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Leatherby Libraries from Home: Online and Social Media Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract: Starting March 11, 2020, the day that Chapman University announced that classes would transition immediately to remote in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Leatherby Libraries dramatically shifted its marketing strategy and the use of social media to communicate with the student body, faculty, staff, and other community member followers. The Leatherby Libraries used social media during the COVID-19 crisis as both a means of communicating urgent messages to its patrons and also as a tool for engaging community members in the absence of traditional library tours, events, and exhibits.

Keywords: Social media, blog, assessment, newsletter, case study

Introduction

Chapman University is a mid-sized university in Orange County, California, rapidly moving up in rankings. The university recently achieved R2 status and its first inclusion on the U.S. News and World Report National Universities list, tied at #124.[1] Current enrollment numbers show just over 10,000 students, around 75% of which are undergraduates. The main campus is in Orange, California, and a smaller campus in nearby Irvine supports the various health science programs. The Leatherby Libraries supports both of

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[1] https://www.chapman.edu/about/facts-and-rankings/index.aspx

these physical campuses, as well as the affiliated Brandman University. Although the Leatherby Libraries is a singular entity contained in one building (other than the Health Sciences Study Commons on the Irvine campus), it is comprised of nine libraries, separated by subject.[2] These libraries, along with several archives, classrooms, study spaces, and offices, take up the five floors of a building in the center of the Orange campus. In 2019, its total gate count was 1,226,552. In addition to students and faculty, many of the people walking through the doors of the Leatherby Libraries are community members visiting one of the archives or attending library programming. In 2019, the library held nine events and 25 displays and exhibits, all open to the public.

The Leatherby Libraries plays an integral role in Chapman University's teaching, learning, and research. The library's vision and mission statements reinforce the library's increasing leadership role in the life and culture of the campus and community.[3] Back when many administrators and staff at Chapman and the Leatherby Libraries were not used to hearing the words "marketing" and "library" in the same sentence, the Leatherby Libraries launched its first marketing and outreach strategy in 2012. Since then, the Development and Communications team has been adamant to pursue a certain process in the promotion of its activities and resources; to complement the library's strategic plan; and to assist the library's and university's faculty and staff in understanding the tactics, strategy, and procedures related to the marketing of its events, activities, resources, and awards. Out of the 42 librarians and other staff employed by the Leatherby Libraries, only two serve on the Development and Communications team: the library development coordinator and the library events and external relations assistant, although the dean and other senior librarians have input and give approval on all marketing and promotional projects. The team has been active on a variety of platforms: the Leatherby Libraries blog, a couple of social media platforms, as well as the Leatherby Libraries website, newsletter, and various brochures and pamphlets.

The Leatherby Libraries Facebook account has been active since March 2011 and the Instagram account since August 2017. Typically, these accounts are used throughout the academic year and summer to promote upcoming

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[2] https://www.chapman.edu/library/libraries-collections-and-archives/libraries.aspx
[3] https://www.chapman.edu/library/about/mission-vision-values.aspx

library events, share selections from library exhibits, and spread other library news. As of February 23, 2021, the Leatherby Libraries Facebook page has 950 followers. The Leatherby Libraries Facebook followers skew a little older than the typical college student. The Leatherby Libraries Instagram page has 416 followers, more of whom are in the traditional college student age range than any other. Between April 1, 2020, and February 23, 2021, the Leatherby Libraries blog had a total of 20,953 visitors, with over half between the ages of 18 and 34. Across all three platforms, approximately one third or more of the followers are from Orange County. See Table 1 for a more detailed analysis of followers per platform.

Prior to March 2020, posts were made to each social media account less frequently. Starting March 11, 2020, the day that Chapman University announced that classes would be transitioning immediately to remote in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Leatherby Libraries dramatically shifted its marketing strategy and the use of social media to communicate with the student body, faculty, staff, and other community member followers. This shift began with the *Learning and Teaching Remotely* series, then moved to videos from the dean, interviews with the librarians as they began to work from home, and a new and more consistent social media series titled *Leatherby Libraries from Home.* The Leatherby Libraries used social media during the COVID-19 crisis as both a means of communicating urgent messages to its patrons and also as a tool for engaging community members in the absence of traditional library tours, events, and exhibits.

