



2019 Central Minnesota Farm Show Case Study

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABOUT.....	3
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	4
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES.....	4
OBJECTIVES, STRATEGY, TACTICS AND EVALUATION.....	5
SITUATION ANALYSIS.....	8
RESEARCH.....	9
STRATEGY AND TATICS.....	11
CALENDAR.....	13
BUDGET.....	13
CONCLUSION.....	14
APPENDIX.....	15

ABOUT

Husky Agency is a student service-learning experience for aspiring public relations professionals at St. Cloud State University. The agency and online platform launched in fall 2016, is located at huskyagency.org. The work of Husky Agency closely falls along the lines of the newly revived St. Cloud State University Chapter of the Public Relations Student Society of America. The pro bono student agency aims to be a leading student-run public relations firm that helps develop students professionally while providing high quality work that meets and exceeds clients' needs.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Central Minnesota Farm Show is the largest indoor farm show in the Upper Midwest, with an annual show held in St. Cloud, Minnesota. The Farm Show, that began in 1967, is coordinated by the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce. The gathering has a long history of cultivating friendships, connecting producers and suppliers in the agricultural community. In 2018, the event attracted over 3,500 people over three days. Nearly 80 volunteers worked together to make the show successful.

In our campaign we carried out a comprehensive promotional campaign for the 2019 Central Minnesota Farm Show utilizing legacy and new media tactics. Our goal was to address as many campaign objectives as possible by November 1, 2018, encompassing promotion of the Farm Show, scholarships, website and social media.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Challenge:

Communication with the client was at times difficult, maybe because there were too many students emailing the client.

Opportunity:

A plan for next year, 2020, would be to assign one person to be responsible for any communication to and from the client. This can ensure a better and more streamlined communication.

OBJECTIVES, STRATEGY, TACTICS AND EVALUATION

Objective 1

Promote 2019 Central Minnesota Farm Show

To increase awareness of the Farm Show through various media channels.

Strategy

Create an impactful and relevant message for the target audience

Tactic 1

Program Cover – Design Farm Show Program Cover

Tactic 2

Website Critique – Review Farm Show website

Tactic 3

Press Release – Promoting Farm Show

Tactic 4

Video – Plan, film, edit possible promotional video

Tactic 5

Pitches – Email templates for promoting Farm Show to media and influencers

Tactic 6

Fact Sheet – Create summary about Farm Show

Tactic 7

Media Kit – Complete social media platforms, other details, # hashtags

Tactic 8

Promotional Flyer – Create flyer for promotion

Tactic 9

Social Media – Create Facebook cover photo and content (Facebook and

twitter)

Tactic 10

Public Service Announcement, PSA – Create audio promotion for use on radio stations

Evaluation of Objective 1: Successful

Husky Agency was able to successfully help design program cover and flyer, review website, and create press release promoting the Farm Show.

A promotional video was created for social media, along with public service announcement scripts and recording suitable for radio broadcasting to help raise awareness about the upcoming Farm Show.

Objective 2

Promote 2019 Farm Show Scholarships

Strategy

To increase the awareness of the scholarships for high school and college students studying agriculture.

Tactic 1

Press Release – Create press release to promote scholarships

Tactic 2

Social Media – Create social media posts to promote scholarships

Evaluation of Objective 2: Successful

Husky Agency successfully created two press releases promoting scholarships for students interested in pursuing a degree in agriculture. One overall press release about the Farm Show that included scholarships and the second press release specifically for scholarships.

A promotional video was created for social media along with public service announcements suitable for radio broadcasting to help raise awareness about scholarships.

Objective 3

Promote understanding the Farm Show is hosted St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce.

Strategy

Educate audience about coordination of Farm Show is managed by the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce.

Tactic 1

Consistent messaging used throughout campaign about the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce is the host and coordinator of the farm show.

Evaluation of Objective 3: Successful

Husky Agency delivered a consistent message throughout the Farm Show Strategic Communications Campaign to help educate the audience about the Farm Show coordination by the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce.

