

Santa's New Tradition

Client Paper



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Purpose and Overview

This report is written in order to outline a marketing and advertising campaign for the company Gift Traditions (GT). The purpose of this report is to create a targeted marketing strategy that will help GT reach its core objective of bringing awareness to the company. Essentially, the goal is to encourage consumers to embrace a new tradition by embracing GT's message, its products, and its movement-centered community. Once implemented, this marketing strategy will help propel GT, shifting the brand image from a startup company into a passionate, community-rooted, holiday-oriented movement.

We will begin with a complete situational analysis, and an assessment of internal *strengths* and *weaknesses*, and external *opportunities* and *threats* (SWOT). Then, we will identify the three target markets that will be on the receiving end of our marketing and communication strategies. We will guide GT in its implementation of our communication and media objectives which have grown out of this SWOT analysis. The main constituent of our recommended strategies includes interaction with the target markets year-round, with an increase in efforts during the holiday season; we will focus on the unique qualities of the product which will be highlighted through our advertisements, our social media, and our promotions. Sample mediums are provided in this report which serve as examples of how GT will be seen on different mediums. Lastly, a campaign evaluation will help us assess the success of our efforts and will allow GT to move forward in its efforts to conquer this market niche.

Situation Analysis & SWOT

First, before being able to decide how to best position GT, we had to understand the industry into which it entered. With an understanding of the industry comes an understanding of the sales history as well as major influences on it. We did not feel that any one established

industry fully encompassed GT and the book and companion gift sacks, so we analyzed four different industries, and took traits and information from each to create a customized industry called the Gift Traditions industry. By combining relevant insights from the Toys and Games industry, Holiday industry, Book industry, and Gift Wrap industry, we gained a better understanding of how our product fits into the market.

Industry

One of the industries we assessed was the Toys and Games industry. This industry is defined as profits generated through the sale of activity toys, dolls, games, and puzzles, infant games, plush toys, outdoor toys and action figures (MarketLine, 2015). Although the gift sacks and books do not exactly fit into this industry we felt that it was relevant because some main competitors and marketing inspiration (e.g. Elf on the Shelf) were in this industry. We found that it is a very crowded industry (MarketLine, 2015). While market entry is very intense, and sales have struggled for the past four years, it is universally agreed upon by experts that sales will increase (MarketLine, 2015). While the sacks and the books are not toys or games, they could be easily marketed using many of the same tactics because they are designed for children and have similar target purchasers, young moms.

Additionally, we addressed the Holiday industry. Because the sacks and books are highly targeted towards the Christmas holiday season, it is important to understand the areas of growth and weakness during this consumer season. We noted that families are spending quite a lot of money- about \$1,000- a year on holiday spending alone, and that this number is predicted to increase by about four percent each year (Grannis, 2014). This is very good news for Gift Traditions. Also, we noted that almost every family spends money on their children (about 99.6%) even through economic troubles (Marketline, 2015). This is a lucrative time of the year,

and because the book and gifts in the gift sacks are intended for children, we know that regardless of economic flux, sales should continue to increase with awareness and economic expansion.

Next, we looked at trends within the Book industry. We found that print book sales are increasing at a decreasing rate while ebook sales have increased (MarketLine, 2015). This reassured us that the books' success will not only be profitable in its own right, but they will also serve as effective drivers for the sales of the gift sacks. Online sales of books now reached 35% of the total market, indicating that online sales is likely a more ideal sales sight (Marketline, 2015). Because the market is so crowded, much of the power in the industry does not rest with the producer, rather with the customer. In order to combat this, we will be highlighting the fact that these books are to be sold in conjunction with the sacks. This combination will frame the books as an indispensable part of the tradition - you can't have one without the other.

Finally, and most importantly, we looked at the Gift Wrap industry. Because overall sales of GT will be driven by sales of the sacks themselves, we felt that an understanding of the Gift Wrap industry would be pertinent. According to Hallmark research, the Gift Wrap industry accounts for over \$3.2 billion a year in retail sales (Martin, 2011). With a large amount of competition, there are high entry barriers to the industry (Marketline, 2015). Fortunately, this can be easily combated because along with this high competition comes little brand differentiation or loyalty (Martin, 2011). Although names such as Hallmark or Michaels are known for selling gift wrap, there are few people who exclusively purchase from these retailers, and little differentiating value (Martin, 2011), so entering the industry with a strong differentiating value would generate success, especially as this industry is expected to grow. Importantly, as the differentiating value comes from the 'going green' recognition, it is important to note that

consumers indicate that they are searching for a more ecologically friendly wrapping option, thus suggesting growth in that area (Sena, 2015). Interestingly, gift bags have been the number one way that consumers choose to present gifts since 2002 (Martin, 2011) and since the sacks are much closer to gift bags than are wrapping paper, this is a promising indication.

Environment

Next, we analyzed the environment GT will be entering. The environment is a conglomeration of economic, legal, technological, and cultural conditions that are external to the company and make up the opportunities and threats. Most important to this analysis is the projection of the economic conditions.

There is no sense in launching a great product into an economy that will not foster it. In the past, there was inconsistent holiday spending during the Great Recession of 2007 (Birth, 2014). However, current spending is increasing and is projected to increase by at least 3% a year (Birth, 2014). This is a very promising environment for GT. During the holidays, families on average spend above \$1,000 a year (O'Connor, 2014). This is also a very lucrative time for businesses.

Technologically speaking, we wanted to highlight three things. First, there is a staggering growth in the ubiquity of ebooks in the United States. In fact, while e-book sales are still dwarfed in sales by printed books, they still come to \$1.519 billion, up by almost 5% since 2013 (Wischenbart, 2014). In addition, ebook sales account for 23% of total book sales (Wischenbart, 2014). This growth itself dwarfs the decline in sales for traditional books which dropped 1.5% for the year (Wischenbart, 2014). Secondly, in today's day, social media has captured every aspect of society. In fact, in 2014 PEW Research found that up to 71% of adults use Facebook, and multiplatform engagement is rising--up 10% from 42% in 2013 (Pew Research Center, 2014). As

well, engagement across most platforms (especially Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest) is growing (Pew Research Center, 2014). Finally, it is important to highlight that the accessibility in online advertising, especially for smaller businesses, is growing. Amazon is especially efficient in its use of only paying by click, so spending can be targeted based on what is working and what is not. This is also helpful, because you do not pay for non-click views.

Next, we analyzed the cultural context of the economy right now, especially concentrating on trends that may impact GT's sales. First, we noted the 'going green' trend that began in the early 2000s. According to Green Industry Analysis, in 2015 over 50% of Americans value protecting the environment over expanding the economy, and now up to 40% of consumers are making their purchasing decisions based on the social/political/green values of the producing company; importantly, this trend maintained *even through the recent recession* (Sena, 2015). This indicates that products with green messaging and green basis will be favored over those without. On the same trend, we found that buying local goods and supporting local businesses is also a major movement, especially in southern Michigan areas such as Ann Arbor, Royal Oak, and Detroit. In these places, businesses such as Cherry Republic, or Shinola are successful both because of their quality products *and* because they carry the "Made in Michigan" brand and sense of authenticity. Additionally, according to Small Business Trends, 94% of consumers indicate that supporting local businesses is important and 90% do so to support the economy (Sophy 2014). Even more promisingly, in 2014, 41% of people said that they will pay more for a product if it is supporting a local business- up 10% from 2013 (Sophy, 2014). We want to mimic this success, by highlighting your home base of Plymouth, Michigan.

