

United Way



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SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT & EVALUATION



**UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA**

AdPR_7750: Social Media Analytics

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Executive Summary + Insights

With over 1,800 branches around the world, United Way mobilizes volunteers, community advocates and organizations to help those communities thrive through programs focused on families, education, health and leadership. It's consistently named the largest nonprofit in the world.

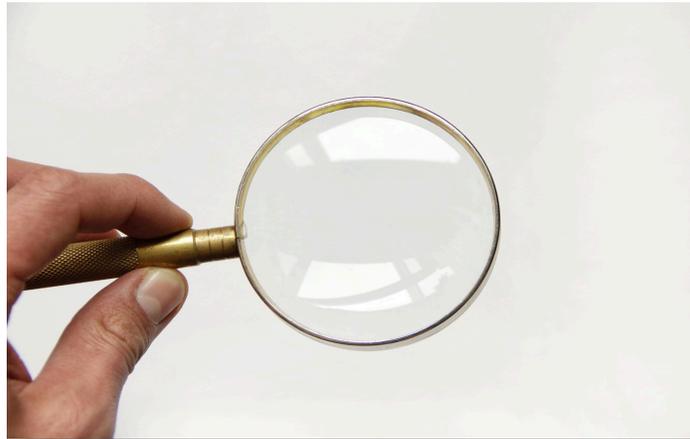
Our group began the semester by exploring a year's worth (Feb. 2016 – Feb. 2017) of Twitter activity surrounding the Greater Atlanta branch of the organization, which invests in over 200 programs throughout 13 counties in the metro area. Their mission is to help children thrive, as the next generation will also support the communities they live in thrive.

Due to a lack of data and engagement, we expanded our search to include the national United Way brand, which encompassed all branches, as well as the national United Way's own Twitter and Facebook activity. This part of the analysis covers October 1, 2016 – December 31, 2016.

What we noticed is that engagement is higher at the national level, but not on a consistent basis. We also found out that these branches do little in the way of "talking" to or engaging each other. However, they can reach large amounts of people through the stories they tell and through their collaboration with community and national partners, such as the Atlanta Falcons, Safe Harbor Yes, and the NFL.

This report will give you a more detailed look at our challenges, questions and goals, how they changed, and what we found within the data we analyzed. We will cover our findings and insights from owned, earned, and network data, as well as our recommendations. Our group focused on the social media platforms of Twitter and Facebook, and used Crimson Hexagon and NodeXL, plus trial versions of Followerwonk and Quintly, to peruse the data. A more thorough search of the United Way's Instagram and Tumblr activity could also be used for further analysis.

Problems & Questions



Goals

- Investigate the conversations about the Atlanta United Way on Twitter
- Investigate the conversations about the national United Way on different social media platforms
- Compare the Twitter conversations about the United Way with those about the American Red Cross

Challenges

- United Way's social media platforms have inconsistent rates of engagement and activity by followers
 - For the most part, engagement is low
- There are over 1,800 branches of UW, so most of them have their own base of followers and do not try to engage the others
- UW is tied to Trump, Clinton, and Planned Parenthood. The organization's CEOs' salaries are constantly questioned leading to donors (and possible donors) wondering where their donations are going within the organization.

Data Overview + KPI

Data Breakdown:

- Owned Data: Twitter

- Dates: February 1, 2016 - February 4, 2017

Sent:

- 695 tweets from Atlanta UW Twitter
- 165 filtered out for analysis
- 530 individual posts coded and analyzed for content

Audience:

- 919 tweets on Atlanta UW's Twitter
- 217 female users + 111 male users; 591 without attached information

- Earned Data: Twitter/Facebook

We changed our original frame dates and organization to expand to the official UW. Dates were picked to see social media activity fluctuations during the turbulent election and holiday season.

- Dates: October 1, 2016 - December 31, 2016
- Facebook: 808 posts
 - 219 female, 198 male
- Twitter: 783
 - 161 female, 166 male

Removed posts concerning Manchester United, United flights

Measurement:

- KPIs:

- Increase engagement rate of Twitter followers by 10% during the October – December 2017 time period. By increasing posts about storytelling and organization and campaign hashtags (#liveunited #shoebox), UW Atlanta should be able to increase their social media presence.

- The official United Way can also increase their engagement rate by 10% by having organizations interacting with the main account. This would increase traffic to the United Way's Twitter.

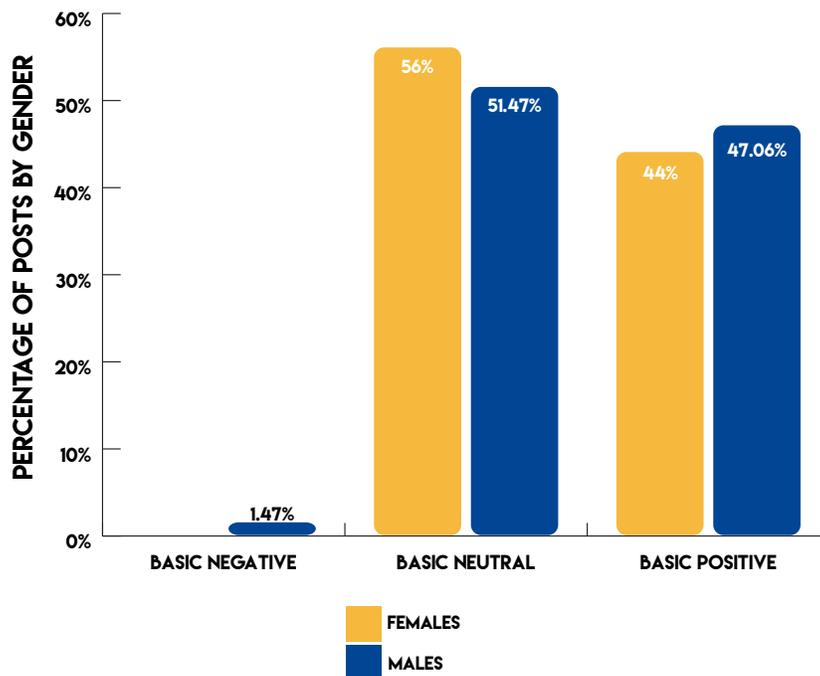
- The official United Way can increase their engagement rate by matching their follower's main activity times (10-1, 3-4). Evening ranges are not as engaged as they could be by UW followers.

Insights: Owned, Earned, Network

Owned:

- The sentiment for ATL UW is not influenced by gender
- The spikes of conversation March, July, August, November of positive sentiment were due to local campaigns and events as well as passage of Safe Harbor Amendment.
- ATL Twitter negative sentiment did not have enough data attached to make clear, concise interpretations.

POST SENTIMENT BY GENDER



Earned:

- More likely to be retweeted: Posts with outside organization hashtags (#TheHeroEffect), with hashtags that create meaningful phrases (#InsurersGiveBack, or with a combination of types
- Posts that did not include a hashtag, or those with “random” hashtags (#community) were less likely to be retweeted and promote engagement.
- The United Way’s tweets are not retweeted often, so it takes quite a bit for its followers to engage in that way. The South is less likely to retweet posts than any other region in the U.S.
- The highest amount of retweets came from regions in the North. However, the number of tweets by users in the North is also very low (24 out of 507) compared to other regions of the country.

