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### 2023 Strategic Plan for The Meat Shed

Trey Meyers

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## 2023 Strategic Plan for The Meat Shed

This plan was conceived and prepared by Trey Meyers

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Department of Communication

Master's Creative Project

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## Abstract

At the end of June 2022, the author began the process of establishing client relations with a local business in Pittsburg, Kansas, The Meat Shed. One of the co-owners, Matt DeMoss, agreed to let his establishment be a client for a graduate project. After initial meetings. The Meat Shed was seeking to expand their brand identity to potential stakeholders of the Pittsburg community and the surrounding areas. This idea from the client sparked the interest of the author to create a strategic plan to assist in increasing awareness and engagement between stakeholders and the client. In this strategic plan the author outlines strategies, tactics, and research methods for The Meat Shed to use in their business marketing strategy. Intertwined in the strategic plan is a theoretical framework, Social Marketing Theory and Networking Theory, the author uses as a guide to create deliverables and conduct analysis about The Meat Shed organization and its stakeholders.

## **Acknowledgments**

This creative project and the steps leading up to the final draft of the strategic plan would not have been possible without the countless support I received from those who want to see me succeed.

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To Matt DeMoss, I would like to thank you for allowing me to work with your organization over the past few months to obtain experience in working in my field. I have especially enjoyed working with you and your business on creating TikTok videos and media material that you can use to benefit your business. I also have enjoyed watching you make magic happen in the kitchen, and I appreciate the knowledge you have given me about food creation.

## **Chapter One: Introduction**

The importance of an organization's brand identity is great. Having an identifiable organizational brand identity allows stakeholders to connect more with the organization resulting in more engagement and awareness. With the inclusion of social and digital platforms, organizations can reach and connect to audiences by providing content that fits the desires of the consumer. We know from modern consumer behavior studies that "individual experiences significantly and positively influence consumer shared experiences" (Chang & Ching, 2006, p. 56). Utilizing this knowledge, from a digital marketing perspective an organization can utilize the consumer to generate additional engagement and awareness through social media motivation. "Social media motivation refers to the various incentives that drive people's selection and use of specific content" (Muntinga et al., 2011, p. 14). These motivations can arise from incentives, entertainment, identification or brand connection. Understanding these mental frameworks inspired the author to create a strategic plan based informed by stakeholder feedback.

This strategic plan outlines strategies, tactics, and goals backed by theoretical research executed in a qualitative and quantitative format to improve outreach, engagement, and retention. This plan conducted research by evaluating The Meat Shed's internal and external stakeholders. These stakeholders included employees (internal), customers (external), and partnering businesses (external). The mixed methods research approach includes a (a) content analysis spanning over a five month period on the organization's social media, (b) a comparative analysis of The Meat Shed's social media with area competitors, (c) qualitative interviews with potential

secondary consumers, and (d) quantitative survey responses from primary consumers. Data were gathered from interviews, social media pages, stakeholder surveys.

## **Review of Academic Literature**

### ***History of Advertising***

Building brand identity is important to organizations, and a vital part of any business structure. In modern organizational structures, one way to communicate brand identity is through advertising. “Advertising is a marketing tactic involving paying for space to promote a product, service, or cause” (Vakratsas & Ambler, 1999). Traces of advertising materials have always been a part of our culture. Historically, advertising campaigns have been used to promote political campaigns advocating for individuals to elect them into office, to recruit citizens to join the military during war efforts, survey public opinion (e.g. four-minute men). “During the 1800’s, brands started emerging using advertising to give products specific meanings. For example, Ivory Soap was no longer called a white soap, but it had its own appearance, logo, and package design” (O’Barr, 2010, p. 2). Billboards and trading cards were another traditional method of advertising to catch the interest of consumers. With the creation of automobiles in 1886, marketers began buying space along highways and roadways to market their brands. Billboards became one of the most popular methods to showcase brands. Trading cards were then created as a ploy to attract consumer interest and build loyalty. “Big tobacco corporations would include variations of famous women, movie stars, wonders of the world, etc. to be collected in a series” (O’Barr, 2010, p. 3). This would encourage customers to keep purchasing tobacco products to collect all the trade cards in the series. McDonalds also attracted consumers through advertizing. McDonalds used the classic family game “Monopoly” to increase brand loyalty. Customers would find that certain products of McDonalds (e.g. drinks, fries, and various burgers) would have a Monopoly pull tab for a chance to win discounts, free merchandise, or cash prizes. If

customers gathered all the colored properties in the series they could turn them in for these prizes. “This proved to be efficient as McDonalds saw a 40% boost in their sales” (Bhasin, 2011). In today’s scene, contemporary advertising is becoming more popular. “Contemporary advertising is encouraging loyalty among users, and makes an attempt to persuade consumer to switch to their brand” (O’Barr, 2010, p. 5). With the consistent occurrence of external factors in the marketplace like COVID-19, inflation rates, and social media organizations are having to find alternative methods to expand and grow their businesses. This is where building a brand identity becomes important. By building a brand identity this allows for a consumer-brand relationship to form, which in turn can help grow and expand organizations. A consumer-brand relationship is defined as “the tie between a person and a brand that is voluntary or is enforced interdependently between the person and the brand” (Chang & Chieng, 2006, p 928).

Communicating consumer-brand relationships showcases the experience the consumer has with the organization. In today's business world, this has been done with the help of social and digital media.

### ***Evolution of Advertising in Digital Media***

In the marketplace today, the advancement of digital technology is changing the game for marketers by having endless opportunities to reach the consumer. “Media fragmentation, consumer interactivity, and the greater ability to personalize content are all products of recent technology advancements leading to a single outcome - the empowerments of the consumer” (Bright, 2011, p. 23). Having a good consumer-brand relationship does benefit both the brand and the consumer equally. "For instance, an organization can create an entire digital media package for the consumer, and then the consumer can limit the exposure to advertising accordingly” (Shapiro, 1999, p. 6). Think of both of these two variables as being interconnected

with each other. “The brand can prime the consumer into their wants and needs based on the media content that the brand creates for them” (Bright & Daugherty, 2012, p. 22). This helps facilitate the process of building brand loyalty with the consumer. There is also the variable of the consumer though. The consumer can alter the behavior of the brand ’marketing strategies based on the market competition. Scholars are aware of the concept of competitive advantage in the mindset of the business. Competitive advantages are described as “a condition or circumstance that places a company in a favorable or superior business position” (Christensen, 2001). As businesses they have many external factors like consumer demand, value of the market, and competitor prices that influences the costs and availability of products and services. The overall goal for businesses is to make a profit, and to do that they have to market their materials as attractive in appearance and price for the consumer. If the consumer finds the product to be too expensive then they can go seek out another vendor who provides a better deal. This helps keep prices of products stable in the market. As consumers become more interactive with an organization, this can help increase and stabilize brand loyalty. For brands this is an ultimate goal. “From the aspect of the individual emotional experiences can help develop a brand personality, and by having shared experiences between brands and consumers this helps fuel the growth of a brand personality which in time builds brand loyalty” (Chang & Cheing 2006, p. 934).

With the incorporation of Web 2.0 technologies, niche markets have formed in online markets (Bright, 2011). When a user accesses content on social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, TikTok) the consumer is able to filter out which media content they view. This allows the consumer to limit the amount of tailored content to decrease information overload (Bright, 2011). From the marketing agency’s perspective, they have to get creative on both content and



distribution strategy“ This furthers allows media exposure to be more tailored or consumer-centric rather than a publisher-centric” (Bright & Daugherty, 2012, p. 25). The power of the consumer in the current media landscape has had a major shift in their favor, rather than the favor of the agencies. “Consumers are relying less on media being pushed at them through traditional channels, and are instead focusing on creating a media environment that revolves around them” (Bright, 2011, p. 35). Advertisers are adapting to gain exposure in consumer customized environments, and gain attraction to their own websites and profiles.

Podcasters are major influencers in the audio/video landscape of media. One of the major reasons for this is accessibility. Users can tune in to listen to their favorite influencer. The number of platforms that a business can use to reach to the most clientele does prove to have results of increasing sales. “When consumers would listen to podcasts; a study indicated that 69% of the listeners became aware of new products or services through a podcast advertisement” (Pelletier & McCoy, 2021). Some famous podcasts in modern society are H3H3, and The Joe Rogan Show, which have had many episodes with commercial sponsorships. “Commercial Sponsorships is a form of marketing in which a company pays for the right to be associated with a project or program” (Kenton, 2021). The idea of having sponsorships is very popular with marketers. Businesses and organizations would pay influencers to showcase their products and services through their networks to gain additional exposure. This has become a common method in today’s advertising strategy in providing alternative avenues of generating metrics outside of traditional mass media methods. Podcasters and organizations have been able to reach to the masses with connectivity and experience through digital and social media.

### *Use of Social Media in a Business Setting*

Social media has had a major societal impact on interpersonal relationships, and with developing consumer-brand relationships. Social media has allowed the opportunity for consumer empowerment. Some scholars believe that consumers are taking over the marketing communications process and are becoming creators, collaborators, and commentators of messages. “In a marketing context, social media are considered platforms on which people build networks and share information and/or sentiments” (Li et al, 2020, p. 52). In a business setting, scholars have identified three social media shifts in the market. “To begin social media enables firms and customers to connect in ways that haven’t not been possible before” (Li et al., 2020, p. 54). In organizational communication the thought of connectedness was one of the main ideas in effective and productive group cohesion. “In this case, various social platforms are sanctioning the opportunity for consumers to reach other consumers, and brands through social networking sites (Facebook), microblogging sites (Twitter), and content communities (Youtube)” (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010, p. 61). This allows social networks to build from shared interests and values of the consumers. Additionally, “social media has transformed ways firms and customers interact and influence each other” (Li et al., 2020, p. 53). In marketing communications, the idea of social interactions between companies and consumers is vital for effective social/digital campaigns. Social interactions, in the marketing world, can stem from word-of-mouth (WOM) advertising. “Scholars have argued that social interactions strongly rely on the social network structure and provide firms measurable value otherwise known as social equity” (Li et al., 2020, p. 53). Social equity combines the value of the consumer, and to the brand. Recently, consumer behaviors have been tied into sustainable and ethical practices of organizations, known as corporate social responsibility (CSR). CSR is “the management concept where companies

integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operation” (Moir, 2001). The eco-friendlier and more ethical an organization is the more likely that consumers would purchase merchandise from them rather than name brand companies. Finally, the “proliferation of social media data has made it increasingly possible for companies to better manage customer relationships and enhance decision making in business” (Li et al., 2020, p. 56). For marketing researchers or market analysts the ability to collect and interpret data has become more efficient. The amount of data points that an analyst can review is vast. “For instance firms can review digital analytics by the 3V’s (e.g. Volume, Variety, Velocity) which help measure the quantity of the data, number of sources of data, and expansive real-time data,” (Alharthi et al., 2017). The amount of data that needs to be collected is highly accessible through social media forums (i.e. social networking sites, blogs, forum threads, etc), and is also used to rapidly disseminate information. With the incorporation of these different forums the data about the consumers can be retrieved in different formats (e.g. audio, video, images). Social media data collection serves as ways to conduct consumer-behavior analysis, market research, and the exploration of new strategies in real-time.

One of the more popular forums for consumers is the use of social networking sites (SNS). Social networking sites provides an avenue for organizations and consumers to stay connected with one another, and these networks have created an environment where information can be obtained within a couple clicks. For the organizations, marketers use social media to gauge customers social media motivations. “Social media motivation refers to the various incentives that drive people’s selection and use of specific content” (Muntinga et al., 2011, p. 14). Scholars and marketers have used a theoretical framework of the uses and gratifications theory to understand the mindset of the consumer when using certain social networking sites.

“Motivations can range from utilitarian and hedonic purposes (incentives, entertainment) to relational reasons (identification, brand connection)” (Li et al., 2020, p. 54). Muntinga (2011) asserts that consumer-brand social media interactions are motivated primarily by entertainment, information, remuneration, personal identity, social interaction, and empowerment. When consumers feel involved, or listened to by organizations there is a high probability of positive reactions from the consumer that helps the exposure of brand’s products and services. An example would be the use of TikTok from brands to execute marketing strategies. Many organizations have taken the strategy of using brand ambassadors on TikTok to attract additional consumer interest, to create opportunities of WOM advertising content. The idea of brand ambassadors came from organizations wanting to convert individuals of the general public into influencers of their brand. Typically, an organization would ship off products to showcase on an individual’s social media in return for monetary compensation, or some additional benefits within the organization. A large majority of the brand ambassadors are found through the TikTok platform in the form of sponsorship posts. Within the platform users can create reels, short audio/video clips, showcasing the products that can be seen by millions of people. This process is designed to cultivate an experience by the ambassadors and the brand itself to provoke a more positive response based on the experience. “Brand experiences are private events that occur in response to stimulation and often result from the direct observation and/or participation in events” (Chang & Cheing, 2006, p. 934). Organizations utilization of brand ambassadors have led to brand identity with the public. Brands that incorporate their identity into a marketing strategy develop a rapport with the public making them more well-known and credible for individuals to purchase products. As a result, these efforts have become a vital aspect to a

business-marketing strategy.

### ***Building a Brand Identity***

Building a strong brand identity is a key factor into another business structure as this is the avenue of generating the most exposure within consumer bases.“ For organizations having a strong brand can lead to several marketing advantages and increase a company’s competitive strength in the market” (Spence & Essoussi, 2008, p. 1039). Strong brands will be more responsive and act more favorably to marketing activities when the brand is tied with it, as compared to when it is not. When looking into the process of building a brand identity, scholars have created a model for organizations to follow to attract the most exposure as possible. First, brands must start with building a brand experience. As mentioned before, a brand experience takes the consumer and incorporates them into organizational activities. “Consumer individual experiences significantly and positively influence consumer shared experiences” (Chang & Chieng, 2006, p. 56).

As seen in recent business strategies, organizations are using influencers to conduct marketing on their behalf. “A digital influencer is someone with the ability to influence, change opinions and behavior online, generally through social networking” (Wibawa et al., 2021 pg 234). In the field of digital marketing, influencers are broken down into four different categories based on their following: (1) Mega-influencers - followers ranging from one million to an unlimited number of followers; (2) Macro-influencers - followers ranging from 100,000 to one million; (3) Micro-influencers - followers ranging from 1,000 to 100,000; (4) Nano-Influencers - followers of 1,000 or less. The incorporation of nano-influencers is relatively new to the industry. “Marketing scholars have noticed a trend of nano-influencers being more influential than micro-influencers because the loyalty of their follower base is high” (Wibawa et al, 2021, p.

235). “Studies have shown that nano-influencers have a high effectiveness when working with a brand based on the level of interaction, and the promotions are viewed as more authentic or original in content/ personality” (Wibawa et al, 2021, p. 237). When conducting promotional campaigns in niche markets there is a tendency for the brands to adopt more influencers to generate more exposure. “Customers feel the closeness of having a two-way interaction of reviews or recommendations by the influencer which in turn can affect their buying interests” (Wibawa et al., 2021, p. 235).

The second stage of building a brand identity involves the idea of brand association. A brand association is an organization’s affiliations, or ties, with other brands or individuals. “Brand associations are not only formed with individual experiences, but are also shaped directly from the act experience of the consumer” (Chang & Cheing, 2006, p. 936). Typically incorporated with corporations branding strategy, these brands will seek out well-known celebrities to partner with similar to an influencer role. For instance, in today’s society we see celebrities like Shaquille O’Neal partner with Papa Johns, and Samuel Jackson partner with Capitol One. These celebrities become the face of the brand which helps influence consumers to trust the brand. In the mindset of the consumer if their celebrity figurehead uses a brand’s products and supports them, then they would act more favorably to that specific brand. It is in this strategic process that organizations would carefully place themselves with certain fan-favorite icons. Scholars have noted caution in using celebrities as figureheads for brands.

If a partnered celebrity was caught up in a scandal, or backlash from the public the affiliated brand could also foresee a crisis in reputation forcing the brands to make a choice on whether to cut ties with the celebrity. Brands have also incorporated supporting social movements to their marketing strategy. This creates the mindset of building a shared and valued

experience with consumers. For instance, Patagonia, an outdoor clothing company, partnered with a movement called Ocean Blue Project to improve urban water quality by eliminating pollutants entering rivers. This brand association generated a high amount of consumer support and interest in Patagonia, and the Ocean Blue Project benefiting both of these organizations. Supporting societal and environmental movements creates a socially responsible organization that is seen as an attractive quality to the consumer. "In basic public relations strategies, having an organization adopt a corporate socially responsible (CSR) mindset guarantees ethical decision making to the consumer" (Bright, 2011, p. 38). Brands want to be perceived by their consumers as being a benefit to society, and not being caught up in deceptive, unethical marketing methods. The third stage in the process is developing a brand personality. "A brand personality is described as a set of human characteristics, and quasi-human traits that are associated with a given brand" (Chang & Chieng, 2006, p. 941). For a brand personality to be known by consumers, it must be formed thorough the consumer experience, and any contact between the consumer and the brand. "For example Absolute Vodka markets their products as cool, hip, and contemporary catering to a 25 year old individual. "Brand personalities use a symbolic framework to create a self-expressive function" (Keller, 1993). Scholars have argued that the symbolic use of brands is even possible because consumers often imbue brands with human personality traits" (Aaker, 1997). Aaker (1997) created a five-factor structure that is in relation to the Big Five personality trait dimensions. The big five personality traits are a theoretical framework set to explain and characterize an individual's personality traits. This is commonly used for evaluating individuals for job positions, or used within brands to develop a relatable identity with consumers. For example, Aaker used traits like sincerity that is in correlation to agreeableness and conscientiousness. Excitement that correlates to sociability, energetic, and

active. Lastly, competence which captures traits like conscientiousness and extroversion.

Scholars have conjured many different variations of personalities that represent brands, but most of the traits overlap with characteristics from the Big Five structure. It is important for brands to build a personality that's attractive, because in the eyes of the consumer actions taken by the brand will be reflected based on the personality of the brand.

