

The Jingle Bell Run Walk For Arthritis Strategic Communication Plan

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Master of Arts in Organizational and Strategic Communication

Emily Kelly

Queens University of Charlotte

Knight School of Communication

Executive Summary

The Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis (JBR) serves as a key fundraising event for the Mid-Atlantic Regional chapter of the Charlotte Arthritis Foundation (AF). The 2012 Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis raised over \$44,000 in funds that fuel key research and programs benefitting the 5.7 million adults diagnosed with arthritis in the Charlotte region.

This strategic communication plan outlines the purpose, an organizational and event analysis, key challenges and opportunities, market segmentation and implementation strategies for the successful deployment of communications initiatives for a charity-affiliated road race. Grounded in public relations and social theory, each component within the plan supports the goal of increased participation in the 2012 Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis, hosted by the Mid-Atlantic Region chapter of The Arthritis Foundation.

Purpose

The purpose of this plan is to boost participation in Charlotte's 2012 Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis. Although event participation has risen since the event's inception in 1984, a weakened economy contributed to flat or declining donations and reduced corporate sponsorships in 2012. This reduction in overall funds places additional importance on the Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis to serve as a key AF fundraising event. With the primary goal of increased participation in the 2012 run/walk, a sub-goal rests in direct contribution to the increased awareness of The Arthritis Foundation's mission and purpose.

Organization: The Arthritis Foundation and the Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis

The Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis

The Jingle Bell Run is a nationwide event that kicks off during the holiday season, raising awareness of America's leading cause of disability while also raising desperately needed funds for research, health education and government advocacy to improve the lives of people with arthritis.

Throughout its 29-year history, the Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis has become the nation's largest holiday run/walk event. All across the country, participants join in a 3-mile timed run, 3-mile fun walk and a kid's fun run with activities for the entire family. In celebration of the holiday season, participants tie jingle bells to their shoelaces, don festive holiday costumes and join friends and neighbors in support of the Arthritis Foundation's mission to prevent, control and cure arthritis and related diseases. Awards for fundraising, fastest race times and creative costuming are part of the concluding festivities of this signature event.

There are over 130 Jingle Bell Run/Walks for Arthritis nationwide with more than 115,000 participants and volunteers. In 2011, the national Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis events raised over \$7.2M; funding that directly contributes to critical research and a cure.

About The Arthritis Foundation

The Arthritis Foundation (AF) is the only national not-for-profit organization that supports the more than 100 types of arthritis and related conditions. Founded in 1948, with headquarters in Atlanta, the Arthritis Foundation has multiple service points located throughout the country. The Arthritis Foundation is the largest private, not-for-profit contributor to arthritis research in the world, funding more than \$450 million in research grantsⁱ. The foundation helps people take control of arthritis by providing public health education; pursuing public policy and legislation and conducting evidence-based programs to improve the quality of life for those living with arthritis.

Arthritis or chronic joint symptoms are more widespread than imagined, affecting nearly 50 million Americans, or one out of five adults and approximately 300,000 childrenⁱⁱ. In North and South Carolina, arthritis affects more than 3 million people, including 15,000 children.

Mission

Our mission is to improve lives through leadership in the prevention, control and cure of arthritis and related diseases.

Organization and Event Analysis Using Social Theory

This strategic communication plan is grounded in public relations and social theory; strategies and tactics throughout are reflective of key social theorists and are noted throughout the plan. Pierre Bourdieu's reworked typology of capitalⁱⁱⁱ provides a foundation for analysis while Robert Putnam's description of the social capital creation process^{iv} serves as a useful illustration for crafting the participant experience and determining how communications shape future experiences and expectations for 2012 JBR participants (See [Appendix E](#)).

The following five questions leverage Pierre Bourdieu's reworked typology of capital and serve as the foundation for analysis of Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis strategic communication plan.

To what degree is the Arthritis Foundation “institutionalized”?

This question seeks to assess human resources details, such as the number of employees and size of the administration, illustrate the number of people dedicated to communications efforts and determine how this allocation of human resources compares to similar organizations.

- The Arthritis Foundation (AF) has eight employees in the Charlotte, North Carolina office and relies on a volunteer base to assist in the planning and execution of public outreach initiatives, such as the Arthritis Walk and Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis. These eight employees report in to a thirteen-member executive staff responsible for overseeing the five Mid-Atlantic regional offices. Within this structure, one staff member serves as vice president of communication for the region. Autonomy is granted to the regional offices for creation and oversight of public relations initiatives, however, they are created in accordance with brand standards and guidelines provided by the national AF and distributed to regional chapters.

In contrast, the Susan G. Komen for the Cure Charlotte chapter employs four full-time staff members and one part-time to serve nine counties surrounding Charlotte, North Carolina as well as one county located in South Carolina. Their Charlotte-area staff reports to a thirteen-member Board of Directors dedicated to the greater Charlotte region.

Assessment: One full time communications resource serves the Charlotte, North Carolina Arthritis Foundation office and the surrounding Mid-Atlantic regional offices. While this resource provides high-level governance for public relations initiatives, the lack of a resource based in Charlotte creates hardship in coordinating efforts for local events. As a result, public relations efforts are predominantly assigned to the director of development for management and execution on a per-event basis. The plan is crafted to reflect a reliance on a volunteer(s) to assist in the director of development in the execution of the suggested strategies. As the director of development is responsible for the oversight of the Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis, a volunteer resource is essential to assist in implementing public relations and communications efforts.

