

Hoosier Basketball Magazine Social Media Campaign

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Abstract

Hoosier Basketball Magazine provides the most comprehensive coverage of Indiana high school basketball in the state. This is a physical magazine with minimal social media presence. Until this project, Hoosier Basketball Magazine only had Instagram and X (formerly Twitter). Neither were active accounts. While media are increasingly consumed online, Hoosier Basketball Magazine is in danger of falling out of the public eye by only being available in physical form. This project combines physical media and social media to promote the magazine and reach a new generation of customers. While posting on social media platforms for the six-month basketball season, a larger following was built with regular engagement from the audience. Use of these platforms led to a nearly 20% growth in audience to promote the release and distribution of the physical copy of the magazine.

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Introduction

Hoosier Hysteria. The movie *Hoosiers*, about this topic, has been added to the Library of Congress because it's considered "culturally, historically, or aesthetically significant" (Library of Congress, 2001). An Amazon search returns several books written on this topic by coaches, players and fans sharing decades of stories. The names have transcended high school basketball to become household names. Legendary coach John Wooden started in Indiana as did the Hick From French Lick, Larry Bird. Before social media even existed, Indiana high school standout Damon Bailey garnered national attention for his basketball skills at a young age. While coverage of Indiana basketball has been extensive through the years, no one has been as consistent as Hoosier Basketball Magazine.

Hoosier Basketball Magazine started as a high school basketball preview in the Indianapolis-based newspaper the "Indianapolis Star". This one-off insert ran in 1970 and garnered a lot of fanfare from the basketball-crazed Hoosier State. As the following season approached, fans were asking for another issue of the detailed magazine. The insert took too many resources, and the newspaper was not planning to do another. According to the Hoosier Basketball Magazine website, basketball fan Gary Donna, who had done some work in the sports department of the Indianapolis Star, wanted to continue with the idea and purchased the rights of Hoosier Basketball Magazine.

Gary Donna went on to publish Hoosier Basketball Magazine as a physical magazine until his death in 2017. The magazine has grown to cover every boys and girls program in the state. It includes high school, college, and professional basketball. Kip Wesner, one of Donna's few employees, took over the magazine and has continued to publish it since Donna's death. The

magazine continues to be released in physical form every fall keeping the basketball-crazed state up to date.

Hoosier Basketball Magazine profiles every high school boys and girls team in Indiana. With the addition of Indiana colleges, that's over 800 teams profiled. The profiles consist of returning starters, seniors, and players to watch. This information is gathered through an email survey sent to coaches. Coaches also have the option to purchase space for a larger profile on key players they would like to provide exposure for All-Star consideration, post-season awards or college attention.

The cover price when purchased at retail is \$14.50. Most purchases take place at a game where fans can buy the magazine at a reduced rate of \$10. The publisher only accepts cash when selling at a game. This can hamper sales as according to a report from CNBC, "More than half of adults younger than 50 - 54% — don't worry about having cash on them, in contrast to 28% of consumers 50 and older" (Konish, 2022). Fans can also order the magazine from the Hoosier Basketball Magazine Website for the retail price plus \$5.00 shipping.

While Hoosier Basketball Magazine has been a staple of Indiana basketball for over 50 years, society is changing. The fans that paid to have physical copies are aging and passing away. Younger fans are coming from a different generation that doesn't stop and browse the magazine racks at the grocery store. They want to scroll through and see the information at their fingertips. Hoosier Basketball Magazine does not have an active presence on social media. They have no Facebook page. Their Instagram account is shared with a stat compilation service called "Know Your Baller." KYB posts highlights from games they attend throughout the season. Hoosier Basketball Magazine's X (formerly Twitter) account has not been active since 2021. In a

quickly changing world, Hoosier Basketball Magazine needs to adapt to new forms of media to survive in a crowded market.

Lit Review

Each social media platform has developed a specific audience of users. It's important to understand the different platforms to know you are using the right content to attract the audience. In 2021, Pew Research conducted a study of the audiences using each platform and found age plays a significant role on what platform an audience uses.

