



Marketing Social Media Applications to High Schoolers

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INTRODUCTION

“How can we market new social media applications most effectively to Palo Alto High School students?”

High school students are a very enticing audience for new social media applications as their influence carries to friends, family, and often, popular culture. This study aims to determine the best, most effective, and most efficient way to market new social media applications to high school students from Palo Alto High School. The study compares three low-cost marketing strategies and their effectiveness at promoting the product in question to the target audience.

BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

Past research has been conducted on this topic, but none have specifically tested a marketing strategy geared towards high-schoolers.

Horn (2011), Tuten and Solomon (2014), and Chu (2011) all explore methods for reaching teens, such as through Facebook, with blogs, or by word-of-mouth. However, all of the methods in the studies were never tested. Ryon (2011) and Okazaki (2009) detail their experiences at actually promoting certain products through the methods. They achieved promising results, however, they focused on college students and middle schoolers, and not high schoolers.

High schoolers often dictate the latest trends in pop culture, and being able to successfully market to them could open up a very enticing market. Additionally, companies developing social media applications could be interested in how to best market their new product to an influential demographics.

Currently, the problem is that there is no marketing method that is proven to target high schoolers the best. Thus, the project attempts to solve this problem by conducting organic research on local high schoolers to find a method that has a high chance of reaching them. This study compares and contrasts three low-cost marketing methods.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

There were two rounds of data-gathering in this project: first, a survey to identify potential marketing methods, followed by data collection after implementing the marketing methods.

Part 1: the “Market Research”

Students from different grades were picked through a stratified random sample and given surveys to fill out for the first round of surveys. This gave the most accurate representation of the school population as it was random and represented all grade levels.

The most effective marketing methods were identified as through a Facebook post, sending it through friend channels, and putting links up on flyers hung around school and the surrounding areas. These marketing methods were then implemented.

Part 2: the Implementation

For the second round of surveys, the aforementioned marketing methods were implemented for two weeks. Links to a “new social media application” were distributed over Facebook, through friend channels, and on flyers. Students who visited these links then filled out a short survey, allowing us to compare the number of responses.

Data was then analyzed and broken down. The raw data from the two weeks of this project can be seen in the “Data Analysis and Results” section.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS / REFERENCES

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DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The three marketing methods implemented were posts in Facebook groups (“Facebook”), having friends share the link (“Friend”), and posting the link on flyers that were hung around school (“Poster”).

One trend was that the “Facebook” link had the most amount of views with 269. This beat the “Friend” and “Poster” links, which had 32 and 2, respectively (Figure 1).

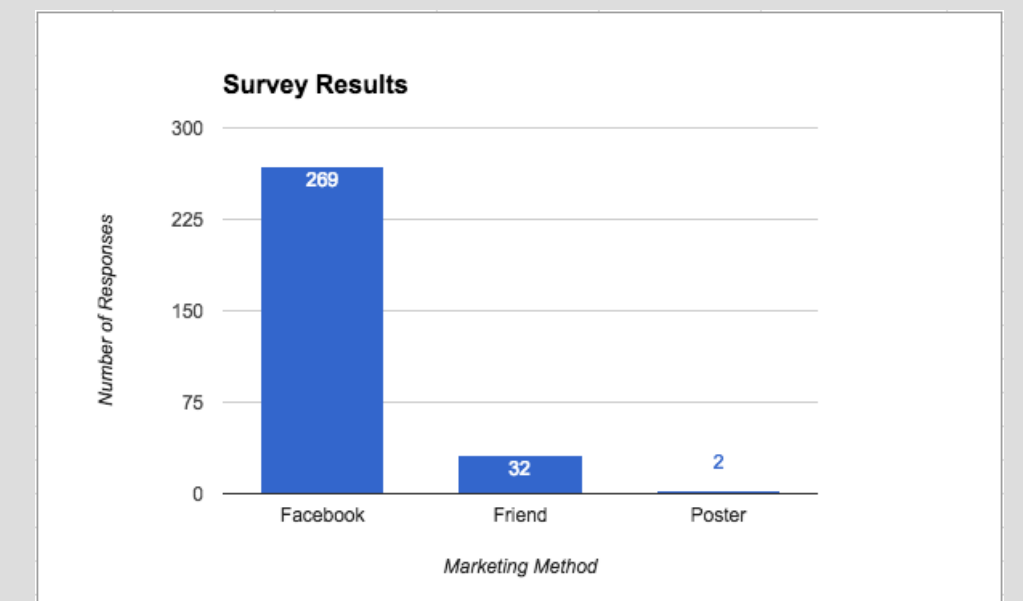


Figure 1: The graph shows the number of responses to each marketing method. “Facebook” had the most responses.