Similar national organizations, such as the Susan G. Komen for the Cure, offer a Board of Directors who solely supports the greater Charlotte region. Having locally based support may be advantageous as the executive team provides oversight for one office and region. The Arthritis Foundation model tasks an executive staff with supporting the initiatives of multiple AF offices and events throughout a multi-state region.

1. What kind of economic capital does an organization have?

This question assesses the Arthritis Foundation's budget and availability of financial resources to the Foundation and for the JBR.

- As of year ending 2011, the national and regional offices of the Arthritis Foundation reported net assets of \$157,383,648. Per the AF's auditors, regional chapters use an independent auditing process and furnish the findings to the national chapter. The regional chapter results are subsequently not available for independent review.

Assessment: Regional chapter results are imperative to determining a budget for the Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis. As of 2012, these numbers were not available to volunteers. The plan suggests initiatives that use existing resources to implement rather than incurring additional costs, such as creating profiles/accounts for the event through internet-based tools such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. This strategy requires the use of a digital subscriber line (DSL) for Internet access – a resource currently budgeted for business use at the Arthritis Foundation office.

2. What kind of knowledge capital does an organization have?

Knowledge capital focuses on the formal professional education or acquisition of informal skills through practice, focusing on the education, skills and experience represented in the organization.

- Stephani Tucker, director of development for the Charlotte chapter, holds over three years experience as director of development for the Arthritis Foundation. Prior to her joining the Foundation, she served over five years as special events manager for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.
- The Charlotte chapter partnered on a per diem basis with Edelman, a public relations firm, to provide public relations support for ongoing community outreach initiatives. Due to budgetary concerns, Edelman currently serves as an advisor to the Charlotte chapter; the director of development leads the majority of the Charlotte AF's public relations initiatives.

Assessment: The director of development holds prior experience event planning for non-profit organizations. This experience proves valuable in coordinating the communications efforts for AF events such as the Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis. Partnering with a public relations firm provides specialized experience and an additional resource, however, this practice may be cost-prohibitive for the AF. The strategies suggested within the plan appropriately align with the experience level of the director of development and may be tailored or expanded upon by an outside resource, such as a public relations firm.

3. What kind of social capital does an organization have?

Bourdieu states social capital is comprised of group membership and the credentials and credit that follow from itⁱⁱⁱ. Key criterion includes the size of the network, the number of people engaged in the network and the volume of capital that may be accessed through the parties in the network. This type of capital may be qualitatively assessed by evaluating the type of connections the Arthritis Foundation possesses – through members of the media, corporations, researchers and medical practitioners.

Qualitative assessment:

- Media relationships
 - WCNC reporters and staff (Colleen Odegaard, Larry Sprinkle)
 - WBTV reporters (John Carter)
- Key sponsorships
 - Humana
 - SunTrust Bank
 - McIntosh Law Firm
 - Genentech
- Researchers and practitioners
 - Duke Children’s Hospital
 - OrthoCarolina
 - Carolina Bone & Joint

Assessment: While active in coordinating community outreach and fundraising events, the Charlotte chapter has made little investment to date in online tools or social media. The opportunity for growth is exponential – development of a Facebook page, Twitter account, YouTube channel (featuring footage garnered from outreach events) as well as an up-to-date home page could give the Charlotte chapter a boost in further generation of social capital. As a result, the strategies suggested within the plan support generating social capital through social media tools.

4. What kind of symbolic capital does an organization have?

As defined by Bourdieu, social capital is “a reputation for competence and an image of respectability and honourabilityⁱⁱⁱ.” All other forms of capital feed into the Arthritis Foundation’s volume of symbolic capital are qualitatively illustrated to indicate the AF’s social standing, prestige and legitimacy.

Serving as the only not-for-profit organization that supports arthritis and related conditions, the Arthritis Foundation is the largest private, not-for-profit contributor to arthritis research in the

world, funding more than \$380 million in research grants since 1948. The AF also prides itself on advocacy by providing public health education and pursuing public policy legislation. At the Mid-Atlantic level, the Charlotte chapter contributed \$750,000 in 2011 to research by and for the region, where over 5.7 million people live daily with the pain of arthritis.

Charity Navigator, an independent, non-profit organization that evaluates American charities, may assist in the measurement or quantification of symbolic capital. Charity Navigator ranks the Arthritis Foundation at 36.91, or a one out of four (exceptional) star rating. Damaging the AF's score is a decline of revenue, increased expenses and a lack of a key staff listing on the AF's website. However, the Foundation received four stars for accountability and transparency, receiving a score of 64.00 on a 70-point scale.

Assessment: The Arthritis Foundation is the only non-profit organization supporting persons with arthritis and related conditions. As the sole agency to provide resources, education, advocacy and research support, the AF is reputable and respected. However, the Charity Navigator rating may serve to damage the AF's reputation if not addressed and repaired. Focus on increasing the organization's symbolic capital would assist in effectively delivering on the strategies listed within the plan, as increasing respect, trust and honor creates greater affinity between the organization, the media and potential participants.

Pierre Bourdieu's reworked typology of capital provides a foundation for the crafting and deployment of strategies illustrated in the strategic communication plan. The assessment of institutionalization and types of capital (economic, knowledge, social and symbolic) reveals strengths, opportunities and weaknesses within the AF that are addressed through the strategies suggested within the plan.

