



Strategic Communications Plan

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Executive Summary:

Hillcroft Services, Inc. provides residential, employment and community support services to individuals with disabilities in several counties in East Central Indiana.

The mission of Hillcroft is: "To provide innovative services and support for people with disabilities and their families, resulting in extraordinary differences in people's lives."

Hillcroft is focused on creating a culture of strong values, understanding the importance of ethical behavior and maintaining high quality services to the people they serve.

In 2017, Hillcroft employed 316 individuals to produce subcontracted work for businesses both locally and in surrounding states and provided housing for 169 individuals. Additionally, they supported 500 children and adults with disabilities through Behavior Therapy, Music Therapy, Recreation Therapy, the ABA clinic and Creativity Unlimited.

According to Hillcroft Services' website, one in five people has a disability, and 66 percent of Americans with disabilities are unemployed. Hillcroft Services works to fill this unemployment gap by providing occupational opportunities for Hillcroft Industry participants.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths:

Hillcroft has many existing strengths in their communication. Their website is very informative and has a wealth of valuable information for their visitors. Each of their target audiences can find resources and information important and applicable to their needs. Hillcroft's Facebook page is another great resource for all audiences; the page is up-to-date and has relevant and current information for followers. Overall, a major strength of Hillcroft Services is that it provides great resources for the community. It assists those with disabilities in finding jobs and feeling a sense of purpose and independence and provides careers and volunteer opportunities for community members.

Weaknesses:

Other than Facebook, Hillcroft Services does not consistently use their existing social media platforms. This can create confusion for new followers or social media visitors, and it is not using all of the assets of the organization to their full potential. While the website is very informative, it may create barriers for visitors trying to navigate the website to find the information most applicable to their needs. The website could also be updated more consistently. The annual report seems to have more information about certain aspects of the organization than the website does.

Opportunities:

Hillcroft Services can promote themselves as a notable, regional organization that is making a difference in people's lives. They are one of the only services in East Central Indiana that provides these kind of services for people with disabilities. They serve more than 500 people with disabilities per year in a variety of ways, and are contributing towards the community in a positive way. They can partner with other businesses in East Central Indiana to increase the amount of employment opportunities for the people with disabilities that seek Hillcroft's services.

Threats:

If Hillcroft Services doesn't receive necessary donations, both monetary and product-based (including but not limited to paper products, small kitchen appliances, arts and crafts supplies and non-perishable food items), they will lack the resources that allow their services to continue. Additionally, if they don't communicate their services well, they will not continue to increase the amount of people they serve.

Target Audience:

- Caregivers of people with disabilities
- People with disabilities
- Potential volunteers in the Muncie community
- Potential donors

Key Messages

1. Philanthropic – Hillcroft Services is devoted to making a difference by providing residential, therapy and employment services to people with disabilities living in East Central Indiana.
2. Empowering – Hillcroft Services continues to grow and evolve programs and services in order to continue being a model for other alike agencies, with the hopes of making a change for disability awareness.
3. Devoted - Hillcroft Services is committed to long-term growth within the community and the organization.

Goal: Increase consistency of messaging and frequency of Hillcroft Services' communication to reach more potential participants, volunteers and donors.

Objectives, strategies and tactics:

Objective One: Improve Hillcroft's social media presence through campaigns and targeted platforms to increase engagement by 50 percent.

Strategy One: Maximize Facebook's features and content to link Hillcroft's brand and services to donors, volunteers, potential employees and caregivers.

Tactic one: Use Facebook's events feature to advertise upcoming Hillcroft events to targeted audiences.

Tactic two: Respond to both positive and negative reviews and comments on Facebook page.

Tactic three: Craft posts that offer a call-to-action and drive followers to visit Hillcroft's website.

Tactic Four: Utilize the Facebook Live feature to broadcast events to a wide audience.

Strategy Two: Build overall presence on existing LinkedIn account to reach potential employees, volunteers, industry leaders and donors.

Tactic one: Utilize LinkedIn's "one-click application" button to encourage potential interns and employees to easily apply to posted job opportunities.

Tactic Two: Provide information to potential volunteers to match their interest with the best volunteer opportunity for them. Information should also be provided on the volunteering process.

Tactic three: Transfer blog posts and news from website to LinkedIn to increase community and professional connections.

Tactic four: Following industry leaders and reposting from their pages when applicable to increase a sense of community and trust.

Strategy Three: Create timely, relevant social campaigns on all platforms to increase engagement.

Tactic one: Create content calendars that emphasize key months.

- March is Disability Awareness Month
- April is Autism Awareness Month
- How Does Hillcroft Help You Grow?

Tactic two: Generate consistent hashtags to post with campaigns to increase brand awareness and content consistency.