Another cultural trend that is becoming more and more popular is doing shopping via a mobile phone or tablet. In 2013, time and dollars spent on online mobile purchases surpasses

shopping on PCs and Desktop computers (Khalaf, 2013). It seems that not only are people spending money online shopping, but they are also doing their shopping on their phones. Although this is not to indicate that we believe that getting into a brick-and-mortar store is unnecessary, but we believe that since it is so much easier to sell online, and because of the success of online purchasing, focusing on online sales should be our initial effort.

Customer

It is also important to focus on our customers. The initial focus of the customer analysis is on all the industry's customers. Two demographics stood out regarding gift wrapping customers: first, the majority of people who purchase gift wrapping are 30-59 years old (Martin, 2011). Second, moms buy one-third of gift wrapping materials. These consumers spend an outstanding amount of almost \$2.6 billion on gift wrap per year (Williams, 2014). Moreover, the general consumer base state that they plan on doing something to reduce gift waste leading us to believe that reusable gift wrap is an unmet need.

This general information about industry consumers leads us to our target market recommendation that is specific to Gift Traditions. We chose three separate target markets, among which only the promotion channels are different, while the price and product, and distribution channels remain the same. The first target demographic is parents. Specifically, we are interested in targeting moms of young children because they do the most holiday shopping. Gift Traditions will be promoted to parents through social media, radio (Pandora), word-of-mouth, online retailers, and blogs. The second target market will be educators because they spend a lot of their time molding the minds of young children. Promotion channels for this target audience will be social media and websites such as Teachers pay Teachers. The third, and last, target market is children. While we understand that children do not have the ability to go to the

store and purchase the product themselves, their buying power comes from their influence on parents' decisions—especially considering how easily children get hooked on characters. We plan on targeting this last market through in-app advertising. Regarding the price points, we are planning on keeping it consistent across target markets: \$10 for a small sack, \$12 dollars for a medium one, and \$16 for the larger size. These are the numbers that are currently being used in the online shop. Additionally, the book would cost \$14.95 and the E-book price would be \$7.99. We believe this is a good price for the e-book, as a cheaper cost will encourage customers to opt for this version, and drive more sales. The distribution of the products would also be the same across target markets and would include distribution through Amazon, our Etsy Store, the Gift Traditions website, craft shows, online retailers, and brick-and-mortar retailers.

Company

Gift Traditions is a company filled with passion and enthusiasm for their mission and their products. This spirit began as a follow-up to Plymouth Puzzles: a second venture in entrepreneurship. After searching for a gift wrapping replacement and a solution for the incredible amount of waste created each holiday season, Gift Tradition's, and consequently "Santa's New Tradition," was born.

Our group identified pillars of the organization to focus on what matters most to Gift Traditions, and therefore what we think is the most important for our target audiences to take away from their experience with Gift Traditions. The first pillar is "tradition." Traditions come in all shapes and sizes, and are different for every family, and we want Santa's New Tradition to find a unique way to be a part of all of these different traditions. First and foremost, the messaging of Gift Traditions will emphasize the fact that this movement will become a tradition within every family who adopts Holly into their home.

The second pillar of the organization is that Gift Traditions is largely “community-driven”. GT is a Michigan based product, and this should immediately become a selling point. Michigan goods have tremendous pride, and Michiganders have a neverending support of anything that comes from the Great Lakes state. We want to make this Michigan based image a huge selling point of Santa’s New Tradition, which is one the main reasons we are starting our marketing efforts in the state of Michigan.

The third pillar of the company that is extremely important in our marketing tactics is the “environmental sustainability” component of Santa’s New Tradition. The book especially notes the importance of being “green” in order to save the planet, and be better inhabitants, and we want to talk to the fact that our gift sacks will be the reason people stop wasting so much paper around the holiday season. The environmentally-friendly aspect of Gift Traditions will be a huge educational component as well, in which children will learn techniques to be more green in one aspect of their lives, and hopefully take to other facets of their life and will pass along as they grow up.

Our final pillar of the organization is maybe one of the most important facts of the entire product: it is “appealing”! If the product was not appealing, it would be way harder to market and sell, and to hook people into the charm of Gift Traditions. We want to keep in mind that Gift Traditions is a fun, light-hearted, entertaining product that will delight children and parents equally. All of the messaging with keep in line with this joyful tone, and none of it will be too serious or forget the entertaining aspect of the company and product.

The one threat we felt might be an issue right now is that Gift Traditions has no additional employees. This might become a future constraint to the overall growth. At this time, however, we do not believe that this is an overly pressing problem. Once the workload becomes

too much for two people to handle alone, this issue can be addressed. On the other hand, the current flexible budget of the company comes as a strength that we can play to, and, at the current size of the company, marketing tactics can be done without limitations.

Competition

Critical to any marketing strategy plan is the evaluation of the product's competition. As Gift Traditions focuses on the gift sack as its primary product and utilizes the book "Santa's New Tradition" as a marketing tool, we focused on direct competitors in the form of similar gift sack products and traditional wrapping paper. We then evaluated Elf on the Shelf as a source of indirect competition to represent the competition in bringing a new holiday tradition into American households.

Gift Traditions is not the first company to introduce reuseable gift sacks into the gift wrap market. We targeted the three leading reuseable gift sack companies for evaluation- wrapsacks.com, livingethos.com, and reuseit.com (2015). Each of these companies targets a consumer that is environmentally conscious. This environmentally conscious consumer is looking toward these three brands to provide him with a product that is fashionable, has utility, and that makes an environmental statement. Gift Sacks from these competitors come in an extensive range of color, pattern, and size options. Some of these gift sacks are even trackable and are priced in the same range as the Gift Traditions gift sacks. None of these brands, however, are incredibly successful, and no one has a solid hold of the industry as a whole. However, we can capitalize on the fact that no other companies have gift sacks large enough to be used for all gift wrapping purposes.

The biggest competitor of all gift sacks is traditional holiday gift wrap. Traditional gift wrap is not just an economic alternative to gift sacks, but a part of the cultural holiday

landscape. Most individuals typically envision presents under a Christmas tree wrapped in holiday gift wrap rather than reusable gift sacks. This direct competitor will be difficult to defeat because it is a part of the cultural landscape rather than just another item on the shelf to differentiate between. Little brand loyalty exists within the gift wrap industry as a wide variety of colors, prints and qualities are available for relatively low costs (Brown et.al., 2014).

Since its publication in 2005 Elf on the Shelf has sold more than \$10 million every year of holiday momentos (Inc). As an indirect competitor Elf on the Shelf is important to evaluate because it is the trailblazer in new holiday tradition products. The fast growing success of Elf on the Shelf tells us that consumers are open to bringing new holiday traditions like “Santa’s New Tradition” and companion gift sacks into their family holiday rituals.