Challenges

There are three key challenges to implementing the strategic communication plan for the Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis: engaging the greater Charlotte community, obtaining event coverage from local media and a heavy reliance on volunteers to manage fundraising events. Through analyzing the structure of the Arthritis Foundation, the competitive charitable donations landscape and these key challenges, action steps are embedded within the strategies suggested in the plan to effectively mitigate each challenge.

The Mid-Atlantic chapter of The Arthritis Foundation employs a regional vice president of communication, responsible for guiding initiatives for the District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, North and South Carolina. While the regional vice president provides oversight in accordance with core Foundation initiatives, local chapters are tasked with public relations and marketing communication management and execution. Stephani Tucker, the Southern Development Director, leads all initiatives impacting the greater Charlotte area.

The AF competes for charitable donation market share as well as for brand (mission) awareness among other local and national non-profits. Examples of national non-profit organizations with regional presence: the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, Susan G. Komen for the Cure, the United Way, American Cancer Society, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Habitat for Humanity as well as regional programs led by Goodwill, The Salvation Army, Ronald McDonald House, etc.

- **Challenge #1:** Engaging the greater Charlotte community

By evaluating Charlotte's population data, conducting a demographic analysis can be a valuable tool for understanding the data and translating it to appropriately inform the strategies noted in the strategic communication plan.

With a population of over 750k (as of 2012) and a median age of 32 years, Charlotte is a city comprised of a youthful demographic, with 44.74% of the population aged between 18 and 44^y. 14% of Charlotte-area residents are aged 45-54, 8.46% 55-64, 4% 65-74 and 3.48% 75 and older (see [Market Segmentation](#) for demographic breakdown).

While this younger segment of the population may appear to be the ideal demographic to target for participation in the event, it is a challenge to engage them and obtain a commitment of resources (whether emotional, financial or participatory) for this particular event over causes that may be traditionally associated with or adopted by this demographic. Arthritis often carries a stigma that labels the disease as an "older person's" illness rather than one that affects one out of five Americans – both adults and children.

Target Charlotte Demographic

This plan's tactics and strategies reflect and target the communication consumption preferences of adults aged 18-44 for two reasons: Charlotte's population statistics demonstrate a saturation (nearly 50%) of residents within this age range; this range is also generally more likely to participate in a community event requiring physical activity/output, with the median age of females participating in a 5k 33.1 and males, 34.4.

The following analysis illustrates the challenges and values of the Charlotte, North Carolina demographic that shape the potential for participation in charity-affiliated sporting events such as the Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis.

Challenges: Determining and utilizing communication channels this audience is most likely to consume. Social media is one channel to which this segment responds – 67% of active Twitter users are under the age of 45 and 54% of those under 45 actively use Facebook. (See [Appendix A](#))

Values: Generation X, or Americans born between 1965 and 1980, tend to value individualism, are technologically adept, are more flexible in times of change than their cohorts and value work/life balance. Generation Y, or "millennials" born between 1981 and 1995, tend to be more socially liberal than other generations, yet hold fairly traditional values. They value family, personal connection, loyalty, and are advocates for social justice, the environment, tolerance and diversity.

- **Challenge #2:** Engaging the Charlotte media

With over 280 5k races listed in the Charlotte area for 2012 just on www.runningintheusa.com, (online race aggregator), Charlotte hosts a number of run/walk events. Differentiating the JBR from other charitable races and events is a consistent challenge not unique to this particular event. Media engagement, while limited, trends toward showcasing the human interest component of the event – the JBR features a "hero" for each event and is the center of the JBR story for that particular year.

Reaching the Greater Charlotte Community

In 2012, a mix of print, television, online and social media were used to publicize the JBR. The primary focus was placed on online channels (local running store/running-focused websites, community calendars, the venue website)---print, television and social media following, respectively. Statistically, a younger audience consumes and responds to non-traditional channels, such as the internet and social media. Older audiences tend to respond to more traditional channels, such as the newspaper, television and radio. However, with 46% of Facebook's users over the age of 45, these trends are likely shifting.

Without a city-specific online race aggregator or repository, finding race information online is a fragmented experience, often with potential participants turning toward their local running store's website, word-of-mouth or past participation with a particular race for information. As reaching the Charlotte community through a one-stop-shop race website is not possible at this time, race information is posted and disseminated to multiple media channels, websites, running stores and community calendars.

The volume of events in the Charlotte region and overall decreased charitable giving creates greater competition for non-profit event participation and contributions. The public may also be generally more skeptical of charitable organizations and funding allocation – in 2011 and 2012, several controversies surrounding non-profits rose to the public forefront, notably, the Susan G. Komen for the Cure/Planned Parenthood issue as well as the KONY 2012 campaign's nearly instantaneous success and image tarnishing by its co-founder. While measurability of non-profit skepticism proves elusive, it would be prudent to remain mindful of any residual skepticism while interacting and communicating with the public for the JBR.

Through the analysis of Charlotte's demographic data and past strategies used to engage the community, the data reveals valuable insights that directly inform the strategies and action items within the strategic communication plan. With a median age of 32 years and values rooted in personal connection, the plan proposes a multi-channel approach rooted in Putnam's theories of community and social capital.

- **Challenge #3:** Heavy reliance on a volunteer base to plan and execute key AF fundraising events.

The Arthritis Foundation, a 501(c)3 organization, employs eight full-time employees in the Charlotte, North Carolina office and relies heavily on a volunteer base to assist in the planning and execution of public outreach and fundraising initiatives. The director of development simultaneously leads multiple outreach and fundraising initiatives, fostering reliance on a volunteer workforce to assist.

