

# PSU Food Pantry Marcom

## Group 2



MKTG363: Szocs

### **Team members:**

Matthew Fisher, Deanna Geiss, Falmata Gerba, Trentin Gibson,  
& Luis Ibanez

# Executive Summary

The purpose of this project is to create a marketing communications campaign that is successful in getting more students to utilize the Portland State Food Pantry. A food pantry was set up to assist students who are struggling to meet financial needs but the pantry has been under-utilized. The goal is to get more students who could benefit from this resource to use it consistently.

**Food Pantry Mission Statement:** Portland State Food Pantry was developed to serve currently enrolled students by providing a free resource, sharing community, and a welcoming, inclusive, and dignified environment to acquire food items on a regular basis.

**The target audience** is PSU students in need of food who do not have enough resources for proper nutrition on any given day. They're aged 18-60, of all genders, ethnicities, etc.

**This unique selling proposition** has been designed to reduce negative stigma that may be associated with the food pantry program by placing emphasis on the fact that *any* student can use this service. By making access to the service more universal, more students should be feel empowered to use this service.

**The objective of the communication plan** is that everyone is welcomed with no questions asked but the food pantry feels students are embarrassed to utilize this free resource. The tagline "stressin' over food and funds isn't fun" is being used to engage the target audience via a poster campaign and Twitter campaign.

**The primary communication channels** are posters placed in strategic locations and a Twitter campaign aimed at the target audience.

**A 1-month/30-day schedule** has been developed to describe the reach, frequency and budget of the project over its' month-long campaign.

**The primary metric for success** is showing whether there is an increase in the number of individuals that have visited the food pantry. A baseline should be obtained during the month previous to this campaign and then visitor volume during the campaign should also be measured. By comparing the results, it is then possible to tell if there was a marked increase in visitation. As well, the survey results for the feedback on messaging are an indicator of how successful the message is for this campaign.

## Background Research

The Food Pantry was created a year and a half ago because of rising cost of tuition, housing, and textbooks, which in return limited students to the degree of spending their money on campus meals. A committee to ensure student security was developed by PSU which whom also partnered up with Harvest Share which is an Oregon Food Bank program that provides fresh fruits and vegetables the second monday of every month right outside Shattuck Hall. According to PSU, Harvest Share is responsible for the distribution of 55,000 pounds of foods to 4,127 PSU students.

The overall objective is to improve access to nutritious and affordable meals on campus. The way it works is students come to SMSU 047A with their student ID Monday through Friday between 12:30-2:30 pm. Students are allowed to pick up to five items and bring it up to the volunteer or staff member so they can log the items out. Perishables such as produce, bread, and items in the “free bin” do not count against your daily limit. The staff will ask you if you've visited the pantry before and if you are enrolled in at least one credit hour class and you're set to go!

They are making it as easy as possible to donate with 5 designated donation spots located at SMSU 047A, SMSU 117, Woman’s Resource Center, Coom 217 in Cramer Hall, and the Market in SMSU. On their website, they also mention that there are other donation boxes located across campus. The food pantry only accepts non-perishable food such as pasta, beans, rice, macaroni and cheese, etc. They also accept diapers, soap, toothpaste and other personal hygiene products. If you donate anything, you are allowed to pick up an extra item as well (six items with donation, 5 items without).

Although there are no statistics about Portland State specifically, a study published by the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior found that 59% of students at a mid-sized Oregon university where food insecure at some point in the last year (Radcliffe). Food pantries have been on the uprise the last decade going from only 4 college pantries and had grown to 121 in 2014 (Bahrapour).

The food pantry project lines up with their mission statement perfectly by providing Portland State University students with a welcoming and free resource to acquire food and other necessities that some of our students had been going long stretches without. It is a community based and donation funded program to help our fellow classmates.

## Target Customer Profile



Target Customer Profile for PSU Food Pantry: Typical 'Sam Student'  
(Portland State University student in need of food)

### **Demographics: (Who are they?)**

They're PSU students in need of food who do not have enough resources for proper nutrition on any given day. They're aged 18-60, of all genders, ethnicities, etc.

### **Psychographics: (What do they think? How do they think? What are they motivated by?)**

Students value a healthy lifestyle, however with the stresses of classes, work and external duties it may be difficult or impossible to get proper nourishment. Since the other stressors may take priority over food. They are motivated by being self-sufficient adults, who may have difficulty receiving assistances.

### **Behaviors: (What do they do?)**

They are college students; either in school full time, a student athlete, part time student and full-time worker, or they are a full time student with a full time job. They choose to go without food in exchange to cover other bills and/or obligations.

### **Environment: (Where do they operate?)**

They operate in the Portland metropolitan area. They would be found operating on campus, interacting with local retail stores, restaurants, public transportation, and entertainment venues in the surrounding area. Many commute from outlying communities and some students are online only.

