

Thrive International

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About and Mission

Founded in 2021, Thrive International is a non-profit organization located in Spokane, Washington, that addresses the refugee crisis in America. The non-profit organization is dedicated to helping struggling refugees from surviving to thriving, through providing shelter that was formally a hotel and offering programs that help assist the displaced refugees get settled and help transition them into their new environment.

Mission:

“Our Mission is to Empower Multicultural Communities to Thrive” – Thrive Internationalⁱ

Vision:

“From surviving to thriving.” – Thrive International

Purpose

THRIVE came to us with the goal of wanting to obtain a passive source of income. They expressed that as a non-profit, they were not able to sustain operations by themselves and relied heavily on grants and donations. They wanted a future where they could become increasingly self-sufficient. The avenue they wanted us to explore to achieve this goal was to leverage their prime advertising space on the side of their building. This gave us the task of determining the possibility and profitability of selling advertising space on an electronic billboard on the side of THRIVE International.

We also asked THRIVE about what success looks like. Beyond the profitability of a billboard, they told us their marketing and advertising goals:

- Increased awareness of our organization/facts about refugees
- I don't know how to measure results, though.
- 15-20 new donors every month
- 5-10% increased website visits
- 2 new sponsorships for major events, donations, etc.
- 20% new followers on social media platforms after launching the billboard
- Instagram:
 - 760+ followers by the end of November
 - 20+ likes on donation/event advertising posts
 - 75+ likes on post-event posts
 - Average of 500+ views on reels

- Active interactions with followers and community members through chats, stories, and comments
- Instagram reach 750+ every week
- Facebook:
 - 1.18K followers by the end of November
 - 15+ likes on donation/event advertising posts
 - 40+ likes on post-event posts
 - Active interactions with followers and community members through chats, stories, and comments
 - Facebook reach 2,450+ every week

With these goals in mind, we began our project.

Board of Directors

Lars Gilbert
 (VP of Equity and Community Development)

William P. Robinson
 (President Emeritus of Whitworth University)

Carla LaFayette
 (Independent consultant)

Diane Betts
 (Senior Manager at Moss Adams)

Abraham Mehboob Alam
 (Mental Health Clinician at Lutheran Community Services)

Goals and Objectives

Advertising Goals

Increase awareness of Thrive International and facts regarding refugees.

Increased awareness of our organization/facts about refugees

- Enhance existing billboard to increase revenue flow
- 15-20 new donors every month
- 5-10% increased website visits
- 2 new sponsorships for major events, donations, etc.
- 20% new followers on social media platforms after launching the billboard.

The LED Billboard Project

To start our research, we were given specific measurements the billboard must adhere.

These measurements were that the billboard cannot measure less than ten feet in height and must be between fifteen to twenty feet in width. Additionally, we were informed that Thrive would be flexible on renting a billboard instead if it was necessary. With these in mind, we set out finding statistics and demographics of the surrounding neighborhoods around Thrive as well as look into the cost and pricing a billboard at that location would yield.

For the target locations to find demographics, we investigated the East Central, Lincoln Heights, Rockwood, Cliff-Cannon, Logan, and Chief Garry Park neighborhoods as they were the surrounding areas around Thrive. In doing so, we were able to pull their median household income, education level, and age ranges. While there was not too much information to note, it is

key to note that Rockwood held the highest median household income at \$87,201 compared to the city wide of \$44,768, highest percentage of individuals with bachelor's degrees at 67% compared to the city wide of 29.5%.

As for costs, we contacted local and state advertisement businesses to help narrow down our search. According to Outfront Media, a generic billboard sign comes in a twenty-foot width and ten-foot height, so the base requirements set out by Thrive are met. Unfortunately, due to the specific nature of Thrive's potential project, they were not able to give an initial startup cost. This is because of the potential for the wall needing to be redone, rewiring, and installing support beams if the wall is not fit to hold up the sign. However, Pacific Outdoor Advertising was able to give us their own personal variable costs to run a billboard of the type required by Thrive, and they said it costs around \$15,000. They did preface that this does not include any kind of permits however which could raise the cost. After some research online, we found that initial startup costs could be as low as \$65,000, however it is key to keep in mind that the cost is projected to be exorbitantly more expensive for Thrive because of their unique situation.ⁱⁱ

In order to consider the price and potential revenue numbers we continued to consult with our sources to come up with approximate numbers. According to local prices on high-traffic areas in Spokane, the monthly price for a single advertisement is \$4,000, and the industry standard for the number of advertisements to run on one board at a time is between six and eight ads. It is necessary to consider that Thrive has expressed their want to run a few advertisements of themselves and maybe one to bring awareness to the war in Ukraine, so the amount of advertisements ran per month may be slightly lower in order to keep up with the industry standard at around five or six. This combination of ads run and pricing has a maximum revenue

of \$32,000 per month. Taking into account the variable cost given to us of \$15,000, that leaves a maximum of \$17,000 in revenue every month.