Literature Review

Research on the use of social media by libraries, particularly academic libraries, is still relatively new and rare. Although Facebook has existed since 2004, Pages for Businesses (under which umbrella libraries fall) have been available only since 2007. Instagram, a photo-sharing social media channel under Facebook's ownership since 2012, launched in late 2010 and has never restricted usership to individuals, as Facebook did in its early days. Early studies into the use of social media by libraries, Facebook in particular, revealed that "both library directors and members of the public did not think that libraries should include social networking roles in their services" (Aharony, 2012, p. 360). Scholars and librarians urged library staff to overcome these initial reservations as the landscape of social media changed,

recommending that some library staff be devoted to maintaining their library's social media pages, for the purposes of sharing information about library services, collections, and events. Debra Lucas-Alfieri has argued in particular that, as "custodians of information," it is particularly critical that librarians keep up with 21st-century technology, including social media, to represent themselves as custodians of 21st-century information, and thus useful for 21st-century students and other patrons (Lucas-Alfieri, 2015, p. 2). This is especially crucial for academic libraries, as a 2019 Pew study revealed that 76% and 75% of people between the ages of 18-24 used Facebook and Instagram, respectively (Perrin and Anderson, 2019). More recent studies bear out this information as well, and the importance of university libraries using social media to reach students. For example, Howard et al., found in 2018 that students overwhelmingly believed university libraries should be on Facebook, primarily to share content related to library logistics and campus-wide information and events (Howard et al., 2018, pp. 14–15). Cheng et al. and Doney et al. agree that both Facebook and Instagram are crucial channels through which university libraries should connect to their students and faculty, though both underscore the fact that certain content (crowdsourcing, visually engaging) is far more likely to connect with the target audiences (Cheng et al., 2020, p. 6; Doney et al., 2020, p. 8). Ability to reach students on the platforms they use on a daily basis (or, as Lucas-Alfieri describes social networking sites, students' "preferred social spheres") helps academic libraries ensure that a wider audience learns about library offerings (Lucas-Alfieri, 2015, p. 72). Building on this, Jeanne M. Persuit writes of the ethical implications of social media and marketing, stating that social media can serve as a modern form of bearing witness, especially important to online audiences in times of crisis (Persuit, 2013).

Persuit writes about the importance of social media use during periods of what Coombs and Holladay term *paracrisis*, "a publicly visible crisis threat that charges an organization with irresponsible or unethical behavior" (Persuit, 2013, p. 83; Coombs and Holladay, 2012). Persuit posits that organizations can best respond to moments of paracrisis by using social media to be where the action is, be there before the paracrisis appears, and be redundant and widespread (Persuit, 2013). While Persuit writes about this strategy in terms of responding to paracrisis, others who have written about the use of social media for crisis communication concur that these three core themes—attentiveness,

timeliness, and repetition—are all helpful for moments of community crisis, as well. Chizwina et al. point to the many ways in which social media can be ideal for crisis communication and cover gaps that traditional news media cannot. These include both the capacity for frequent, up-to-the-minute updates and interactivity, which allows community members to communicate with each other and feel connection and solidarity in the midst of a crisis (Chizwina et al., 2017). Hagen et al. point to the benefit of social media posts reaching "boundary spanners" — "those who connect diverse communities that would not otherwise be connected" — who can then widely disseminate these posts to their friends and followers (Hagen et al., 2018, 537). Cheng et al. emphasize this as well, pointing to the ways in which "[c]ontent of social media can also contribute to the marketing of libraries as users can be attracted and connected through the information, which may create a sense of belonging to the libraries" (Cheng et al., 2020, p. 6). Although social media is still perceived by many in the library field to be relatively new, it offers a strong set of tools for libraries, particularly academic libraries, to market themselves and to manage crisis communications. It was a natural progression, therefore, for the Leatherby Libraries to use social media as a tool to both market itself and communicate effectively and speedily with its audiences during the first six months of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

Crisis Communication: Promoting the Libraries During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Libraries around the world struggled and continue to grapple with shutdowns during the pandemic. As of mid-December 2020, some public and academic libraries are still offering curbside services and others have opted to completely offer remote services. As a team, our primary focus was to continue to provide excellent service and access to a myriad of online and remote services, as well as to increase our virtual offerings, which include Zoom library instruction, individual research consultations, and bibliographic information literacy sessions. Our goal was to organically shift our well-developed marketing strategy from the physical to the virtual world.