SITUATION ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Farm Show is in its 52nd year, 2019.
- Funding at least \$5,000 in agricultural scholarships
- Inside venue, climate controlled
- Educate with free and timely information
- Largest indoor farm show in Upper Midwest
- Gathering is during a non-peak time period for farmers
- 250 Vendors

Weaknesses

- 2018, fell short of reaching attendance goal of 4,000 (Actual attendance 3,500)
- Parking difficulties with large trucks and farm machinery
- Trouble reaching target audience in Upper Midwest
- Farmers unfamiliar with city environment, including parking meters

Opportunities

- Social media celebrities, Machinery Pete and Peterson Farm Brothers
- Social media volunteer, new for 2019
- Twitter is new for 2019
- Volunteers contribute to event's success

Threats

- Winter, possible snow storms and blizzards
- Travel difficulties in winter
- Other farm shows in Upper Midwest
- Online sales, like Amazon, threaten potential sales of vendors, and attendance

RESEARCH

Our goal in doing research on the Central Minnesota Farm Show Strategic Communications Campaign was to learn how to better target the desired audience and to increase the attendees to the farm show in February 2019. Husky Agency worked very closely with Sheri Wegner to discuss campaigns from past Central Minnesota Farm Shows, and gathered crucial information for devising a more effective client Media Kit.

Primary Research

According to Margaret Hart, Communications Director for Minnesota Department of Agriculture, Husky Agency learned:

“The downside: Minnesota farmers have faced many challenges this growing season. Agriculture commodity prices remain low - with corn and soybeans prices below the cost of production for the past three years. Ongoing trade negotiations have left farmers uncertain about markets. Weather has impacted all parts of the state throughout the growing season, and now many crops ready for harvest have been blanketed with a layer of snow. These stressors, combined with the fact that farming can be a very isolating endeavor, have contributed to an increase in mental health concerns among farmers and their families. Minnesota’s dairy farmers, in particular, are facing hardships due to low milk pricing. **The upside:** Agriculture has always been at the heart of our state’s economy and its way of life. Ranking in the top ten among all states, Minnesota serves as a world-class provider of many top-quality agricultural products for consumers around the globe. Minnesota’s agriculture industry supports many other industries as well, such as manufacturing, transportation, wholesale and retail trade, services, construction, banking, insurance and real estate,” Hart said.

Number of Farms in Stearns County, 2018 – From Minnesota Department of Agriculture

The average number of farms in Stearns County from January to October 2018, is approximately 551.

Number of Farms in Stearns County, 2017 – From Minnesota Department of Agriculture








The average number of farms in Stearns County from January to December 2017, is approximately 577.



Secondary Research

MINNESOTA'S DAIRY INDUSTRY: A FACT SHEET FOR BUSINESSES

KEY MINNESOTA RANKINGS

 8th in Milk Production 9.5 billion pounds	 7th Largest Dairy Herd 460,000 dairy cows
 6th in Cheese Production 657 million pounds	 8th in Milk Goats 12,000 head
 8th in Employment in Dairy Product Manufacturing 5,500 people	 8th in Dairy Product Exports \$190 million
 4th in Total Value of Manufactured Dairy Products \$5.0 billion	

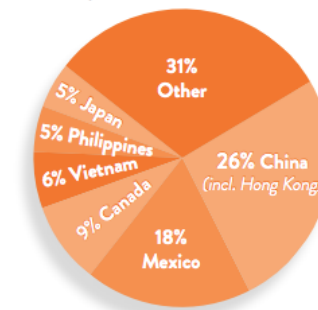
Sources: Minnesota Dept. of Agriculture; U.S. Dept. of Agriculture; U.S. Census Bureau Annual Survey of Manufacturers; Minnesota Dept. of Employment and Economic Development

MAJOR DAIRY PRODUCT COMPANIES AND BRANDS

- > **General Mills**, a Fortune 500 company, is a major producer of consumer dairy products, including Yoplait and Annie's yogurt.
- > **Schwan's**, on Forbes' list of largest private companies, got its start in home food delivery services in 1952 delivering ice cream. It remains a major manufacturer and retailer of manufactured dairy products.
- > **Land O'Lakes**, also a Fortune 500 company, ranks as the #1 retail butter brand in the United States.
- > **American Dairy Queen**, headquartered in Minnesota, has over 6,000 locations in the United States, Canada, and 20 other countries, through the DQ system of franchisees.
- > **Kraft Heinz** completed a more than \$100 million expansion of its New Ulm, Minn., cheese plant in 2017. The plant produces Velveeta, Kraft Deli Deluxe cheese slices and Handi Snacks cheese and crackers.

