitter.com/microsoft.

5. Widget Set

A collection of [software](#) routines that are typically used for creating graphical interface functions such as menus, buttons and scroll bars. It can also include conversion routines to render different types of coded [data](#) to the screen.

6. Wordpress

A very popular [open source blog](#) publishing program that is installed on the user's Web server. Introduced in 2003, WordPress is written in PHP and uses a MySQL [database](#). Noted for its rich features, WordPress "Themes" provide numerous templates from which to choose a suitable

look and feel. In addition, the site can be enhanced with dialogs such as user registration, user feedback and password protection. WordPress also enables non-blog content to be included, and it imports other blog publishing formats. For more information, visit www.wordpress.org.

7. YouTube

A very popular Web video sharing site that lets anyone store short [videos](#) for private or public viewing. Founded in 2005 by Chad Hurley, Steve Chen and Jawed Karim, it was acquired by Google in 2006 for \$1.65 billion. YouTube is another amazing Internet phenomenon with meteoric growth like Amazon.com, Yahoo, Google and MySpace. Within a couple years, more than 25 quadrillion bytes (petabytes) of videos were being streamed from the site each month.

YouTube provides a venue for sharing videos among friends and family as well as a showcase for new and experienced videographers. Featuring videos it considers entertaining, YouTube has become a destination for ambitious videographers, as well as amateurs who fancy making a statement of some kind. In addition, YouTube emerged as a major venue for excerpts from political speeches. In the 2008 presidential campaign, videos of Barack Obama and John McCain were viewed more than two billion times according to media firm TubeMogul.

Videos are streamed to users on the YouTube site (www.youtube.com) or via blogs and other [Web sites](#). YouTube provides specific code for playing each video that can be embedded on a [Web page](#) of a third-party site.