Our team collaborated in preparing messages around the following topics:

· Reopening and closure announcements

· Curbside and pick-up services
· Changes in processes, rules, and deadlines
· Changes in any health and safety protocols
· Uplifting news about major accomplishments by librarians and library staff
· New databases and resources, especially ones that focused on social justice

Communication and Engagement with Online Audience

Since the announcement on March 11, 2020, that all instruction at Chapman University would be virtual, the Leatherby Libraries made a commitment to stay connected to its various constituents through its blog, email newsletter, and social media accounts on Facebook and Instagram. The Leatherby Libraries' primary goals were to ensure that all of its patrons, especially students and faculty, were aware of library resources available remotely and to foster a sense of community and engagement between the library and its audience despite the physical distance.

Communicating to patrons the resources that were available remotely was the first priority of the Leatherby Libraries at the beginning of the crisis. Modeling a page after the UC Irvine Library's website,[4] the Leatherby Libraries created its own Remote Teaching and Resources page[5] on its blog. The page outlined the ways in which students and faculty can communicate directly with librarians and the Reference Desk using email, phone, or webchat and highlighted online resources helpful for research, such as online databases, LibGuides, and Digital Commons. Since its publication on March 18, 2020, this list of resources has been shared and reshared repeatedly, both by the Leatherby Libraries itself on social media posts, emails, and other blog posts, and by other campus departments and programs, including the biweekly university president email to all faculty and staff. Additionally, librarians created a LibGuide for Online Teaching and Learning,[6] and the coordinator of Scholarly Communications and Electronic Resources compiled, in two different blog posts, lists of databases and other online resources, such as film

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[4] https://www.lib.uci.edu/uci-library-services-available-covid-19-response
[5] https://blogs.chapman.edu/library/2020/03/18/leatherby-libraries-remote-resources/
[6] https://chapman.libguides.com/online_teaching

streaming services like Kanopy, that allowed researchers to access a wider range of titles.[7] In addition to sharing these resources on the blog and social media channels, the Leatherby Libraries requested that the materials be shared with all students and faculty in a series of campus-wide emails sent by the Provost's Office and the Dean of Students.

Fostering a sense of community and engagement with the library's audience, despite the physical distance, has been the long-term goal in the Leatherby Libraries online strategy during the COVID-19 pandemic. This has taken two primary forms: a new social media series called *Leatherby Libraries from Home*, and a three-part blog series: Leatherby Librarians at Home,[8] Leatherby Libraries Students from Home,[9] and Leatherby Libraries Staff at Home.[10] These blog posts, which were posted on a regular basis from April 6 to June 11, 2020, interviewed librarians, library student employees, and library staff in conversations meant to make readers feel a personal connection to the Leatherby Libraries. Librarians, students, and staff were encouraged to send in pictures from their home workspaces and to give friendly, casual answers to the interview questions.

To help students feel like the Leatherby Libraries was there to support them and understood what they were experiencing, all librarians and staff were asked the following questions:

1. What has been the most challenging aspect for you of working from home so far, and how did you overcome it?
2. What is your favorite remote resource for students and/or faculty?
3. What book(s) have you been reading recently?
4. What is the most interesting change you've made to how you do your job in the past few weeks?
5. What is your number one piece of advice for students learning remotely and/or faculty teaching remotely right now?

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[7] https://blogs.chapman.edu/library/2020/03/19/new-and-expanded-library-resources-for- online-teaching/; https://blogs.chapman.edu/library/2020/03/23/new-and-expanded-library- resources-available-to-alumni-and-the-public/

[8] https://blogs.chapman.edu/library/category/leatherby-librarians-at-home/

[9] https://blogs.chapman.edu/library/category/leatherby-students-from-home/

[10] https://blogs.chapman.edu/library/category/leatherby-libraries-staff-at-home/

Student employees were asked a similar set of questions, again with the goal of establishing that the people at the Leatherby Libraries are relatable and accessible to Chapman University students. These questions were as follows:

1. What has been the most challenging aspect for you of studying from home so far, and how did you overcome it?
2. What do you miss most about coming in to work at the Leatherby Libraries?
3. What book(s) have you been reading recently?
4. What remote resource(s) from the Leatherby Libraries have you been using the most while you study from home?
5. What is your number one piece of advice for other students learning remotely right now?

