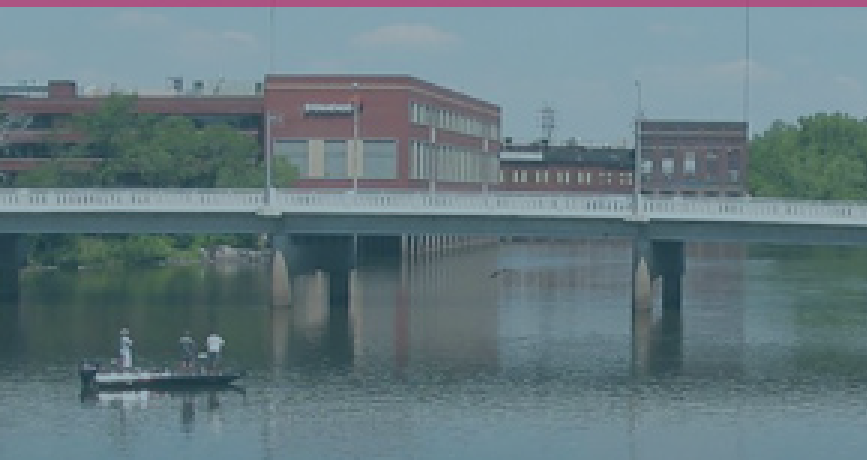


# UniverCity Year

Better • Places • Together



2020-2021

## Public Relations and Social Media Plans for Parks in Wisconsin Rapids

Journalism 454: PR Campaigns  
University of Oregon



UniverCity Alliance  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON





## Memorandum

**To:** Director Kyle Kerns

**From:** Parks Project SOJC PR Team

**Date:** August 18, 2020

**Subject:** Final Project Memo

### Summary of Work

As a group, we met with our client on multiple occasions to discuss what direction we wanted to go in. As the term progressed, we decided that we wanted to focus on expanding the park's social media presence. As we began to figure out the details, we found that we would not actually have the control of creating the social media accounts. With this in mind, we then decided to focus on creating a social media calendar to assist in their posting once the social media accounts are created. We planned out what kind of content they should post as well as creating captions to assist the photos. We also created an infographic centered around social distancing outdoors that could be posted on social media or printed and put up in public.

### Outline of Accomplishments

- **Deliverables:**
  - PR Plan
  - Social Media Plan
  - Infographic



### **Recommendations going further:**

Immediate: The first step for implementation would be to create the social media accounts. Once the social media accounts have been approved and created, the social media calendar that was created can be implemented.

Short Term: The short term goal is to gain a presence on social media. This can be done through consistent and scheduled out social media posts. Keeping an active social media account will attract more viewers and generate more engagement.

Long Term: While posting the bi-weekly content provided in the calendar for Instagram, continuously do social media audits every other week in order to ensure the content posted is beneficial to the parks and is getting positive feedback. It may be necessary to adjust the content ideas if there is less engagement on certain posts. For example, if videos are receiving fewer likes, comments and visits than photos then the content calendar should be edited to feature more photo ideas in place of the videos.

For future reference, if the client would like to try automated posting they can use <https://hootsuite.com/> to schedule their social media posts.

###



## **PR Plan**

### **Core Problem Statement**

The goal is to increase awareness and attendance of the newly renovated downtown river parks.

### **Situation Analysis**

#### **Background and History**

The City of Wisconsin Rapids has finished phase 2 of the renovation of several parks along the riverfront, next to downtown. These parks are already well known to the community as places that can be enjoyed for many different activities. The parks have areas that can be rented out to hold private events as well as public events. There are already many recurring public events, such as lunch in the park. Other activities these parks have to offer are fishing, kayaking and running trails. The City of Wisconsin Rapids population, 17,610, has a very diverse age range, with about 50% of the population being in the target audience range, persons between 18-65. They also have about 1,400 veterans, which is a good number to reach out to and hold an event for them at the Veterans Memorial park. (US Census 2019)

Since the parks are so close to downtown there is lots of foot traffic by people who are dining and shopping nearby. There are many opportunities to increase attendance and exposure to the parks. Since there is no designated account for the parks, this is a great way to gain interest by the citizens of Wisconsin Rapids. While the people already know that the parks exist, they may not know of the different events that can be held there or the different activities these parks have to offer - which is why this will be the focus of our public relations campaign.