According to Pew Research a study of adult Americans that use social media, 69% of respondents use Facebook (Auxior & Anderson, 2021). Facebook has the largest reach of all platforms. On data platform Statista, Stacy Jo Dixon says as of February 2024, Facebook had over 3 billion monthly users. While Hoosier Basketball Magazine's main goal is to sell the physical magazine, it does need to reach these online audiences. Hoosier Basketball Magazine needs convergence of old and new media. Convergence is used to define, "the blending of old media as magazines, newspapers, television, cable and radio with new media (computers and the Internet) to deliver content" (Lawson-Borders, 2003). With Facebook having the largest audience it is important to continue to remind those who have bought in the past about the magazine and hopefully capture the attention of those unfamiliar with the magazine.

According to Sprout Social (2024) the average age of Facebook users is older (51% over the age of 40) than the other social media platforms and presents a good opportunity to reach the decision makers in the home. Platforms such as Instagram and Snapchat have an average user base under the age of 30. Alhabash (2017) notes, young adults (19-29 years old) report using Instagram. It's important to reach these younger audiences for long-term survivability in the market. Another Pew Research (2022) study found Facebook users aged 18-29 have dropped

from 71% to 32% in the last seven years. Snapchat (41% to 59%) and Instagram (52% to 62%) have risen in that time frame. As physical media such as magazines fade, publishers need to adapt to capture a new audience and the way they consume media.

According to Pew Research, publishers of media need to diversify the use of social media to keep the audience they have and to develop a new generation (Auxior & Anderson, 2021). The younger generation has grown accustomed to everything on their phone. Bennett (2008) states, “Termed ‘digital natives’ or the ‘Net generation’, these young people are said to have been immersed in technology all their lives.” Information, entertainment, even food delivery from an app. Not being active on social media can make these older forms of media fall too far behind and vanish. Gundy (2022) stated, a study completed between 2002 and 2020 by the U.S. Census Bureau’s Service Annual Survey found, Periodical Publishing, revenue fell by 40.5% and periodical publishing companies declined in that time from 40,181 to 23,919.

As prices continue to climb, social media provides a way to reach thousands of potential clients for free if done right. “For companies it symbolizes a marketing and promotion opportunity that transcends the standard middleman and connects companies directly with clients” (Si, 2016). This is a free opportunity being missed by Hoosier Basketball Magazine. Social media does offer paid opportunities to increase reach and grow your customer base. With Hoosier Basketball Magazine being absent from social media, posting for free and growing a base will be best to start.

Si (2016) states there are two advantages to using social media as a marketing tool for companies: The first, it saves cost on manpower. Social media marketing is a skill that needs practice, but the manpower to create and publish opposed to a physical publication is drastically lower.

The second advantage to social media is an increase in probability of revenue creation. This can happen in several ways for Hoosier Basketball Magazine. Active social media accounts can keep the magazine top of the mind for those that have been fans in the past. Jackson (2011) notes, “A study by Info-graphics puts forward that at least half of Twitter and Facebook users say they have become more likely to talk about, recommend or purchase a company’s products after they became engaged with the company on social media.”

With everything at your fingertips online, magazines on the rack easily get lost in the shuffle. Social media can help remind those fans to look for it or order it in advance. Maintaining the accounts does not need to be a year-round job. A study of Toronto sports teams found, “teams are still actively driving their social through the primary product, and not necessarily attempting to engage in maintenance activities in the off-season” (Naraine, 2022). Becoming active at the right time will capture the audience’s attention and provide a chance to reach a new audience.

An effective social media campaign could also raise advertising dollars. Building a large following can get interest from like-minded businesses such as basketball camps, training schools and equipment distributors. “Social media advertising can not only increase product purchases via providing persuasive messages but also diffuse brand information via utilizing network connections” (Huang et al., 2013). While the magazine does have advertisers in the physical copy, reaching younger companies that have moved to the online space will generate new opportunities for advertising dollars. Lou (2018) found users would readily skip social media content if it did not quickly catch their attention.

You are a brand

Relative to legacy media like magazines, social media is still in its infancy. While some companies or people may seem like they have mastered this tool, it's still developing, and they must adjust with it. While Hoosier Basketball Magazine has 54 years of experience in physical form, it has very little experience or footprint in the social media world. This is where they must become active to capture the audience and brand themselves the leader in Indiana high school basketball.