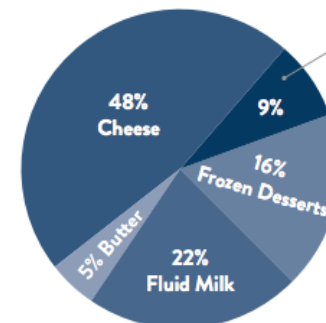
DAIRY EXPORTS

Minnesota exported \$190 million in dairy products in 2017 and ranked 8th among the states. Two export markets (China and Mexico) made up about 44 percent of Minnesota's dairy product exports.



Source: Global Trade Atlas

EMPLOYMENT DISTRIBUTION ACROSS DAIRY PRODUCT MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES, 2016



Source: Minnesota Department of Employment and Economic Development, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

STRATEGY AND TACTICS

Strategy

Increased awareness of the Farm Show through various media channels

Tactics

- a) Designed Farm Show program cover
- b) Critiqued Farm Show website
- c) Created two press releases promoting Farm Show
- d) Created short promotional video
- e) Created Public Service Announcement, PSA, for promoting on radio stations
- f) Created Media Kit for social media platforms
- g) Created promotional flyer
- h) Created Facebook photos and content about Farm Show

CALENDAR

Activity	Due Date	Responsibility
Farm Show Program Cover Design	Nov. 1, 2018	Agency Staff
Farm Show Website Critique	Nov. 1, 2018	Bethany Jones Cassidy Kottke
Farm Show Press Release	Nov. 1, 2018	Agency Staff
Scholarship Press Release	Nov. 1, 2018	Agency Staff
Pitches for Media	Nov. 1, 2018	Sam Boettcher Abby Jonio
Promotional Flyer, 8.5 x 11 inches	Nov. 1, 2018	Public Relation Specialists (Two Designs)
Media Relations Kit	Nov. 1, 2018	Caleb Forberg Media Relations
Social Media Calendar and Guide	Nov. 1, 2018	Paisley Reynolds Alyssa Crum
Promotional Video	Nov. 1, 2018	Caleb Forberg Media Relations and Staff
Public Service Announcement	Nov. 1, 2018	Caleb Forberg Media Relations and Staff
Fact Sheet	Nov. 1, 2018	Sam Boettcher Abby Jonio

BUDGET

Husky Agency worked pro-bono with the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce to create a Strategic Communication Campaign for the Central Minnesota Farm Show. The budget was used only for marketing and executing the campaign, with \$3,200 allotted for the overall project.

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
Marketing, strategic communications budget	1	\$3,200	\$3,200
Husky Agency staff, 15 staff members, pro bono	15	\$0	\$0
Sheri Wegner, Special Events Coordinator, St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce, included in salary	1	\$0	\$0
Bernie Quist, Vice Chair, Farm Show, Volunteer	1	0	0
Amanda Groethe, Marketing Coordinator, Farm Show, Volunteer	1	0	0
Total			\$ 3,200

CONCLUSION

Husky Agency created a Strategic Communications Campaign for the 2019 Central Minnesota Farm Show that included a Media Kit, PSA, and short video.

Suggestions for future Farm Show Strategic Communications campaigns:

- Work on clarity in communication between the Husky Agency and client.
- Update the Farm Show website to include relevant, current, accurate, and in-depth information.
- Website needs be refined to make it more professional and have important information about scholarships, vendors, and other aspects of the Farm Show be more accessible and user friendly.

Final congratulatory remarks:

- Each member in Husky Agency was assigned particular tasks to help meet all the requirements and deadlines for the completion of the campaign, November 1, 2018.
- Agency team learned how to work through different real-world challenges as the campaign progressed. Since Husky Agency is a pro-bono and student run, there was greater latitude for error without facing dire consequences.

APPENDIX

Public Service Announcement

Script by Sodid Misaghian Shirazi

Join us for the Farm Show hosted by the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce on February 26, 27, and 28 2019 at the River's Edge Convention Center. This event is a great opportunity for you to meet and develop meaningful relationships with local vendors and learn the latest in agriculture technology. There will be around 400 booths for you to explore. The Central Minnesota Farm Show is the largest indoor farm show in the Upper Midwest, attracting farmers all over the region.

