COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL AND LIFE SCIENCES VIRTUAL TOUR: A SOCIAL MEDIA HASHTAG CAMPAIGN   *BY GORDON YODER*

INTRODUCTION

Mission: The mission of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences is to deliver unsurpassed educational programs that prepare students to address the world's critical challenges related to agriculture, food systems, human wellbeing, natural resources and sustainable communities.

Problem: CALS academic programs are scattered across the Gainesville campus, which limits the ability to showcase the breadth of the college to prospective students and causes current students to miss out on beneficial and relevant opportunities.

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INTRODUCTION

Initial Goal: to better inform students, prospective and current, on the wide range of opportunities the college offers.

Project Goal: to determine which style of content is most effective in creating engagement for our audiences.

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OBJECTIVES

Objectives:

1. To gain insight into which style of content creates the most social media engagement
2. To compare the campaign's content with the average content posted on CALS accounts
3. To create an online, interactive context allowing viewers to engage and participate in the campaign
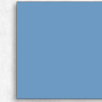4. To weigh the effort required to produce each style of content with the engagement it created

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BRANDING

Colors

Related Sciences

RGB: 127, 242, 236
CMYK:

Natural Resources

RGB: 108, 154, 195
CMYK:

Agriculture

RGB: 216, 252, 91
CMYK:

Font

Gentona Bold

Other

NATURAL RESOURCES AGRICULTURE

RELATED SCIENCES

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#THISISCALS

LOCATIONS

Plan: the #thisiscals social media campaign will target four locations representative to CALS.

- Plant Micropropagation Laboratory
- Austin Cary Forest
- Field and Fork Farm and Gardens
- Florida Farm Bureau Federation Internship

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CONTENT

Plan: three styles of content will be produced for each location, giving insight into which type of content creates the most engagement.

- Picture
- Edited (Interview + Broll)
- Kinetic Typography (On-screen Text)

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POSTING

Plan: the project will involve a three-month campaign, consisting of weekly content.

It was determined that Thursdays at 9pm is when most of our followers are online (according to Facebook and Instagram insights).

Each piece of content will be posted at a consistent time with the same caption, making the style of video the only differing variable.

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POSTING

Features: each post will highlight a student "expert" at a given location.

Questions (will include, but not limited to):

- What is the focus of this location and how are you involved?
- Why is this location important to CALS or what is the purpose of this location?
- How does what you do contribute to the mission of CALS?

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EXAMPLE

Picture: taken on-location and edited to fit Instagram, Facebook and Twitter

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EXAMPLE

Edited: includes an interview with the student "expert," b-roll and subtitles

JESSICA WEBSTER
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCHER

As an undergraduate in the Micropropagation Lab, I help with projects pertaining to conservation of endangered species and by working in this

EXAMPLE

Kinetic Typography: includes b-roll of student "expert" and rolling, on-screen text

THE GARDENS PROMOTE SERVICE SO STUDENTS CAN COME TOGETHER TO SUPPORT THE GATOR GOOD.

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RESULTS

After a three-month posting period, engagement data was analyzed for each video and photo post on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. The analysis looked at reach, views, likes, comments and shares, according to social media medium.

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OBJECTIVE ONE

To gain insight into which style of content creates the most social media engagement

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VIDEO VS. PICTURE

Instagram: according to reach data, pictures lead to higher engagement

Facebook: according to reach data, video does lead to higher engagement

**Twitter:** according to impressions, video content leads to higher engagement

EDITED VS. KINETIC TYPOGRAPHY?

Views: views include all media views three-seconds or longer (according to Facebook)

Views

EDITED VS. KINETIC TYPOGRAPHY?

Views: views include all media views three-seconds or longer (according to Facebook)

