

Individual Report: University of Derby Management Events (UODME) 7-a-side
Tournament Evaluation



Module: Managing Sports Events

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Contents

Introduction	3
Marketing.....	3
Delivery of event.....	5
Conclusions.....	8
Appendix	9
References	22

Introduction

University of Derby Management Events (UODME) hosted a charity 7-a-side football tournament for Children First Derby (CFD) on 17/04/2023, upon first thoughts the event had a positive impact, and we raised £254, but to what extent was it successful and how can this be measured? Through post-event evaluation, event organisers can analyse intended and unintended outcomes from the events operations, finances, marketing and delivery, and use these findings to improve in the future (Getz, 1997). It is the last part of the event cycle and is often overlooked by the events teams, despite having endless practical applications (Pielichaty, 2016). The process involves using pre-determined event objectives as benchmarks for the outcome measures, which can then be compared and analysed to determine it as successful or not, and produce recommendations accordingly (Bodwin, 2011). Other aspects such as post-event spectator and participant surveys, and personal performance evaluation also aid this process (Tum, 2006). Using this literature, I decided to critically evaluate two aspects of the event: i) the marketing campaign; and ii) the delivery and my own personal performance.

Marketing

Marketing is described as the promotion, selling and distribution of a service (Giesler, 2013), through promotional activities, and communication streams (Morgan, Whitler, Feng & Chari, 2019). UODME had a clear marketing strategy and set out objectives before the event, which were in line with the S.M.A.R.T acronym, making them easy to evaluate and compare to actual outcomes (Ogbeiwi, 2017) in the post-event phase. Through the social media campaign we gained 62 followers (see appendix 1), achieved 6,892 impressions, reached 792 accounts (see appendix 2) and received 1,300 profile visits (see appendix 3). In terms of content, we managed to engage 121 accounts (see appendix 4), obtaining 338 likes and 22 comments across 17 posts (see appendix 5). Although this sounds like a strong marketing campaign initially, when benchmarked with our objectives it can be seen that multiple areas did not reach the heights we expected.

UODME failed to meet multiple objectives in the marketing campaign – Table 1 outlines the objectives used as a benchmark against actual figures. The majority of the social media directed goals were not met – this included: 1) gaining 100 followers on the event Instagram page, 2) having 50% of attendees hearing of the event through social media streams, and 3) contributing to CFD's following by gaining them 50 new followers directly from our event. When evaluating the campaign, it is clear that we suffered from a lack of experience in marketing and content creation – my role in the group was to create content and post this on social media (See Appendix 6 and 7), although this was something I had never done before. Reimer et al. (2018) suggested that adding marketing experience to a team would benefit and elevate the marketing campaign, which is important as marketing is integral to the success of the product – this is something the group should have looked at doing when forming the events group, as no members of the board had any prior marketing experience – this naivety caused us to build a lacklustre Instagram campaign. Furthermore, in hindsight, UODME would have benefited from having more board members as our board was amongst the smallest out of any group with only 4 members – larger groups have a positive effect on performance, and allow more expertise to be integrated within the project (Tanna et al., 2011), although the team had multiple areas of expertise within it, we did not best utilise these strengths and would have benefitted from a marketing expert, as we identified this to be an essential aspect of the event. Sharma, Leung & Apithipyangkul (2023) state that group characteristics can greatly affect the efficiency and performance of marketing – personally, I felt I was better suited to negotiating

with sponsors and securing prizes and funds for the event, due to my experience in sales – I did not see marketing as a strong suit, but was willing to produce the best content I could regardless. Considering the circumstances, I managed to build a respectable social media campaign and the abovementioned statistics reinforce this. Despite numerous objectives not being met, literature and practical experience has allowed me to identify areas for improvement and development for the next events project I undertake.

Table 1: Comparing the pre-event Marketing Objectives to the post-event outcomes.

Marketing Objectives	Outcome Measures
Gain 100 followers on the event Instagram account before the event commences.	The actual figure was 62 followers, as seen in appendix 1. This means UODME fell short of this objective and only obtained 62% of the followers required.
Obtain 3 of the entered teams through University of Derby football teams (ladies or men's) by contacting them directly.	UODME met this objective, as 4 out of the 8 teams were created via the University Football Team: UODMFC 5ths, UODMFC All-Stars, Derby Gazers and Glass Ankles were all composed of University football team players only.
Using a post-event survey, to hit 50% of people hearing of the event through social media.	This figure did not meet the goal set of 50%, but instead was just below at 47.8% (See Appendix 8).
Using a post-event survey, to hit 15% of people hearing of the event through social media.	This figure was exceeded, with 52.2% of attendees hearing about the event through word of mouth, showcasing the hype surrounding the event (See Appendix 8).
Improve Children First Derby's following by 50 followers.	This figure failed drastically, and was limited to 5 people following the CFD Instagram page directly as a result of our event, meaning we only obtained 10% of the projected followers.
To gain 5,000 Instagram impressions in the build up to the event.	This figure was met, as we managed to collate 6,892 impressions overall (See Appendix 2)