Farm Show Public Service Announcement Audio

Voice of Sodid Misaghian Shirazi, written by Caleb Forberg

www.soundcloud.com/huskyagency/2019-central-minnesota-farm-show-psa-by-sodid-misaghian-shirazi



The image shows a SoundCloud audio player interface. On the left is a square album art image featuring a red barn and a silo in a snowy field. The text on the album art reads "HA HUSKY AGENCY" and "Public Service Announcement by Sodid Misaghian Shirazi" with the website "huskyagency.org". To the right of the album art is a play button icon, the text "Husky Agency", and the title "2019 Central Minnesota Farm Show PSA by Sodid Misaghian Shirazi". Further right, it says "1 day ago" and "# Education". Below the title is a waveform visualization of the audio. At the bottom right of the waveform, a small black box displays "0:35". Below the waveform is a text input field with the placeholder "Write a comment". At the bottom of the player are four buttons: a heart icon with "2", a repost icon, a share icon, and a "More" button with three dots. A play button icon and the number "5" are located at the bottom right corner of the player area.



**2019
Central Minnesota
Farm Show**

CentralMNFarmShow.com



**February
26-28, 2019**

Farm Show Video

Producer Caleb Forberg

Editor Paisley Reynolds

Photographer Sam Boettcher

<https://youtu.be/q9iK-NviD9c>



2019 Central Minnesota Farm Show Promotional Video

2019 Central Minnesota Farm Show video promotion.

Farm Show Press Release

2019 Central Minnesota Farm Show Case Study



Please contact Sheri Wegner, Special Events Coordinator at St. Cloud Chamber of Commerce, for additional information at 320-656-3831 or email swegner@StCloudAreaChamber.com.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SAINT CLOUD, Minn., November 1, 2018

Central Minnesota Farm Show set for February 2019, St. Cloud

Coordinated by the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce, the Central Minnesota Farm Show continues for the 52 year; the largest indoor farm show in the Upper Midwest. The three-day agricultural experience, February 26-28, 2019, at the River's Edge Convention Center, 10 Fourth Avenue South, St. Cloud, Minnesota.

The Farm Show is dedicated to educating the next generation of farmers. Six scholarships are to be awarded for high school and college students enrolled in an agricultural related field of study. Find out more about scholarships at the Farm Show website.

centralmnfarmshow.com

“Agriculture has always been at the heart of our state’s economy and its way of life. Ranking in the top ten among all states, Minnesota serves as a world-class provider of many top-quality agricultural products for consumers around the globe. Minnesota’s agriculture industry supports many other industries as well, such as manufacturing, transportation, wholesale and retail trade, services, construction, banking, insurance and real estate,” said Margaret Hart, Communication Director, Minnesota Department of Agriculture.

“Minnesota farmers have faced many challenges this growing season. Agriculture commodity prices remain low - with corn and soybeans prices below the cost of production for the past three years. Ongoing trade negotiations have left farmers uncertain about markets. Weather has impacted all parts of the state throughout the growing season, and now many crops ready for harvest have been blanketed with a layer of snow. These stressors, combined with the fact that farming can be a very isolating endeavor, have contributed to an increase in mental health concerns among farmers and their families. Minnesota’s dairy farmers, in particular, are facing hardships due to low milk pricing,” said Hart.

“The Central Minnesota Farm Show Scholarship Fund is created to award financial support area high school students and college students pursuing a career in an agricultural related field. By awarding educational scholarships, the Central Minnesota Farm Show is helping to ensure the future of rural America for generations to come,” said Bernie Quist, Committee Vice Chair and Scholarship Selection Member, Farm Show.

“I believe the Central Minnesota Farm Show is important to our community as it brings together the backbone of our economic community with so many of our businesses relying either directly or indirectly on the Agri-business works. By doing this it is also able to bring awareness to so many businesses and individuals that may not be aware of the impact that agriculture has on their business,” said Andy Noble, Chair of the Farm Show.

“The Farm Show Scholarship has helped me pursue my ultimate dream- finding a degree in agriculture that will lead me to a sales and marketing career in the future. I feel pride in knowing that my community values agriculture, and that they will support the youth who find their passion in farming and other related fields,” stated Rebecca Schubert, past scholarship winner at North Dakota State University.

Since 1967, the Central Minnesota Farm Show attracting farmers and vendor alike, establishing meaningful relationships in the agricultural community. The Farm Show is hosted by the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce, <https://www.stcloudareachamber.com>. If you need additional information, please contact Sheri Wegner, Special Events Coordinator at the St. Cloud Area Chamber of Commerce at (320) 656-3831 or swegner@StCloudAreaChamber.com



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