Over the course of the two months that this series ran, a total of eighteen blog posts were created: ten in the Leatherby Librarians at Home series, five in the student series, and three in the staff series.

All Leatherby Libraries blog posts are shared immediately after publication on the library's Facebook and Instagram accounts. Every Monday, the past week's blog posts are summarized in an internal email to all librarians and staff, the advancement team, the Information Services and Technology department, and to two members of the Chapman Strategic Marketing and Communications team who will occasionally reshare the blog posts on the Chapman Newsroom site, giving the content a much wider audience.

Reception on social media to this series was noticeable and positive. On Facebook, all "Leatherby [Blank] at/from Home" posts received an average engagement of 10.2 per post. In comparison, over the months of April, May, and June, the Leatherby Libraries Facebook page had an engagement average of 6.8 per post. However, there was virtually no preference for these posts on the Leatherby Libraries Instagram page, where these posts averaged 10.3 likes per post, and where the average likes per post for that three-month period was 10.7. This is perhaps attributable to the fact that Facebook posts are more easily shareable than Instagram posts, and that several of the subjects of the interviews reshared their interview posts on Facebook. For example, librarian Essraa Nawar, who was the subject of the final post in the series, shared her post, which received only one "love" reaction on the original post, but received

ten likes and two love reactions on its shares (Figure 1). See Table 2 for a detailed breakdown of the engagement with the posts on Facebook and Instagram.

Over the span of the ten weeks during which these posts were published to the Leatherby Libraries blog, they ranged from 10th to 55th place in popularity on the blog, as sorted by unique pageviews, with an average of 39.2 pageviews per post. The most popular post, according to pageviews, was the very first one in the series, interviewing librarian Annie Tang, with 73 unique pageviews. In contrast, the average number of unique pageviews for the five most popular blog posts during that period of time was 670, with the majority of those pageviews occurring on the two most popular posts: a post made in early April 2020 announcing the creation of Zoom background images of the Leatherby Libraries (1,033 pageviews), and the Remote Resources page mentioned above (1,007 pageviews). In total, the posts in the new series received 10.7% of the total unique pageviews between April 6 and June 11, 2020.

Overall, the "Leatherby [Blank] at/from Home" blog posts were moderately successful at engaging the audience and fostering a sense of community. On the blog itself, they performed relatively well, although well below the average of the top five posts. When posted to Facebook, they performed above average. When posted to Instagram, however, their performance matched the average post performance for Instagram during the period of time measured. Additionally, the lack of comments reveals an overall lack of engagement. While the above average performance on Facebook suggests engagement, it is entirely possible that the likes, clicks, and shares were motivated by friends of the subjects of the interviews clicking to show support for their friends, but not necessarily engaging with the interviews themselves. Based on the trends in the pageviews, likes, and engagements with the posts, with the very first post receiving the most pageviews and most likes on Instagram, it is possible that audience members lost interest in the series after a given period of time. The number of pageviews on the last post in the series (25, coming in above only three other posts) supports this idea. From the period studied, the Leatherby Libraries Facebook page experienced a net loss of two followers.

Changes to Social Media Planning

In addition to sharing the blog series mentioned above, the Leatherby Libraries social media accounts have been focused since early April 2020 on a new series, titled *Leatherby Libraries from Home.* The series is shared on both Facebook and Instagram. Each post contains one or more images from the Leatherby Libraries archives. These images are usually found on the Chapman University Digital Commons, but a few have been sourced from other photo archives.

Leatherby Libraries from Home aims to help the library's social media audience feel connected with the library's collections, even when they are not physically available. Because students are often unaware of all that the Leatherby Libraries holds in its Special Collections and Archives, the series has the added benefit of making those students and other followers aware of materials they would not have known to look for when on campus, as well as sharing images that are available only digitally. Each post is shared to Facebook and Instagram with a brief summary of the image, why it is being shared on that given day (if relevant), and any other necessary context. Occasionally, the captions will also include a question intended to encourage engagement and comments. For instance, a post featuring an aerial image of the Chapman University campus from 1995 was posted with the caption, "We're missing campus as much as you are, Panthers. So today's Leatherby Libraries from Home is a great aerial photograph of the Chapman University campus, along with parts of Orange, taken in 1995. Can you spot your favorite campus buildings?"[11] Given the findings of Doney et al. regarding the popularity of crowdsourcing posts on Instagram, the use of these types of comments has increased in recent months (Doney et al., 2020, p. 9). Additionally, each post is tagged on Instagram with the hashtag #leatherbylibrariesfromhome, as well as any other hashtags relevant to the content of the image.