### **Preferred communication channels: (Where do they get information?)**

Usually information about PSU is received through the PSU email, knowing most college students they over look anything that's not from either the professor or their fellow students. Social media is a good alternative in grabbing the students' attention. As well as having posters around campus and the surrounding areas.

## Communication Brief

Communication Objective:	The objective is to get the students who are most in need of supplementing their nutrition to use the PSU food pantry more often/more consistently.
Target Audience:	The target audience is PSU Students in need of food, due to their economic situation.
Audience's Current Perceptions/Actions:	Currently, there is a portion of students who use the food pantry services already, there are those who are too stigmatized to use it, and those who don't know about it.
Desired Audience Response:	The desired audience response will be for the audience to feel no stigma, to know this is available, and use it more often.
Necessary Ideas That Need To Be Conveyed:	Ease of access, lack of stigma, & good options.
Justification for Necessary Ideas:	Because it's true, available and because people believe proper nutrition is important regardless of circumstance.
Time Frame for Desired Response:	We want to see an improved audience response within a short-term period of time (ie 90 days).
Indicators/Measurement of Response:	This best indicator is counting the # of students who visit the PSU food pantry.
Appropriate Tone of Voice:	A kind, humble, welcoming and inclusive tone of voice.
Brand Identifiers:	PSU logo, food pantry logo/name, school colors.

## Unique Selling Proposition (w/ initial messaging)

*USP (Unique Selling Proposition):*

PSU food pantry offers free food to any PSU student who is in need. The food pantry offers students 5 free items per day, and unlimited access to perishable items.

This unique selling proposition reduces negative stigma that may be associated with the program by placing emphasis on the fact that any student can use this service. By making access to the service more universal, more students should be feel empowered to use this service. If the food pantry finds that the program is being abused, the USP could be further modified.

*Tagline for this USP:*

“Stressing over food and funds isn't fun”

*Message:*

Messaging will be targeted in a non-threatening and non-judgmental way. Inclusivity is key so students do not feel like they are being singled out.

Everyone is welcomed with no questions asked but the food pantry feels students are embarrassed to utilize this free resource. These examples are ways the food pantry can get more students to come and use their service.

*Example 1: [Appendix A]* This is a promotion to get people/target audience engaged. This could be either emailed to students, tweeted, advertised in the school paper, or could be placed on the food pantry web page. The Cialdini weapon of influence used in this example is scarcity. The promotion will help motivate people to visit and try the food pantry where once they have a positive experience, they will continue to come back.

*Example 2: [Appendix B]* This utilizes the Authority and Social Proof weapons discussed by Cialdini. Victor E. Viking is looked at as a role model and will help students to feel better about using the food pantry's message. The image also has a humor element which should help make it appealing. This could be advertised in the same ways as Example 1.

*Example 3: [Appendix C]* This is a different approach to the program. This is based on Cialdini's weapon of influence, Reciprocation. It may be useful to get people to think they are not getting something absolutely free, in order for them to use to program. This could also be seen as somewhat humorous as well, given there is an ironic element to the content. The message could be delivered in the same was the previous two examples.

## 6. Message Testing & Refinement

Before testing the overall message of the food pantry, two methods were developed. Method 1: displaying one of the three posters on/around the PSU campus. Method 2: starting a twitter account, tweeting out what the food pantry offers. These two methods were selected as they cost the least and were the most simple yet effective to complete (see appendices) .

Method 1 was implemented because of the visual display on the posters. The message will be captured more effectively due to the colors and having them being displayed all around campus. We felt the posters would be more successful than a tweet, students are more likely to see the posters because they are right in front of them, instead of going or of their way to see the food pantry’s twitter page.

Moving forward with Method 1, each team member asked 10 PSU students to complete a short survey about the messaging. With 5 members in our group, we decided to have two members walk through Keller Miller Center, two members walk through Kramer, and one walk stand outside the library. A total of fifty students were surveyed with a flyer about the example advertisement ideas. This flyer had three ad ideas along with a “tweet” promoting that specific ad. We then asked these students to rank these posters from favorite to least favorite, and asked how we could improve their number one choice, along with if they are a graduate or undergraduate.

### Messaging Survey Data Example:

[Survey Results]			
Data Collector	Preference	Improvements?	Grad or Undergrad?
Deanna	#1: Best: 3 2nd: 1 3rd:2 #2: Best: 2 2nd: 3 3rd: 1 #3: Best: 3 2nd: 2 3rd: 1 #4: Best: 1 2nd: 2 3rd: 3 #5: Best: 3 2nd: 2 3rd: 1 #6: Best: 1 2nd: 3 3rd: 2	#1: The background color #2: The layout/Organization #3: Color Scheme #4: Drop the orange #5: Don't use white poster paper #6: Increase text size, crisp the picture	#1: Undergrad #2: Undergrad #3: Undergrad #4: Undergrad #5: Grad #6: Undergrad