- #GrowWithHillcroft
- #IHeartHillcroft continued in November on Giving Tuesdays.
- #AbilityAwarenessMonth

Tactic three: Promote campaign hashtags and campaign mission across all social media platforms.

Tactic four: Retweet, share, comment and like positive posts that support and expand the campaign.

Objective 2: Reduce the amount of expendable information on the website to make it more direct and navigable.

Strategy One: Update the website to improve user friendliness and navigation.

Tactic one: Evaluate each website page and remove any broken or irrelevant links.

Tactic two: Condense site to be navigable through one menu rather than two.

Tactic three: Evaluate the company's most valuable assets, such as services for employees with disabilities and services in general, and bring that information to the forefront of the website, such as in the most accessible tabs on the website.

Tactic four: Add a website page for caregivers of people with disabilities that includes information about how the disabled person can get a job at Hillcroft Services.

Strategy Two: Use short videos to inform viewers of Hillcroft Services' mission, condense website information and make the website more visual for visitors.

Tactic one: Create short, one-minute videos to engage key audiences.

Tactic two: Post brief, but engaging YouTube videos with themes once a month.

- "A Day in the Life of _____" could help a viewer visualize the services Hillcroft offers without adding more text to the website.

Tactic three: Embed monthly YouTube videos on the website to make it more engaging, visual and concise.

Evaluation:

Objective One: Social Media

Strategy One: Track and compare social media analytics to measure increase in viewership (video), engagement (communication) and its effect on raising awareness.

Strategy Two: Plan posts in a timeframe tailored to specific target market per social media outlet.

Twitter: Post between 12pm-5pm at twice a week.

Facebook: Post between 1pm-4pm for maximum outreach.

Instagram: Post between 2pm-5pm with relevant hashtags to gain traffic and appear on “explore” tab.

Strategy Three: Track correlation between donations periods and website traffic.

Strategy Four: Develop recurring donor report and how donation total has increased with media targeted directly to previous donor networks.

Strategy Five: Measure attendance of Hillcroft Service’s events in comparison to news/client calendar to Facebook event model.

Strategy Six:

Measure the impact of the repositioning effort for Hillcroft’s website traffic

-Track correlations between Hillcroft SEO with a less textually crowded and redundant website.

-Measure and record the effects/increase of community awareness of Hillcroft Services.

-Survey whether switching from a content heavy website to video for informative content is raising public awareness and advertising Hillcroft Services.

Timeline:

By April 30, 2018

Objective One (Social Media) Strategy 1: Facebook events should be updated to increase community reach for large events such as the Master's Golf Outing.

Objective One (Social Media) Strategy 1: Social media content that drives website traffic should be implemented to increase website accessibility and engagement.

Objective One (Social Media) Strategy 1: Current Facebook reviews should be acknowledged by this point; future reviews should be acknowledged no more than 48 hours after the initial post.

Objective One (Social Media) Strategy 2: LinkedIn presence should begin to be implemented by this point, including interaction with other industry professionals, and should remain consistent after this point.

Objective One (Social Media) Strategy 3: Hashtags should begin to become consistent by this point, and should be used consistently after this point.

By May 1, 2018

Objective One (Social Media) Strategy 1: Facebook live should be used on an event-by-event basis, starting with the Master's Golf Outing 2018.

By July 31, 2018

Objective One (Social Media) Strategy 2: Volunteer information should be available to reach the student population at the beginning of fall semester 2018.

By November 31, 2018

Objective One (Social Media) Strategy 2: One-click applications should be available for the next wave of Ball State Graduates in December 2018.

Objective Two (Website) Strategy 1: Information about Hillcroft Services for caregivers regarding employment opportunities for the disabled people in their lives should be available.

By January 1, 2019

Objective One (Social Media) Strategy 2: Blogs should be integrated into LinkedIn's platform to share with other industry professionals.

Objective Two (Website) Strategy 1: Website should be cleaned of any unnecessary or broken links to increase user friendliness.

Objective Two (Website) Strategy 1: Company assets should be evaluated to be able to update the website with the most pertinent information. Cite should then be condensed from two navigation bars to one to increase accessibility and user friendliness.

Objective Two (Website) Strategy 2: YouTube videos to be used on website should be completed and uploaded to Hillcroft's YouTube page. Social media posts featuring videos should begin after all videos are finished and continue indefinitely.

By July 2019

Objective Two (Website) Strategy 2: YouTube videos should be embedded on Hillcroft's website by this point to help decrease the amount of text and increase visual engagement.

March 1-31

Objective One (Social Media) Strategy 3: Disability Awareness Month campaign should run each year to increase social media engagement and brand recognition.

April 1-30

Objective One (Social Media) Strategy 3: Autism Awareness Month campaign should run each year to increase social media engagement and brand recognition.