Early in the series, which was announced on social media as well as the Leatherby Libraries blog, the Leatherby Libraries' social media coordinator reached out to all Leatherby Libraries librarians and staff, requesting that they submit to her any items in the collections that they found particularly noteworthy or "shareable." Early submissions included a letter from the Henri Temianka Archives written by the composer Dmitri Shostakovich, offering a

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[11] https://www.instagram.com/p/CBT31Eqh90g/

detailed critique of a performance of one of his symphonies by a Temianka-directed orchestra, as well as a letter about local Orange, California, history. In addition to these early submissions, the coordinator of Special Collections and Archives has continued to submit items that are brought to her attention by researchers using the archives. Often these latter submissions are related to topical national conversations about race and equality, making them excellent content for engaging audiences online.

In addition to accepting submissions, the primary strategy for determining what items to post each day has been to take an "On This Day" approach. Posts are often themed to noteworthy figures born on a certain date, historical events that took place on a given date, or holidays—both standard and silly, like National Ice Cream Sundae Day—that take place on a given date. In the cases where no famous birthdays, historical events, or holidays match up with what is held in the archives, the poster browses the collections to find an image that seems both worthy of sharing and likely to generate engagement and audience response. Given the large percentage of followers based in Orange County, priority is also given to images from the archives that focus on either campus history or Orange County/Southern California history more broadly.

As of September 10, 2020, 107 posts had been made in the *Leatherby Libraries from Home* series.[12] On Instagram, these posts have an average of 10.9 likes per post, with the most popular post, a 1924 cover of the magazine Film Fun, receiving 53 likes.[13] On Facebook, the posts have an average engagement of 6 per post, with the top-performing post, a celebration of the Muslim holiday Eid al-Adha, featuring a picture of pilgrims in their tent city outside Mecca, receiving a total of 56 engagements.[14] It is both notable and not particularly surprising that different posts perform differently on the different platforms. In general, the more vivid and visually interesting images, such as the *Film Fun* cover or an image of actress Ali McGraw adding her handprints to the sidewalk outside Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Los Angeles,[15] perform better on Instagram, which is a largely visual channel. Additionally, images

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[12] The series is ongoing, so this is being used as an arbitrary end date for the purposes of this article/case study.

[13] https://www.instagram.com/p/CDj-JyZBEpx/

[14] https://www.facebook.com/LeatherbyLibraries/photos/a.141849759216898/3205867426148434/

[15] https://www.instagram.com/p/CAV8yfyhUqw/

that can be connected to popular hashtags get quite a bit more attention on Instagram, where hashtags are used, than on Facebook. For example, the Ali McGraw picture received 41 likes on Instagram, but only 3 engagements on Facebook. The use of the #hollywoodhistory and #graumanschinesetheatre hashtags, which have, respectively, 22,882 and 11,885 posts on Instagram, was almost certainly responsible for a large part of this popularity on the platform. Images that may not be as aesthetically compelling but have some personal connection to the audience perform better on Facebook, for example, the Eid al-Adha post (which received most of its engagement on shares) or a post commemorating the 65th anniversary of Disneyland (which is only five miles from the Chapman campus).

In addition to different posts receiving different levels of engagement on the two platforms, Leatherby Libraries staff observed what seemed to be an expression of virtual content fatigue as the series continued, at least on Facebook. The series started out quite strongly, with an average Facebook engagement of 5.1 in April, climbing to 5.9 in May, 7.0 in June, and peaking at 8.7 in July. A steep drop to an average engagement of 4 per post occurred in August, which was also the first month that saw a few posts in the series receive zero engagement. This is likely due to an overall fatigue with virtual content that has been observed in the most recent months, as members of the American public have come to feel over-saturated with online content since quarantine/stay-at-home measures began in March. This is a concept that has been termed "Zoom fatigue," and refers to "the tiredness, worry, or burnout associated with overusing virtual platforms of communication" (Lee, 2020). Despite this dip in engagement on Facebook, however, engagement on Instagram has remained fairly steady, with series posts on Instagram coming in at averages of 9.1 likes per post in April, 11.7 in May, 11.0 in both June and July, and 11.3 in August. Given the consistency in engagement on Instagram and the likelihood that the new academic year will bring with it renewed interest in library materials, the Leatherby Libraries will be continuing the series for the foreseeable future. While the Leatherby Libraries Facebook page has double the followers as the Instagram page, the Facebook followers skew significantly older than the Instagram followers. Outreach to increase student followers on both platforms is a high priority moving into the new year.