### Results and Analysis

<b>Totals:</b>	<b>1st Place Votes:</b> #1:17; #2:12; #3:21 <b>2nd Place Votes:</b> #1:16; #2:20; #3:14 <b>3rd Place Votes:</b> #1:17; #2:21; #3:12	<b>Top 3 suggestions:</b> <b>#1:</b> Select better color scheme <b>#2:</b> Less busy and/or cluttered <b>#3:</b> Improve font/text	<b># of Grad: 9</b> <b># of Undergrad: 41</b>  <b>Overall Rankings:</b> <b>#1: Example 3; #2: Example 2;</b> <b>&amp; #3: Example 1</b>
----------------	--	---	--

Results were quantified and the overall ranking ended placing Example 3 [Appendix C] as the best/#1 ad. The majority of students that were surveyed were undergraduate students which appears to be consistent with the overall student population at PSU. The top three suggestions were then applied to that ad to create a revised message and delivery.

The finalized poster **Appendix D** has been modified to accommodate the suggested improvements from the survey. The color scheme has been altered, to coincide with the school's colors. And the font has also been changed to be consistent throughout the poster.

## Scheduling

Date	
11/1	First Phase: Research Poster Ideas & Twitter Campaign Ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>reach</i> - Followers on Twitter, amount of foot-traffic at poster locations</li> <li>● <i>budget</i> - Since the program is volunteer-based, the labor is free. \$25 or student print quota for color paper poster prints. (125 prints per standard student printing quota for single-sided color printing) &amp; time spent by volunteers.</li> <li>● <i>frequency</i> - Quantified by how often the poster and/or tweet is seen.</li> </ul>
11/8	Second phase: Make edits to posters and potential tweets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>reach</i> - Our reach will be an outcome of the amount of posters that can be purchased, and being placed with the desired frequency.</li> <li>● <i>budget</i> - 4 hours for editing posters and tweets, get quotes for posters.</li> <li>● <i>frequency</i> - Find out how many posters can be purchased, while staying within budget. Then assess how many poster per block can be placed.</li> </ul>
11/15	Third Phase: Think of Metrics to measure success <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <i>reach</i> - We were able to reach X amount of students.</li> <li>● <i>budget</i> - Since labor is free and materials a total of \$35 (with \$10 of tape included), we were successful in keeping a very small budget for this campaign.</li> <li>● <i>frequency</i> - We successfully placed 2 posters per block. And/or tweeted X amount of times.</li> </ul>
11/22	Complete Phase 4: Testing USP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Each member is responsible for organizing one section of the paper.</li> <li>● Final edit and submit by or before 11/28/2017</li> </ul>
11/29	PROJECT IS COMPLETE  Final data and reporting is available.





## Metrics to measure success

The success of the messaging will be determined in part by the survey that was conducted about the messaging for this campaign. Patrick Parnaby from IDEA stated, "Surveys are a classic method for data collection because they are flexible, easy to implement, and offer a nearly limitless range of data with reliable results. Because you can gather large amounts of feedback directly from individuals who are affected by the program, surveys act as the finger on the pulse of your project and can measure its strength" (Parnaby). When creating the questions, we will mostly use open-ended questions because we would like the best possible responses and keep the overall process simple for the respondents. We will have a set of three questions, they are listed below.

1. Rank your favorite poster from least favorite to best.
2. How could your favorite be improved?
3. Are you a graduate or undergraduate?

The primary overall metric for success would be to show an increase in the number of individuals that have visited the food pantry. A baseline should be obtained during the month previous to this campaign and then visitor volume during the campaign should be measured. By comparing the results it is then possible to tell if there was a marked increase in visitation. Also, the survey results for the feedback on messaging are an indicator of how successful the message is.

The success benchmark/goal is to see an anticipated 20% increase in foot traffic in the food pantry, which will be measured during the campaign, and for 4 weeks after the campaign.

By collecting these results, we can accurately establish factors that correlate with the students who use this service. Due to this appeal, we can work to further develop strategies to increase demand/foot traffic to the food pantry. We can also determine factors that were not useful and remove them from the equation so that this great service stays available in the long-term to those in need.

## Bibliography

Bahrampour, Tara. "More College Students Battle Hunger as Education and Living Costs Rise." *The*

*Washington Post*, WP Company, 9 Apr. 2014.

Cialdini, Robert B. *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*. Collins, 2006.

Hawkins, Delbert. *Consumer Behavior*. McGraw-Hill, 2015.

Parnaby, Patrick. "Evaluation through Surveys." *IDEA*, 1 Feb. 2011,

[www.idea.org/blog/2006/04/01/evaluation-through-surveys/](http://www.idea.org/blog/2006/04/01/evaluation-through-surveys/).

Radcliffe, Shawn. "Nearly 60 Percent of College Students Are 'Food Insecure'." *Healthline*, Healthline

Media, 30 Jan. 2014.

# Appendices

## Appendix A: Example 1



## Appendix B: Example 2



## Appendix C: Example 3



## Appendix D: Final Messaging