SWOT

With all of this being said, we as a team identified many opportunities to enhance the overall image and presentation of your company, which we will address in our marketing goals. As we mentioned in our presentation, as well as the items bolded in the SWOT below, we have narrowed down the most important, as well as the most threatening, aspects of both your company and the industry surrounding it. These items also helped us cater which aspects of our marketing strategy we spent the most time on in order to maximize the reach to our target audiences, as well as what message this advertising sends to these audiences. As you read on, you will see how the money you will put into our marketing strategy would pay off in all of the fantastic possibilities that your brand could be a part of.

SWOT

Strengths

- Karen and Jeff indicated that they are willing to work with a flexible budget
- Located in Michigan and intense Michigan pride means local is better
- The trademark on "Gift Traditions" and the copyright on the book and illustrations give the product and the company an established and set name and product
- Karen and Jeff's previous experience with Plymouth Puzzles gives them a strong background and foundation of working with a small business
- Gift Traditions' online presence is an opportunity for online growth
- The product message of being environmentally friendly and community oriented is a positive and unique quality
- Innovation breaks with tradition!

Opportunities

- Rise in E-Book sales, according to our research and the book industry analysis, presents an opportunity to expand into this market
- Moreover, book industry analysts state that E-books are only 20% of the market value which means that it is not an over-saturated market
- In recent years the holiday industry has seen a rise in holiday shopping, especially for families
- According to our research, no other brand has larger sack sizes
- Studies have shown that in recent years people have exhibited a willingness to spend more on nice wrapping paper
- Spending on kids has sustained throughout changing (and often harsh) economic conditions
- The ease of online shopping should be taken advantage of

Weaknesses

- The organization and interface of the Santa's New Traditions website could be executed in a better, more modern, and more interactive way
- The company's current social media presence needs more guidance and needs to be friendly; moreover, the company should expand into additional social media profiles such as Instagram and Twitter
- The Do-It-Yourself (DIY) tutorial that Karen and Jeff have posted that shows customers how to make the sacks by themselves would stand out more if posted on the blog (that we suggested they create)
- The size of largest sack is not big enough, as stated by members of our focus group
- The design on the sacks and book does not allow for major sale opportunities throughout the year
- The main character in the book does not have a name that would allow her fans to truly connect and spread the word about her

Threats

- Well-established indirect competitors that have a history in the same industries crowd out the new company of Gift Traditions
- Indirect sack competitors offer a larger variety of sack sizes and patterns which might be more appealing for consumers
- Established Christmas traditions might turn off consumers from purchasing Gift Traditions Sacks and replacing the shiny gift wrapping paper with them
- Traditional wrapping paper can be inexpensive which might deter consumers from spending more money on the Gift Tradition experience
- According to our research and book industry forecast, the book market value is decreasing and this trend is expected to continue
- Competitor pricing is lower which might act as an incentive for our potential customers to buy competitor sacks

Allocate the budget

A crucial step before approaching the majority of our campaign is allocating the marketing budget. We broke the spending down into four major categories: Online Advertising, New Sale Opportunities, Company Aspects, and Appearances. Respectively, we designated \$7,000, \$2,000, \$300, and \$1,000. We recognize that this comes only to a sum of \$10,300, which is well under the designated \$15,000 limit (or higher if successful), but this sum is only the first wave of marketing. Because GT is a young company, and has a lot of room to grow, we felt that it would be more effective if we were to wait to see which of these efforts proved to be most successful. After the first year of promotion, we recommend reevaluating the ratio of funding, as well as re-allocating the remaining amount. At that point, we will also want to assess if investing in other forms of advertising may be effective or necessary, such as print or even television.

The majority of the budget is going to be dedicated toward online advertising. We are currently designating \$7,000 to online advertising, which will be split among several different opportunities. The subcategories of online advertising will include establishing a social media presence on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and blogs; we will also be creating and placing Pandora ads, Amazon ads, YouTube ads, and eventually in-app advertising. We outlined basic strategies, in detail, in our creative outline. Facebook Advertising has capabilities to create very targeted promotional posts which would allow you to do two important things: (1) to advertise directly to the target market, without wasting time and money advertising to a random demographic, and (2) to increase the range of people who see the post because if someone likes the advertisement, this “like” might show up on a “friend”’s news feed thus giving us more post impressions. We recommend initially investing \$1,000 of this amount to social media advertising.

Regarding Internet radio, we chose to initially focus our advertising on Pandora rather than on other online radio programs for several reasons. First, some Internet radio sites require an expensive investment, upfront, which would not only put a strain on our budget but it also does not guarantee a return on the investment; Spotify, for example, requires a base investment of \$10,000 (Biernacki, 2013) and the advertisements on this site might not necessarily reach our target markets. On the other hand, Pandora has a much more reasonable cost. It only costs \$30 for every minute of advertising time on the Pandora mobile application and 1/6th of this price to advertise on the Pandora desktop website (Biernacki, 2013). Moreover, Pandora is very popular among our mom target market—something that will be explained in more detail later—so we are certain that this platform will be an effective method of reaching them. Considering that about 81% of moms who use Pandora utilize the mobile application, we are interested in focusing on that platform over the desktop website (451WhitePaper). We recommend investing another \$3,000 over the course of the first year to this medium.

In addition for Online Advertising, we want to investigate a new app called “YouTube for Kids.” This service, which launched on February 23rd of this year, will feature pre-roll ads. Currently, as the service is so young, there is no data for the cost of these ads. However, we assume that the prices will be similar to YouTube’s current costs - about \$10 per view; we recommend investing an initial \$1,000 (Alleger, 2012).

In our presentation, we designated \$2,000 for the publishing of an e-book version of your book as well as specifically targeted marketing of it. You indicated in class that you believed this would likely cost a large amount of money, especially with the large number of images. After researching this, we have found that does not need to cost more than \$300 total to publish it (Liber Writer, 2015). There are several online self-publishing or semi-self-publishing services

that offer professional-quality work for little money. We recommend using Liber Writer. For \$120, they will format your work (including pictures) into an e-book ready to be published on Kindle, which can then be sold through Barnes and Noble (Liber Writer, 2015). If you do not want to publish on Kindle, there are many other services identical to this one that will format your book to be suitable for online, immediate publication for similar prices. We have included links to this, as well as a step-by-step guide on how to use the software, in the separate binder we provided during the presentation. If you place your e-book for sale through the Kindle app or through Amazon.com, then they will provide resources for marketing it as well as monitoring sales (Amazon Kindle Direct, 2015), the rest of the money will be used for OLA, focusing exclusively on the e-book. The focus of this money will be on sites that will more readily lead direct traffic to its purchase (and drive sales traffic to your site) such as banner ads, rather than options like Pandora Radio.

The final subset of our budget will focus on book appearances. We use this term to encompass school readings, attending book fairs, readings at book stores, and craft fairs. This amount of money is set aside not only to cover the cost of entering certain events (such as the application fee for The Sunday Kerrytown Artisan Market), and advertising specifically to the events, but also miscellaneous costs associated with the travel. Because these events are likely the most effective advertising that can be done in early stages- word of mouth is incredibly powerful- we want to ensure that you are able to invest yourselves fully in your time spent there. While we understand that time is an investment itself and it may feel cumbersome to devote all this time, we set aside this money to also cover gas costs, food on the days you travel, and also compensation for your time.

Assumptions

To go ahead with the next step of our market designs, our group made some assumptions of how the environment of both the company as well as external factors would remain.

