Marine Debris Awareness Campaign

Qualitative Research - Content Analysis and Focus Groups

Designed by A. Feeney
2016

Table of Contents:

Research Narrative:

Technology is changing the way people interact and communicate everyday. Creating an engaging online presence not only increases website interactivity but can be used to bring awareness to a public good. One of the reasons why people visit a website frequently is to source educationally driven content that is current and accessible. Utilizing online platforms to engage with audiences will inspire repeat visits which may alter behaviors toward change.

In an effort of raising awareness and promoting advocacy for marine conservation communication materials and strategy are being developed for this audience. Through market testing and research, several focus groups will review these communication materials for utility and effectiveness. One of the primary goals of this research is to articulate creative ways in which to encourage participation, engagement and education to publicize the plight of ocean pollution.

In order to promote behavior change an issue has to speak directly to people, where their lives intersect with the problem. An issue such as marine debris is physical and conceptual in nature. It loses importance and relevance if it doesn't resonate with its audience. Building an emotional connection has to be established for this ideal to advance and eventually lead to a change in behavior. The use of emotion and fear appeal in conservation messages have been able to reach an audience looking for change but have lost support with the general public because of its inevitability design. Through formative research, I hope to uncover new ideas and strategies that speak to this larger demographic; ideas that arouse hope.

It is one of the communication content goals to create materials that are universal and can be used as a source of information for ages 8-88.

The HawaiiGirl808.com website has limited educational content and resources that do not inspire repeat visits. Website analytics state that time spent on each page is relatively low. Since online experience and interactivity has a measurable impact on awareness, creating a better user experience will increase web traffic while advocating for conservation principles. Also as part of this social communications strategy, there are two other areas where focus group feedback will be instrumental. One includes selecting a logo design that unites brand identity with the website. The other will be reviewing a Facebook social media campaign, created to educate the public about the rise of micro plastics in the ocean ecosystem. Gaining feedback about the structure, content and messaging appeal; is key to sync all of these products together to form a comprehensive outreach campaign.

Ideally, the objective of this research project is to solicit ideas, insights and contributions from community members. Testing content will aid the direction for collateral materials and website improvement. Additionally, discovering content areas with educational appeal will take place through both pre and post focus groups.

Strategic areas:

- Determine content areas that will resonate with parents, educators, and the public
- Logo development for brand identity and connection
- Testing the effectiveness of using social media for advocacy
- Website used as an educational portal to promote conservation principles

Focus Group Design & Procedure:

Summary:

The purpose of this focus group is to understand the general public's perception of ocean pollution. The primary goal of these focus groups is to generate ideas for a more engaging communication content and strategies that will be employed through a logo, a social media campaign and a branded website. Focus group members will be shown a clutter reel of graphics, videos, logo choices, and several social media posts aimed at driving awareness of marine debris and micro plastics in the ocean. This informal research process will ask for feedback on communication content and learn ways to create more effective messaging that particularly appeals to parents, children, and educators. Also general information questions will be posed to understand perception of marine social issues that will be utilized to drive the future direction of content for the general public.

Two evening sessions will be scheduled for each focus group to be held in Bellingham, Washington. Participants will be chosen for their expertise in education, connection to the community, parents with young children and a few participants' from the general public.

After each session, I will analyze transcripts for emergent themes and synthesize useful data. Any emerging themes and valuable insights will help steer future communication content and campaigns.

Logistics:

Research Location: Focus Group #1 & #2
Bellingham Chamber of Commerce
- o Free street parking is available
- o It is recommended that the team meets prior to the scheduled focus group at the facility and with moderator to make sure they understand the research and check that all equipment is in working order

Focus Group: 6-7:30pm

Pre-screening criteria & Target audience:
Female: 70%   Male: 30%
Age: 20-65 year olds
Community members: educators, parents, students

Additional Instructions:
- o Clutter reel/PowerPoint presentation employed (20 min. of images, videos, website analysis, marketing materials content to be tested).
- o Focus group should take between 75-90 minutes and will include 5-8 participants.
- o Participants will be encouraged to speak freely and ask for clarification if needed.
- o The moderator will facilitate the discussion and present media to the groups. Her responsibility will be to work through questions and script to glean information about participant's attitudes and behaviors towards alumni giving.
- o As the focus group unfolds the moderator should use her best judgment to determine if the focus group is providing valuable information for the team.
- o Provide paper and pen to participants to take notes during the focus group. Collect these notes at the end of the discussion as they may yield insight not spoken by the participant.
- o Organized time: Moderator welcome 5-10 minutes, clutter reel segment 20 minutes, general questions 40 minutes, follow up questions 10 minutes. Close and thank you for 5 minutes.