Despite the majority of our objectives not being met, we did meet the following objectives: 1) 15% of attendees hearing about the event through word-of-mouth (achieved 52.2%); 2) Enter 3 teams from the University football teams (4 teams entered); 3) Obtain 5,000 social media impressions (6,892 obtained). Although the majority of objectives were not met, literature from Jalilvand & Samiei (2012) indicates the value of word-of-mouth marketing, which can have a stronger effect on brand-image and purchase intentions than social media. Silverman (2001) also highlights that the power of word-of-mouth marketing is exponentially more effective than conventional marketing, as people are more inclined to listen to suggestions from peers and acquaintances, than they are to act on advertisements, of which they are exposed to hundreds of daily. This is supported by our event page reaching 792 individual accounts across the campaign, with only 62 of these actually following the page and engaging with the event – this equates to 8% of the accounts we reached. Considering this, the value of 52.2% of the attendees hearing of the event through word-of-mouth is significantly

higher than them hearing about it through social media, as a higher percentage of these individuals interacted with the product. Evaluating my own personal performance, during the planning process of the event I was not aware of the practicality and benefits of word-of-mouth marketing, and no plans were put in place to enhance this. This is a weakness of my performance as with more focus, the event could have attracted even more spectators and increased revenue streams, now, with the literature used in conjunction with this evaluation I am aware of where to focus resources and time more effectively, and enhance the word-of-mouth marketing stream.

Utilising the abovementioned literature, a set of recommendations for future practice can be presented. These recommendations are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Recommendations for future practice to enhance the marketing campaign.

Recommendations	Description and literature to support
Focus on word-of-mouth marketing as a primary marketing stream.	Silverman (2001) is an advocate for word-of-mouth marketing and says its practicalities make it the most effective marketing technique possible. A word-of-mouth driven marketing campaign would include 1) an individual of high power being on board with the event, and then promoting it; 2) A top rating from advisory services; 3) networking events; 4) peers and friends speaking about the event, which requires a hype built up around it. UODME did not deliver on any of these levels, meaning in future events, this approach will be adopted to drive ticket sales.
Increasing the size and expertise of the group	Tanna et al. (2011) states that a larger group will allow for a greater pool of talent, allowing more individuals to specialise in different areas. UODME did not use strengths to our advantage, and the marketing campaign failed due to this. In future events, a marketing specialist will be utilised to create tailored content.
Enhancing the impact on the charity	The event had little effect on the charity that the event was done in aid of (CFD), and did not increase their social media presence. This was an essential outcome listed by UODME. For non-established brands, monetary promotion techniques such as giveaways are very effective in gaining a required response (Qi, Peng & Chen, 2021) – in the future, a discounted entry will be given to the team that contributes most to an increase in the charity's following.

Delivery of event

The events original date was 11th March 2023, but due to extreme weather conditions, it was postponed until 17th April. As we already had collected payment and had all 8 teams, we did not want any teams to be unable to make the second date, so liaised with them and came to an

agreement for the new date, the most amount of teams that were available on one date was 6 teams – to maximise revenue, we chose this date and refunded the 2 other teams. These spots were filled at a later date by other teams. If it weren't for the contingency plan detailed in the event proposal for extreme weather conditions, UODME would not have been prepared for this situation. A board meeting was organised, and all teams were informed that the event could not go ahead – this decision was backed by module lead James Bostock (see appendix_). The decision to postpone, and not to move to an indoor venue was due to one of the key selling points of the event being the state-of-the-art 3G facility that going to be used. Scott et al. (2003) supports this with literature that weather is one of the main factors that affect cancellation of outdoor events, which can have major impacts if the main attractions of the event are the natural environment and facilities. Considering we were also relying on spectators for extra revenue streams, the decision to postpone was an effective one, as weather has been shown to heavily affect revenue streams and expected spending from consumers (de Freitas, 2003). I believe my own contribution to this process was essential, as I was responsible for informing all teams via social media about the postponement, and then collated all of the dates that the teams could attend, in order to find a mutual date that all teams could attend. I was especially impressed with my communication with all teams, keeping them informed at all times on updates. Communication is essential to consumer experience and heavily influences their perceptions of the organisation (Kharouf, Biscaia, Garcia-Perez & Hickman, 2020) – this, in turn, influences the likelihood of consumers attending again, and recommending events to others (Kim, Byon, Baek & Williams, 2019) – something that has already been mentioned a focal point for future projects. This highlights the level of responsibility I had within the role of managing the social media accounts, of which I believe my performance regarding communication was strong.

Objectives

UODME set out pre-determined event objectives prior to the event, to accompany the abovementioned marketing objectives. Only one objective was achieved, which concerned the number of people attending the event, this exceeded 200% of the projected number of attendees. Budget balance was highlighted as an issue, as, despite having more consumers, we made less revenue than expected. Our inclusivity objective failed, after reaching out to the University's Women's Football Team, they did not want to enter due to important league fixtures coming up. Our post event survey also was not well received across the teams, with only 29% of attendees completing the form. A summary of the objectives and the outcome measures are detailed in table 3:

Table 3: Event Objectives and Outcome Measures Comparison.