Views

- Edited
- Kinetic Typography

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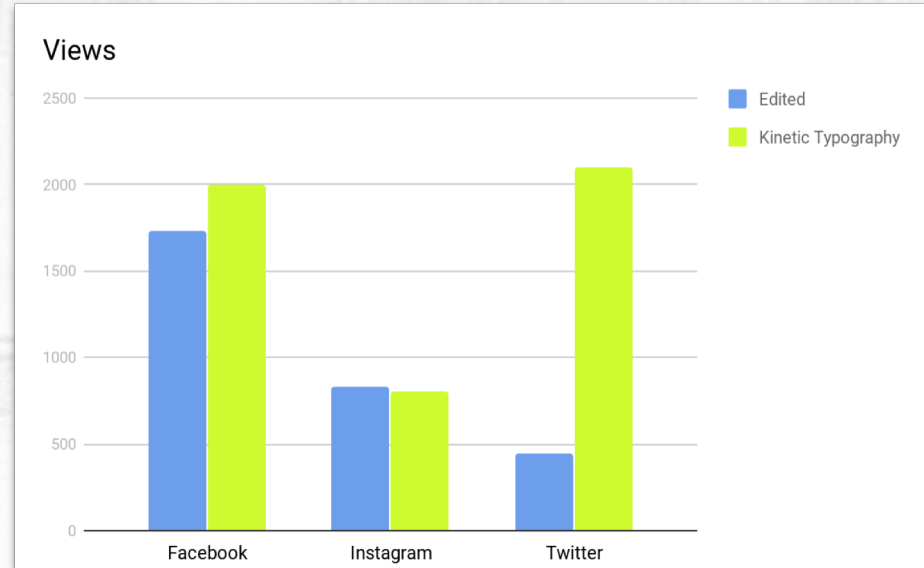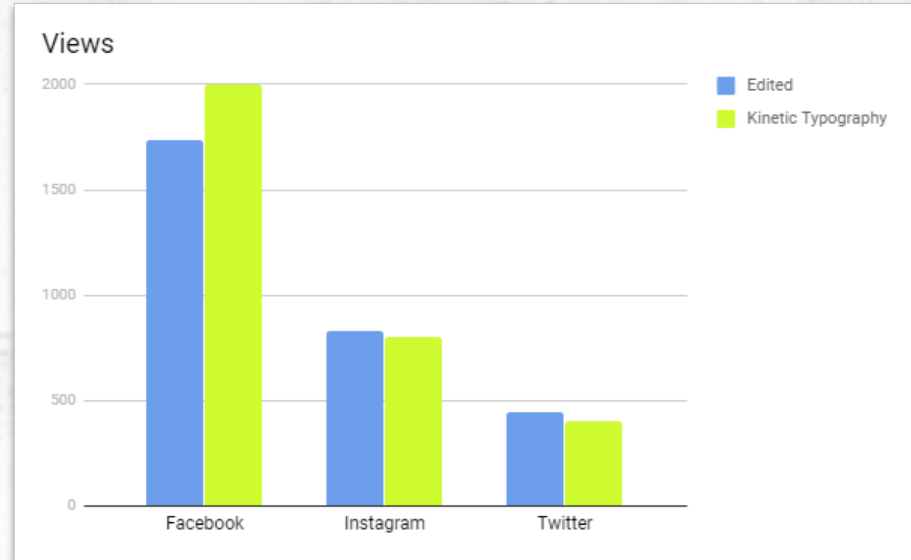
OBJECTIVE TWO

To compare the campaign's content with the average content posted on CALS accounts
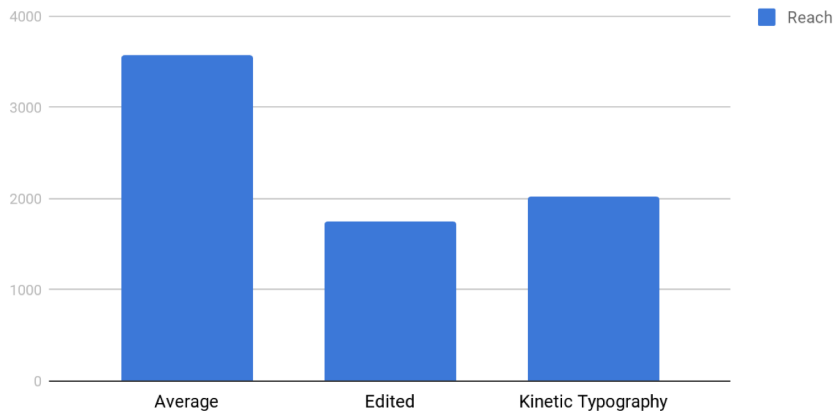
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HOW DOES IT COMPARE TO THE AVERAGE?
FACEBOOK

Average Engagement Rates: average reach (number of times a post was viewed) for CALS video posts, 23 in 2018, compared to the average reach of #thisiscals video styles, 8 in 2018.

Facebook Reach Rates: Comparison Between #thisiscals Video Content and Average CALS Video Content

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HOW DOES IT COMPARE TO THE AVERAGE?
FACEBOOK

Facebook Live: of 24 videos in a six-month span, eight were #thisiscals and six were Facebook Live

It is believed that the higher engagement rates that live videos bring caused the average to be higher than that of the #thisiscals videos.

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HOW DOES IT COMPARE TO THE AVERAGE?

Average Engagement Rates: average reach (number of times a post was viewed) for CALS video posts, 6 in the last 6 months, compared to the average reach of #thisiscals video styles, 8 total.

No substantial difference.