Some considerations with focus groups:

Focus groups, while a great way to understand perceptions and attitudes, lack external validity. There is no representative sample because each group is so small and the sample is not probability based. Since focus groups generally employ logical inference (logically these results represent a population), they are highly subjective and answers can be biased. There is no way to statistically analyze results. Additionally, care needs to be taken while interpreting data as it is very easy to skew results in favor of a particular point of view. Focus groups are less expensive than other methods, can be flexible and are often done very quickly.

For Moderator: The goal of this focus group is aimed at understanding how people interact with technology for education, to gain perceptions of ocean pollution and to discover ways to influence attitudes towards conservation ideals. Additionally, learning what communication tools this demographic prefers and uses for resources, connection and distribution is an important aspect of this research. Please adhere to normally set protocols for language, leading and active listening.

Total time for this group should be 75-90 minutes, divided as such:

Part I- Welcome- 5 minutes

Part II- General Questions- 30 minutes

Part III- Clutter reel/PowerPoint- 20 minutes

Part IV - Website- 20 minutes

Part V- Follow up questions- 5 minutes

Part VI-Close and Thank you- 5 minutes

[Recruitment Letter (sent as email):](#)

Hello all,

I would like to invite you to take part in a focus group on ..at the Bellingham Chamber of Commerce at 119 N. Commercial St Suite 110 about ocean conservation. The focus group should last no longer than seventy-five minutes.

Conducting research and this discussion is meant to gain a deeper understanding of what motivates people towards change. I will present some conservation communication materials that focus on education and advocacy and ask for your honest opinions and perception.

Your feedback is critical to assessing your knowledge of ocean pollution for the development of future conservation strategies.

In particular, I would like to know more about your awareness of:

•   Micro plastics

•   Ghost nets

•   Coral bleaching

•   Ocean Gyres

•   Fishing practices

I hope you will be able to join this small group discussion. Refreshments will be provided and there is free parking on the street. Please RSVP as soon as possible, so I can get a count of people that are attending.

Thank you in advance for your insights and time. Hope to see you soon.

Alena

Please make sure to speak clearly and please do not talk while others are talking. We want to make sure that everyone is heard and respected. Do you have any questions before we get started?

We have a lot of topics to cover tonight but let's start off with something fun.

Ice breaker question- What is your favorite website? Why?

Focus Group Questions (#1 & #2):

General Sociological questions:

1. What types of social media do you use?
2. What do you think are the most pressing issues facing the environment?
3. What do you know about ocean pollution?
4. How can we make marine science matter?
5. Do you believe that the climate is changing? Please elaborate.
6. How can we balance marine conservation and fishing rights?
7. What is your perception of ocean pollution?
8. Have you heard of 'ghost nets' before?
9. What would be an effective storyline to convey marine conservation principles?
10. How can we influence public behavior?
11. What makes you visit a website?
12. Do personal ethics make people care more about the environment?
13. Generally speaking, would applying religious principles toward conservation help or hinder people from participating?
14. How can we balance the need for food security, marine protection and economic development in the ocean?
15. What is your perception of conservation organizations?
16. Are marine sanctuaries and underwater parks important?
17. Does ocean policy and regulations help or hinder marine conservation efforts?
18. When you receive important information do you prefer it to come from a primary source or secondary source? Or does it matter?
19. What is a culturally sensitive way to convey conservation messaging?
20. If someone has never experienced the ocean before, how do you relate its importance?