The last step in this process is for brands to build a positive attitude. "A brand attitude is described as a consumer's overall positive or negative evaluation about the brand" (Chang & Cheing, 2006, pg. 56). The brand attitude is based on the emotional experience of the consumer that generate positive, or negative beliefs that become influential characteristics altering consumers behavior about the brand. Market analysts have constructed four characteristics that are important to note in relevance to brand attitude. First, brand attitude depends upon the current relevant motivation. As a result, if a buyer's motivation changes, so might the buyer's evaluation of a brand. Consumer motivation is unpredictable, as the wants and needs of the consumers have a vast amount of influential external factors that can alter a consumer mindset. Consumers are more likely to purchase a product or service based on the positive motivations that are presented to them. "Sensory gratification and social approval are a few of the most popular examples of a positive motivating process" (Percy & Rossiter, 1992, p. 267). Second, a brand attitude consists of both a cognitive and affective component. The cognitive, or logical belief, component guides behavior and the affective, or emotional feeling, component energizes the behavior. The logical and emotional mindset does affect the buying behavior of the consumer in either a positive or negative way. The use of rhetoric (e.g. logos, pathos, ethos) in marketing and advertising has been used many times to capture desired appeals of the consumer base. Additionally, the cognitive component may be comprised of a series of specific benefit beliefs. In and of



themselves these are not the attitude, but rather the reasons for the brand attitude. Finally, brand attitude is a relative construct. In almost any product category what one is looking for is the brand that meets the underlying motivation better than alternative brands. As long as a motivation to behave exists, buyers will choose some brand that best meets that motivation from the alternatives of which the buyer is aware (Percy & Rossiter 1992). Understanding the brand identity process is critical to understanding an effective advertising strategy.

### ***Social Marketing Theory***

The social marketing theory focuses on how socially valuable information can be promoted. The social marketing theory is a combination of some smaller theories to study the behavior of consumers, specifically how they react to products and services. There are six different features to this theory. First and foremost, one of the features this theory creates is an audience awareness. "Where there is a need to promote any idea, person, or behavior, the first step is to create awareness that such a new concept or individual exists" (Liman, 2018, p. 34). When creating audience awareness, it is important that all channels that are available are used to be able to outreach to more people. Coinciding with audience awareness is being able to target the right audience. It is very important when trying to market to additional consumers, that you know who you are trying to target. The campaign should be directing to that specific target audience, and not try to overlap with other audiences as this is how confusion can occur within the campaign messages.

Once the target audience is identified, then you would want to reinforce the message that you are trying to send. "When people receive a new message once, they tend to forget it easily" (Liman, 2018, p. 36). That is why repeating the message that you are trying to convey is important and try to expose the message to different channels. The most powerful form of

communication is the process of word of mouth. When creating a marketing campaign, it is also important to cultivate images or impressions. People will only seek out information that suits that person's interests. "When the audience is not interested in the person, product, or service being promoted, they will not seek out any information about them" (Liman, 2018, p. 37). There is a catch though. While a campaign should cultivate these impressions, you want to ensure that you also stimulate the interest of the group you are trying to market towards. "Dramatic events or unexpected actions should help capture the interest of the audience" (Liman, 2018, p. 37). Once that is done, you have successfully grabbed the consumer's attention. Lastly, when using the social marketing theory, you want to induce a desired result. If you are trying to bring up a new product or service, then that should result in some actual sales or heavy usage by the public. If you are trying to eliminate a behavior, then steps should be taken to ensure that behavior is eliminated. The main arching idea when using the social marketing theory is either to promote or discourage behaviors.

### ***Network Theory***

The network theory developed by Peter Monge was created as a theoretical framework for how social groups communicate with one another in an organization. "Networks are described as social structures sanctioned by communication among individuals and groups" (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 276). Within this theory one of the basic structures is the idea of connectedness. As connectedness has been talked about in the marketing perspective, in a communication setting, connectedness has to deal with the stability of the pathway of communication. When communicating in groups there is a probability that emergent networks and personal networks may form. "Emergent networks are described as informal channels that are built by members of the organization, and personal networks are interactions that have its

own personality” (Borgatti & Halgin, 2011). When communicating with others, every interaction develops a personality with each member to make the conversation unique. Some qualities that can come from a conversation is functions likes friendship, information sharing, and personal influence. This is called multiplexity or the “overlap of roles, exchanges, or affiliations in a social relationship” (Haythornthwaite, 2001). Within network theory, the basic unit of measurement is called a link. A link can be defined by the purpose, how much is shared, and the functions within the organization itself. Links can vary in the level of frequency and stability (e.g. how often the conversations occur, and the predictability of the conversations occurring). Using the network theory framework, organizations can understand qualities within interactions and conversations to measure the links with groups. These links can provide consumer data for agencies and organizations that may inform marketing campaigns or strategies.

### ***Conclusion***

Developing a brand identity is important to organizations. Brand identities are used to set brands apart from others and bring an exclusive element to their product and services. For scholars being able to analyze and observe organizations strategic process for building an identity is important for recognizing trends or patterns in the market. As consumer behavior is constantly changing it is imperative for analysts to study this area in the industry of marketing and advertising. Understanding how to create a constructive strategic plan can produce many benefits for organizations. Incorporating these ideas and processes into a brand can reflect upon the consumer bringing a positive value, and shared experience between the brand and the consumer.

## Research Methodology

When conducting research studies, it is important to lay out the methods of gathering and analyzing data for the research to provide an insight look into the researcher's angle. The first portion of the research starts out with content analysis framework. The process of producing content analysis work is to analyze all parts of content in social and digital media channels to understand what strategies and practices are currently being used. In this strategic plan the researcher adopted four variations of content analysis research, (a) *stakeholder analysis*, which compares internal and external stakeholders to an organization (Freeman et al., 2010), (b) *comparative analysis*, which compares competitors to the organization (Rose & Mackenzie, 1991), (c) *SWOT analysis*, that recognizes differentiating factors that an organization can establish in a broad market (Teoli et al., 2022), and (d) *social media analysis*, which looks at the strategies and content of an organization, over a five month period, to evaluate media trends and reoccurrences (Lai & To, 2015).

In addition to analyzing content from The Meat Shed, the researcher also wanted to gain an interpersonal perspective from local consumers on what is attractive to them in social and digital content. To be able to accomplish this task, two studies were created using qualitative and quantitative approaches. Within these studies, the researcher sought out information from participants on how they view social media content, and what is attractive to them as a consumer. Utilizing a multi-methodological approach, the researcher's belief is that the study would incorporate interpersonal perspectives and statistical perspectives that would provide an insight on the local consumer's behavior. A set of research questions were drafted to use as a framework for both studies. The first question the researcher wanted to look toward was how stakeholders

felt about their preferred media content. This idea was created to analyze what channels and avenues consumers liked to view content therefore; the following research question is proposed:

*RQ1: Will Meat Shed stakeholders report differences with their prefer means of communication?*

The second research question seeks to understand what attractive qualities do consumers notice in social and digital content. With the rapid acceleration of innovative technologies, consumers interest and attractions are constantly shifting. With the steady shift in consumer behavior the intent of this research question is to focus on what influential factors in media content, are consumers attracted to, therefore; the following researcher question is proposed:

*RQ2: How do customers perceive current message strategies used by The Meat Shed?*

The third research question aims to analyze any reputational differences stakeholders have with The Meat Shed. This question should acquire information regarding to the reputation and relationship The Meat Shed has with their stakeholders, therefore; the following research question is proposed:

*RQ3: Will Meat Shed stakeholders report differences in their relationship with the organization?*

The final research question is to geared to compare two different styles of content to investigate which is preferred to consumers. According to Simon, (2016) “Consumers are attracted to content if its relatable to individual experiences, or individual beliefs ensuring consumer interactivity and engagement” (p.13-14). Utilizing the knowledge from the social marketing theory, the researcher believes that user-generated content would be more effective than organizational-generated content. This belief lead to the creation of the first hypothesis for the study:

*H1:* Consumer reactions to a brand are more positive when exposed to user-generated content rather than organizational-generated content.

In order to answer the research questions proposed, approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) was sought. The project received approval on January 27, 2023. Data collection occurred between February 1, 2023 to April 20, 2023.

### ***Qualitative Analysis***

The first section of research involves the use of a qualitative framework to gain interpersonal definitions and thoughts with local consumers and their media usage. This involved personal semi-structured interviews to obtain the data from individuals to assist in the creation of strategic deliverables.

### ***Participants***

Six participants were selected and completed an interview session about their social media usage and attraction. For the purposes of safeguarding confidentiality, the participants are to remain anonymous throughout the explanation of processes and results. Before interviews were conducted informed consent was given to the researcher prior to the in-person interview. The selection process of the participants was recruited using a convenient sampling strategy from Pittsburg State University, in hopes to obtain information from the collegiate demographic. Of the six participants, half of the individuals were female ( $n=3$ ) within the age range of 18-25, and the other half of participants were male ( $n=3$ ) within the age range of 18-25. When selecting participants for qualitative interviews, there were inclusion criteria required for qualification. First, the participants had to be at least 18 years old, and currently live within the 4-state region (Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas). This ensures that only individuals, that live within reasonable proximity to The Meat Shed's establishment, were collected.

## ***Procedures***

The process and procedures for conducting the interviews was a fixed-interview process. After participants have been selected for an interview, the researcher coordinated through face-to-face interactions, and email messages to meet for an in-person interview session. A semi-structured interview format was used, meaning that a predetermined set of questions were prepared prior to the interview session. However, during the interview process if the researcher became aware a follow-up questions were used for purposes of expanding or clarifying statements. In order to analyze the content of the interview, each session was recorded through Zoom to obtain the raw transcripts for analysis. Following Pittsburg State Universities Institutional Review Board (IRB) standardsm, the recordings of the interviews are safely stored on a technology device that is password protected. The location of the interviews was chosen by the interviewee; however, recommendations were made for the space to be private in order to get clear audio recordings of the interviews. For each of the interviews the average length was between 10 to 15 minutes.

## ***Interview Design***

As stated above, a pre-prepared list of questions was created prior to the interview sessions in an attempt to cultivate a structured interview process. The interview questions followed a thematic analysis framework developed by Braun & Clark (2006) to identify, analyze, and report patterns within a data pool. Scholars argue that a theme captures a salient aspect of the data in a patterned way; therefore, researchers should engage with the data to see if it corelates to the questions in a meaningful way (Scharp & Sanders, 2019) Represented in Figure 8.1, are the list of interview questions asked to the participants, and the strategic research goal of the

question. Each of the interview questions were developed in relation to specific research questions.

*Figure 1.1: Qualitative Interview Questions*

Qualitative Interview Questions	
Interview Question	Strategic Reasoning
Would you more likely trust a business if they had a social media account? Why/Why not?	This question analyzes the levels of trust and reputational standing with consumers of the organization
Do you believe that all businesses should have a loyalty or retention program?	This question is geared to the creation of a loyalty inducing deliverable to retain a consumer relationship
What are some attractive practices businesses can utilize in their social media?	This question identifies influential attractive factors that can be used in social content.
Think of some popular brands in Pittsburg Kansas? Why do these brands come to mind?	This questions creates a comparison of other local brands to analyze how they create an identity online
Do you follow The Meat Shed on any social media account?	This question was created to see what the current commitment of the participants were to The Meat Shed
How can restaurants make a good social media presence online?	This question is designed to brainstorm strategies that can help the organization gain attraction, engagement, and commitment from the consumers



## Quantitative Analysis

The second part of the research study involves the use of a quantitative survey to analyze consumer behavior with social and digital media. To gather responses from participants, the researcher created a survey through Qualtrics to be able to analyze data using analytics.

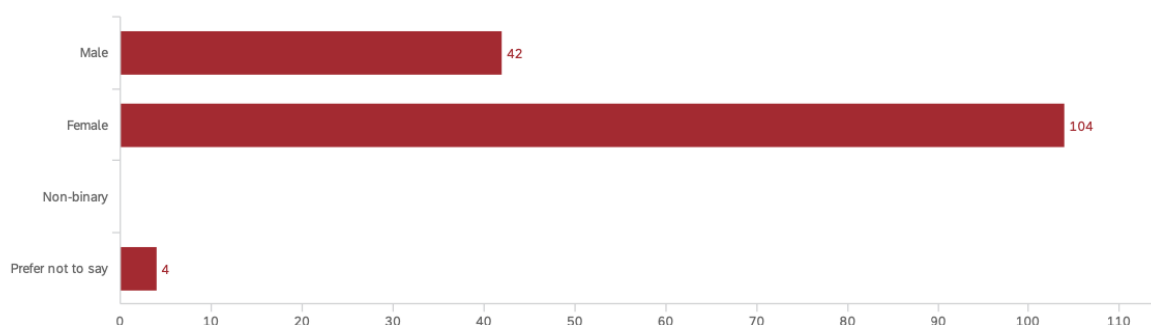
Researchers use quantitative analytics to conduct research because of the validity and reliability of the use of numerical values.

## Participants

In an effort to gain a broad perspective on the mindset of the consumer, 152 survey responses were collected and analyzed. When participants completed the survey, they were asked general demographic questions to gain an idea who the target market is. Figure 8.2 showcases the sex of the participants who engaged with the survey.

Figure 1.2: Participants Sex Responses

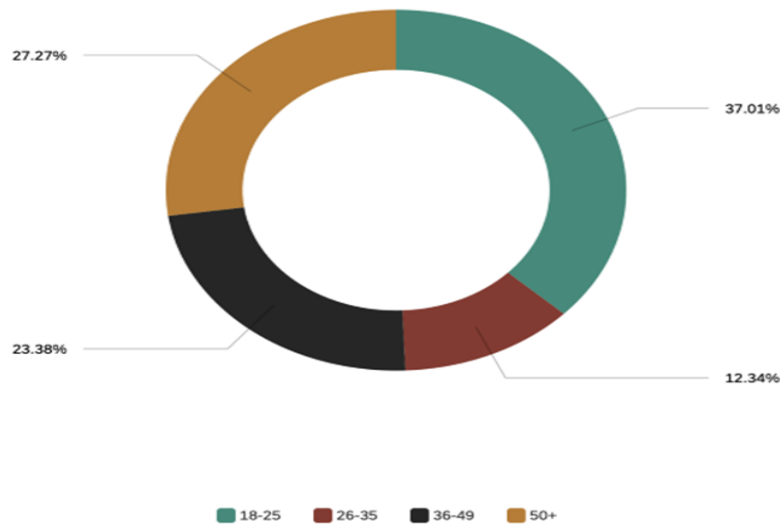
Q18 - What is your sex?



Females responses accounted for 69.33% ( $n=104$ ), and males accounted for 30.67% ( $n=42$ ). With the predominant responses of the survey being female, this also brings attention to the fact that the primary target audience should be directed towards the female audience for future digital efforts.

Another demographic characteristic that needs to be analyzed are the age range of the participants included in the survey. Age is an important characteristic to analyze as different generations of people are attracted to different styles of content as compared to other generations. As shown in Figure 1.3, the most popular age range were the college-aged range 18-25, accounting for 37.01% of the responses ( $n=55$ ). Second highest in the participant pool is the 50 plus age category accounting for 27.27% of the responses ( $n=41$ ). Third highest on the set of responses is the 36-49 age category accounting for 23.38% of the responses ( $n=36$ ). Lastly, the lowest representing age category from the participants is ages 26-35 accounting for 12.34% of the responses ( $n=19$ ). However, the age range breakdown is similar in the size from the diverse responses. Having a diverse response pool can provide multiple variations of perspectives to identify consumer personalities in viewing social media content.

Figure 1.3: Participant Age Responses



The final notable demographic from the participants of the study is the proximity of where they live to The Meat Shed. Understanding the proximity and location of the consumers engaging with content is important to identify centralized areas or trends of who is viewing social media posts. As shown in Figure 1.4, there are two main groups that interacted with the survey. One group of participants live 10 miles or less from The Meat Shed and accounted for 39.61% of the participants ( $n=58$ ), and the other group lives 100 miles or more from the establishment and accounted for 33.12% of the participant pool ( $n=51$ ). These two groups represent both consumers base of near and far geographic locations. Analyzing these groups will provide an opportunity to gain multiple perspectives on what classifies as attractive content. Following these two groups are the remaining three categories of participants living 11-25 miles from The Meat Shed accounting for 9.09% ( $n=14$ ), 26-50 miles accounting for 9.09% ( $n=14$ ), and finally 51-99 miles accounting for 9.09% ( $n=14$ ).

*Figure 1.4: Participant Proximity Chart*

Q21 - How many miles do you live from The Meat Shed located in Pittsburg Kansas



## ***Procedures***

When creating the survey, the researcher followed IRB protocols to ensure safe and ethical research for the participants and the researcher. A survey was created using a Qualtrics software to be able to effectively gather and create visual graphics for the data in the analysis stage. Since this research study caters to a local organization there were some stipulations that needed to be met before the participants could take the survey. The first requirement was all individuals needed to be at least 18 years old. This ensures that participants have full legal autonomy before consenting to taking the survey. The final requirement was all participants had to live within the 4-state region as stated above. This ensures that only individuals living in proximity of the establishment would complete the study to ensure the data was valid and reliable. The initial survey was published on March 10, 2023 and survey responses were analyzed on April 13, 2023. Analysis of the survey was conducted utilizing SPSS 27 to run statistical tests and correlations to answer the research questions and hypothesis posed.

### ***Distribution Strategy***

The primary sampling strategy was a convenience sample framework transferring into a snowball strategy. The researcher used personal connections and networks to generate awareness for participants to take the study, and requested individuals within the network to share the survey. The survey was initially posted on March 10, 2023 utilizing the Facebook platform for primary exposure. After the publication through social media, the researcher made requests to professors and graduate teaching assistants to publicize the study to their students. At the researcher's request, extra credit was not allowed to be offered, but persuasive messages were recommended to provide influence on potential participants. Accessibility of the study was also created in two different styles to ensure a smooth process for participants. A QR code was crafted for those who wanted to use a mobile device to complete the study quickly, and a website hyperlink was also shared for those completing the study on computer devices. Copies of the participant recruitment messages are included in the Appendix of this document.

### ***Survey Design***

When creating the survey, the researcher drafted a series of 23 questions that aimed to look at different dimensions of consumer behavior and media attraction utilizing organizational social content. Respondents averaged between six to eight minutes to complete the survey. Scale reliability was established to ensure if the data collected is following a reliable framework to identify common themes that are described below with Cronbach's alpha to determine scale reliability. This study used the Organizational-Public Relationship Scale (OPRS) developed by Kim (2001) to assess the perceptions of the public about their perceived relationship with the organization. This scale had been implemented before by a researcher Murdock (2003) to look at the organizational-public relationship with the National Botanic Gardens. The OPRS scale

includes a series of 16 Likert-scale questions on a seven-point scale ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. The dimensions of this scale include: *Organizational Trust*: this genre represents a desire for consumers to be treated just and fairly, and the organization to take opinions of the consumers into account ( $\alpha=.71$ ,  $M= 5.6$ ,  $n=4$ ); *Commitment*: this genre analyzes a relationship the organization has with their consumers. Ideas like consumer importance, and the consumer to organization link are measured here ( $\alpha=.72$ ,  $M= 5.11$ ,  $n=4$ ); *Community Involvement*: this genre seeks to identify the knowledge the consumer has about organizational involvement with local communities and events. ( $\alpha=.71$ ,  $M= 5.33$ ,  $n=4$ ); *Reputation*: this genre seeks to see how consumers view the brand and culture of the organization. ( $\alpha=.71$ ,  $M= 4.85$ ,  $n=4$ ).