Instagram Reach Rates: Comparison Between #thisiscals Video Content and Average CALS Video Content

#THISISCALS

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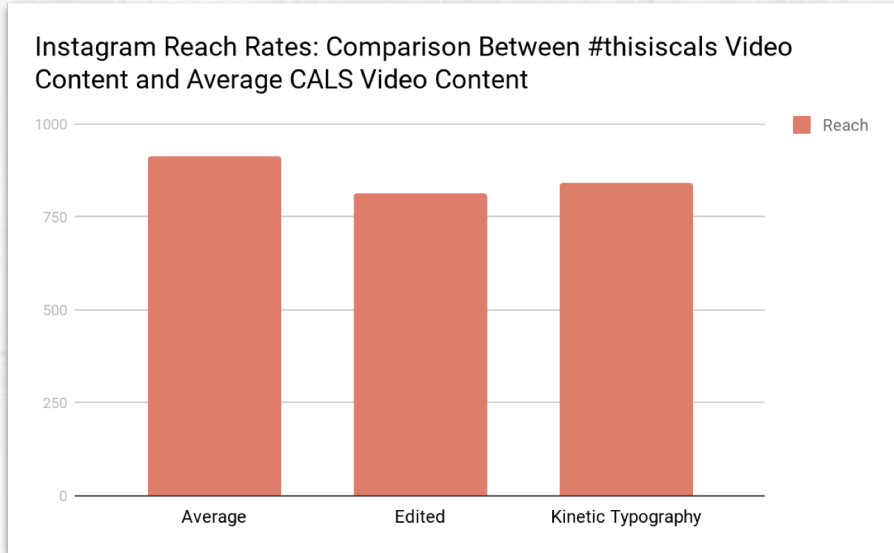
OBJECTIVE THREE

To create an online, interactive context allowing viewers to engage and participate in the campaign

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WHY USE A HASHTAG CAMPAIGN AGAIN?

Hashtag content: the intent of centering the campaign around a hashtag was to allow for user-generated content.

Important to note some additional posts were posted by CALS accounts.

Hashtag Content

Other
Project Posts
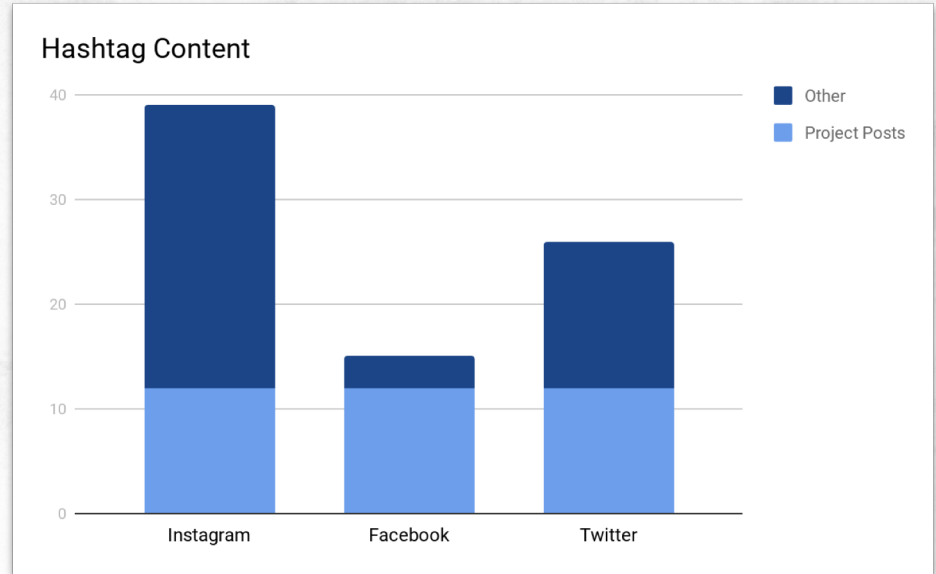
OBJECTIVE FOUR

To weigh the effort required to produce each style of content with the engagement it created

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HOW MUCH EFFORT IS REQUIRED?

Time spent: it is estimated that one piece of content (per style) required:

- Edited: 90 minutes
- Kinetic Typography: 60 minutes
- Picture: 15 minutes

Time Spent to Produce

Picture
9.1%

Kinetic Typography
36.4%

Edited
54.5%
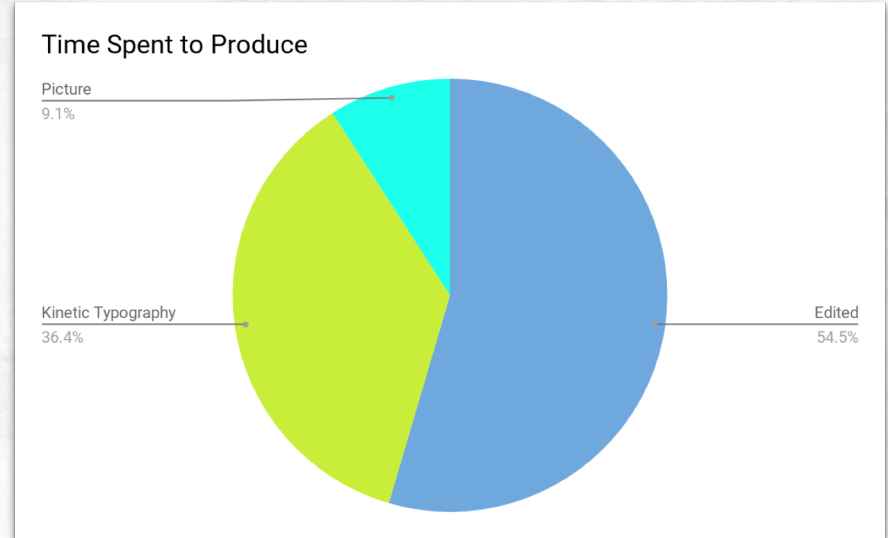
RECOMMENDATIONS

Facebook: based on data from the content produced at Austin Cary Forest, it is recommended to focus content around a source influencer, rather than a specific style of content.