Materials:

1. What thoughts arise when you view this image?
2. Which image communicates a stronger message?
3. What questions do you have when you see this image?
4. Would these images make you more likely to change your behavior?
5. **Logo:** Looking at this logo, what ways can it be improved?
6. **Logo:** Does this logo help or hinder the HawaiiGirl808 brand?
7. **FB:** As part of this communication campaign I created a Facebook group highlighting this issue of micro beads in household items. Reviewing these posts, what are your thoughts on their effectiveness?
8. **FB:** Should the Facebook posts be linked to the website?
9. Overall, how effective are these materials in conveying awareness of ocean pollution?
10. If materials are mainly focused on Hawaiian Island and the Pacific Ocean, does it limit inclusivity?

Website questions:

1. What is your first impression of this website?
2. Is the font, colors and visual look consistent with all other content materials?
3. How can this website be improved?
4. What would make this website more appealing to parents and teachers?
5. What is needed for this website to be an educational source?
6. Who do you think would visit this site?
7. What online content do you find most appealing?
8. What would make you visit this site again?
9. Is it important to have shareable resource material?
10. How often do you share information?
11. What is more motivating… testimonials from 'real' people or from the scientific community?
12. How can this website be more kid-friendly?
13. Are there areas that would be helpful to include?
14. What sections would you add to this website?
15. Is the overall brand consistent in conveying a message of conservation?

Market Research: Focus Group #1

Gauging awareness, soliciting feedback on materials and planning communication strategy

Materials presented to focus group before revision process:

<div align="center">Campaign logo options:</div>

Social Media Campaign on Micro plastics:

Alena Oralia
November 23 at 3:46pm

Lately, I have been thinking about what motivates people to change. Change requires effort and sometimes it seems we don't have enough time, energy or incentive to critically analyze our behaviors. Our world is constantly changing though. Just imagine how much change you have witnessed in your own lifetime.

Think about your favorite place in the world. Now think back.. does it look the same as when you first encountered it? What would you do to save that special place? What actions would you willing to take to preserve that beauty for the next generation? Now we can visualize change.

We become so entrenched in our routines that challenging our beliefs takes cognitive effort and purpose which may seem beyond what we are willing to give. That effort can be measured in small incremental steps though, that is the good news. Everyday is an opportunity to do good for yourself, others and the earth. Consider taking steps toward limiting the use of plastics in your daily life. Choose to recycle. Take your children to their local watershed. Learn more about how your choices impact water systems.

My hope is that once you comprehend the scope of an ocean full of plastic; you will be motivated to make changes that not only benefit you but leave those places you love, forever beautiful.

👍 Like   💬 Comment

Alena Oralia
October 8

Plastics are a part of our everyday lives. Everything that we use and now eat contains micro beads of plastic. Our commodities, including beauty products, are seeping down the drains and ending up in the ocean. These micro beads are almost invisible to the naked eye and they contain lethal toxins, including DDT. What is devastating is that even the smallest marine life creature, planktons, have been found to consume these ocean micro-plastics. This means that every animal along the food chain, including humans, will also consume those same plastic beads as they never break down. So the plastic that began with our morning face washing routine has now returned to us, on our plates. We literally become plastic both inside and out. Plastic in the ocean and its cleanup is all of our responsibility. We must act now! The first step is easy. Find out what's in your beauty products and choose wisely when shopping.
Your choices today, literally affect someone's tomorrow.

HawaiiGirl808.com website:

hawaiigirl808
for the love of the ocean

Welcome   Portfolio   Resume   Pono   Advocacy

WELCOME

Welcome/ E komo mai to HawaiiGirl808!

This site is place to share information and resources that aid in the conservation of all

About Me

Focus Group #1: Communication materials presented/Clutter Reel

Conservation Images: Marine Debris

Product A- Beach debris   Product B- Ocean debris

Conservation Images: Marine animals

70-100% of North Pacific sea birds are affected by eating plastic. This albatross starved to death because it ate too much plastic trash.