Employ a Grant Writer

Grant writers utilize databases and donor websites to find funding from grants that aligns with the objectives of the organization they are contracted with. The grants the writers make proposals for can require extensive information regarding the organization.ⁱⁱⁱ Grant writers could charge an hourly rate or project-based pricing, but most prefer to use the latter as hours per month can vary greatly. They typically would charge a percentage of what the grant amount is. This percentage usually comes within the range of 2-3%.^{iv} One such grant writer who works out of the Spokane area is Mandy Chapman Orozco. She is noted for her ability to help produce proposals for Rutgers, Children's Aid and Family Services, Jill's House, and many other initiatives along with being the founder and CEO of Oro Consulting which specializes in helping nonprofit organizations like Thrive to find the funding they need for their initiatives.

Create a Go-Fund-Me Page

Go-Fund-Me offers Thrive the opportunity to both get their name out on a social platform and offer a way for individuals to donate to Thrive. A drawback with Go-Fund-Me stems from their transaction fee, that takes 2.9% plus \$.30 deducted from the total donation.^v By combining compelling storytelling, clear campaign goals, strategic use of social media, regular updates, and expressing gratitude, Thrive can leverage the power of GoFundMe to reach a wider audience and successfully fundraise for impactful initiatives.

Utilize a Newsletter

Newsletters are a great way to tap into potentially unavailable audiences by mail. On average, there is a response rate of 4.4% toward marketing mail. This is not even considering the amount of reach and visibility you are reaching. We investigated USPS's Direct Mail Marketing program to give potential cost estimates. Using this program, you can send letters, postcards, flat mail, and other media for as low as \$0.29 cents per item, however this cost raises significantly depending on the type of mail you want to send. USPS allows the user to create custom designs on their online tool or you can hire a designer to make one for you. USPS estimates this cost to be around \$24.21 per hour. Lastly, you can either have a personal house list that has addresses that you have, or you can use USPS's Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) system to mail to specific area codes. For the specific area code, we investigated, we chose 99223 because it had the highest median household income in the area at \$112,803 with a population of 30,023 which is 8.76% of Spokane residents. The estimated costs of the advertisement campaign according to USPS to send out 1000-5000 mailed items would cost approximately \$7496. With an average response rate of 4.4%, you can look to see around 40 to 200 responses depending on how many items you send out.^{vi}

Social Media Marketing

Marketing Goals

Instagram

Instagram's in-app advertising tool may help Thrive improve its reach and hit these goals.

The way Instagram's advertising works is through a CPM or CPC which means cost per click or cost per impression. Typically, companies on average pay, \$0.50 to \$1 per link click. Using Facebook and Instagram congruently may build attention to Thrive's brand as both prices are reasonable.

Instagram, \$6.70 (Cost per thousand clicks)

Facebook, \$7.19 (Cost per thousand clicks)

760+ Followers by the end of November

20+ Likes on donation/event advertising posts

75+ Likes on post-event posts

Thrive may improve its Instagram likes by making sure their Instagram account is a business account, using the demographics tool to target and break when their followers are most active and when posts are receiving the most activity on a day-by-day, week-by-week, and hour-by-hour breakdown. If this becomes overwhelming, Thrive may use a Post Schedule tool like Loomly (which starts at \$26 a month to schedule and automatically post for Thrive a month in advance, making sure to post during their peak target hour on a day-by-day basis).

Average of 500+ views on reels

Active interactions with followers and community members through chats, stories, and comments

Instagram reach 750+ every week

(cost per thousand impressions)

Instagram, \$0.20-\$2.00, \$6.70

Facebook, \$0.97, \$7.19

Facebook

Increase Follower Count

One goal Thrive is to increase its Facebook followers from 1.1k to 1.18k. The Times Article: “6 Guaranteed Ways to Get More Followers on Facebook, Twitter, & Google” by Kevan Lee, suggests a few ways that can help Thrive reach their goal. A few of the strategies include being an authority, posting frequently, avoiding bursts, and offering incentives. The first tip in the article comments on being an authority. The article suggests that accounts that have a lot of followers have one thing in common: their account showcases some form of authority; “The real quick way to get a bunch of people following you: Be Barack Obama. Or Katy Perry. Or Joel Cacsiogne. What do folks like these have in common? Fame, yes. But they are also creators and, doers and leaders. The act of creating is what sets them apart.”^{vii} HubSpot data found that users who self-impose themselves as gurus have an average of 100 more followers than a typical user. **Error! Bookmark not defined.** Therefore, as Thrive works towards its mission in helping

refugees, Thrive should be displaying themselves as experts in the refugee crisis to help bring more attention to their cause.