Objective	Outcome Measures
To get 85% of participants to complete a post-event survey to inform future practice.	This figure was 29%, with 23 out of 80 participants completing the study.
To raise £350 for Children First Derby	A total of £254 was raised for the charity.
Inclusivity – for at least one team to be female only.	No female teams entered the tournament.
To have 50 participants/spectators at the event	Over 100 players and spectators were present at the event (75 players, 25+ spectators)

Post-Event Survey:

The post-event survey was sent out to teams via the event Instagram page to form a part of the post-event evaluation. The results are detailed in table 4:

Table 4: Post-event evaluation results.

Question	Results
Overall, how did you rate the event?	45.5% Very good, 36.4% Excellent, 9.1% Good and 9.1% Fair (see appendix 10)
How likely are you to recommend this event?	69.6% of people likely to recommend. (see appendix 11).
Where did you first hear about this event?	52.2% through word of mouth, 47.8% through social media. (see appendix 8)
Awareness of Children First Derby pre-event?	65.2% not aware of the charity before the event, only 17.3% confidently aware of the charity. (see appendix 12)
Awareness of Children First Derby post-event?	60.8% now confident in awareness of the charity. All respondents showed an increase of awareness apart from 1. (see appendix 13)
Were there any issues with the running of the event?	Leadership issues saw 4 responses, organisation responses saw 4 responses and more teams saw 2 responses.

The responses from this survey, clearly identified issues within leadership on the day of the event, of which I believe my own performance lacked. Due to my lack of experience with running large events, I was highly nervous, experiencing a high amount of social anxiety, causing my communication as a leader to suffer – although communication was a strong suit of mine within the promotion of the event, social anxiety can cause people to communicate less when in face-to-face environments compared to online communication (Doorley et al., 2020). According to Tracy (2014) an essential aspect of leadership is clear communication, and without this, leaders cannot be successful. Multiple responses related to the lack of this within the survey. This could have been prevented with the correct loudspeaker equipment, to ensure everyone was informed and could hear the instructions being given, this would have been a personal preference and made myself more comfortable on the day. Looking back on the event, I did feel this lowered the quality of the event as multiple teams were unsure on the rules, timings and fixture lists – with more leadership, this could have been prevented.

The following recommendations were made for the event delivery phase, to enhance the customer experience. Table 5 outlines these.

Table 5: Event delivery recommendations.

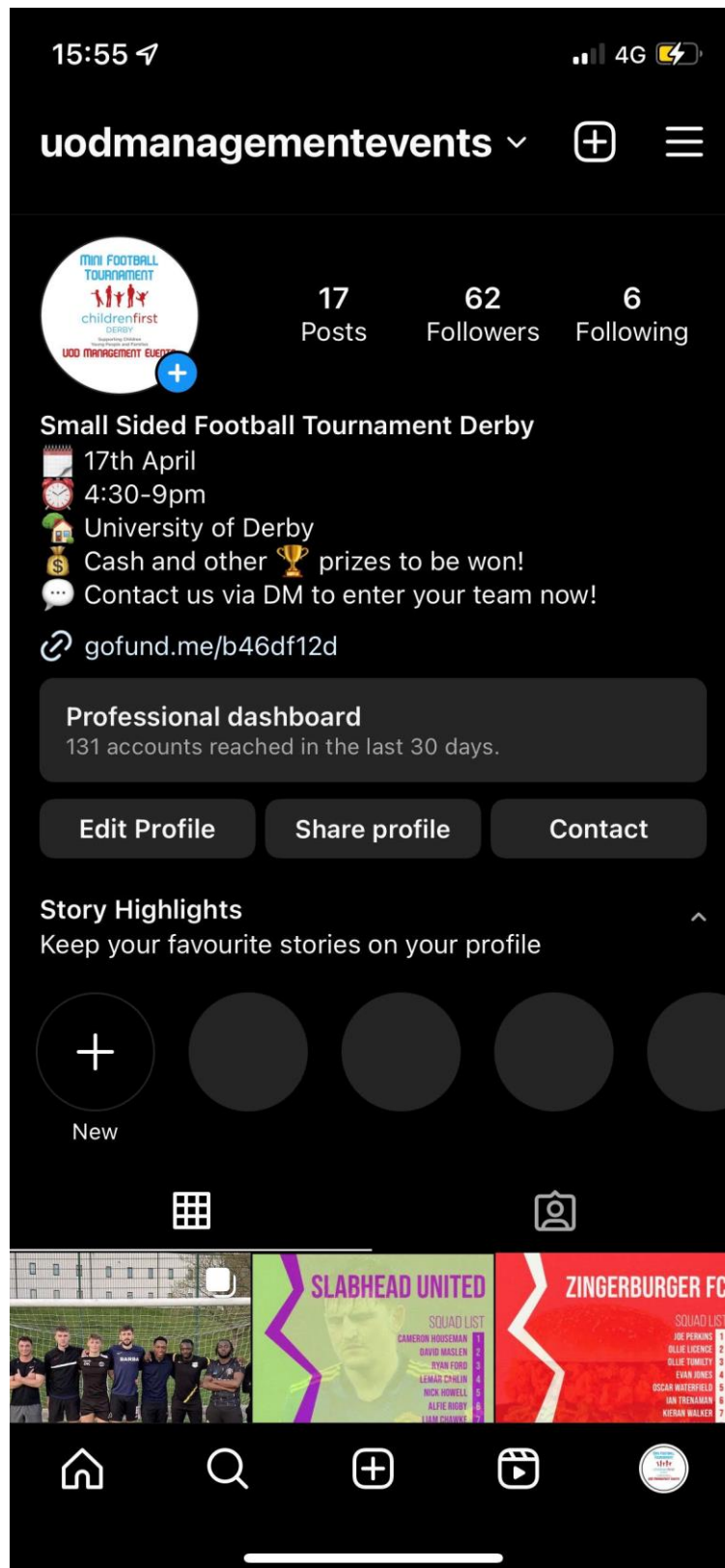
Recommendation	Description
Face-to-face interviews	The success rate of our post-event analysis was poor, Bowdin et al. (2011) states that interviews are likely to have a higher response rate, and a more in-depth qualitative nature, however, this would require a highly skilled interviewer.
Gaining Leadership Experience	Now that I have experienced the organisation of running sporting events, I would like to start volunteering to reduce the social anxiety I felt during the face-to-face communication aspect of the event. Through volunteering, I will be able to harness these skills and become a better leader and communicator.
Employment of experts such as referees	One of the main aspects of feedback that the group received was the poor quality of refereeing, which can endanger opponents (Hancock et al., 2021). With our group only having 1 qualified referee, it is essential that in future events we employ another official so that all teams are under the correct supervision.

