Transit at your Fingertips: Linking Social Media to Environmental Action!
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Background
- 60% of carbon emissions in Seattle are from transportation, and sustainable public transit has the potential to reduce this impact
- Non-profit organizations often see social media as an essential tool to advocate and communicate to the fullest potential but previously have not done a very thorough job of evaluating the social media efforts
- Therefore an objective of this project was to consider recommendations for social media methods

Research Question
What communication strategies are used by the organization and how does the audience engage and interact with published content?

Internship & Methods
- Conducted internship with Seattle Subway
- Analyzed Seattle Subways social media content by creating an audit, see Figure 1.
- Created surveys to gauge public opinion on light-rail expansion and the organization
- Interview with professional environmental communicator
- Literature review: Understanding the intersection of social media and environmental communication

Results
Seattle Subway Facebook (C4) audit

Major themes:
- Link/light rail expansion
- "what we give up for cars"
- Updates on train services
- Light rail opening
- High speed rail

Tones:
- Serious
- Optimistic
- Humorous
- Melancholic
- Assertive
- Excited
- Pragmatic

Intended Audience:
- Residents of Seattle
- specific communities within Seattle
- Residents of PNW

Interview & Literature Review:
By auditing a non-profit's social media efforts, new goals and methods can be developed to increase audience engagement and brand messaging

Structure and collaboration for non-profit social media teams can help to create consistent yet diverse content to represent the organization

There can be indirect impacts on the environment due to social media activity, but it is much harder to measure direct civic action

Significance & Next Steps
Effective communication may help to reduce carbon emissions
- Actively continue to improve social media communication methods and ways of staying on brand to the organizations mission
- Evaluate past and current brand content
- Establish future goals for what the organization want as a result of using social media as a tool for communication and education.

Recommendations
- Set clear and achievable goals for the use of social media (What does the organization want as a result of using social media?)
- Self evaluations for non-profit organizations social media activity
- Evaluate user engagement by creating surveys for users and followers (on opinions of the organization, methods, and self-reflections)
- Develop methods to measure users civic action taken due to a non-profits social media efforts (which would help non-profits understand the influence of their social media on people and the environment)

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Thank you for listening!

Any questions? 😊

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