The second tip the article suggests in helping boost followers is to post frequently because the more posts you have, the more followers. For example, Lee demonstrates this correlation between the number of tweets and followers from Twitter; “A Twitter user who has sent 1 to 1,000 tweets has an average of 51 to 100 followers. Users who have tweeted more than 10,000 times are followed on average by 1,000 to 5,000 users.”**Error! Bookmark not defined.** Therefore, Thrive needs to make sure they are continually posting to make users know they are still relevant and working to conquer their mission, and in turn, Thrive will slowly gain more followers while making new connections along the way. However, Thrive needs to make sure to not create bursts by over-posting. Busts can include posting too many updates, posting unwanted topics, and sharing unwanted information.**Error! Bookmark not defined.** The biggest threat for Thrive is over-posting irrelevant content that ends up steering away from its overall mission. Facebook offers a tool to help prevent bursts discussed later.

The last tip that can help Thrive get more followers is to offer incentives. The article showed ten reasons why people follow brands, which included liking the brand overall, discounts, and staying up to date on the brands.**Error! Bookmark not defined.** Thrive can use this same idea for a “give to get” method. Thrive can host a local giveaway with local businesses (or bigger businesses). Thrive could then create a post that states, ‘like us, follow us, and share this post. The first fifteen to twenty users who do this will receive x benefit.’ This is not only an opportunity for a local business in Spokane to make money but allows Thrive to gain new followers as well.

Increase Likes on Donation/Event Advertising

A second goal Thrive has is to help increase likes on donations and event postings. The blog from Better Communication Forum “5 Tips to Get More Likes On Your Facebook Page” offers three helpful tips to increase likes for on Facebook for non-profit organizations: create sharable posts, like other pages as you go, and share positivity. The first tip talks about the importance of creating a post that sparks emotion because people are likely to share with others, “Facebook is overflowing with images, quotes, stories, how to videos, inspirational words, and more. Often, these posts get viewed hundreds or even hundreds of thousands of times as they make their rounds on people’s news feeds. This is because when a post is meaningful, funny, or important to someone, they feel compelled to share it with their Facebook friends”^{viii}. Thrive can benefit from this, because given Thrive’s powerful mission, each post should display their mission. Additionally, similar to sharing emotion, Thrive should share positive posts. These posts may include overcoming a milestone, a successful event, opening a new program, etc. Since Thrive relies only on donations, it helps to assure donors that their donation is making an impactful change.

The last tip from the blog suggests liking other pages as your page. For non-profits like Thrive, it is important for them to engage and help support other non-profits similar to their niche. Helping support similar non-profits can help Thrive get recognized; “When you engage with other groups as your 501(c) (3) persona (instead of your personal profile) you increase the chance that these groups will notice your group in return. In the non-profit world, it’s important to create an alliance with like-minded groups; using Facebook as a means to the end is fitting.”**Error! Bookmark not defined.** Thrive can benefit from this by following other similar Facebook groups like Feast World Kitchen which also has a mission for helping refugees. If a

follower of World Feast Kitchen sees Thrive following (who World Feats Kitchen follows in return), that follower of World Feast Kitchen might be inclined to visit Thrive's profile and either get a potential new follower or get likes on current posts.

Generate Interactions with Followers and Community Members Through Chats, Stories, and Comments

A third goal of Thrive is to have more engagement with their followers on Facebook. Facebook provides numerous tools to help businesses be more engaging with their followers such as planning posts, utilizing immersive formats, creating chats, measuring performance, and using boosting tools^{ix}. The first tool Facebook has is planning what you post. Facebook can provide a detailed demographic overview that includes gender, age, educational background, etc. of both followers and non-followers on your account through an audience intelligence tool.^x This tool is helpful for Thrive because Thrive can have a better understanding of who their followers are. This will enable Thrive to create posts that are tailored to Thrive's audience, rather than sending a post in the dark post.

A second valuable tool that Thrive can utilize is using Facebook's immersive formats. Facebook offers different form of mediums that include 360, Facebook Live, video, stories, photos, instant articles, etc.^{xi} This is essential because Thrive can utilize their demographic data to help determine which form of medium is most effective for their target audience. For example, if Thrive discovers that most of their Facebook followers are predominantly older demographic and likes to read, Thrive can tailor their post to that target demographic by incorporating short articles on the refugee crisis. Thus, not only reaching Thrive's target audience, but helping Thrive establish their authoritative presence in the refugee crisis on social media. Additionally,

Facebook offers a guide to help create an effective post on all types of mediums, along with a scheduling tool to post in advance to help manage posts. This tool is designed to help save time and stay organized with all social media posts within Meta platforms before the launch of the post.^{xii} This will help Thrive find the balance of preventing bursts, because Thrive will be able to find that balance of not over or under-posting since all posts can be scheduled in advance.