Groups should:

- Highlight influencers with high number of followers
- Encourage influencer to engage with the content early in the posts lifespan to create meaningful conversation

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Instagram: due to the normalcy of picture content and higher engagement rates in the study, it is recommended to focus efforts on picture content.

With growth in video features like IGTV, it is recommended CALS find strategic ways to incorporate video.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

Twitter: based on data from the Field and Fork Farm and Garden video, content should be directed at follower characteristics

Content should relate to:

- Interests (dogs, tech news, weather, science news, music festivals and concerts, technology, national parks, sports news, sporting events, and government)
- Consumer buying styles (premium brands, ethnic explorers, fresh and healthy, quick and easy, home cooking and grilling, and natural living)

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RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that CALS and similar groups focus their efforts on picture content.

It is recommended to target messaging based on follower data, which can be pulled from specific social media platform analytics.

It is recommended to feature an "influencer" with a high number of followers and an active posting schedule.

It is recommended that the influencer engage with the content early in its lifespan.

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TIMELINE

Planning: 6+ weeks prior to posting

- Brainstorm content ideas
- Select a location or area to feature
- Determine the style of content you want to use
- Identify potential "influencers" to be featured
- Correspond with them and set a time to capture

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TIMELINE

Production: 4-6 weeks prior to posting

- Capture content
- Coach the influencer on how to engage with the content

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TIMELINE

Post Production: 2-4 weeks prior to posting

- Edit photo or video content
- Have content reviewed and approved

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TIMELINE

Posting: 0-2 weeks prior to posting

- Schedule the post (if not posting manually)
- Remind influencers to engage with the content early

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CONCLUSION

Recommendations are related to influential sources and targeted messaging, more than a specific style of content.

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FUTURE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

It is recommended that further research look at:

- Which type of source is most effective for engagement?
- Which subject of content is most effective for engagement?
- Does video lead to higher knowledge gain compared to picture?
  - Which style is most effective?

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QUESTIONS?

https://gordony13.wixsite.com/thisiscampaign

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College of Agricultural and Life Sciences Virtual Tour: A Social Media Hashtag Campaign
Gordon Yoder

Introduction
The University of Florida's College of Agricultural and Life Sciences has a mission to deliver unsurpassed educational programs that prepare students to address the world's critical challenges related to agriculture, food systems, human wellbeing, natural resources and sustainable communities. As expressed by Elaine Turner, dean, the college has a need to better inform students, prospective and current, on the wide range of opportunities the college offers. Unlike other colleges at UF, CALS academic programs are scattered across the Gainesville campus. This presents various problems for students, prospective and current. Prospective students wishing to take a tour of the college are unable to do so in a way that showcases the breadth of CALS. Current students miss out on opportunities beneficial and relevant to them during their time at the college.

The **#thisiscals social media campaign** aimed to bridge this gap and better inform publics on the opportunities within CALS. The campaign targeted four locations representative of CALS. There were three styles of content produced at each location - an edited video, kinetic typography video, and photograph - giving insight to which type of content is most effective. The content was aimed at showcasing the wide range of opportunities students have within CALS. The campaign provided a virtual tour for students, via social media platforms, taking the college to them. Locations were determined based on input from leaders within CALS and according to the college's vision: *"We will be the destination of choice for students seeking academic programs in* **agriculture, natural resources** *and* **related sciences***…"*. The campaign covered key locations representing each of the three academic programs. Locations included the Field and Fork Farm and Gardens, the Plant Micropropagation Laboratory, the Austin Cary Forest, and an off-site internship at the Florida Farm Bureau Federation.

Another benefit, and foundational reason, the campaign was designed around a hashtag is that it allows others to contribute and submit their own original content. According to Curata, a content marketing company, user-generated content helps build brand equity and add credibility. The hashtag allows CALS to curate that content and showcase it in a way that is easily searched.

Following the three-month posting schedule, from July to September of 2018, an analysis compared the effort required to produce each piece of content and the engagement that content received on social media platforms.

Objectives
1. To gain insight into which style of content creates the most social media engagement.
2. To compare the campaign's content with the average content posted on CALS accounts.
3. To create an online, interactive context allowing viewers to engage and participate in the campaign.
4. To weigh the effort required to produce each style of content with the engagement it created.

Process
To meet these objectives, a three-month campaign was implemented, consisting of weekly content, including an edited (b-roll) style video, kinetic typography style video, and photograph. Each post highlighted a student "expert" at a given location, explaining how the location is connected to CALS.

