

Timothy Chen: Individual Contribution Page

My work in AguaClara's Outreach Team this semester initially began as strictly focused on corporate sponsors and grant lists. However, my work has expanded into several facets of the outreach's scope, and I have become somewhat of a factotum for the team. I worked with a host of initiatives in the past four months: sponsorship searches, concert management, marketing strategy formation, social media presence, and business communication. Not all of these projects have been successful, however. In the following sections, I will explain in-depth what I have done for the initiatives (and what the results have been so far).

Sponsorship searches

I have been involved with the search for corporate sponsors, since AguaClara is in need of more funding. In the processing of doing so, the search turned into more of an affiliate search; that is, I began connecting more with organization with similar visions instead of companies that could write us a check. Some of the affiliates included Fundacion Cantaro Azul, Net Impact, the Pillsbury Institute of Entrepreneurship, and Eship@Cornell. I am working with individuals from the Pillsbury Institute and Eship@Cornell (specifically, Thomas Ward and John Jaquette) to find a clearer direction for AguaClara. Although these organizations are not sponsors per se, I believe that they will become invaluable resources for us in the future.

Concert management

In November, I helped other outreach team members to oversee the benefit concert. The AguaClara benefit concert is a semi-annual event where the Cornell community is able to enjoy great music and food while contributing money to our cause. At the concert, Julianne Schwartz and I hosted as the MC's, as we introduced performers and managed the time-line of the night. In addition, I was in charge of the donation finances and closing tasks, such as sending thank-you letters and posting a website blurb about the concert. By counting up the combined donations, I found a total of more than 460 dollars in revenue.

Marketing strategy formation

I am currently trying to figure out a comprehensive marketing strategy for AguaClara. My past school and work experiences have given me a specialization in marketing management and market research, and both of these aspects are crucial for AguaClara. I have determined that this organization needs more direction for its outreach campaign: we need to be able to quickly and concisely answer the question "What is AguaClara" when someone asks it. I am trying to develop a marketing strategy that addresses the identity of our team, as well as the methods in which we should be advertising ourselves on and off campus. This is not a quick task, but you can view a small bit of the initial push in this presentation that I created for the outreach team.

Social media presence

The greatest trend in the past five years has surrounded the use of social media. In the last few weeks of the fall 2010 semester (and probably in the majority of the coming semester), I was exploring the potential of social media for AguaClara. Specifically, how can AguaClara market itself with greater appeal to the different audiences who use sites like Facebook and Twitter? And more important, how can AguaClara expand its internet presence beyond its current website? At this time, I have not made much progress because of some hindrances in updating a spammed-out facebook group page, but Twitter seems to show promise. Updates on these initiatives will be given soon.

Business communication

The last task (and perhaps the most difficult task to quantitatively measure) that I have been carrying out this semester involves business communication. To the greatest extent possible, I would like see all written and oral communication that AguaClara has with the public to be professional. That is, AguaClara's external communications should abide by the norms and standards of proper managerial communication (rules do exist!). When it comes to business letters, presentations, or even phrasing, grammar, and formatting, I have been trying to pass outreach materials through a filter of business communication editing. This task does not manifest itself in any stand-alone, tangible document, but it is reflected in the quality of the outreach team's written text. In the coming semester, I plan on putting together an in-depth guide of communication guidelines for AguaClara.