Conclusions

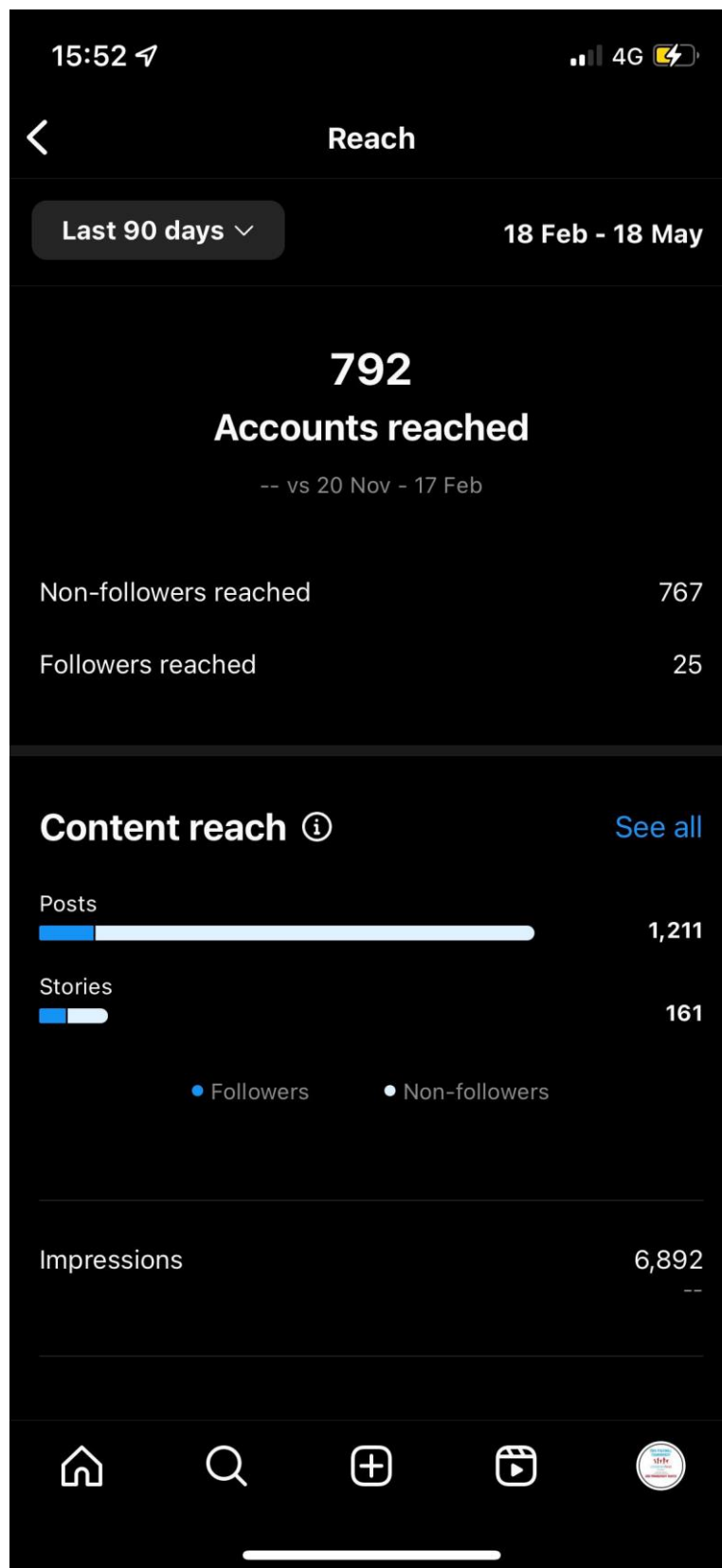
Overall, the event had high levels of enjoyment and many people were likely to recommend the event to others. This is a form of word-of-mouth marketing, which was identified as an area to capitalise on during the promotion phase of the event. My personal performance was strong during communication with entered teams, but more training and expertise is required for marketing, as for on the day, there were some organisation issues and a lack of leadership, which can often lead to the failure of an event. The recommendations available will ensure that any future events are more of a success and objectives are achieved.

