

Ball State University
2000 W University Ave
Muncie, IN 47303

To: Dr. Rick Wysocki
From: Anna Wainscott
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Subject: Content Strategy Analysis

Introduction:

The purpose of this document is to analyze the content strategy of Brothers Bar and Grill located in Muncie, IN. Brothers is arguably the most popular bar in Muncie for college students, so I wanted to examine if part of their success with getting such good business comes from strong content and communication strategies. Brothers is a well known bar and has many locations in the Midwest, so advertising for the bar is found all over the area. Part of my research involved discovering if Brothers Bar and Grill in Muncie is successful from their own advertising content, or rather the advertising from other locations.

Although this analysis is focused on Brothers in Muncie, to ensure I did complete extensive research, I viewed communication channels from both Brothers in Muncie, other locations as well as the official corporate Brothers Bar and Grill. The channels I organized are as follows:

1. Brothers Bar and Grill Website (Muncie/official page/other locations)
2. Brothers Bar and Grill Instagram (Muncie/official page/other locations)
3. Brothers Bar and Grill Twitter (Muncie/other location)

There are 19 locations, so I viewed both the Instagram and Twitter account for each location and the website for each location. To my surprise, the Brothers in Muncie is actually one of the most successful profiles on social media. They have a higher following number on Instagram than any other location including the official Brothers page, and the only location doing better than them on Twitter is the location in Bloomington, where Indiana University is located.

Context:

On the Brothers Bar and Grill Website, they explain that their bar is a modernized throwback to the old Midwestern corner tavern. They definitely cater to the Midwest, as that is where all of their locations are. Their original location is in Wisconsin, and one of their fan favorite food is their famous Wisconsin cheese curds. They are certainly an all American loving Midwestern bar that is targeting individuals who are fans of that style of food and drink. Overall, the goal at Brothers is to make sure everyone eats well, drinks a lot, and has a good time.

I would maybe go so far as to place Brothers in the category of a sports bar. They have numerous televisions inside their restaurants so customers can watch whatever game is on. In addition, they frequently post on their social media accounts when a UFC (Ultimate Fighting Championship) fight is going to air and encourage people to come watch it there. I found it interesting that I did not see any posts about any other sport; I was unable to figure out why they strictly focus on UFC.

Using the knowledge I already have on Brothers and after looking through their social media, their target audience is definitely people in their 20's. Although you can be under 21 and eat at Brothers, their main market is people over 21. However, at least in Muncie, it is pretty uncommon to see anyone at the bar that is in their late 20's or over 30. This could be why the locations near a college campus seem to be more successful and have a larger following— college kids love Brothers.

Methods:

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used to conduct this analysis. The most extensive research was the quantitative research. As there are 19 different locations, I wanted to use them to compare to the Brothers Bar and Grill in Muncie. To conduct this research, I looked at each location's Twitter and Instagram account to discover which locations had the most followers. Not only did I keep count of each location's follower count, but I also explored each page to see how engaged the bar's audience is on their social media accounts, keeping in mind the ratio between how many followers the account had and how many of those followers actually engaged in their posts.

By using this quantitative approach, I then began my qualitative research. Because the two strongest locations are in college towns, I considered the implications of that and used that to help determine who their main audience was. I also conducted qualitative research by reading through the website to see things such as their "about us" page. There is one main Brothers website, but it has links to take you to the homepage of each different location's website. I clicked through these to compare and contrast how each location catered to their audience. Some locations had more information than others, so this was interesting to look at and decipher how the amount of information on each site impacted how well their audience is engaged.

After reading through the website, I continued my qualitative research by looking at their social media posts to determine how clear and concise their messages were to their targeted audience. I also determined how successful each post was, and tried to determine what made certain posts more popular than others.

Discussion:

After conducting my research, I determined that the Brothers Bar and Grill in Muncie has the best content strategies out of the other locations. In addition, they certainly have a better content strategy than the official Brothers social media accounts. Brothers does not have a main Twitter account, they only have a main Instagram account, and it does not even have 1,000 followers. Brothers Bar and Grill in Muncie however, has over 4,000 followers (see Figure 1).

