

The Case

For A Good Cause

The sixth period Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management Class at Lemon Bay High School is made up of juniors and seniors. The class is split right down the middle with twelve boys and twelve girls. All of the students in the class have taken at least one other business course while attending high school. The teacher, Mr. Jimmy Edwards, enjoys this group of students very much. He has considered giving the class a final project, as he always does, but this time he gives the students a bit more liberty to complete the task. Normally Mr. Edwards assigns a fundraising task to donate the proceeds to a local charity, however this year a neighboring community has been devastated by a natural disaster that tore through the community.

The class is split evenly into two teams, the blue team and the orange team. Both groups are given the task of developing a promotional campaign to raise as much money as possible with, all proceeds collected by both teams going to the neighboring communities' relief effort. The fundraising project will take place for a four week time period and the goal for the class is to raise approximately four thousand dollars.

The orange team gets right to work using their creative and decorative skills to create a banner, posters, and flyers to be posted all over school. The team also decides to set up a table before and after school outside of Mr. Edwards's room, and they set up a table in the lunchroom for the whole school to donate.

The blue team realizes the orange team will decorate posters and flyers, yet they choose to use this approach as well. They avoid creating a banner to post in the school, but they do collect money before and after school, as well as at lunch by alternating guys to wear signs and carry money cans all throughout the day. Ted is the Chief Executive Officer of the blue team. His brother is in a rock band, and they post songs and videos of the band on the popular social networking site MySpace.com. Ted's brother has commented numerous times about the band's popularity growing because of the free promotion they get online. Ted has the idea to create a MySpace page discussing the fundraiser, and puts links to photos of the devastation on the webpage. At the top of the page Ted posts the comment "Please help us help them" with the school address and phone number on the web page.

Mr. Edwards is a bit leery of the use of any social networks as a marketing and promotional tool, because of all the negative publicity some of the web sites have had in the past. His fear is that comments published to the web pages may be detrimental to the outlook of the school and community, if the web space is not governed properly. Another concern of Mr. Edwards is that the county which he teaches in has established a county wide block of any social networking websites. He is very excited that Ted has come up with an innovative promotional strategy, and would like to see if the social network can help to generate some much needed fund raising dollars.

Questions for Discussion

- Should the blue team be prohibited from the use of social networks on school premises for this fundraising opportunity?
- Is the county wide block of social networks hindering the students' ability to develop critical communication skills?
- Should Mr. Edwards be less concerned with the students' promotional methods, and more concerned with the amount of money each team is bringing in?
- Would the blue team lose a substantial amount of donations if Mr. Edwards were to stop them from using the social network as a promotional method?