



SOLUTIONS TO PROMOTE STUDENTS' PARTICIPATION IN THE UNIVERSITY'S VISUAL COMMUNICATION ON FACEBOOK SOCIAL NETWORKING SITE IN VIETNAM

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Abstract:

Social networking sites have a great influence on everyone, especially young people. In Vietnam, 100% of higher education institutions have a fanpage (an information page created on Facebook) to communicate images about the institutions' activities. In order to promote the image of higher education institutions to the public, students are the main and effective human resources in communicating the university's image on social networking sites in the most effective and objective way. Therefore, to achieve the desired effect, it is necessary to have appropriate solutions.

Keywords: solution; student; visual communication; university; Facebook social networking site; Vietnam

1. Introduction

According to the White Book Vietnam Information and Communication Technology 2019 (2019), the number of Internet users in Vietnam accounted for 70% of the total population in 2018 and the average time of Vietnamese people using the Internet is up to nearly 7 hours/day. In Vietnam, Facebook is still the most used social networking site. According to statistics, as of January 2021, there were about 68 million Facebook accounts in Vietnam, putting Vietnam in the top 7 countries with the largest number of Facebook users in the world. In addition, statistics on the age of social network users in Vietnam were the highest in the 18-34 age group, in which the number of students accounted for a large proportion.

Understanding the important role of social networking sites, higher education institutions are looking for ways to promote their "brand" by visual communicating on mass media in which social networking sites are a fertile "land" that brings great efficiency. To be effective, it is necessary to have specific solutions to promote student

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participation in the university's visual communication on Facebook social networking site.

2. Promoting and improving the quality of education

The 13th National Congress of the Party clearly stated that:

“Building synchronously institutions and policies to effectively implement the policy of education and training is the top national policy and a key driving force for country development; continuing to synchronously innovate educational and training objectives, contents, programs and methods towards modernity and international integration; having a policy of breakthroughs in development and improvement of the quality of higher education; building and perfecting institutions and policies to develop Vietnam's education in the context of the market economy and international integration, taking quality and output efficiency as a measure; promoting synchronous innovation, improving the effectiveness and efficiency of state management, professional management and administration, expertise in education and training, step by step effectively implementing the autonomy mechanism associated with responsibility and accountability of education and training institutions”.

These are the guiding viewpoints and development orientations of the country for the period 2021-2030 that the 13th National Congress of the Party has determined in order to continue to successfully implement the fundamental and comprehensive reform of education and training in general and higher education in particular. Those are the directions that the higher education institutions are aiming for.

Quality education means quality training students to create talents both intellectually and morally. It is a solid, long-lasting foundation to demonstrate the prestige, caliber and reputation of the university. Once the reputation is established, all communication activities about the university will become easy and students will believe, love, be proud and always want to share and introduce their university not only on Facebook social networking site but also in all other means. However, achieving good education quality is not an overnight thing, universities can do it right away, but requires a whole process of operation and meeting the standards and criteria for quality evaluation. Therefore, universities all try their best to improve the quality of education and participate in the assessment and accreditation of education quality with the aim of creating the image and brand of a prestigious university. Thus, the most important thing to promote student participation in the university's visual communication is to create students' confidence in that university. In order to create trust and confidence in students, it is necessary to come from the root strategy which is to promote and improve the quality of education. It is necessary to improve the quality of capacity, management team and lecturers. This is an extremely important issue to improve the quality of higher education. The fact that this team at universities is still lacking and weak, leads to the recruitment of

donors in a sufficient number to raise the recruitment quota. Besides, is necessary to look back at the goals of higher education, fundamentally changing the curriculum, content and methods of teaching and learning at university. Objectives of higher education must always adhere to social realities, and properly reflect the socio-economic development requirements of the country, the world, as well as each locality. Facilities must be strengthened to create conditions for universities to improve training and research capabilities and build a civilized, fair and modern training environment.

3. Raising students' awareness

For student participation in the university's visual communication on Facebook social networking site to achieve the highest results, students need to have the right perception of the university they are attending. Students are aware of the role of the individual in communication activities, consciously build the organization and promote the development of the university, even towards the university communication becomes a responsibility and obligation of each individual student when studying in that university environment.

In order to raise students' awareness of the university's visual communication in general and on Facebook in particular, universities need to have solutions to motivate, encourage, and educate them to be aware of their role in communication activities and building the university's image.

Currently, in the full-course training program of universities, in addition to the modules included in the training program of the major, universities have spent the first week of the course or the beginning of the year introducing to students about the topic of "Rules of behavior on social networks" aims to educate students about the positive sense of using social networks. However, the process of raising students' awareness still depends on many factors, so for this activity to be effective needs to be combined with cultural, artistic, physical, and sports and entertainment activities and consider to become a regular, continuous activity and at each level from small to large such as group - class - university. To raise students' awareness of the university's visual communication on Facebook, it is necessary to:

Firstly, regularly educating students on ideas, propagandizing to raise students' awareness and responsibility to the collective, and mobilizing students to participate in the media by thematic talks and weekly activities.

Secondly, every staff, lecturer, and academic advisor is one who inspires students' participation through inspirational trends. Their participation in the communication will form a link and many participating staff and lecturers will become resonators of those links in order to create a contagion effect to promote student participation. Each staff, lecturer, and the student will then become a communication ambassador about the university's image on Facebook's social networking site.

Finally, each student needs to cultivate his or her own moral sense through study, practice and in relationships with friends. When communicating on Facebook social

networking site, it is necessary to have appropriate judgments and attitudes and behaviors in cyberspace and put collective interests above personal interests. In addition, students need to boldly propose, exchange and give suggestions to staff and lecturers about what they are not satisfied with or do not understand. Strengthening connections with lecturers is also creating closeness and sharing to form feelings and create love and trust of students with the university.