Examples of #theheroeffect & #insurersgiveback - outside organization



Network:

- The main factor we observed in the network analysis is that the main UW does not speak to branches via Twitter and vice versa.
- They do not have similar key influencers or conversations.
- They do share #liveunited, but the conversation webs usually end there.

Competition:

- The Red Cross does share similar themes of giving/volunteerism, but the Red Cross carries more negative sentiment attached to their posts.

Owned Data: Introduction

Profile:

Client: United Way of Greater Atlanta

Platform: Twitter (6,100 followers)

Time Frame: Feb. 4, 2016 to Feb. 1, 2017

Location: Most tweets come from those who live in Atlanta and the surrounding areas

United Way: UW of Greater Atlanta focuses on community outreach by coordinating efforts between businesses, professionals, organizations, and the people in need of resources. UW's main goal is to create meaningful change and awareness in its Atlanta community.

Main Questions:

- What topics or themes of conversation create the most engagement?
- Does the use of hashtags have an effect on how often content is retweeted or shared?
- If so, what is the nature of these hashtags?
- Does the presence of hyperlinks affect the amount of retweets?
If so, where do these hyperlinks go? Internal or external pages?
- Do engagement rates fluctuate during certain campaigns such as Human Trafficking Month?
- What content is associated with the Safe Harbor Yes campaign?
- Will gender be a predictor in terms of positive or negative sentiment?

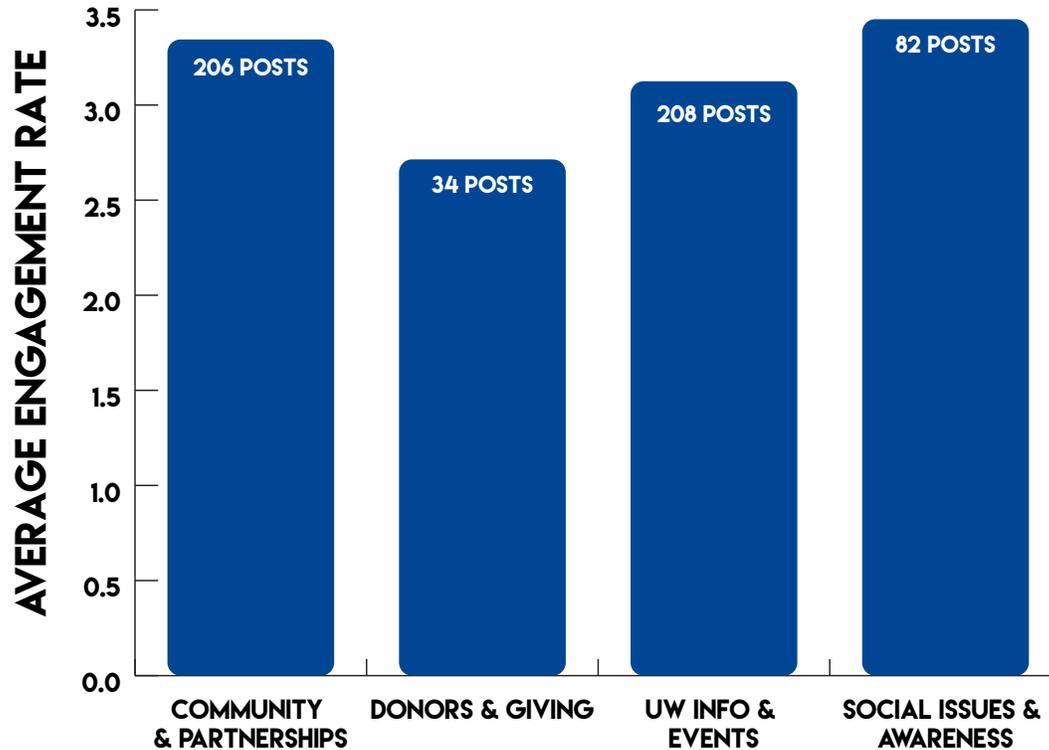
Findings:

- Received higher engagement rates with posts that did not include hashtags or links - the next best engagement rates came with posts that included hashtags or links referencing specific campaigns and outside organizations.
- We also found that the organization's Twitter followers were more likely to post to their page during active campaigns, fundraisers and community outreach initiatives.
- Found spikes in positive conversation during the months of March, July, August and November 2016. UW teamed up with the Safe Harbor Yes campaign and its effort to pass an anti-sex trafficking amendment, this dominated the conversation in November, which was of particular importance as it was an election year.
- Those UW tweets that we coded as dealing with donors and giving had the lowest engagement rate. This category also accounted for the least amount of tweets, so it seems the organization understand their audience in this sense.



Owned Data: Predictives

ENGAGEMENT RATE BY THEME OF TWEET



- Although lower in post count (82), tweets coded as “Social Issues and Awareness” posts had the highest engagement rate of all categories. This is not surprising, as many of these social issues (childhood hunger, sex trafficking) hit close to home in Atlanta
- Those posts with a “Donors & Giving” theme (34, or 4.89% of posts) unsurprisingly had the lowest engagement rate (2.71)
- Posts concerning “Community and Partnerships” (206) had an average engagement rate of 3.34 (29.64% of posts). Since the UW thrives on community partnerships, this higher engagement rate was not surprising

