



THEBLACKSHEEP

73 West Monroe Avenue – Chicago, Illinois 60603 – www.theblacksheeponline.com

CLIENT RESEARCH REPORT

Introduction

About The Black Sheep

Founded at the University of Illinois as The Booze News and rebranded as The Black Sheep in 2009, The Black Sheep is a collegiate content and marketing company that allows local and national brands a one-stop shop to reach the collegiate demographic.

On the editorial side, The Black Sheep develops strong campus teams who create unique, local content that focuses on the social and entertainment side of college, written by students, for students. On the marketing side The Black Sheep is able to execute any campaign from lead generation, user acquisition, hosted events, and other strategic methods to ensure a strong return for their clients.

The Black Sheep has a presence at more than 65 universities powered by structured campus teams comprised of students gaining experience in editorial, marketing, sales, operations, and other areas.

About This Class

Public relations writing at Western Michigan University prepares its students for the professional world of PR by teaching students how to write clear, concise material

founded on solid, reliable research. For the purpose of this class, we will prepare a PR campaign on behalf of The Black Sheep utilizing skills and practices learned throughout the semester.

Audiences

The primary audience we will target with our campaign will be current and prospective clients of The Black Sheep looking to market to college campuses. This existing clientele include L’Oreal, The New York Times, GroupMe, La Croix, College Pro and several other companies listed on The Black Sheep website. Prospective clientele include both local businesses looking to target a specific campus and national brands looking to market nationwide. This audience makes up the main source of income for the company.

The secondary audience we will target with our campaign includes students at colleges nationwide who might be interested in starting a branch of The Black Sheep on their campus. This audience is solely responsible for the expansion of The Black Sheep’s presence and reach.

SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relatable – The mission and values of the company are very relatable to the millennial generation to whom they are trying to	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Naiveté/Experience – As a young company, The Black Sheep has little to no experience executing a PR campaign and believing in its

<p>market.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Youthful – The company is still relatively new and still maintains a youthful vigor and energy. • Capable – The company already carries out the everyday operations to market to their target audiences. • Existing Reach – The Black Sheep already has 50% campus saturation and over 1,000 contributing writers. 	<p>merits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small Size – The central company is still relatively small with around 30 full time employees. • Financials – As a small and new company, there is little expendable income to use for PR campaigns.
<p>Opportunities</p>	<p>Threats</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constant growth of social media – Social media is constantly changing and providing new opportunities for companies to reach a wider, more diverse audience. • Addition of new clientele – By increasing communications with publics outside of the organization, The Black Sheep has the opportunity to increase its reach and sources of income. • Physical expansion – With the increase of reach nationwide, there could be an 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market Demand – Clientele could observe the process of reaching colleges via The Black Sheep and decide to cut out the middleman and try it themselves. • Competition - The largest competitor of The Black Sheep is Barstool Sports, which uses social media in a similar fashion to target college campuses to sell engagements to large brands. • Overgrowth – Too much growth or too many clients could overwhelm the small staff of The

<p>opportunity for a new physical office for full time employees in other locations across the country.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitor overtaking/acquisition – If The Black Sheep is successful enough, they could corner the market on college marketing and engagement, pushing out possible competition. 	<p>Black Sheep and lead to a breakdown in staff confidence and productivity.</p>
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Goals & Objectives

The first goal of this PR campaign is to increase the awareness among the target publics of the mission and reach of The Black Sheep. To reach this goal, we will strive to increase college campus awareness of The Black Sheep from 50% to 75% by the end of the 2017-2018 school year. We will also strive to establish new relationships with at least 100 new businesses or brands nationwide by the end of the 2017-2018 school year.

Our second campaign goal is to expand the physical presence of The Black Sheep on college campuses. This will be achieved by establishing student staff of The Black Sheep at 20 new universities by the end of the 2017-2018 school year.

In the past, The Black Sheep has relied solely on word of mouth to spread awareness and attract new staff and clientele. This tactic has brought them farther than one would expect, but has shown to be causing something of a plateau in the growth of The Black Sheep

in the past quarter. It is our hope that by implementing these new goals and objectives that The Black Sheep will develop more professional, effective tactics that will allow them to achieve these goals in a shorter amount of time and with a higher efficacy.

Tactics

Throughout this campaign, we will develop press releases, social media posts, public service announcements, company newsletters and brochures in order to better fulfill our objectives and reach our goals. These tactics will assist in achieving the goal of added awareness by providing information about The Black Sheep to its publics and possible new publics it was as yet unaware of. They will also be the first PR copy of their kind for The Black Sheep and will thus be able to be used as templates for future campaigns or endeavors.

These tactics will also enable The Black Sheep to have the professional correspondence to improve their image and inspire their publics to want to work with them further, effectively fulfilling the second goal of inspiring students and new universities to set up Black Sheep staffs on their campus.

Conclusion

The Black Sheep is in dyer need of a structured communication plan to better reach the publics that allow them to thrive as a company. This PR campaign will develop this new communication plan by creating the written PR documents listed above, thus equipping The Black Sheep with a PR arsenal to grow its awareness and campus presence.

The Black Sheep's strengths as a new and energetic company will allow it to embrace this new campaign as a vehicle to seize the opportunities that this new technological climate affords it. By establishing a solid foundation for the relations The Black Sheep has with its publics, they will better cope with their naiveté and small size and might even surpass the competition that threatens their success in the future.

For further information or queries please contact:

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