Appendix

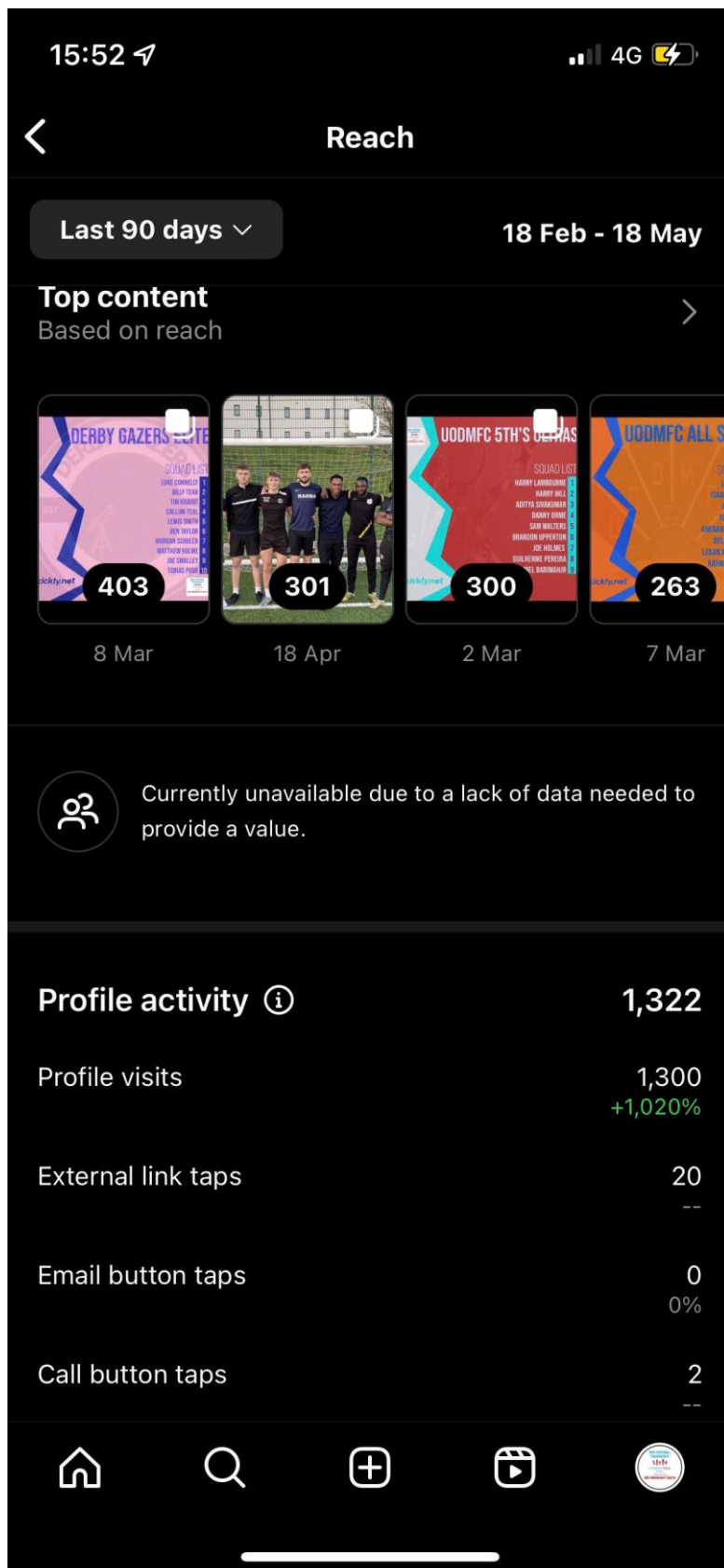
Appendix 1: Social Media Event Page