Many news outlets and companies covering sports are posting highlights and drawing a big response from the audience. Instagram user House of Highlights has over 50 million followers. According to Dave Finocchio (2016) of Bleacher Report, House of Highlights is the modern SportsCenter for a younger generation. A short video with the excitement of the crowd or dunk can capture one's attention in seconds. According to Mastromartino et al, (2020) fans now expect digital interaction with their teams even in the absence of the core product. The pages of a physical magazine may be interesting to read, but a new generation wants to scroll through content. For Hoosier Basketball Magazine to stay relevant to this new generation, they need to have digital content.

Social media leaves a permanent mark. Any post can be found for years. Social media managers are very cautious of this and their brand. Jacobson (2020) states, "In recent years, there has been a backlash against personal branding on social media, which is premised on the representations being fake, inauthentic and narcissistic." Whether it's a personal brand or a company's brand, they will be judged. We've seen the audience pull tweets from years past to expose people. In 2018, Major League Baseball shortstop Trae Turner faced backlash from homophobic tweets he sent as a teen. That same year, relief pitcher Josh Hader had old tweets

with homophobic and racist comments exposed from years earlier (Raymond, 2018). It's important for a small media outlet such as Hoosier Basketball Magazine to stick to basketball. It's impossible to highlight over 800 teams with boys and girls combined. The magazine must build a reputable online brand as someone who covers the talent as equally as possible.

Company branding is not new, but social media has taken it to another level. Jacobson (2020) states, social media managers not only use branding for their current audience, but their future audience as well. This is a place Hoosier Basketball Magazine may have fallen short. It has been consistently covering basketball but has not changed or created anything exciting for fans. Newer generations are not as likely to buy a black-and-white magazine with headshots even if it is a friend of theirs.

For this project, Hoosier Basketball Magazine will be active on Facebook, Instagram and X(Twitter). Teams, schools, and athletic departments are spread across the three platforms with no consistency used across the state. X (Twitter has been the most active as Athletic Directors disseminate information, and some players use Twitter as recruiting tools more than their other social media. Most schools have had a Facebook page, but not the others. Consistent with Pew Research studies (2021), players have been found to be more active on Instagram over the other platforms.

Objectives

While Hoosier Basketball Magazine still sells to schools and families, it has been absent from social media. The objective of this project is to develop and implement a social media strategy to excite people about the physical copy of the magazine. Publisher Kip Wesner said his target audience is three groups. First, are the loyal buyers of the magazine. Second, the families of the cover athletes and those featured inside. Third, the fans that see someone with it and buy

out of curiosity. As stated earlier, the first segment is aging out. The third option is a gamble as these are impulse purchases with no guarantees. The only solid audience that will continue to return is that second group every year. Increasing HBM's online presence and engagement will reach a new audience and reinforce the existing one to go purchase the magazine. By creating different content for Facebook, Instagram and X (formerly Twitter), we will be able to engage target audiences on each one. Our X(Twitter) account will be more directed at athletic departments and teams, Instagram at players and Facebook towards families. This is based off the current followers on each platform that are also reflective of the previously mentioned Pew Research studies (2021). Targeting those groups can help us build a brand and excite a new audience that will purchase the magazine in a current form or discover that the magazine should transition to an online format, we'll be tracking data to find a recommendation for future issues.

Measurements

The objective of this project is to build a new audience for Hoosier Basketball Magazine and keep it relevant in a changing industry.

Measurement #1:

Our first measurement is magazine sales. The main goal and the easiest in raw numbers are the number of sales. Cost of production and the price of the magazine may change, so tracking raw numbers is the easiest to gauge. The inconsistency of the release date of the magazine and lack of previous years tracking also made it difficult to gauge sales compared to previous years. This makes tracking a raw number of sales compared to numbers produced the best measurement.

Measurement #2:

The second measurement is social media engagement. Building on social media helps develop the existing brand of Hoosier Basketball Magazine. We are able to track numbers of followers, likes, and activity and views on the content. This is a good statistic to track but can also help when related to magazines sold. As stated previously, Hoosier Basketball Magazine has not been active on social media, and this was a way to see if an active account affects sales. Engagements were a key statistic to follow. Not everyone followed the account, but if they interacted when their friends shared the content, it can drive them to the magazine or one of our social media accounts that was promoted in each post. We were able to track engagements through insights provided by the platforms and see if weeks we have more activity, correlated to more sales.