Product A- Turtle
(assuming the outcome)

Product B- Bird
(seeing the outcome)

Conservation Images: Ghost Nets

Product A- Reef with Ghost Net | Product B- Ghost net effects

Conservation Images: Coral Bleaching

Product B- Before & After
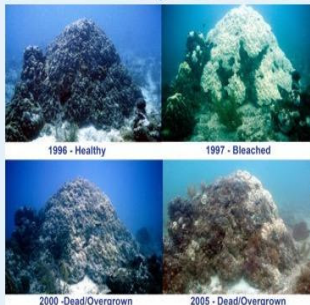
1996 - Healthy | 1997 - Bleached

Product C- Healthy systems

2000 -Dead/Overgrown | 2005 - Dead/Overgrown

Product A- Timeline

Conservation Images: Advocacy

10 THINGS YOU CAN DO FOR TRASH FREE SEAS

Product B- Advocacy in action

Product C- Products & effects

Product A- Infographics

Communication Materials: Logo design

Logo A- Plastic Free Hawaii 808

Logo B- Hawaii Girl 808.com

Communication Materials: Social media logo

Promoting a healthy ocean ecosystem through limited use of plastic products

This logo was used for a social media campaign, how can it be improved?

Communication Materials: Facebook posts

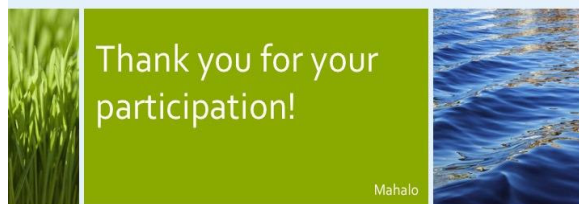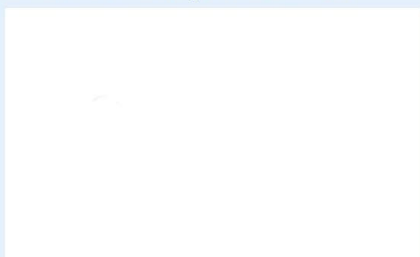Primary vs. Secondary source: establishing a voice and brand
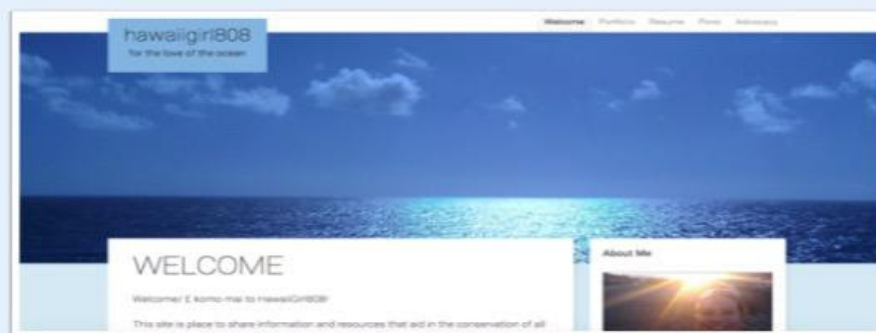
Insights from Focus Group #1:

Logo:

- Remove HawaiiGirl by itself-sounds like a beach store for bathing suits
- Keep plastic free language

Social Campaign:

- Good overall text but keep it short, it is way too much to read on a Facebook post
- Use text for blog post
- Curate the content with interesting lead in

Website:

- Create resources tab for educators, parents and kids
- Under Advocacy tab at a 'What's Important Now' feature

- Add a search button feature to site
- Make links & content shareable and downloadable
- Separate content by grade level as its added
- Hyphenate 'Pono' for SEO
- Careful with language- use words all public will understand
- Do not add too many pages-keep it clean

Log of Revision Process (in chronological order):

- Updated logo with colors of Hawaii Girl and merged it with Plastic Free visual look
- Added search feature to website
- Created a resources tab- placed awareness & ocean education material there
- Social Media Campaign- decreased text and added more interactive content to Facebook posts
- Added updated logo to the website for continuity and branding
- Linked social media campaign to website through custom link- provides updated content that is now accessible through website and notifies followers of new posts.
- Used previous social media text as story development in website subpages
- Updated the Advocacy tab with two new subpages- ocean conservation & marine debris
- Updated seal logo for Facebook campaign header image
- Revised Pono tab with Hawaii conservation subpages