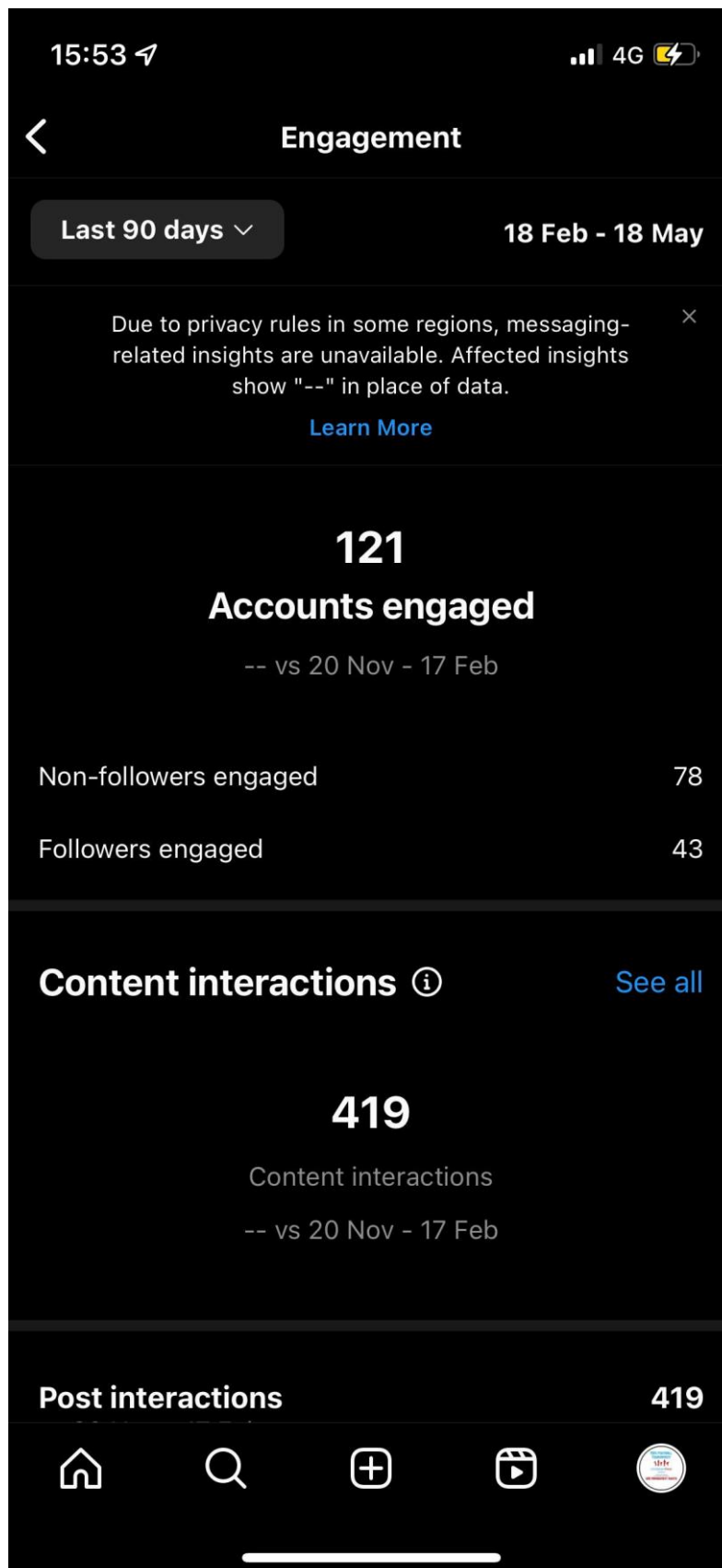
Appendix 2: Social Media Reach since account creation



