UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

DEPARTMENT OF EARTH & ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE

COLLEGE OF LIBERAL AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

URBAN ENVIRONMENT ABSTRACTS

DEVELOPING A USER EXPERIENCE DRIVEN COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY FOR THE GLOBAL WATER ALLIANCE

Tan Chan (2016)

Readers:
   Stan Laskowski, Earth & Env Science, University of Pennsylvania
   Angelita Fasnacht, Global Water Alliance

The environmental nonprofit world is vast and growing. Just as a commercial enterprise depends on customers for profit, the success of an environmental nonprofit organization is dependent upon its donors and beneficiaries—its primary stakeholders. In the digital era, there has increasingly been a need for sophisticated, stakeholder-driven marketing informed by corporate marketing strategy. The project presented in this report consists of two parts: 1) a literature review of research on environmental communication and user experience design, and 2) a communications strategy for the Global Water Alliance (GWA) informed by best practices in user experience, branding, and social media. Notably, in the environmental communication literature, there is a consensus that environmental nonprofits are not fully utilizing the interactive components of social media. In particular, there has been a reliance on a "broadcast" paradigm of communication, based on information dissemination, rather than on the "dialogic" paradigm, based on interactivity and user engagement. The second part of the report, a brand and digital communications strategy plan for the GWA, is an effort to help the organization strengthen and institutionalize its dialogic capacity.

A GUIDE TO WALKABILITY: MOTIVES, CHALLENGES, AND SOLUTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY

Jacob Thompson (2014)

Readers:
  Gregory Krykewycz, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
  Richard Berman, University of Pennsylvania

Walking is a human being's original and most basic mode of transportation. In many United States communities, however, residents are unable to walk to and from destinations. In the twentieth century, suburban sprawl and the rise of the automobile resulted in significantly increased distances between destinations and communities that are unsafe and unappealing for walking. This Capstone project serves as a guide to help communities make walking a viable, efficient, and safe mode of transportation. The importance of walkable development for sustainability is addressed, including how walkability reduces energy consumption and land use. Walkability additionally provides benefits to public health, safety, equity, and the economy. The "Challenges" section discusses the barriers to walkability, which include low density, automobile-oriented development, roads built primarily for automobile mobility, lack of pedestrian infrastructure, and poor street connectivity. The "Solutions" section explains how streets and neighborhoods should be designed to maximize walkability. A walkable neighborhood incorporates mixed-use development, high density, an interconnected street network, street design that is oriented for the pedestrian, and appropriate placement of parking. Together, these elements form human-scale neighborhoods that are efficient, equitable, and sustainable and offer a high quality of life.