



Communications Plan The Ellen DeGeneres Show

Goal: Restore the Ellen DeGeneres Show to its status as one of the most popular daytime talk shows in America.

Objectives:

- Increase overall viewership of the Ellen Show by 20% in the next year
- Reduce all negative coverage of the Ellen Show by 50%
- Increase younger viewership (ages 18-25) by 25%
- Increase the show's original content by 30%
- Increase audience-submitted content by 20%
- Increase employee satisfaction by 50%

Strategies:

- Create a more transparent organizational structure
- Increase positive media messages about the Ellen Show
- Re-emphasize Ellen's efforts towards being a positive ally & proponent of change
- Increase employee participation in show segments in the next season
- Include more content on the show that is directly created and submitted by viewers
- Make Ellen and top producers more visible players in the everyday workplace happenings

Tactics:

- Create a press release sharing information about the organizational structure of the show & highlighting recent changes (allowing viewers some insight into how the show is managed/run)
- Conduct a "tell-all" interview with a popular news outlet (preferably one targeted to millennials) like Vice, Paper Magazine or even The Atlantic or the NYT
- Announce Ellen's commitment to giving back by donating a substantial amount to a progressive charity (ex. LGBTQ community, or BLM), or some sort of continued charity donation over time – this will come out of her profit from the show

- Organize publicity for Ellen's donations to charity and have an article written about where her donations are going & who the money will help, and why she decided to choose that specific charity
- Develop a new program to incentivize employee participation in show segments in the next season through
 - Encourages employees to take ownership of their segments and participate more
 - Incentives could include: paid time off, cash awards, gift cards, new amenities for the office, employee awards
- Offer giveaways and rewards to viewers who submit their own content to be featured on the show
 - Cash awards, gift cards, meet & greet with Ellen (or video chat/Instagram Live chat with Ellen due to Covid), beauty products, electronics, etc.
- Implement a system of employee check-ins where small groups of employees meet with Ellen and head producers monthly, rotating regularly so that each employee gets one-on-one time to discuss their concerns
- Implement a new commitment to community service where employees and producers are encouraged to volunteer & can get paid time off to volunteer at a chosen charity or nonprofit – this should be publicly announced as well in some sort of press release or news article
- Have more guests on the show that are experts in social justice, or guests from the LGBTQ community – who can speak on hot topics in today's world that younger viewers may be interested in
- Feature more real-world guests on the show, perhaps people have struggled during the pandemic or found their way out of tough times – to make things more relatable
- Create a TikTok page to create original content & to post humorous or interesting clips from the show

Target Audience:

- Women ages 25-60 (key demographic for daytime television)
- Employees of the Ellen DeGeneres show
- All regular viewers of daytime television
- Younger Americans (ages 18-25)
- Pop-culture enthusiasts (ages 13+)
- Pop culture columnists and reporters

Messages:**Twitter examples:**

“Ellen and a group of employees had a blast volunteering together at Martha's Kitchen yesterday. Tell us where you like to volunteer to be entered to win a prize valued at \$500 and a chance to be featured on the show. #ReplyTweet #GiveBack”

“We've made a lot of changes at the Ellen Show in the past year. For us, sincerity and authenticity is key. For that reason, we want to share a little bit about our organizational structure and who's in charge of what these days. Head to my website to get the full info.”

Example headlines for media stories:

- “Ellen opens up about her past mistakes in first tell-all interview”
- “Ellen DeGeneres donates one million dollars of revenue from her show to LGBTQ nonprofit”
- “Ellen DeGeneres and employees seen volunteering at local soup kitchen”
- “The Ellen Show now has a TikTok page and it’s surprisingly hilarious”

Instagram examples:

- Surveys of viewers to see their opinions on the show that day or gauge general interest in something
 - “YES/NO – does the show need more musical performances?”
 - “What guests would you like to see on the Ellen Show in the future? Reply to this story.”
 - “Reply to this story for a chance to win a one-on-one Instagram Live with Ellen herself!”

Timeline:

The plan is to be completed in its entirety within the next year, by October 2021.

By the end of the year (October – December 2020):

- Publish the press release on Ellen’s website relating to the organizational structure of the show & highlighting recent changes in leadership
- Conduct initial check in with employees, gauging their overall satisfaction
- Organize and conduct tell-all interview with a major news outlet to be released before Christmas
 - After the interview, analyze social media to see the general response
 - Contact media sources to place this story in other news outlets as well
- Announce Ellen’s commitment to give a substantial amount back from her show to a charity around Thanksgiving, to emphasize that she is “giving back”
 - Can also announce Ellen Show’s commitment to community service & plan to give employees paid time off to volunteer
- Have Ellen and employees do community service together & contact media for this story to be placed in the national news around November
- Conduct an employee survey to see what incentives employees would most be interested in
- Conduct a survey with employees to see how often they would like to meet with Ellen and top producers, and in what setting
- Decide what giveaways and prizes would be appropriate to give to viewers through Instagram surveys and how often this will be done
- Create a TikTok page and start posting humorous and relatable content targeted towards younger demographic

