COMMUNICATION PLAN: CAMP KESEM (UC Davis Chapter)



A NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

**Background:**

* Kesem is well known nationally, but not well known on the UC Davis campus. Locally there is a Kesem chapter established at the University that primarily relies on the volunteering of college students to run their camps over the summer. In this plan, we have created a way for the local chapter to gain more exposure and attract more volunteers so that more campers can be easily accommodated, thereby achieving the Kesem mission of aiding children whose parents have been afflicted with cancer.

1. History of Kesem in Davis:
   * 1. Locally (Davis, CA): The UC Davis Camp Kesem chapter was established in 2004 and was the 7th chapter to open nationally.
   1. Import Issue Kesem Addresses: There are over 1.7 million cases of cancer each year in the United States alone, and with that said, there are more than 3 million kids who have some parent or family member with such disease. One study from the *Journal of the Psychological, Social and Behavioral Dimensions of Cancer*, written by Ben Edwards and Valerie Clarke, found that loved ones who had family members with cancer can suffer sociological problems such as depression and anxiety. **Camp Kesem is the only camp both nationally and in Davis, CA that focus on children whose parents have been diagnosed with cancer.**
   2. Who Benefits from Kesem:
      1. Service to Community: Camp Kesem provides and once in a lifetime camp experience to thousands of children each year across the county. Children in the local Davis area are given the chance to be kids again.
      2. Individuals Who Benefit: There are many who benefit from the services Camp Kesem brings to the community. First and foremost the children benefit tremendously, as they are the primary focus of the entire organization. Camp Kesem provides emotional support, friendships, and lifelong memories to these children. They are given the opportunity to be kids again and not have to worry about the stress cancer brings to their family. While kids are at camp, parents and/or family members can focus on many important and serious effects of cancer, such as financial responsibilities and treatment options. An important third party, the UC Davis college students, also benefit from Camp Kesem. These students end up becoming leaders, developing invaluable leadership skills. They are able to leave a lasting impact on these children’s’ lives, as well as learn more about leadership and counseling.
   3. Performance indicators: (Note: “Campers” refers to only children, not camp leaders)
      1. Locally: Davis Chapter (Number of campers only found for 2 consecutive years)
         * 2014: 110-120 campers
         * 2015: 142 campers

* Here we see an increase in the amount of campers which means more volunteers are needed in order to continue to provide the level of quality that Kesem strives for.
  1. The Competition: There are many organizations that represent children with cancer, or both children and family members with cancer, but none locally in Davis, California. Therefore, Kesem is the only camp in this area, so competitors in the area is not an issue. Nationally, the following are Kesem’s biggest competitors:
     + - Camp Harmony: An organization located in Malibu, Ca that also provides kids with a fun and memorable camp experience. Camp Harmony is not focused on children whose parents are afflicted by cancer, but rather focused on providing impoverished children a camp experience. Smaller organization (only 1 chapter) and consists of only 700 campers. Fundraising scale is very small.
       - Camp Ronald McDonald for Good Times: The organization provides a large scale, fun, camp experience for BOTH children and parents affected by cancer. Organization is over 10 times larger than Camp Kesem, with over 30,000 campers and numerous sponsors.
       - Children's Treehouse Foundation: The only other organization that we were able to find that focuses on children who have parents afflicted by cancer is in Denver, Colorado. This is a much smaller organization and DOES NOT provide a camp experience for children. The type of training they provide volunteers with enables them to professionally support and emotional consult the children.

**External or Public Environment:**

1. Local & National Perception: From our research, Camp Kesem at a national level is well known and is given tremendous amount of praise for the time and dedication they provide towards children. However at the local level here in Davis, many students know very little about the organization and what it aims to do.
   1. Grassroots organization? – NO
   2. Credible? – YES
2. Camp Kesem & The Media (UC Davis Chapter): Locally, the only coverage has come from the Aggie Newspaper and the Davis Enterprise, a local Davis newspaper.

**Campaign/Organizational Goals**

1. The ultimate goal of Kesem is to raise money and awareness to fund camp experiences for children affected by cancer stricken parents. Achieving their goal will support children through the tough times by providing student leaders as a source of emotional support, role models, and compassion; as well as camp activities as a source of entertainment and fun memories. Camp Kesem wants to be perceived as an exciting place where kids can be kids without the external stresses of cancer, as well as a place of comfort in a supportive community.