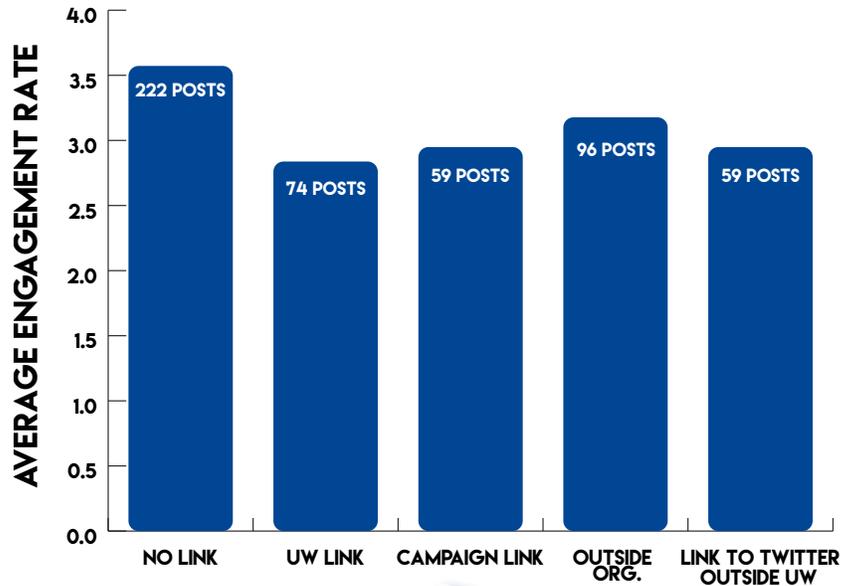


High-engagement posts with “Social Issues & Awareness” theme

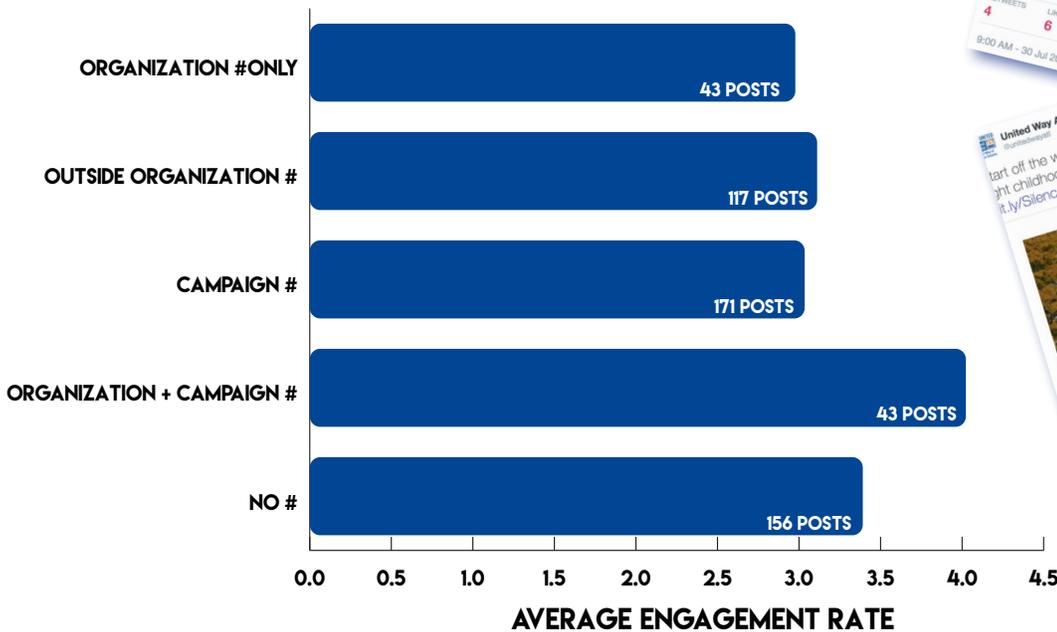
Owned Data: Predictives

- After coding for link type, we removed any dead hyperlinks (20 posts) and proceeded to examine the 510 tweets containing active or no hyperlinks.
- Posts containing no link (23.18% of all sent posts) outweighed posts containing any hyperlinks in terms of engagement. The average engagement rate of these posts was 3.57. The next highest engagement rate of 3.17 belongs to the 96 posts that included links belonging to an outside organization. Examples included news stories and outside events co-sponsored by UW.
- The lowest engagement rate (average of 2.83) belongs to the posts that only included a link to United Way social media and websites.

ENGAGEMENT RATE BY HYPERLINK TYPE



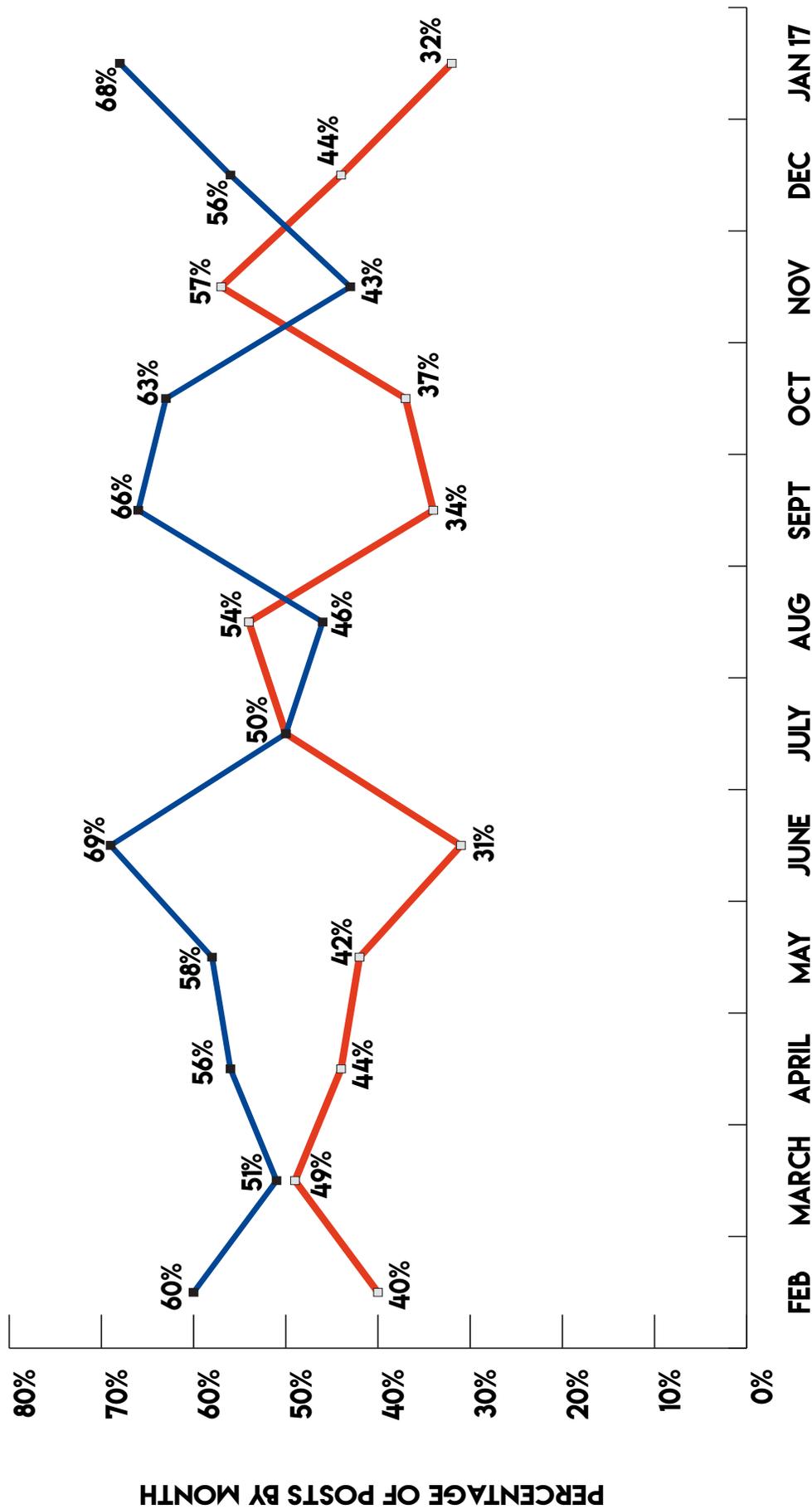
ENGAGEMENT RATE BY HASHTAG TYPE



- Those posts containing hashtags associated with outside organizations and specific campaigns created the highest engagement rate, with an average of 4.02. However, this only accounted for 8.1% of the total sent posts we analyzed.
- Organizational hashtags & the combo category both contained 43 posts, while the combo category had a higher level of engagement due to more hashtags.
- Surprisingly, those posts without hashtags (29.43%) had the next highest engagement rate (avg. = 3.4).