Questions included, but were not limited to:
1. *(purpose)* Why is this location important to CALS or what is the purpose of this location?
2. *(process)* What is the focus of this location and how are you involved?
3. *(impact)* How does what you do contribute to the mission (see below) of CALS?

Mission: *The mission of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences is to deliver unsurpassed educational programs that prepare students to address the world's critical challenges related to agriculture, food systems, human wellbeing, natural resources and sustainable communities.*

One piece of content was released each week featuring a different location. Each piece of content was posted at a consistent time each week with a consistent caption. The following major social media platforms were utilized: Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter.

Following the three-month campaign, an assessment was completed to determine which style of content was most effective, with respect to the amount of effort required to produce the content. Recommendations are provided at the end of this report to create similar social media campaigns in the future.

Evaluation
The #thisiscals campaign was evaluated through various methods, including web analytics and interviews with the college leadership team.

Web analytics allowed us to track how much engagement each piece of content attracted, through likes, comments, and shares. This provided us with helpful recommendations and insights into what type of content our viewers found interesting.

Interviews with the college leadership team, including the dean, associate deans, director of student development and recruitment, director of alumni affairs, and the strategic communications manager assessed whether the campaign fulfilled the need originally expressed.

Results
After the three-month posting period, engagement data was analyzed for each video and photo post on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. The analysis looked at reach, views, likes, comments, and shares, according to each social media medium.

Objective 1

Style of Content

With one of our main objectives being to gain insight into which style of content creates the most social media engagement, we first have to discover if video leads to higher engagement on social media compared to photo content.

	A	INSTAGRAM B	C	D	E	F	FACEBOOK G	H	I	J	K	L	TWITTER M	N	O	P
2	EDITED	Views	Reach	Likes	Comments	Total	Reach	Views	Reactions	Comments	Shares	Total	Impressions	Media Views	Total Engagements	Total
3	Field and Fork Farm and Gardens	228	814	n/a	0	1042	1,813	394	17	1	2	2,227	1,272	1	20	1,293
4	Austin Cary Forest	161	781	n/a	0	942	2,880	879	85	18	12	3,874	777	143	7	927
5	Florida Farm Bureau Federation	260	903	n/a	0	1163	1,355	236	4	0	0	1,595	978	127	21	1126
6	Plant Micropropagation Laboratory	184	759	n/a	0	943	987	224	1	0	0	1212	1,510	176	15	1,701
7		833	3257	n/a	0	4090	7,035	1733	107	19	14	8,908	4,537	447	63	5,047
9	KINETIC TYPOGRAPHY															
10	Field and Fork Farm and Gardens	213	831	n/a	0	1044	1,068	209	7	0	0	1,284	16,095	1,873	89	18,057
11	Austin Cary Forest	201	813	n/a	0	1014	4,487	1,368	141	16	16	6,028	860	2	19	881
12	Florida Farm Bureau Federation	203	872	n/a	0	1075	982	216	11	0	1	1210	870	130	9	1009
13	Plant Micropropagation Laboratory	187	849	n/a	0	1036	1,552	207	7	4	3	1,773	832	97	14	943
14		804	3365	n/a	0	4169	8,089	2000	166	20	20	10,295	18,657	2,102	131	20,890
16	PICTURE															
17	Field and Fork Farm and Gardens	n/a	1,322	73	0	1395	702	n/a	5	0	0	707	1,505	n/a	39	1,544
18	Austin Cary Forest	n/a	1,021	77	1	1099	2,937	n/a	140	43	7	3,127	756	n/a	17	773
19	Florida Farm Bureau Federation	n/a	887	40	0	927	1,297	n/a	33	0	3	1,333	704	n/a	8	712
20	Plant Micropropagation Laboratory	n/a	898	40	0	938	881	n/a	40	5	2	928	675	n/a	11	686
21		n/a	4,128	230	1	4359	5817	n/a	218	48	12	6095	3,640	n/a	75	3,715

Figure 1: Left column includes each style of content, organized by video style. Rows (1-21) are separated by each style and piece of content. Columns (A-P) separated by color show engagement data organized by social media medium.

The Facebook Reach metric was analyzed. Facebook Reach is measured in all posts, video and photo, allowing for even comparison. It was determined that video does lead to slightly higher engagement, in terms of total reach (G7=7,035; G14=8,089; G21=5,817), although not significantly. Instagram Reach metrics showed photographs to be more effective than video (C7=3,257; C14=3,365; C21=4,128). This finding is not concerning since the majority of Instagram content is composed of photographs. The difference between engagement rates for photographs over video is not substantial. We can also draw even comparisons across posts from Twitter Impressions. Comparing photograph content (M21=3,640) to edited video content (M7=4,537), photograph is only slightly higher. Kinetic typography content (M14=18,657) was left out of this comparison due to an outlier.