### **Communications Audit**

The parks program predominantly communicates through press releases via the City of Wisconsin Rapids website. There is an Instagram account, @wisconsinrapids, but the posts are inconsistent, the last one was in April, and it is not a dedicated account for the parks and recreation department, therefore, it does not feature much about the newly renovated parks along the river. The photos posted do not have much engagement, but by focusing on a more consistent theme on a new parks account there is a great opportunity to boost this.

### **Audience Profiles**

Formatting a PR campaign to fit the right audience is crucial in finding success and eventually achieving our targeted goals. In this case, our target audience will be directed mainly towards young adults. According to our research (US Census 2019, and Director Kyle Kearns),



young adults are the most common park goers. This is most likely due to their previously active lifestyles, or due to the fact they are downtown the most out of any demographic.

Younger patrons have an expectation for parks to be well kept and modern, without sacrificing their experience in nature. People go to parks to escape their busy lives, so the beauty within the park should be showcased and activities within the park should complement or add onto what the park already offers (live music, water features, food trucks, etc.).

The good news about trying to reach a younger audience, is that they are already the most accessible demographic to reach, due to the convenience of social media. Using different online platforms, we can spread our message and promote events, and make them viewable by everyone. Making everything easily accessible is key in reaching younger audiences.

Reaching the younger generation is certainly our main point of emphasis, however, it is equally as critical to reach our secondary audience, which is parents between the ages of 30-50. In doing so, these parents are far more likely to bring the rest of their family, which is a sure way of improving attendance numbers in the surrounding parks.

One way of doing this, is to create and promote events that are appealing to parents and children. Creating a family atmosphere is critical in obtaining any sort of success in the parks and recreation industry. This is where the importance of safety and cleanliness come into play. By gaining the trust of parents, these parks will gain a positive reputation in the community and will help with overall growth in the long run. (Urban.org)

One of the main points to get across in this campaign, is to drive home the fact that having a nice park to go to, is a mutually beneficial luxury to have in their community. Parks like these provide a relaxing or adventurous place to go, and provide safety and help strengthen the bonds of their community.

### **Goals**

Raise general awareness about the parks in the community and draw in more young adults to spend time within them.

**Objective:** Create a Facebook and an Instagram account and build a schedule with content ideas for the three months by mid August.

**Primary Audience Strategy:** Build the online presence via Instagram for young adults in order to bring awareness of all the activities parks have to offer. Create content that is specific to them, Instagram is the platform of choice because it is the most accessible by young adults (Pew Research).



## **Tactics**

- Create a Parks and Rec specific account
- Build a social media schedule for the new Instagram
- Begin to follow local hotspots, like restaurants, bars and boutiques
- Begin to follow local young adults via the Wisconsin Rapids and specific parks geotags

**Secondary Audience Strategy:** Strengthen the online presence from the Parks and Recreation team to raise overall awareness for the parks within the community via Facebook. Create content specific to them, Facebook is the most used by adults ages 30-49, making it the best platform to reach the most people (Pew Research).

## **Tactics**

- Create a Parks and Rec specific account
- Build a Facebook posting schedule for the next three months
- Advertise the new account with photos of the parks to adults in the city via Facebook
- Begin posting curated content

## **Evaluation**

Create an Instagram and Facebook account and build a social media schedule with content ideas.

- Criteria: There must be an active social media and a schedule created
- Tools: Keep track of followers and commonly used hashtags by the locals in order to find ways to best reach them
- Outcomes: A larger number of followers on Instagram
- Outputs: Creating a two separate social media pages with curated content designed to target the specific audience
- Metric: Looking at the number of followers gained each day and auditing the daily posts to see which ones better reach the designated audience and which ones bring an increase in attendance to the parks.