### ***Organizational Message Testing***

After completing the OPRS, participants were asked to view two organizational message conditions (e.g. TikTok, Facebook). The first message is a TikTok video that is about two minutes in length. This video's topic is seeking to teach consumers on how to shuck oysters from home utilizing home tools. Questions like "*do you feel this post was attractive to you?*", or "*do you feel like you are important to The Meat Shed as a consumer?*" were asked following this video message ranging from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. This is in direct correlation to organizational trust, commitment, and involvement. The second portion of messaging analyzing was the inclusion of a popular social media post from The Meat Shed's Facebook platform. This post showcases on The Meat Shed's products from their special of the day. Questions like "*do you feel like The Meat Shed is innovative in its culture?*" or "*do you feel The Meat Shed wants to maintain a relationship with you as a consumer?*" were asked following this social media post.

Participant responses ranged from *strongly agree to strongly disagree*, and are in correlation to the dimensions of innovation, and reputation.

## Chapter Two: The Meat Shed Client Overview

The Meat Shed LLC is a local meat market and deli in Pittsburg, Kansas that focusses on local sourcing, quality service, and better food for the community. The Meat Shed is co-owned by Matt DeMoss and Josef Wantschik who have been trained professionally in butchery practices and have experience in the food industry. Matt and Joe both have a goal to make their business a “key pillar to Pittsburg” by targeting all demographics from college kids to families by providing locally sourced meat. Joe attended culinary school, and has been trained by mentors in the art of meat preservation and butchery. The Meat Shed is a split establishment with one side operating as a meat market, and the other side houses a full in-house deli restaurant using meats locally sourced in the 4-state region. One of the unique practices The Meat Shed enacts is they cure their own meat products ranging from sausages to salamis. Those products are made, dried, and cured in-house then, sold at the meat market or to other small businesses in the midwestern 4-state region. The Meat Shed also provides an educational opportunity for locals to register to learn the processes and safety regulations for curing meat. They offer these courses periodically throughout the year for interactive, experiential consumer engagement.

1. **Mission Statement:** The Meat Shed focuses on providing top tier food, and becoming a representative of the unique heritage and food culture of Southeast Kansas.
2. **Vision Statement:** To become a key pillar to the community of Pittsburg, Kansas.



## ***Goals and Objectives***

The Strategic Plan breaks down the research portion into three categories. These categories of goals represent the clients' interests of bringing more awareness to their own organization. These categories include reputational, relational, and task-oriented goals. The reputational goals were created based from the current identity of The Meat Shed, and pre-existing knowledge from the community and social media content. The relational category of objectives recognizes the relationship between the internal and external stakeholders to the organization. The task-oriented goals focus on the steps and measures The Meat Shed can execute to increase engagement and audience awareness through social and digital media that stem from the multi-methodological approaches.

### **Reputational Goals:**

- A. Awareness: The strategic plan analyzes the overall knowledge of the organization from individuals in the community.
- B. Social Media Presence: This plan conducts an analysis on the social media presence and the levels of engagement from the media platforms Facebook, TikTok, Instagram.

### **Relational Goals:**

- C. Stakeholders: The Strategic Plan undergoes research to examine the relationship development between internal and external stakeholders to the organization.

### **Task-Oriented Goals:**

- D. How to Increase Community Awareness: The Strategic Plan outlines steps to increase the level of knowledge about the organization.
- E. How to Increase Media Engagement: The Strategic Plan outlines steps to increase engagement levels on all media platforms.
- F. How to Target College Demographic: The Strategic Plan recommends steps to execute to attract the college demographic in Pittsburg Kansas.

## Chapter Three: Engagement of Content Analysis Framework

### *General Attitudes*

The attitudes of both external and internal stakeholder reflect similar characteristics when it comes to their consumer behaviors. General attitudes are described as “the thoughts and feelings of individuals in correlation to an identity or idea” (Wang, et.al, 2001). Through observation of the internal stakeholders (employees) they seemed to be very positive and enthusiastic. This type of personality and energy is much needed, especially in the service industry. When consumers walk into an establishment, one of main factors they look is the environment of the business. Employee personalities can contribute on building a personable organizational brand. The external stakeholders (consumers) seemed to be equally as motivated to support the business if they had critical knowledge of the organization’s operations. After conducting preliminary analysis through prior studies, potential stakeholders are more likely to support an organization that is local and has a strong media presence. This information provides The Meat Shed with a motivational factor to try to reach out to more consumers within proximity of the business location. As requested by the client, the goal of The Meat Shed is to become a “Pillar of Pittsburg”. With the assistance of the social media and motivation from the stakeholders, the organization can empower them by providing information and personable memories to share.

### *Knowledge*

Based on the responses from the stakeholder surveys and interviews it became clear that the external stakeholders were not as knowledgeable about the nature of the business. After investigation, some consumers were confused on the identity of The Meat Shed because of the name. In their opinion, they believed The Meat Shed to be more a butchery than a restaurant

establishment. Another indicator to the lack of awareness from external stakeholders was that some participants were confused about what the establishment entailed since at a glance it looks like a gas station. Both of these factors indicate a potential weakness in The Meat Shed brand identity. With internal stakeholders, through observations, they seemed knowledgeable about the business and the nature of the establishment. This is likely because they are more involved and interactive with the business than the external stakeholders. However; the internal stakeholders seem to be lacking the knowledge on the history of the business and how it came to be. When questions were asked about how the businesses got started they deferred them to the owners. Increasing the employee's knowledge about the nature of the organization can showcase the connectedness between the business and the employees.

### ***Beliefs***

Throughout the preliminary steps of creating the strategic plan for The Meat Shed, a few personal beliefs from the author's perspective is that the awareness and engagement from external stakeholders can greatly increase if the organization empowers them by catering to their desires. Both internal and external stakeholders want the local business to succeed and be heavily involved with the community. It is also the belief of the consumers for the organization to target the younger audiences and demographics due to the geographical location of The Meat Shed. Since the organization is in proximity to a college campus, The Meat Shed can shift their focus and attention to gather some of the college student demographic. Securing the attention of the younger demographic will allow the opportunity for additional exposure through digital content and word of mouth advertising.

## ***Stakeholder Analysis***

When creating a strategic plan, one of the first things that can be analyzed is the stakeholders and their individual characteristics. Knowing an organization's audience is imperative, and beneficial to social and digital marketing. Campaigns can be created and targeted to certain demographics based on the information from the stakeholder analysis. Before conducting a stakeholder analysis, we must first understand what qualifies as a stakeholder. Stakeholders are "people or small groups with power to respond to, negotiate with, and change the strategic future of the organization" (Eden & Ackerman, 1998, p. 117). This definition resembles the power dynamic individuals or consumers can have on a organization. To help provide a framework for analysis we will refer to Bunn et al. (2002) who categorized a three step-process for defining stakeholders. The first step resembles the power role the stakeholder plays in the community and toward the organization. The second step describes potentially interested stakeholders and categorizes their characteristics. For example, some possible categories of characteristics could be providers, visitor, government agency, consumer, and employees. The third step involves providing classification on what type of stakeholder they are. Bunn et. al (2002) provided two different types of classifications, internal and external. Internal stakeholders are individuals who have power influence on the organization from an insider perspective. These stakeholders gain their perspective by immersing themselves with the business structure. External stakeholders are individuals who have power influence on the organization from an outside perspective by having no affiliation to the organization. Both of these classifications have important roles to play and can influence organizations.

In correlation to The Meat Shed, four different types of stakeholders have been identified. First are the employees. Employees in this case are an internal stakeholder as they have an active

role in the day-to-day operations. Employees for The Meat Shed are seen as the face of the business, as this is who the community would interact with primarily in normal business operations. Additionally, employees have the ability to provide fruitful information about the nature of the organization just from word of mouth. In the marketing field, these individuals are known as brand ambassadors. Brand ambassadors take an organization's identity and use personal channels or means to create more audience awareness. This can be done by using strategies of product placement, social media exposure, promotional products. That is why it is important for organizations to treat their internal stakeholders with care and support as they have a pivotal role in the business. When looking at the power role that employees have within the company it is relatively simple. Employees are included in the community workforce, and their motivation and passion for work is financially and morally driven. "The employees would be more inclined to work harder if they seem to have an equitable compensation rate in return, and feel like they are making a valuable impact in their communities and within the organization" (Frontline PBS, 2020).

Community partnerships are important stakeholders to The Meat Shed. Even though some of the businesses in proximity to the organization can be seen at a competing business, however given the nature of how they run their operations can influence factors within The Meat Shed. For example, in the height of Jeff Bezos's career at Amazon, the company made a organizational wide policy that every employee under the company would have a set minimum wage of \$15 an hour. This corporate rule change made it a very attractive factor for work personnel, and forced Amazon competitors to also raise their wages to have that competitive advantage. Now given the size and outreach of The Meat Shed, the scale sizes of the organization are much smaller, but the same influential process can still occur. Businesses,

specifically ones in the food industry, are seen as entertainment and leisure establishments.

These organizations sell products and services for monetary compensation in return.

Additionally, businesses are seen as financial producers that can be reflected from taxes rates or the amount of revenue the business is bringing in. Naturally the more income a business obtains, the more money that is paid in taxes.

Looking toward the consumer-side, there are a couple of stakeholders that have some influence or a power dynamic with The Meat Shed. One of the most prominent consumer bases in Pittsburg, Kansas are single individuals or college students. In a town of 20,000 college students make up of about 6,000-7,000 of the population (Pittsburg State University, 2022). This equivalent to about 27-30% of the population is just from the college. These external stakeholders are classified as a consumer or visitor to the community and to the organization. Common characteristics of these individuals include low attention spans, high stress levels, high levels of escapism, lack of stability, and strong idealistic values of local support (COE – Characteristics of Postsecondary Students, n.d.). This can be translated that college students are seeking distractions or entertainment to escape from the stressors of instability and demands of higher education.

The final recognizable stakeholder on the consumer side are married couples and families. These consumer bases are another form of an external stakeholder that hold an influential stake with the organization. Just like the previous consumer base, married couples and families are classified as consumers or visitors to an organization and the community. The particular difference between these stakeholders lies in the characteristics. These consumer bases are deemed as stable groups, that express high levels of interest to the entertainment and leisure districts. Most importantly, these consumer bases are more in favor of creating memorable

experiences that are valuable of their time and money. Lastly, an important aspect to note is individuals are not as available in comparison the hours of operation of the business which is 10am-6pm. Most of these individuals have high levels of commitment to the activities like tending to families, and full-time employment. This can be a challenge for the organization to tackle in reaching these consumer bases.

*Table 3.1 Stakeholder Analysis Chart*

<b>Employees (Internal)</b>	<b>Businesses (External)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Power Role:</b> workforce, brand ambassadors</li> <li>• <b>Characteristics:</b> finically driven, passionate with high levels of engagement if motivational factor is present, loyalty with stability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Power Role:</b> service provider, situational consumer</li> <li>• <b>Characteristics:</b> finically driven, passionate about employment, high levels of motivation and collaboration, competitive mindset</li> </ul>
<b>Single Individuals / College Students (External)</b>	<b>Married Couples / Families (External)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Power Role:</b> consumer, visitor</li> <li>• <b>Characteristics:</b> low attention spans, high stress levels, high level of escapism, strong local support, community mindset</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Power Role:</b> consumer, visitor</li> <li>• <b>Characteristics:</b> high levels of entertainment, and leisure activities, high level of commitment, limited availability, memorable events are a priority</li> </ul>

## **Social Media Analysis**

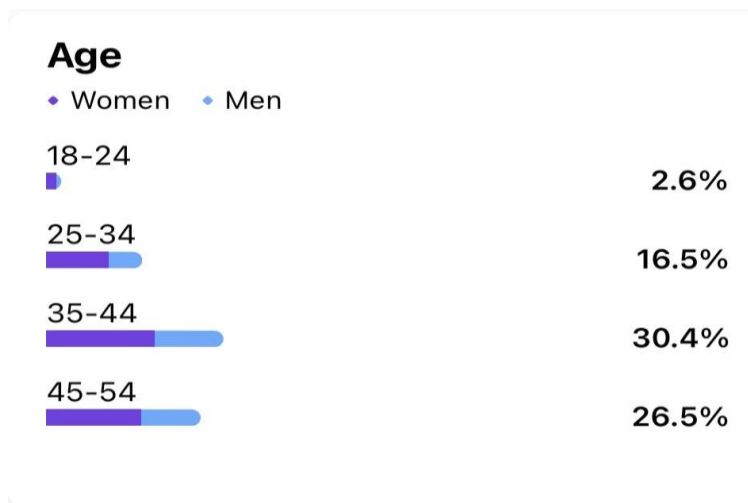
One of the primary goals of this strategic plan is to analyze and forecast potential social and digital trends and patterns that The Meat Shed can use to execute a plan of action of creating and targeting digital content. Prior to the creation of the strategic plan, a social media analysis must be conducted on the organization to gain a visual representation of what strategies are effective and ineffective. Social media analysis is described as “the process of collecting and analyzing audience data shared on social networks to improve an organizations strategic business decision” (Hanna & Burns, 2023). The current media usage scope from The Meat Shed involves the use of two social media platforms (i.e., Facebook and TikTok), and one online website.

### ***Facebook***

Facebook is the main social media platform used to bring information to The Meat Shed’s consumers, and also an avenue to showcase specials and products to the mass audiences. Their Facebook follower count includes 5,200 individuals. The specific audience analysis of the platform reveals a couple of noticeable trends that can provide useful tips on how to target future consumer bases. One of the first noticeable qualities was the gender identification of the followers of The Meat Shed: 64.4% of the followers are female, and 35.6% of the followers are male. This data tells us that the social media deliverables and posts should be geared to focus on the appeal to women rather than men. Facebook analytics does not support the feature of being able to identify the marital status of the individuals; however, a fair assumption that a majority of the women following The Meat Shed are spouses or in some form of commitment with a significant other.



*Table 3.2: Facebook Age Demographic*



\*Note: Data only reflects individuals who interacted with Facebook platform. This data is pulled straight from Facebook Analytics\*

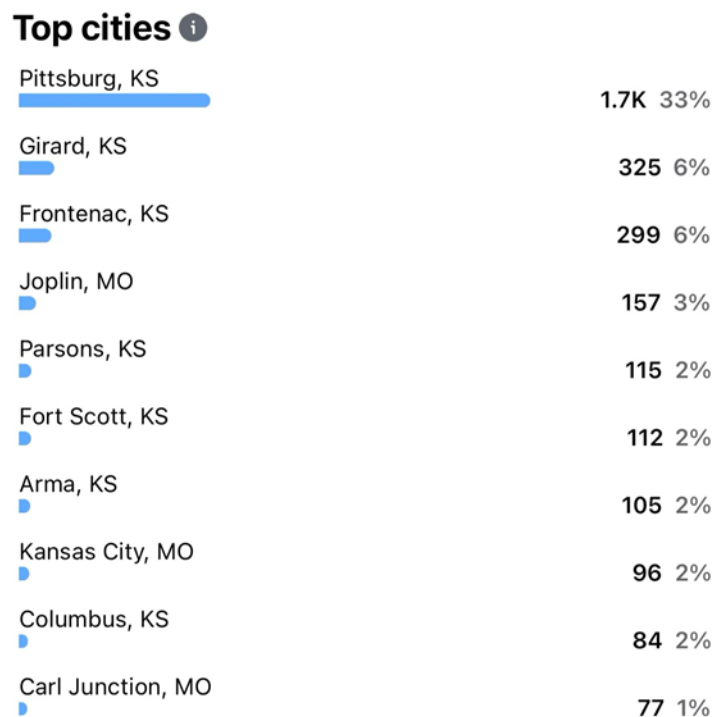
According to Forbes Social Media Division (2022), women are attracted to bright and vibrant colors, and prefer posts that are concise and appealing to the eye. In regard to the food industry, the use of imagery or narrative storytelling on final products, or graphics of interpersonal conversations between individuals are what are deemed as attractive by females. Another criterion of audience information that Facebook analytics provides is age. In a preliminary meeting with Matt DeMoss in June of 2022, he explained that most of the organization's current cliental involves the age range of older individuals or older couples. When investigating the age range of the followers the most prominent age range is ages 35-44 years old which represents about 30.9% of the stakeholders on the Facebook platform included in table 3.2 is the categorical data of the age ranges for The Meat Shed on the Facebook platform.

The information from the data table coincides directly to what Matt DeMoss was expecting in the business's demographic. When reviewing the cliental, 56.09% of the cliental that is involved with The Meat Shed are represented through the age ranges of 35 and up. In

effort to expand the organization’s horizon to attract new consumers, a recommendation would be to attract the college student demographic.

Another general demographic that can be analyzed through the Facebook analytic software provides the geographic location of the followers. “The main cliental or consumer base of the followers should reside within 10-15 miles in proximity of the organization establishment” (Felton & Sims, 2005). When analyzing the geographical location of the followers, most of them reside in Pittsburg, Kansas or in the 4-state region. A complete breakdown of the follower’s geographical location is represented in Table 3.3.