Style of Video

With video content engagement, in general, being slightly higher than photo content, our next question is which video style performed better? For this observation, views were analyzed across each medium (see figure 2). Facebook views include all media views three-seconds or longer. Kinetic typography style video (H14=2,000) performed slightly better than edited style video (H7=1,733) on Facebook. On Twitter, total impressions (M14=18,657; M7=4,537) and total media views (N14=2,102; N7=447) showed a huge gap, with kinetic typography being drastically higher. This is due to a single piece of content. Due to such a substantial difference, those numbers are not included for this comparison. With those outliers excluded from the data, there would be no substantial difference between kinetic typography videos and edited videos.
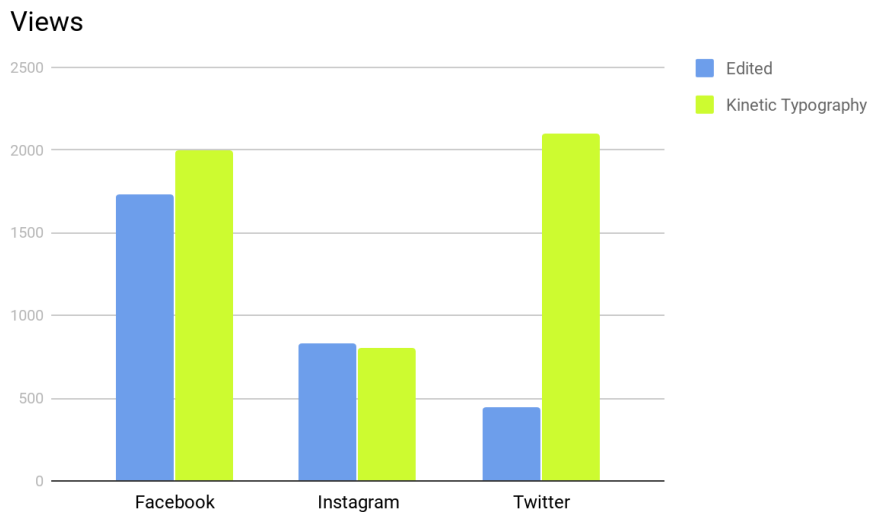
Views

Figure 2: Total views by video style for each social media medium

Objective 2

Video Content

Another question we sought to answer is how the #thisiscals content compares with other content posted on CALS accounts. We conducted a comparison between the average engagement rates on CALS accounts compared to the #thisiscals content engagement. Looking at Facebook, the analysis compares average reach for CALS video content to the average reach for #thisiscals kinetic typography style and edited style. The same comparison was examined between average reach for CALS photo content and #thisiscals photo content.

Results show that average Facebook video content on the CALS account have higher engagement rates compared to #thisiscals video content (see figure 3). This is largely due to the low amount of video content posted outside of the #thisiscals campaign. In a 6-month time span, April to September, 2018, there have been 16 videos posted the CALS Facebook page, excluding the eight #thisiscals videos. Six of the 16 videos were Facebook Live videos, which are widely recognized as high-engagement content. Further analysis should be conducted to compare #thisiscals video content to uploaded video content on Facebook, excluding live video.

Facebook Reach Rates: Comparison Between #thisiscals Video
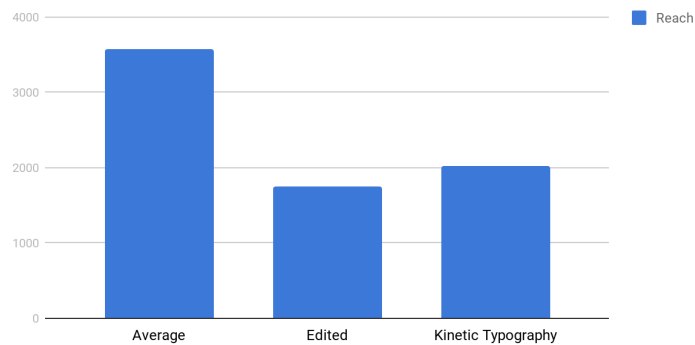Content and Average CALS Video Content

Figure 3: Average reach (number of times post was viewed) for CALS video posts, live and uploaded content, compared to the average reach of #thisiscals kinetic typography and edited video posts.

On Instagram, #thisiscals video content reach rates showed to be lower than the average (see figure 4).

Instagram Reach Rates: Comparison Between #thisiscals Video
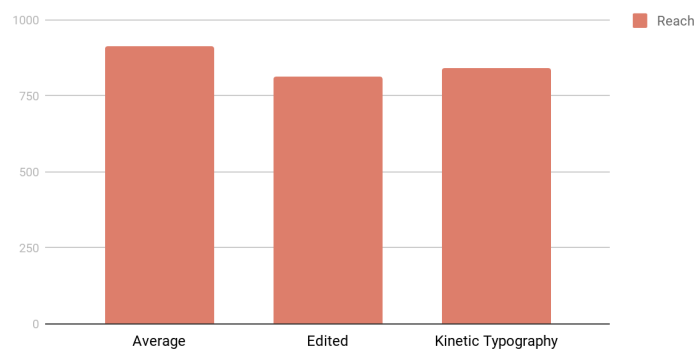Content and Average CALS Video Content

Figure 4: Average reach (number of times post was viewed) for CALS video posts compared to the average reach of #thisiscals kinetic typography and edited video posts.

