Operation Innovation Final Report for Above All Things - Fall 2024

Cohort 6: Hunter Wellington, Carter Westdyk, Jaya Ande, Preston Mao, Ayden Bowie, Evan Frewin

Executive Summary

Cohort 6 enhanced Above All Things' digital presence by addressing key challenges, including low event visibility and inconsistent social media engagement. Through customized strategies and tools like Buffer, the team developed tailored content plans and improved event promotion to amplify the organization's mission impact, boost community engagement, and expand its reach.

Background

Above All Things is a non-profit organization dedicated to offering "knowledge, nourishment, support, and guidance" to underserved communities. Their vision focuses on "uniting diverse individuals through education, activities, and nourishment that promote shared values, creating a lasting legacy of growth and well-being for everyone." Key programs supporting their mission include sports and fitness camps, nutrition and wellness coaching, and various educational initiatives. Their impact in 2023 is highlighted by the quantity of meals and food distributed, the fitness programs and skills imparted, and the special community drives that were organized (https://aboveallthings.org/our-impact).

Cohort 6 evaluated Above All Things' online presence to enhance their outreach via social media and their website. We identified the target audience, analyzed the current online presence, created outreach strategies, and tracked engagement over time. The team develop a plan to help the organization more effectively manage its online presence.

Driving Question

How might *Above All Things* enhance its online presence to better engage and communicate with its potential clients?

Scope

The scope for our project included four items:

- Analyze the online and social media presence of *Above All Things*.
- Identify target audiences and the information valuable to them.
- Create design plans for social media and websites.
- Brainstorm strategies to help the organization reach as many people as possible.

Deliverables

Cohort 6 provided two main deliverables in the form of:

- Recommendations & Suggestions on how to increase engagement for *Above All Things* platforms.
- Provide an executive summary to bolster social media presence and outreach capabilities.

Issues Identified

- Social Media Engagement
- Inconsistent Followship
- Post Consistency
- Nonprofit Identity
- Awareness of Events

Establish and Maintaining Identity Online

Establishing an online identity within the nonprofit community is incredibly important when it comes to getting your message across to potential donors and volunteers. Sites such as Guidstar.org, Greatnonprofits.org and CharityNavigator.org are essential tools that donors use to evaluate which nonprofits they should give donations to and why. (Klenke, 2023) These sites also help any individual to understand what the mission of your organization is and what you are doing to put that mission into action. Not only do

these sites help get your message out to the world and various communities you serve, but they also give a window into your staff and operations, which help communities and donors get a full picture of your organization. (Klenke, 2023). These various websites can also be instrumental in attracting volunteers to help with the various services you provide, such as your Moo-Cing the love event, your recent golfing fundraiser, or any other event that you may need extra volunteers for. Above all, these sites draw donors and any other individuals, who may be interested to your website. It is important to never over explain on these sites but leave enough information that attracts donors to your website where you can go further in depth and draw them into your organization (Klenke, 2023).

The information provided on these sites is essential to help nourish the growth of your outreach capabilities. By establishing your presence on these websites, it will not only help you gain an increase in donors, but in volunteers as well. This will most definitely help your organization grow and flourish and extend your reach to help more communities throughout your area of operation. Getting your organization on these platforms will only benefit you and push you forward in your outreach capabilities.

Disparities in Followership and Engagement

Above All Things faces a wide range of disparities in followership across its social media platforms as each one attracts different types of audiences. They have a social media platform of Instagram, TikTok, LinkedIn, Facebook, and YouTube. Instagram and TikTok tend to be popular with younger users, especially those between "18 and 34 years old" (Statista Research Department, 2024). This makes these two platforms a great place to reach younger audiences. However, if the content isn't tailored to their interests such as using more videos of fun and interactive posts, there might not be as much of an increase in followers or engagement.

LinkedIn on the other hand, is a platform for professional communities. It attracts people focused on networking and business opportunities. If the foundation's posts are more about personal stories or community impact rather than professional growth or partnerships, it might not get the same kind of interaction or followership on LinkedIn as it does on Instagram or TikTok.

Facebook and YouTube have a broader user base, including older adults. Unlike YouTube, Facebook's algorithm limits how many people see posts unless they're shared in groups or promoted. The reach might not be as large without extra effort. However, the current state of Facebook is high compared to the other states of engagement on other social media platforms. Considering the non-profit demographics, Facebook might be the reason why it has a high interaction state. Even though YouTube's current state is a little less popular than Facebook's, the content that is provided on the platform resonates well with the audience as it includes recap videos and summaries of events hosted by the non-profit.