On game days, we posted the locations we would be at and tagged the schools. This would get the word out before game time, so fans were looking for us. Gyms did not provide a location to sell magazines, so letting people know we were there ahead of time helped.



Views on content gave a strong indicator of which areas of the state we attracted attention from, and which ones are active in high school basketball. Those schools or cities that share, like and view the most content were more likely to invest in a high school basketball magazine. Some schools may not share content to help spread the word of the release, so it was not beneficial to sink as many assets into that area.

Tracking which content is reshared or saved by users helped us see which attracted the most audience across the platforms. Building that interest and trust of a new audience is important for the future. If they see we consistently deliver content they enjoy, then this will pique their interest in what we have to offer in the magazine.

The magazine release has been inconsistent over the years. Using social media was a way to keep the magazine on people's mind. When the magazine is released midseason, fans are now wrapped up in the action and may have forgotten about the magazine. Building an audience will allow Hoosier Basketball Magazine to let followers know when the magazine is released, where to find it or how to order it.

Following the different schools and athletic department accounts helped reach them with information regarding our game visits. Hoosier Basketball Magazine was able to see which accounts are active, what hashtags or tagging they used, and what their fans respond to on social media. Every school uses different social media platforms, and there is no consistency throughout the state. This made it important for Hoosier Basketball Magazine to be active across all platforms.

Research Questions

1. Can a strategic social media campaign impact sales of a traditional form of media?

2. Which social media platform will generate the most engagement for Hoosier Basketball Magazine?
3. Which type of content will generate the most audience engagement across the platforms?

Project Execution

The Hoosier Basketball Magazine social media project ran throughout the high school basketball season. We started in the preseason to build the absent social media leading into the season. The season runs from November to March. We continued to post throughout this time even after the magazine was released.

With Hoosier Basketball Magazine being a small business, the publication date varies every year. This was a key point for the social media. Fans do not have a time they can annually expect to find the magazine, so it can be frustrating for them. With an active social media campaign, we kept them updated for when they could order online or visit the magazine stands to purchase the newest edition.

The Crew

The Hoosier Basketball Magazine social media project used three people to create preseason content. Maya Riquelme was director of photography. She shot internal and external as well as photography. We edited together with Premier Pro. Raul Britez recorded and mixed sound for this project. He was also our drone operator capturing more footage for our content.

I was responsible for scheduling visits both preseason and during the season. With this, I had to research the teams to find the story or what would generate interest from the audience. This also included researching the social media of the school involved to see if they and their fans were active on the platform. While on site, I would conduct short interviews with coaches and athletic directors as well as help Maya gather footage to complete our story. All content was

edited to under 2 minutes and 20 seconds to work with all platform restrictions. Once the season began on October 31, 2023, I handled all photography, editing and posting except for any post directed by the publisher.

Step 1: Building An Audience

High school basketball in Indiana has a long history and a dedicated fan base. To begin on social media, our team highlighted the historic gyms Indiana has to offer. Indiana has some of the oldest and largest high school gyms in the nation. Highlighting some of these gyms started to drive traffic to the social media platforms. Using a mix of photos, videos and interviews helped us gauge audience interests, through analytics sections of each platform. In the analytics, we were able to see what content is viewed the longest, shared the most and has the most interactions. We carried this information over to step two.

Post happened during the highly active times generated on the apps. We posted four-to-five times a week depending on the gathered content that week. This included a preview of the upcoming week to attract a new audience for that area. From previous business posting experience, we have found Sunday through Thursday at 7 P.M. is an active time on social media. We continued to check if the trend changed, but from previous use, this is the best time to do this.

Throughout all steps, we tracked the analytics of where the most followers came from. This includes platform, area of the state and which posts generate the most engagement. Tracking this data allowed for more promotion of the physical magazine in these areas and will be helpful in future seasons.