- In terms of our new specified industry, we assumed that spending on holiday goods and gifts will continue to increase.
- We also assume that “green” products will continue to be popular, as well as an interest in “going green.” “Santa’s New Tradition” emphasizes the tremendous waste that is created with unnecessary gift wrapping and what gift sacks can do to alleviate that environmental strain, so we believe that it is essential for this interest in “going green” to continue
- Consumers will continue to wrap gifts in some way. As a major tradition embedded in culture, we can assume that this tradition will not disappear.
- Parents will continue to appreciate the value of giving gifts to their children and to continue to make yearly purchases (Saad, 2014).
- In order to purchase these gifts for their children, parents often turn to the internet learn what the top items to buy are, and our group assumed that this will continue to be the case.
- We mentioned educators as an important consumer for this product to speak to the environmental lessons in this book, and our final assumption is that educators will continue to look for new and innovative curriculum to introduce to their students.

Recommended a Brand Positioning Strategy

In our initial marketing pitch, we came up with three different brand positioning strategies that we felt best represented our overall marketing goals. As we moved forward with our creative strategy, we referenced these choices in crafting our final communications strategy.

The first that we chose was the Use-Occasion Positioning strategy, which is used in order to position the product to be used at a particular time or season of the year. When the product is situated in this light, consumers will create an association between the product and a certain event or occasion where the product best fits. We chose this as our first strategy because Gift Traditions created “Santa’s New Tradition” to change the current gift-wrapping market towards sacks rather than wrapping paper. Because the story of “Santa’s New Tradition” focuses on Christmas and the holiday season, it makes sense to use this strategy. If a strong association was produced between “Santa’s New Tradition,” gift sacks, and the holiday season, customers would be inclined to purchase these products during this time of year. We decided that directly after Halloween sales are concluded, heavier marketing for Santa’s New Tradition and gift sacks will begin. Our various marketing techniques discussed later will be targeting consumers directly to believe that these products will be best served during the Christmas season. Although we do not want to limit advertising to this time period, heightened promotion is important during this time. Sales for most companies surge during the three month period of October-December (Grannis, 2014). As well, by associating Santa’s New Tradition and the gift sacks with the holiday season, it will further position the sacks as a logical and appealing alternative to wrapping paper.

Not to limit our product to just another Christmas toy, our team was prepared to take note of the other unique features of the pieces at hand. We used the Creative Appeals Strategy for this purpose, which states that one identifies the Unique Selling Proposition, or USP, for a particular advertising message, which will pinpoint specific reasons the product is a good buy for the consumer, and evidence that supports rationale. In our presentation, we noted how important it was that Gift Traditions is a company like no other, with distinct products that stand out. The fact that it cannot be restrained to one particular industry illustrates this uniqueness, hence our belief

that these unique qualities will not only be important to our target audiences, but will also set it apart from other holiday books, toys, games and other spirited goods. Along with this, the idea that “Santa’s New Tradition” makes way for a more sustainable, earth-friendly Christmas tradition will be beneficial for generations to come, and is important to teach children now. We feel as if a mission statement setting Gift Tradition products apart from everyone will be the best way to implement this strategy. To reach our target consumers we state: “Santa’s New Tradition is the first holiday’s children book that advocates for the use of reusable holiday gift wrapping for the purpose of decreasing the amount of garbage produced by gift wrap each holiday season.” This mission statement will highlight the important features of Santa’s New Tradition, and will be used frequently to allow our consumers to comprehend the product’s stance.

The final brand positioning strategy that we determined would suit our marketing needs is the Media Reach strategy. With this particular strategy, we took the approach that we wanted the maximum amount of people to be exposed to our advertising campaigns, therefore maximizing the amount of people who will get at least one exposure to our various appeals. With our various target markets, and our ability to have a wide range of creative ideas to attract attention, we thought that this positioning strategy would best fit our company’s goals. With a wide range of various marketing tactics, we are hoping to create a lot of buzz about the product, and therefore create a large awareness of the brand and all of its unique properties, making it a must have. We will focus on a lot of different mediums in order to accomplish this type of marketing strategy, including advertisements within apps popular among children to access this target market, online radio advertisements as well as mom blogs to attack the parental target

market, and Amazon banner ads to create an overall feeling that this is the must-have product of the season.

We feel that by utilizing these three brand positioning strategies we will be able to maximize our efforts in this Marketing and Communications campaign. These three strategies will allow us to emphasize our appeal, in a timely manner around the holiday season, through the use of various media that will best reach our target market.

Media Objectives and Strategies

In order to be able to assess the success of our campaign, we need to establish specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound or SMART objectives. Our goal is to attain these objectives within the first year of the campaign launch seeing as we will evaluate our campaign a year post campaign launch. The objectives are as follows, in no particular order:

1. To increase name recognition and product awareness in the target market by at least 35% during the first year of this marketing strategy and to position the reading of “Santa’s New Tradition” and the use of the Gift Sacks as an important addition to the Holiday season in at least 30% of young families who are familiar with Gift Traditions. While this may seem like a low number, a 35% increase in product awareness in the first year, and subsequent 30% adoption rate will turn into higher word of mouth exposure by the second year, when higher goals can be set.
2. To position the use of the Gift Sacks as important in the effort to combat waste and climate change in the minds of at least 25% of the ‘mom’ target market. Again, we want to set achievable goals. If at least one quarter of our market connects GT and our eco-friendly messaging, then we will know that this is effective. If not, then the messaging will need to be addressed.

3. To use social media platforms (including the ones we will suggest in the strategies section) in order increase Gift Traditions' followers by 100% and to increase engagement by 50% With double the followers, GT will have at least 86 followers, which is a great number to start spreading the message. As well, in order to create a sense of community, there needs to be increased interactions, which higher engagement will provide .
4. Use our social media sites and the networks that they provide in order to create a sense of community.

We have specified the strategies by which we will attain our objectives for each of our target markets. The first target market, young parents of generation x and ages 24-40 years, will be on the receiving end of these media objectives for many reasons. This demographic makes up the primary shoppers during the holiday season (Haury, 2012). They are also on various social media which makes them very reachable and susceptible to our communication. Being young parents, they are very willing to buy for their kids and they demonstrate a strong brand loyalty when they do so. We determined that it is best to target this market through frequent posts on social media and frequent social media promotions to entice them and direct their attention to Gift Traditions. This target market spends twelve hours a week, on average, on online radio which makes it very intriguing to advertise through this channel; however, we found that it makes most sense to advertise on Pandora (to start) because it is the number one downloaded application for online radio and because their "pay-per-play" advertising business model makes it very cost-effective for us. We are also determined to create a blog for the main character and call it Holly's blog, allowing Gift Traditions to interact with its fans throughout the year and through longer posts. On Holly's blog we will include both updates about Holly's life, her expeditions, and tips on how to spread the mission of being eco-friendly and community

oriented. Lastly, we found that the large and interconnected network of Mom Blogs online provides an easy and vast platform for us to spread the word about the movement of Gift Traditions. Mom Blogs are viewed as very credible in their followers' point-of-view and they are highly influential in the followers' purchase decisions, making us confident that this form of advertising is relevant and resembles the most effective method of marketing -word-of-mouth. The goal of targeting this demographic is to create a sense of trust and community with the moms that are present and active online. Additionally, our goal is to create nostalgia for tradition among this demographic by combining a "natural" and "environmentally friendly" overtone when discussing this product and our basis for this movement.