Respondent grade levels were also collected. In the “Facebook” link, Seniors had more link clicks (Figure 2). Juniors were also the most likely to click on the “Friend” link (Figure 3). A possible reason for this trend could be that the researcher primarily talked to Juniors, wildly affecting the results. Further research should be done to verify this claim. Lastly, there was no identified trends for “Poster” due to a lack of responses to analyze.

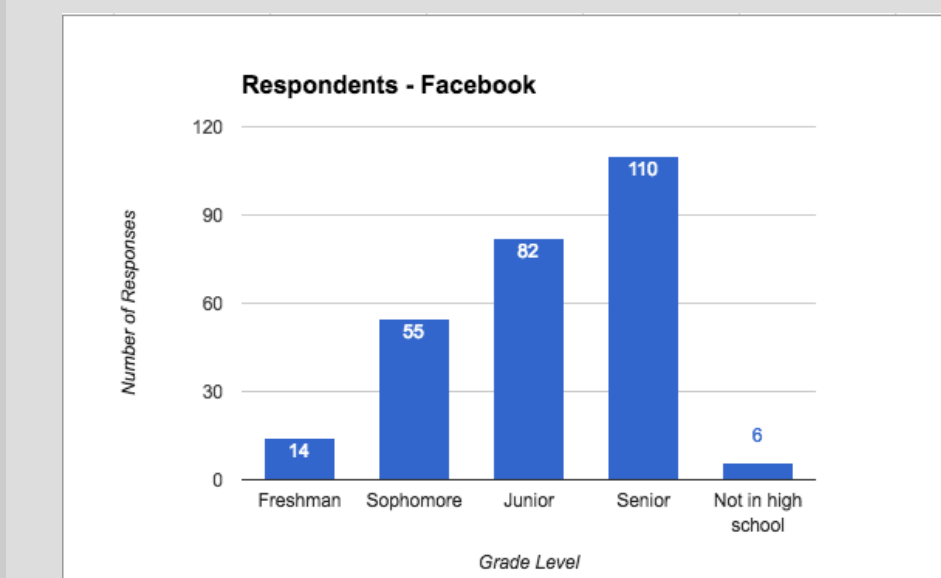


Figure 2: A breakdown of the “Facebook” survey by grade. Responses decreased with grade.

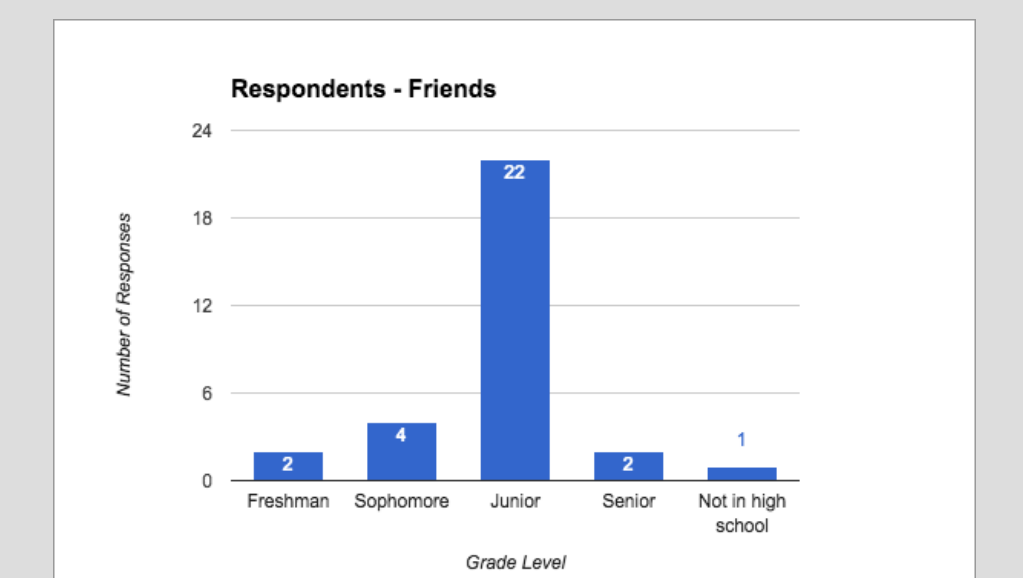


Figure 3: A breakdown of the “Friend” survey by grade. Juniors had the most responses.

From the results above, it is concluded that promoting a new social media application through Facebook would be the best low-cost method. Of the three examined marketing methods, Facebook had the most user engagement across all grade levels.

To target certain age groups, it should be noted that Seniors tended to click on the Facebook link the most and Juniors tended to click on the link distributed through friends the most.

Further research on this topic could involve comparing responses on Facebook with other social media platforms such as Instagram or Twitter.