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JagTV Qualitative Study



A Report by South Texas College's office of
Research & Analytical Services
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Background

As stated in its mission statement, South Texas College's Office of Public Relations and Marketing (STC-OPRM) supports the overall college mission through different promotional and informational pieces. "The office is charged with helping to develop and implement methods for communicating with the College's various audiences, especially prospective students, visitors, peer institution, alumni and the local community." In addition, part of its Detailed Assessment Report for 2008-2009, the STC-OPRM has set several objectives including promoting the STC image, services, and programs through the use of video (O 1).

In an effort to support departmental goals to "promote the college and higher education to the Rio Grande Valley to recruit new students and keep community informed" as well as "promote a college going culture in our communities," the South Texas College (STC) Office of Public Relations has developed JagTV, informative videos meant to be distributed throughout the community and college on a monthly basis. (South Texas College Office of Public Relations and Marketing [STC-OPRM], 2009, *Office of Public Relations and Marketing Website*)

According to the JagTV website:

JagTV is the place to get the scoop on the latest information about South Texas College. From learning how to sign up for a community library card, to learning to register online to getting cooking tips, to learning how to grow your own salsa garden, we offer advice on getting into college, what to do once accepted and tips and information to help you live and learn better. (STC-OPRM, 2009, *JagTV*)

This production video is meant to reach several groups in the community including, but not limited to, STC students, STC faculty, staff, and administration, various community entities including secondary students, parents, and other community members.

While other colleges, such as Lansing Community College (LCC TV), Houston Community College (HCC-TV), also produce television and video segments, they differ from JagTV in that other colleges run different segments and productions 24 hours a day, 7 days a week through local public broadcasting channels.

Purpose of Study

This particular study will involve the use of focus groups which will consist of various community members, such as parents of high school students, high school staff, and high school teachers. The focus group will seek to discover participants' opinions about the initial JagTV video, what changes, if any, need to be implemented in future videos, and also to uncover other topics of interest for future segments.

Methodology

A qualitative study involving focus groups will be conducted to provide insight into this subject. Three focus groups were conducted at a local high school located within the area serviced by South Texas College. Due to regulations limiting research that can be conducted with subjects under the age of 18, as well as the timeframe of the study (which fell after the end of the regular school term), we were unable to conduct focus groups with high school students.

Two focus groups were conducted with a mixture of parents and paraprofessional staff (n=17) and one focus group was conducted with teachers (n=6). The focus groups with parents

and paraprofessionals were conducted before parental involvement meetings. The focus group that took place with teachers was conducted during a teacher's in-service day.

At the beginning of each focus group the purpose behind the video and the purpose behind the focus groups were explained to study participants before and the complete video was shown. With the exception of the period in which this introduction was made and the video was shown, focus group meetings were recorded and transcribed.

Transcripts, qualitative memos, notes, and other data was imputed into NVivo8 software to find common themes and ideas regarding opinions of the JagTV segments and to uncover topics study participants would like to see covered in future segments.

Research Questions

(Please see appendix A for list of questions asked of study participants.)

The purpose of this study was to gauge responses and gather opinion of the video production known as JagTV. This study also seeks to uncover what type of topics participants would like to see covered in future segments.

The information gathered as part of this research study will be used by the STC-OPRM to promote JagTV and develop future JagTV segments.

Findings

Coding suggests that there is a high level of interest in programming such as JagTV. The video seemed to hold the attention of all focus group participants and all of them expressed interest in seeing future segments and having their children/students see them as well.

Parents & Paraprofessionals

The groups that seemed most excited about this particular endeavor were made up parents; they stated that they learned a lot about the college via the JagTV segment. They found the video to be “very informational” and made several examples of how the information presented could be used to assist them and their children. For example, one parent stated that her son had decided to go into culinary studies after graduation and that they were unaware that a culinary studies program was available at STC. They were already acting on the misconception that her son would have to leave the Rio Grande Valley to continue his education. Due to the cooking segment she was excited to learn that another option was available.

Parents and paraprofessionals also agreed that the segment College Services: Library Community Card was particularly useful. They were unaware that this particular service was open to the community and several participants showed interest in taking advantage of being able to utilize library services and courses offered by the library. They felt that this amenity would be useful to their families as a whole. One parent pointed out that this service would allow her daughter to not only use the library, but “to experience what college might be like.”

Parents and paraprofessionals both seemed to think that the segment College Services: Financial Aid to be informative, but in need of improvement. They felt that the process was not as clearly outlined as it could have been and that more detailed information was needed about how to go through the financial aid process.

Different aspects that the parents and paraprofessionals enjoyed included the diversity of individuals presenting in the various segments and the presentation of segments that would

appeal to diverse interests within the community. They also felt that students would enjoy the way that the segments were presented (i.e. “fast paced,” “crazy”).

Teachers

The focus group that consisted of teachers had an overall positive reaction to the JagTV video. The majority of participants agreed that while the video was not geared towards them, since it was “obviously produced for a much younger audience,” it still held their interest and they found the information to be useful.

They all agreed that the information presented within the course of the JagTV video would be useful to students and parents. The study participants felt that the information, such as the library card, could be utilized both to help students with their academic endeavors and help prepare them for entry into post-secondary education.

All the teachers that participated in the focus group felt that this would be a good tool for them to utilize in their classrooms. It was suggested that the information on the videos could help answer questions about college that they might not have the answer to with the meningitis scare, other ways of paying for college, and different studying techniques being cited as examples.

Recommendations

Future Segments

All groups agreed that the video segments informed them about different amenities offered by STC that they were previously unaware of. They stated that they would like to be

presented with more segments that tell them about services and programs offered by STC, such as the library card, that are available to the entire community.

Introducing students and parents to different fields of study offered by STC was also suggested. Tying information segments, such as Cooking with Chef Paul and Fashion: Killer Looks, to programs such as culinary studies and chemistry, seemed a subtle, but effective way of doing this.

There was a very strong interest in having future programs cater to the Spanish-speaking population of the area. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, 82.1% of Hidalgo County, which contains 4 out of 5 STC campuses, has households where Spanish is spoken. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2000)

Other Recommendations

It is apparent that production and dissemination of JagTV to the community at large could be instrumental to helping the STC-OPRM to meet specific outcomes and objections outlined in their Detailed Assessment Report.

For example, objectives/outcomes 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 18 could all easily be met through the production of future segments in much the same way that objective/outcome 10 was met through the segment College Services: Library Card. JagTV could also assist with objective/outcome 11 if video segments were posted on various social media outlets, including YouTube and Facebook.

The STC-OPRM may also consider utilizing ideas currently used by Lansing Community College Television (LCC TV). This includes using a survey to have the community vote on

what segments they would like to see, as well as utilizing community volunteers to work on various segments.

Focus group participants indicated that they would like for JagTV to be made available to them through various media outlets, such as educational public access channel 17 and dissemination to parent groups and classrooms at various schools.

Appendix A

JagTV Focus Group Questions

What was your initial reaction to the program?

Did it hold your attention? If not, why?

What is the one thing that stood out the most?

Which segment/topic did you find to be the most helpful and entertaining?

What future topics would you like to see?

What would you change about the program?

Any other thoughts/reactions?

Are you or any of your family members enrolled or associated with STC?

Do you watch your city or school district local TV access station?

Do you use the STC website?

Do you view videos on internet video sites? If so, which sites?

What are your initial thoughts about South Texas College?

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