The second target market that we are targeting is children ages 3-12. We want to clarify that we are not recommending this target market for the purpose of having them purchase the products; we are only recommending this target market for marketing purposes. Studies have shown that young children in this age range are major driving forces behind their parents' purchases (Birth, 2014). As a result, although the products are partly for children's use (to read the book, to open the sacks, and to learn about Gift Traditions' mission) this demographic is mostly on the receiving end of marketing that emphasizes the appeal of Holly. Advertisements that appear in applications are a great way of reaching this demographic because research shows that they spend about six hours using smartphones every day (The Statistics Portal, 2015). Radio advertisements are also an effective way of reaching these children and getting their attention, especially if they are listening to them with their moms. Lastly, YouTube recently launched a children's application which serves as a great vehicle for delivering both in-video advertisements and banner advertisements.

The third, and last, target market that we are focusing on is elementary school teachers. Elementary school teachers are formative influences on children, seeing as children spend about half of their days learning and growing with teachers. Teachers will also serve the purpose of legitimizing the book for parents: if teachers accept and incorporate this product and this movement into their curriculum, parents will follow suit and will understand the significance of introducing the product into their holiday traditions. It also makes sense to target teachers, not only because the book content has a great message, but also because the vocabulary in the book can be taught in this manner—helping Holly and Gift Traditions further spread their ideas and their mission. Teachers will be reached through teacher blogs and resources such as Teachers-pay-teachers (where teachers are known to go to for new and innovative lesson plans). Moreover, free lesson plans will be included for teachers (as a means of promotion) with the purchase of every book and sack; this will serve as a further incentive for teachers to incorporate the material in their lesson plans around the holiday because the work has been done for them. Essentially, the major goal of targeting this demographic is to position “Santa’s New Tradition” as a cute and easy lesson plan for the holiday season.

Although it may be appealing to only market closer to the holiday season, we recommend year-round advertising and promotions. This way Gift Traditions, “Santa’s New Traditions”, and Holly will all be familiar names to future consumers. Then, beginning in early October, heavier promotions and placements urging consumers to make the purchase will feature familiar names and brands rather than having to introduce and promote at the same time. The posts that are recommended for the off-season should focus on the character and the cause, rather than the holiday and tradition component of promotion.

We believe that phrasing all promotions as a part of a “Made in Michigan” movement will help in the branding. Many consumers, especially those with Michigan pride, really appreciate buying local as a reason to purchase something. While we do not recommend promoting the product itself as “Made in Michigan” (because it won’t necessarily be), by focusing on the movement as originating here, many people will be more willing to support local businesses.

As far as the actual sales component, because Gift Traditions already has a well-established online sales infrastructure, for the first few years, sales should be online. While having products in a brick and mortar store is a good goal, and would allow for more solid sales, it also requires sharing profits and extra resources required to place the products there. Also, online shopping accounted for 56% of Holiday sales, and next year 63% say they plan on doing shopping and research on their devices (Grannis, 2014). This number grows within our target market, as moms are notorious for online shopping- 41% of 25-34 year olds say they feel comfortable doing online purchases as opposed to the 27.4% average for the general population (Grannis, 2014). Therefore, it does not make sense to invest in the unnecessary costs of in-store sales. Rather, we believe that growth should occur online, especially since all social media can push customers directly to the shopping page. Also, since Plymouth Puzzles has experience with an Etsy site, we believe that creating one for Gift Traditions would also be effective.

Communication Objective and Advertising Message

Our advertising message is fairly straightforward. These four advertising statements, as well as the mission statement, served as the basis of our messaging. They were the basis of our tone and our goals.

1. Objective Statement: This campaign will bring awareness to possible consumers of Gift Traditions, the Gift Sacks and “Santa’s New Tradition.” It will convince them that buying the Gift Sacks and the book are an integral part of any young, reasonably environmentally-conscious family’s holiday tradition
2. Support Statement: Gift Traditions will use mixed media (social media, online radio advertising, blog promotions, in app advertisements) along with various appearances and appeals to educators in order to convey brand awareness and a sense of tradition.
3. Tone Statement: The tone of GT ads should convey a spirit of joy and energy. They should suggest that “Santa’s New Tradition” and gift sacks are an integral part of a young family’s holiday traditions, and that the book and sacks are fun!
4. Brand Statement: Gift Traditions understands the lifestyle of young parents and their desire to create traditions in their young family and promote an environmentally friendly dialogue with their children in a fun and cute way.

Creative Brief

For Moms	For Teachers	For Kids
<i>What is opportunity and/or problem the advertising must address?</i>		
Opportunities -Reach the family spender -Allow community growth	Opportunities -Non-saturated market -Influencers for parents	Opportunities -Key influencers -Born in social media era
<i>What do we want to do as a result of the advertising?</i>		
Create awareness and engage in social media	Create awareness and legitimize as teaching resource	Create awareness and show as FUN but also important movement
<i>Who are we talking about?</i>		
Moms -Generation X -Environmentally conscious	Teachers -Innovative -Engage with online educator community	Kids -Influential in parent consumer habits -Love holiday traditions
<i>What is the key response we want?</i>		
Engagement, adoption	Legitimization, recommendation	Engagement, action
<i>What information/attributes might help produce this response?</i>		
Building a local community base	Cross-curricular subject	FUN images, blog, book, visibility!
<i>What aspect of brand personality should advertising express?</i>		
Community movement	Educational importance	Kid-friendly and FUN
<i>Are there media or budget considerations?</i>		
Willing to pay for plush sacks and ideal	Can use teaching guide as rewarding promotion	Advertise in child friendly media spaces
<i>What other information might affect the creative direction?</i>		
Competitor product design	Cost and accessibility	Advertising venues great

Creative Strategy

From here, we worked to create examples of each of the communication methods that we recommended. Social Media, our main component, is a viable, inexpensive option to spread the primary advertising messages.

Twitter: Twitter will keep our customers up-to-date with all of our upcoming events, promotions and happenings. Customers will also be encouraged to interact through this platform to create a community around the product. Moms, more than any other online community, are likely to follow brands online, and Twitter is a quick and easy way to engage with them.



Facebook: Facebook will further encourage community building posts. Here, Grift Traditions can engage in comments and conversations with potential customers and those who have adopted “Santa’s New Tradition” into their community. This is the face of the brand: the first thing consumers will see if they search for it online. Because over 60% of moms are on Facebook, and 68% say that they use it to share and collect information about products (DeCesare, 2014), it makes sense to use this as a resource to connect with them on a personal level.



Santa's NEW Tradition

Timeline About Photos Likes More ▾

2,000 likes

John Smith, Kate George and 98 others like this.

Invite your friends to like this Page

ABOUT

One Christmas Eve, Santa sees something in a home that gives him a notion for a new tradition, but he is not sure how to get it started.

<http://santasnewtradition.com/>

Suggest Edits

PHOTOS

Post Photo / Video

Write something on this Page...

Santa's New Tradition 6 hrs · 🌐

Have you checked out our updated Etsy store? With new colors and bigger sizes, you can add to your collection!