Without the accountability and compensation of full-time employment by the Foundation, volunteers may cease to contribute their time and resources to the event at any point. If a volunteer is tasked with managing a major initiative and departs their role, the remaining committee members and AF staff must make arrangements to complete the task or obtain another volunteer to backfill the position. No formal employment may also lead to conflicts in priority; if a volunteer has another commitment, they may prioritize this commitment over one for the AF, leading to gaps in volunteer coverage or incomplete tasks critical to furthering an initiative.

Additionally, without the intrinsic and acquired knowledge that accrues with organizational employment over time, misinformation may be shared unintentionally, brand standards may not be observed, and/or tasks may not be managed within the AF's standards. While the AF has a roster of committed volunteers, the nature of variability is a salient point to bear in mind when relying on volunteers to execute on the Foundation's behalf.

Opportunities

Evaluation of the three key challenges to the Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis reveal an opportunity to use communications tools familiar to both AF employees and volunteers while reaching a younger demographic and engaging members of the local media.

- **Opportunity #1:** Leverage primary motives for participation to engage the Charlotte community

As organizers of charity-affiliated sporting events seek to attract participants of all athletic abilities, the scope of the event and subsequent fundraising capacity of an event encompasses anyone actively interested in keeping fit and/or in pursuing a healthy lifestyle^{vi}. However, little is known about the motives that drive people to enter mass participation sporting events, other than that a broad range of motives apply. Scott and Solomon (2003) identified a continuum of participant types, ranging from "event junkies," who took part primarily for the competition to "social butterflies," or individuals participate for the social interaction^{vii}.

Bennett, Mousley, Kitchin and Ali-Choudhury (2007) discovered three primary motives for participation (sport, fitness and cause related) that drive participation in mass sporting events with charitable connections. These motives may relate to the sporting activity itself, to the general desire to pursue a healthy lifestyle or the wish to take part in an event arising from a strong desire to support the charitable cause with which the event is aligned^{vi}.

Motive 1: Physical Well-Being

The desire to experience an activity leading to a sense of physical well-being serves as a common cause of participation in sports. Benefits are both physiological and psychological, with participants experiencing physical arousal (dubbed "the runner's high) as well as stress reduction. The desire to identify psychologically with a sport^{viii} or master its techniques, therefore improving self-esteem^{ix} also helps drive the desire to participate in the sport. A person may experience feelings of pride and accomplishment through participation in a sporting event such as a charity-affiliated road race as the prestige of participation is transferred psychologically to a person's self-esteem and self-identity^x.

Motive 2: Pursuing a Healthy Lifestyle

Individuals who are drawn toward keeping fit and pursuing a healthy lifestyle are more likely to engage in physical activity and are attracted to participate in general exercise activities, such as running or cycling, rather than in specific sports such as tennis or football^{vi}. Further, individuals who pursue these activities have a desire to experience fun and enjoyment^{vi} and mix socially with others attracted to healthy living. As these individuals are more likely than others to elect participation in physical activity, they serve as an attractive target market for charity-affiliated sporting events.

Motive 3: Cause-Related Involvement

Bennett, Mousley, Kitchin and Ali-Choudhury (2007) discuss the role of a level of involvement, or the perceived relevance of an entity based on a person's needs, values and interests, may play in influencing participation decisions. Bennett and Gabriel (1999) assert certain individuals might be motivated to participate in an event more through levels of personal physiological involvement with the act of supporting the charity or charities affiliated with the event than by another consideration. While significant, the level of involvement served as a relatively minor influence on participation decisions, confirming research conducted by Linder and Kerr (2001) and Gwinner and Swanson (2003) that states "involved" individuals proactively seek participation in events connected with their favored sporting activity.

The research of Bennett, Mousley, Kitchin and Ali-Choudhury revealed 81% of event participants were willing to pay an additional entrance fee for events with a charity connection^{vi}. Individuals who shared feelings of personal involvement with the cause were prepared to pay higher fees than others, implying a lower level of price sensitivity within this group of participants. Further, as involvement with the cause serves as a predominant motive for participation, communications efforts should reflect the event's ability to enable participants to demonstrate enthusiasm for and affinity with the charitable organization^{vi}.

- **Opportunity #2:** Increase effective use of social media tools

Within the context of challenge #2, opportunity exists to better leverage social media tools in an effort to capture the attention and participation of the 18-44 segment. The Mid-Atlantic Chapter has a Facebook account; however, the content is provided and managed at a regional level. The AF also uses Twitter to communicate with followers and is also managed at the regional level. While the tools are in place, the Mid-Atlantic Chapter may submit content or allow Charlotte employees/volunteers to provide content for both Facebook and Twitter.

Use of these tools, as depicted in [Appendix A](#), effectively targets this demographic, reaching them through channels they've adopted as vehicles of communication.

- **Opportunity #3:** Create committed volunteers

One of the most distinctive features of the nonprofit sector is its voluntary nature^{xi}. As an unpaid workforce, volunteers can be greatly advantageous to an organization. Intentional planning and vision setting from nonprofit leadership can maximize volunteer participation through the management of volunteer interests, facilitation of relationships with staff members and ensured connection to the organization's strategic goals^{xi}.

To assist in creating committed volunteers, leadership must share the organization and event's vision. Providing a vision and plan helps guide a volunteer base both in task-related efforts and in fostering greater depth in relationships with the organization and event. Volunteers thrive when they can see that the work they perform is central to the organization: work that impacts the organization's bottom line—its mission^{xi}.