These differences show why it's important for the foundation to adjust its content based on who's using each platform. Understanding what type of content is best for each platform can be impactful for the wanted interaction for the non-profit's success.

Awareness of Monthly Event

When observing the social media pages and website of *Above All Things*, we discovered that their events are quite hidden. Specifically, we noticed that their monthly, primary event was especially difficult to find. This is an issue when trying to reach out to families and volunteers, who might be searching for opportunities such as this. Being able to advertise your events is essential to increasing your engagement as an organization.

Once the event is clearly visible and findable, that's when advertising plays a big role. "Fun, exciting, and imaginative websites can gratify individual desires." (Choi, 2015) Nowadays, attention spans have become so miniscule that to grab someone's attention you need to be able to do it within seconds. An article on this topic said, "The online space grows more competitive each day. Nonprofits are up against big-name companies, vying for consumers' attention." (Weinger, 2024)

Based on these findings, it's crucial to make your event clearly visible to your viewers. This could be by making a tab on your website be your upcoming events. Another solution might be to post event details on your social media stories. Whether either of

these options one day get put into use, the importance of having your events visible is evident.

Time Allocation for Posting

Organizations face several challenges with time allocation for posting on social media, impacting their ability to maintain consistent and effective engagement. Key issues include:

1. **Limited Resources**: Unlike large businesses with dedicated social media teams, smaller ones often have one or two people working in multiple roles. Finding time to create, plan and post content consistently can be difficult with other responsibilities like customer service, inventory management, and sales.

2. **Lack of Analytics Tools**: Many organizations may not have access to advanced analytics tools that help determine the best times to post for maximum engagement. This makes it challenging to know when their target audience is online and most active, leading to posts that may go unseen if timed incorrectly.

3. **Inconsistent Posting Schedule**: Organizations may post less due to time constraints or unpredictable demands. This lack of consistency can weaken their visibility and algorithm, as social media platforms often reward regular, timely content with better reach.

4. **Content Creation Time**: High-quality content such as videos, graphics, and well-written posts requires time and skill. Organization owners may struggle to find enough time to create quality content, which can lead to lower levels of engagement and effectiveness of each post.

5. **Audience Differences Across Platforms**: All social media platforms have their best times and posts must be designed around them to ensure reach. Having multiple accounts in different platforms confusing especially if there is no plan or timeline.

6. **Adaptation to Algorithm Changes**: Social media algorithms are constantly evolving, affecting which content gets shown and when. Small businesses may

not have the time to stay updated on these changes, leading to less effective posting strategies over time.

7. **Difficulty in Planning Around Diurnal Engagement**: Engagement often differs throughout the day, but small businesses may not have the resources to study these patterns or schedule posts accordingly. This can result in missed opportunities to reach audiences at optimal times, especially if they only post during business hours.

How do you fix this issue?

To fix time allocation issues for social media posting, *Above All Things* can start by setting up a simple content calendar. Planning posts in advance helps keep things organized and ensures a consistent posting schedule. *Above All Things* can also use free or low-cost scheduling tools, such as Loomly, Buffer or SocialBu, which can help automate posts at optimal times, so they reach more people even if you're busy. They can also focus on creating quality content over quantity, one or two well-made posts per week are better than many rushed ones. Also, regularly reviewing basic insights available on social media platforms can guide when to post and what type of content performs best. This approach can make social media management easier and more effective without taking up too much time.

What are the best times to post on Social Media

Figure 1

WHAT TIME YOU SHOULD POST

(Recommendations from Sproutsocial & Hubspot)

FACEBOOK

- Weekdays from 9 - 10 AM (Fridays)
- Weekends tend to have lower engagement

INSTAGRAM

- Weekdays perform well, Friday being the best day
- Sundays see the least activity

LINKEDIN

- Weekdays (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.)
- Thursday and Friday performing best
- Avoid weekends for professional content

YOUTUBE

- Weekdays from (2-4 p.m.)
- Weekends from (9-11 a.m.)

TIKTOK

- Monday afternoons (2 p.m.)
- Wednesday evenings (4 p.m.)
- Sunday mornings (8 a.m.)

How often should you post?