Like · Comment · Share · 238 11 63

Santa's New Tradition 16 hrs · 🌐

Gift Traditions November 10 at 6:00 pm

Calling all educators! Young Readers Day is here and if you're looking for a fun way to educate your kids about green living, look no further:
<http://www.santasnewtradition.com/>



Like · Comment · Share


1,896 people like this. Most Relevant ▾

386 shares

Write a comment...

Gift Traditions December 1 at 10:00 am

December is here which means 25 days until Christmas! Get ready for all the holiday joy with your gift sacks and books to celebrate a New Tradition!
<http://www.santasnewtradition.com/>



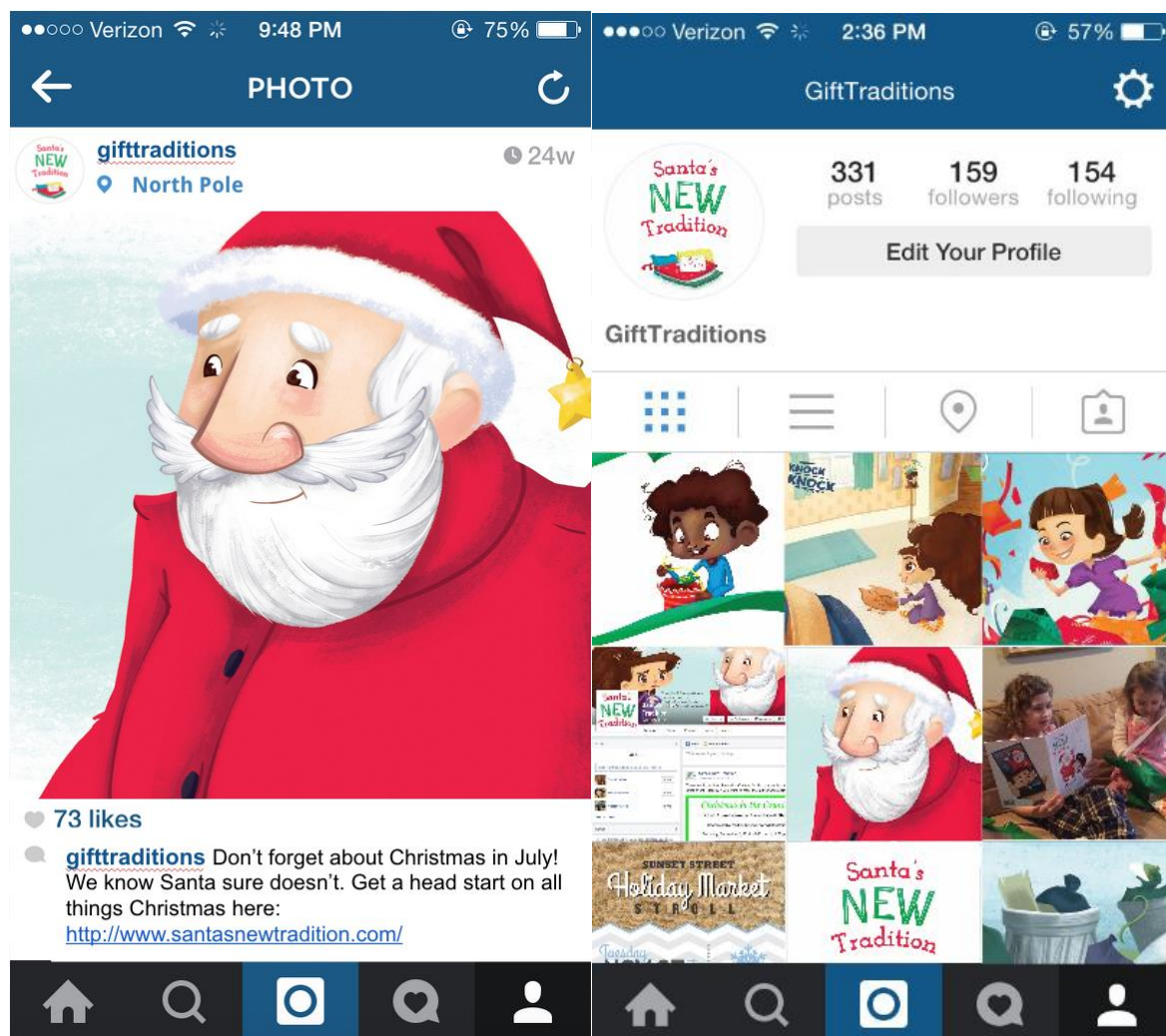
Like · Comment · Share

1,896 people like this. Most Relevant ▾

386 shares

Write a comment...

media format for the target market (451WhitePaper).



Blog: Moms AND Teachers love finding out new information from blogs. Websites such as Teacherspayteachers will promote awareness of the product and the brand. By offering fun promotions such as our pre-created lesson plans, or eco-friendly tips, we will encourage the customer to make Santa's New Traditions a part of their holiday tradition. We encourage you to reach out to blogs in the Ann Arbor area. When products are promoted on blogs, $\frac{2}{3}$ of moms are more likely to purchase it (Brown et al., 2014). As well, the standard mom blogger and follower

falls right in the target demographic of Gift Traditions with 89% having young children, and 88% more likely to use eco-friendly products (DeCesare, 2014).



Radio ads: Because the average mom spends 12 hours a week listening to online radio, and 73% of all moms listen to it (DeCesare, 2014), online radio ads can target them while they are on the go. With friendly, easy to remember messages, they will be mostly used to promote awareness as well as bring traffic to the website. As well, advertisements on Pandora are fairly inexpensive as they are based on a per listen cost.

Ad Banners: Starting during “Christmas in July,” ad banners will appear on popular websites to encourage familiarity with the brand. Then, during the holiday season, they will change to begin to promote the sacks and the book itself. These ads should show up on sites like Amazon. These