Owned Data: Monthly Sentiment

POST SENTIMENT BY MONTH



Owned Data: Explaining Spikes

- March 2016 (49% positive): An overwhelming part of the conversation during this month was in regards to UW's annual Shoebox Project campaign, which collects and then provides a shoebox full of toiletries to homeless women and children around Atlanta. Over 40,000 shoeboxes were collected in 2016 alone.
- July 2016 (50% positive): There wasn't one topic that stood out among the others, but the conversations during this month included excitement about fundraising and campaigns, as well as speakers and events hosted by UW of Greater Atlanta.
- August 2016 (54% positive): The conversations during August included excitement about the annual Mayor's 5K, sponsored by Delta, as well as shout-outs to those helping with education and child hunger campaigns.
- November 2016 (57% positive): Three big topics stood out this month: the passage of the Safe Harbor Amendment on Election Day; the annual Women's Leadership Breakfast; and the Taste of Hartsfield-Jackson fundraiser, which benefited United Way of Greater Atlanta.



Owned Data: Insights + Recommendations

Insights:

- Engagement with the United Way of Greater Atlanta's Twitter is generally low and inconsistent
- High engagement comes from posts that mention community partnerships and organizations
- Lowest engagement rates attached to posts about donations and with those tweets that linked to the United Way website or other social media pages
- Posts about campaigns linked to social issues (#SilencetheGrowl) received more retweets and likes than any other category
- United Way of Greater Atlanta does not include links on many of their posts, and those posts have a higher engagement rate than posts with links
- Gender was a non-issue in terms of engagement and sentiment
- Biggest spikes in positive sentiment were in March, July, August, and November; the branch ran multiple campaigns during those months and participated in a national conversation about sex trafficking with a partnership with Safe Harbor Yes.

Recommendations:

- In today's political climate, Twitter users are increasingly aware of and interested in social issues. United Way's engagement rates were much higher when their tweets were themed around awareness of social problems in Atlanta, such as child hunger, poverty, Veteran homelessness, sex trafficking and more.
- United Way of Greater Atlanta should dedicate more posts to these issues to increase engagement
- United Way needs to monitor its use of hashtags. They created the most engagement among users with posts using campaign and outside organization hashtags, yet these posts were few and far between.
- United Way of Greater Atlanta should use this hashtag combination more frequently to boost engagement in their owned tweets.

Earned Data: Introduction

Client: The Official United Way

Instead of examining the social media activity for Atlanta, we expanded our search to the official accounts of the United Way (UW). Curious of changes from a minor branch to an entire nonprofit, we used similar platforms from our initial observations. Like the Atlanta branch, UW had little to no activity on platforms like blogs or Tumblr.

- Dates: October 1, 2016 - December 31st, 2016
 - Dates were picked to see social media activity fluctuations during the turbulent election and holiday season.
- Location: United States, outlining groups identified as other nations
- Platform: Facebook/Twitter
 - Facebook 808 posts
 - Twitter 783 posts
 - Removed posts concerning “Manchester United” soccer team - extremely integrated into the UW conversations

Goals:

Expand search of social media activity to the official UW. We originally looked at the ATL UW’s Facebook, Twitter, and Tumblr accounts (Oct 1 - Dec 31, 2016), but the data was insufficient in numbers. We scrapped our original investigation and focused on the main organization.

- Determine the conversations concerning the UW differ by platform
- Examine prominent conversation themes by month
- Examine national scale UW and see conversation changing by region

Questions:

- What was the organization’s online sentiment during the “giving season” of Oct - Dec?
- What are the conversations that produced the most social media activity?
- Did the United States’ presidential election affect the conversation?
- How did the region in the US engage with the official UW?

Earned Data: Region Analysis

Overall analysis:

The states with the most activity during our three-month period of analysis were Florida, California, and Illinois. Because we focused on Atlanta at the beginning of the project, we decided to compare the conversation in Georgia with the ones in the states with the most posts.

#LiveUnited, the United Way's official hashtag, made up the largest part of the conversations in three out of four states.

Florida:

- In Florida, the hashtag was used in 238, or 11% of posts. The majority of these posts came from United Way branches in Jacksonville, Lakeland (near Tampa), and Palm Beach. Several others posts using #LiveUnited also came from United Way employees.

Georgia:

- 182 posts (16%) from Georgia used this hashtag. United Way 2-1-1, a program of the United Way of Greater Atlanta, was a significant contributor here. However, the UWATL branch itself only used the hashtag 8 times from Oct. – Dec. 2016. They should use it more to be connected to the broader UW conversation.

California:

- In California, only 7% of the posts (183 out of 2,486) used #LiveUnited, but it was still the most used topic. Of these, 32 came from the Ventura County United Way branch, which has a very small following.

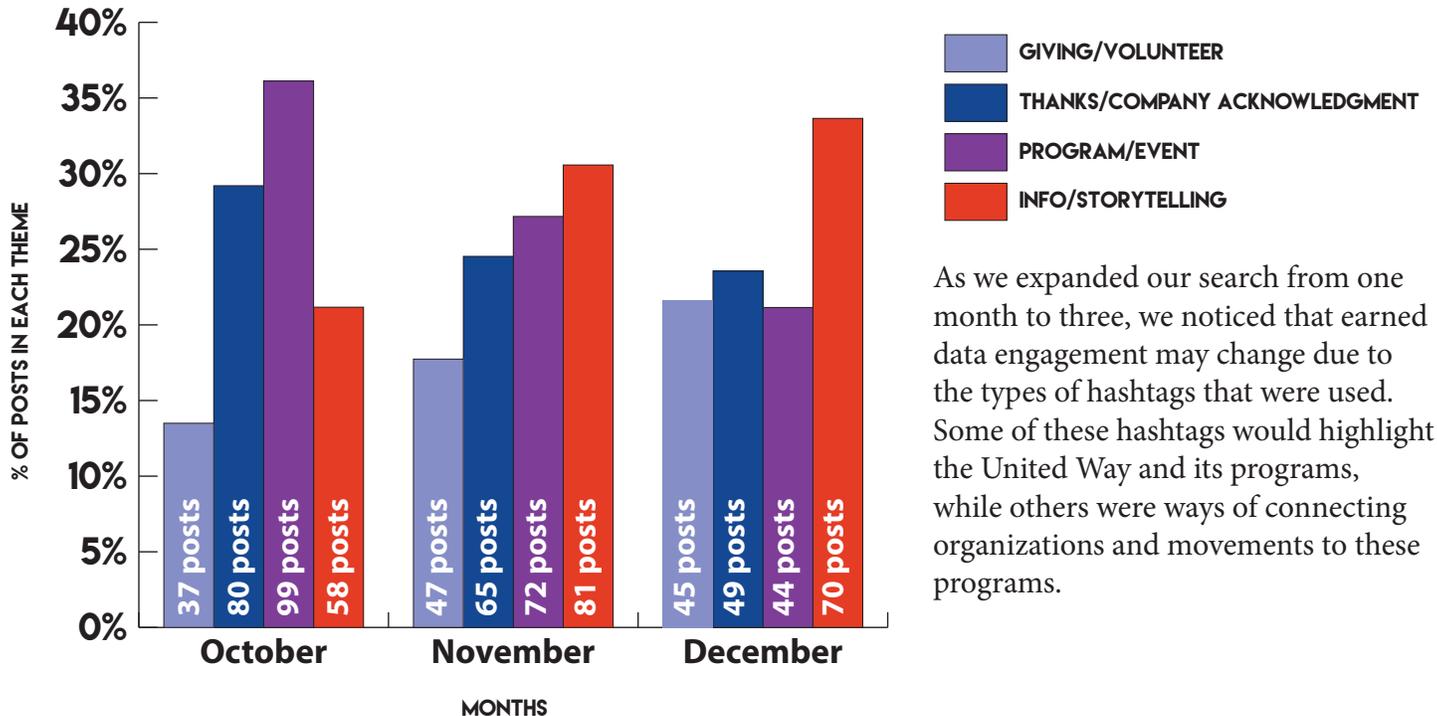
Illinois:

- Illinois, which accounted for 2,429 posts, did not have a high number of #LiveUnited hashtags. It's most prevalent topic was the United Way of Will County. 221 posts, or 9% of those from Illinois, mentioned this branch. However, upon further inspection, all of these posts come from one user, a radio station located at Lewis University, a private Catholic school in Romeoville. #LiveUnited is only used in 51 posts (2%).

Earned Data: Analysis of Activity

TWITTER

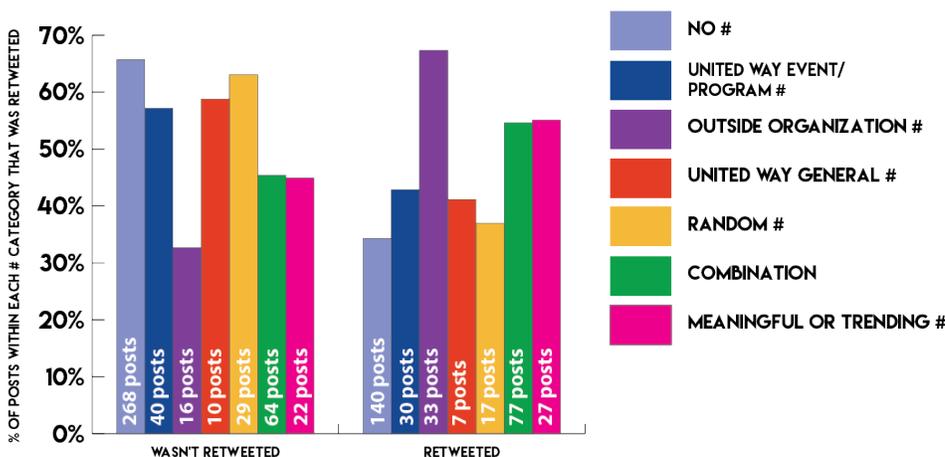
WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MONTHS AND TWEET THEMES?



As we expanded our search from one month to three, we noticed that earned data engagement may change due to the types of hashtags that were used. Some of these hashtags would highlight the United Way and its programs, while others were ways of connecting organizations and movements to these programs.

- We observed an increase in the percentage of the tweet theme of “Giving and Volunteering” as the December holidays approached. Paired with the “Giving and Volunteering” theme, there was also an increase in “Informational and Storytelling” tweets.
- In tandem, the “Thanks” and “Programs” themes decreased. This may be to focus more on giving during the holiday season when people, usually, feel more apt to donate.

DO CERTAIN HASHTAGS AFFECT RETWEETS?

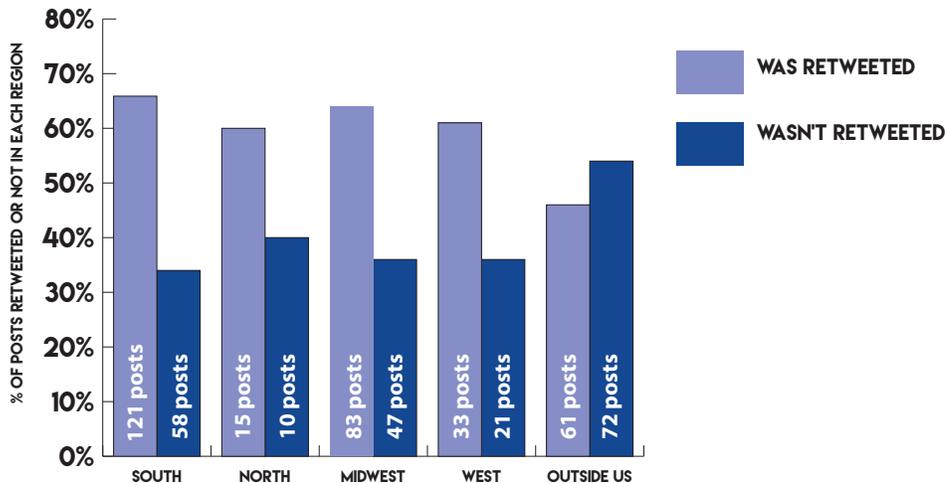


- Because #s outside of the organization expand its audience, the “Outside of Organization #s” had a higher percentage of retweets
- Random #s and no #s did not have much social media engagement in terms of retweets despite higher counts of posts.
- If the organization stays focused on their organization while piggy-backing on “Trending #,” the UW may be able to expand their audience and impact on a national level. (i.e. #maskoffchallenge #wotinternation paired with #liveunited).

Earned Data: Analysis of Activity

TWITTER

DOES REGION AFFECT THE ENGAGEMENT WITH TWEETS?



- Overall, the regions inside the US have roughly the same percentage of social media activity with retweets from the United Way.
- The northern region of the US has the lowest out of this category (60%), while the highest percentage of retweets (65.88%) were located in the southern region.
- However, the number of tweets by users in the North is also very low (24 out of 507) compared to other regions of the country.

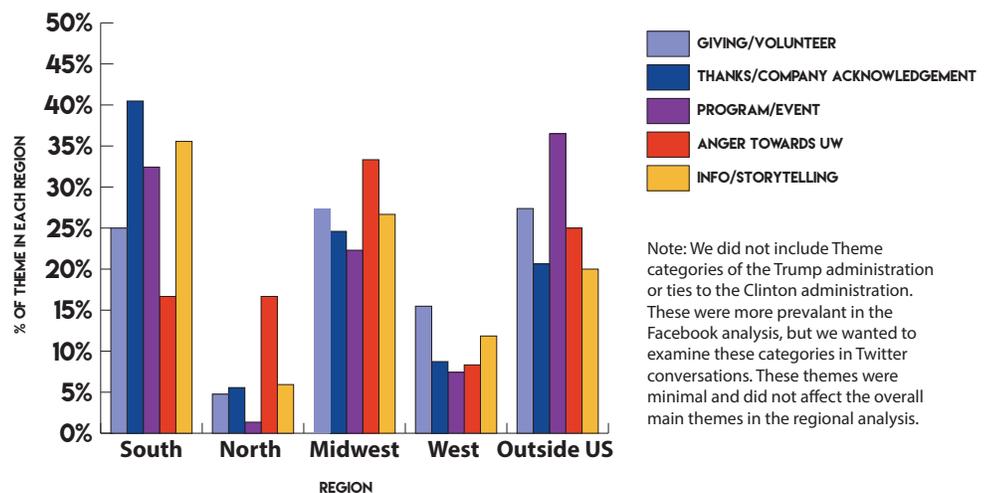
Example of “thanks” tweet with UW in Columbus, GA