*Table 3.3 Consumers Proximity Radius to The Meat Shed on Facebook Platform*

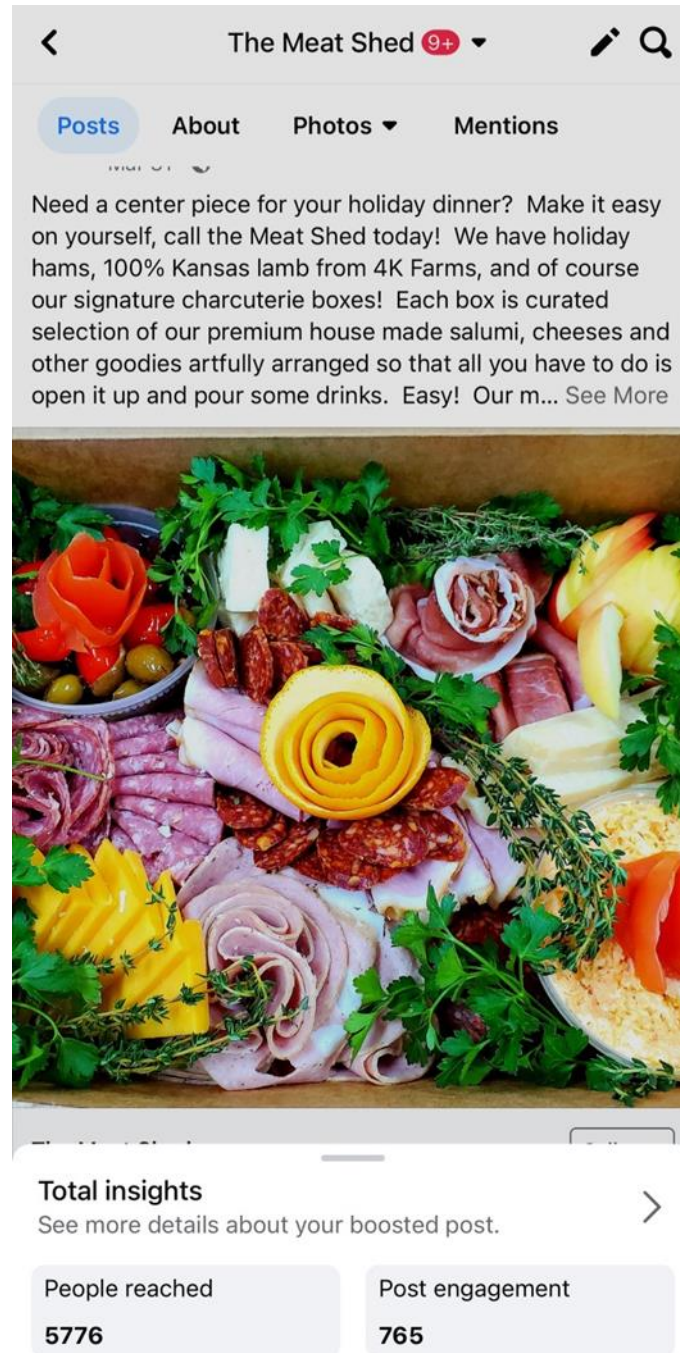


\*Note: Data only reflects individuals who interacted with Facebook platform. This data derives from Facebook Analytics\*

The data from Table 3.3 shows that most of the individuals who interact with The Meat Shed are located within a 25-mile radius from the establishment. It is important to note that this statistic is only an estimated value based on the followers who interact with content published by The Meat Shed. On Facebook, the program analytics within the Facebook software are unable to track the exact location of the individual unless they interact with the content. As a result, this is a rough estimate base on known consumer behaviors on this platform.

Lastly, a final part of the social media analysis is analyzing the content that is being published on the platform. Stemming from the ideas of the social marketing theory “social and digital posts should create audience awareness on an idea, person, or behavior” (Liman, 2018, p. 34). In a marketing aspect there are two different kinds of social content. The first is user-generated content. “User-generated content is content that is created by the organization to publish to mass audiences” (Fader & Winer, 2012, p.371). From the Facebook posts, The Meat Shed primarily uses a mix of informational and promotional content. The informational content ranges from weekly menu updates to information about educational experiences. On the promotional side, The Meat Shed produces content like product showcases, partnership posts, and educational courses about meat courses. Tracking the social media posts between the months of January 2023 to April 2023, the most popular post on the Facebook platform was a paid promotional post for a holiday dinner package (see Figure 3.4). This Facebook post reached 5,776 people and generated 765 impressions. When analyzing social media metrics, impressions can include likes, comments, or clicks on a post. The content of the post is very attractive with vibrant colors in the visual elements, and the verbal content is very information, but persuasive to coax people to buy from the organization.

Figure 3.4: Facebook Social Media Post



## TikTok

The second social media platform that The Meat Shed uses is TikTok. This platform tries to generate additional exposure and awareness from consumer interest and proximity. The TikTok algorithm provides its content to its users based on the attraction of the media they use, and the proximity of the posts to the user (Hirose, 2022). Understanding this, the plan for the TikTok platform was to provide video based informational content to the users that represents the personality of The Meat Shed.

The current following of The Meat Shed on TikTok sits at 229 followers and 786 likes across all content. The TikTok account was created in June of 2022 and the post rate on this platform averages about twice a month. The organization's ideal demographic is more stable and viable from Facebook than TikTok, but for getting the brand identity out to the public, and gaining the exposure can prove to be useful through this platform. The TikTok channel features videos of cooking demonstrations that people at home can follow to create dishes from products used from The Meat Shed. These cooking demonstrations are engaging and informational to the consumer viewing the media content. The most popular post on the channel was one of the first videos that was produced on the account. In regard to views, the most viewed video was the *pan-seared steak part two* sitting at 3,033 views. This indicates to the organization that the exposure is possible on the channel of TikTok. In regard to consumer impressions, the video with the most impressions was the *oyster shucking* video sitting at 118 likes, and one comment. Being able to consider the analytics of individual posts can help the planning process to use the same format and style of video in future content for the platform.

## **Online Website**

The Meat Shed also maintains a digital presence of their organization through a website hosted by a company called Square. Square is a company that helps provide a point of sale system for small businesses in order to help streamline business operations like online ordering or catering. The purpose of the website is to support online shopping. The website includes some vital aspects such as: (a) organizational identifiers, (b) available products, and (c) hours of operation. There is a lack of informational content about the nature of the business. For instance, on the website there is no organizational history or an “About Us” page explaining the business values, or an inside look on how the business was created and operates. Topics like community partnerships, and CSR topics are good to include on an organizational website. Providing this information builds reputation with stakeholders, and builds trust among The Meat Shed’s constituents making it inviting for consumers to support the organization.

## **Comparative Analysis**

In the strategic planning process, another method of analysis that can be used to judge trends in patterns of media culture is a comparative analysis. Comparative analysis is described as “a comparison of two or more processes, documents, or data sets that represent a pattern analysis” (Pickvance, 2001, p. 14). This form of analysis compares two organizations or entities together to observe any noticeable differences in strategy that can indicate potential success, and potential failures in media content. When selecting organizations that meet criteria as a local competitor to The Meat Shed, specific criteria were used to see if there was a match. Of the qualities to be deemed a competitor the organization had to operate within the same business industry, be a locally owned business, and maintain a social media presence. The organizations that have been selected for analysis are The Pitt, Chatters, and Drop the H Brewing Co. It is

important to note that when comparing these entities, the only variable that is being analyzed is the social and digital content of the organization, and not the business structure.

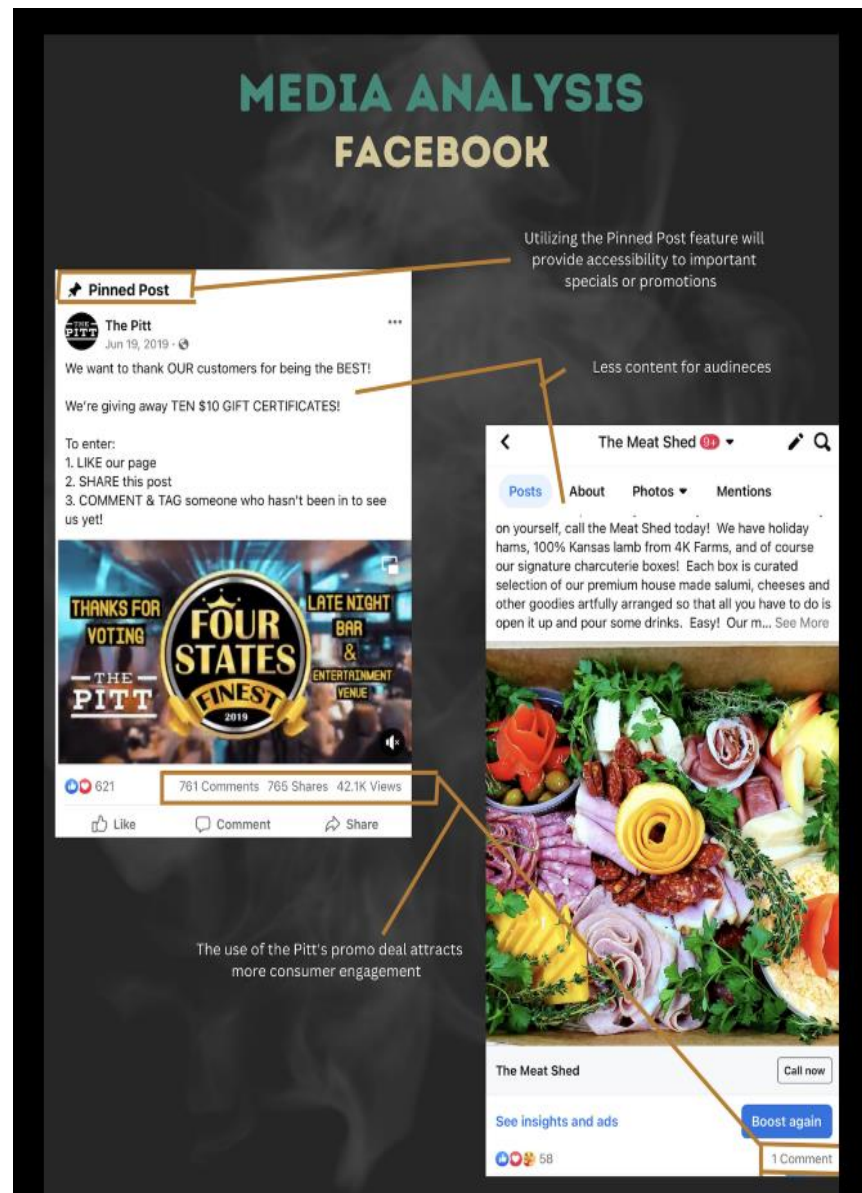
## **The Pitt**

The Pitt is an American restaurant bar and grill that is located in the downtown district of Pittsburg, Kansas. The Pitt has become a recognizable business with the community of Pittsburg due to the nature of deals and promotions, and the amount of community ties the organization has with activities with the local college's sports team and student organizations. The Pitt maintains two social media platforms Facebook and Instagram. On Facebook, The Pitt has a follower count of 8,300, and 3,000 followers on Instagram. Automatically, a noticeable difference between The Pitt and The Meat Shed is the number of followers. The Pitt is attracting and targeting a larger consumer base than The Meat Shed. The reasons for this can be variable and unstable due to consumer preferences or unpredictable behaviors, however based on the media strategies on these platforms The Pitt has been able to target and interact with more consumers. The next factor that was compared between these two organizations is the post consistency of digital content. Ideally, in accordance to the social marketing theory, when you "identify your target audience you want to reinforce the importance of message that you are trying to send. When people receive a message once, they tend to forget it easily" (Liman, 2018, pg. 36). In business, you want maximize audience awareness of the brand message and its products and services by marketing consistently. The Meat Shed excels in this area of digital content. On Facebook, The Meat Shed averages about one post per day, increasing their distribution strategy 3.2 times greater than the average user according to Facebook Analytics. The Pitt also mimics this vital concept and averages of one post per day on their business platforms. Lastly, the final factor that was compared with these organizations are the styles of



media published and analytics data for that post. In Figure 3.5 it shows a comparison of both organizations most popular social media posts.

*Figure 3.5: The Pitt and The Meat Shed Media Analysis*



When observing the figure above, there are some noticeable characteristics that can indicate success in social media marketing. Looking at The Pitt's popular post, one feature was the potential on interactivity the consumers had with the organization. The style of content



reflected a giveaway and promotional mindset. On the post there was stipulations that had to be met to be qualified for the giveaway. First, viewers were required to like and engage with the post. Next, they had to comment on the post, which produces additional impressions to increase the amount of people who will see the content. Finally, the viewer had to share the post on their own dashboard which increases the distribution of the post. These messages motivate consumers who want free products to advocate for your organization since they have an incentive. This mimics the concept of creating curated content. “Curated content is the process of others sharing information about your organization” (Pickvance, 2001, p. 15). One of the first modern companies that benefited from curated content was Starbucks. One of the marketing strategies within the Starbucks franchise was for employees to purposely misspell names on Starbucks drinks to provoke a response. Naturally, consumers would be distraught with the mistake of misspelling their name and in cases create social media content about this experience. The underlying factor with this tactic is these consumers are promoting the Starbucks drink by exposing the humorous mistake (Menon, 2020). In this case, The Pitt cultivated the production of curated content by providing an incentive or motivation to generate exposure.

## **Chatters**

Chatters is another local restaurant that has a lengthy relationship to the Pittsburgh community. Chatters is located next door to The Meat Shed, making it an adjacent competitor. When analyzing social media practices, Chatters primary platform is Facebook. On this platform they have a following of 8,700 people, and publishes a post three days a week. In comparison to The Meat Shed’s most popular post, Chatters does not reach the same levels of consumer interaction on social media. It is important, however to take note of the styles of posts Chatters uses. Chatters most interactive post was an event promotion with college students. This strategy

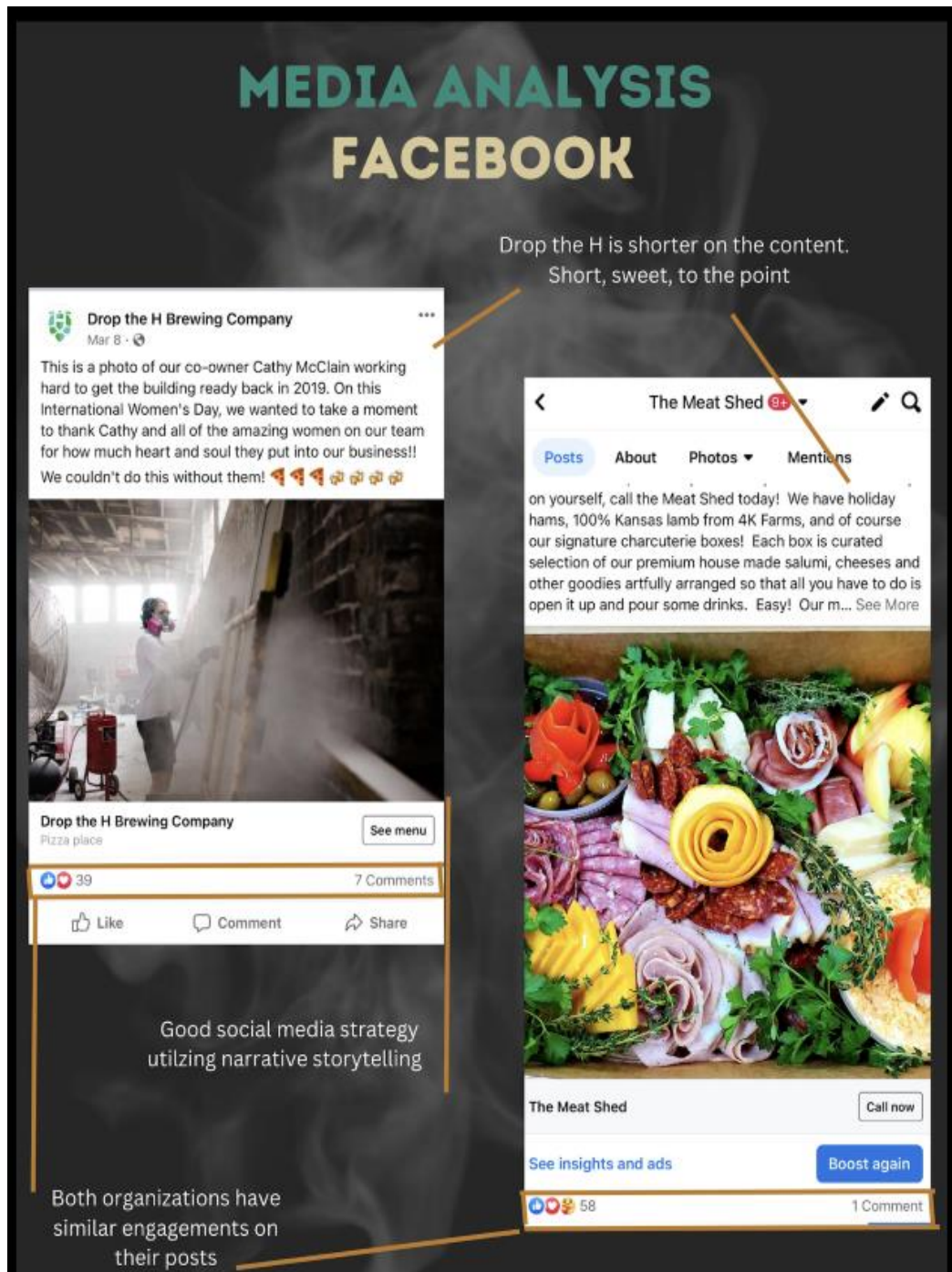
is most useful when trying to cater to new audiences. According to Wang et al. (2016) “one of the biggest causes in building effective brand awareness stems from the business-to-business (B2B) marketing” (p. 59). Partnering with institutions that are affiliated with desired consumer bases, can be one the best tactics to reach broader audiences.

### **Drop the H Brewing Co**

The last identifiable competitor to the Meat Shed is Drop the H Brewing Co. located in Pittsburg, Kansas. Drop the H is a modern take on an American style pub serving craft beer and pizza. Both organizations, The Meat Shed and Drop the H, cater to different consumer bases but what really makes Drop the H a competitor is the ability to quickly attract consumers through events. Networking theory, created by Peter Monge (2011), states that “an effective way to create and retain an organizational network is to remain interactive with your members”. Drop the H remains interactive with their consumers by providing in-house special events like a trivia and military appreciation nights.

Drop the H’s dominant social media platform is Facebook with a current following on 4,300 followers. The Meat Shed and Drop the H both average a post consistency of one post per day. The styles of posts Drop the H uses follows The Meat Shed’s mindset of providing promotional and informational content. Since these two organizations share similar digital strategies the concern on how The Meat Shed can stand out online. Following the common theme of social media content, The Meat Shed can accomplish this by providing incentives or deals to motivate consumers to the establishment. As shown in Figure 3.6, Drop the H gains more impressions when making content with “behind the scenes” or “history” of the business.

Figure 3.6: Drop the H and The Meat Shed Media Analysis



Providing consumers with a “behind the scenes” look can make them feel more knowledgeable or in exclusive standing with the organization. Consumers may be more attracted

to establishments that have a history or significant meaning The Meat Shed could employ this strategy by engaging in narrative storytelling.

