

EDITORIAL



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DMC social media memes unprofessional

Del Mar College has recently taken a unique approach to its social media communication strategy by incorporating memes and humor into its content on Facebook and X, formerly known as Twitter. While humor can be an entertaining and a popular way to connect with students online, as an educational institution, it is vital to ensure that messaging is respectful and appropriate to avoid any potential negative impact on the community.

Del Mar College recently made a comment on a local news page regarding an article about a woman who suffered from food poisoning at a seafood restaurant.

When one gets sick, it is traditional that you might send a "Get Well Soon" card, or maybe even a bouquet of flowers. Standing on the sideline and commenting, "This would never have happened had I been involved," can reasonably be viewed as self-centered or even offensive. That is why the comment made by Del Mar College, "That's why they need Del Mar College

trained culinary masters," can be described as being at best in bad taste, especially considering the suffering and even death that can result from food poisoning.

The college's recent posts to its own social media accounts have references to various TV shows, those strange alien statues from Mexico, and Taylor Swift. A particular post depicting the SpongeBob SquarePants character Patrick Star with eyelashes and superimposed lips was commented on by a Del Mar College alumna as, "Higher education should also bring higher levels of thinking and speaking." While someone might disagree over whether "gurl" is a word that should be used at all or not, it is a sign that not everyone is catching what they college is tossing out.

As tempting as it may be to jump on the meme and comment bandwagon, it's important to remember that not all forms of humor or content may fit with an institution's brand or values. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi's decision to not use memes so far on their Facebook page

this semester while maintaining high levels of student engagement through other means is a great reminder of this fact.

It is also important to note that not every platform has the same user base, and the meme culture varies as well. According to an Ecampus news survey, Instagram and Snapchat tend to be the most popular platforms among younger generations. Due to this many of the accounts the college would be engaging with on Facebook won't be students, but rather faculty, parents of prospective students and community members. These are groups that might be more open to seeing Del Mar College as an accredited, respectable institution, rather than one that is "cool and relatable."

Even if Del Mar College focused its efforts at humor toward the right platforms, attempts to be wacky and relatable through the use of memes have always been controversial among internet users. This is especially so among younger users who tend to describe it as "cringe" and view it as a poor attempt for out-of-touch

institutions to try to connect with an ever-changing online culture and environment.

Of course, there are always exceptions to the rule. The old Wendy's Twitter account was a shining example of that. But why is Del Mar College trend chasing? Why is it trying to latch on to the top meme of the week just for the post to become dated by the next class week?

Del Mar College is a timeless institution, and it should be presenting a timeless presence. It is important to showcase the true essence of the college: highlighting its rich history, core values and achievements.

Social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook can be used to post visually engaging content that celebrate campus life and the college's students and staff. As Vikings, it's important to showcase our strength, resilience, and a sense of pride in our campus and all that it has to offer. This can help foster a strong sense of community, attract more students to the college, and keep the college off r/hellofellowkids.

ASK THE VIKINGS

QUESTION: WHAT SOCIAL MEDIA APP DO YOU USE THE MOST AND WHY?



"Twitter because it's funny as hell. It's funny and all the hot takes are on Twitter. Everybody is scared on the other platforms and nobody cares on Twitter. You can say whatever."

— Austin Tichacek,
Surgical Tech Pre-Med



"I guess the one I use the most is Twitter. I like to use that because it has a lot of my interests on there. It's kind of where I get my news from and it's funny to see what's going on there."

— Desirae Esparza,
Biology



"Most definitely YouTube. I like to watch documentaries while I do my homework. It just helps me focus and I'd rather listen to something educational."

— Marissa De Leon,
Pre-Med



"I think the one I use the most is Facebook. I guess because I can stay in touch with family members and they have some pretty good memes on there. I also stay updated with the Del Mar page."

— Anna Martinez,
Early Childhood Education



"Probably Instagram, it's one of the bigger platforms; you can text on it. If not Instagram then Snapchat is second for me."

— Cliften Edmunds,
Mechanical Engineering



"Snapchat, because it's easier to chat with people on there because you can send pictures easier than other apps."

— Marissa Garza,
Nursing



"Honestly, I use Twitter the most. I just go on it to see what's going on."

— Xavier Sanchez,
Computer Programming