Photograph Content

Average engagement rates from photo content linked to the #thisiscals campaign compared to other photo content showed similar reach rates. This similarity gives more reason to believe that video content reach rates would be similar to the average if we excluded the Facebook Live videos. On Instagram, the same is true for #thisiscals photo content compared to the average for other CALS posts.

Objective 3
The third objective was to create an online, interactive context allowing viewers to engage and participate in the campaign. The intent of centering the campaign on a hashtag was more than to create easily searched content. It was to create a context for other CALS students and affiliates to engage in and contribute to. All additional content using #thisiscals was posted naturally, without a call to action. It is important to note that some of the additional posts included in figure 5 were posted by CALS accounts.
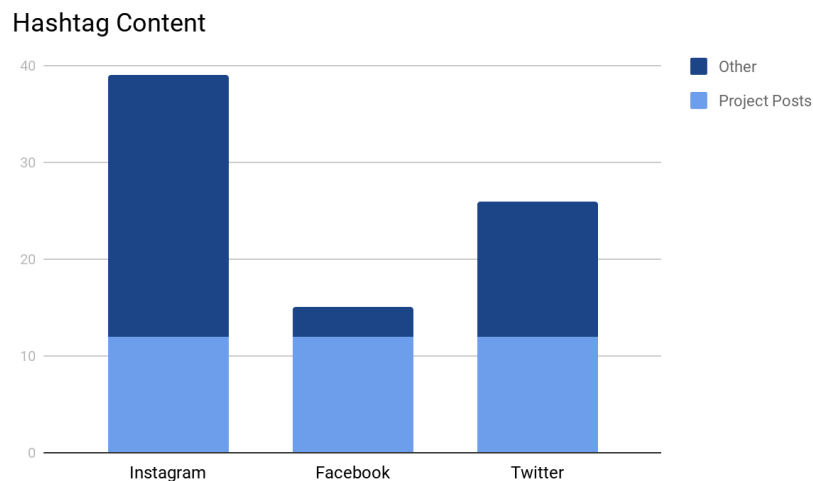

Hashtag Content

Figure 5: The chart above shows the number of posts using the hashtag #thisiscals. The dark blue indicates posts in addition to campaign content.

Objective 4
It is also worth mentioning the effort required to produce each style. This provides useful information as content creators prioritize their efforts into engagement-driven content. It is estimated that 15 minutes went into the production of the photograph, 60 minutes into the production of the kinetic typography video, and 90 minutes into the production of the edited style video. It is important to note that the time was derived from an experienced video and photograph content creator and may not be applicable for all content creators.

Recommendations
Based on the data presented in this report and interviews with college leadership, the following recommendations were made.

Based on the data in objective 4 pertaining to the effort required to produce each piece of content, it is recommended that CALS and similar groups should focus their efforts on photograph content. This may especially apply to groups that do not have an experienced videographer or the necessary time available to produce the high-effort forms of content. With the results showing no substantial difference in video content engagement compared to

photograph content, photograph content is a recommended form of content for CALS accounts due to the low effort required.

Facebook
Although kinetic typography videos did not lead to significantly higher engagement rates, they were slightly higher. It is our belief that this is due to the frequency and normalcy of this style of video across Facebook, from pages like Buzzfeed, Biteable, and more. Kinetic typography videos also allow viewers to receive information directly on their newsfeed without the need for sound, whereas other videos without typography require viewers to turn on the sound to listen. For these reasons, it is recommended that CALS continue to use kinetic typography videos.

In addition, we recognize that the content produced at Austin Cary performed better in each category, compared to other content of the same style. The high engagement rate (reach, views and reactions) correlates with the high number of shares this post received. The edited style video, kinetic typography style video and the photograph post were shared on the personal account of the student featured. Facebook pages like the UF/IFAS School of Forest Resources & Conservation (1.6k followers), Agriculture Television (967 followers) and UF IFAS Extension Highlands County (297 followers) also shared the post, bringing more post visibility and reach. Friends and family of the featured students jumped in on the sharing, creating conversations in the comments. In 2018, Facebook created a new algorithm that prioritizes posts that create meaningful conversations, especially those from family and friends. This was done with the belief that a person-to-person connection is more valuable than a person-to-page connection. The algorithm was created in an effort to arrange posts on a user's timeline according to how likely the user would be to interact with the content. The high engagement rates for the content produced at Austin Cary supports this.

This leads to the recommendation to focus content around the source influencer, rather than the style of content. With there being no serious difference in engagement data between each style of content on Facebook, high engagement is more likely to be linked to student influencers. It is recommended that future content be shaped around influencers with a high number of followers. It is also recommended to have the featured influencer engage with the content once it is posted to create the meaningful conversation that will increase the content's visibility.