Example of “anger” tweet from the midwest region

- Through the entire analysis, we see the southern region of the United States (Alabama, Florida, Georgia, etc) is the most involved with the UW. The South was also the most involved with calling out sponsors and thanking users directly (51 posts or 41%).
- The midwest’s spike in anger is composed of 4 posts - although this is not a significant portion of tweets, this does begin to explain some of the broader findings in the FB analysis. Compared to Facebook, Twitter users did not seem to want to resolve issues or support the UW against postings.
- The South was the most connected to outside organizations and companies. In Georgia, Columbus, Augusta, and Atlanta are the major hubs giving thanks to businesses in their communities.

DOES THE REGION AFFECT THE THEME OF TWEETS?

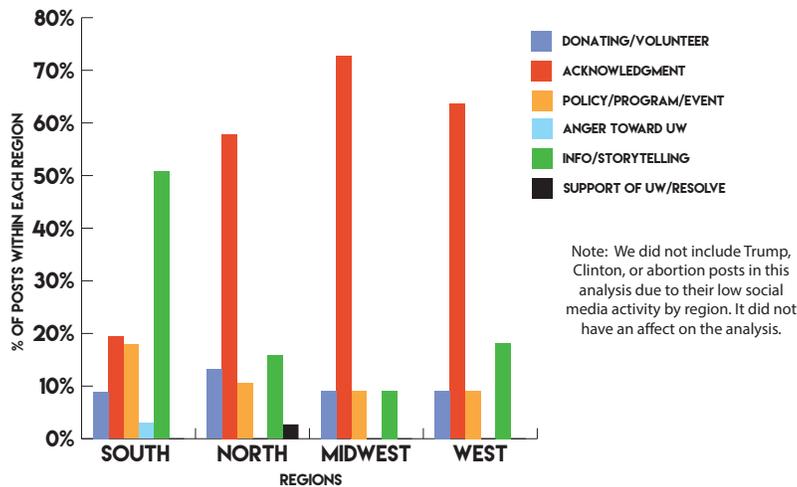


Note: We did not include Theme categories of the Trump administration or ties to the Clinton administration. These were more prevalent in the Facebook analysis, but we wanted to examine these categories in Twitter conversations. These themes were minimal and did not affect the overall main themes in the regional analysis.

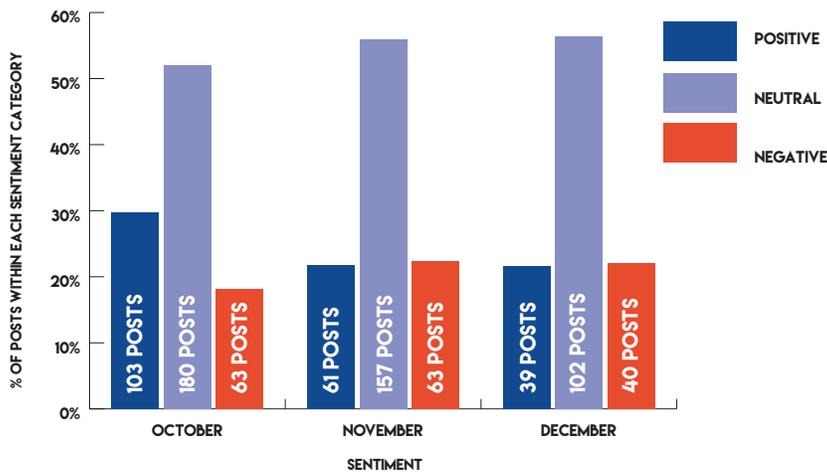
Earned Data: Analysis of Activity

FACEBOOK

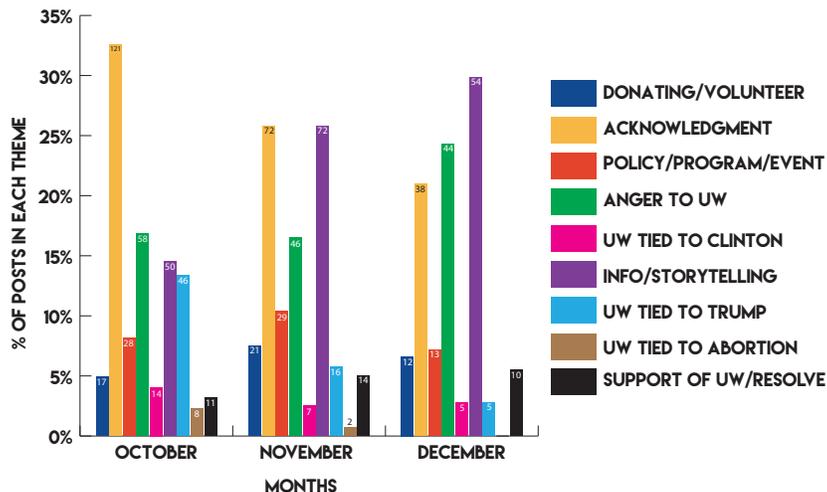
HOW DO THE THEMES CHANGE BY REGION?



HOW DID THE SENTIMENT CHANGE OVER THE MONTHS?



HOW DO THEMES FLUCTUATE MONTHLY?



- Since not every post is attached to an identifiable location, we had to work with a smaller set of data for our regional analysis.

- Once again, themes surrounding acknowledgement and information or stories are the top conversations. Interestingly, the conversations in the South had to more with informational posts or good stories about the United Way and its surrounding communities.

- The South is also the only region that displayed anger towards the United Way, although ties to abortion and Planned Parenthood don't come up.

- As anticipated, most of the posts were coded as "Neutral." However, there were still quite a few posts coded as negative (203) and positive (166).