Suggested Communication Plan

Strategy #1: Use a multi-channel communication approach

Recommendation:

Promote participation in the 2012 Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis through communication and simultaneous multi-channel marketing communications. This promotion serves to boost both social and symbolic capital of the JBR and of the AF – by broadening the existing JBR participant base and solidifying the Arthritis Foundation’s reputability within the greater Charlotte community.

Required resources:

Volunteer: External volunteer resource + partnership with and final approval from internal AF resource (Stephani Tucker) in messaging development and deployment.

Tech: DSL/high-speed Internet connection, camera, phone, access to www.kintera.org, Mid-Atlantic Chapter Facebook/Twitter accounts

Channels:

- Web
 - <http://www.kintera.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=1023235>
 - Create vanity URL for 2013
 - 2012 = www.jinglebellruncharlotte.kintera.org
- Print, television and radio
 - See [Appendix B](#) for a list of Charlotte television, newspaper and radio stations.
 - Create and distribute press release to each media outlet
 - Reach out to existing media contacts and either develop or further current relationships.
 - Schedule pitch follow-up week of event, two days prior, etc.
- Participant email
 - Leverage Kintera email automation tools to reach out to registered participants
 - Month prior, two weeks prior, five days prior to event.
 1. Coordinate packet pickup, team/captain meetings and communication as well as share tips and tricks for raising funds.
- Social media
 - [Twitter](#)
 - Continually post event information and relevant content
 - Create a hashtag for others to reference and join the conversation
 - #CharlotteJBR, #Arthritis, #CLT, #JBR, #running, #5k, etc.
 - Follow previous event participants and those who currently follow the AF or other relevant people/companies.
 - Don’t just push content - engage with followers
 - [Facebook](#)
 - Encourage past participants to share stories, post photos and invite friends to participate in the fun.
 - Create an event invitation on Facebook – allows participants to connect to the Mid-Atlantic AF page as well as quickly and easily forward invitation to Facebook friends.
 - [Instagram](#)

- Create an account
- Link to Facebook and tweet links to photos
- Invite Twitter followers and Facebook friends to follow along and share their photos
 - Creates pre, during and post-race affinity among participants.
 - Pre-race: builds community, anticipation and excitement.
 - During: Captures excitement, action and community.
 - After: promote community, camaraderie among participants. Creates visibility for the event and its participants.
- Use the same hashtag(s) as noted above for Twitter
 - Photo ideas:
 - Committee meetings
 - Pre-event setup
 - Sponsorship photos, i.e. a picture of committee members outside of TrySports
 - Inspirational quotes
 - AF staff and volunteers at other AF events
 - Encourage dialog and followers by following, liking and commenting on their photos.
- All platforms: links/hot buttons/addresses for social media sites displayed prominently on all communications mediums
- Event follow-up:
 - Clear and concise communications deployed through web, email and social media
 - Messaging examples:
 - “Thank you for your participation”
 - “Amount (of donations) raised”
 - Arthritis Foundation mission engagement – how your donations matter
 - Participant engagement: upload post-race photos and share stories via Facebook and Twitter
 - Miscellaneous event follow-up
 - “If you didn’t receive a t-shirt...”
 - Follow-up messaging to those registering after cut-off wrapping up logistical details or any additional loose ends.

Roles:

Budgetary impact: Minimal. These initiatives may be implemented and executed by volunteers in conjunction with AF staff and utilize existing resources - no additional capital investment required.

Goals:

- Goal #1: share key event information in a timely manner
 - Time, date, location, logistics, event details.

- Goal #2: engage the greater Charlotte community in the event and the Arthritis Foundation's mission and purpose.
 - Create communications reflective of the fun and communal atmosphere created at the Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis as well as engage participants on an emotional level
 - Feels good to support a cause.

Measurement:

Measurement may be derived in comparison to 2011 communication initiatives – number of mentions in newspapers, television coverage, web hits and overall participants. The amount of sponsorships and funds raised also serve as a subset of communication effectiveness and reach.

Strategy #2 – Increase the event’s social and symbolic capital

Recommendation: manage expectations, foster trust and promote event and cause engagement

Participation is promoted through multi-channel marketing communications with the goal of furthering the social and symbolic capital of the JBR and of the AF. Event coordinators, communicators and volunteers are the building blocks of constructing and furthering Jingle Bell Run/Walk participant trust. Participants expect communications and event details to remain consistent, correct and timely. Further, each interaction with a participant, whether in person or online, must align with previously communicated information in order to successfully avoid miscommunications or mismanaging a participant’s expectations.

Opportunities:

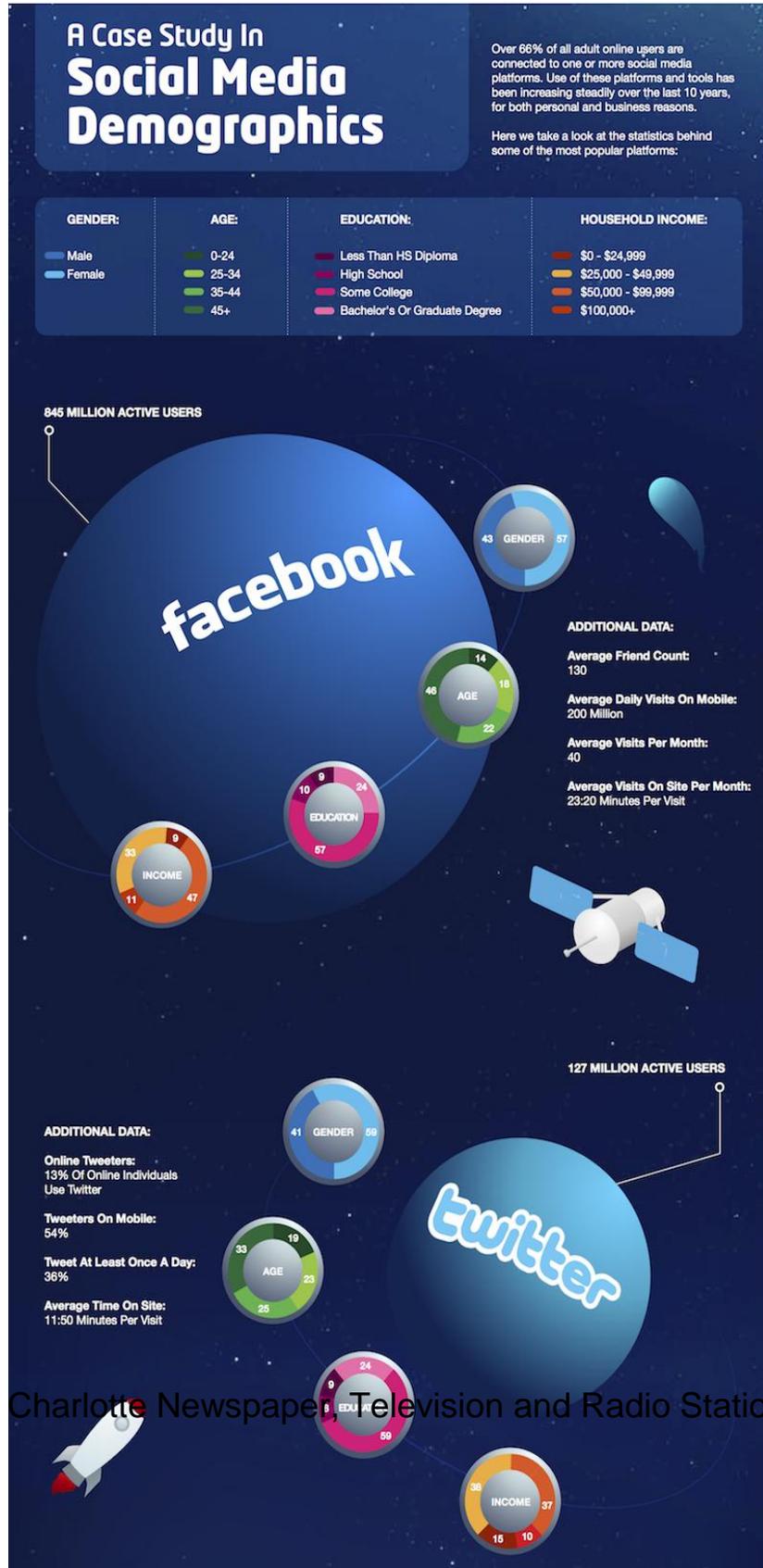
- Event time designated before the first event communication deploys and does not change. Setting a concrete event time minimizes future participant confusion and reduces volume of participant questions regarding start/anticipated stop times.
- Setting and maintaining consistent policies
 - Ex: t-shirt distribution
 - If participant is pre-registered online, they pick up their shirt with race packet
 - If participant registers in person the day before or day of event, they may either pick up their shirt at The Arthritis Foundation or request their shirt be mailed to their home/business address

As rooted in Putnam’s theories of community and social capital and illustrated by the model of the extremes of social capital creation ([Appendix C](#)), awareness of the participant experience and concerted effort to establish (for first time participants) or build upon (previous event participants) trust while creating a positive event experience constructs higher amounts of social capital and ongoing engagement with participants of the 2012 Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis. Facilitation of coordinated action shapes the experiences and expectations of participants and in turn constructs a cycle of trust, establishment of a positive reputation, and engagement with the Arthritis Foundation’s mission and recurring event participation.

Conclusion

With implementation of this strategic communications plan’s principles, tactics and strategies, the 2012 Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis is poised for success. The tactics outlined within this plan, grounded in public relations and social theory, serve as a roadmap for boosting participation in the 2012 Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis. These tactics may be expanded upon or revised as needed to accommodate fluctuations in event details, market forces or volunteer/staffing resources.

