

*Goal: Examine ACU's football social media account(s) by comparing it to a high performing competitor in the same industry by following these steps that are similar to the steps of the social media planning framework.*

*Step 1: Evaluate ACU Football social media.*

*Step 2: Conduct research that will help identify a football team that is performing well with social media.*

*Step 3: Provide three recommendations to ACU based on your evaluation.*

February 19, 2023

### Football Social Media Assignment

ACU Football almost certainly has the main goal of increasing attendance at their football games thus generating more revenue for the school and the football program. ACU Football strives to create strong, loyal customers to increase return football games. Their customers are people who enjoy watching college football, including college students, alumni, and local fans of football in general. This demographic is attracted to ACU Football through earned media in the form of press recognition when they play games against other football teams. Another earned media source is through Instagram's share button, which is a way to send the post to another Instagram account. ACU wants to have a high share ratio to increase following and engagement. As well as social media sharing inside of Instagram is another earned media outlet. ACU Football's Instagram account is trying to communicate a strong team that is competitive with the other teams in the division. I also believe that they are attempting to build community cohesiveness and convey a common support of the team by posting all of the players' information through personnel posts. To analyze how well they are meeting their goals, I first looked at how many followers the football team's Instagram account has. It is just 7,358 followers, which seems low compared to the University enrollment rate of approximately 4,558. It should have more than 8,000 followers in an 8-year span if student involvement is high. The next analytical benchmark I used during my social media audit was to determine if ACU football responds to any user questions. It appears that they currently do not engage with the comment

section. I noticed that during the off season, content is sparse and cluttered. The last post was February 8th, which is more than 10 days ago at the time of this writing. That creates weak customer brand recognition because ACU Football is not posting consistently throughout the year. For example, postings regarding all of the players on the same day rather than spaced out throughout the week creates erratic engagement. This type of content is redundant, and mostly consists of action photos or still shots of the players. There are no informational posts for the upcoming season or off-season schedule. I think this decreases their conversion rate goal of getting more people to the football game. The tone of ACU Football is informative and energetic, which helps convey the message. The ACU football team's Instagram account does not appear to be fully optimized. For example, on the website, there is a complete football game schedule, yet that information is not present on Instagram. This creates reduced engagement as the audience doesn't know what the post is about.

The University of Alabama football team's social media goals are likely the same as ACU Football's: namely, to increase or ensure high football game attendance which in turn makes money for the school and football team. Alabama Football is an example of a college athletic department with a high-performing social media presence. For instance, their Instagram account currently has 1.1 million followers, which is the most followers of any NCAA football team in the country (@alabamafbl). In terms of a metric most people can easily understand, having the most followers in your particular category in the United States is the gold standard. But that is not the only reason to be impressed. It helps that Alabama has a history of being one of the best college football programs in the country. Their Instagram account is successfully capitalizing on that championship image. Their posts are varied but are relevant to the success they have achieved. They include a mix of videos and still shots, and they even post some non-football related content such as a picture of Martin Luther King in celebration of his life. This attracts a variety of people and helps create a sense of belonging to something bigger than

yourself. Alabama Football posts very frequently, even in the off season. For example, in the past week they have posted eight new images and videos on their Instagram account. It is evident that Alabama is utilizing social media more frequently than ACU Football, which increases brand recognition and followers. Alabama receives tens of thousands of likes, and hundreds of comments, on a regular basis, particularly for posts of its famous players and coaches. They play that up, because they must realize that the famous players of the past and present sell their championship brand.

My first recommendation for the ACU football team would be to include a post containing the game schedule in the comments detailing when the next game is. This is beneficial and convenient for their customers , and it would make it more likely for fans to make it to the games, which is their goal. It would also be helpful to post the schedule throughout the semester on the second page of photos. This way brand engagement will increase. A second way in which ACU Football social media can improve is by including photo groups in which multiple posts make up one picture. After reviewing Alabama Football's Instagram account, their team utilizes multiple photos to create a unique collage when looking at the profile. Lastly, the ACU football team can incorporate more words into their posts to make it easier for the reader. For instance, Alabama Football's posts include words along with visuals to draw the customer in. It also conveys a message quicker than just utilizing the comment section. It also boosts brand loyalty by educating people which players are active.