Internal Marketing

Since well before the outbreak of the pandemic, the Development and Communications team at the Leatherby Libraries has reached out to library staff through regular emails as well as in-person meetings with various teams when necessary. In addition to occasional emails notifying library staff of events or news on a given day, the Events and External Relations assistant sends out an email every Monday morning titled "This Week in the Leatherby Libraries." This email typically contains one or more of the following sections:

· "Events in the Library This Week," which lists any events taking place in the library, whether they are library-sponsored or not
· "New on the Blog," which links all blog posts published in the past week
· "Links of Note," to which any librarian or staff member can submit articles relevant to all library staff
· "Personal and Professional Developments," which contains news such as staff members' new publications, participation in conferences, or important life milestones like marriages or pregnancies

The primary goals of this weekly email are to keep library staff informed of events that will affect foot traffic in the library and to keep everyone up to date on the library's news, as well as that of their colleagues.

Since Leatherby Libraries employees began working from home in March 2020, the goal of these emails has slightly shifted. Due to the cancellation of all events for the foreseeable future, that portion of the email is no longer relevant. Other aspects of the email, however—in particular, the "New on the Blog" and "Personal and Professional Developments" sections—continue to be important for ensuring that all library staff, who now have no face-to-face interaction with each other, are aware of library news. Early on in quarantine, these emails were also important for internal crisis communication. For example, when Chapman staff began working from home March 19, 2020, the email for the week of March 16, 2020 began with the following "Note from the Marketing Team:"

Essraa and I wanted to let everyone know some of the steps we're taking in light of the COVID-19 crisis. All spring events

(Groundbreaking Girls exhibit opening reception, Nadia Murad Book Club, Aloha Shirts exhibit opening reception) have been postponed. We will let everyone know as soon as they are rescheduled. We're also in the process of creating clear information for students, faculty, and other staff about library resources that are available digitally. Our student employees are all off campus; some of them have been given the option, if they choose, to participate in some of our marketing remotely (writing blogs, social media posts, etc.), but none of them is required to. We hope you all stay safe, and please don't hesitate to reach out if there's a question we can answer for you!

The "This Week in the Library" emails have been a primary means of contacting all Leatherby Libraries staff at once, which was a task that quickly became crucial as soon as quarantine began.

In addition to offering a source of library news and updates, the "This Week in the Library" emails also serve, through the "Personal and Professional Developments" section, as a way of fostering a connection among staff members who may not work together very closely and an overall sense of camaraderie among all Leatherby Libraries staff. Picking up on the importance of this camaraderie, the Development and Communications team made one key change to the emails beginning with the week of March 23, 2020: the inclusion of a personal picture and a lighthearted caption at the end of the "Personal and Professional Developments" section. These pictures began with a picture of one of Rachel Karas' cats lying on a couch, with the note, "Finally, a message of comfort from Rosalind Karas, who reminds you all to wash your paws/hands, keep up your social distance, and take care of yourself." After receiving positive feedback for this inclusion from several staff members, Rachel decided to continue the habit. The majority of the pictures added to the end of the emails features one or both of Rachel's cats, Rosalind and Minerva, with captions, usually humorous and silly, sometimes tied to a particular event in a given week (like a holiday or season change), and always lighthearted. Other images used include pictures of fireworks for the week of July 4th and a throwback picture to the first week of classes in a different school year.

Each of these emails, the Development and Communications team has surmised, has the desired effects—they keep Leatherby Libraries staff in the

loop of all that the Leatherby Libraries is sharing and contribute to the overall sense of community and camaraderie among Leatherby Libraries staff.