Step 2: Highlight Our Brand

As teams began to practice, we highlighted the players and teams that were expected to make an impact this season. We used the analytics from the previous step to help create the content for this step. Being selected to be on the cover is an honor for the player, the team they represent and their community. This step included a cover release. The younger generations have grown up with video games such as Madden making a big deal about their cover athletes. Months in advance, EA Sports teases the cover athlete release and NFL writers make their list of predictions. Bobby Kownack of NFL.com wrote, “Who’s next to be featured on the iconic cover? Here are five players I think would be deserving (Kownack, 2023).” Hoosier Basketball Magazine did the same thing this season with its cover athletes.

The cover release athletes were posted twice a week over a three-week span in November. One male athlete and one female athlete a week for a total of six posts. We continued to follow the analytics and post on the same days and times to keep with the active times on each platform.

Step 3: Highlight Basketball Games

As the season played out, we leaned on the relationships we had built with the schools and coaches to continue collecting content. Hoosier Basketball Magazine has a few freelance employees that attend games throughout the year and assisted with information collection. We helped in gathering and posting this information to keep the social media active throughout the season. This gave us the opportunity to promote the magazine by highlighting those players featured inside.

Step three is where we shifted our posting times. Girls’ games vary but are mostly played on Tuesdays. Boys’ games are held on Fridays with some on Saturdays. Holiday and regional tournaments also take place on weekends. With that in mind, we posted and interacted on those

nights as we received content from our team at games or the schools themselves. This assured fans knew we are keeping them up to date on high school basketball action.

Spreading the Word

You can have exciting content, but if no one is aware, then it makes no difference. We used hashtags and tagged key entities to spread our content. When we tagged the schools, teams, or athletic departments we are profiling, this helped reach their respective fanbases. It may not reach as wide as a hashtag but will be strong in the represented region. With hashtags, we were able to have a larger reach and were able to extend beyond that locale throughout the state and, with the proper hashtags, even globally.

Hashtags categorize content, so users can search for content genres in which they are interested. Tracking hashtags can assist in finding trending topics. As the high school basketball season approached, this came into play when staying on top of what was relevant between the generations. “Brands leverage hashtags to promote products and campaigns, fostering user engagement and brand loyalty” (Zarrella, 2013). The Indiana Basketball Hall of Fame uses the hashtag #in49otherstates. This is used for their saying, “in 49 other states, it’s just basketball, but this is Indiana.” That hashtag was used throughout the state as players posted highlights and stats throughout the season. A more generic hashtag of #highschoolbasketball was used throughout the nation. This can help to draw a larger audience that may not purchase magazines but can help attract advertising dollars. According to Zarrella (2013), tweets using hashtags receive twice as much engagement. Most marketers believe using a strategy for each platform and limiting the number used is best. A study conducted by Social Baker found using 10+ hashtags can reduce engagement by 68.2% (Sadhu, 2023).

Tagging is when you link or mention another page in your post. This can open the lines of communication between two pages allowing followers on each to find similar pages. Tagging can lead to more social interaction, content collaboration and user-generated content as people can create content associated with your brand and share. “It guarantees that the people tagged will see your post” (Minal, 2019). Social media can be overwhelming and over saturated. Sparingly tagging athletes, schools and athletic directors can get your post in front of the right audience and bring more eyes to your page.

The importance of key words in your post is growing. According to Finnaran (2023), Google reported roughly 40% of Gen-Z is using TikTok and Instagram for searches over Google. Knowing and using the terminology your target audience is searching is important to capture their attention. With other media, fans and schools posting their own content, Hoosier Basketball Magazine needs to stand out from the crowd.

Post Examples:



The Cave at Mishawaka High School is the oldest active high school gym in Indiana. Next year will be the 100th anniversary of high school basketball in this gym. We posted photos and videos about the gym, the history and what's to come.

We tagged the school and athletic department as well as used relevant hashtags on other post to help spread the information. While the post on gyms may be more popular regionally, fans of the history also followed and others that wanted to see what gym is next. Relevant hashtags were the city, county, conference and other sports and locale related hashtags with significant post.



Hoosier Basketball Magazine · 9/24/23

An amazing gym named after an Indiana legend. The William L. Garrett Memorial Gymnasium at [@shelbyhsbears](#) [@SHSGoldenBears](#) is a must see.