The Muncie Brothers Instagram account seems to have a good grip on who their audience is, and they know how to target them. From my personal knowledge, I know the majority of workers at Brothers in Muncie are college students. I am not sure who runs the social media accounts, but I wonder if it is someone around the same age as their target audience because they definitely cater to college kids, which seems to be working. One characteristic of this Instagram account in comparison to the other ones is seen immediately when you look at their bio. Instead of just having their address or their other social media accounts linked, they have their specials going on for the week listed. This is a great strategy, especially for their audience. College students and other people in their 20's are always looking for something fun to do, especially if there is a sweet deal involved. By posting these specials in their bio, they are strengthening their digital content strategy.

Another example of Brothers Muncie doing a good job to target their content towards their audience was on a recent post about the events they are holding for St. Patty's weekend (see Figure 2). In their post, they said that they hoped everyone enjoys their spring break, and advises them to pack pedialyte and ibuprofen so they are ready to go to Brothers when they get back. Because most of their audience is Ball State students, they did a great job of grabbing their attention by bringing up our spring break and letting us know of what is to come.

Although this account has a high follower count, the interaction on their posts is extremely low. Most posts do not get more than 100 likes (see figure 2, this was a more popular post and only got 131 likes), which is a poor ratio when you compare it to their 4,000 followers. That being said, they do get over a thousand views on their videos, which means a decent amount of followers are seeing their posts, they just aren't interacting with them. This is the theme I saw with their Twitter account as well. On Twitter, Brothers Muncie has 7,340 followers. However, they have practically no interactions on their posts. Tweets on that account are lucky to get even one like or retweet. Their main strategies definitely rely on Instagram. A lot of their posts on Instagram that get a lot of likes are when they post customers having fun at their bar. I did not see any of these on their Twitter, so perhaps posting more content of people at the bar would cause more engagement on Twitter.

I think the Brothers website could use some work. For starters, it is a little tricky to navigate because you have to be on the right location to get the information you need. In addition, almost

all of their locations have social media accounts, yet none of them are linked on the website. I think linking these accounts to the website would improve their content strategy immensely. One thing the Muncie website did well however, was including free parking instructions. People aren't going to want to come to the bar if there is hardly anywhere to park, so this is helpful for their audience. There were not any other locations that had this feature on their website.

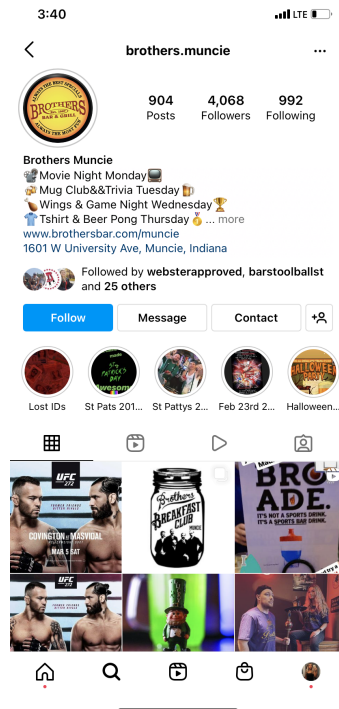


Figure 1



Figure 2

Conclusion:

The execution of Brothers Bar and Grill in Muncie's content strategies really surprised me. Going into this analysis, I predicted that the bars in bigger cities would have more followers and engagement. Their website explains that they love the Midwest lifestyle and try to create that atmosphere there, which is likely why the locations in bigger cities are struggling to reach the right audience. I think the location of this Brothers definitely helps contribute to their success, but they also do a good job of creating content that is directed towards their audience. The other locations seem to be struggling to designate their audience because they can't make all their posts cater to college students the way the Brothers in Muncie does.

After analyzing three main channels, I determined that Brothers' Instagram page has strong content strategies, but that their website and Twitter page could definitely use improvement.