### **The SWOT Matrix**

The invention of the SWOT matrix has been around in the business industry for many decades. Originally the idea of creating this matrix is coined by Albert Humphrey in the 1960's. "This analysis tool received its acceptance and recognition by being able to differentiate and establish a niche within a broader market" (Teoli et al., 2022). Aside from the business world, the SWOT matrix can additionally be applied at an individual-level to assess a person's standing in comparison to their competition. When assessing the SWOT matrix dimensions there are internal and external considerations. "Strengths" and "Weaknesses" are represented as an internal consideration, and "Opportunities" and "Threats" are represented as an external consideration.

The first part of the SWOT matrix is to address the strengths of the organization. Strengths should outline what the organization advantages are, and what are some unique services that organization can provide to consumers. For The Meat Shed, the first strength is their consistent social media presence on the Facebook platform. At a quick glance The Meat Shed averages about one post per day. By providing a daily post, this primes the followers to expect a post from the organization. Not only are the posts consistent, they are also very informational in their content. This also helps the types of consumers that are information seekers looking for specific knowledge about daily specials. The second strength of The Meat Shed is the uniqueness of providing educational courses of meat preparation and safety to the public. By providing hands-on opportunities for consumers to interact and engage with, the organization is effective on increasing consumer awareness and interactivity. The Meat Shed

currently hosts four different styles of informational cooking courses (i.e. sausage, salami, dry curing, and hog breakdown). A final recognizable strength is the partnership with local organizations that supports the use of locally sourced organic foods. The Meat Shed made a partnership with Leafy Green Farms, to showcase an organic product that is made locally. Creating partnerships with other businesses showcases a “community support” mindset and this can be recognizable by the public. Additionally, the use of organic foods correlates with The Meat Shed’s mission statement: The Meat Shed focuses on providing top tier food, and becoming representative of the unique heritage and food culture of Southeast Kansas. This provides a glance of the steps The Meat Shed is taking to adhere to their visions while creating organizational credibility and identity.

The second part of the SWOT matrix is weaknesses. Weaknesses outlines what the organization needs to improve on, and what your consumers view as an organizational weakness. The first weakness that has been identified is the knowledge external stakeholders have about the establishment. In the qualitative and quantitative studies, participants have stated the image of the organization is confusing. Some of the participants have expressed that they are unaware of the location of establishment, and what services the organization offers. Some external stakeholders are confused if The Meat Shed is a butchery establishment, or just a meat shop. Many were unaware that The Meat Shed has an in-house-restaurant operation. The final recognizable weakness directly correlates to the previous weakness. The Meat Shed lacks organizational history on website. The Meat Shed currently has a website through Square. This website houses an online ordering system for consumers to order online for pick up. The lack of this informational content like narrative stories or an “About Us” page can be a leading cause as to why external stakeholders are unaware of business operations.

The third part of the SWOT matrix is opportunities. Opportunities are the first part of the matrix to begin laying out the external considerations. Opportunities recognize potential factors or new trends that an organization can take advantage of. The first opportunity The Meat Shed has is exploring the inclusion of the college demographic. Due to the proximity being less than five miles from main campus, it would make sense for the organization to take advantage of the college demographic. "Pittsburg State University holds a student population of 5,500 people" (Pittsburg State University, 2022). The Meat Shed can take advantage of this convenient demographic by working or partnering with athletic clubs, and student organizations. The last opportunity The Meat Shed can implement is the inclusion of a loyalty or retention program. "The use of a retention program is a common business practice to keep consumers returning to the organization" (Maples, 1996). The use of a loyalty program can be done digitally or using a print variation. The use of this opportunity can also attract the college demographic if they are presented with a special or incentive to return.

The last part of the SWOT matrix is the threats. "Threats are presented external considerations that bring attention to problems or situations the organization can run into or face trouble with" (Teoli et al., 2022). The first threat recognizes the competitive market in Pittsburg. The Pittsburg community attracts a variety of local businesses that can be seen as competition to the organization. By providing motivational factors or incentives to the consumers The Meat Shed can capture interest. The second threat to The Meat Shed is the hours of operation of establishment. Since The Meat Shed closes at 6pm they would lose the dinner time audience. This limitation can restrict the ability of some consumers to support the organization. The last threat of The Meat Shed can be the lack of consumer spending due to economic inflation. As the cost of living and goods increases, consumers spend less on wants and non-essential needs

impacting food industry locations. Some organizations have countered this by offering more specials, or kickbacks to the consumer for limited time offers. Offering consumers exclusive deals can motivate consumer behavior to influence them to support their organization.

Figure 3.7: SWOT Matrix Chart

<p><b>Strengths</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of meat courses</li> <li>• Consistency of social media presence on Facebook</li> <li>• Partnerships with local businesses utilizing organic foods or products</li> </ul>	<p><b>Weaknesses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stakeholders have limited knowledge of establishment operations</li> <li>• Lacking narrative storytelling elements on organizational website</li> </ul>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targeting the college demographic</li> <li>• Proximity location to PSU campus and college residential areas</li> <li>• Sponsorships with collegiate sports and student organizations</li> <li>• Inclusion of a consumer retention or loyalty program</li> </ul>	<p><b>Threats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pittsburg has many local competing businesses</li> <li>• Organization hours of operation creates consumer market limitation on dinner crowd</li> <li>• Economic inflation deterring consumer spending</li> </ul>



## Chapter Four: Qualitative and Quantitative Analysis Results

### Qualitative Analysis

The data that were collected from the interviews reflected similar results across all six participants. In order to answer RQ1 which states: will Meat Shed stakeholders report differences within their preferred means of communication, The first question that was introduced to participants is if they would more likely trust an organization if they had a social media account. The responses from all six participants were very centralized in the same response. Female participant one explained that “if an organization had a social account this is the consumers way to authenticate or background check them to see if they are attractive” (personal communication, April 22, 2023). An important trend or behavior trait is important to note here. Based off these responses ‘consumers use social media as a background check to see if the organization is inviting to them or not. That would mean that businesses need to showcase a good first impression online, as this is the most accessible information to the consumer. This notable characteristic directly relates to the researchers second research question which seeks to know how consumers perceive message strategies. Based off the participants responses, social media messages are viewed as informational and promotional content to see if the environment of the business is attractive to consumers. Spence & Essoussi’s (2008) explains the processes of models of building a brand identity. “Part of building a brand identity requires cultivating a positive consumer experience, and one of the most predominant influential factors for building a positive experience is the environment of the organization” (p. 1037).

Another question that was asked to the participants was in their opinion, should organizations have a loyalty program or retention program. This question was designed to inform



the creation of a specific deliverables. When asked, female participant two and male participant four indicated that the use of a loyalty program should be situational. When asked for further explanation, the participants stated that only certain types of industries should include a retention program. The food industry was one that was identified for having a loyalty program. Favorable ideas on creating a loyalty program included the creation of an app or a in print coupon like a punch card. However; female participant one indicated “that a punch card is a good idea, but could easily be lost by the consumers potentially causing frustration” (personal communication, April 24, 2023). This response ties into the first research question which states, will Meat Shed stakeholders report differences in their preferred means of communication? These responses illustrate that some stakeholders prefer digital content, and some would not be opposed to in print documents for specials, deals, or information publication.

A third question that was asked to participants was what makes a social media post attractive to you. The responses from this question were very diverse, but included a variety of themes throughout the answers. Female participant one, female participant three, and male participant four explained that attractive content to them is clear, concise, and includes vibrant graphics. Female participant two, and male participant five stated that memorable experiences and exclusive content is also attractive. In the researcher’s opinion, all of these influential factors can be combined and included in a social media post, but in the responses, there was another identifiable theme which was access to exclusive content. This theme is the inclusion of exclusive content. When investigating further, female participant one explained “having a behind the scenes look of a business make me feel like I am part of a VIP status, or the business is speaking directly towards me as a consumer” (personal communication, April 22, 2023). It also is just cool to see behind the scenes operations of a business.” The Meat Shed currently does not

employ a behind the scenes look at the operations of the business aside from the TikTok videos designed to showcase a small portion of the operation. The researcher further wanted to understand if stakeholders would report differences in their relationship to the organization. As indicated from the participants, exclusive content makes them feel more attracted and engaged to the operations of the business. Consumers want to feel like they have a pivotal role in an organization, and in some cases, they would like to see it represented with motivational incentives.

The final interview question asked participants how restaurants or food locations can establish a good social media presence online. Across all six participants the responses were very similar. Participants explained the common themes of clear and concise messages, inclusion of vibrant graphics to catch audience attentions, and the resemblance of memorable consumer experiences. As explained by male participant five “I would support a business if they made me feel important within the establishment, and online. It doesn’t even have to be about me, but having days where specials happen to reward me as a consumer is very nice.” (personal communication, April 23, 2023). This stems back to the idea of cultivating a positive consumer experience. When the consumers feel important or witness an organization trying to maintain a positive relationship with them, the local support is more beneficial and noticeable.

### **Quantitative Analysis**

The results from the quantitative study provides unique insights and perspectives toward consumer behavior. Survey responses were collected and then analyzed in SPSS 27 to conduct a variety of tests. In order to answer *RQ1*, which questioned whether Meat Shed stakeholders would report differences in their preferred means of communication, two Chi Square tests were conducted to compare sex and age, to how the participants received communication. On the first

Chi Square test, age and how participants received communication reflects a significant difference  $X^2 (15, n = 151) = 30.2, p = 0.01$ . Across all age categories the preferred means of communication was social media

This solidifies the importance of creating content catering to the audience, since that is there preferred means of media. The second Chi Square test looks at the relationship between sex of the participants and their preferred means of communication. This data reflected no significant difference  $X^2 (10, n=151) = 11.43, p = .32$ . This data shows that both genders prefer the use of social media for obtaining information.

In order to answer *RQ2*, which questioned, how consumers perceive The Meat Shed's message strategies, three statistical tests were conducted. The first statistical test conducted was an Independent Samples T-test to compare the age of participants to their reactions on attractive level after watching the Meat Shed video. There was no significant effect for age,  $t (18) = .91, p = .11$ , in comparison to their reactions on how they felt about the TikTok video in terms of attraction ( $M=2.42, SD=1.23$ ).

This means that all the age groups had different reactions and interpretations of the attraction level from the video. A second Independent Samples T-test was conducted to compare the relationship between sex of the participants to their feelings on attraction from the TikTok video.

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attraction ( $M=2.42$ ,  $SD=1.23$ ). This means that all the age groups had different reactions and interpretations of the attraction level from the video. A second Independent Samples T-test was conducted to compare the relationship between sex of the participants to their feelings on attraction from the TikTok video. According to the data there was no significant effect for sex,  $t(18) = -.96$ ,  $P = .82$ . This means that males and females did not report any significant reactions from the video. This can translate that males and females view and intercept the content the same ( $M = 1.50$ ,  $SD = .57$ ). The final statistical test that was conducted was a correlational test to compare how likely participants would be active with an organization if they were active on social media and if they felt like the TikTok video was attractive to them as a consumer. The data reflected that there was no correlation between both scales  $r(151) = .08$ ,  $P = .29$ . These statistical studies showcase that there is no major difference between ages and sex of the participants and how they view their social media content. In translation this represents that the Meat Shed's TikTok video is inclusive and accessible to all demographics.

In order to answer *RQ3*, which questions whether, stakeholders will report differences in the consumer relationship to the organization three statistical tests were performed. The first t-test conducted was to compare the proximity radius of the participants to the Meat Shed to their relationship from the video they watched. As to what the researcher expected the data reflected no statistical effect between these two groups  $t(70) = -.34$ ,  $p = .90$ . Since the primary source of information received is from social media the proximity radius should have no effect on how they view content differently ( $M = 5.67$ ,  $SD = 1.11$ ). The second test aims at comparing the proximity of the participants to if they would support an organization if they were active on social media. This data reflects similar data from the previous question since social media is the primary source of obtaining data. The test does showcase the same result resembling no

significant effect  $t(70) = -1.57, p = .82$ . This represents that the proximity of the establishment is not an influential factor on how interactive consumers are with the media content of the organization ( $M = 4.12, SD = .83$ ). The last statistical test compares the marital status of the participants and if they would like to receive information about the Meat Shed. The data represents that there is no significant effect on marital status and if they would like to receive more information about The Meat Shed  $t(69) = .96, p = .48$ . This can represent that consumers primarily do not think about their significant other when viewing content about The Meat Shed ( $M = 5.4, SD = 1.32$ ). This represents consumers having their own autonomy in their social media content.

Finally, in order to support the researcher's hypothesis, which seeks to see if consumer reactions about a brand are more positive when using user-generated content than organizational generated content two statistical tests were performed. The first correlational test compares if participants wanted to receive more information on the The Meat Shed and if they believed the social media content was innovative. This test aims to seek if consumers believed The Meat Shed has innovative culture, then they would want to receive more information about the organization. The data reflects that there is a significant difference between these two scales  $r(151) = .37, p < .001$ . After investigating further into the data if participants thought the content was innovative in the culture then they would like to receive more information about the Meat Shed. This articulates that innovation is one of the attractive factors from consumers in media content. The correlational test performed aimed to compare the consumer attraction levels from the video, to the consumer attraction level for the social media post. When designing the study, the TikTok video was strategically inserted to represent user-generated content, and the social media post is represented as the organizational-generated content. The data represents there is a significant

correlation between both styles of posts  $r(151) = .31, p < .001$ . After further investigation the researcher identified that participants were more attracted to the video than the social media post. The hypothesis is supported that consumers prefer user-generated content over organizational content.

## **Discussion**

After any portion of a research study should be an inclusion of a discussion with the researcher to expand more on the results and disclose the limitations or opportunities of future research. In the researcher's opinion, the style and process of the qualitative interviews were very beneficial and gathered great sources of information. Based on the participants' responses, The Meat Shed should gear their social media content catering more to the consumer experience. Producing social media posts that do not have high volumes of wordy content, and more presence of graphics and memorable experiences are more attractive to the consumers. Brainstorming some potential ideas to meet these consumers desires could be the inclusion of an anniversary event recognizing another year of business operation. This event can be 'thank you opportunity' to consumers, and provide them with specials or deals, while supplies last can be seen as a memorable experience to the consumer. Another idea that can be implemented is the planning of a community event that is welcome to anyone in the area to attend. This can be achieved through a community wide event, or possibly partnering with a collegiate event.

The data that were calculated showcased a variety of significant differences and identified factors that were not at play. Based off of the results, the participants of the survey indicated that their preferred means of obtaining information about the The Meat Shed should come from social media. This expresses the importance of streamlining the content that is published and ensuring that the content is inclusive to all audiences. Another indicator from the

statistical tests is that the geographic location of the stakeholders is not a influential factor when viewing social media content. This eliminates the worry that the farther away the consumer is the more distance it would create in the relationship dynamic. Connecting this idea to the networking theory, “the idea that links remain stable between two networks rely on the interactivity of the consumer (Littlejohn & Foss, 2011, p. 276). Lastly, another identifiable factor from the data results showcases that the consumer prefers user-generated content than organizational-generated content. This can stem from the idea that the user-generated content is more connecting to the consumer, and incorporates a more personable environment or meaning. Therefore, it would be an effective strategy to create content that is more personable to audiences, and showcase an exclusive environment for being a supporter to the organization.

### **Limitations**

All research has limitations that can hinder a streamlined process of interviews or potentially reflect on the data. One of the first limitations from the qualitative research was the participant scale of individuals who interacted with interviews. Ideally, the sample pool for interviews would be larger than six participants the process of scheduling and conducting interviews was impacted by the time and availability constraints. A second limitation to the qualitative study is the demographics of the participants. Of the six participants all of them ranged from the ages of 18-25 reflecting the college student population. This was in part due to the sampling strategy employed by the researcher, but ideally the sample should reflect towards the consumer base of The Meat Shed. The final limitation to the qualitative study is the time frame of the project. Ideally when employing a multi-methodological research strategy ample time should be present to allow for more participant and individuals to interact with study.

During the process of this strategic plan and research, only five months was present for the researcher to execute a mixed methods framework.

The researcher encountered some limitations when executing this quantitative framework. The first limitation that was recognizable in the quantitative study is the time frame of the survey development, analysis, and interpretation. Ideally, a rigorous study to this extent should have ample time to plan, execute, and interpret. Due to the nature of pairing up the project completion time to the researcher's graduation the study only lasted four months. However, since this study incorporated a mix methods approach, the research only allocated one month to the quantitative portion of the study.

Another limitation to the quantitative study is the participant pool that was acquired. Since the data collected would be used to create deliverables for a local organization the research was aiming to collect 300 - 400 survey response to reflect a diverse participant population. In this rendition of the study, only 152 surveys were collected and analyzed. Therefore; the results of the data can only reflect the behavior of a small portion of the population.

The last limitation of the study is the exclusion of some survey response due to the lack of completion on some questions. For instance, developed within the Qualtrics software is an analytics system to report if participants watched the video content or not. In the analysis phase 22 participants answered the questions following the video, but did not actually view the video. In effort to provide reliable and valid data, those responses were excluded to avoid skewing the data.

### **Areas of Future Research**

If the qualitative portion of the study were to be replicated, there are a couple of avenues that can be pursued to produce a more diverse set of responses. One of the first changes that can



be made to the study is the inclusion of a focus group to obtain responses about consumer behavior and digital media. Through this process, participants could be shown a variety of messaging strategies currently used by The Meat Shed to analyze their reactions and attractions to the content. Employing this strategy can provide more detailed descriptions of what type of persuasive messages are present in the content, or that needs to be in the content.

Another direction that can be taken from this qualitative study is identifying what types of exclusive content is desired and attractive to consumers. Based from the current study, consumers desire to see the exclusive content to feel more connected to the organization. This idea can be taken further, and a researcher can create a variety of strategies that follow the theme of exclusivity and evaluate which method is preferable to targeted consumer bases. Based off of the results from the quantitative study a researcher can analyze a variety of message strategies employed by an organization and have participants interact with them to see what factors or attractive or preferred from strictly user-generated content and organizational-generated content.

A final avenue for analysis that can be conducted is doing a comparison between print and digital materials to see what information people retain best in both formats. By employing this strategy, this would allow scholars to investigate which parts of content is retained by consumers. Understanding this behavior can help articulate where vital information needs to be placed, and how it should be represented.