[#shelbyvilleindiana](#) [#highschoolbasketball](#) [#hoosierbasketballmagazine](#) [#hoosierhysteria](#)



William L. Garrett Memorial Gymnasium not only boasts a unique look but, a history that changed basketball. The gym is named after former State Champion and Mr. Basketball Bill Garrett. “As the first African American basketball player to compete regularly in the Big Ten, Bill Garrett, BS’51, was a trailblazer for Indiana University” (Shaw, 2021). He was drafted by the Celtics and played for the Harlem Globetrotters.

We posted photos, videos and interviews in the preseason highlighting these gyms. Tagging the schools and using hashtags showed fans Hoosier Basketball Magazine is an active account and started drawing fans in before the season started and before the magazine went on sale.

You can find all post on social media on these platforms:

Facebook: Hoosier Basketball Magazine

Instagram: hoosier_basketball_magazine

Twitter: @HBBMagazine

We did not use YouTube for this project, but all video content has been consolidated for you to view at: https://youtube.com/@samueflynn496?si=s9IWosjG_2Yuy9wN

Results

The goal of the project was to help Hoosier Basketball Magazine sell magazines. The late release date hampered sales. According to Kip, sales are on track with previous years. Hoosier Basketball Magazine printed 9,000 copies this season. Of those, 7,000 were distributed to retail and schools. At this time nearly 5,000 have sold. With less time to sell magazines this year, that may be the best you can ask for. With no true tracking system at Hoosier Basketball Magazine, it’s impossible to put a number or dollar amount on the success of this project.

To answer Research Question 1, yes, social media can help you sell physical forms of media. Social media offered free advertising and awareness for the release and locations the magazine could be purchased. Research question 2 would not be as easy to answer. There is no consistent platform used between players, teams, schools, or fans. To be truly effective Hoosier Basketball Magazine should continue to post across all platforms. Social media continues to grow for Hoosier Basketball Magazine. Instagram gained 220 followers, X (Twitter) gained 387 and Facebook gained 349. While not every follower will buy a magazine, they are an audience that you can engage and create an advocate for the magazine.

Table 1: Social Media Follower Growth

Social Media Platform	Growth	Percentage
Instagram	+220	19.76%
X (Twitter)	+387	20.75%
Facebook	+349	Previously not used

Posts received different attention across the platforms. Tagged photos on Instagram received more attention and shares than on X (formerly Twitter) and Facebook. This could be attributed to the fact that we were able to tag the players directly on Instagram while they may not be as active on the other platforms we used. Our most active posts were the magazine cover release and the release of the Top 60 Workout list. On those posts we only tagged the IHSAA and the Indiana Basketball Coaches Association, who partnered with us for the event. Those posts received significant attention across all platforms, with the highest engagement happening on X, accumulating over 104,000 views. The activity on X is believed to be because of the amount of schools, teams, coaches and athletic directors using the platform as opposed to the

others. To answer Research Question 3, posts that highlighted and promoted a player's accomplishments grabbed the most attention.

Publisher Kip Wesner has said he can't pay for a social media person next season, and he isn't going to do it so this season will be it for the social media of Hoosier Basketball Magazine. From a business standpoint the effectiveness must not have been there to justify continuing. This project, especially if continued, would build that future audience. Hoosier Basketball Magazine is in a season-to-season survival mode. Cultivating that audience three to four years down the road may not show results this season but ensures the longevity of your audience.

With the delay in release and lack of tracking at Hoosier Basketball Magazine there are still ways to measure the success of this project. First, we didn't make enough of a difference for him to want to keep it going. Next season, maybe he'll see the value when it is not there. Second, I have been approached by two different programs to assist with their social media. Surge Swimming is a club in a swim desert. I have helped them with photos and videos for their social media and website. A sponsor for InspireHer, a girls basketball camp held by University of Illinois player Kendall Bostic, has asked me to help cover the event this summer. While we may not have made a difference in Hoosier Basketball Magazine, our work did catch the attention of others wanting us to assist them.

The project may not have been an overwhelming success. Hoosier Basketball Magazine's social media is in a better place than when we started. With the late release of the magazine, social media did help get the word out and showed its effectiveness of spreading messages. Social media is not going anywhere, and companies of all sizes can benefit from the use of an effective campaign.