A third tool Facebook has is groups. Facebook groups allow businesses and organizations to connect and chat with their followers in a more private setting. Creating a separate page enables more interaction between an organization and their followers.^{xiii} Thrive can use this tool to help kickstart more engagement with their followers by posting a question and continuing the conversation on a separate group page. Furthermore, Facebook allows businesses to sell tickets for an event on the social media platform.^{xiv} This can help Thrive because selling tickets on Facebook is free to use and will reach a greater audience.

A fourth tool Facebook offers is various performance measurement tools. Some of these tools include measuring the data analysis on comments from posts, reach, demographic information on users, likes, and additional insights on posts and videos. This information can help Thrive get insight into each of their posts to compare and contrast what is working and what is not. Finally, Facebook also has boosting features. A boosting feature allows a persisting post, that received poor results, for refinement. Users select what was the intended goal of the post, and incorporate key content the post needs to include, and Facebook can generate a post. The user may accept or reject elements from the suggested post.^{ix} This tool can help Thrive increase their reach per post on posts that resulted in a low reach.

Increase Facebook Reach

Thrive's last goal for Facebook was to help increase Thrive's weekly reach by over twenty-four hundred views. Facebook offers a few suggestions on how to improve reach across all meta platforms. Some of the suggestions include posting consistently, improving post quality, and start advertising. Facebook's first suggestion was to post regularly. Facebook recommends posting regularly to help increase reach because businesses that post consistently have a high reach. Facebook explains the reason for this is because of how frequently everyone uses Meta platforms; "Your audience typically uses Facebook and Instagram on a regular basis, so posting more often increases the likelihood that they will see content from your business when they are on Meta technologies. When you post consistently, it also keeps your audience engaged and can help increase your audience over time."^{xv} Facebook also advise using scheduling tools to help with post planning, as previously discussed for Thrive to use.

The second suggestion Facebook offers is to help boost reach, is to improve the overall quality of a post. Facebook explains the importance of making sure how important it is for a post to resonate with its audience; "Your reach is driven by how much your audience values the content you post. This is based on positive interactions and engagement with the content you post, such as link clicks, comments, shares, saves, and reactions."^{xv} In the previous section, the audience intelligence tool will help Thrive identify their audience values. This will help when Thrive creates a post later on in the future, so that post resonate deeper with Thrive's audience. Additionally, Facebook offers key elements to not include in a post including clickbait, engagement bait, watch bait, links to low-quality web experiences, low-quality video, misleading experiences and content, and inauthentic sharing.^{xv}

Finally, Facebook's last suggestion to increase Facebook reach includes using a boosting post feature and creating an ad. Boosting a post is a tool to help increase the reach of an existing

post, which is explained in the previous section. As for creating an ad, Facebook offers various types of ad formats to help businesses and organizations reach their goal for a particular ad promotion. To demonstrate, some of the types of Facebook ad formats include promoting your page, promoting your business within a certain location, boosting post, boosting event, attracting more visitors to a business website, promoting a new app, get more leads, incase website purchases, and increase vehicle sales.^{xvi} Thrive can use these various ad formats when advertising on specific type of ad, so there is a higher chance Thrive meeting their goal and target reach.

Our Recommendations

The Billboard was a Great idea, but we ran into some challenges...

According to the Spokane Municipal Code 17C.240.070:

“A. Flashing signs or lights. A sign that contains an intermittent or flashing light source, or a sign that includes the illusion of intermittent or flashing light by means of animation, or an externally mounted intermittent light source, except as consistent with the standards contained in Table 17C.240-4.”^{xvii}

These are our recommendations as potential sources for completing Thrive’s Goals...

1. Grant writers
2. Newsletter
3. Instagram Ads and Facebook
4. AI tools listed above

The Future of Thrive...

Looking ahead, we're optimistic that these marketing recommendations could contribute to Thrive's future as potential second sources of revenue. The idea behind these suggestions is to address the current limitations regarding the original idea of a billboard, and still provide solutions on how the purpose of the billboard could still be reached. We were extremely thrilled to work with Thrive this semester and provide our insights on what we found as suggestions of revenue. We're very excited to see how these ideas play out in a more practical and applicable manner, hopefully contributing to the company's ongoing success. We would like to thank Shannon and Mark for being so patient and working with us throughout this process. It has been a pleasure to work with them both, and we are extremely grateful for such strong communication throughout this semester.

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