## **Chapter Five: Creation of Strategic Plan Deliverables**

The three phases of strategic planning included in this plan were research, planning, and content creation. The first phase, the research phase, is where content and information were gathered to gain an understanding on consumer behavior practices with social and digital content, and also analyze the current media presence of the client. In this phase, a SWOT analysis was crafted, a stakeholder analysis was created, a comparative analysis was drafted, and finally a social media review was conducted. The second phase, the planning phase, incorporated the creation of strategies, outlined goals, and explained the research methodology process. Finally, the third phase or the content creation phase was the execution of creating deliverables ranging from print and digital content based on the findings through the research.

The first task for research was to craft a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis for the client, The Meat Shed. Creation of a SWOT analysis is vital to any strategic plan as these outlines what the organization does well, addresses what is lacking, helps create a vision to seize new opportunities, and recognizes threats to minimize risks. This phase also included drafting a stakeholder analysis. This allows the researcher and the organization to generate an understanding on who the target market is, and who are influencing factors to the organization. Being able to identify internal and external stakeholders can assist in framing messages for social media content, and help provide an understanding on who is currently supporting the organization. Also included in this phase was the inclusion of a comparative analysis. This analysis is specially geared to look at The Meat Shed's social media strategies in relation to competitors in the area. By understanding the client's competitors' media strategies can help in recognizing trends and patterns on what attracts consumers or disengages them. In the analysis the competitors analyzed include: The Pitt, Chatters, and Drop the H Brewing Co,

Finally, a social media audit or review was executed on the client's media platforms. The purpose of this strategy is to (1) understand what the current media practices of the client are and (2) identify trends with engagement on what content is attractive. Utilizing the Social Marketing Theory framework, the platforms that were analyzed were TikTok, Facebook, and The Meat Shed's Square Website.

The second phase included the creation of strategies and goals, and explains the methodology for executing research. Incorporated in this phase was the development of task, reputation, and relational goals. The creation of these goals can provide the client a framework or an idea on how to execute strategies and implement deliverables that were created from this plan. Lastly, included in this phase was the explanation of the methodology and procedures for obtaining research. With the use of mixed methods, the author outlines the sampling strategy, distribution strategy, survey design, and participant demographics backed by theoretical knowledge from the communication and marketing fields.

The final phase involves the execution print and digital content creation to increase engagement and consumer awareness. The types of deliverables that were created stems from the research obtained from the qualitative and quantitative studies. Based on the research findings the author created a content calendar, brochure, branding guide, and a loyalty punch card.

### **Content Calendar**

The use of a content calendar is an important organizational tool to help maintain a consistency in social media post publications. "A content calendar allows organizations to organize efforts in a visual manner, while enabling clear communication of a campaign schedule and editorial plans" (Strohl, 2021). Content calendars are dynamic in fulfilling the role as a framework to content strategies. These calendars have many advantages like (1) keeping your

teams organized and aligned, (2) allows for producing brainstorming sessions, (3) maintains post consistency, (4) sustains audience interests, (5) enables visibility across all platforms, and (6) tracks performance more efficiently. When creating a content calendar, vital information should be included to provide the most clarity and planning before publishing a social media post. Therefore, in content calendars strategies like content frequency, deadlines, post theme and topics, should be included.

### ***Goals / Objectives***

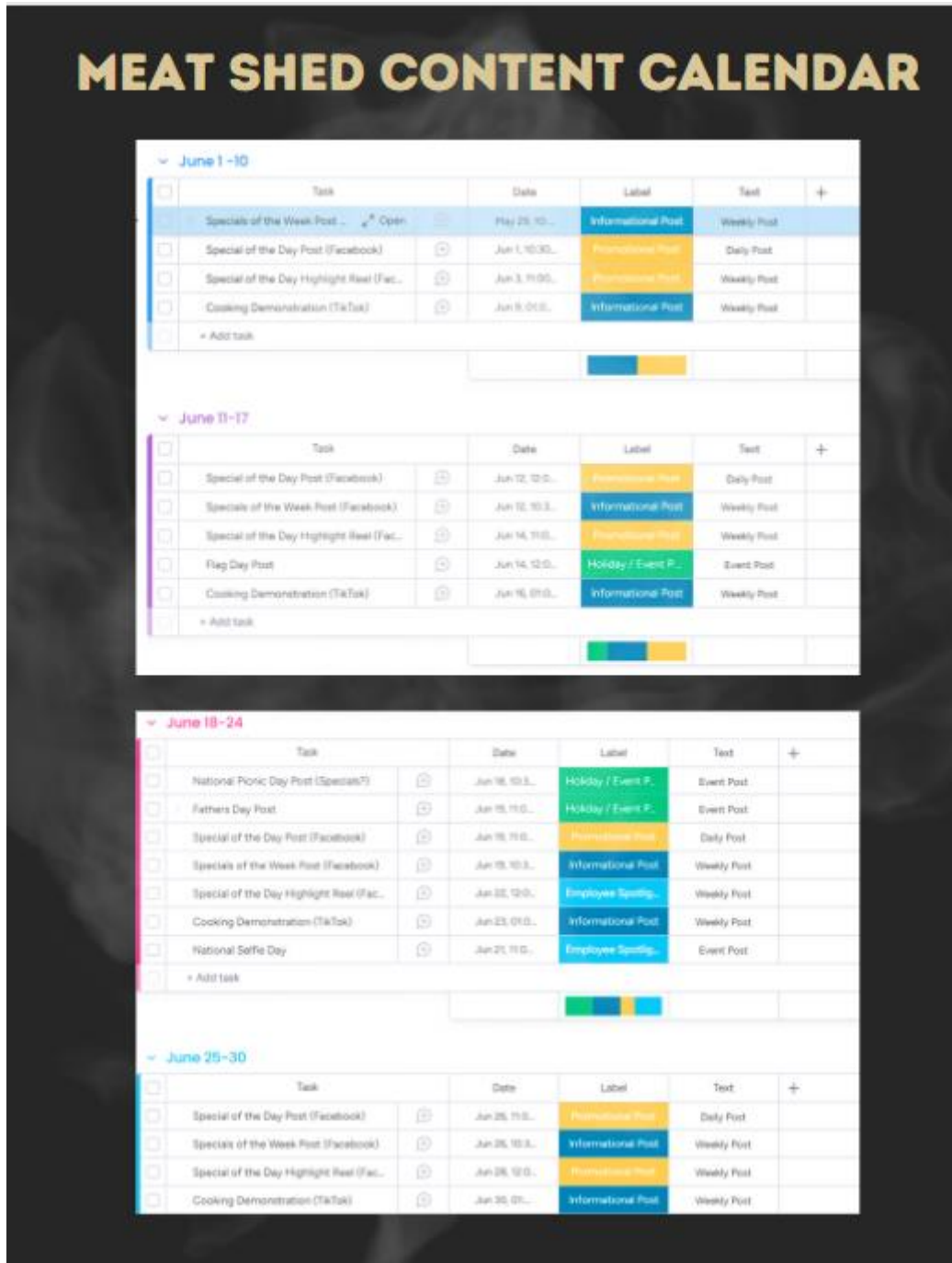
When creating the content calendar for The Meat Shed, the author's hope was to provide a streamlined and transparent schedule to reach post consistency on social media platforms. Providing a consistent posting schedule can prime consumers minds on when to expect posts on certain platforms. Another goal for this content calendar is to fuel ideas for the client to engage with more diverse audiences that can become potential The Meat Shed stakeholders. Through creating a timeline for social media post publications, the framing and consistency of the posts will be more efficient.

### ***Strategies***

With the content calendar creation, the author employed a variety of strategies that fueled the final creation of the calendar. The first strategy used is the timeline of when to post the social media content. According to HubSpot (n.d.), a developer and marketing software for products and services, explains the best time to post social media content on the Facebook platform is between 8am-12pm. This is the best time frame to make a post "since a common behavior for individuals is to check personal social media accounts" (Zyoud et. al, 2018). For the TikTok platform, the best time frame to post a video is between 1pm-3pm. This time was set "since a majority of the TikTok users access the platform during the afternoon hours of the day" (Zyoud

et. al, 2018). Another strategy that was used is implementing a diversified style of post to attract audiences. The styles of posts that were included in the content calendar are promotional, informational, employee spotlight, and special event or theme. Figure 5.1 outlines the style of post, the time the content should be posted, and how often the post should be published on a weekly basis.

Figure 5.1: Meat Shed Content Calendar



## **Loyalty Punch Card**

The purpose of creating a loyalty program or retention program for consumers is another common strategy to have consumers return to the business. Stemming from the qualitative interview's, participants indicated that the use of a loyalty card would be an inviting factor for them to return to the organization. Therefore, the author wanted to create a punch card that would allow consumers to feel rewarded for supporting a local business. "When individuals are presented with a motivational factor or incentive the perception of a consumer's image on a business is positive" (Yi & Jeon, 2003, p. 234).

### ***Goals / Objectives***

When creating the loyalty card, the author aimed to make sure that the identity of The Meat Shed was represented. The main objective for the deliverable was to motivate consumers to return to The Meat Shed, by providing an incentive of a free or discounted product.

### ***Strategies***

Since one of the most popular items from The Meat Shed are the sandwiches, the loyalty card showcases a graphic of a sandwich. This conveys to audiences that The Meat Shed is a meat and deli establishment, reinforcing the identity of the organization. Another goal from the author was to make sure the content on the loyalty card was concise and promotional. This strategy was implemented for the consumers to have a transparent understanding on what the promotional entails. In Figure 5.2, The Meat Shed loyalty card uses the strategies that are listed.

Figure 5.2: The Meat Shed Loyalty Card



## Branding Guide

One of the biggest factors that had been interpreted from the data is the utilization of post consistency to make an organization brand recognizable. The concept of building a brand identity is vital to any business trying to set themselves apart from competitors. “To build brand equity, marketers typically employ a set of brand elements where each element, perhaps in different ways, helps to enhance awareness and communicate the proper image” (Keller, 1998).

## Goals / Objectives

The author’s aim for the creation of the branding guide for The Meat Shed is to maintain social media post consistency utilizing themes, graphics, and colors to make the brand recognizable to audiences. As represented in Appendix F, 82 participants from the quantitative survey stated that they receive information about The Meat Shed from social media. Therefore, the author wanted to focus on creating a content branding guide to assist in content creation. The



author has broken down the branding guide into two-main goals: (1) help The Meat Shed create a guide on identifying brand elements from their current logo, and (2) brainstorm and draft elements that can be associated with The Meat Shed. These goals intertwine with the client's request of gaining additional exposure to audiences in the community and with social media content.

## **Strategies**

The branding guide uses a variety of branding elements that The Meat Shed can use in their print and digital contents. The first strategy is the use of various typologies. The participants from the quantitative surveys, and qualitative interviews indicate that they would be attracted to social media content if the post used graphics, vibrant colors, and had a sense of style or creative design. These visually appealing elements can contribute to a professionally created document or post. The author analyzed the current logo of The Meat Shed, and used Adobe's font identifier to draft ideas of potential fonts to use in future designs. Represented in Figure 5.3 are various typologies, and when they need to be used in digital posts.

The second strategy that is used is the use of vibrant colors to attract audiences and create brand association. Utilizing Adobe's color program, the author was able to identify what colors are used in the logo that should be translated into social media posts and print content. Adobe's program was able to identify five main colors (e.g. teal, tan, gold, maroon, and black). These colors can be paired with certain typologies, and should be present in graphic elements.

The third strategy that is used in the branding guide or photography examples that showcase the operations and capture action with The Meat Shed. Half of the participants in the qualitative interviews indicated they would be attracted to a "behind the scenes" look of an operation. This strategy can also help build brand associations. The author aimed to capture

action shots working with Meat Shed products, and interactions with consumers to the business. The use of these types of graphic elements will help create more audience engagement and attraction.

The final strategy used in the branding guide is the use of hashtags on social media content. “Hashtags are the use of slogans or messages followed by a symbol to create a marker or title that can grouped by media users” (Adamska, 2015, p.3). The use of hashtags can be used to assist audiences in searching for specific content. This strategy can also be used to pair with building a brand association. The branding guide in Figure 5.3 identifies hashtags that are good use for The Meat Shed to include in their content. The hashtags that were selected were chosen based on how (1) popular the tagline is on social media platforms, and (2) if the hashtag has a high level of frequency that is traceable through each platform.

Figure 5.3: Meat Shed Branding Guide



## **Fact Sheet**

“Fact sheets are a traditional print and digital document that provides informational content on a subject or topic” (Hootsuite, 2022). The use of this type of media material can be used to provide information about Meat Shed operations to audiences with easier accessibility. Fact sheets can be printed and strategically placed in desired locations, or published electronically making it accessibility to audiences that do not live close to the establishment.

## **Goals / Objectives**

The author aimed to focus on one unique opportunity The Meat Shed provides, their educational culinary courses. As many potential stakeholders are not aware of this opportunity, The Meat Shed offers the goal was to provide more audience awareness about the subject, while employing persuasive strategies following the branding guide’s recommendations. Another goal from the author is the fact sheet can be printed off, and strategically placed in location across Pittsburg or the local college to reach to the college student demographic.

## **Strategies**

The fact sheet incorporates two strategies that are aimed to help attract additional audiences about the culinary courses The Meat Shed offers. The first strategy employed is the use of persuasive messages to attract audiences. These culinary courses are great for gifts for family members, or bonding events with friends, and the fact sheets attempts to communicate that to audiences in a persuasive way. The final strategic strategy used on the fact sheet is the incorporation of feedback loops. Feedback loops are channels for individuals to contact an organization or seek information. Traditionally these can be in the form of emails, phone numbers, or social media platforms. Represented in Figure 5.4 are The Meat Shed’s feedback loops for audiences to use to seek an inquiry about a culinary course.

Figure 5.4: Meat Shed Culinary Course Fact Sheet

## MEAT SHED CULINARY COURSES

Are you interested in learning about food and cooking with meat products? The Meat Shed offers educational courses to give you the skills to impress your family and friends! This opportunity is great for gifts for family or bonding with friends.

### Courses we Offer

- Sausage ~ \$100
- Salami ~ \$100
- Meat Curing ~ \$75
- Hog Breakdown ~ \$150

Lunch is  
provided

Enjoy 10% OFF  
all store  
merchandise!



### Call for an Inquiry!

**Phone:** (620)-234-3015

**Address:** 2401 S Rouse St.  
Pittsburg, Kansas, 66762

Follow Us on Social Media: @MeatShedKS



## Reflection

This project was a task that I believe that I could not have accomplished when I first started my Master's program at Pittsburg State University. I have always been the type of individual who goes above and beyond to showcase my skills and interests. I also have a personal belief that I feel that my educational knowledge should be used to support local businesses or foundations to create a more welcoming environment for the organization. This rigorous creative project has never been accomplished before in short time frame, but this project gave me a challenge that I could work towards to impress myself, and others. Since I have started my college career in 2018, I have completed many papers, exams, and projects about theoretical concepts and models. I decided to pursue a risk and take all that knowledge learned over the five years here and apply it to a local organization. In my eyes, I feel like the risk has paid off, and I hope that my personal growth and expertise is translated into this strategic plan for The Meat Shed.



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## Appendix A (IRB Form)

### Pittsburg State University Application for Approval of Investigations Involving the Use of Human Subjects

For IRB Use Only

Date Received: 01/26/23  
Application #: AS23-015

The application must be typed (not hand-written) and all attachments included as a single PDF document. Submit documents based on the schedule posted on the IRB page on the PSU website. When submitting the forms, allow sufficient time for the appropriate level of review before the planned start date. Attach additional sheets as necessary.

For questions about the review process contact Cindy Johnson at 620-235-4175 or at [irb@pittstate.edu](mailto:irb@pittstate.edu). Consult HHS.gov for guidance on Human Subjects Research.

**Contact information** is required to ensure that research subjects can contact the investigator(s)

Investigator(s) Name(s): Treyton A. Meyers

☒ Check this box to indicate that all investigators have completed approved ethics training. Attach valid completion certificates to the completed application. Student projects: include all committee members.

Department: Communications

Local Address: 702 W 1st Pittsburg KS, 66762

Phone: 9133027079

E-Mail Address: [tameyers@gus.pittstate.edu](mailto:tameyers@gus.pittstate.edu)

Project Title: Building Brand Identity with The Meat Shed

Expected Starting Date: Feb 1, 2023

Expected Completion Date: May 14 2023

**Application review type.** Use *Review Criteria Form* to determine appropriate category. When multiple categories apply, applications will be evaluated on the **most restrictive** of categories.

☐ Full Review. Category:

☐ Expedited Review. Category:

☒ Exempt Review. Category: EX4

☐ This research is also being submitted to an external IRB. A full copy of that application or letter of support is attached, along with a completed External IRB Collaboration Form.

If notification of human subject approval is required give date required:

Name of agency:

If the PI is a student, complete the following:

Faculty Sponsor: Alicia Mason

Department: Communication

Phone: 660-464-2206

E-Mail Address: [amason@pittstate.edu](mailto:amason@pittstate.edu)

Committee Members: Alicia Mason, Troy Comeau, Megan Westhoff

## I. Description of the Subjects

Minimum of 100 Participants for Survey / Five to Ten Participants for Interviews

A. How many subjects will be involved? \_\_\_\_\_

B. Subject Population (check all that apply):

- ☒ Adults
 ☐ Prisoners
 ☐ Minors
 ☐ Intellectual Disability  
☐ Physically Ill
 ☐ Disabled
 ☐ Special Education  
☐ Other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

C. For projects conducted in schools or school settings, written approval from the School Administrator must be obtained. Please attach to end of this application.

N/A

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

N/A

Name of School: \_\_\_\_\_

N/A

N/A

What grade are the students in? \_\_\_\_\_ Approximate Age of Students? \_\_\_\_\_

N/A

N/A

How many classes involved? \_\_\_\_\_ What subject: (secondary)? \_\_\_\_\_

D. Does this research require participation from an organization other than PSU? If Yes, please attach a letter of support/understanding or documentation from that organization demonstrating approval or willingness to participate. No

E. What criteria will be used to select subjects AND/OR what criteria will be used to exclude individuals? (e.g., age, sex, race, ethnic origin, religion, or any social or economic qualifications)? State why the selection will be made on the basis or bases given.

The selection of participants will include individuals of any gender, who are at least the age of 18, English speaking, and live in the four state region. The general demographic characteristics have no exclusions except for the geographical location. This is because the data needs to be specific to individuals who live in this region who would have knowledge of the client being worked with.

**II. Abstract:** Summarize the strategies used to collect data and protect participants. Discuss what will be the purpose of collecting the data (e.g. is the data for an improvement project, is the data solely for a peer-reviewed publication, is it a pilot for a larger study, etc.). Attach additional sheets as necessary. The purpose of this collection is to obtain data for fuel a graduate student creative project to obtain a masters degree. The data collection will help provide an understanding of what the individuals experiences and opinions about digital content and brand identity within organizations.