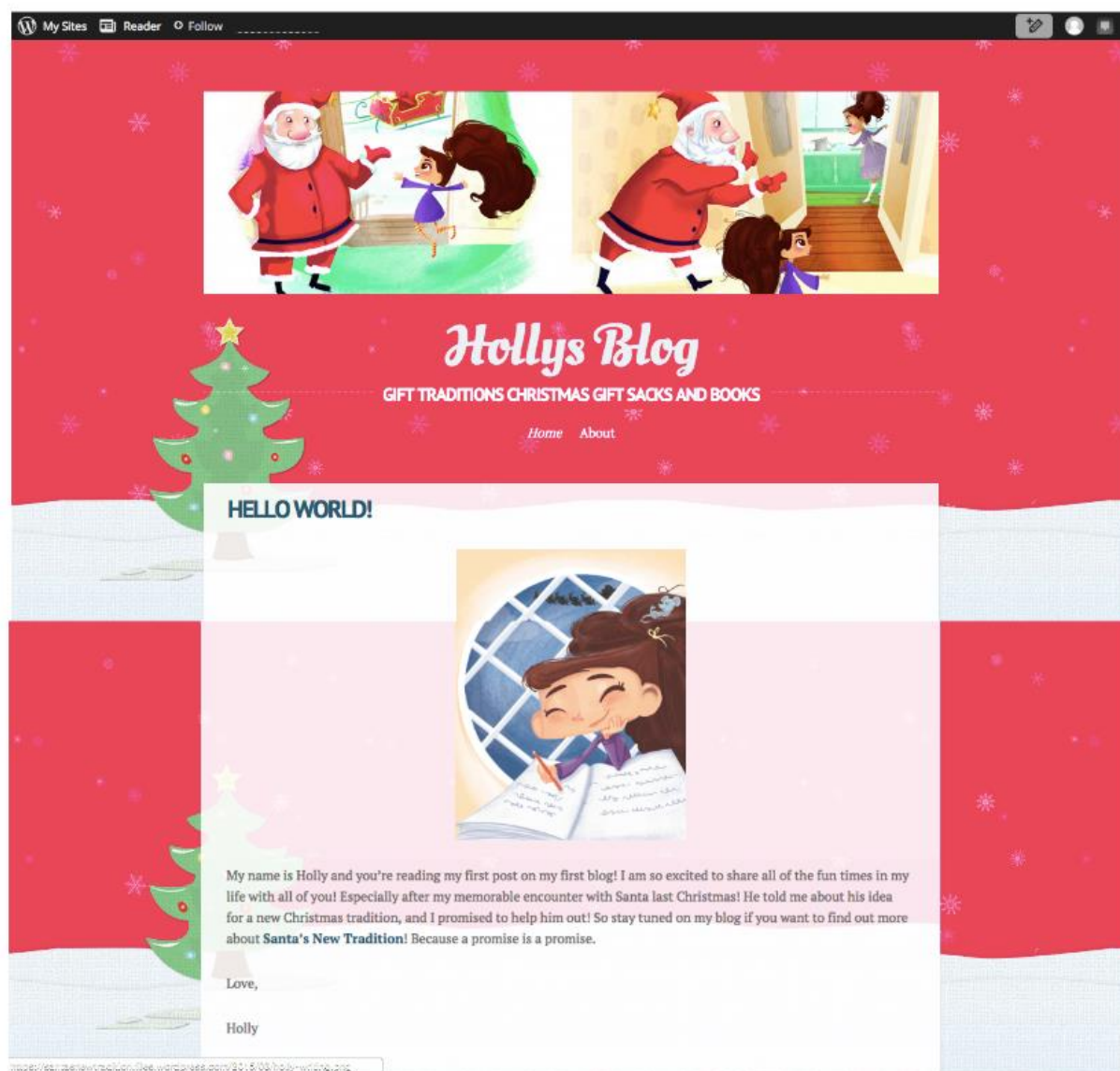
advertisements are usually very effective, because 58% of the population in our target age range say that they click on these advertisements, and this number grows to 78% when you refine the market to those who have a college education (Oetting, 2015).



In-app Ads: These bright and cheery ads will encourage kids to click through, driving them to the mobile-friendly website. About 72% of children under 8 report playing on parent's phones, and they are spending, on average, about 7 hours a week on apps. Additionally, 92% of moms have a phone, and are heavy game players (DeCesare, 2014). By having ads appear on these platforms, consumers will become familiar with Holly, Santa, and their mission to reduce waste.



Holly's Blog: Moms will love this little extra that comes in the Gift Tradition community. Every month, short little eco-friendly articles will be posted. These will not only drive users through the website, but keep them in the Gift Traditions mindset year round. As well, this will allow customers to feel that they are a part of the community that centers around this movement.



Lesson Plans: Much of the information about the lesson plans can be found in the additional binder we provided during our presentation. These plans are a part of our effort to position “Santa’s New Tradition” as a teaching tool. By placing these resources on teaching websites, they will become available to teachers, which will lead to them introducing Holly and her mission to many children and their families.



The “Santa’s New Tradition” holiday storybook teaching guide’s supplementary teaching resources are designed for lower elementary age students.

This Teaching Guide includes the following resources:

- KWL
- Word Web
- Crossword Puzzle
- Creative Applied Writing Activity
- Fill in the Blank Assessment

Santa’s
NEW
Tradition



Story By: Karen Sookak
Pictures By: Michelle Ouellette
Published By: Plymouth Puzzles LLC

All materials and illustrations/graphics present are copyright of Gift Traditions and may not be copied or reproduced.

Cards: We have created small business cards to place at local partnering shops. Customers can pick up these cards when they pick up their coffee or their Cherry Republic Cherries! They will have Gift Traditions’ logo on the front and a small coupon on the back. This way, with website information and a coupon, consumers will be driven to the website to learn more about the movement.



Promotions

The creation and distribution of rewarding promotions is crucial for “Santa’s New Tradition” to build awareness and encourage product interest and engagement. We combined aspects of push and pull style promotion strategies to most effectively reach our target audience based on the nature and current consumer network base. Push promotion strategy focuses on getting the product out to the target consumers. We are suggesting the employment of cooperative advertising with local businesses, and product demonstrations/instruction and education in the form of book readings at local elementary schools and presence at community events. These community events range from the Ann Arbor Art Fair and Kerrytown Bookfest (application dates in early January) to children’s events at the Ann Arbor District Library and other Ann Arbor / Plymouth community organizations. Pull promotion strategy focuses on drawing the consumer in to the appeal of the product. Our primary implementation of pull promotion strategies is centered around coupons in the form of coupon cards that can be handed

out at trade shows or local cooperating businesses and organizations, coupon deals for educators and institutions, and online promotion codes.

We are also emphasizing the importance of creating a consumer database with our “Santa’s New Tradition” online social media community, as well as gaining access to the already thriving databases of local mom bloggers. Once we evaluate the success of our first year marketing efforts, we will be able to more effectively market via the database created within the “Santa’s New Tradition” online community. Through the information we will gather from our Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pandora, and Holly’s Blog community, we will have a ready database. Additionally, we stress the importance of creating and maintaining relationships with mom bloggers because they have access to already existing and strong databases that are largely made up of our target mom market. Building upon relationships with these mom bloggers will allow us access to their databases in addition to that of our newly created “Santa’s New Tradition” community and database.

Our last point of emphasis in types of promotion marketing is through philanthropy and positive public relations exposure. We suggest the Ann Arbor District Library branches as communities to which positive public relations exposure and philanthropy would be successfully achieved. For example, donating ten copies of “Santa’s New Tradition” to the Downtown branch would be a great opportunity for a public donation during a holiday children’s book reading. This shows that Gift Traditions is concerned about education and wants to help its local community- and we see no better way than through the public library,

Evaluation Criteria

Within the first year of the launch, we will measure the success of the marketing campaign primarily through book and sack sales. Web site hits, promotional responses, book

reading attendance, and trade show sales will be important too in assessing the success of our campaign. We also feel confident that the pre- and post-test distributed online (which will measure levels of awareness, attitude, and purchase intention) will demonstrate a clear image of the change this marketing strategy will usher (See Appendix 1). We have included very basic data from a cursory run of the survey that we launched, in order to illustrate possible conclusions from this in the first Appendix. Lastly, social media analytics will also be an important part of our evaluation, including the amount of followers our profiles will gain, the amount of re-posts and shares of our posts, the amount of likes on our posts, and the amount of hashtags that we will create and will reuse. Re-using hashtags is important because it will further solidify your brand, and can act as a sort of ‘mini-slogan.’ In addition using a hashtag often encourages members of the community to use them, and by doing so, create their own promotion of the brand.