4. Developing a set of rules to encourage, motivate and attract students' participation in the university's visual communication on Facebook social networking site

Visual communication is one of the important factors associated with the development and branding of the university. However, a majority of students participate in the university's visual communication on Facebook social networking site passively, only participating when it is associated with their own interests and when there are initiatives of the Youth Union. Therefore, it is necessary to have a worthy incentive mechanism for students to actively participate in this communication activity.

In order to attract students' participation in university's visual communication, universities also have incentive mechanisms such as: adding points, commending, and awarding certificates of merit or cash. However, these incentives may not have specific, detailed and stable scales. Some universities only have a mechanism to encourage students in a short time, focusing on the time of enrollment, so the participation of students in the university's visual communication on Facebook social networking site just stops at seasonal quality but not towards sustainability.

5. Improving the quality of the content of the articles published on the university's fanpage

For each article posted on the fanpage, the admin will be the one to know the effectiveness of that article based on the number of people who reach that article. The reach index of each post is displayed directly below each post and to measure the attractiveness of the content, so it must be based on user engagement with each post including likes/emotions, shares and comments on the post. Thus, the interaction rate will show, of the total number of people who reach the post, how many % are really interested and involved in that communication process. In addition, on Facebook in particular and social networking channels in general, content posted not only needs to achieve the goal of public interest, but it also needs to take into account the content's ability to spread. Going viral means getting that information content to a wider audience without spending too much. That's why posts need to have a lot of likes, comments or shares. When a person likes, comments or shares, a newsletter about that content is generated on their friends' home page (newsfeed). Thus, it is they who want to increase the ability to spread information or in other words, carry out communication activities.

Quantitative results and statistical observations have shown that the level of student participation in the university's visual communication on Facebook is passive and depends on the content of the posts on the university's fanpage. Thus, in order for the information on the fanpage to be widely spread, it requires students to participate in liking / expressing emotions, sharing and commenting on posts to achieve a high rate. That means it is necessary to improve the content of articles to attract students' participation in the university's visual communication on Facebook.

In order to improve the quality of the content of the university's fanpage, it is necessary for fanpage administrators to have creative ideas. Creativity is key to increasing reach and engagement. However, creative ideas need to "hit" the psychology and interests of students - the target public. From events and activities of educational institutions, fanpage administrators choose creative ways to be attractive and lively. For example:

- Presenting the content in the form of questions: This is a way to start a "conversation" with students. The question acts as a call to action, attracting attention and making students want to share their thoughts. The answers received by students through comments are the results of participation in communication activities. It is advisory to ask fun, impressive, easy-to-answer questions that may be related to university keywords. This will make it easier to create sympathy and stimulate more people to respond. Moreover, from students' feedback, administrators can generate interesting content ideas in the future. Some other types of questions can be used to increase Facebook interaction such as open-ended questions, questions with answers, image questions, etc. Besides, public opinions also send positive signals to Facebook. From here, Facebook will better understand the university's fanpage, contributing to increasing organic reach.
- Creating content with images and videos: Facebook has its own Watch section dedicated to videos. It can be said that video is a great content idea to improve and attract interaction on the fanpage. Therefore, the university's fanpage administrators should take advantage of creating ideas for videos, creating and sharing videos regularly in many forms, such as information videos, entertainment videos...
- Updating new trends: This is one of the types of articles that are modified, imitated or shared by many people. Trends only last for a certain period of time, they are momentary and easily replaced by new trends. For students, approaching the trend is always fast. Therefore, those who take care of fanpage at universities need to monitor and update to be able to apply trends in a timely manner to increase reach and attract student participation on Facebook.
- Using graphics with the university's brand identity: An idea for creating university fanpage content is to create a graphic associated with the brand identity that combines the logo, font, and color of that university. It is a flexible solution that is perfect for any online platform.

- Posting content at the optimal time: Creating content on the fanpage is not the only task to increase interaction on Facebook, but it is also necessary to choose the optimal time to post to have the opportunity to reach the largest number of the public. If you post at the wrong times, you can miss out on a lot of reach and engagement. However, in fact, there is no fixed golden time frame for posting, fanpage administrators need to test posting at different time frames, then monitor the results to find the most suitable time.
- Selecting and using of student products during the training process to post: For each training major, students will have a variety of practice products. The selection and use of good products by students to post on the fanpage will be a recognition of the students' results and experiences during the training process at the university. This is considered the most objective way of communication and will create a viral effect that will not only motivate students to have their products posted, but also motivate their friends, siblings, and relatives to participate in communication by interacting, liking, sharing, and commenting. Also from these products, universities can extend the reward policy to the products of students with the most interaction on an annual basis, maybe once a month or quarterly. As such, this activity also motivates other students to strive and compete, increasing students' participation in the university's visual communication on Facebook.

6. Conclusion

Mobilizing students' participation in the university's visual communication on social networking sites should also be associated with the educational institution's communication activities on Facebook in a strong and effective way. At the same time, by implementing basic solutions, universities can attract students' participation in visual communication on Facebook social networking site.

These solutions aim to create trust and excitement in students towards the university. From there, they can promote students' participation in the university's visual communication on Facebook social networking sites in particular and on the media in general in an active and positive manner.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

About the Author

Le Thi Minh Huyen is working at Vietnam Women's Academy, Vietnam. She is currently conducting research on solutions to promote students' participation in the university's visual communication on Facebook social networking site in Vietnam.

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