**III. Procedure: Activities Involving Human Subjects.** Attach additional sheets as needed.

**A. Give a brief description or outline of your research procedures as they relate to the use of human subjects.**

1. Who will be the subjects? How will you recruit participants into the study? If advertising for subjects, include a copy of the proposed advertisement.

This study will not be conducting research using vulnerable populations. The researcher will undergo a selection process to seek required participants to use as data for analysis. These individuals must be at least 18 years of age, and live within the four state region (e.g. Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Arkansas). The participants will be recruited using a convenient and snowball sampling strategy. Utilizing network connections within Pittsburg State Universities faculty members, the researcher will submit a request to Department of Communication to publish a Bulk-E message to communication students. The researcher will also request from a variety of professors within the Department of Communication to post a link of the survey to a Canvas announcement in their courses.

2. What precisely will be done to the subjects? State instructions given to the subjects and activities in which they will engage. If you are using questionnaires or handouts, please include a copy as an attachment to this application.

This study incorporates two different parts for a variety of data collection. The first part encompasses quantitative methodology to collect data. These participants will be instructed to complete an online survey asking a variety of questions about opinions and experiences with organizational brand identity and social media content. The participants can opt-out of the survey at any time. The participants in this study will remain anonymous to the researcher.

The second part of the study involves qualitative methodology to collect data. Interviews will be conducted asking questions about opinions and experiences of social media content from organizations. A series of pre-prepared questions will be asked in a semi-structured format. The participants will be recorded for transcription purposes to analyze data, but will remain anonymous when drafting final report. Participants can opt-out at any portion of the study.

3. If any of the subjects are minors or "vulnerable" (e.g. children, prisoners, mentally or physically disabled, pregnant women) discuss how their special condition will be handled.

N/A



4. How will subjects be informed of research findings?

If subjects request to be informed on research findings a copy of the final draft can be emailed to their personal account for review

**IV. Confidentiality and Anonymity:** How will the data be collected? Check all that apply.

- ☒ Questionnaires (Submit a copy)
- ☐ Observations (describe how they will be conducted below in Section IV.A)
- ☒ Interviews (Submit sample questions)
- ☐ Standardized tests (list names; attach a copy if possible)
- ☐ Test (Submit a copy)
- ☐ Task(s) (briefly explain below in Section IV.A)
- ☐ Video or Audio Recordings, Still Images
- ☐ Computer Entries (explain below in Section IV.A)
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

A. Explain the procedures for collecting, recording, and storing that data during the study. Attach additional sheets as necessary. If using an online survey tool (e.g. SurveyMonkey, Qualtrics, etc.), include a screen shot of the survey's settings.

For the quantitative portion of the study a survey will be posted utilizing an online survey tool Qualtrics. A copy of the survey is included in the application. The data results will remain on the researchers personal laptop, that is kept on person or in a secure location at all times. The data will be stored on a usb hard drive that is stored in an university office at all times. When needing to access the hard drive, the device will remain on the person and be protected through login verification to access. The academic advisor will also keep a copy of the study and results on a univeristy sanctioned computer that is kept in an office on univeristy grounds at all times. To access the data it is protected by a set of login credentials to add an extra layer of security. The data will be kept over a academic semester time span for analysis, and will be kept for a portion of three to five years after project completion then the data will be discarded and

B. Who will have access to the data during the study? Access should be limited to protect anonymity of subjects and confidentiality of subject responses. Students should include faculty advisors/committee members.

The researcher will be the only individual who has access to the data for the study. The researcher however may confer assistance with academic advisor Alicia Mason if necessary. However anonymity will be kept during all phases of the study. The data will also be presented to a gradate committee for review at the end of the study, however none of the participants personal informaiton will be disclosed. The committee members are members of the graduate faculty in the department of communication.

- C. Explain what will happen to the data once the study is completed. Federal regulations require that data be kept for at least three years after completion of the research (45 CFR 46.115(b)). How will the data be protected during this time? Is there a need to keep the data beyond that or will it be destroyed? If kept, how long and where will it be stored, how will confidentiality be ensured, who will have access to it?

The researcher will follow federal regulations and maintain data for a duration of three years. If the researcher does not need data the information will be discarded online by deleting copies of the survey responses and shred notes of interviews. However this study reflects the knowledge and findings by the researcher into a graduate project. Therefore; a final copy of the graduate project will be kept with the researcher for proof of completion and another copy of the findings will be given to a local business The Meat Shed who is the client in the graduate student project. The data from this project will be kept in safe locations that are out of reach from the public secured by locked doors and login verifications. The data will be used to interpret strategies to help improve brand identity with the client. All of the data will be kept on a password protected file of lead researchers laptop.

- D. Explain the level of confidentiality you are guaranteeing the participants. Include data privacy policies for all external tools being used.

All participants of the study will remain fully anonymous throughout all presentation settings. When the participants are accessing the survey they are not required to provide any identifying information to secure the anonymity of the individual. During the interview portions of the study, the zoom interview sessions will be recorded only for the transcriptions of audio. Once the audio transcription has been obtained the interview video recording will be deleted. On the Otter app the researcher will only be collecting the audio transcriptions. There will not be a video element to this portion of the study. Within neither of the studies will the individuals name be disclosed. Interview participants will be given an alias name in the final draft of the project when explain the report of findings. Once final report has been made the recordings will be erased, and the transcriptions will be kept in the secured hard drive. Privacy policies are attached.

#### **V. Benefits, Risks, and Costs of this Study**

- A. What are the potential benefits to the subjects, to the field or discipline, or to the University?

The value of the project is great for the researcher and the discipline collectively. In perspective on the researcher, the researcher will be able to have created a client portfolio utilizing for a local business that can potentially have a positive impact them. The researcher will also have the opportunity to apply theoretical concepts into a real-world setting. Lastly, other scholars can review this project to gain an understanding on application steps that can be taken to improve any other business structure.

- B. Will compensation (money, extra credit, etc.) be offered to the subjects? If so, what specifically will be offered, and how will it be dispersed?

No monetary compensation will be offered to subjects.

C. What risks, discomforts, or other adverse reactions are most likely to be encountered by the subjects? Please consider carefully.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Employability                               | <input type="checkbox"/> Deception (benevolent misdirection)           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Financial or personal reputation | <input type="checkbox"/> Embarrassment                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Emotional stress or discomfort              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Psychological stress or discomfort |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Loss of confidentiality                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Criminal or civil liability                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Physical stress or discomfort               |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (explain): _____                      |  |

D. What safeguards will you use to eliminate or minimize these risks? If there is the possibility of adverse reactions by the subjects, explain where the subjects can receive help.

The subjects anonymity will be the main safeguard to minimize any risk of information going publically to be identifiable. The questions are designed in the study to only explain the interests and patterns of social media and digital behavior. If a participant feels uncomfortable answers these questions they can conclude the process at any point in time.

E. In your opinion, does the research involve **more than minimal risk** to subjects? "Minimal risk" means *"the risks of harm anticipated in the proposed research are not greater, considering probability and magnitude, than those ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine or psychological examinations or tests."* (45 CFR 46.102(j)) Please explain.

No this study should only involve minimal risks. The only potential discomfort that can come from this study is if the individual realizes a personal problem with their own behavior. This set of behavior can occur naturally just from common experiences in daily life. The purpose of this study is to seek any patterns to behaviors in digital media and social media. However the researcher believes that this level of risk will not have any impact to the study.



## VI. Informed Consent

Unless authorized by the IRB, no investigator may involve a human being as a subject in research under the auspices of the University unless the investigator has obtained the informed consent of the subject or the subject's legally authorized representative. For studies involving minors or others incapable of providing their own legal consent, in addition to consent of the subject's representative, informed **ASSENT** should be obtained from study participants in a manner appropriate to the study population unless otherwise waived by the IRB.

For further information about informed consent processes review the information provided by the Department of Health and Human Services.

### Exemption, Waiver, Alteration of Informed Consent or Documentation of Consent

If applying for research that will not include Informed Consent, check any that apply and attach appropriate documentation to this application. All other research must contain appropriate Informed Consent/Assent.

- ☒ This study is **Eligible for Exemption**, so Informed Consent is not required; however, investigators should include in the instructions to participants that participation is voluntary, may be discontinued at any time, and that withdrawing or not participating will not result in negative consequences.
- ☐ **Passive Parental Consent** (a.k.a. Opt-Out consent) is requested because the research meets the minimum elements of Passive Parental Consent as described in the *PSU Policy Assurance Handbook*, **AND** parents will have no less than 14 calendar days to opt their student out of the study, **AND** the notification document will be sent directly to the parents.
- ☐ **Waiver or Alteration** of Informed consent is requested because the research involves public benefit/service programs **AND** that the research could not otherwise be carried out without waiver or alteration of Informed Consent (45 CFR 46.116(e)). Include *Informed Consent Waiver or Alteration Form*.
- ☐ **Waiver or Alteration** of Informed consent is requested because the research involves no more than minimal risk to the subjects **AND** could not otherwise be carried out without the requested waiver or alteration **AND** could not otherwise be carried out without using private information or biospecimens (if required) in an identifiable format **AND** the waiver or alteration will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the subjects **AND** whenever appropriate, the subjects or legally authorized representatives will be provided with additional pertinent information after participation. (45 CFR 46.116(f)). Include *Informed Consent Waiver or Alteration Form*.
- ☐ **Waiver of documentation** of informed consent is requested because the only record linking the subject to the research would be the Informed Consent form **AND** the principal risk would be loss of confidentiality (45 CFR 46.117(c)(i)).
- ☐ **Waiver of documentation** of informed consent is requested because the research presents no more than minimal risk **AND** does not involve procedures requiring written consent outside a research setting (45 CFR 46.117(c)(ii)).
- ☐ **Waiver of documentation** of informed consent is requested because the subject is a member of a cultural group or community that does not normally sign forms **AND** there is no more than minimal risk **AND** there is an alternative method for documentation of consent (45 CFR 46.117(c)(iii)).

### Informed Consent Contents and Process

A. Explain the procedures that will be used to obtain consent/assent. Attach additional sheets as necessary.

The researcher will have an introductory paragraph on survey outlining the purpose and process of the survey. The introductory message is as follows: Thank you for showing interest in participating in this academic study. The goal of this survey is to obtain your opinions and feelings about organizational brand identity and attractive qualities in social media content. If you wish to not participant in this survey you can close the window at any time. All responses will remain anonymous to the researcher and to the public.

The participant will seek consent to interview individuals before conducting data collection. The researcher will ask consent on audio recording for proof and documentation.

B. Federal regulations (45 CFR 46.116) state that the following elements of information should be provided to each subject. Place a check mark before each component included in your consent document. Attach a copy of the document to this application.

- ☐ A statement that the study involves research
- ☐ An explanation of the purposes of the research
- ☐ The expected duration of the subject's participation
- ☐ A description of the procedures to be followed
- ☐ Identification of any procedures which are experimental
- ☐ A description of any reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts to the subject
- ☐ A description of any benefits to the subject or to others which may reasonably be expected from the research
- ☐ A disclosure of appropriate alternative procedures or courses of treatment, if any, that might be advantageous to the subject
- ☐ A statement describing the extent, if any, to which confidentiality of records identifying the subject will be maintained
- ☐ One of the following statements about any research that involves the collection of identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens:
  - A statement that identifiers might be removed from the identifiable private information or identifiable biospecimens and that, after such removal, the information or biospecimens could be used for future research studies or distributed to another investigator for future research studies without additional informed consent from the subject or the legally authorized representative, if this might be a possibility; or
  - A statement that the subject's information or biospecimens collected as part of the research, even if identifiers are removed, will not be used or distributed for future research studies.
- ☐ For research involving more than minimal risk, an explanation as to whether any compensation, and an explanation as to whether any medical treatments are available, if injury occurs and, if so, what they consist of, or where further information may be obtained
- ☐ Research, Rights or Injury: An explanation of whom to contact for answers to pertinent questions about the research and research subjects' rights, and whom to contact in the event of a research-related injury to the subject
- ☐ A statement that participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled, and the subject may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits, to which the subject is otherwise entitled

Additional Elements as Appropriate

- ☐ A statement that the particular treatment or procedure may involve risks to the subject (or to the embryo or fetus, if the subject is or may become pregnant), which are currently unforeseeable
- ☐ Anticipated circumstances under which the subject's participation may be terminated by the investigator without regard to the subject's consent
- ☐ Any additional costs to the subject that may result from participation in the research
- ☐ The consequences of a subject's decision to withdraw from the research and procedures for orderly termination of participation by the subject
- ☐ A statement that significant new findings developed during the course of the research, which may relate to the subject's willingness to continue participation, will be provided to the subject
- ☐ The approximate number of subjects involved in the study

Documentation of Assent

- ☐ When studying minors or others incapable of giving legal consent, assent forms must also be provided (unless waived by the IRB). Assent forms should contain the same information as above, but the language and delivery method should be appropriate for the subject population. Attach a copy of all assent documents that will be used to this application (including *Informed Consent Waiver or Alteration* form if applicable).

## VII. Certification and Approval

### Verification of Assurance

#### PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR ASSURANCE

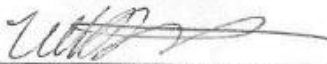
I understand that as Principal Investigator, I have ultimate responsibility for the protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects and the ethical conduct of this research for which this application has been submitted.

I agree to comply with all PSU policies and procedures, as well as with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the protection of human subjects in research, including, but not limited to, the following:

- Title 45, Part 46 of the Code of Federal Regulations.
- The Belmont Report, *Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects and Research*.



I also agree that the following criteria will be met:

- The project will be performed by qualified personnel according to the research protocol.
- Copies of all questionnaires, survey instruments, interview questions, data collection instruments, and information sheets for human subjects will be maintained in the respective department.
- Necessary review by the PSU Institutional Review Board will be sought if a) changes are made in the research protocol which may result in the research no longer meeting the original approved criteria, or b) Continued Review at the appropriate time.
- All study investigators have completed the approved ethics training, and a copy of the valid completion certificate is attached to this application.
- The Principal Investigator and all research personnel have read and understand the PSU Assurance Handbook concerning human subjects research protocols.

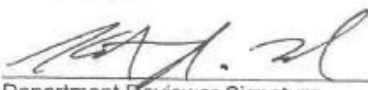
	Treyton A Meyers	11/29/22
Principal Investigator Signature	Name (please print)	Date

**Faculty Sponsor:** If the Investigator is a student, the Faculty Sponsor (e.g. thesis director, research supervisor, etc.) must approve this application.

I certify that this project is under my direct supervision and that I accept the responsibility for ensuring that all provisions of approval are met by the investigator.

		1-17-23
Faculty Sponsor Signature	Name (please print)	Date

**Department Reviewer:** I acknowledge that this research is in keeping with the standards set by our department, university, state and federal agencies. I assure that the principal investigator has met all departmental requirements for review and approval of this research, and that this application is complete and correct.

	Ken J. Ward	Dec. 15, 2022
Department Reviewer Signature	Name (please print)	Date



### Review Criteria for Research Involving Human Subjects

The first issue that must be determined is whether the proposed research is subject to the IRB review. This decision can be determined by the following two questions:

1. Does this activity involve human subjects?

**Human subjects** are defined by 45 CFR 46.102 [1]:

*"living individual(s) about whom an investigator (whether professional or student) conducting research obtains*

1. *data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or*
2. *identifiable private information."*

2. Does this activity involve research?

**Research** is defined in 45 CFR 46.102 [1]:

*"Research means a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Activities which meet this definition constitute research for purposes of this policy, whether or not they are conducted or supported under a program which is considered research for other purposes. For example, some demonstration and service programs may include research activities."*

If the answer to BOTH of these questions is "Yes" then the investigation is **Research Involving Human Subjects**. Even if the investigation does not involve Research but does involve Human Subjects, the IRB would be a good resource to verify that adequate protections are in place.

Use the remainder of this document to determine the type of review required.

Attach only the appropriate page(s) to the application PDF.

[1] HHS.gov. "Engagement of Institutions in Human Subjects Research (2008)." *HHS.gov*, Retrieved 02/12/21, [www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/guidance/guidance-on-engagement-of-institutions/index.html](http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/guidance/guidance-on-engagement-of-institutions/index.html).

### Exemption for Research Involving Human Subjects Criteria Form

Project Title: **Building Brand Identity with The Meat Shed**

Principal Investigator: **Treyton Meyers**

Unless otherwise required by Department or Agency heads, research activities in which the involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories are exempt from review by the entire Institutional Review Board (IRB). All of the project activity must qualify as exempt according to one of the criteria below for the project to be ruled exempt from IRB review. Criteria are paraphrased from HHS 2018 Decision Charts (<https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/decision-charts-2018/index.html>); all clarifications should refer to this document.

**Note:** Listed exemption categories do not apply when the research activities include:

- a. prisoners, fetuses, pregnant women or human in vitro fertilization
- b. survey or interview techniques which include minors (under 18 years of age) as subjects
- c. research involving the observation of the public behavior of minors (under 18 years of age)
- d. the deception of the subjects
- e. techniques which expose the subject to discomfort or harassment beyond levels encountered in daily life (the research activity presents more than minimal risk to human subjects)

**Instructions:** Check the applicable category(s) which make this research applicable for exempt review:

- ☐ EX1: This research is conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings **AND** the research involves normal educational practices not likely to adversely affect students' opportunity to learn the content or assess educators providing instruction (45 CFR 46.104(d)(1))
- ☐ EX2: This research involves the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior **AND** the information is recorded in such a way that the identity of the subjects cannot be ascertained **AND** involves children **AND** the investigator DOES NOT participate in the activities being observed (45 CFR 46.104(b)(3))
- ☐ EX3: This research involves the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior **AND** the disclosure of responses outside the research would not reasonably place subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to financial standing, employability, educational advancement, or reputation **AND** does NOT involve children **OR** if it involves children the investigator DOES NOT participate in the activities being observed (45 CFR 46.104(b)(3))
- ☒ EX4: This research involves benign behavioral interventions in conjunction with collection of information from adults through verbal or written responses (including data entry) or audiovisual recording **AND** the subjects have agreed to information collection **AND** the information is recorded in such a way that the identity of the subjects cannot be ascertained (45 CFR 46.104(d)(3))
- ☐ EX5: This research involves secondary uses of identifiable information or biospecimens which are publicly available (45 CFR 46.104(d)(4)(i))
- ☐ EX6: This research involves secondary uses of identifiable information or biospecimens **AND** the information is recorded in such a manner that the human subjects cannot be identified directly or through linked identifiers, the investigator will not recontact the subjects, and the data will not be re-identified (45 CFR 46.104(d)(4)(iii))
- ☐ EX7: This research involves secondary uses of identifiable information or biospecimens **AND** the information is for use in "healthcare operations" or "research" as defined under 45 CFR 164.501 or for "public health activities and purposes" as defined under 45 CFR 164.512(b) (45 CFR 46.104(d)(4)(iii))

CONTINUED on Page 3



Completion Date 30-Aug-2022  
Expiration Date 29-Aug-2025  
Record ID 51041643

This is to certify that:

**Treyton Meyers**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher**

(Curriculum Group)

**Social-Behavioral-Educational PI/RA**

(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**

(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Pittsburg State University**

Not valid for renewal of certification  
through CME.

