

Slide 1:

Hello everyone, this is George Yazbeck here to present my final project for thesis proposal development. The name of my presentation as you see here is entitled "Social Media Misuse: Decisions from the Corporate Boardroom." And just below the title here, I've credited the student's thesis abstract and my proposal. As such, I have formatted my slides based on the guidelines set by the assignment to explain how my idea works in addressing the issues raised by the thesis. So without further ado, let's get started.

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Now as we all know, we're digital media students but not everyone is in the same concentration. I'm in digital video, a choice that I made because I'm passionate in producing content that primarily educates as well as entertains. I also love the video-editing and screenwriting aspects of my intended profession, though the former is going to relate more to crafting this project.

This segues into my intent to focus on documentaries as I look forward to producing my individual thesis as such. The reason for this is because I strongly feel more comfortable coordinating people in a scene to exemplify an idea as opposed to directing actors for a fictional story (at least for now). This will be evident in my proposal.

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So before we learn about the proposal, I will need to first address the student's thesis statement, which I chose to do my research on. In the abstract, I learned and eventually paraphrased the issue as "social media not being properly utilized by corporations for legitimate statistical purposes. So what does that necessarily mean?"

Social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter have had a tremendous impact on the way people get their news and even learn about products through word of mouth. The student challenges that organizations are often unaware or even nonchalant about the usefulness of using social media to expand their public reach.

Furthermore, he claims that attitudes of bias exist to such an extent that it negatively affects such decision-making of these organizations to use the tool effectively. Take for example, a conglomerate using Twitter to research new ideas for a product instead of marketing their upcoming ones for instant feedback and exposure to millions of users.

It is this kind of attitude that the student questions in his abstract; what barriers exist in the minds of those decision-makers? Is there stigma that plays a role in not taking social media seriously in the context of marketing and exposure? And lastly, what specific information is being discounted from social media that could be put into more effective use?

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Alright, so now that we know the issue and the questions, here is what I propose to make a case to businesses for why their opinions towards social media should change for their benefit. I look to film boardrooms in various companies in which the decision-makers involved discuss

their approaches, attitudes, ideas and ultimately decisions on what to do with using the online tool.

Ideally, my goals as a producer of this kind of documentary is to examine and educate behaviors that lead to a decision, answer questions raised by the abstract from the people involved, and lastly, get the audience to react from these findings. Specifically, I would target businesspeople from other companies and social media users.

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Now why this approach? I have decided to focus on the proceedings of what unfolds in a boardroom for a few reasons. Firstly, documentaries are almost always filmed in a similar and conventional fashion. They are never up close enough to be taken as a case study in the manner of which I want to educate my audience about the issues.

Secondly, I want my film to stand out and be remembered. If my documentary took a unique approach to persuading and spreading awareness of a particular cause, even if it doesn't change some peoples' minds, the issue would be still very much alive because of the way the issues were presented.

Thirdly, this approach allows for more realism. Documentaries almost universally use reenactments between actual footage to prove facts and ideas. However, the raw emotion and exact delivery of interaction may get lost in even the best interpretation. This is especially important with my aim to accurately show the psychology and behaviors of business people in a boardroom who argue and talk about social media use.

If I want to justify why social media is being neglected by these types of people, I need to at least let the public know why they feel that way. At that point, reactions to the decision makers could at least set the stage for changing their stance and views, especially if enough backlash is warranted for someone who has a fallacious excuse in dismissing social media entirely.

Social media strategists would also be interviewed to provide their professional opinions on the correct use of social media and its benefits for companies to adapt to current trends.

Now, I didn't come up with all this approach on my own. I had inspirations and even found one instance of similar work. My next slide is all visuals, which I will explain one by one.

Slide 6:

The first image you see is of American-born British filmmaker Roger Graef. He made a 3-part documentary called Decisions, which aired in the U.K. in the 1970s. I tried finding screenshots of this film online but apparently it's so obscure that I had to use this picture instead.

Anyhow, through previous research, I learned that Graef's documentary was the first instance in which a company granted permission to be filmed from within. However, Graef faced challenges during production, some of which I will talk about shortly.

Nonetheless, his unique approach of capturing the bias and discrimination of how the higher-ups decide on what risks a business should take proved effective in shedding a new and more truthful perspective of corporate-consumer relations.

Should people learn this information, instant feedback would result and could cause these entities to evolve their viewpoints or face risk of being out of touch with their consumer base.

Another inspiration of producing my documentary in this approach is scenes from the show *The Apprentice*, which to some extent teaches about the art of business behavior. It is no more appropriate than to talk about the show's use of filming a boardroom, where the audience sees contestants discuss about their beliefs and arguments for such.

For my documentary, I would like to take this concept and style it as a debate: why is social media not a viable option? could be one question. The resulting arguments and rebuttals should gauge consumers into reacting and persuade other businesspeople to hear these points and hopefully adapt to using the tool, even if not in the stubborn interest of the higher-ups.

Lastly, there is one other aspect of *The Apprentice* and another fellow reality TV program, *Survivor*, that has inspired me to craft my documentary, and that is confessionals. These are scenes that feature a person who airs their thoughts to the audience privately. Traditional documentaries have these but the difference here is the intent to directly connect their thoughts from immediate action.

For example I would want to ask a manager why they snapped at their subordinate on an argument for social media. Showing the un-called for emotion would favor the cause among the audience, if it was to happen.

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Alright, so let's talk about the format. I intend to incorporate 3 parts to the documentary: the boardroom footage, confessionals with the boardroom members and social strategists and finally, whatever facts are necessary to support the student's and strategist's view on using social media effectively.

Some of the technologies I will use are a multi-camera setup to capture each person as they speak in the boardroom and wearable microphones. If necessary, I would use lighting gels as most offices have windows where the sunlight can affect my shoots. And of course, to edit my footage, add sound and create graphics, I will use the Adobe Creative Suite.

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So let's get into the challenges. As I said earlier, the obstacles that filmmaker Roger Graef encountered in his production overlaps what I could potentially face. These include getting permission from companies to film and getting good responses from these businesspeople.

Regarding this, I have to make sure these confessionals are strictly related to the issues; no personal or controversial attacks. Sometimes even the most disciplined people get carried away.

One other challenge is dealing with those same businesses whose internal politics get in the way of finishing my project. For instance, there could be one day where I'm allowed to shoot a boardroom but the next, due to some unforeseeable conflict within the company, I could be turned down. It is thus important that I maximize the amount of time spent with each boardroom and edit footage with input by the business so that it may be signed off.

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Finally, we have our timeline. I have designed it according to the 3 phases of film production. In pre-production, I aim to contact 4-5 boardrooms and social media strategists to ask for their participation in the documentary. Once I get permission, I would then plan out my schedule and take my equipment, cameras, laptop, you name it.

During production, I would film the boardroom meetings and review the tape later that same day while the next, I would ask questions brought up from the recording to the participants. The answers would be then used for the confessionals.

Lastly, for post, I would need to review all footage with each respective company with their input and change anything upon request. Once finished, I would compile all the footage into one raw file and will add music, graphics, captions, credits and anything else that a documentary needs for professional viewing.

Now given the variables in scheduling companies and strategists based on region and convenience, I didn't add any realtime estimates for each phase on this timeline. It could very well take 2 to 3 months, which I think is a good estimate.

The bulk of this work would be concentrated on the shooting and editing, and for just a handful of places to do this in, it would be quite manageable.

Overall, I really believe that I've made a strong production proposal that is both definitely feasible and supports the student's goal for social media to be adopted properly for professional business use. This concludes my presentation.

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