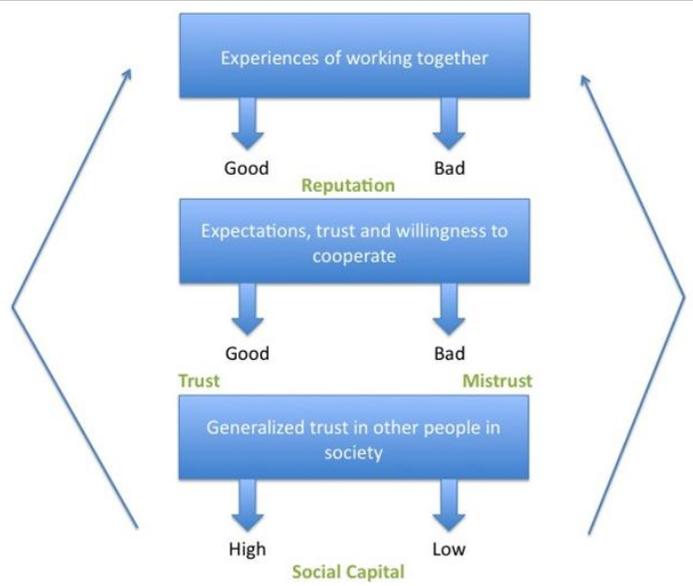
Appendix A: Social Media Infographic



Appendix B: Charlotte Newspaper, Television and Radio Stations

Newspaper	Television	Radio
Charlotte Business Journal	Channel 3 WBTV	WNSC 88.9 FM
Charlotte Observer	Channel 9 WSOC	WDAV 89.9 FM
Charlotte Post	Channel 14 WHKY	WFAE 90.7 FM
Creative Loafing Charlotte	Channel 18 WCCB	WRCM 91.9 FM
Mecklenburg Times	Channel 30 WNSC (PBS)	WNKS 95.1 FM
Q Notes	Channel 36 WCNC	WXRC 95.7 FM
Rhinceros Times	Channel 42 WTVI (PBS)	WWMG 96.1 FM
South Charlotte Weekly	Channel 46 WJZY	WKKT 96.9 FM
University Times	Channel 55 WMYT	WPEG 97.9 FM
		WRFX 99.7 FM
		WBAV 101.9 FM
		WLYT 102.9 FM
		WSOC 103.7 FM
		WKOC 104.7 FM
		WEND 106.5 FM
		WLNK 107.9 FM
		WFNZ 610 AM
		WNOW 1030 AM
		WBT 1110 AM
		WWWC 1240 AM
		WOCR 1540 AM

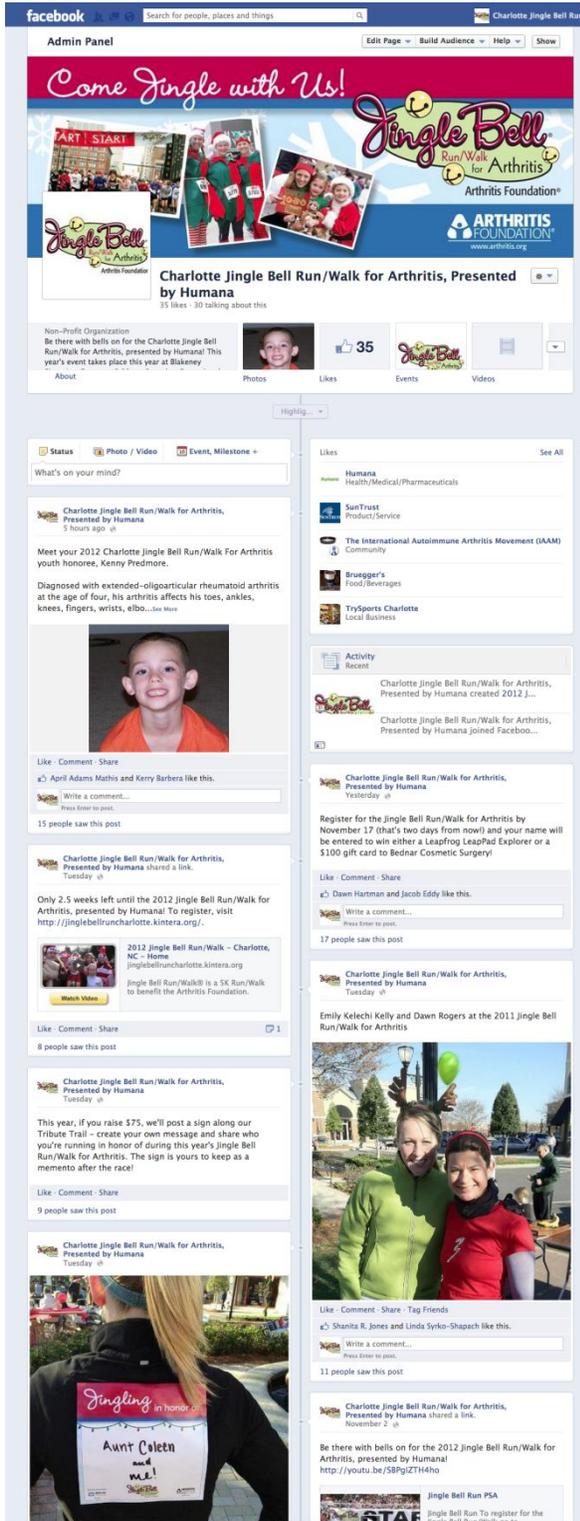
Appendix C: Model of the Extremes of Social Capital Creation



Appendix D: Social Media Assets

Facebook [home page](#):

Twitter [home page](#):



The screenshot shows the Facebook page for the 'Charlotte Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis, Presented by Humana'. The page features a banner with the text 'Come Jingle with Us!' and 'Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis' logo. Below the banner, there is a post from Humana with 35 likes and a photo of a young boy. The page also includes a 'Like' button, a 'Share' button, and a 'Comment' button. There are several posts from other users, including one from Dawn Hartman and Jacob Eddy, and another from Emily Kelechi Kelly and Dawn Rogers. The page also has a 'Status' section and a 'Photo / Video' section.



The screenshot shows the Twitter profile for '2012 Jingle Bell Run @CharlotteJBR'. The profile includes a header with the text '2012 Jingle Bell Run @CharlotteJBR' and a bio that reads 'The 2012 Charlotte, NC Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis, presented by Humana, is on 12/1/12. Visit jinglebellruncharlotte.kintera.org to sign up today!'. The profile also shows 7 tweets, 24 following, and 3 followers. There are two tweets visible, both from @CharlotteJBR, one dated 5h and one dated 8h. The tweets mention the 'Charlotte Color Run' and the 'Jingle Bell Run'.

