

Task 1: Essay on Community Engagement

Module Code: LCBB4002

Module Title: Community Engagement

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Introduction

Social media lets people communicate through virtual networks and communities. Internet-based social media platforms allow quick electronic transfer of data, documents, videos, and images. Internet accessibility makes it possible. Users can connect to social media via computers, mobile devices, and tablets using web-based software and apps. Even though social media is popular in the U.S. and Europe, Indonesia is now on top. Social media platforms are essential in modern business. Companies engage the community through social media. Today's corporate world needs social media. "Community engagement" means interacting with social media followers to build belonging, trust, and loyalty. "Social media engagement" refers to the number of likes/favourites, comments, direct messages, shares, retweets, saves, link clicks, and mentions on social media accounts.

Understanding Social Media

Social media was quickly embraced by companies looking for a new way to connect with their consumers as a method of maintaining communication with friends and family. With social media, one may interact and disseminate ideas with everyone on the planet or with many people at once. More than 3.8 billion people throughout the globe utilise social media. New social media applications like TikTok and Clubhouse appear practically every year, joining the ranks of well-established social networks like Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, and Instagram, constantly changing and expanding ('Social Media Statistics', 2022). Around 57.60 million people will use social media in the United Kingdom by 2022.

As per the study by the Pew Research Center, the majority of users of social networking sites are under the age of 35. At least one social networking platform was accessed by over 90 per cent of persons aged 18 to 29 in 2013 ('Social Media Statistics', 2022). Additionally, these users tend to be well-educated and well-off, with an annual income of at least \$75,000.

Deploying Community Engagement Principles and Standards

To boost member engagement, and create value and relationships. Business leaders must constantly improve and reinvent their offerings to provide value to consumers (Johnston and Taylor, 2018). The community participation principles are:

- ◆ Clarify the initiative's goals, demographics, and target groups. Know the community's history, prior engagement efforts, economic climate, political climate, social norms and values, demographic trends, and demographic shifts (Lindgreen et al., 2018). Learn what the community thinks of those launching engagement activities, then act.
- ◆ Establish connections, build trust, and enlist the help of community organisations and leaders to develop community mobilisation mechanisms.
- ◆ Self-determination is everyone's duty and right (Lindgreen et al., 2018). It can not give individuals the power to act in their self-interest and expect them to be responsible.
- ◆ Change and health improvement require community involvement.
- ◆ The company must appreciate community diversity. Community involvement strategies must consider diversity and other factors (Devisch and Huybrechts, 2020). To engage so many people, use multiple tactics.
- ◆ The organisation values community diversity. Community engagement initiatives must consider cultural diversity. Prepare to hand over control of planned community activities or interventions so you can adapt to changing needs.

Benefits of Stakeholders' Participation

A stakeholder is any person or organisation interested in a company or that company. Investors, employees, customers, and suppliers are a company's top four stakeholders. Stakeholders may be inside or outside a company. Internal stakeholders are company employees, investors, or owners. It gives them company ownership (Freeman et al., 2010). A firm's actions and repercussions affect many outside the company's boundaries. External stakeholders include suppliers, creditors, and the public.

Business revolves around good and bad relationships. A company must know who will help it and who will hold it back to succeed. Stakeholder mapping helps make short-term decisions and achieve long-term goals (Kvam, 2019).

As stakeholders are essential for businesses, here are some benefits of good stakeholder management.

Education

Communicating directly with a stakeholder enables a business to acquire their viewpoint and fresh insights on a product or problem that may help you achieve a competitive edge (Kvam, 2019). Include a variety of views in a stakeholder management's outreach to ensure that the business can hear from all aspects.

Effective Decision Making

Hearing from the stakeholders may strengthen an existing choice. Exploring a subject from a new perspective never hurts, and making an educated choice should always be the objective.

Trust

When a business communicates with stakeholders, they demonstrate that it appreciates stakeholders' points of view. This collaborative strategy fosters confidence and goodwill in the industry (Brem and Viardot, 2015). It is essential if the business is operating in the wake of a catastrophe; building trust may be a drawn-out and complicated process, but it starts with ensuring that all parties involved believe they have a seat at the table.

Cost Savings

Engaging with stakeholders may save time and money in the long run. There is evidence that organisations that include stakeholders are more likely to complete projects on time and under budget (Lindgreen et al., 2018). These savings may be realised by removing obstacles and mitigating unexpected that might slow down the organisation's procedure.

Risk Management

Individuals and groups can assist a business in identifying possible hazards before they become dangers to that business or project. It is essential if the company is operating in the wake of a catastrophe; building trust may be a drawn-out and complicated process, but it starts with ensuring that all relevant stakeholders believe they have a seat at the table (Johnston and Taylor, 2018).

Accountability

In the end, establishing connections with various groups and individuals is necessary to improve accountability both inside the company and with external audiences (Lindgreen et al., 2018).

Stakeholder Engagement Process and Strategies

Identification of the Stakeholders

Connecting with different groups and individuals improves responsibility both inside and outside the company. Identifying direct and indirect project stakeholders is another method. Directly affected stakeholders include the project team and client. Indirectly, it may affect a neighbouring organisation or community members (Devisch and Huybrechts, 2020). Directly affected stakeholders have more influence and effect on a project than indirect ones. These aspects provide a logical approach to identifying stakeholders, despite being generated and investigated in greater detail during stakeholder analysis (Lindgreen et al., 2018).

Gathering project stakeholder information requires a register. The project team compiles a list of all stakeholders' names, affiliations, contact details, titles, and other information (Freeman et al., 2010). It is an essential tool for Stakeholder Management and will help the project team communicate effectively with stakeholders.