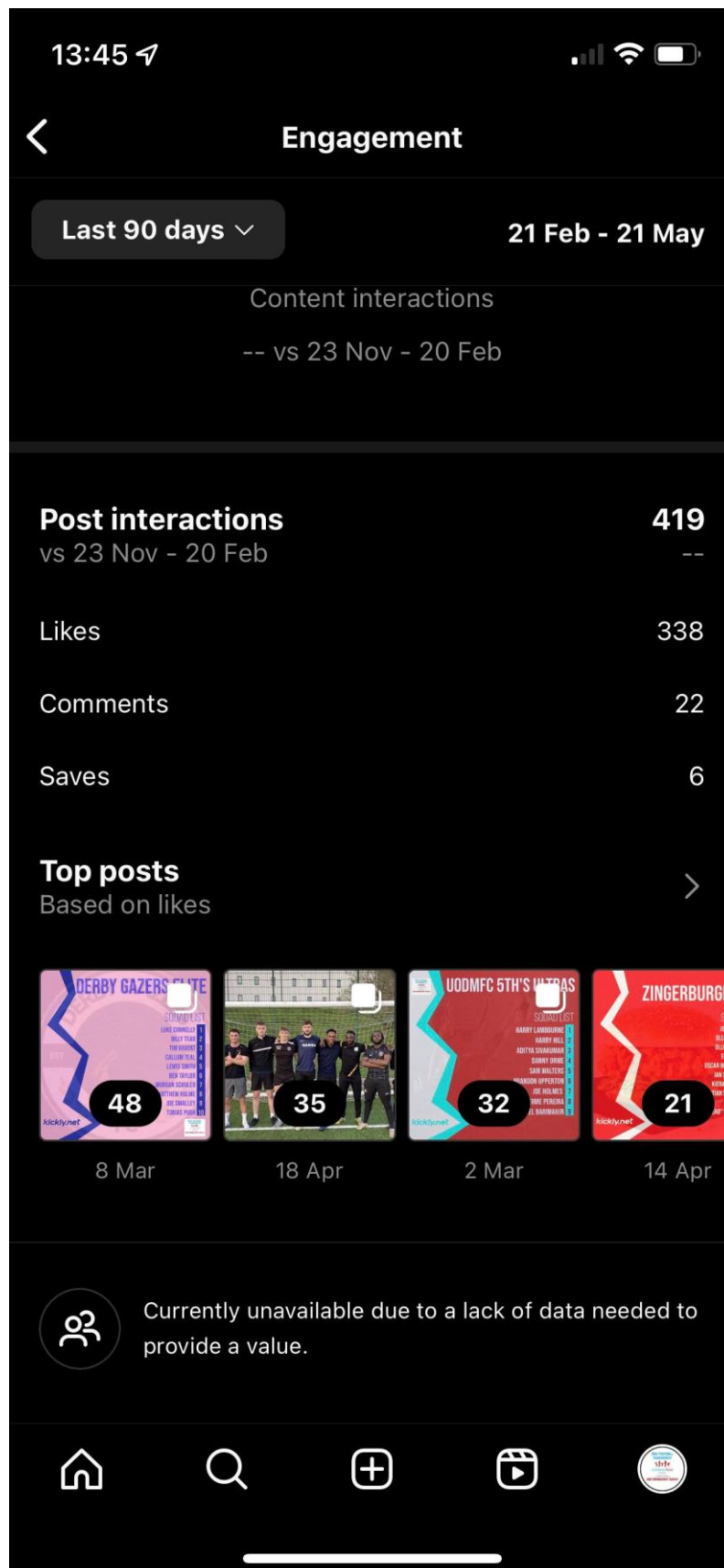
Appendix 3: Social Media reach continued



Appendix 4: Event page engagement



Appendix 5: Event Page likes and comments.



Appendix 6: Event Page posts and content



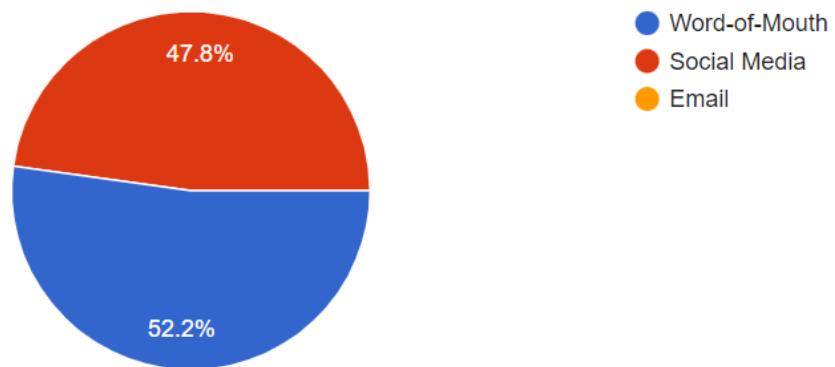
Appendix 7: Event page posts and content pt. 2



Appendix 8: Survey showing how attendees first learned about the event.

How did you first learn about the event?

23 responses





To James Bostock



Hi James,

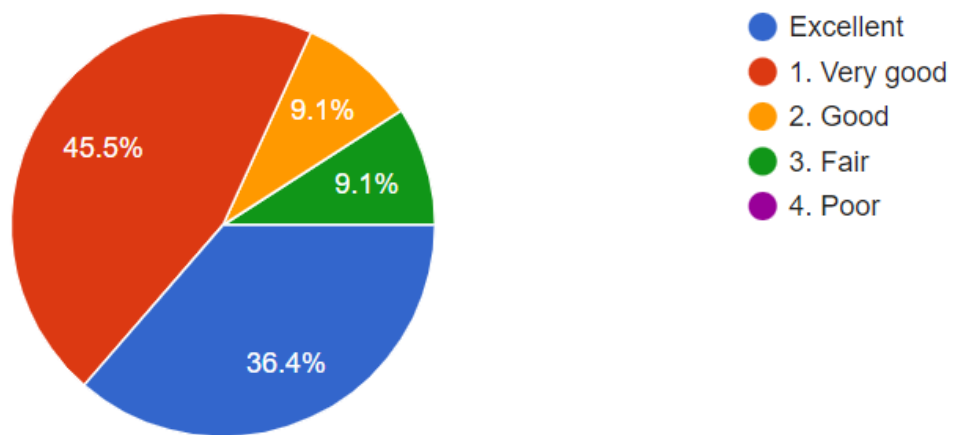
We're going to go ahead and postpone the event on Saturday. We agree that the weather would beat us and calling it off early is beneficial for all parties. We're going to post something on socials [tomorrow morning](#) and then send out follow up messages to all teams. I am discussing with the rest of the group when would be best to rearrange.