As for Facebook Live, it is recommended to continue producing live videos because of their high engagement rates. Based on continued observations, further recommendations into the effectiveness of Facebook Live should be made. It would be important to know whether the same recommendation to use source influencers holds true for Facebook Live.

Instagram
Instagram Reach metrics showed photographs to be more effective than video (C7=3,257; C14=3,365; C21=4,128). There is reason to believe that this is due to the normalcy of photographs on Instagram, as it started as a platform solely for photograph content. This is not reason to neglect video content, however. With video use increasing on Instagram and new features like IGTV, it is expected for video engagement to increase on the platform. Looking at video styles, the edited and kinetic typography styles were similar in engagement rates. It is

recommended that CALS continue to focus efforts on photograph content, while also finding strategic ways to incorporate video.

Twitter

Analytics from Twitter does not offer any solid recommendations. At first glance, kinetic typography style video seems to be drastically higher than other styles of content. This is due to an outlier on the data set tied to the Field and Fork Farm and Garden video posted on August 2, 2018. The post gained 16,095 impressions, which is substantially higher than the 854 average of the other three posts in the same style category. If this individual post gained engagement numbers consistent with the other kinetic typography videos, there would be no cause for the style as a whole to be recommended ahead of other content style categories.

For this reason, we want to look beyond the kinetic typography style as a whole and focus on the individual post for recommendations. Between August 1 and August 4, there were four tweets that each brought in over 12,000 in impressions. Impressions include the number of times people saw a tweet on Twitter. This is above the average impression rate for CALS posts. It is possible the increase in tweet activity on the CALS Twitter account was linked to other popular posts or to an event concurrent with these posts. It is also possible that stormy weather on the evening of August 2 caused more of our followers to be inside and on their social media accounts. This is not likely because the other social media mediums did not show the same spike in engagement activity. The last possibility is that CALS Twitter followers had a specific connection to the Field and Fork Farm and Garden. According to Twitter's audience data, 57% of followers have a "fresh and healthy" consumer buying style. This could have led to a personal connection with the CALS post that focused on sustainable, fresh produce at the garden.

Conclusion

The results of the campaign, originally looking to find which style of content creates the most social media engagement, does not end with any recommendations specific to the type of content produced. Although kinetic typography performed slightly better than other types of content, the data did not show any considerable differences. This insight gives freedom for content creators to produce content of any style, based on the amount of effort required and available. Content creators seeking to create low-effort content should focus on photograph content. On the contrary, those with more time and skill available, seeking to create high-effort content, have the freedom to focus on kinetic typography and edited style videos.

The truer recommendations are related to influential sources and targeted messaging. All content, especially on Facebook, should be centered on influencers with a high number of followers. Directions should be given to the influencer to engage early in the content's lifespan to create higher post visibility. It might also be helpful to tag the featured influencer in the original post.

Timeline of Content Creation

Idea Phase: ● Brainstorm content ideas ● Select person, location, or topic of focus ● Determine content style (Video or Photograph)	Six weeks prior to posting

Correspondence Phase:
● Reach out to person, location contact, or other expert for help
● Identify potential "influencers" to feature in content
  ○ Well-spoken
  ○ Good representation of CALS
● Select influencer based on high number of social media followers and frequency of posting
● Set up time to capture content
	Five weeks prior to posting

Execution Phase: ● Capture content ● Coach influencer on how to engage with the content ○ Like, comment and share early in the post's lifespan	Four weeks prior to posting
Editing Phase: ● Edit photo or video content ● Have content approved by supervisor, influencer, and others as needed.	Three weeks prior to posting

Posting Phase:
● Schedule post (if not posting manually)
● Remind "influencer" to engage with content early in its life-span
  ○ Like, comment and share.
  ○ Reply to comments to create meaningful conversation
	Week of posting

Figure 6: The table above outlines a suggested timeline from conception to the posting of content.

Content, specifically on Twitter, should be specifically directed at follower interests and consumer buying styles. CALS Twitter follower interests include (in rank order) dogs, tech news, weather, science news, music festivals and concerts, technology, national parks, sports news, sporting events and government. CALS Twitter follower consumer buying styles include (in rank order) premium brands, ethnic explorers, fresh and healthy, quick and easy, home cooking and grilling, and natural living. It is recommended that CALS content creators center content around these interests and consumer buying styles.

It is recommended that further research be conducted on influential sources and targeted messaging to determine greater effectiveness. To determine how video might fit into the puzzle,

it is recommended to conduct further research into which style of content leads to increase knowledge and awareness. It is believed that video content is more effective in increasing knowledge, based on theory research like Mayer's Theory of Multimedia Learning (Mayer and Moreno, 1999).

Reference

Mayer, R. E., & Moreno, R. (2003). Nine ways to reduce cognitive load in multimedia

learning. Educational psychologist, 38(1), 43-52.