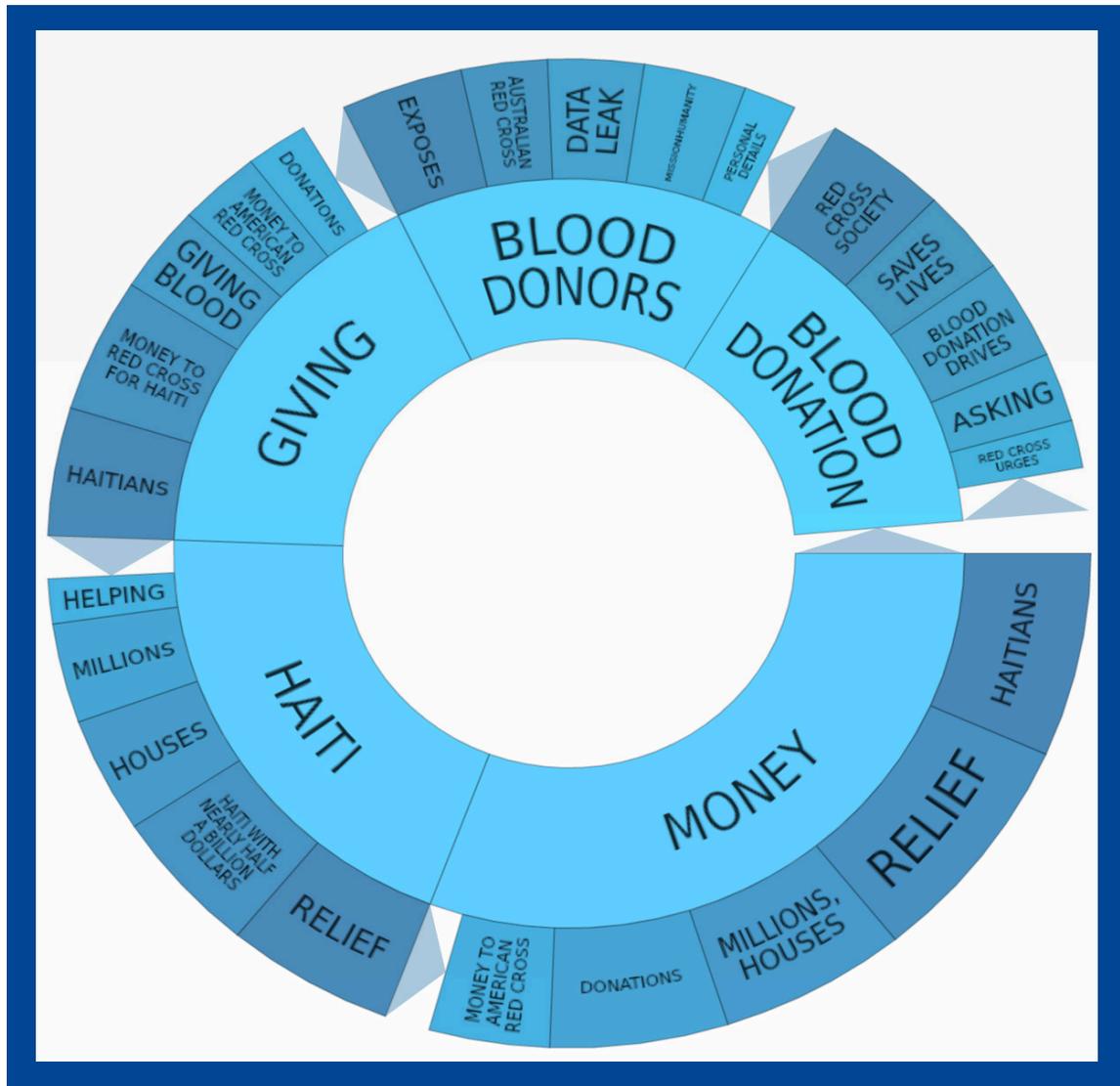
- While the % of positive social media activity changed very little, there was a more noticeable decrease in negative conversations from October (103 posts) to November (61 posts). This could be due to the slew of negativity in the weeks leading up to the election.

- While the % of negative posts barely changed from November to December, the number of negative posts decreased from 61 to 39.

- The majority of the United Way's social media activity consists of posts that acknowledge groups, companies or individuals, as well as posts that tell a story about the UW's mission.

- However, anger towards the organization was also higher on the list, especially in December. It's also interesting to note that there was a spike in activity tying the UW to Trump in Oct. 2016 (13% of that month's activity vs. 5.7% in Nov. and 2.8% in Dec.)

Earned Data: Competition

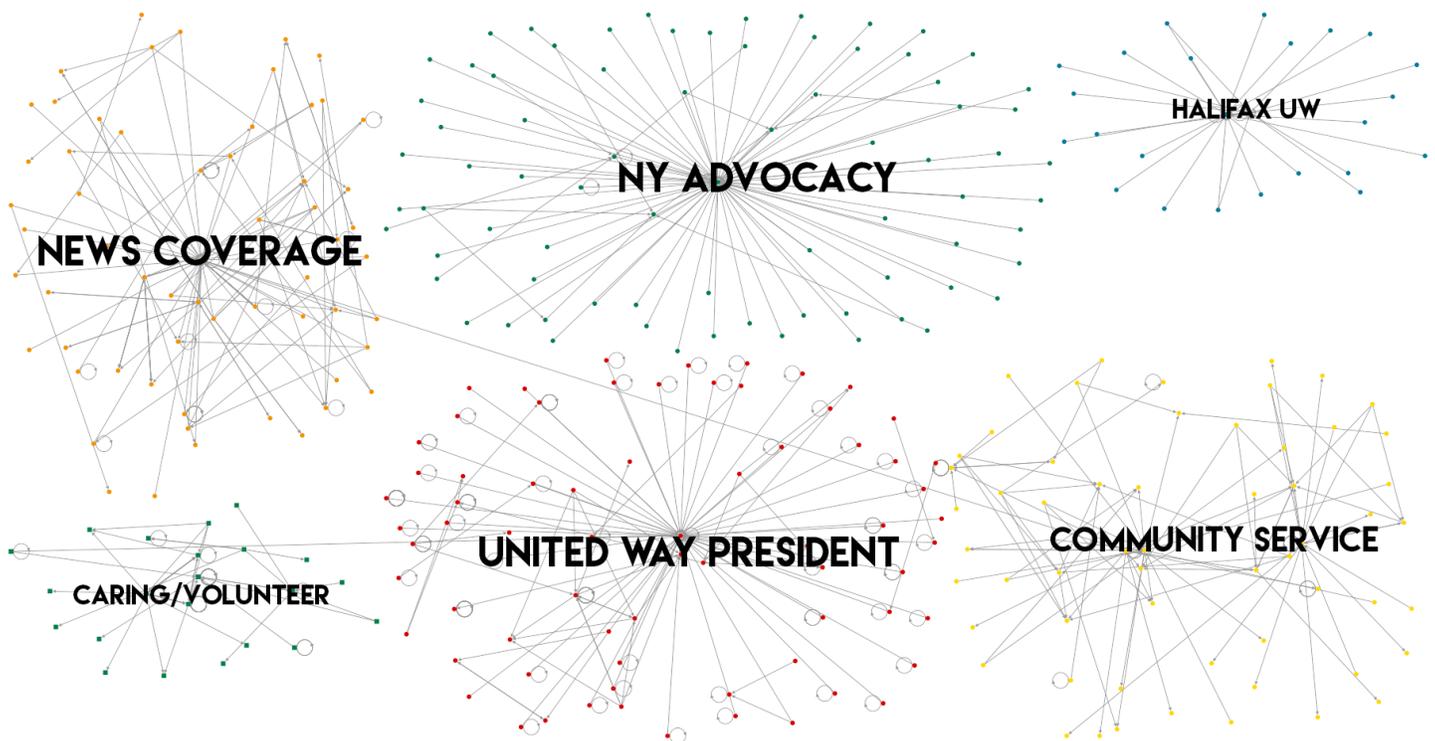


- We looked at the American Red Cross as a nonprofit competitor in the social media arena. While the United Way focuses on community building and the Red Cross provides disaster relief management, **both have activities that overlap**. Their national accounts do not have similar followings, but the Atlanta branches do.
- The key topics of conversation that come up with the Red Cross are “Giving, Blood Donors, Blood Donation, Money, and Haiti.” Hurricane Matthew hit Haiti during this time, and several news stories popped up about Haitians not trusting the Red Cross to manage the relief funds. Few of the same key topics, except “Donations” show up on United Way’s feed. The UW key topics concern community and support.
- The conversation about both nonprofits centered in the United States. In fact, users from California posted the most about both the United Way and the Red Cross.