Leatherby Libraries' Marketing Assessment Process

At the beginning of every month, the following statistics are collected and entered into a shared spreadsheet:

- Facebook: total number of posts, reach, engagement, and likes
- Instagram: total number of posts, reach, engagement, and likes
- Blog: number of posts, both total and broken down into the categories of Academic, Informational, Community Engagement, and other; total clicks
- Newsletter: total sent, opens, click-throughs
- Events, displays, and exhibits: number, date, total audience for event, location, type

Facebook and Instagram statistics are collected by visiting the "Insights" tab of the Leatherby Libraries Facebook Business Page. For Instagram insights, logging into the Instagram app on a phone is also required to check the total engagement, which includes likes, comments, and saves. For the blog, statistics are collected both by visiting the blog itself to count and categorize posts, and by visiting the Google Analytics Dashboard for the blog. On the dashboard, "Unique Pageviews" represents total clicks. Newsletter statistics are gathered from the "Insights" section of Campaign Monitor.

The Development and Communications team reviews these statistics regularly and makes notes of certain patterns. If social media engagement is down, can we identify why and improve our posts in the next month? If event audience is up, can it be traced to a particular aspect of our marketing cycle, and can we then replicate that for the next event?

Conclusion

Thankfully, putting together a robust and flexible marketing strategy, a solid outreach team, and a strong web and social media presence served our institution well during this crisis. While the transition was not easy, it is fair to say it was smooth for the Leatherby Libraries Development and Communications team.

The support the team received from library administration is commendable. It was challenging at times to make sure that the messaging was consistent and as fast as the team would like it to be, yet the team adapted in unprecedented ways during this situation.

Virtual platforms and social media outlets served the Leatherby Libraries very well during the pandemic. From using the online blogging tools to rethinking how to engage with social media to help students and faculty, the team learned new ways to adapt, engage, and serve its audience digitally and virtually.

While the team had to adapt to the crisis, the library's main purpose did not change. The focus was always the students, the faculty, the researchers, and the greater Chapman University community. The Leatherby Libraries found ways to engage with and reach every constituent. Faculty and students were targeted by the news services, new resources, and databases, while the community at large were responding to the *Leatherby Libraries from Home* series, social media posts, and newsletters.

The goal of the Leatherby Libraries Development and Communications team is and will continue to be delivering a clear message, communicating the library's value, and promoting existing and new resources that will help the Chapman University community reach its educational and research potential.

Figure 1. *Facebook Insights for the Facebook post sharing the Leatherby Librarians at Home interview with librarian Essraa Nawar*
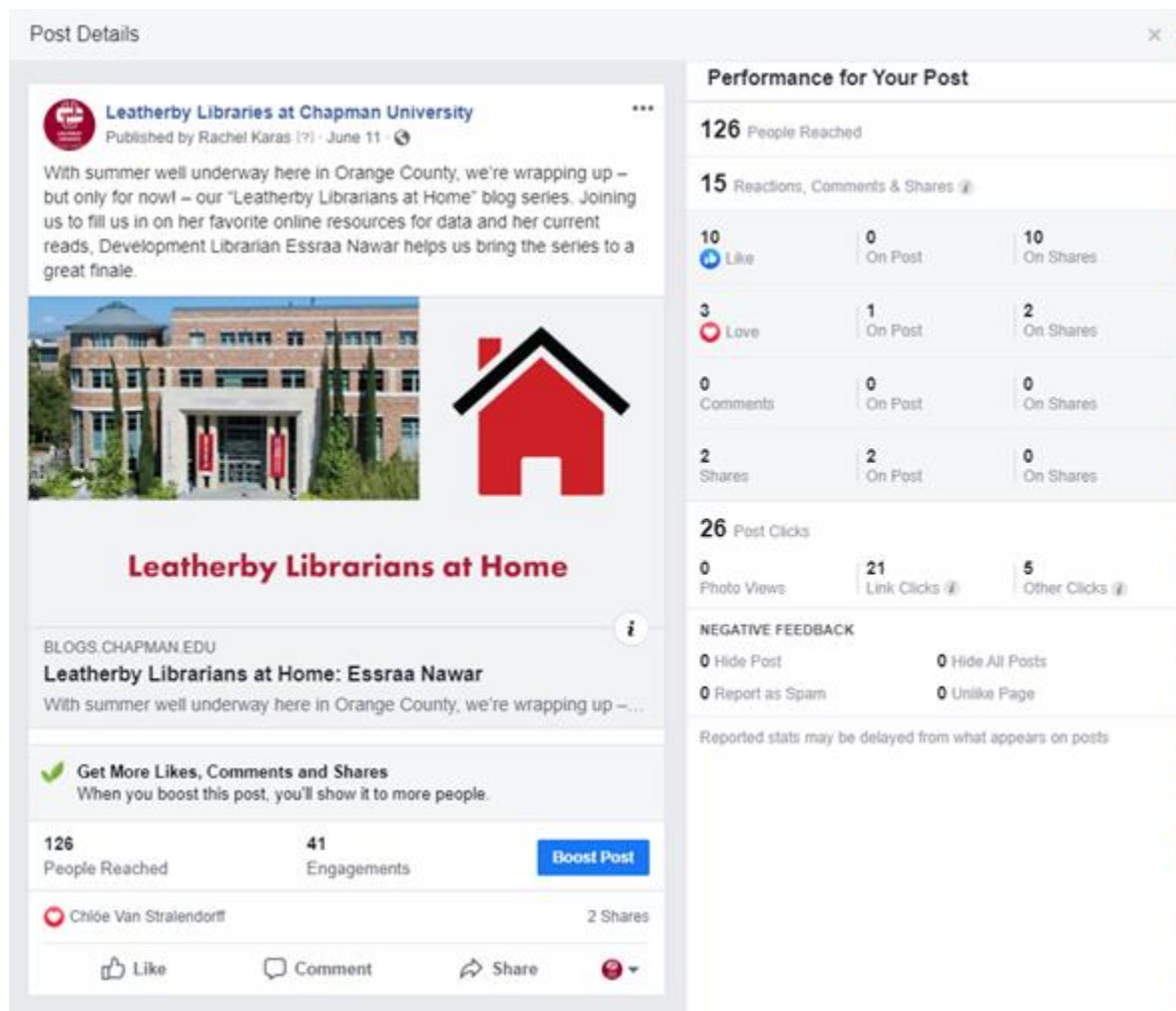
Table 1. *Detailed breakdown of gender, age, and location of followers on the Leatherby Libraries' Facebook page, Instagram profile, and blog*