Appendix E: Foundational Documents

Robert Putnam: Community and Social Capital

Robert Putnam (1993, 2000, 2003) asserts the success of societies greatly depends on the horizontal bonds of collaboration: only long-term relations, such as associations and clubs, are

able to generate the cohesion that brings societal benefits such as lower crime rates, increased health, happiness, and even economic prosperity^{iv}. According to Putnam (2000), society has seen a decrease in a sense of communityⁱⁱⁱ, which makes relationships difficult to establish and maintain. He states the reasons behind the decrease are several, notably the shift in society moving from a traditional family structure toward living alone, suburban sprawl that fractured spatial integrity and affected free time^{xii}. Additionally, the introduction of electronic entertainment “privatized” leisure time, and the newer generations value communal activities less than their predecessors. These foreboding trends created a slow erosion of the social networks vital for the welfare of our societies and individuals.

To counter these effects on societies and individuals, Putnam claims civic engagement, political equality, solidarity, trust and tolerance as well as a strong associational lifeⁱⁱⁱ are the keys to a thriving civic community. Social capital, the “features of social organization, such as trust, norms and networks that can improve the efficiency of society,” builds and maintains a thriving community^{xiii}. To generate social capital, individuals must work together and establish trust by participating in social organizations, clubs and associations.

In the unification of a group of people to achieve a common goal, bonding, or social capital that furthers in-group cohesionⁱⁱⁱ occurs among participants. A physical accomplishment such as participating in and completing a 5k or 1k race strengthens in-group cohesion for those who experience physical limitations – the crossing of the finish line serves as a physical expression of conquering limitation as well as a metaphoric transcendence beyond illness. For participants not experiencing physical limitations, the cohesion may stem from unifying as a group under a common goal - to complete a race in support of eradication of an illness.

Putnam’s theories of community and social capital illuminate the need for a strategic communication plan to creatively engage a public increasingly retreating to their homes and participating in privatized leisure time. Strategies in the plan should inform potential event participants of this opportunity to support a sense of community, do the right thing (support those affected by illness) and bond together as a team or groupⁱⁱⁱ. Generating increased social capital for both the Jingle Bell Run and the Arthritis Foundation are key goals of the plan. Through the action steps outlined in this deliverable, the plan encourages participation by promoting the event, detailing the activities for individuals of varying fitness levels, physical ability and ages. Successful implementation of the plan yields “safe” and “easy” social capital opportunities, attracting future participants to the event and encouraging or increasing engagement in the Arthritis Foundation’s mission and objectives.

Pierre Bourdieu: A Reworked Typology of Capital

Pierre Bourdieu (1992) defines “field” as a social space or network of relationship between peopleⁱⁱⁱ. Bourdieu’s (1992) theories of field struggles, or the implication that people struggle and compete to position themselves in fields with the help of different forms of symbolic and material resources (capital), suggests organizations also struggle for these positions. Through Bourdieu’s reworked typology of capital, public relations assists organizations in various fields, providing a framework for the different forms of capital an organization possessesⁱⁱⁱ. The

relevance of field struggles to the strategic communication plan is illuminated through understanding the different forms of power positions constructed with the help of capital and public relations. One position of power lies in language – it is a form of symbolic power that is often not recognized as such. Understanding language as power serves as the foundation for the public relations initiatives outlined within the strategic communications plan. It gives voice to an event, speaks on behalf of an organization and reaches out to a set of publics who may have a personal stake and an individual narrative tied to the cause; whether it be themselves, a loved one, family friend or coworker affected by arthritis.

Social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter serve as a platform for reaching out to desired publics; through the creation of a Facebook and Twitter page, the event assumes a voice for which current and potential participants may identify, engage, share and comment. This engagement may be shared quickly and easily across the participants' networks; with each "like" or retweet, the mission and objectives of the event and organization gains power.

Moreover, Bourdieu proposes five forms of capital (1984) that frame relevance for public relations and analyze different forms of power positions. The strategic communication plan addresses these five key questions, helping to frame the analyses woven throughout the plan.

- To what degree is the organization institutionalized?
- What kind of economic capital does an organization have?
- What kind of knowledge capital does an organization have?
- What kind of social capital does an organization have?
- What kind of symbolic capital does an organization have?

Pierre Bourdieu's typology of capital links theory to practice and provides a foundation for the crafting of strategies and action steps within the strategic communication plan. The five key questions leverage Pierre Bourdieu's reworked typology of capital and frame the analysis of Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis strategic communication plan.

About the Author



Emily Kelechi Kelly is a marketing communications consultant currently serving as a Digital Marketing Program Manager for Bank of America. With over 10 years experience in the financial services industry, she specializes in digital marketing communications for both public and non-profit organizations. Prior to her role at Bank of America, she held positions at Wells Fargo, Fidelity Investments and Fifth Third Bank. She holds a B.A. in Interdepartmental Studies with a concentration in Consumer Behavior from Wittenberg University and is a candidate for graduation in the Master of Arts in Communication program in James L. Knight School at Queens University of Charlotte.

An avid volunteer, Emily serves as the communications lead for the Jingle Bell Run/Walk for Arthritis and has helped lead international and domestic service travel teams to South Africa and New Orleans, Louisiana. A Cincinnati, Ohio native, she and her husband Jonathan reside in Charlotte, North Carolina.

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