Networks: Introduction

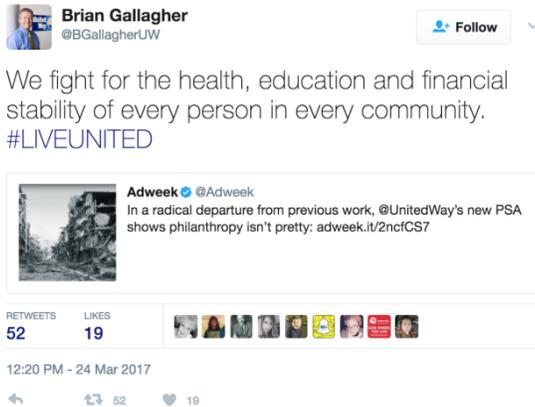
Data:

- We decided to look at United Way's Twitter on a national basis, as our intended target of the Atlanta United Way did not yield enough results to provide a meaningful analysis.
- Though we implemented a boolean search that was meant to exclude tweets about soccer and international football, our largest cluster (besides the isolates) was a Manchester United fan. We had to manually delete similar groups as we perused the conversations.
- After looking through the data, we settled on analyzing six clusters, not including the isolates group. Unfortunately, our clusters did very little overlapping - there were not many conversations between clusters, so clusters stood by themselves.



Created with NodeXL Pro (<http://nodexl.codeplex.com>) from the Social Media Research Foundation (<http://www.smrffoundation.org>)

Networks: Cluster Information



UW President Group

- With 164 tweets, this group's common thread is the U.S. president of the United Way, Brian Gallagher. He is mentioned or retweeted 48 times within this cluster. These tweets are almost exclusively from United Way branches.
- The highest in-degree user in the UW President group is Elizabeth Barron, or @IntegralReal, who is the president of the Mid-Maine United Way.
- The top hashtag in this group is #liveunited, which is the national hashtag of the United Way. It's used 55 times in this group, by far surpassing the other top hashtags.

NY-Essence Group

- In all of our groups, the word pair "united, way" was either the most or second-most used. • In this group, it was used 74 times.
- While our highest in-degree user's (Brian of Edelman PR) tweet about the NY United Way's first female president was not retweeted from his profile, he has over 5,000 followers and considers himself an advocate for marriage equality.

News Group

- 60 posts.
- The hashtag used the most in this group was once again #liveunited. However, #myfreetaxes was also one of the top used hashtags in this group, as the conversations about the United Way's free tax services grew.
- Top tweeters within this group are nonprofit leaders - one is a vice president of sales for Collective Goods of Colorado, and the other is a regional coordinator for Smart Beginnings in Virginia.
- This shows that these conversations

Networks: Cluster Information



Pikes Peak UnitedWay
@ppunitedway



Our @AmeriCorpsVISTA members were recognized by @COSpringsMayor today for their service in this community! #liveunited #COSprings



Community Service Group

- With 59 posts, this group is made up of United Way links, as well as links to news stories about UW's community outreach initiatives.
- Like most of the groups, the most commonly used hashtag is #liveunited. It's used 45 times in the posts.
- A common thread is also the UW of Central Carolinas, as this group was the most mentioned, and the link to its press release regarding community grants is the most used URL.



Cindy Gordineer
@UWFCPréz



Nice job, Glenn HS & Meadowlark MS! Thanks for a cleaner environment. @mustangnation01 @ghsbobcat_pride @wsfcs @forsythnobacco #LiveUnited



LIKE
1



9:50 PM - 20 Mar 2017

Halifax UW Group

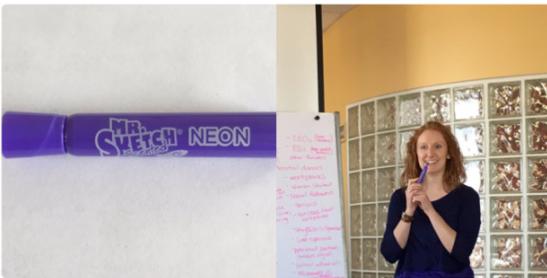
- This group consists of only 25 posts.
- The top hashtags are #halifax and #togetherwearepossibility, which seems to be a United Way organization hashtag used for events and awareness concerning volunteerism.
- The group's top user, KarmaBuy, is also located in Halifax. Karmabuy is "about community purchasing power."



Denise Green
@DGreen1



Thank you Mr. Sketch for helping @UWHalifax staff develop our content strategy. What would you like to hear about from United Way #halifax



RETWEETS
3

LIKES
6



11:03 AM - 24 Mar 2017

Week of Caring/ Volunteer Group

- Our smallest group, this one only has 22 posts that focus on some United Way branches' "Week of Caring."
- The top URL was an Augusta County, Virginia (@UWGA) UW link about that branch's Week of Caring, which takes place in April.
- Because of this, behind #liveunited, the hashtag #woc2017 was the hashtag used the most in this group.
- Most of the posts within this group had low engagement (likes, retweets).

Network Recommendations

Based on our network findings, we suggest:

- UW chapters throughout the country engage with each other on social media if they want to create more meaningful conversations with their followers.
- United Way of Augusta (UWGA) has only 303 followers, which is much less than most other branches of similar size. Most of its posts are about events it's hosting. Perhaps the branch should post more about social issues throughout its community.
- The branches' Twitter reach seem to do well when their presidents post on the branch's behalf. Perhaps those branches with small followings could use that strategy, especially if they communicate with each other on Twitter.



5 Overall Recommendations

1. The UW should engage smaller branches
2. Storytelling/showing the impact of donations/volunteer:
UW should increase their storytelling/informational posts to increase engagement with donations/volunteer posts. Audiences like to see where and what their donations go towards in the wide array of UW campaigns.
3. The UW should continue to partner with community organizations that are bipartisan and speak to the concerns of community residents within the communities
4. UW needs to better match their posting times with their followers' most active hours. They should be able to increase their engagement rate at 10 AM and 3-4 PM by following recommendation #2.
5. When (or if false) information is spread, UW needs to respond rather than let their community respond for them. This may not decrease negative sentiment quickly, but it will manage possible future PR issues.





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SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT & EVALUATION



Pictures taken from the United Way's main site and chapter pages - used for educational purposes only.

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VAN ALLEN**

University of Georgia, SEE Suite 25