Summary

As we have thus far illustrated throughout this marketing report for Gift Traditions, with the Online Advertising, Social Media presence, New Sale Opportunities, Company Aspects, and Appearances, all totaling to \$10,300 within the budget, we foresee the success of Gift Traditions. We think the strategies we have laid out for you and its potential benefits in return are pragmatic and viable; therefore, we think it is crucial for Gift Traditions to consider going forth with this marketing plan. We are very excited to see this project put into action and look forward to working with Gift Traditions to make this pro-environmental act a rooted holiday tradition.

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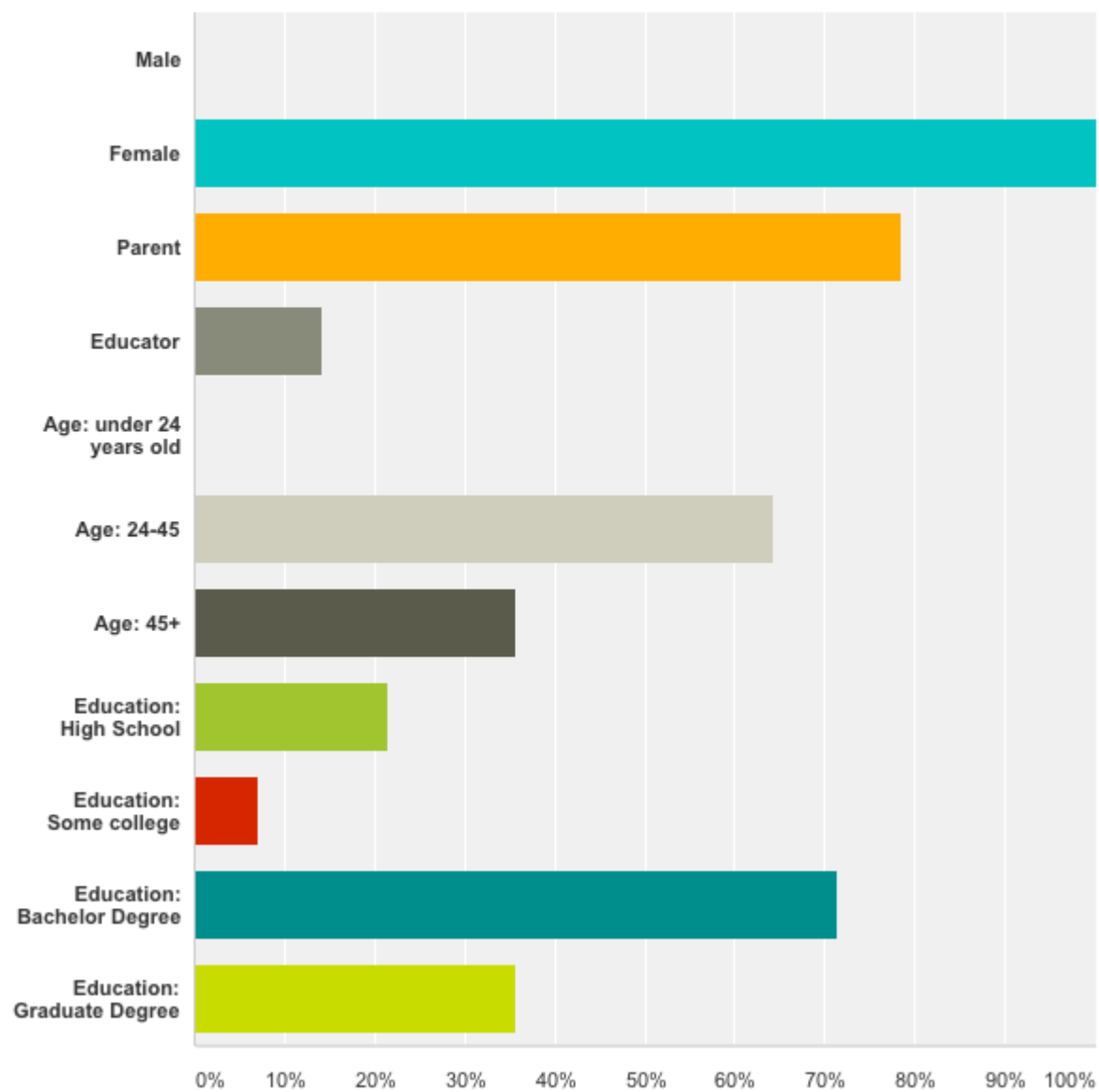
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Appendix 1

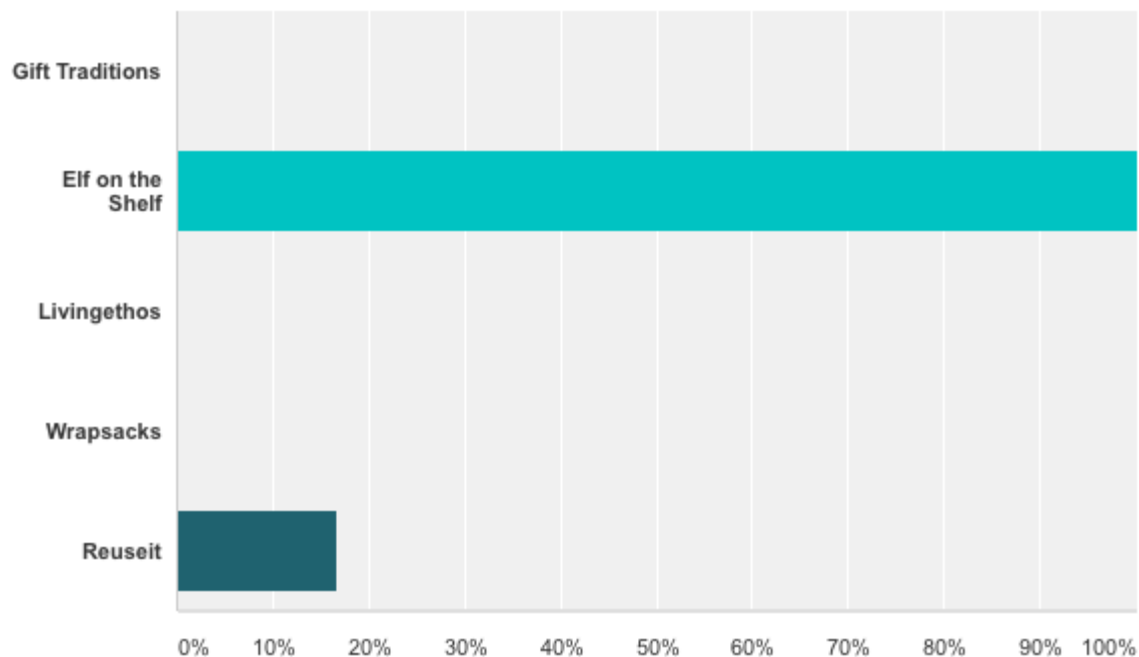
Check all that apply:

Answered: 14 Skipped: 0



Which of the following brands have you heard of? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 12 Skipped: 2



In the last year, how often have you heard other people talking about our brand?

Answered: 14 Skipped: 0