## **Timeline**

### **Timeline**

- July 21, 2020 - create an Instagram and Facebook account for the City of Wisconsin Rapids Parks and Rec department
- July 24, 2020 - begin posting curated content
- July 26, 2020 - begin following local business and people via Instagram
- July 28, 2020 - begin advertisement for Facebook page
- August 10, 2020 - send three month social media schedule to client

## **Budget**

### **Budget for Instagram advertising**

- Instagram average cost per 1,000 impressions: \$7.91
  - (source: webfx.com)
- Average of 5,000 impressions per month = \$39.55
- 5,000 impressions per month for a year = \$474.60

### **Budget for Facebook Advertising**

- \$200 monthly for 103 clicks

## **Sources**

<https://www.webfx.com/how-much-does-social-media-advertising-cost.html>

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/wisconsinrapidscitywisconsin>

<https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/57656/311012-Understanding-Park-Usership.PDF>

<https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/fact-sheet/social-media/>



## **SWOT**

### **Strengths**

- Next to downtown, which brings more people to the parks.
- On the water allows for more things to do.
- Activities for all ages, such as hiking, kayaking, lunch in the park and many more.
- It is outside so there is plenty of space for social distancing.
- Already open, which means people already know about the parks.
- Well maintained grassy areas.
- No competition.

### **Weaknesses**

- Still waiting on FEMA funding from the 2019 June storm.
  - This was not worked into the park budget.
- Parks and Rec does not receive enough funding
  - It is not quite its own separate entity
- Managing the expectations of the public, following COVID-19
- Revenue collection methods

### **Opportunities**

- Promoting to a diverse age group.
- Creating a specific area for social distancing friendly space to gather in small groups.
- New leadership can create opportunities and provide promise towards the future.
- Expanding the already existing area and providing new activities for park goers.

### **Threats**

- Another recession could close downtown business, which leads to less people coming to the parks because they are no longer visiting that area.
- Storms could flood the park and or cause storm drains to overflow and flood
- Spring melt could flood the parks, as they are on the river
- Lack of funding could lead to a larger threat of spending more money in the long run.
- Lack of public exposure to the inclusiveness of the provided services of the parks.





## **Deliverables**

### **Wisconsin Rapids Social Media Calendar**

- August 2-8
  - August 4: Infographic on social distancing
    - “Social Distancing in nature, made easy”
  - August 6: Video at the farmer’s market
    - “Support your local farmers”
- August 9-15
  - August 10: A couple with a beautiful picnic set up
    - “Come spend an afternoon, enjoy the park, enjoy each other”
  - August 13: Food truck event, picture of unique and interesting food
    - Come check out “insert food truck” at the park! You can safely social distance while enjoying some great food.
- August 16-22
  - August 17: Picture of kids enjoying the park or water
    - How’d you spend last weekend? Check out all our fun activities for the kids and yourself!
  - August 20: Pictures of kids on the dock looking out at the water
    - “No better way than enjoying the last few moments of summer than by being outside”
- August 23-29
  - August 24: Show people engaging with each other at an event in a park.
    - “Community starts here.”/”Find community here.”
  - August 27: Video/photo of people distancing in the park, maybe frisbee or tossing football/baseball.
    - “Staying safe in late-summer style is easy at \_\_\_\_ Park.”
- August 30 - September 5
  - August 30: Park Goer Profiles:
    - Once a week testimonials about park goers and the activities they are participating in.



- What are they doing at the park? How long have they been going to the park? Why do they choose this specific park?
  - September 3: Pictures of popsicles
    - “It’s still hot outside, get in a last-minute picnic while you can!”
- September 6-12
  - September 7: Picture of people doing homework outside with notebooks, laptops, etc.
    - “School is back in session, take your homework outside of the library.”
  - September 10: Picture of pile of leaves
    - “Fall is around the corner, but we can still enjoy the summer while we can. What’s your favorite season?”
- September 13-19
  - September 13: Feature different restaurants from around the area, take pictures of people eating their takeout in the park for social distancing
    - “Get a change of scenery - Grab some \_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_ and enjoy it in the park!”
  - September 16: End of summer post
    - “Don’t let the days slip away! Come hang out and enjoy the great outdoors while you still can!”
- September 20-26
  - Indoor activities that the parks and rec department runs
    - “Stay safe, stay inside”
  - Pictures of the trees on the trail and people running
    - “It’s always a great time of year to stay active and appreciate the view”
- September 27- October 3
  - September 27: Videos of people paddle boarding, maybe yoga on the paddle boards
    - “The best way to spend a sunny day, at your local park!”
  - October 1: Picture of a couple walking through the park
    - “Take your date night outside - walks are free and a fun change of scenery”
- October 4-10
  - Use changing leaves and scenery behind the purpose of the post.