**CITI**  
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at [www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w55a8f1df-4fbd-49e7-afc1-d41a38401021-51041643](http://www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w55a8f1df-4fbd-49e7-afc1-d41a38401021-51041643)



Completion Date 21-Dec-2021  
Expiration Date 20-Dec-2024  
Record ID 46411823

This is to certify that:

**Ken Ward**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher**  
(Curriculum Group)

**Social-Behavioral-Educational PI/RA**  
(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**  
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Pittsburg State University**

Not valid for renewal of certification  
through CME.

**CITI**  
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at [www.citiprogram.org/verify/7w5ef6c96a-2225-46ea-93d9-48558853ec32-46411823](http://www.citiprogram.org/verify/7w5ef6c96a-2225-46ea-93d9-48558853ec32-46411823)



Completion Date 20-Dec-2021  
Expiration Date 19-Dec-2024  
Record ID 45141821

This is to certify that:

**Troy Comeau**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher**

(Curriculum Group)

**Social-Behavioral-Educational PI/RA**

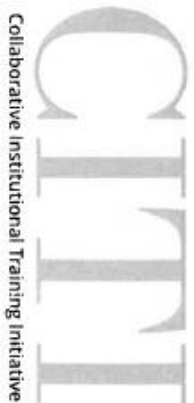
(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**

(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Pittsburg State University**



Verify at [www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wdcf0c921-5813-41f6-abbd-ee979fd330e6-45141821](http://www.citiprogram.org/verify/?wdcf0c921-5813-41f6-abbd-ee979fd330e6-45141821)

Not valid for renewal of  
certification through CME.





Completion Date 14-Dec-2021  
Expiration Date 13-Dec-2024  
Record ID 46364118

This is to certify that:

**Megan Westhoff**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher**  
(Curriculum Group)  
**Social-Behavioral-Educational PI/RA**  
(Course Learner Group)  
**1 - Basic Course**  
(Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Pittsburg State University**

Not valid for renewal of certification  
through CME



Collaborative & Professional Training Initiative

Verify at [www.citi-program.org/verify/?nw/6de1066-8b7d411c-9a4f-50359b2f388e-6364118](http://www.citi-program.org/verify/?nw/6de1066-8b7d411c-9a4f-50359b2f388e-6364118)



Completion Date 05-May-2021  
Expiration Date 04-May-2024  
Record ID 42289927

This is to certify that:

**Alicia Mason**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher**

(Curriculum Group)

**Social-Behavioral-Educational PI/RA**

(Course Learner Group)

**1 - Basic Course**

(Stage)

Not valid for renewal of certification  
through CME.

Under requirements set by:

**Pittsburg State University**



Verify at [www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w0f00131a-3ea0-4581-83af-c8c068ca0b55-42289927](http://www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w0f00131a-3ea0-4581-83af-c8c068ca0b55-42289927)

## Appendix B (Quantitative Survey)

### Introductory Message

Thank you for showing interest in participating in this academic study. This study should take 5-10 minutes to complete. The goal of this survey is to obtain your opinions and feelings about organizational brand identity and attractive qualities in social media content. If you wish to not participant in this survey you can close the window at any time. All responses will remain anonymous to the researcher and to the public. Do you wish to continue with the study?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

### Demographic Questions

What is your age?

- ☐ 18-25  
☐ 26-35  
☐ 36-49  
☐ 50+

What state do you currently live in?

- ☐ Kansas  
☐ Missouri  
☐ Oklahoma  
☐ Arkansas  
☐ Other

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What is your sex?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Non-binary
- ☐ Prefer not to say

What is your highest obtained educational level?

- ☐ High School / GED
- ☐ Associates Degree
- ☐ Bachelors Degree
- ☐ Masters Degree
- ☐ Doctoral Degree
- ☐ None

How many miles do you live from The Meat Shed located in Pittsburg Kansas

- ☐ 10 miles or less
- ☐ 11-25 miles
- ☐ 26-50 miles
- ☐ 51-99 miles
- ☐ 100 miles or more

What is your current marital status?

- ☐ Single
- ☐ Living with partner
- ☐ Married
- ☐ Prefer not to say

1/27/23, 10:57 AM

Preview - Qualtrics Survey | Qualtrics Experience Management

Restart Survey

Place Bookmark

Tools



Share Preview

Copy on this link: Meat Shed Video to watch a TikTok by The Meat Shed. Based on a 7 point scale, (1) being strongly disagree (7) being strongly agree, Do you feel The Meat Shed has the ability to attract you as a consumer?

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Based on a 7 point scale, (1) being strongly disagree (7) being strongly agree, Do you feel The Meat Shed wants to maintain a relationship with you as a consumer?

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Based on a 7 point scale, (1) being strongly disagree (7) being strongly agree, Do you feel The Meat Shed is innovative in its culture?

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Agree

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- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Based on a 7 point scale, (1) being strongly disagree (7) being strongly agree, Do you feel you specifically are important to The Meat Shed as a consumer?

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

### Digital Content Consumer Analysis

Review this social media post by The Meat Shed. Based on a 7 point scale, (1) being strongly disagree (7) being strongly agree, Do you feel this post was information to you?



**The Meat Shed**

22h · 🌐

What's better than roast beef and gravy? Nothing. The roast beef 'n gravy po' boy starts with a hoagie roll and horseradish mayo. We then pile on our house roast Herlocker Farms beef, crispy onions, and gravy. Delicious, silky beefy Meat Shed gravy. This is your Thursday lunch

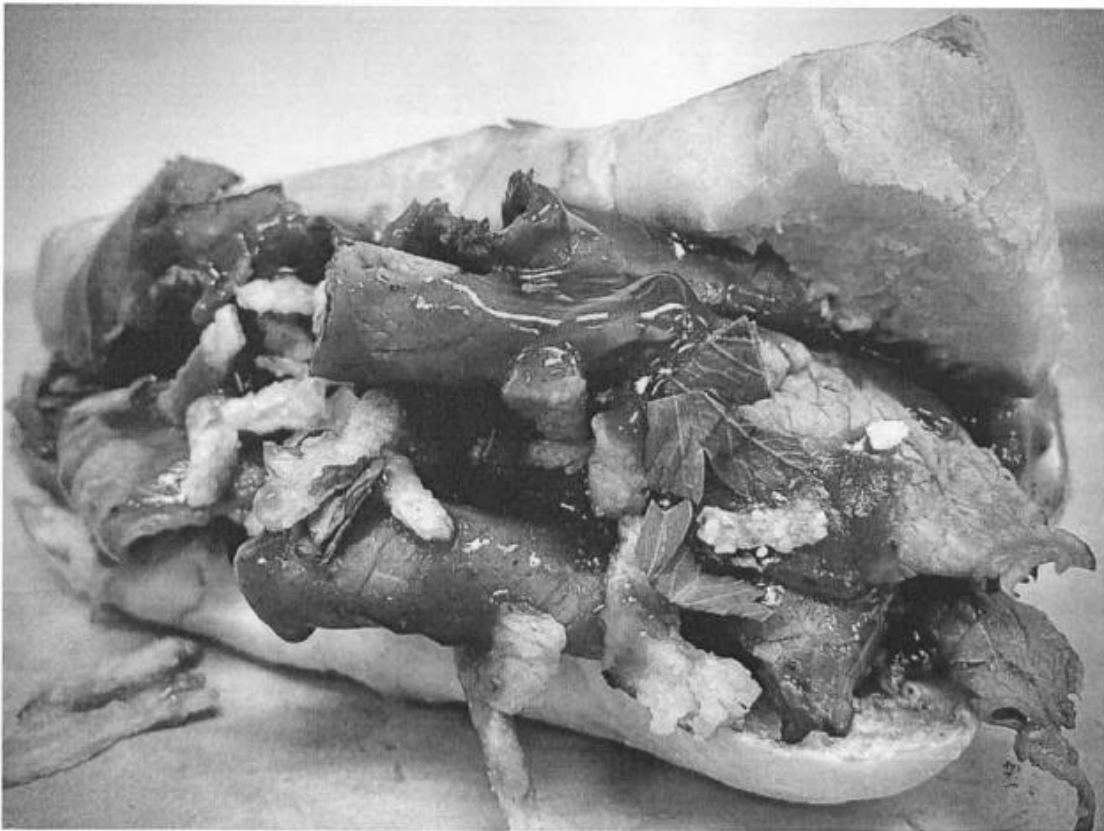


Qualtrics Survey Software

12/15/22, 1:30 PM

only, really meat shed gravy. This is your Thursday lunch.  
Available starting at 11am. Order online at <https://meatshedks.square.site>

- 
- 
- 
- 
- 
- #foodie #foodstagram #foodpics #pittstate #salumi  
#localvore #charcuterie #shoplocal #buylocal #eatlocal  
#thechampagneofmeat



Click to write the question text

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Based on a 7 point scale, (1) being strongly disagree (7) being strongly agree, Do you feel this post was attractive to you?

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree

Based on a 7 point scale, (1) being strongly disagree (7) being strongly agree, Would you like to learn more about The Meat Shed?

- ☐ Strongly Disagree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Somewhat Disagree
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Strongly Agree



### Consumer Behavior

Which factors influences you to support a business or organization the most? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Product(s)
- ☐ Service Environment (The People)
- ☐ Business Environment
- ☐ Popularity
- ☐ Attractive Advertising
- ☐ Hours/Accessibility
- ☐  Other Please Describe

What social media platform do you use the most? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ TikTok
- ☐ Snapchat
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ Instagram
- ☐ Youtube
- ☐ Pinterest
- ☐ I do not use social media

How likely are you to visit an organization if they were active on social media?

- ☐ Extremely unlikely
- ☐ Somewhat unlikely
- ☐ Indifferent
- ☐ Somewhat likely

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☐ Extremely likely

### Client Message Testing

Have you ever heard of The Meat Shed?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

Have you ever used or bought The Meat Shed's products?

- ☐ Yes  
☐ No

In the past six months how have you received information about The Meat Shed?

- ☐ Word of Mouth (e.g. friends, family, social interactions)  
☐ Local Media (KOAM, KSN, KKOW, Morning Sun)  
☐ Facebook  
☐ TikTok  
☐ Instagram  
☐ Flyers  
☐ I do not recall receiving information about The Meat Shed

How would you like to receive information about The Meat Shed in the future?

- ☐ Word of Mouth (e.g. friends, family, social interactions)  
☐ Local Media (KOAM, KSN, KKOW, Morning Sun)  
☐ Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok)

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- ☐ Email Chains
- ☐ Newsletters or Creative Briefs
- ☐ I do not want to receive information about The Meat Shed

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1/27/23, 10:57 AM

Preview - Qualtrics Survey | Qualtrics Experience Management

Restart Survey

Place Bookmark

Tools



Share Preview

Thank you for completing this survey! If you have any questions or would like a copy of the study once completed please email the primary investigator at [tameyers@gus.pittstate.edu](mailto:tameyers@gus.pittstate.edu).



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## Appendix C (Distribution Strategy)

Happy Tuesday,

I hope you are having a relaxing and easy Tuesday! At least the weather seems to be somewhat pleasant. I wanted to touch base with you to request some assistance in gaining responses to my graduate project survey for a local business here in Pittsburg, Kansas. To provide some background information about my project. I am attempting to seek responses from the general public about what media attracts consumers to help The Meat Shed build material to bring more awareness for their business. To those who are unaware The Meat Shed is a deli market, and restaurant right here in town, and the owners want to make their establishment "A Pillar of Pittsburg". Therefore, I wanted to exercise my research knowledge to figure out what attracts consumers to local businesses through social and digital content.

I was hoping / wondering if you would be willing to publish an announcement to your students for them to complete my survey so I can gain data from the public to help The Meat Shed. You do not need to offer extra credit as an incentive, because my personal mindset is if the students want to complete it, they will do it on their own. (But feel free to add some persuasive messages to help motivate them).

My survey does have some basic stipulations that are required before taking the survey. The stipulations are as follows...

- Individual must be at least 18 years old
- Individual must live within the four-state region (Kansas, Missouri, Arkansas, Oklahoma)

If an individual does not meet these requirements, **they should not** be taking the survey. My hope was that we could work together to try to get this survey through any channel or avenue possible for the most exposure so I can gain fruitful data for my graduate project. To make the process easier for you I drafted a template below to where you can just copy and paste the information to send to your students. Feel free to add more to the message if you would like.

---

Header: A message from a fellow student....

Hello Everyone!

My name is Trey Meyers and I am a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the Department of Communication. I am gathering responses from the student body for my graduate creative project. My project is aimed to support a local business here in Pittsburg, The Meat Shed, by seeking information about your consumer behavior for online media. I feel a majority of the time we could use the ideas from students to help support local businesses. If you would like to help a local business and a fellow graduate student, please complete my survey through the following link: [https://pittstatebusiness.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_9QSi42iICT3PzE](https://pittstatebusiness.co1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_9QSi42iICT3PzE)

This survey should only take you about 5 - 8 minutes to complete. **NOTICE: You must be at least 18 years old and currently live in the four-state region (Kansas, Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma.** If you do not meet these qualifications, please **Do Not** take the survey.

I greatly appreciate taking the time to read over my message, and your willingness to help me through my graduate project process. If you have any questions or would like to know the results of the study, please email me at [tameyers@gus.pittstate.edu](mailto:tameyers@gus.pittstate.edu)

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## Appendix D (Qualitative Interview Questions)

### Qualitative Interview Questions

1. Would you more likely trust a business if they had a social media account? Why/Why not
  2. Do you believe that all businesses should have a loyalty program for consumers? Why/Why Not?
  3. What are some attractive practices businesses can utilize in their social media?
  4. What makes a social media post attractive to you?
  5. What are some popular brands that you can think of in Pittsburg Kansas? Why do these come to mind?
  6. Do you follow The Meat Shed on any social media account?
  7. How can restaurants make a good social media presence online?
-

## Appendix E (Quantitative Data Tables)

Figure 4.1: Chi Square Age and Means of Communication Data Table

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	30.203 <sup>a</sup>	15	.011
Likelihood Ratio	31.848	15	.007
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.324	1	.250
N of Valid Cases	151		

a. 17 cells (70.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .25.

Figure 4.2: Independent Samples T-Test Age and Video Attraction Chart

Independent Samples Test											
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Significance		Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
						One-Sided p	Two-Sided p			Lower	Upper
What is your age	Equal variances assumed	2.830	.110	.911	18	.187	.374	.750	.823	-.979	2.479
	Equal variances not assumed			.939	4.804	.196	.392	.750	.798	-1.328	2.828



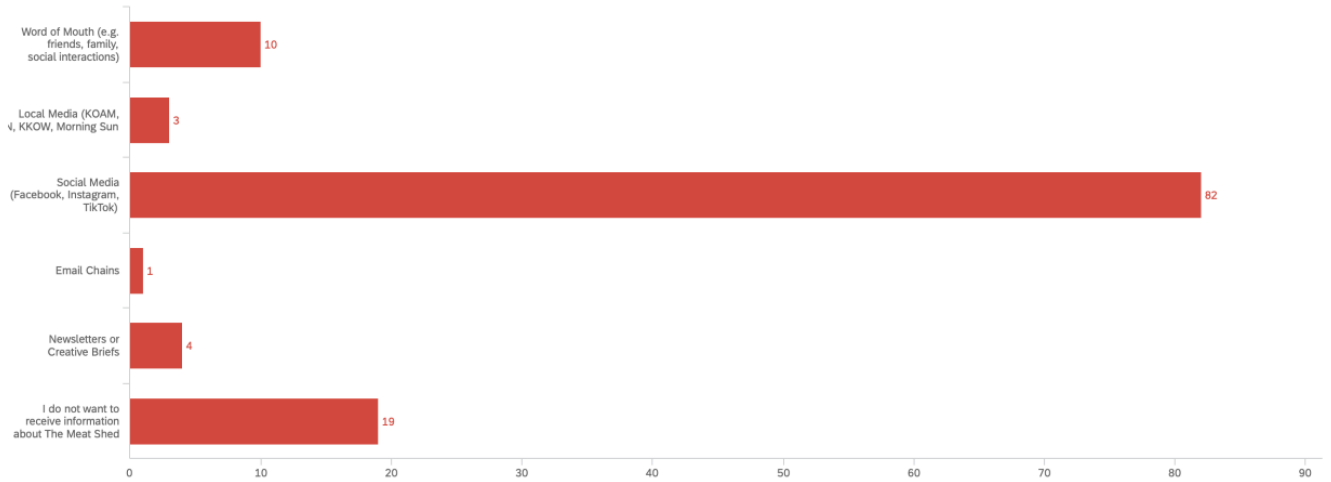
Figure 4.3: Correlational Test Between Video and Social Media Attraction

Correlations			
		On a 7 point scale, (1) being strongly disagree (7) being strongly agree, Do you feel The Meat Shed has the ability to attract you as a consumer from the video you watched?	Based on a 7 point scale, (1) being strongly disagree (7) being strongly agree, Do you feel this post was attractive to you?
On a 7 point scale, (1) being strongly disagree (7) being strongly agree, Do you feel The Meat Shed has the ability to attract you as a consumer from the video you watched?	Pearson Correlation	1	.314**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001
	N	151	151
Based on a 7 point scale, (1) being strongly disagree (7) being strongly agree, Do you feel this post was attractive to you?	Pearson Correlation	.314**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	
	N	151	151
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

## Appendix F (Communication Audit Responses)

Q5 - How would you like to receive information about The Meat Shed in the future?

Page Options ▾



Q4 - In the past six months how have you received information about The Meat Shed?

Page Options ▾