I will get back to you soon.

Appendix 10: Participant Enjoyment of the Event

Overall how would you rate the event?

22 responses

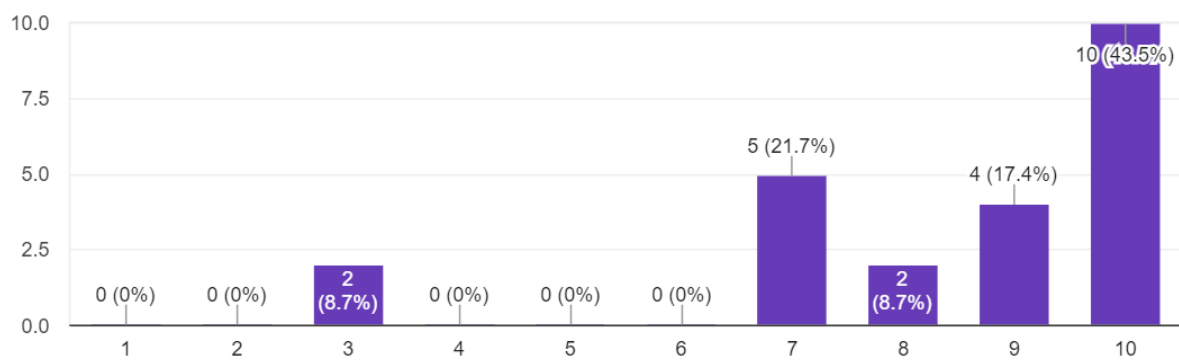


Appendix 11: Likelihood of recommendation

Rate on a scale of 1 to 10 how likely you would recommend this event to a friend or colleague.

 copy

23 responses

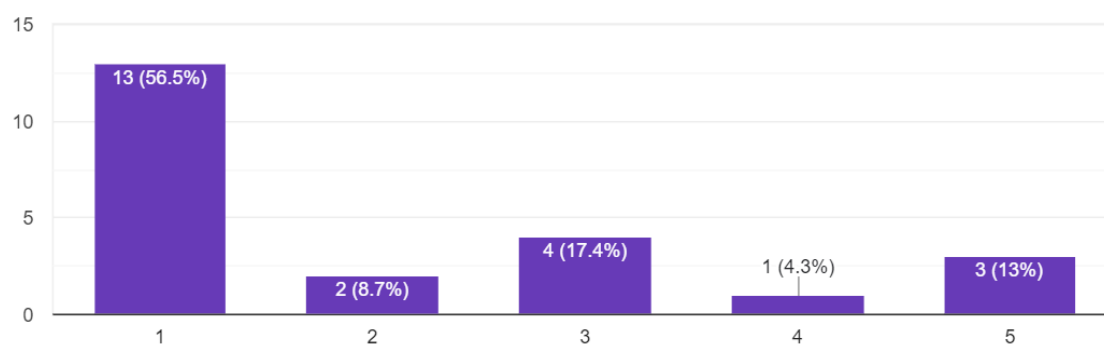


Appendix 12: Awareness of charity pre-event

Please rate on a scale of 1 - 5, how aware you were of the charity, Children First Derby before the event.

 Copy

23 responses

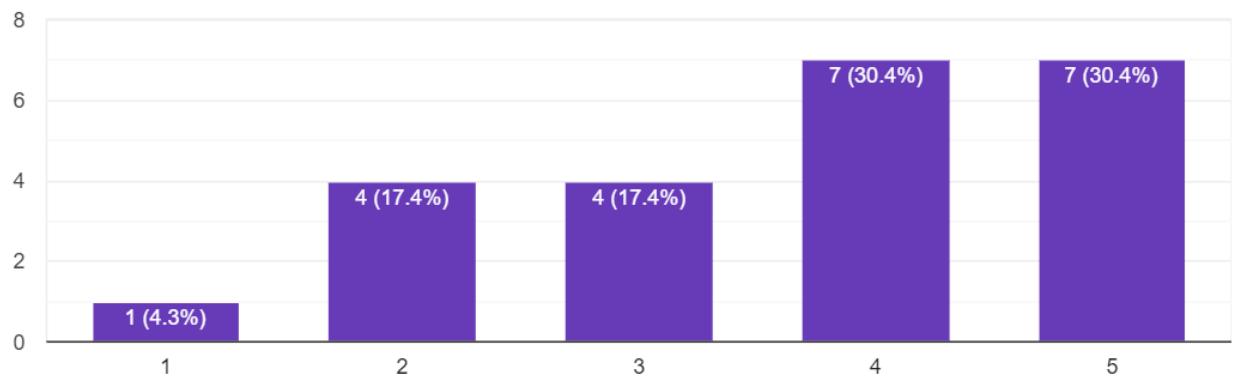


Appendix 13: Awareness of Charity post-event

Please rate on a scale of 1 - 5, how aware you were of the charity, Children First Derby after the event?

 Copy

23 responses



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