Figure 2

INSTAGRAM	3-5/WEEK
IG STORIES	2/DAY
FACEBOOK	1-5/MONTH
YOUTUBE	1/WEEK
YT SHORTS	2-4/WEEK
TIKTOK	3-5/WEEK
LINKEDIN	1-2/DAY

Price of each Social Media Management Tool

Figure 3

MEDIA MANAGEMENT TOOLS

	LOOMLY	BUFFER	SOCIALBU
PRICE $$$	$32/Month $384/Year	$20/Month $240/Year $5/month extra per account	$15.8/Month $190/Yearly
ACCOUNTS - USERS	10 - 2	4 - 2	12 - 4
PERKS	• Automated publishing • Content calendar • Hashtag Manager	• Performance overview • Audience Demographics • Custom video thumbnails	• Hashtag Suggestions • Unified Inbox for all accounts • Automated Chat-Bot support
DOWNSIDES	• Cost/Pricing • Limited Analytics	• Less Accounts	• Limited Analytics
REVIEWS	4.6 ★★★★⯪	4.4 ★★★★⯪	4.6 ★★★★⯪

REVIEW SOURCE: G2.COM

Comparing these Different Tools

Loomly is a user-friendly social media management tool for individuals, teams, and agencies. It helps create, schedule, and analyze content across major platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn. Features include a collaborative calendar, content optimization tips, approval workflows, detailed analytics, and ad budget management, making it ideal for structured and brand-focused campaigns.

Buffer is an easy-to-use social media management tool for small businesses, solo marketers, and creators. It simplifies content scheduling across platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Pinterest with an intuitive dashboard. While its analytics are less detailed than Loomly's and it lacks advanced approval workflows, Buffer's simplicity, affordability, and quick insights make it ideal for efficient social media management.

SocialBu is a social media management tool that helps users plan, execute, and monitor their strategies. It simplifies scheduling with an intuitive dashboard for platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Pinterest. While its analytics are less

detailed than Loomly's, and it lacks advanced approval workflows, SocialBu is affordable, user-friendly, and ideal for solo marketers, small teams, and creators seeking efficiency and quick insights.

Social Media Engagement

Being able to adequately monitor and manage your different social media platforms is crucial in receiving the desired amount of engagement. Some techniques, such as responding to comments and using proper hashtags, are pivotal in seeing an increased growth in your different channels and social media platforms.

Responding to Comments to Engage the Audience

Actively responding to comments fosters a sense of community and shows that the brand values its audience's input. This practice enhances customer service, builds brand loyalty, and increases overall engagement. Improves Customer Service: Engaging with comments demonstrates attentiveness to customer feedback, leading to higher satisfaction and loyalty (Waymore,2024). Builds Brand Loyalty: Personalized interactions create a connection with customers, encouraging repeat engagement and preference over competitors (Waymore, 2024). Increases Engagement: Responding to comments encourages further conversation, boosting engagement metrics on social media platforms (Waymore, 2024).

Utilizing Hashtags to Expand Audience Reach

Hashtags categorize content, making it discoverable to users interested in specific topics, thereby increasing reach and engagement. Hashtags help users discover content they care about, enhancing brand visibility and sparking relevant conversations. (Sprout Social, 2023)

Some example hashtags to include in your short-form video content include: #FYP, #Foryoupage, #Foryou, #Underground, #Relatable, #4u, #Explore, #Christmas,

#Holiday, #family, #love. These have been proven to give the best results on short-form type content.

Social Media Best Practices

<u>Figure 4</u>

Add a Linktree on each social media platform

A Linktree consolidates multiple links into one, simplifying navigation for the audience and enhancing the user experience. They also provide a single access point to various resources, reducing friction for users seeking information. By centralizing links, it directs more traffic to the website and other platforms, potentially boosting conversions.

Linktree serves as a centralized hub, consolidating multiple links into a single, easily accessible location, thereby streamlining user navigation and enhancing the user experience. As stated on Linktree's official website, "Linktree allows you to create a personalized and customizable page that houses all the important links that you want to share with your audience." (Linktree, 2022) Business Insider highlights that "Linktree is a social media landing page service that lets users build a page with any number of links to other sites and web pages." (Business Insider, 2022)

By providing a single access point to various resources, Linktree reduces difficulty for users seeking information, leading to overall improved user satisfaction and increased website traffic. And it is important to make sure that your personal Linktree is posted on every single social media page to emit the best results.

Implementing a Consistent Banner Across Platforms

A uniform banner reinforces brand identity and communicates core values, creating a cohesive and professional appearance. It enhances brand recognition by being consistent and helps audiences easily identify and remember the brand. Having a uniform banner also communicates core values. Including mission statements or core values in banners informs the audience about the brand's purpose and ethos.

"Whether it's a website, social media, or print collateral, your brand should resonate with the same visual language." (Renative Studio, 2023) By implementing a consistent banner, you create a cohesive brand experience that strengthens the overall brand presence.