Focus Group #2: Communication materials presented/Clutter Reel
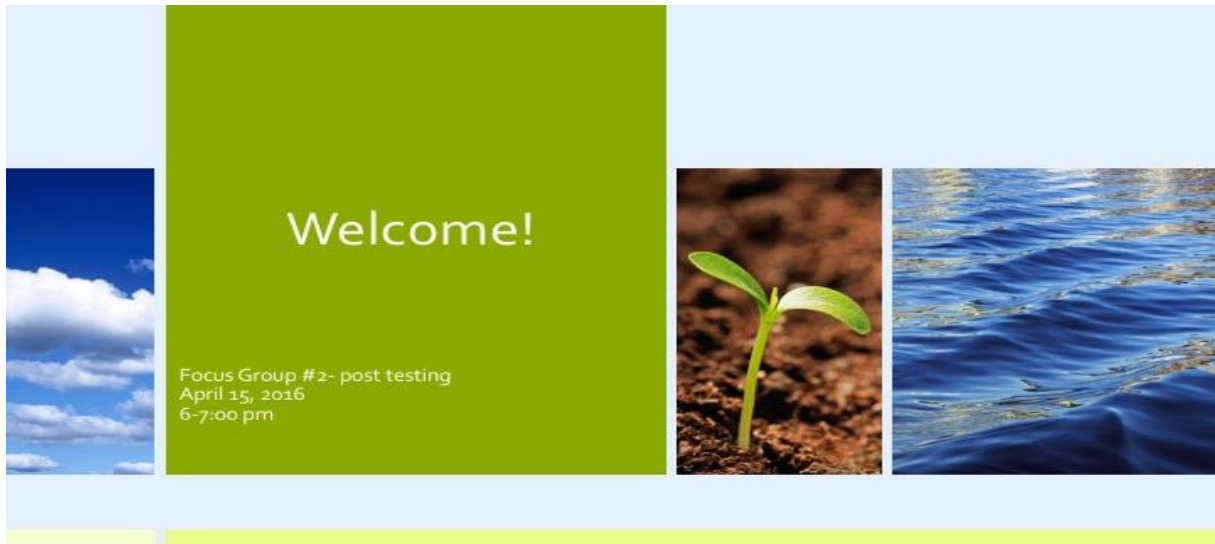
Communication Materials: Logo design (before)