Discussion

The intent of the social media campaign was to help Hoosier Basketball Magazine sell the physical copy of the magazine. The 2023-2024 edition did not get released until the first week of January. This left three weeks of the girl's season and approximately six weeks of the boys season to sell at games. The magazine was still available at retail, but selling at events is the fastest way to sell bulk amounts. Strengths and weaknesses as well as adjustments needed were discovered throughout this project. As the magazine release continued to be pushed, we needed to adjust our focus.

Strengths

Tagging: Tagging schools, coaches and athletes helped grow our fanbase and was more effective than hashtags. Tagging was more direct to the person and their audience over the searching of a specific hashtag. An examination of four random Instagram post, two tagged, two hashtagged showed more interaction when people are tagged. The average of these post showed an engagement of 735 accounts to 298.5 when tagged. The posts were shared 13.5 to 2.5 times and likes were 79.5 to 21.5 when tagged. Follower growth was 4 to 1.

Table 2: Social Media Engagement

Instagram Post	Engagements	Shares	Likes	Follower Growth
Tagged	735	13.5	79.5	4
Hashtagged	298.5	2.5	21.5	1

Building for the future: Hoosier Basketball Magazine is in its 54th year, but it has been quiet on social media. This means a lot of these younger athletes don't know or care about the history. While newspapers or video media would get footage of the stars and print those or produce a

hype video, we would get something for everyone. We shared content from late in the game when teams have gone to younger players and tagging those in class of '27 or '28 helped generate followers for the future. We would often find that when a high school athlete would share our content or follow us, their parents and family would soon follow us as well.

Passing on Information: Social media was a voice that Hoosier Basketball Magazine didn't have. Especially with the inconsistency of the release, this was a tool to spread the word. When magazines were placed in a specialty retail store, we could let fans know. These locations would need at least one restock as they would quickly sell out. The same for game appearances. We would have a short press release for the PA to read during half time. Posting on social media let fans know where we would be and would start selling as soon as we entered the gym.

Weaknesses

Consistency: Between boys' and girls' basketball, games were taking place six days a week. Social media is so fast paced and if you don't have something for the audience you can easily be forgotten. With only one person posting on social media and living 250 miles away, the consistency was not there. On days I could attend a game, other outlets could post before I even got home to edit. Out of sight, out of mind.

Communication: The publisher was running everything by himself. This did make time with him very difficult and most of our communication was by text. Him being unfamiliar with social media led to a bit of a fear of social media. We had some missed opportunities to post out of his fear of feedback. During December, the heart of the season, he wanted it silent for fear of someone asking about the magazine. Also, the Top 60 Workout hosted by Hoosier Basketball Magazine was a missed opportunity. The Top 60 Workout invites the top 60 boys' and girls' players to perform in front of the State All Star selection committee and college coaches in

attendance. Schools would make special posts for their players and tag us when selected. He did not want any acknowledgment of those until the official press release which came nearly two weeks later. This is all lessons learned and can be addressed in the offseason when things calm down for him so he can better understand social media.

Limitations and Implications for Future Studies

The biggest obstacle for this project was the late release of this year's magazine. To sell magazines, you need to have a magazine. When the season starts in November fans are curious what they are going to see from their teams. Hoosier Basketball Magazine provides a peek into what they can expect. By a January release date, much of this information is irrelevant. Another limitation on this project was the distance required to travel. We could not produce the quantity of content as other media outlets. Even on days we were able to get content, by the time I returned home to edit, all other outlets had their content posted.

Future studies could benefit from more time considerations. A sport such as football played Friday nights might be more manageable if you were traveling. Basketball could be manageable if you take the travel factor out. Make time to discuss progress with the company. We had plenty of conversations by text, but more time face to face would have been beneficial. When discussing the project with the company, discuss the negative aspects of social media as well. We had discussions on when fans react negatively, but going more in-depth of how one or two fans should not deter your social media would have been helpful.

Conclusion

Hoosier Basketball Magazine is proud of its 54 years covering high school basketball in Indiana. Starting the magazine 54 years ago was an unknown and they learned and made adjustments. Now, they cover more teams than ever. Social media is the same process. Social

media continues to grow and offers a great opportunity for any small business to have a direct voice with their audience. It just takes time to learn and grow.

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