Exploring YouTube Shorts

YouTube Shorts offer a platform for short-form video content, catering to the growing demand for brief, engaging videos. Short-form videos are highly engaging and can quickly capture viewers' interest. Leveraging YouTube Shorts can attract a broader audience, especially those who prefer concise content.

"YouTube Shorts is the way to shoot, share, and binge short videos (think 3 minutes or less) on YouTube. It's where you can go to get creative, explore new ideas, and connect with others." (Google, 2021) "YouTube Shorts lets you shoot and share vertical videos from the camera you carry everywhere: your phone." (YouTube, 2021) "Currently, YouTube Shorts is averaging over 30 billion daily views — that's four times as many as a year ago." (YouTube Blog, 2021)

YouTube Shorts is becoming a more powerful platform by the day to which content creators turn their eye to dive into very trending currents of short-form videos, driven by TikTok, but reaching audiences that might not use it directly. Since the Shorts are inside

YouTube, then the large base from YouTube is utilized, and the experience is similar, yet offered to those without access or preference for TikTok. This feature gives creators the ability to publish riveting content in a scrollable, short-form format, much like TikTok-with all the energy and sense of immediacy that has fueled TikTok's rise. Using Shorts, creators tap into the reach and community engagement of YouTube while offering audiences an experience parallel to what's offered by TikTok.

Post Inconsistency

Maintaining a consistent social media presence is crucial for non-profits like *Above All Things*. Irregular posting leads to decreased engagement, reduced visibility, and diminished audience connection, hindering the organization's mission. To address this, monitor engagement metrics—likes, comments, shares, follower growth—to identify patterns and determine when inconsistency affects performance.

Developing a content calendar ensures a steady flow of posts aligned with events and campaigns. Scheduling tools like Hootsuite or Buffer automate posting, helping maintain a reliable presence. Assigning roles within the team creates accountability and prevents missed posts.

Active engagement with followers—responding to comments, messages, and shares—fosters community and signals relevance to social media algorithms. Regularly reviewing analytics refines the content strategy, focusing on formats that drive the most interaction.

By planning strategically, using automation, assigning clear responsibilities, engaging the audience directly, and making data-driven adjustments, Above All Things can maintain a consistent, impactful social media presence.

Sample Content & Video Template

Cohort 6 created sample content and a video template specifically for Above All Things. They made sure to include hashtags and made it as a short-form video to emphasize the need for YouTube shorts. They also included a popular song, which typically increases the amount of engagement on short-form types of content.

Attached below is the link and a QR code to the Video:

https://youtube.com/shorts/c07CVqYLEXM

Actionable Outcomes

To enhance Above All Things' digital presence and engagement, the following actions are recommended:

- **Claim your organization** and insert more information on sites such as *Great Nonprofits* and *Charity Navigator*, which will help draw in more donors and give them a clear view of your mission and operations.
- **Put your organization** on *Volunteer Match*, a website that serves as a portal for volunteers to get in touch with your organization and serve at the various events you host.
- **Develop a Content Calendar** and use scheduling tools, such as *Buffer*, to maintain consistent and strategic posting.
- **Create an "Upcoming Events" section** on the website and promote events through social media stories to improve visibility and participation.

Conclusion

As we conclude this project, we reflect on the journey and the collective effort of Cohort 6 in partnering with *Above All Things*. Together, we sought innovative ways to amplify your online presence, ensuring that your incredible mission touches even more lives. The passion and dedication of this organization inspired us to deliver strategies that enhance engagement and reflect the heart of your purpose, building a stronger, more connected community. Our work represents a beginning rather than an end. We hope

the tools, insights, and plans provided here serve as a stepping stone for growth and inspire further creativity within your team. It has been a privilege to contribute to a cause that uplifts and unites many. Thank you for trusting us with this opportunity. Your vision motivates us to strive for meaningful impact, and we're honored to have been a part of it.

References:

Klenke, J. (2023, March 27). *How charity navigator and GuideStar can help increase donors -*. Gilliam Bell Moser LLP. https://www.gbmcpas.com/how-charity-navigator-and-guidestar-can-help-increase-donors/

Vita, C. J. D., & Fleming, C. (2016, June 4). *Building capacity in nonprofit organizations*. Urban Institute. https://www.urban.org/research/publication/building-capacity-nonprofit-organizations

Mansfield, H. (2021, July 26). *10 Facebook Best Practices for Nonprofits*. Nonprofit Tech for Good. https://www.nptechforgood.com/101-best-practices/10-facebook-best-practices-for-nonprofits/

Zalani, R. (2024, March 19). *Best Frequency Strategies: How Often to Post on Social Media*. Buffer Library. https://buffer.com/library/social-media-frequency-guide/

Statista Research Department. "U.S. Instagram Users by Age 2024 | Statistic." *Statista*, Statista, 2024, www.statista.com/statistics/398166/us-instagram-user-age-distribution/.