- This could be an opportunity for a parks photo contest: Best photos of capturing the change of season at your local parks.
- These photos sent in can and should be used for the social media to involve park goers and as a way to spend less time creating content.
- October 11-17
  - October 11: A couple walking their dog on a trail, or playing fetch in the park
    - “Come enjoy the fresh crisp air in our dog friendly parks.”
      - Geotag one of the dog friendly parks
  - October 15: Picture of a pile of leaves
    - “Fall-ing in love with the colors of the leaves”
- October 18-24
  - October 18: Ice skating reminder, pictures from last year’s ice skating:
    - “Ice skating season is right around the corner.”
  - October 23: Pumpkin carving in the park
    - “Come hang out and show off your pumpkin carving skills with us. Grand prize winner gets \_\_\_\_.”
- October 25-31
  - October 25: Picture of candy
    - “Gearing up for Halloween! What’s your favorite type of Halloween candy?”
  - October 30: Pictures of trick or treaters and halloween costumes in the park
    - “We love to see trick or treaters of all ages hanging out at the parks!”



**SOCIAL DISTANCING IN  
N A T U R E**

**THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF  
A KAYAK IS 10 FEET**



**THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF  
A PICNIC BLANKET IS 6  
FEET**



**THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF  
A FISHING POLE IS 6.5  
FEET**



**SOCIAL DISTANCING ISN'T HARD  
WHEN YOU USE THE OUTDOORS AS  
YOUR RULER.**





## Final Presentation



## Overview

- Most of our work was based around growing the social media presence and gaining local awareness of the parks in the Wisconsin Rapids area.
- One of our main goals was to establish an online presence by putting emphasis on ease of use and safety of the parks.



## Situation Analysis

- City of Rapids newly renovated riverfront parks
- Parks can be rented out to private events and also hold public events
- Population: 17,610
  - 50% target audience 18-65
  - 1,400 veterans
- Close to downtown
  - Lots of foot traffic
- No designated park social media accounts





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## What was accomplished:



1	SEP, TUE	3:30 - 4:30pm	Photo: Pictures of kids playing in the park
8	SEP, TUE	3:30 - 4:30pm	Video: Show people engaging with one another, wearing masks
10	SEP, THU	3:30 - 4:30pm	Video: People playing frisbee or catch (social distancing)
15	SEP, TUE	3:30 - 4:30pm	Park Goer Profile
17	SEP, THU	3:30 - 4:30pm	Park Goer Profile
22	SEP, TUE	3:30 - 4:30pm	Photo: Students doing homework in the park
29	SEP, TUE	3:30 - 4:30pm	Feature restaurants
1	OCT, THU	4 - 5pm	Feature Restaurants
6	OCT, TUE	4 - 5pm	Photo: Indoor park owned centers
8	OCT, THU	4 - 5pm	Photo of people walking the trails
13	OCT, TUE	4 - 5pm	Photo: Paddle Boarding
15	OCT, THU	4 - 5pm	Photo: Showing beauty of park
20	OCT, TUE	4 - 5pm	Photo: A couple walking their dog
27	OCT, TUE	4 - 5pm	Video: Ice Skating
29	OCT, THU	4 - 5pm	Photo: Kids in costumes. Safe trick or treat event in park

Snippet of  
September and  
October on the  
PR calendar

## What was accomplished:



Infographic for a  
social media post







## Key Tactics and Deliverables



Building and growing an  
*online presence*

Create media such as *infographics*  
and captions to assist their posts.

Reach the target audience of  
*young adults* who will be aware  
and attend the parks with regularity.

Developing a *social media calendar*  
for the team in Wisconsin to use when  
they are ready.

*engage*  
with community through social media.



## Challenges and Opportunities

**Challenge:** Build a social media presence

**Opportunity:** Create a social media calendar that outlines the next three months with content ideas and captions



## What's next?

- Make an account for the parks to post content and engage with the community.
- Implement the calendar of scheduled social media posts to maintain consistency on the profile.
- Begin to grow the online presence of the parks to attract the targeted audiences.



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# About UniverCity Year



UniverCity Year is a three-phase partnership between UW-Madison and one community in Wisconsin. The concept is simple. The community partner identifies projects that would benefit from UW-Madison expertise. Faculty from across the university incorporate these projects into their courses, and UniverCity Year staff provide administrative support to ensure the collaboration's success. The results are powerful. Partners receive big ideas and feasible recommendations that spark momentum towards a more sustainable, livable, and resilient future. Join us as we create **better places together.**