January – March 2021

- Implement check in system with employees based on employee survey
- Decide what incentives will be best to encourage employees to participate more in creating original segments based on employee survey
 - Go out and allocate those rewards and incentives (if physical items)

- Release info on social media encouraging viewers to submit their own content to be featured on the show
- Attain rewards/prizes for viewers and begin to receive audience submissions, making it a point to acknowledge this on the show
- Announce and begin to implement employee incentivizing program
- Continue volunteering/community service program and post about it on social media
- Continue regularly posting on TikTok and other social media

April – July 2021

- Continue to implement check-in system with employees, making sure Ellen is getting time to connect with each employee at some point so far since the program began
- Continue audience feedback through Instagram stories
- Continue audience rewards and incentives for viewers to submit their own funny or unique content
 - Emphasize on social media and during the show itself
- Have employees share on social media their own stories of what they enjoy about working on the Ellen Show
- Make visible community service and volunteer efforts (both employees and Ellen herself)
 - Share on social media
- Continue regularly posting on TikTok

August – October 2021

- Organize a “what has changed in a year” segment for the Ellen Show, to discuss changes in the past year (internally and externally) and to recap for viewers – showing progress is happening
- Conduct an interview with a news outlet about what has changed on the Ellen show in the past year and personally what has changed for Ellen herself
- Continue implementing employee check-in program
- Continue implementing audience incentive program
- Continue audience feedback through Instagram stories
- Continue regularly posting on TikTok
- Make visible community service and volunteer efforts (both employees and Ellen herself)
 - Share on social media

Budget:

Social media marketing efforts (Twitter, TikTok, Instagram): \$880,000

Production of media materials (press releases, media outreach, etc.): \$60,000

Original content production: \$2,000,000

Rewards/incentives for employees: \$400,000

Rewards for viewers: \$200,000

Media monitoring: \$90,000

Employee feedback monitoring (surveys, check-ins): \$40,000

Audience tracking (focus groups, surveys): \$60,000

TOTAL \$3,730,000

Measurements:

- Number of news articles published about the Ellen Show, and the tone of each article (negative, positive, mixed)
- Number of likes and retweets on the show's Twitter page
- Number and tone of tweets mentioning the Ellen Show on Twitter
- Number of views on the Ellen Show's TikTok
- Number of likes/comments on the Ellen Show's Facebook page
- Number of views and replies on Instagram stories
- Monthly surveys of viewers
- Amount of content submitted by viewers
- Scheduled monthly check-ins with employees
- Amount of content created by employees & how many employees contribute to each given segment
 - Compared to before the program was implemented
- Number of viewers of the show each day
- Demographics of viewers of the show
 - Analyzed on a regular basis to chart changes

Research:

Background: This past summer, Ellen DeGeneres and her show, The Ellen DeGeneres Show, have been subject to controversy relating to allegations of poor management, a toxic workplace culture and unfair treatment of employees. This led to an internal investigation by Warner Media and the firing of three head producers of the show. In September, Ellen “addressed” the controversy during her first episode of the season, but many say this apology fell short and critiqued it as being full of platitudes with no real substance. Viewers have lost trust in Ellen and her show, and if this doesn't change, she will continue to lose more of her audience.

Viewership/demographics: The amount of viewership for the Ellen Show has consistently been decreasing, which is why it is key to implement this plan as soon as possible. According to [Variety](#), DeGeneres garnered 1.7 million viewers in this year's season premiere – down 37% from last year. Her decline in viewership was steeper than most other comparable daytime talk shows. However, she is doing well in her key demographic, adults aged 25 to 54, according to the [New York Post](#). And with female viewers ages 18 to 34, her show is the most viewed daytime talk show. This is a good sign, but needs to be improved upon through the efforts explained in this communication plan.

Social media budget: According to [WebFX](#), the average cost for a social media marketing campaign is between \$900-\$7,000 per month. The same average cost is listed for social media management and social media advertising per month. Obviously, it depends on the budget of the client and the number of social platforms being used. In this plan, we focus mainly on three platforms – Instagram, Twitter and TikTok – as the main social media platforms that we want to expand outreach on. According to another source, Web Strategies, Inc., most companies spend about 5% to 15% of their annual revenue on marketing. The actual revenue of the Ellen Show is not listed online, but [ZoomInfo](#) estimates the show's total revenue at \$11 million. According to ZoomInfo, the show employs 59 people in total. Therefore, I was able to break down my budget

accordingly. To calculate, I went with 8% of total estimated revenue being spent on marketing, which results in \$880,000 allotted for social media marketing.