Establishing Relationship

Project managers know they must cultivate stakeholder relationships to avoid failure. Successful projects require early communication between key stakeholders, customers, and suppliers (Kaul and Chaudhri, 2017). Stakeholders' interests, problems, and concerns must be addressed. They must also monitor, document, and fulfil their obligations.

Identification is the first step in establishing a relationship between a business and its stakeholders (Johnston and Taylor, 2018). The process of identification is aforementioned. The other measures include:

Identify desired outcomes: Organize the relationships with the program's stakeholders to fulfil their needs and the program's needs. (Krizan, Merrier and Logan, 2008). Before beginning a task, it is essential to have a clear understanding of what must be accomplished and the flexibility to modify expectations if the need arises.

Share information openly with stakeholders: Establish credibility by communicating the status of business activities openly. Excellent communication is crucial to successfully convey the company's vision to the project's participants. Provide an overview, including timetables and significant milestones.

Provide options to resolve issues: Rather than insisting on a single answer to a problem, seek compromise or numerous favourable results. Offering people mutually advantageous options is a potent tactic.

Make realistic promises and keep them: Overpromising and underdelivering will ensure the project's collapse (Kaul and Chaudhri, 2017). If the project manager must make adjustments in the middle of a project, they must speak honestly and explicitly about the reasons.

How Social Media Platforms Can Be Used As An Outreach To Support The Project

Businesses that do not use social media to communicate with public sector stakeholders miss out. Facebook has 1.11 billion active users. 55 million active Twitter users (Devisch and Huybrechts, 2020). LinkedIn has 255 million members and YouTube has 1 billion unique monthly viewers, so it is clear that many of a company's stakeholders use at least one major social network, read and comment on blogs, and subscribe to RSS feeds ('Social Media Statistics', 2022). Here are social media engagement strategies:

Meaningful Social Media Presence

The first step in engaging stakeholders is maintaining a relevant presence on their frequent social networks. Create social media profiles that fit the requirements of various stakeholder groups. To successfully reach these groups, the business must create suitable profiles for each network (Heinze *et al.*, 2016). Stakeholders may identify themselves by "liking" a page, following, or adding as a contact, which is a benefit of having relevant social media profiles. By exchanging value, the business sets the circumstances for future engagement with this new audience, whether by informing, advising, or collaborating.

Research for stakeholder discussions

After successfully making a meaningful presence on social media, several stakeholders may now discuss the business on social media (Lindgreen et al., 2018). For instance, if the company works in the fashion designing industry, it will find individuals utilising Twitter and Facebook to discuss new designs, trending fashions, sales going on, and more. There will be both good and negative feedback. The business must join the discussion to assist those with unresolved concerns and to share the good feedback with a larger audience (Kaul and Chaudhri, 2017).

Sort Interests and Targeting

It is simple to find prospective stakeholders by scanning social networks for references of relevant locations, services, people, and events. For instance, if the business is a fashion house with an official Twitter account, they may search the network for mentions of various fashion events, design talks etc.

By doing so, the business may develop a beneficial network of locals that can serve as its online "eyes and ears" when the company needs assistance in marketing (Robertson, 2022).

Share relevant materials

The abovementioned strategies focus on developing an audience of important stakeholders and monitoring your reputation (Stutts, 2021). When using social media to engage stakeholders, the most crucial component is creating information that has significance.

If people consider the business of a fashion house in London, they will need to post materials related to several stakeholder groups. For instance:

The Designers and Professionals: The business should create posts that provide thanks and tributes to its designers and other professionals involved with the firm. It will create a positive feeling among the designers and professionals (Brem and Viardot, 2015).

Workers and Employees: A fashion brand should engage its workers and employees. They may post their gratitude towards the workers and employees on social media (Freeman *et al.*, 2010). Besides, it can also share its goodwill policies regarding workers' safety, health issues, etc. It will help them create a good image of the brand.

Influencers and Ambassadors of the Brand: Influencers and ambassadors of the brands are crucial. The business should collaborate with social media influencers and its business ambassadors (Stutts, 2021).

Loyalty Customers: The official recognition of loyal customers can engage them more strongly with the brand. Loyal customers work as an army of the brand's promotion.

The procedure enables a business to create connections with stakeholders and identify people with whom it must interact in various capacities, such as to inform, counsel, or cooperate.

After doing this, the business may expand upon these connections. Engagement of stakeholders can be done in the following ways:

Signup for newsletters: Invite social media stakeholders to remark on the business's services to sign up for regular email updates if the company has already developed connections with them (Johnston and Taylor, 2018). In this approach, they may update them on important news and encourage them to participate in future discussions via an additional channel (Stutts, 2021).

Consultations: When the company has to consult on strategy, service offering, or store development, it may extend its reach beyond the "famous few" if it has

cultivated a following of relevant and engaged stakeholders (Brem and Viardot, 2015).

Tenders: Similarly, the business may publicise bid possibilities on social media, perhaps attracting a larger and more competitive pool of vendors.

Collaboration: If a company has a project that requires development and execution, it may announce it to its social media followers and discover possible partners. The company can then collaborate with them via channels such as online collaboration tools (Johnston and Taylor, 2018).

There are numerous methods to engage portions of social media audience, but building individual connections enables a business to discover groups of individuals who want to be informed, consulted, or collaborated with.

Conclusion

Social media is useless without user engagement. Social media is not used for one-way communication. They want to meet people and companies. Facebook was originally conceived as a place for people to interact, but it is now a venue for companies to engage in substantive conversation and convert attendees into paying customers. Social media engagement impacts brand exposure and customer loyalty for small businesses. Mapping project stakeholders help determine short- and long-term goals. Long-term, involving all stakeholders may save money and time. First, make sure all relevant stakeholders believe they have a seat at the table.

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