Platform	Male	Female	18–24 years old	25–34 years old	35–44 years old	45–54 years old	55–64 years old	65+ years old	Orange County
Facebook	34.5%	65.5%	8.0%	41.0%	18.0%	15.0%	11.0%	7.0%	36.0%
Instagram	24.5%	75.5%	30.7%	27.6%	12.1%	16.9%	9.1%	3.6%	33.2%
Blog	37.8%	62.2%	29.0%	27.3%	17.2%	9.1%	9.6%	7.8%	35.0%

Table 2. *Facebook engagements and Instagram likes of the* Leatherby Librarians/Student/Staff at/from Home *blog series*

Post	Date Posted and Shared	Facebook Engagements	Instagram Likes
Leatherby Librarians at Home: Annie Tang	April 6, 2020	5	18
Leatherby Librarians at Home: David Carson	April 15, 2020	8	15
Leatherby Librarians at Home: Lauren Dubell	April 23, 2020	3	8
Leatherby Librarians at Home: Shahrzad Khosrowpour	April 30, 2020	6	7
Leatherby Students from Home: Ruby Blakesleay	May 4, 2020	42	9
Leatherby Librarians at Home: Margaret Puentes	May 7, 2020	4	9
Leatherby Students from Home: Jimmy Elinski	May 11, 2020	12	14
Leatherby Librarians at Home: Tiana Taliep	May 14, 2020	6	11

Leatherby Libraries Staff at Home: Laurie Gates Cussalli	May 15, 2020	21	11
Leatherby Students from Home: Lillian Phan	May 18, 2020	5	9
Leatherby Librarians at Home: Rand Boyd	May 21, 2020	7	6
Leatherby Libraries Staff at Home: Andrew Valbuena	May 22, 2020	3	12
Leatherby Students from Home: Aneli Whitford	May 26, 2020	1	3
Leatherby Librarians at Home: Ivan Portillo	May 28, 2020	7	10
Leatherby Libraries Staff at Home: Rachel Karas	May 29, 2020	4	16
Leatherby Students from Home: Hakeem Wakil	June 1, 2020	5	6
Leatherby Librarians at Home: Taylor Greene	June 4, 2020	3	5
Leatherby Librarians at Home: Essraa Nawar	June 11, 2020	41	16

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About the Authors

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