Choi, J., Ok, C. (Michael), & Choi, S. (2015). Outcomes of Destination Marketing Organization Website Navigation: The Role of Telepresence. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, *33*(1), 46–62. https://doi-org.libproxy.library.unt.edu/10.1080/10548408.2015.1024913

Weinger, Adam. "Adam Weinger." *Double the Donation*, Adam Weinger https://doublethedonation.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/logo-dtd.svg, 20 Sept. 2024, doublethedonation.com/nonprofit-advertising/.

The best times to post on social media in 2024 [new data]. HubSpot Blog. (n.d.). https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/best-times-post-pin-tweet-social-media-infographic

Naceva, N. (2024, October 29). *13 social media strategies for small businesses*. Influencer Marketing Hub. https://influencermarketinghub.com/socia-media-strategies-small-businesses/

SproutSocial. (2024, April 10). Best times to post on social media in 2024. https://sproutsocial.com/insights/best-times-to-post-on-social-media/

Garbis, K. (2024, August 23). The impact of social media algorithms on your content strategy . https://digi-solutions.com/the-impact-of-social-media-algorithms-on-your-content-strategy/

Perperidou, A. (2024, August 30). *Why respond to social media comments and best practices*. WayMore. https://www.waymore.io/blog/why-respond-to-social-media-comments-and-best-practices/

Hashtags: What they are and how to use them effectively. Sprout Social. (2024, April 26). https://sproutsocial.com/insights/what-is-hashtagging/

Webliska. (2023, October 20). *The Ultimate Guide to using hashtags: Best practices and tips - viraldashboard blog*. ViralDashboard Blog -. https://viraldashboard.io/blog/the-ultimate-guide-to-using-hashtags/

McLachlan, S. (2024, November 11). *The best TikTok hashtags for growth in 2024*. Social Media Marketing & Management Dashboard. https://blog.hootsuite.com/tiktok-hashtags/

Oladipo, T. (2024, April 23). *How to use TikTok hashtags (+ the best hashtags of 2024 so far)*. Buffer Library. https://buffer.com/library/tiktok-hashtags/

Best tiktok hashtags in 2024 [Ultimate guide]. HubSpot Blog. (n.d.-a). https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/best-tiktok-hashtags

What is Linktree?: Linktree Help Center. Link in bio tool: Everything you are, in one simple link. (n.d.). https://linktr.ee/help/en/articles/5434130-what-is-linktree

Johnson, D. (n.d.). *What is Linktree? how to make a free landing page for your social media profiles and other links*. Business Insider. https://www.businessinsider.com/guides/tech/what-is-linktree

Name. (2024, April 25). *Visual consistency: Maintaining brand identity across platforms*. Renative Studio. https://renativestudio.com/blog/visual-consistency-maintaining-brand-identity-across-platforms/

Google. (n.d.). *Why choose shorts - youtube help*. Google.
https://support.google.com/youtube/answer/13363900?hl=en

Ferguson, K. (2022, September 19). *5 ways YouTube Shorts can help superpower your channel*. blog.youtube. https://blog.youtube/inside-youtube/5-ways-youtube-shorts-can-help-superpower-your-channel/

YouTube. (n.d.). *Advice & support from YouTube Shorts Community - youtube creators*. YouTube. https://www.youtube.com/intl/us_US/creators/shorts/

Missinglettr. (2024, August 8). *The importance of consistency in social media marketing*. https://missinglettr.com/blog/importance-consistency-social-media-marketing/

Smith, A. (2024, November 13). *How social media consistency drives business results*. Sprout Social. https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-consistency/

Pretorius, L. (2024, September 27). *The importance of social media consistency - bird*. Bird Marketing. https://bird.marketing/blog/marketing-digital-marketing/guide-digital-marketing/socialmedia-marketing-tactics/importance-social-media-consistency/

Macready, H. (2024, November 12). *How often should a business post on social media? [2024 data]*. Social Media Marketing & Management Dashboard. https://blog.hootsuite.com/how-often-to-post-on-social-media/

Morgan. (2023, April 14). *How to be consistent on social media: 7 powerful strategies*. New Home -. https://morgankg.com/how-to-be-consistent-on-social-media/