**Communication Objectives and Target Audience:**

1. The ultimate communication objective is to use social media as a resource that spreads awareness about Camp Kesem to the large UC Davis student body to gain more volunteers for the camp. The use of social media would spread awareness through media platforms as well as word of mouth from those already involved in the organization and those who are just joining the organization. Camp Kesem will use social media as a way of reaching this target audience of the UC Davis student body to encourage student volunteering and promoting the Camp’s benefits.

* How will we measure the success? Success will be measured by following the growth of the camps social media pages through likes, shares, interactions and messages. A recording of the number of volunteer applications in past years will be compared with the recording of how many volunteer applications are received this coming year for camp as well as comparing the numbers of past volunteers to this coming year’s volunteer numbers.

1. **“A” List Audiences**: We want to reach and influence the students at UC Davis who are willing to volunteer their summer, promote Camp Kesem, and/ or give their time to help raise funds for a successful camp. Students can be reached by utilizing Kesem's social media resources to increase the visibility of the organization on campus in order to gain more volunteers. Camp Kesem has the social media outlets of Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to effectively reach the student body, but does not utilize them to their full potential. Using their social media platforms would increase awareness about Camp Kesem and could increase the exposure that Camp Kesem has been trying to achieve.

**Key Messages:**

1. Kesem currently works with the slogan “Hate Cancer, Love Kids?” when it comes to them raising money for their fundraisers and their own personal self-promotion of events, which is an excellent starting hook. Specific words to keep in mind to capture the message of Kesem is “camp” “place” “kids” “happiness”. Kesem needs to incorporate the catchy “Hate Cancer, Love Kids? Come to Camp Kesem” onto bumper stickers, posters around campus, and on their social media sites. On a bumper sticker the words “Hate Cancer, Love Kids?” can be the larger top line, with “Come to Camp Kesem” on the bottom. Whereas for a poster, the wording of “Come to Camp Kesem” should be changed to “Donate to Camp Kesem” or “Send a Child to Camp”.

**Strategy and Tactics:**

1. Social Media Campaign :

* Camp Kesem UC Davis must make their Instagram account public.
* Create a hashtag on Instagram called #FeatureFridays in which Kesem posts a picture of a current volunteer who have gone to camp and their short testimonial of their time volunteering at camp. Link this post and the hashtag to Twitter to reach the larger audience.
* #WhyCKWedneday: Posts from past and current student leaders detailing why Kesem means so much to them.
* #MemoryMonday: Post a picture of your favorite camp memory and tag @ckucdavis
* Once a month hold a Instagram contest in which they ask follower to “Tag a Friend so you can win!” and give away Camp Kesem swag like tank tops, t-shirts, sunglasses, or a gift card to a local fundraiser restaurant (Cultive, Raja’s, Chipotle) The rules of the Tag a Friend competition is that you have to tag a friend who they think would be a great fit to volunteer for Camp Kesem
* On Sundays, the student leaders need to post about upcoming fundraisers to raise awareness of the events and encourage a large attendance.
* ALL hashtags and the Instagram need to be linked to the Twitter and Facebook account to ensure maximum exposure.

2. Word of Mouth

* Kesem Fridays on campus: Student leaders wear their Kesem shirts around campus, to the gym, around Davis, etc., in order to spread awareness about the camp.
* Tabling in the Quad: Set up a table with student leaders to answer questions students may have. This is also a way for students to advertise upcoming fundraisers for the camp and inform students of deadlines to sign up to apply to be a Kesem Counselor.
* Volunteer Meetings: Once a month, beginning in October. Give prospective students information about camp, what camp entails, and important dates to remember (when to apply to be a volunteer, when volunteers will be chosen, fundraiser dates, camp dates)

\*These are some ideas on behalf of our own vision for how the camp can expand, yet Kesem is not limited to these ideas alone. There are many more options Kesem can explore to further expand.

**Tactics:**

* Timing is essential: They have from one year from the end of the current 2015 session to promote to raise funds for the 2016 session.
* Public Image is Key: Instagram posts must be consistent and easy to find. Therefore, Kesem needs a hard copy of their strategic social media plans in order to remain consistent with their posts.
  + Continuing with maintain a clean public image, Kesem should require that all volunteers of Kesem keep their Instagrams and Facebooks private in order to minimize the potential for a scandal of any kind involving the private actions of a camp counselor.
* We’ve created the following timeline to better illustrate when we want to implement this social media campaign in order to achieve the greatest results.