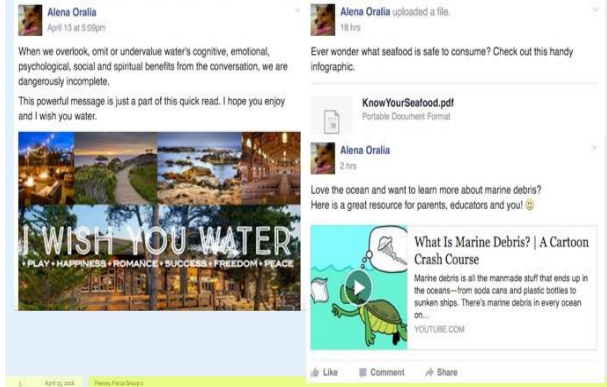Logo A- Plastic Free Hawaii 808

Logo B- Hawaii Girl 808.com

Communication Materials: Logo design (after)
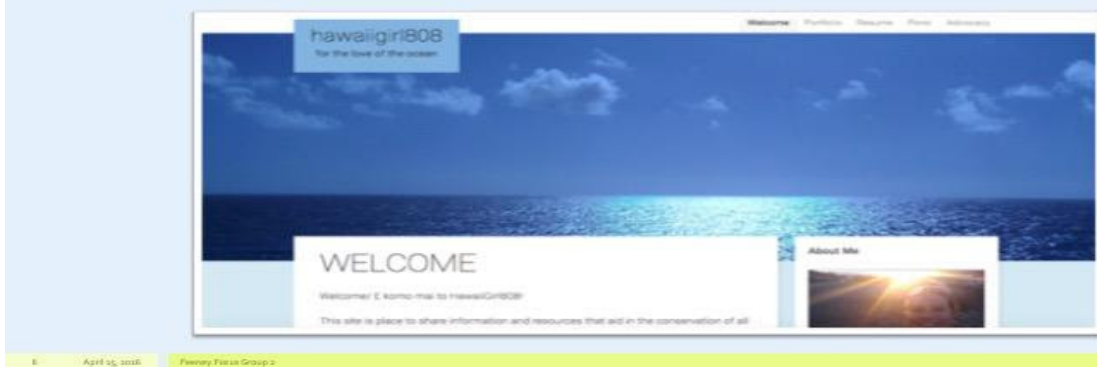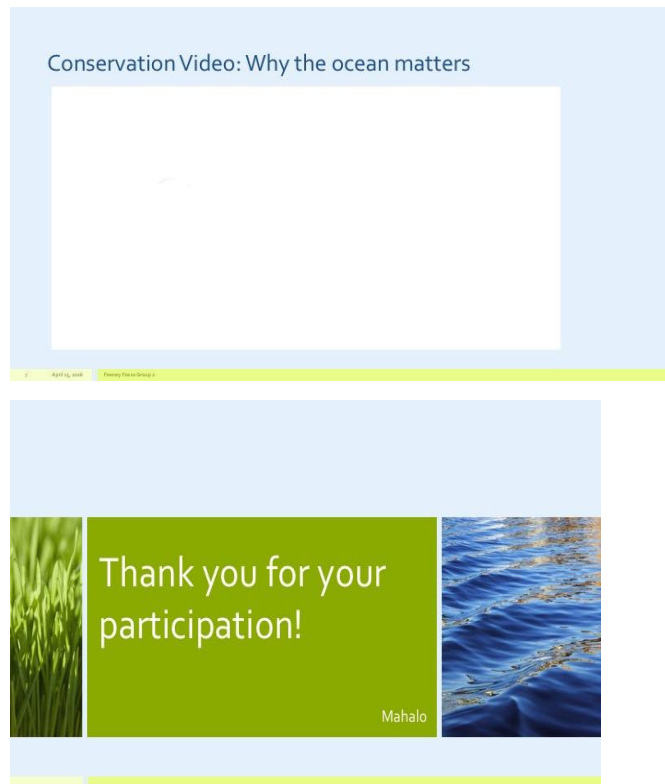
Communication Materials: Facebook posts (before)

Primary vs. Secondary source: establishing a voice and identity

Communication Materials: Facebook posts (after)

HawaiiGirl8o8.com

https://hawaiigirl8o8.com/

video used to determine appropriate age for similar content

Insights from Focus Group #2:

- Videos can be mentors that inspire kids toward conservation ideals
- Create categories under Resources tab with subpages for ease of access: focus on Educators, Parents & Kids
- Develop a 'kid-friendly' area of website that kids can navigate on their own
- Add more downloadable pdf posters teachers can use in their classrooms
- Match educational standards with website content so educators will use often
- Add ocean recreational photos for inspiration- enjoyment of water
- Revise Plastic Free Hawaii logo to more global approach

Log of Revision Process (in chronological order):

- Incorporated and curated videos into website
- Added content under new Resources tab especially for educators and parents
- Researching kid friendly picture book about ocean

- Added Hawaiian Outrigger photo to scrolling header of website
- Plastic Free Hawaii logo was updated to become Plastic Free Oceans

Conclusion:

The goal of this research was to glean a deeper understanding of how to affect change through conservation communication. Communication campaign materials were developed to reach the broadest audience possible. A website, social media posts and a logo were utilized to promote awareness of ocean pollution and in particular marine debris. Through the development and launch process, it became evident that in order to achieve the desired behavior modification outcome I had set out to accomplish; I would need to test how effective these materials were in conveying intention and advocacy. Through two directed focus groups, I crafted questions and produced presentations to solicit feedback from my target audience. In reviewing these materials, participants were asked to provide their honest assessment of the material's messaging effectiveness. Participants were also instructed to provide feedback on direction and to evaluate the website's ability to become a resource for the public. One of the unexpected outcomes of these focus groups was the level of interest in this topic as well as the vast amount of knowledge that the participants brought to the creative process. Their recommendations were used throughout the revision process and were very instrumental in guiding the direction of future outreach and educational content creation.

The objective of the first focus group was to test the design and efficacy of each of the three products as well as learn more about sociological motivations toward change. The second focus group reviewed the updated communication materials for overall appeal,

cohesiveness between products while providing a directed focus towards the education community.

The culmination of this research has provided a solid foundation for my overall conservation communication strategy. Speaking directly with community members, parents and educators has increased the depth of this campaign. Many of the recommendations have been incorporated into my materials and I will continue the review process as I consider further suggestions. Overall, the insights from these focus groups are a valuable resource for the future expansion of my educational conservation work.

Here is the final revision of the logo as recommended by Focus Group #2: