Improved Online Presence of MSR

An Interactive Qualifying Project

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Abstract

Our team worked with MSR, a nonprofit helping members find employment, to evaluate and improve their online presence. Our team updated the website with new content and engaged their audience on social media platforms. We created a marketing strategy to ensure sustainability of our work, introducing these content and management techniques to volunteers at MSR. Increasing MSR's online engagement and following encourages connection with supporters internationally and enables MSR to connect more individuals with employment opportunities.

Acknowledgements

Executive Summary

Background

MSR is a Registered Welfare Organization founded in 2007 that works to combat unemployment in Namibia. Originally known as Men on the Side of the Road, the organization was created after noticing the large groups of men waiting at traffic lights for work. The organization's goal is "to help prepare and connect registered members to employment opportunities and better equip members to find employment for themselves" ("History of MSR," 2021). In 2016, MSR rebranded themselves to include women and teenagers who had dropped out of school ("MSR Gets New Look," 2016). MSR provides members with training in English, financial, and computer literacy. The organization also connects members to vocational training opportunities. Today, MSR has two offices in Windhoek and Swakopmund. As of 2020, MSR has 1813 members, 261 of them having found long-term employment ("MSR Namibia," 2020).

Namibia, located in southwestern Africa, became an independent nation in 1990 after a century of colonization from Germany and South Africa. Beginning in 1884, German forces occupied present-day Namibia and suppressed the indeginous population (Hope, 2020, p. 21-22). After World War I, South Africa took control of Namibia and extended their aparteid laws to Namibia, which segregated and discriminated against black Namibians (Hope, 2020, p. 27). Namibia finally gained independence from South Africa in 1990 (*The Namibian Struggle for Independence – 1966 – 1990 – a Historical Background | South African History Online*, n.d.). However, the political, social, and economic inequality is still seen in Namibia today (Levine & Roberts, 2013).

Namibia has the second most severe income inequality in the world and can be seen in the country's unemployment rate (*Countries ranked by GINI index (World Bank estimate),* 2019). As of 2018, the unemployment rate was 33.4% (Shigwedha & Kaulihowa, 2020, p. 73). With this high unemployment rate, citizens of Namibia often turn to day jobs to provide some type of income. Referred to as day-laborers, these individuals will stand by the road and seek day jobs (Sparks, 2004,

p.223). While this can provide temporary funds, jobs can be difficult to find and incomes can become inconsistent (Wyk et al, 2020).

As a non-profit organization, MSR relies on donations to fund the operation costs. Recently, they have been struggling to find donors and are operating on a month-to-month basis (C. Beukes, personal communication, March 1, 2021). One of the best ways a non-profit can gain a following of potential donors is by growing their online presence. In 2019, a team from Worcester Polytechnic Institute helped MSR start to build this presence. This team created a new website for MSR as well as a Facebook and Instagram page (Armstrong et al., 2019). However, since this team left, no updates had been made to the website and only infrequent updates appeared on the Facebook page. Our team's goal was to continue improving MSR's online presence in the hopes it would increase their social media following, prompting an increase in overall funding and support from potential donors, members, and employers.

Methods

To accomplish this goal, we outlined four objectives that would improve the online presence:

1. We gathered new information on MSR members and events through interviews. This was done through interviews with MSR staff and members. We then used this information to update the social media and website.

2. Next, we evaluated the website to determine where we could improve the site. We surveyed our family and peers through an online questionnaire and MSR members through a paper copy of the questionnaire. To further analyze the website, we also evaluated MSR and other non-profit websites against a 14-item best practices checklist. This checklist included criteria about aesthetics, security, usability, and branding. The last way we evaluated the website was through the analytics provided through Wordpress, the content management system used for the website.

3. We then developed a comprehensive marketing plan to ensure MSR can continue to build its following. We developed this plan using interviews and research on the best practices for nonprofits.

4. We also determined the necessary steps needed to create an online donation portal to encourage easy donations from international users by interviewing representatives from Bank Windhoek.

Findings

Using these methods, we collected and analyzed data that we used to improve MSR's online presence.

New Information about MSR

Through communication with our sponsor, we learned the number of MSR members had increased, MSR had a new staff member, and MSR holds a monthly membership training. During our interviews with members, we gained new testimonials that could be used on the website to share MSR's story. Finally we learned valuable interview skills MSR can use in future interviews with members to create the best testimonials.

Website Analysis Pre-Implementation

From our survey at the beginning of the project, we discovered the website was easy to navigate, as 93% of the online respondents answered it was extremely easy or somewhat easy to navigate. From these results, our team determined the overall layout of the website did not need to be changed and the current design could remain. However, our survey respondents gave the website an average overall rating of **7.23 out of 10** so there were areas we could improve the user experience.

Using our 14-item best practices checklist, we determined MSR's website fully met **6 out of 14** of the criteria, with another 4 out of 14 of the items being partially met. We used the checklist with four other non-profit organizations as well and found they all satisfied more of the items than the

MSR website. We used the other websites as inspiration for how we could improve MSR's own website.

For a week before we made any changes, from April 6th to April 11th, we collected data on the website. During this time span, we found it had **29 unique visitors**, 68% of whom were from the United States and 21% of whom were from Namibia. We also found the page loading speed of the website was **13.2 seconds**.

From this analysis, we identified several areas to improve the website. Areas included new updates, increased security, more impactful stories and photos, decreased page load time, and a working donation portal.

Website Analysis Post-Implementation

At the end of the project term, we surveyed website users and gathered website analytics again to measure our progress. From our survey results, we found that the overall website rating was now **9.1 out of 10**. In addition, MSR's website now fully meets **11 out of 14** of the items on the checklist, which is a 36% increase. From April 12th to April 26th, MSR's website gained **65 new visitors** and **18 returning visitors**. Lastly, the page load time was decreased to **1.6 seconds**.

Marketing Strategy

To increase MSR's following beyond the website, we also developed and implemented a social media marketing strategy. After conducting research and an interview with Jennifer Hale, the marketing director of C5 Georgia, a nonprofit in the United States, we developed our plan. This plan consisted of posting on Instagram and Facebook daily to increase engagement with a different theme for each day of content.

We then applied this strategy on MSR's Instagram and Facebook page starting on April 12th. By the end of the project term, our new Instagram page had **77 followers**. We used the analytics on Instagram to determine the best posting time and which types of content the most engagement. "Motivation Monday" posts and "Sponsor Saturday" posts had the furthest reach amongst our team's posts. Posts aimed at garnering support from the consumer tended to have a higher number of

interactions than other posts. During the project term, the engagement on the Facebook page increased **100%** and the post reach increased **325%**.

Donation Portal

To learn how to create an online donation portal, we met with Albe Louw and Clifford Lyners of Bank Windhoek. Our team learned Bank Windhoek was developing their own transaction portal but it was still being tested. It was not feasible to fully implement the portal before the end of our project. To ensure the integration was easy for MSR, our team investigated what could be completed. We integrated MSR's new donor database, HubSpot, into the website by installing a Wordpress plugin. This prebuilt donor database ensured a smooth transition for when the portal will be complete.

Recommendations

To ensure MSR's online presence continues to improve, our team recommends MSR implements a donation portal and continues to update the social media accounts and website.

Implement Donation Portal

First, MSR should complete the final steps to add an online donation portal. Our survey responses and research all suggested the addition of a donation portal. To do this, MSR must complete two tasks:

1. **Enroll** MSR in Phase 2 of Bank Windhoek's proprietary e-commerce platform trial so MSR can begin collecting donations as soon as possible.
2. **Integrate** the already-installed Wordpress plugin with the Bank Windhoek e-commerce platform.

A secure donation portal will provide international users with an easy method to transfer funds to MSR to cover their operational costs.

Maintain Social Media

To guarantee MSR's social media platforms remain updated, our team created a collection of marketing resources in a Google Drive folder. To maintain engagement, we recommend a staff

member or volunteer posts to MSR's Instagram and Facebook at least **once a week**. The folder consists of various resources to help MSR do this, including:

- Pre-made content that can be posted periodically by MSR staff,

- A content calendar to organize and outline posts,

- And various tips like how to engage with followers or create new content.

Since our team built a following on MSR's Instagram page by posting everyday, the MSR team can reduce the number of posts. This in turn will make the task of maintaining the social media achievable to a busy office staff.

Maintain the Website

Within the marketing folder, we also included information on how to maintain the MSR website with a User Guide on how to use Wordpress. As the website was already established, occasional updates will be adequate. Our team recommends MSR should include the following updates:

- **Once per week**, log-in to the admin side of the website and check for any updates

- **Once per month,** update the calendar page

- **Once every 3 months**, add a new story to the "announcements" page

- **Once per year**, add a new story to the "member updates" page

Our team found MSR's audience became more engaged on the website following posts about current MSR events, therefore it is important to maintain the website to reinforce this connection between the consumer and the organization.

Conclusion

By analyzing and updating MSR's website and social media platforms and outlining steps to be taken by MSR staff in the future, we hope MSR's online following will increase and lead to more donations. In our project term, we already saw improvements among MSR's online following and hope with our recommendations, this following will continue to grow.

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1 Introduction

Due to the global pandemic stemming from the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), unemployment rates are elevated worldwide. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), global unemployment increased by 33 million in 2020, with the global unemployment rate rising to 6.5 percent. Labor markets were greatly disrupted, with 8.8 percent of global working hours lost relative to the fourth quarter of 2019. This is equivalent to 255 million full-time jobs, assuming a working week is forty-eight hours. During the COVID-19 pandemic, both shifts to inactivity and shifts to unemployment have driven these losses (*Wcms_767028.Pdf*, n.d.).

Even before the pandemic, Namibia, a low-resource country, had high levels of unemployment. Located in southwestern Africa, Namibia was a colony of South Africa until 1990 and was subjected to apartheid rule. The apartheid laws "prevented black Namibians from having any political rights, as well as restricted social and economic freedoms" (*The Namibian Struggle for Independence – 1966 – 1990 – a Historical Background | South African History Online*, n.d.). A result of these apartheid laws was the creation of communities, composed of mainly citizens of non-European descent, with less resources and job availiability.

In Namibia, the effects of the apartheid are still felt today. Unemployment is at a high and the country is widely divided by economic status (Levine & Roberts, 2013). The result of this disparity is evident in communities such as Katutura, which is located outside of Windhoek and populated primarily by people of non-European descent. MSR, previously known as Men on the Side of the Road, noticed the members of the Katutura community had a vast unemployment problem. These individuals would sit on the side of roads looking for a day's work in order to provide for their families ("History of MSR," 2021). MSR was founded in Katutura, but the non-profit has now expanded to another site in Swakopmund, a city along the coast of Namibia. MSR works with the unemployed and provides training and support to them as they find permanent employment.

As unemployment numbers increased due to the coronavirus pandemic, MSR needed more funding to continue its programming. Their website, which had not been recently updated, is the best way to connect donors and potential members to the organization. At the start of the project, it lacked important features like an online donor portal and recent updates from the program. In addition, MSR's other forms of social media lacked content, reducing the organization's ability to market themselves to potential donors and members. Without updates to the website, potential donors did not have the ability to understand what effect MSR has had on the community. The website did not reflect MSR's recent rebranding in helping more women and children. Donors are disinclined to provide funding when they cannot see the results of their efforts.

Previous work to improve MSR's online presence focused on the creation of the organization's current website. As marketing strategies evolve, it is becoming increasingly important that organizations have strong branding and wide engagement that has continuity across multiple platforms (Chung et al., 2017). Leveraging social media within a marketing strategy has become a necessity. Our team's goal was to continue to improve MSR's online presence in the hopes it would increase their social media following, prompting an increase in overall funding and support from potential donors, members, and employers.

To build MSR's online presence, our team focused on ways to improve both the website and social media platforms. First, we gathered new information on members and events so the website could be updated. Next, we evaluated the website using interviews, surveys, and checklists to determine where the website could be improved. To attract more people to MSR, our team also developed a comprehensive marketing plan that can be used on MSR's social media accounts. To encourage quick donations, we researched how to design an online donation portal that could be accessed through the website. By completing these four steps we were able to build a stronger online presence for MSR. We also provided MSR with a strategy to continue marketing on their online platforms to ensure the sustainability of our work.

2 Background

In this chapter, we will first learn about Namibia's economy, both historically and presently. We will then give an overview of MSR, including their mission, resources, and previous project partnerships with WPI. Lastly, we'll explore the importance of nonprofits to have a strong online presence.

2.1 Namibia's Economy

This section will introduce Namibia's history and how it affects the economy. Namibia's economic growth is promising, but the country has been plagued with high income inequality since its time as a colony of Germany and South Africa. The section will also look at how unemployment impacts individuals and how the coronavirus pandemic has exacerbated Namibia's unemployment problem.

2.1.1 Economic History

Namibia is a relatively new country, having just gained independence from South Africa in 1990 (*The Namibian Struggle for Independence – 1966 – 1990 – a Historical Background | South African History Online*, n.d.). However, Namibia's history starts long before that. At the start of the 20th century, German forces occupied and colonized present-day Namibia. Rich with resources, the colonists pushed native Namibians from their homes and began to establish a white colony (Hope, 2020, p. 21-22). Following World War I, South Africa took control of Namibia from the Germans and followed Germany's strategy of pushing native Namibians off their land (Hope, 2020, p. 27). Apartheid laws from South Africa were extended to Namibia and restricted black Namibians from political, social, and economic freedoms. After many attempts at freedom, Namibia gained independence from South Africa in 1990 (*The Namibian Struggle for Independence – 1966 – 1990 – a Historical Background | South African History Online*, n.d.). However, the economic inequality caused by Namibia's colonial past remains (Levine & Roberts, 2013).

Since gaining independence from South Africa, Namibia's economy has seen steady economic growth. The country has a much higher gross domestic product (GDP) than the average GDP of sub-Saharan Africa and is classified as an "upper middle-income country" by the World Bank (Levine & Roberts, 2013, p. 167). However, these statistics do not take Namibia's severe income inequality into account. As of 2019, Namibia's income inequality was the second highest in the world (*Countries ranked by GINI index (World Bank estimate),* 2019). Khomas, the region where Katutura is located, has the largest proportion of employed individuals in the country at 30.7%. It also has the highest number of chronically unemployed people in the country and is home to 17.1% of all unemployed individuals in Namibia (Ashipala, n.d., p. 6-7).

Namibia's income inequality is a result of the country's high levels of unemployment. During the global recession of 2008, Namibia saw unemployment rates reach 50%. It has dropped since then but has remained over 20% (Shigwedha & Kaulihowa, 2020, p. 73). While the government has made efforts to help its citizens, the attempts at welfare are often not enough to bring citizens out of poverty. In addition, since Namibia is considered an upper middle-income country, it receives less funding and aid from the World Bank than a lower-income country (*World Bank Country and Lending Groups – World Bank Data Help Desk*, n.d.). As a result, the unemployment rate remains high, leaving many Namibians out of work despite an improving economy.
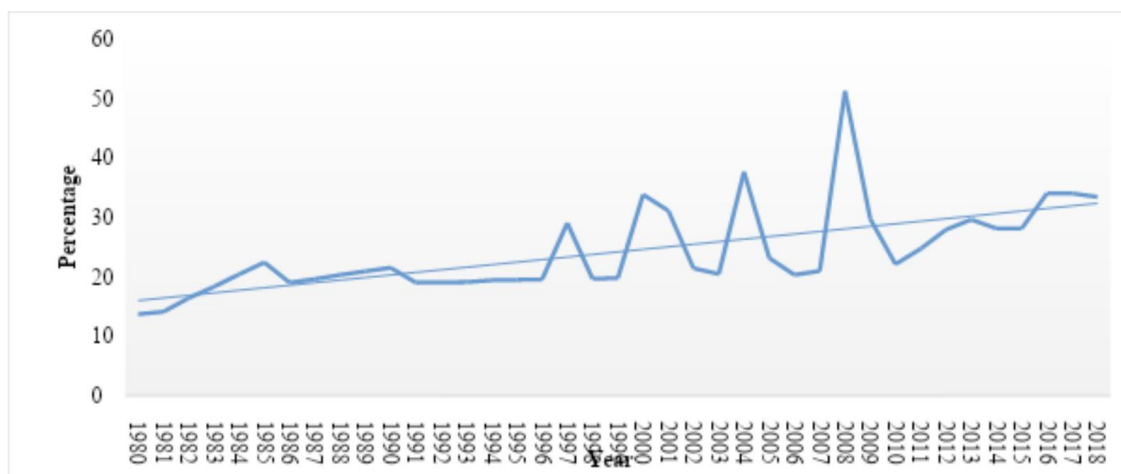
Figure 1: This figure shows the annual unemployment rate in Namibia from the year 1980 to 2018, showing an increasing trend in unemployment rates (Shigwedha & Kaulihowa, 2020).

2.1.2 Effects of Unemployment

The largest impact unemployment has on an individual is the loss of a steady source of income. Without it, necessities like food and shelter become hard to pay for. In Namibia, 42.3% of citizens are undernourished due to the high levels of unemployment and poverty ("Namibia," n.d.). Unemployment can negatively impact the mental and physical health of individuals as well. Unemployment is found to increase depressive symptoms. Mortality rates tend to rise after an individual becomes unemployed (Nichols et al., 2013, p. 9). These factors all lead to a decrease in the quality of life.

When individuals become unemployed, they turn to various short-term jobs to provide an income. Referred to as day-laborers, these individuals will stand by the road and seek day jobs (Sparks, 2004, p.223). Having a reliable full-time job is beneficial to an individual's subjective well-being as they offer consistency (Wyk et al, 2020, p. 7). While informal employment offers a source of income, it still creates concern for the worker. It can be very difficult to find jobs and day-laborers need to be constantly searching for them. A series of interviews of unemployed men in Namibia found over half of them spend seven days a week looking for work on the side of the road (Sparks, 2004, p.223). Namibia has an informal employment rate of 66.5% (Wyk et al, 2020, p. 2). One way to combat this issue is for non-governmental organizations to work with day laborers to help them find jobs and more permanent places of employment (Wyk et al, 2020, p. 8).

2.1.3 Impact of the Coronavirus Pandemic

In 2020, the coronavirus pandemic halted economic growth throughout the world. The United Nations Economic Commission for Africa predicted that a potential 29 million people in Africa could be pushed into extreme poverty from the pandemic (Takyia & Bentum-Ennin, 2020, p.2). Namibia is estimated to see a 4.8% economic contraction (*Overview - The World Bank of Namibia,* n.d). With one-third of the working population already unemployed, the loss of jobs caused by the pandemic has only increased this number. Some countries turned to federal aid to help their citizens through

lockdowns. While Namibia does have programs in place to help those in poverty, the effects of the pandemic put strains on these programs making them unable to assist the growing unemployed population (Erastus, 2021). Without adequate government support, non-government organizations (NGOs) must be able to step in and help citizens find a source of income.

2.2 History of MSR

MSR is a Registered Welfare Organization (Reg. No. WO348) and an Incorporated Association Not for Gain (Reg. No. 21/2007/025) founded in 2007 ("History of MSR," 2021). The organization, originally known as Men on the Side of the Road, was founded after realizing large groups of individuals would sit at strategic places around Katutura, Namibia. These men would sit, typically around traffic lights, in hopes they may be offered a job for the day and be able to provide for their families. The organization's goal is "to help prepare and connect registered members to employment opportunities and better equip members to find employment for themselves" ("History of MSR," 2021).

In 2016, MSR rebranded themselves after realizing Namibia's unemployed population included more than just men. This new rebranding focused on "consider[ing] all unemployed people, thus including the men physically sitting on the side of the road, Grade 10 and 12 school dropouts, women and all the others falling in the category of being unemployed" ("MSR Gets New Look," 2016). In 2018, just two years after the rebranding, MSR filled a database with their members which shows "at least 1302 registered job seekers, 337 [individuals] have been assisted through vocational training, 560 [people] were placed into part-time jobs while 280 are now employed full time" ("Roadside 'Beggars' Put to Work," 2018).

2.2.1 Operations of MSR

MSR is focused on providing the skills and resources necessary to gain employment. Once an unemployed individual joins MSR, they are provided with training in fields including communication skills, cover letter building opportunities, interview tips, and mentorship. They do this by following a

seven-step process, which starts by determining the best course of action for the individual, playing on their strengths determined through one on one counselling ("What We Do," 2021). Members are trained by MSR staff in basic English skills to aid them in the workplace as well as in financial literacy, which is then followed by vocational training in the member's chosen fields ("What We Do," 2021). MSR then provides members with a mentor, a member of MSR staff, to help provide any additional guidance they may need. While the organization has many members and some volunteers from the community, there are only three staff on payroll at MSR split between the two offices. These staff and volunteers reach out to the organization's extensive network of employers in the sixth step of the program to ensure the member attains formal employment or begins a journey of self-employment. The seventh step is to help those who wish to seek self-employment and become entrepreneurs with classes on how to get started.

Figure 2: Seven-step process as described on the MSR Website ("What We Do," 2021).

After providing these resources to the individual, MSR then aids in reaching their network of employers and hiring recruiters to provide the steppingstone needed to find appropriate opportunities. MSR may contact employers to ask if there are any open roles and employers may also reach out to the organization through their website with available roles.

2.2.2 Testimonials of the Programs

Over thirteen years in operation, MSR has helped over 1,800 people find employment opportunities ("MSR Namibia," 2020). These individuals are extremely grateful and use the skills MSR provided them in their future endeavors.

Nelson Michael is a member of MSR who has turned his skills learned through their programs into his own business ("MSR Turned Me into an Entrepreneur," 2017). In 2002, seeking better job opportunities and school systems for his family, Mr. Michael came to Windhoek. He discovered the job market to be difficult to maneuver. When MSR was introduced to him, Mr. Michael joined and was trained in both life and management skills at the MSR office. Mr. Michael was contracted to multiple jobs through MSR, yet most of his first jobs were not long-term ("MSR Turned Me into an Entrepreneur," 2017).

Figure 3: Pictured above is Nelson Michael from *The Patriot* article written about him ("MSR Turned Me into an Entrepreneur," 2017).

MSR provided the opportunity for Mr. Michael to learn how to drive in their vocational training programs in 2014. After obtaining his driver's license, Mr. Michael was hired by one of Windhoek's largest taxi companies for six-months. When this contract was up, he was employed as a taxi driver for a year, which inspired him to build his own taxi business. Mr. Michael expresses his gratitude to MSR by saying;

"I want to thank MSR for never giving up on me and equipping me with the required skills, so

I could start making a decent living" ("MSR Turned Me into an Entrepreneur," 2017).

Mr. Michael plans to expand his business by buying another vehicle and has hopes to open up another business in Windhoek.

Testimonials such as these as published in Namibian newspaper, *The New Era*, are vital to an organization's success. Testimonials engage both donors and potential members of the organization and build a sense of trust between the individual and the true mission of an organization such as MSR. This trust is established through an understanding of how people are aided through their membership in MSR. While there was a testimonial section on MSR's website titled "Member Updates", this page was not a major focus of the website or their social media, and only included four stories.

2.2.3 MSR Current Status and Operations with COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic which widely shut down the world in March of 2020 also affected the day-to-day operations of MSR. As the pandemic was spreading rapidly, MSR announced its decision to shut down in-person operations effective the 16th of March, 2020 ("MSR Namibia," 2020). In their public statement, they encouraged all members and staff to follow Namibia's Ministry of Health's instructions and provided a phone number for members to call regarding employment ("MSR Namibia," 2020).

For about two weeks, both offices of MSR, in Swakopmund and Windhoek, were shut down (C. Beukes, personal communication, March 1, 2021). During the shutdown, MSR knew their members were some of the people struggling the most in the pandemic. Without the amenities of the MSR office space, members were unable to start finding new jobs. With this in mind, the offices started opening twice a week for a few hours at a time, increasing the hours of operation slowly until August, 2020 when they completely reopened operations (C. Beukes, personal communication, March 1, 2021). Since the full reopening, MSR has continued to allow members into their offices daily and they hope to continue to do so fully in the future. Even though the organization re-opened operations for the year 2020, the number of members able to find employment drastically decreased compared to previous years. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, just over 80 members found employment through MSR's aid in 2020. This number of individuals is much lower than the average 138 individuals annually placed in jobs from the previous five year span. Though 80 individuals placed

in employment is still a large number, this employment was almost entirely temporary, as can be seen in Figure 4. Only seven members found either full-time or part-time employment in the year 2020.
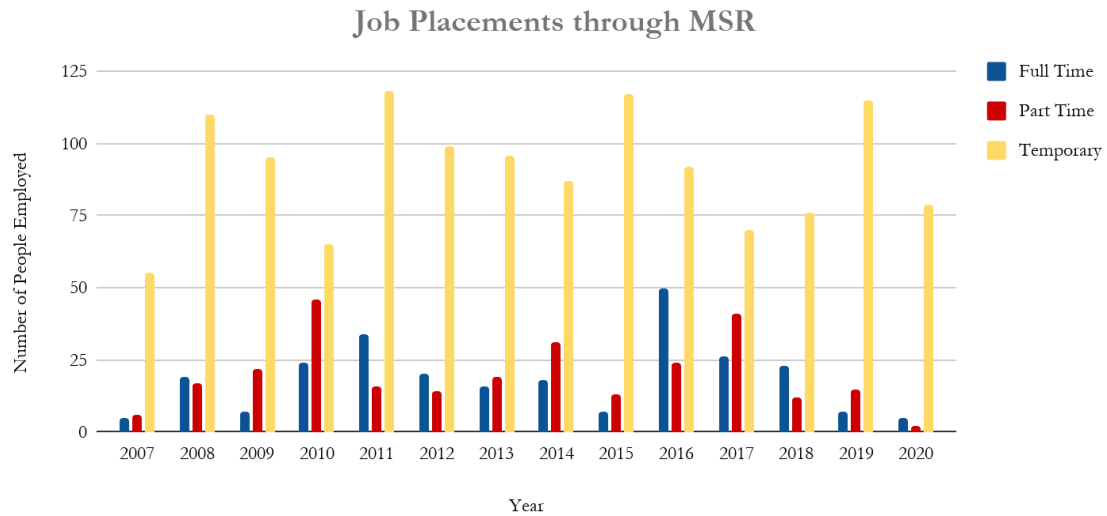
Figure 4: Graph of the annual job placement of members of MSR (C. Beukes, personal communication, March 1, 2021).

2.3 Previous IQP in Partnership with MSR

In the Spring semester of 2019, a project team composed of four students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) proposed and implemented a project designed to improve Men on the Side of the Road's online presence.

2.3.1 Website Reconstruction by the Previous Team

When the previous IQP team began their partnership with MSR, the non-profit's existing website had numerous technical and communication issues. The team conducted interviews with key stakeholders and determined the stakeholders wanted the focus of the website to be MSR's members, showcasing their skills and success stories through multimedia content, an ability to crowdfund, and optimization for social media. The 2019 project team also evaluated the existing website using the "Web Design Best Practices Checklist", which assesses websites based on the multiple attributes including: page layout, browser compatibility, navigation, color and graphics, accessibility, and more. MSR's website was

missing approximately 36% of the criteria, with page layouts contributing to the majority of the losses. An analysis of websites of comparable organizations was completed as the final step prior to the development of the new website.

After completing a comprehensive needs analysis, the 2019 project team decided on WordPress as its website building platform and began developing the content that would later be on the website. The content met the requests of the organization while adhering closely to the principles outlined in the best practices checklist. The reconstructed web page was more visually appealing and informative than its predecessor and accurately portrayed the organization's rebranding. The website uses a continuation of the font and color scheme throughout, as well as providing the links to their other forms of social media: Facebook, LinkedIn, Youtube, and Instagram. The website uses Arial font because of its simplistic design and readability. The color scheme of MSR's logo, a deep blue and golden yellow, is used throughout the website in slight variations. The theme used for the website is the WordPress Mesmerize Theme. Following the completion of the website, the team re-evaluated the new website using the best practices checklist and found 86.95% of the criteria present, with the remaining 13.05% of criteria not applicable to the website in its current state. Therefore, the updated website was much more intuitive for a site visitor. In order to ensure the sustainability of the website and provide the MSR employees with resources on updating it, the 2019 project team created user guides with instructions on how to maintain the WordPress site, as well as all of its connected social media pages (Armstrong et al., 2019).

2.3.2 Recommendations by Previous Team

The website created by the WPI IQP team in 2019 provided a solid foundation for future marketing opportunities. The 2019 team identified two potential areas of growth for future projects: a comprehensive marketing plan and an online portal for employers. Past marketing methods of MSR have not been successful in attracting sponsors and other funding to the organization. Therefore, the 2019 team suggested another team could identify and implement a proven marketing strategy that is effective in Namibia across MSR's website and social media pages. In addition to a marketing plan, an

employer portal could be created and linked to the website. Through the portal, potential employers would be able to search members by their skills, access their contact information, and hire them directly for jobs (Armstrong et al., 2019).

2.4 Importance of Online Presence

This section will cover the logistics of creating an effective online presence. Maintaining an online presence is essential in reflecting an organization's social mission and profile. It is also a great source of revenue as an effective online presence will help reinforce a community or existing community.

2.4.1 Business Models

Non-profit organizations are required to innovate their business model as means for financial sustainability, even in the absence of other funding sources, and to deliver services to beneficiaries (Balan-Vnuk & Balan, 2015, p. 214). The researchers conducted in-depth interviews with Chief Executive Officers of four organizations as well as a Chief Financial Officer to get an overall perspective of how their respective organization generates revenue. After the interviews, they concluded, "It is evident from the responses from all the CEOs that there was no expectation of ongoing financial support from government contracts or from other philanthropic sources, and they were therefore focused on generating revenue for the organization" (Balan-Vnuk & Balan, 2015, p. 217). To ensure financial revenue, an organization's business model must be focused on ways to acquire funding. Business models heavily rely on consistency, for which the organization's social mission needs to be clear and resonate with the services they provide (Balan-Vnuk & Balan, 2015, p. 217). This, in turn, will help direct the organization to innovative marketing strategies.

2.4.2 Marketing Strategies

Marketing strategies are derived from understanding the demographic; the people who you are trying to sell or serve. "Marketing (the verb) has to start with the market (the noun) to be effective over the long haul. Only then, by putting the appropriate marketing activities together in the correct sequence,

can you change the way your organization thinks of its markets and ultimately the way those markets think of you..." (Brinckerhoff, 2010, p. 79). The ability to respond to the needs of clients and beneficiaries allows an organization to receive funding because they are catering towards a niche that needs outside support (Balan-Vnuk & Balan, 2015, p. 218). Ways to determine what an organization's market wants can range from surveys to in person discussion (Brinckerhoff, 2010, p. 82). It is essential that an organization's marketing strategy be evaluated continually. The wants and needs of stakeholders are always in flux and all parts of an organization's brands need to adapt to these changes (Brinckerhoff, 2010, p. 42). The marketing cycle never ends and organization's must always be sharing their mission with potential members and donors.

2.4.3 Developing Social Media Strategies

Social media plays a critical role in today's global marketing as it can significantly affect a brand in either a positive or negative light. Proctor & Gamble's Old Spice is a very well known brand from its humorous advertisements. The brand was on the verge of declining until an advertisement was created, which featured NFL star Isaiah Mustafa as the 'Old Spice Guy'. The advertisement won the Golden Lion award at the Cannes Film Festival in 2010 . The brand started to become more prominent when the advertisement was posted on YouTube with millions of downloads, very successful humorous tweets on Twitter, and the creation of a fanbase on Facebook. "Sales of Old Spice increased by 55% between April and June 2010" (Pitt et al., 2011). From the Old Spice advertisement circulating around social media platforms, it gathered and retained a large audience, increasing their sales significantly. Having a strong social media engagement is a necessity when marketing the branding of an organization because it is a platform that easily garners the attention of people around the world.

Developing an online presence for a non-profit organization is an essential business model for maintaining financial stability and assurance for the services they provide. Social media revolutionizes how an organization can engage with the market and build public relations (Pitt et al., 2011). Knowledge on social media is critical for organizations as they need it to integrate with their overall

marketing strategy. Research emphasizes if an organization's social media is managed poorly, it can bring about fatal consequences such as, "'abuse, addiction, and misuse', 'reduced productivity', an increasingly 'strained computing and network resource' and 'misrepresentation' due to staff failure to distinguish between personal and business use" (Chung et al., 2017, p. 1406). Furthermore, misuse in social media will demean an organization's reputation (Chung et al., 2017, p. 1405-1406). If the reputation of an organization is not well known or is ambiguous, the chances of receiving any funding are slim.

There are several strategies nonprofits can implement to improve their social media presence. These strategies branch into four categories: Social Commerce Strategy, Social Content Strategy, Social Monitoring Strategy, and Social CRM (customer relationship management) Strategy.

- Social Commerce Strategy is a social media strategy to use social media as an outlet for promotional or advertising purposes, given its global reach. This strategy is one-way communication oriented, for which it is intended to attract consumers in the short run. This short engagement between the organization and the consumer makes this Social Commerce Strategy the most underdeveloped social strategy amongst the four.
- Social Content Strategy is a two-way communication social media strategy that provides content the consumer needs in order to retain and increase customer engagement. This strategy requires the organization to provide content favorable for the consumer to share it, which in turn better promotes the organization's branding.
- Social Monitoring Strategy is another two-way communication strategy that addresses the content delivered by responding to the consumer's online needs or concerns relating to it. This strategy requires the organization to respond to the consumer and push content that best satisfies the targeted demographic.
- Social CRM (customer relationship management) Strategy is the last two-way communication strategy that encourages the consumer to take an active role and contribute to promoting the organization's branding by either sharing the organization's content, commenting on it, or showing interest in the content. This strategy is two-way communication oriented, requiring

the organization to build a collaborative relationship with the consumer and other

organizations (Li et al., 2021).

Strategic Social Media Objectives

Figure 5: Graph that illustrates the taxonomy of the following four social media strategies, highlighting their interaction with the consumer as well as their effectiveness in consumer engagement (Li et al., 2021).

Social CRM Strategy as it is the most optimal way to retain high engagement. To follow this

strategy, the accounts should be set up as a nonprofit organization. This feature allows the account to

feature a "donate" button on platforms like Facebook and Instagram. A content calendar should also

be implemented to ensure the account is posting at a consistent schedule. The featured content should

share stories about the people impacted by the organization. Using this strategy allows followers to see

beyond the brand and understand how the nonprofit has helped the community. Lastly, the

organization should ensure the content is shareable so their message can be spread and their following

can grow. This can be done by using statistics and short facts to bring attention to the cause ("Social

Media for Nonprofits," 2020). Implementing these steps can help a nonprofit gain more attention on social media. The following strategies encourage engagement with the audience, which helps the organization's branding to be more substantial. People will become more cognizant of the organization's social mission and it will encourage them to stay in touch in the future. "The more customers connect and interact with the firm's activities, the higher is the level of customer engagement created…" (Li et al., 2021). With more attention, the nonprofit can secure more funding.

2.4.4 Website Presentation

A website is dynamic and consists of many different features and strategies that can be used for storytelling and helping to grow a for-profit or non-profit organization. One main feature of a website's functionality and structure is the layout. A website's layout is important when it comes to giving a good impression to an audience who wants to know more about the services an organization provides (Brinckerhoff, 2010, p. 78). Offering immediate access for your board and staff along with opportunities that allow them to become more cognizant of your organization enhances the clarity of the social mission, internal communications, and satisfaction of the board, staff, and volunteers (Brinckerhoff, 2010, p. 78).

To be most beneficial to the organization, there are many best practices a nonprofit website must consider. A website must have standardized branding, use impactful photos, and use a minimalistic design. These strategies will create a visually appealing site. The website must clearly convey the organization's mission and story. To help users with navigation, a website must minimize page load time and optimize the site for mobile devices. A nonprofit can also grow its presence by linking its website with platforms like the organization's social media accounts, email, and phone number. Since nonprofits seek donors to stay operational, donation opportunities must be featured. Strategies to accomplish this include adding a matching gift tool, linking the website and donor database, and featuring the donation button prominently ("14 Essential Nonprofit Web Design Best Practices," 2020).

2.4.5 Search Engine Optimization

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is a mechanism that allows the searcher to get results that will most benefit their online search based on specific keywords, Bhandari and Bansal (2018) claim, "SEO also helps marketers by displaying their respective ads to the right people in the right place and right time. Organizations can better promote themselves online by increasing their searchability and therefore improve their overall online presence. Marketers can advance the rankings of their advertisement on the search-results pages by improving their quality score in order to make them more significant and therefore more search-engine compatible." (Bhandari & Bansal, 2018, p. 25). To rank sites, the web search tool scores every site on its relevance by utilizing search engine algorithms (Yalçın & Köse, 2010, p. 488).
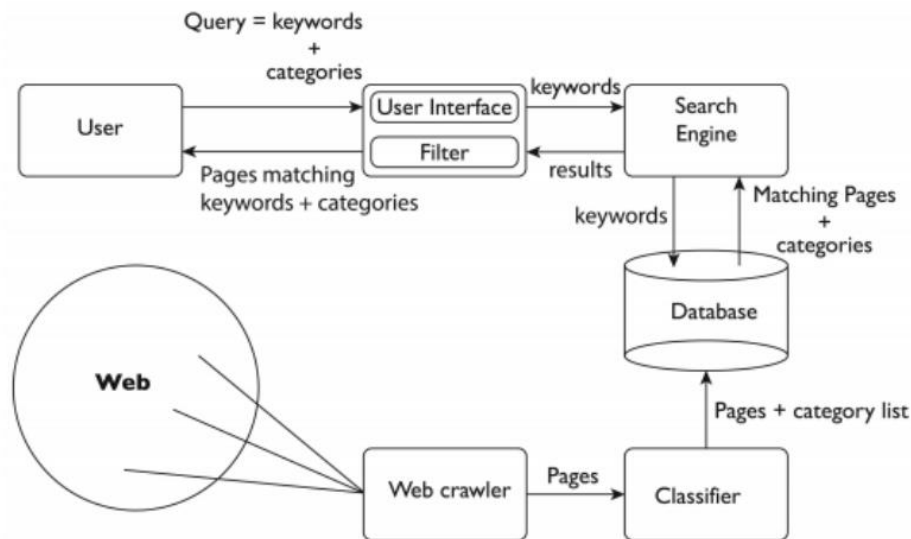
Figure 6: This flowchart describes how SEO connects users to web pages using their search query to display the best results for the individual (Chekuri, Goldwasser, Raghavan, and Upfal, 1997).

2.5 Background Summary

Namibia's high unemployment rate and severe income inequality has resulted in 33% of Namibians out of work. MSR, a nonprofit founded in Katutura, helps unemployed individuals by providing them resources and training to find jobs. MSR has recently struggled to find the donors needed to

fund its programs. One of the best ways for a non-profit to increase funding is by improving the organization's presence online through their website and social media platforms. A strong website focuses on the organization's mission and has an aesthetically pleasing layout. The organization's social media platforms must encourage the consumer to be active and interact with the content. Using this information, our team outlined a series of steps to improve MSR's online presence, which will be explained in the following chapter.

3 Methodology

The goal of our project was to improve MSR's online presence in order to increase their social media following. Improving this online presence should promote an increase in overall funding and support from potential donors, members, and employers. To accomplish this goal, our team's primary objectives were to:

1. Gather updated information on MSR and its members,

2. Evaluate MSR's website to determine the best marketing strategy,

3. Develop a marketing plan to ensure more popularity on social media platforms and online search engines, and

4. Design an online donation portal to be linked to financial systems internationally / nationally and accessible to MSR.

Figure 7: Flowchart describing our team's overall objectives and order in which we completed them.

3.1 Objective 1: Gather updated information on MSR and its members

Before we could make any updates or changes to MSR's website or social media, we needed to gather data on the current state of MSR. This included updates from members and information on scheduled events. On MSR's website, the recent updates section had not been modified since 2019. Without updates, members and potential donors were not able to know what MSR was doing. To successfully update the website, our team completed two tasks. First, we collected information on the status of MSR and its members. Next, we added this information to the website. While completing

these two tasks we considered ethical implications as described in Appendix A to ensure this study was conducted honorably.

As we were unable to travel to Namibia, we used interviews with MSR members and staff to collect information. Summaries of these interviews can be found in Appendices B, D, and E. We conducted the interviews over Zoom in March and April. There is a time difference of six hours between Namibia and WPI. The time difference was difficult as it narrowed mutual availability. To schedule interviews during the typical Namibian workday, at the convenience of our interviewees, our team offered to conduct the interviews between 2pm-5pm Namibian time or 8am-11am EST ("Time Zone in Namibia," n.d.). The first interview was with Crystal Beukes, CEO of MSR, to understand the current operational status of MSR. We also used this interview to learn of any upcoming events to add to the calendar. The following interviews were with current members, whom we contacted with the help of Ms. Beukes. These interviews focused on the member's relationship with MSR and how the organization has helped them. We used questions outlined in Appendix C as a guide.

Our team interviewed a wide demographic of individuals at MSR. From volunteers, to new members, to well established individuals within the organization, all participants were over the age of eighteen. We made sure to include both males and females, as well as members from both the Windhoek office and Swakopmund office. This ensured we captured the diversity of the backgrounds of each interview participant. We conducted the interviews in the form of a conversation, starting by introducing ourselves and the project in order to make the interviewee as comfortable as possible. This step was important to create a flow and generate more stories rather than short answers to our questions. Prior to conducting the interviews, we completed research on the economic history of Namibia and the effects of unemployment on individuals. We kept this information in mind and established a method of sensitive questioning. We also reached out to the interviewee and asked for their consent to record the dialogue using the recording features on Zoom. We prompted the participants to complete MSR's liability release for consent prior to uploading the content online.

Once our team conducted the interviews, we added this information to the website. We updated the calendar page with all upcoming events as described by Crystal Beukes. The articles we

wrote from members' interviews were also uploaded to the "member updates" page as well as posted to social media[1]. Testimonials and member stories showcased on the website and social media platforms provide an insight as to how individuals are influenced by the aid of MSR. Members' stories and tales of success are valuable tools when marketing nonprofits. Donors are more willing to give when they see how their monetary donations will be used. Our team highlighted the training opportunities at MSR that have allowed individuals to join the workforce, and in some cases, create their own businesses, such as Nelson Michael's story. Demographic information for the members we interviewed and the guiding questions we used to collect the testimonials are found in Appendix C.

3.2 Objective 2: Evaluate current website through demand analysis

Even with new updates, the website would not be effective in relaying MSR's mission if the content, layout, and overall design were not improved to meet the demands of its users. To determine the best marketing strategy, our team assessed MSR's current website. In this analysis, we evaluated the usability of the website.

3.2.1 Surveying Website Users

To collect information, our team first conducted interviews with Crystal Beukes along with other MSR employees to get an idea of what feedback was needed when renovating the website. Our team used the qualitative data from the interviews to create a questionnaire that best exemplified MSR's expectations for the website; the printed version of both the pre-project implementation and post-project implementation questionnaires can be found in Appendices F and G. Crystal Beukes and other MSR staff members helped us distribute the questionnaire to individuals in Namibia. To complete the needs analysis, we evaluated the requests of the sponsor which we obtained through a series of interviews. Our team then surveyed MSR's website users to determine their preferences. Following our updates to the website and the social media platforms, we distributed the survey again to the initial

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[1] https://msr.org.na/recent-updates/member-updates/

recipients to re-evaluate the usability of the website. This survey occurred after our work on the project was complete. We utilized the data from both surveys to measure the success of the project.

The respondents completed the surveys online through the web-based Qualtrics platform and were composed of both open-ended and closed questions. Many of these close-ended questions followed the format of rating specific features on a scale described in the questionnaire, such as the usability on a scale of "very easy" to "very difficult". We put the data into a data analysis program and used the graphing features to create figures to display the response data, the results of which can be found in 4.2.1.

Ms. Beukes distributed a printed copy of the survey to MSR's offices to ensure members who did not have internet access could partake and provide a larger sample population. Even with this printed option, we did not receive much feedback from MSR members. The format of the survey questions allowed us to interpret and understand multiple opinions and further ideas to aid the project. We obtained a sample size of 58 responses to the pre-implementation survey and 32 responses to the post-implementation survey. The target audience was website visitors: potential donors, members, and general users. Our team posted the questionnaire through various social media platforms in hopes to recruit participants. By using Qualtrics' database, we gained access to the sample population. It was in our interest that the sampling was non-probability because the people in this sample population may not have had an equal chance of participating in the study due to lack of internet access and time zone differences. We also sent an email to our peers from the Namibia IQP cohort at WPI to gain more submissions on the accessibility of the website and social media. WPI students and staff provided important insight into how international users felt about the website.

3.2.2 Analysis of Website

Our team used nonprofit websites to better understand website layouts and potential marketing strategies. We compared various nonprofit websites from organizations with similar missions to MSR's. We analyzed the other organizations' websites and pinpointed the differences between them as well as the essential criteria met. Our team also analyzed the MSR website and other nonprofits'

websites using the "14 Essential Nonprofit Web Design Best Practices" (2020). These best practices are described by Double the Donation, an online resource to aid nonprofits, following fourteen points that both attract donors and maximize online donations. Some of the criteria described include optimizing the website for mobile use, linking other communication outlets, keeping the design minimal, and featuring the donation button prominently on the page ("14 Essential Nonprofit Web Design Best Practices," 2020). Once the websites were analyzed, we chose the most effective layout, aesthetic, and content to fit MSR's needs. Together, our team went through each criterion and determined whether the criterion was fully met, partially met, or not met on the websites evaluated. This allowed us to quickly gauge where MSR's website stood in comparison to others before collecting more detailed data.

Table 1: Checklist of the 14 Essential Nonprofit Web Design Best Practices used to analyze MSR's website at the start of the project ("14 Essential Nonprofit Web Design Best Practices," 2020).

Objective	Current Website (Meets/Does not meet)
Invest in a Nonprofit CMS	
Optimize for Mobile	
Make Navigation Intuitive	
Minimize Page Load Time	
Implement Strong Website Security	
Add a Matching Gift Tool	
Link up Your Website and Donor Database	
Include other Communications Outlets	
Standardize Branding	
Use Impactful Photos	
Keep it Minimal	
Feature Your Donation Button Prominently	
Include Other Engagement Opportunities	
Tell Your Story	

Using the information from this analysis, along with feedback from the survey and interviews, we implemented changes to the layout, content, and performance of the website. While our team altered the website, we further evaluated it by observing the website traffic and analyzing page engagement using web analytics. Finally, we conducted surveys a second time to gain any final feedback on the design and to gauge how the website improved.

3.3 Objective 3: Develop a marketing plan

Websites are no longer the only way an organization can reach its audience online. As social media becomes more popular, it is important for nonprofit organizations like MSR to have a strong presence on these platforms. MSR's Facebook account was last updated in December 2020. To garner the most interest and following, MSR needs to update the accounts frequently. To ensure this continuity, we developed a social media marketing plan with information on how frequently to post, what content to post, and which social media platforms to use. We delivered this plan to MSR in the form of a Google Drive folder[2], which included videos, pre-made content, templates, a marketing calendar, and tips for continuously updating MSR's marketing strategy.

To create this plan, our team first determined which social media platforms were most beneficial to MSR. Using interviews with the MSR staff and additional research, we considered social media use both in Namibia and internationally and which platforms are most user-friendly for a simple posting strategy.

Once we decided on the platforms to use, we created a marketing calendar to visually depict MSR's marketing campaigns for the next year. The content calendar included important dates for the organization as well as National and International holidays to ensure efficient content postings. The calendar indicates when posts should be made, to which platform they should be published, and what is being posted. To help facilitate the process of content creation, we created a series of templates for MSR's social media accounts. These templates included pictures and captions for MSR to post at a consistent interval. MSR staff is made up of three individuals, none of whom focus on social media. Therefore we focused on making the social media strategy as efficient as possible. We created each post to attract donors to MSR as well as potential employers for the members. We did this by highlighting the members and announcing information about recent training at MSR. Our team utilized the interviews and testimonials taken during the earlier project stage and created videos as well as updated pages for the website to gain the donors' trust of what their donations will provide for members.

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[2] https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Vnn9LiXPNaDjAIrj68NfDGgxmNlxowBR?usp=sharing

By creating this plan, MSR could reach a larger audience through their social media accounts. Our team also utilized search engine optimization to gain an increased following on MSR's website. We researched keywords and phrases that receive the highest number of searches, which were then added to the website so MSR's website appears at the top of a potential donor's search engine query. By creating a marketing plan for social media accounts and optimizing the MSR website to be found through an online search engine, we hope MSR's online popularity will increase.

3.4 Objective 4: Design an online donation portal

The first three objectives helped MSR build a larger following and garnered interest from potential donors. To encourage funding from this following, we researched the steps to design and implement an online donation portal that is easily accessed through the website. Donation portals help increase nonprofit's monetary donations. Individuals are influenced by technology and social media more than ever before. Internet campaigns have been shown to increase a nonprofit's popularity, which therefore would increase traffic to their website. With this higher traffic to the website, there is an increased likelihood individuals will donate to the cause if a donation portal was easily accessible on the website.

Currently, when the user navigates to the donation page on the website, they are given a bank code as their only way to donate. An online portal would make donating an easier process, ideally making the user more likely to donate. We believe this ease will lead to an increase in funding for MSR. To outline the necessary steps to create a successful portal, we met with Albe Louw and Clifford Lyners at Bank Windhoek, MSR's banking provider, to understand the potential options for secure money transfer. With Mr. Louw's and Mr. Lyners's aid we researched ways to improve the website to support a donation portal.
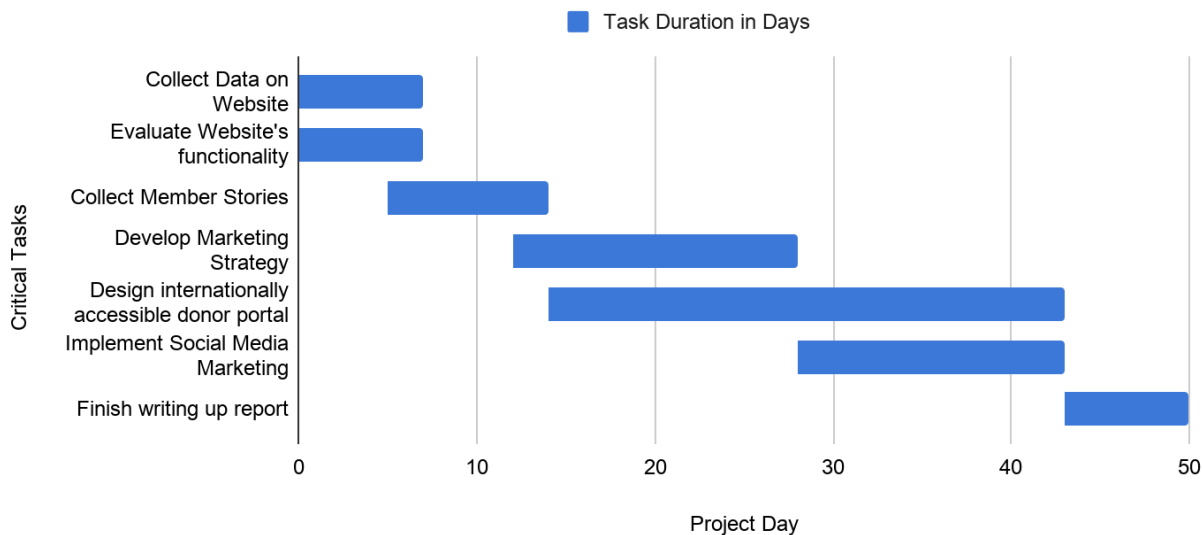
Figure 8: Gantt chart describing our team's timeline and goals.

3.5 Summary of Methods

Our team outlined four key objectives including gathering updated information, evaluating the current website, creating a marketing plan, and designing a donation portal. The timeline we followed can be seen in Figure 8. We outlined how interviews were conducted with MSR staff and members, as well as experts in both marketing and banking. These interviews, along with our surveys and additional research, provided us with the necessary information to complete these four objectives and accomplish our goal of improving MSR's online presence.

4 Findings

Following the methods outlined in the previous chapter, we collected and analyzed data that we then used to improve MSR's online presence. The following section discusses the results from our interviews, surveys, and website analysis. It also includes quantitative and qualitative data on how our improvements impacted MSR's online following.

4.1 Updated Information

Our team's first task was to gather updated information on MSR and its members. The website had not been updated since 2019, so this step was vital in creating new content for the website and social media platforms. Through interviews with our sponsor, we gained new information about MSR and its operations. During our initial interview with our sponsor, we learned MSR was fully operating in person through the coronavirus pandemic, which was unclear from its website. Subsequent meetings during the project term provided us with the following information:

1. MSR added a new staff member, Tresia Kenaruzo, who was not featured on the website,

2. MSR held a training at the Windhoek office on April 14th, and

3. MSR's total members increased from 1601 members (the number on the website) to 1813 members.

Our team also conducted a series of interviews with MSR members at the Swakopmund office and the Windhoek office, summaries of which can be found in Appendices D and E. We noted short quotations from the interviews that could be used in social media posts. We also used the interviews to create testimonials and other new information to update the website pages, which can be found in Appendix H. Members at both offices spoke positively about MSR and appreciated the support MSR had provided. Several members mentioned how it was helpful to have access to reading the newspaper and printing copies of their resume. In addition to learning more about what members think about MSR, we learned valuable information on gaining testimonials. MSR staff can use this information in the future to gain more content for the website.

During the Swakopmund interviews, we interviewed members one at a time. We found this technique to be most effective as members were more inclined to speak and tell us their story. During the Windhoek interviews, we spoke with four members at one time. This made it difficult for the team to pull out individual aspects from each interviewee. Therefore, the content from the Windhoek office was less effective in creating testimonials than the content from the Swakopmund interviews.

Each office gave our team a different point of view. At the Swakopmund office, many of the members did not have degrees from universities and found MSR's training and support through school most beneficial. Meanwhile, members whom we interviewed at the Windhoek office stated they had gone to school but were now unemployed. They found MSR's resources such as printing resumes and job connections were the most beneficial aspects. With these two different outlooks, we gathered two distinct types of testimonials which were useful to showcase MSR's vast range of resources. The Swakopmund interviews focused more on the training and how MSR has changed their lives. The Windhoek interviews were more focused on the many resources that MSR can provide members outside of training.

During the interviews, we identified certain questions that worked particularly well and could be used in future testimonial interviews. Asking members about what training they have gone through and what they found most helpful gave our team insight on what members think is most advantageous. Another useful question was asking members about the friendships they have made while at MSR. This question gave us valuable quotations that showcased MSR as a community.

4.2 Website Analysis

After gathering updated information on MSR, our team analyzed the website to ensure the layout and information were up to date. This analysis took place in multiple forms: surveying individuals about the prior state of the website to understand the highest areas of need, comparing it to similar-mission non-profit websites against a standard-practice checklist, and using the analytics from the current website to evaluate website traffic.

4.2.1 Website Analysis Survey

To evaluate the website, our team sent out a survey with questions regarding the MSR website in its previous state. We composed the survey with open-ended and closed-ended questions to determine a user's impression of the website as well as why the respondent answered as they did. We distributed the survey online via email and social media posts, with Crystal Beukes distributing a printed version of the same survey to the members of MSR. Most of the online survey responses were from individuals outside of the organization, a majority of whom had a limited knowledge of MSR. This helped our group obtain unbiased opinions on the website. The surveys were vital to our data collection process as they allowed our team to understand the opinions of the public, a demographic whom we targeted as a potential donor base. We ensured these opinions affected our original planned execution and altered our process to best fit the views of this general public.

We received 47 responses to our online survey, 45 of which were from respondents in the United States while the other 2 respondents were from the Bahamas and United Arab Emirates (UAE). The international participants from the survey were not surprising to us. We shared the survey to our fellow students in the Namibia cohort, one of whom was in the UAE, as well as family and friends through LinkedIn some of whom reside outside of the United States.

The results from the U.S.-based respondents were similar to what we had hypothesized. When trying to search for MSR, using just "MSR" in the search field, the search engine yielded the website for the organization on the first page of results for only 6% of respondents. When the individuals whom we surveyed entered "Men on the Side of the Road" in their search engine, the MSR website was on the first page of results 96% of the time. This result was unsurprising to our team as there is a U.S. based company, Mountain Safety Research, which produces outdoor gear and goes by the same acronym "MSR" as Men on the Side of the Road (Mountain Safety Research). With these results, our team did determine MSR's re-branding from 2016 was not well advertised through their website. The organization changed their name to MSR five years prior to this project. Therefore, it should be well established and well known to our audience the organization no longer goes by Men on the Side of the

Road. Our team made sure to encourage the new following we acquired to know MSR through this acronym.

The respondents from Namibia had a higher success rate of search engines yielding the MSR website. In this group, we found that when "MSR" was entered in the search engine it was a result on the first page for 64% of the respondents. This is a large increase in search engine results from the U.S. based respondents and is likely due to the servers being based in Namibia, therefore when Namibian respondents search for it there is more likelihood of the results yielding the MSR website. When respondents googled "Men on the Side of the Road", MSR's website was displayed on the first page of results 100% of the time.

Next, our team addressed the useability of the website. The first question we asked respondents was how easy the website was to access; we gave five choices ranging from extremely easy to extremely difficult. The majority of the 47 online respondents, 63%, determined accessing the website was "somewhat easy", the range of these data can be found in Figure 9. The 11 respondents from Namibia found the website easier to access, the largest share of responses, 37%, stated it was extremely easy to access the MSR website, the data to support this can be found in Figure 10.
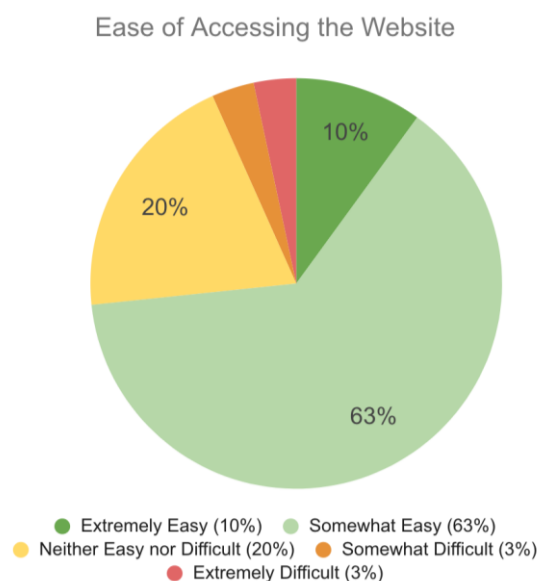

Figure 9: Results of the 47 online survey participants from the questions which asked "How easy was the website to access/find?". Most respondents (63%) believed the website was "somewhat easy" to access.

Ease of Accessing the Website (Namibia Responses)
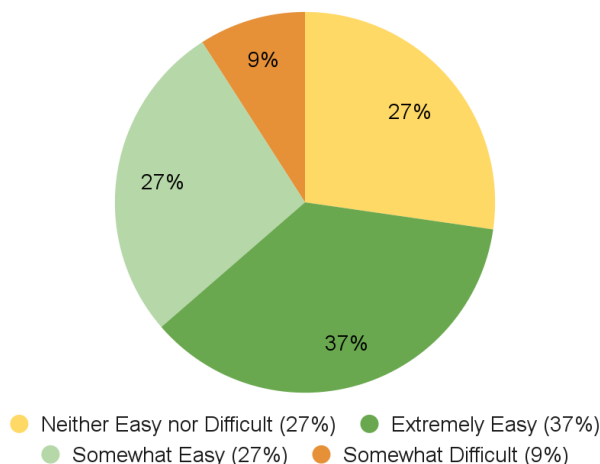
Figure 10: Results of the 11 Namibian responses to the survey from the questions which asked "How easy was the website to access/find?". Largest share of respondents (37%) believed the website was "extremely easy" to access.

The second question was about navigating the website. We gave the respondents the same five options as the previous question. Our team discovered many individuals liked the layout and thought navigating the website was intuitive. Approximately 53% of the online respondents thought the website was at least somewhat easy to navigate, 40% of online respondents believed MSR's website to be extremely easy to navigate. The majority of respondents from Namibia believed the website was neither easy nor difficult to navigate. This larger response of neutrality could be due to many respondents not having much computer access and therefore not being as well versed with websites like MSR's. The results from this question for both groups may be seen in Figures 11 and 12. From these responses, our team was able to determine we did not need to reorganize the website, as a majority of people believed the website was very easy to access and navigate on their own. This meant we did not need to focus on finding a new customer relationship management system, CMS, rather focus primarily on the information and management of the prior CMS for the website.

Ease of Navigating the Website
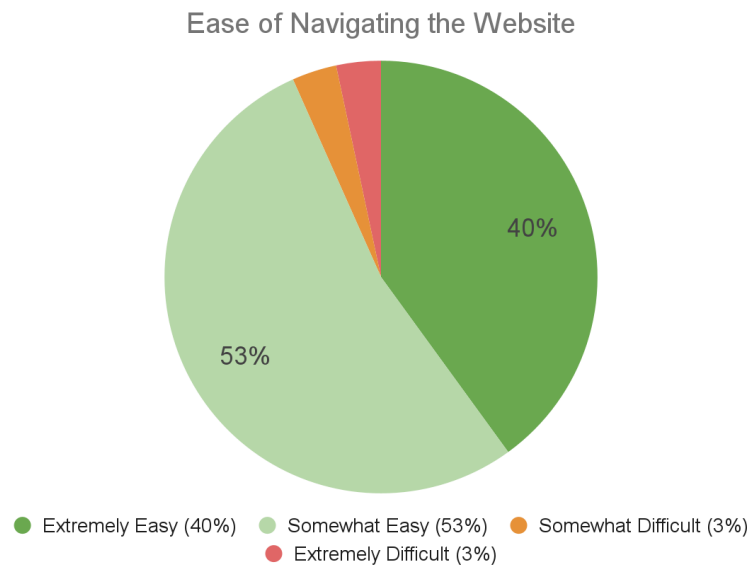
Figure 11: Results from the online survey asking the 47 non-Namibian respondents "How easy was it to navigate the website?". The responses show strong belief that the website's navigation was not difficult for individuals.

Ease of Navigating the Website (Namibia Responses)

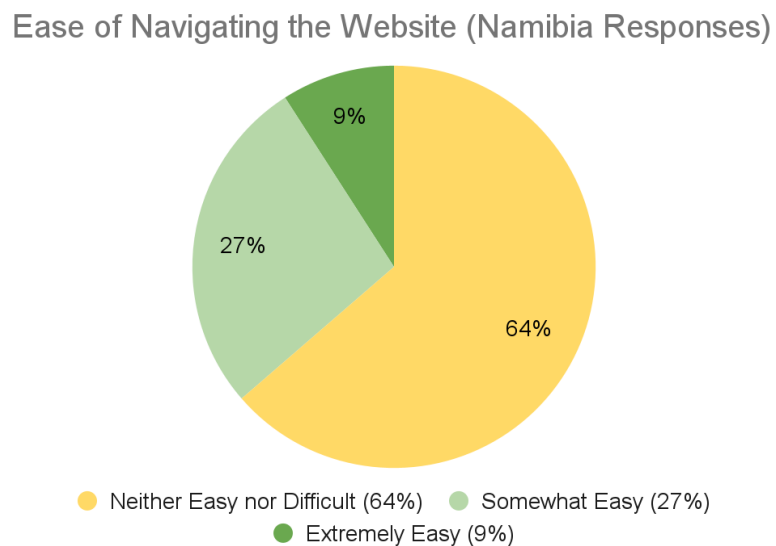**Figure 12:** Results from the Namibia responses to the survey, asking the 11 respondents "How easy was it to navigate the website?". The responses show navigating the website was not difficult but also not widely viewed as easy.

Another item we analysed was the information on the website. Our team started by asking if there was any page on the website which the respondents felt as though information was lacking. With

an open-ended question such as this, we received multiple responses about what individuals would want to see. Some responses included wanting to know more about how to donate, how to volunteer, having a better understanding of the current events taking place at MSR and more recent updates on the organization, as well as a more transparent understanding of the financials of MSR. With these results in mind, our team pushed harder towards our objective of implementing the donation portal and also focused on trying to create more transparency with opportunities to become involved with the operations at MSR. After discussing with Ms. Beukes, we decided to not include the financial information of MSR on the website, as she was not ready to publish this information. We also decided to update the calendar feature on MSR's website more frequently.

Many responses to the open-ended questions from the group in Namibia wanted more access to a member database which would highlight members and their specific skills. Many members also wanted to see more information on jobs in the area as well as extra resources to learn about the vocational training which they could get at MSR. These responses were very important for our team to understand how the members of MSR and people in Namibia feel about the current website. However we received the responses with limited time left in the term to fully address the changes discussed. Still, the responses were very helpful in our recommendations to future project groups.

Along with the open-ended questions, we wanted to collect quantitative data about the information provided on the website so we could visually depict the responses. We decided to include similar-style questions as the accessibility and navigational ability of the website, addressing an understanding of what resources MSR provides its members along with how individuals may donate both their time or money to aid the organization. The options ranged from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" that the information provided on the website allowed them to have a firm understanding on these topics. Regarding information on how MSR provides resources to its members, all respondents either chose "somewhat agree" or "strongly agree", meaning the website accurately shows information on their operations and what they may provide their members with. However, the results respondents gave varied greatly for our question of "Would you say the information provided on the website is helpful in knowing how to donate time or money to MSR?".

While the majority of results were evenly cast between "somewhat agree" and "strongly agree" at 35% each, there was a wider range of responses as seen in Figure 13. The last page of the printed survey was not completed by any of the respondents in Namibia, meaning the responses for this question were collected solely from non-Namibian respondents online. From these data, our team determined many people do not know how they may be able to help support MSR, either through monetary donations or through donating their time, even though 81% of respondents indicated they would want to support this organization if they knew how.
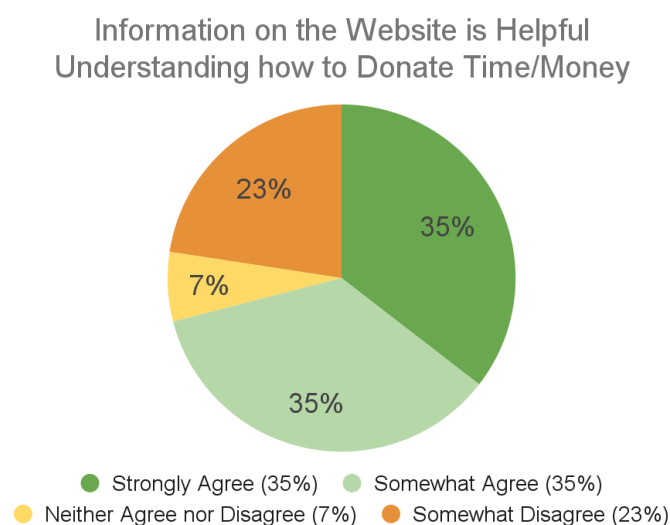
Figure 13: Survey results from the 47 non-Namibian respondents asking "Would you say the information provided on the website is helpful in knowing how to donate time or money to MSR?". These results are more varied than the other responses on information provided on the website.

As our team's final questions on the survey, we asked for our respondents' opinions of the website as a whole as well as asking for any further suggestions. Our team realized a 72% rating on the website, as can be seen in Figure 14, was not ideal. We wanted to understand our respondents' opinions of implementing: a more prominent donation portal which was easy to access, a displayed gift matching option in the donation portal describing how the money may be used, a more phone-friendly website, and updated content so individuals know the current state of the organization. These opinions were all very helpful while our team made changes to the previous website.

Overall Website Ranking: Pre-Implementation(1-10)

Figure 14: Ratings of MSR's overall website on a scale of 1-10, 1 being a very poor experience, and 10 being a very good experience. The average respondent rating was 7.2±1.8 out of 10.

After we completed the work on the website, we sent out our surveys again. The post-implementation survey was very similar to the pre-implementation survey. Our team only received feedback through the online version of this survey as MSR was unable to collect the results from the paper copy as quickly. The majority of our team's updates to the website were aspects that may not be seen; due to this the most important questions we could ask were if people felt the information on the website was up to date and if they felt their opinion on the overall ranking had changed. The results from this survey showed the success of our team's changes to the website. The post-website updates survey results were collected from 32 respondents, all from the United States. These individuals determined the overall website to have a 91% rating, as can be seen in Figure 15. This increase of 19% aided our team in the belief our changes to the website were successful. The qualitative input from the survey regarded that adding a donation portal would be very beneficial to the website, our team had attempted to create this portal and our efforts can be found in section 4.4.

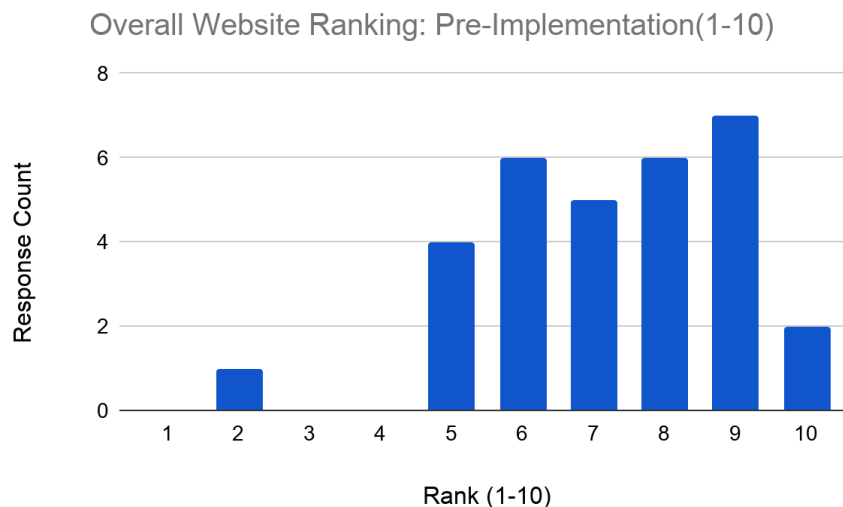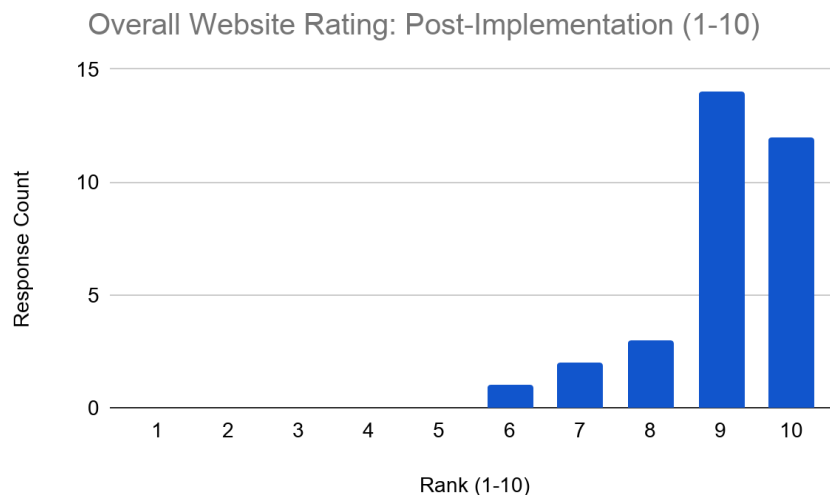**Figure 15:** Post project ratings of MSR's overall website on a scale of 1-10, 1 being a very poor experience, and 10 being a very good experience. The average respondent rating was 9.1±1.0 out of 10.

4.2.2 Non-Profit Website Comparison

As we described in the previous chapter, our team compared MSR's website with a list of "14 Essential Nonprofit Web Design Best Practices". Our team determined if each criterion was met on the website before we changed any aspects of the website. This checklist aided our team in determining where our attention would be focused on during our project.

We used Google Sheets to create a checklist of all 14 criteria. Proceeding through the checklist one aspect at a time, we determined whether the website: met the criterion, partially met the criterion, or did not meet the criterion. Overall, MSR's website met approximately 43% of the criteria on the best practices list. The full breakdown of our initial analysis can be found in Table 2.

Table 2: The "14 Essential Nonprofit Web Design Best Practices" used in our evaluation on MSR's initial website, along with our team's evaluation of each criterion.

Criteria	Website Meets	Website Partially Meets	Website Does Not Meet
Invest in a Nonprofit CMS	X		
Optimize for Mobile	X		
Make Navigation Intuitive	X		
Minimize Page Load Time			X
Implement Strong Website Security			X
Add a Matching Gift Tool			X
Link up Your Website and Donor Database			X
Include other Communication Outlets	X		
Standardize Branding	X		
Use Impactful Photos		X	
Keep it Minimal		X	
Feature Your Donation Button Prominently		X	
Include Other Engagement Opportunities	X		
Tell Your Story		X	

We also used this table to create a graphical representation of our evaluation, as shown in Figure 16. The evaluation shows the website had lacked about 57% of criteria. The areas for improvement were evenly split between partially meeting the criteria and not meeting the criteria, providing the team with a basic understanding of where we could make an impactful change.
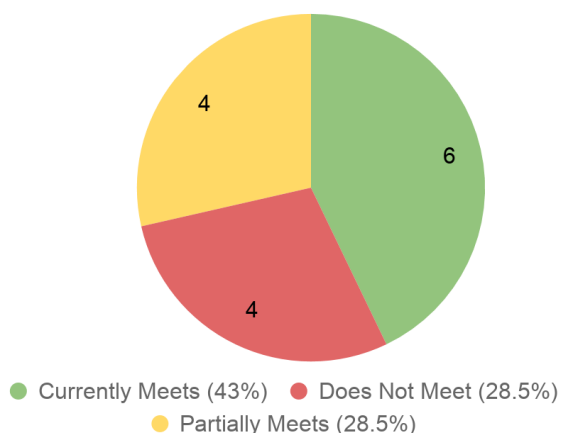
MSR Website Evaluation (Pre-Implementation)

● Currently Meets (43%)   ● Does Not Meet (28.5%)
● Partially Meets (28.5%)

Figure 16: This graph represents the overall results of our team's evaluation of the initial website in quantifiable results based on our checklist of the 14 best practices criteria.

Using this data analysis, our team concluded which areas needed the most improvement. We determined the importance of creating a donor portal, linked to MSR's bank account, as well as implementing strong website security, minimizing page load time, and telling their story through both a minimal design and impactful photos.

Once we established what we needed to improve on the MSR website, we evaluated other non-profits each with a well-established online presence to determine what effectively corrects these issues. The websites we evaluated were all nonprofits with a mission-based marketing style. The websites were for nonprofits such as Charity Water, Maryland New Directions, The Doe Fund, and Crossroads MA. We selected nonprofits known in the industry for their strong online presence or that have a similar mission to MSR. To keep a standard basis in our comparison of each website, we used the same checklist. As a team, we determined every organization we compared had a stronger website than MSR's. None of our results identified a perfect website that met all 14 criteria. However, Charity Water, a mission-based organization motivated to bring clean and safe drinking water to people in developing countries, had the strongest online presence ("Charity Water Home Page," 2021). This website met approximately 86% of the criteria from our checklist, see Figure 17. Our team compared their practices to our marketing strategy to determine its effectiveness.

Charity Water Website Evaluation

● Meets Criteria (86%)   ● Does Not Meet Criteria (7%)
● Partially Meets Criteria (7%)
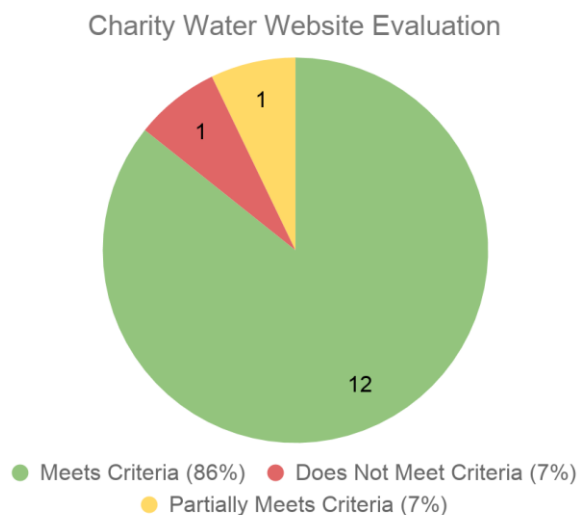
Figure 17: Results from our Charity Water website evaluation: the website met 12 out of the 14 necessary criteria.

Every website we evaluated had a stronger presence than MSR's original website; however we also compared the results of the nonprofit websites to MSR's website after our group made changes. We updated the testimonials, the events calendar, the statistics for the organization, the security, the links, the MSR staff page as well as other minor maintenance described in section 4.2.3 Website Analytics.

During our team's final analysis of the website using the 14 best practices checklist, we determined the updated website met 11 of the 14 criteria, with only two partially met criteria and one criteria not met as can be seen in Figure 18. The one criteria our team could not meet during our project term was adding a gift matching tool as can be seen in Table 3. This criteria could not be met without a working donation portal, which is described in section 4.4 of this paper. Our team increased the met criteria by five practices which we determined to be a success as it is comparable to the Charity Water evaluation which we were using as our standard. Further improvements to update MSR's website can be found in our recommendations chapter.

MSR Website Evaluation Post-Project
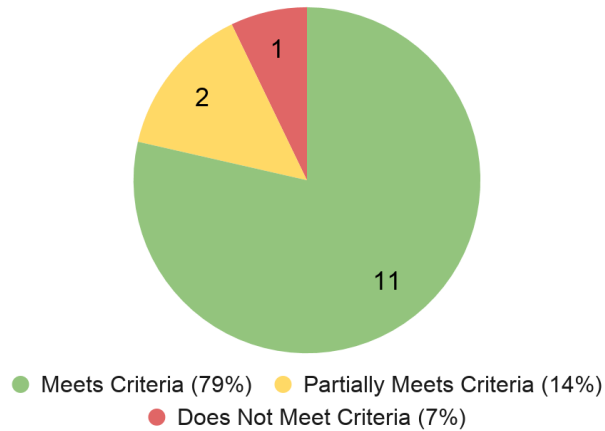
Figure 18: Results from our post project MSR website evaluation: the website met 11 out of the 14 necessary criteria.

Table 3: The "14 Essential Nonprofit Web Design Best Practices" used in our evaluation on MSR's initial website, along with our team's evaluation of each criterion in the post project analysis.

Criteria	Website Meets	Website Partially Meets	Website Does Not Meet
Invest in a Nonprofit CMS	X		
Optimize for Mobile	X		
Make Navigation Intuitive	X		
Minimize Page Load Time	X		
Implement Strong Website Security	X		
Add a Matching Gift Tool			X
Link up Your Website and Donor Database	X		
Include other Communication Outlets	X		
Standardize Branding	X		
Use Impactful Photos		X	
Keep it Minimal	X		
Feature Your Donation Button Prominently		X	
Include Other Engagement Opportunities	X		
Tell Your Story	X		

4.2.3 Website Analytics

Once we gained access to MSR's website on April 1, 2021, we added Google's Site Kit, a website analytics tool plugin for WordPress, onto MSR's website to observe the website traffic, general demographic, and page loading speed over the course of the project. For further insight, we used Google Analytics to give real time analytics of the website. No one had previously included the website analytics tool for MSR's website, which made it impossible for us to retrieve any past statistics of the website. We added the two website analytics tools on April 6th, 2021 and observed trends before we made any updates. For the first iteration of recording MSR's website analytics, our team collected data from when the website analytics tools had been implemented to the day prior to our team's social media campaign April 6th-11th, 2021. For the second iteration of recording MSR's website analytics, our team collected data from when we started the social media campaign on April 12th to two weeks before the end of the project on April 26th to exhibit how the campaign had affected the number of new users garnered, the pageview count, the user demographic, and the bounce rate. Bounce rate is the percentage of visitors on the website who leave the website after viewing one page. Due to varying time periods for each iteration, comparing them was not a perfect method of determining the growth of MSR's website.

4.2.3.1 Unique Website Visitors

April 6th - April 11th

We gathered data for the first week after including the website analytics prior to beginning the social media campaign. It shows there were a total of 29 unique visitors and 34 sessions with the website.

Figure 19 + 20: Percentage of new and returning visitors of MSR's website and the number of unique visitors of MSR's website from April 6th to 11th, 2021.

April 12th - April 26th

After the social media campaign began, we garnered 65 new users and maintained 13 returning users on MSR's website. The MSR website had its greatest reach on April 23rd, the same day our team introduced MSR's monthly membership training on the social media platforms. There is a possibility that content showing MSR's activities encourages people who follow MSR through social media to further engage through the website.

Figure 21 + 22: Percentage of new and returning visitors of MSR's website and the number of unique visitors of MSR's website from April 12th to 26th, 2021.

4.2.3.2 User Demographic

April 6th - April 11th

The demographic was mostly visitors from the United States. One possible cause is our team's online questionnaire being shared amongst other teams working with Namibia's Project Center on April 1, 2021. There were some, however, from the Bahamas, South Africa, Spain, Israel, India, and the United Arab Emirates. Following April 7, 2021, there was a decrease in site visitors. This could be due to the completion of the survey or that this was the time period following Easter, April 4, 2021, where the users' attention could be directed elsewhere and not on the MSR website. During this time, there was a ratio of 29/3 new to returning users (Figure 19).
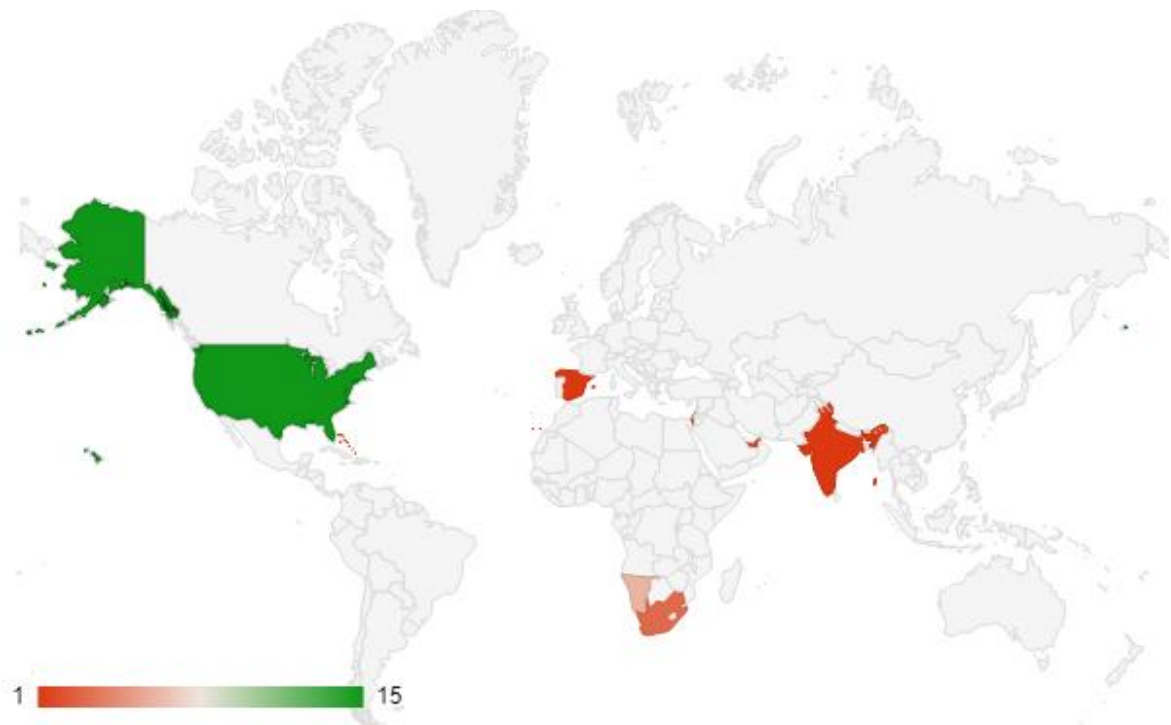
Figure 23: The user demographic from April 6th, 2021 to April 11th, 2021.

April 12th - April 26th

The demographic became slightly more diverse as people from Croatia, Germany, Egypt, Pakistan, and Indonesia visited MSR's website. MSR's website demographic still consists of mainly people from the United States, for which 68% of them visited the website during this time period. Our team mainly focused on promoting MSR's Instagram page, as the United States is Instagram's largest audience, this

can be a potential reason as to why the majority of website users are from the United States (Tankovska, 2021). The IQP Namibia Cohort is another potential reason as to why the user demographic is mainly those residing in the United States.
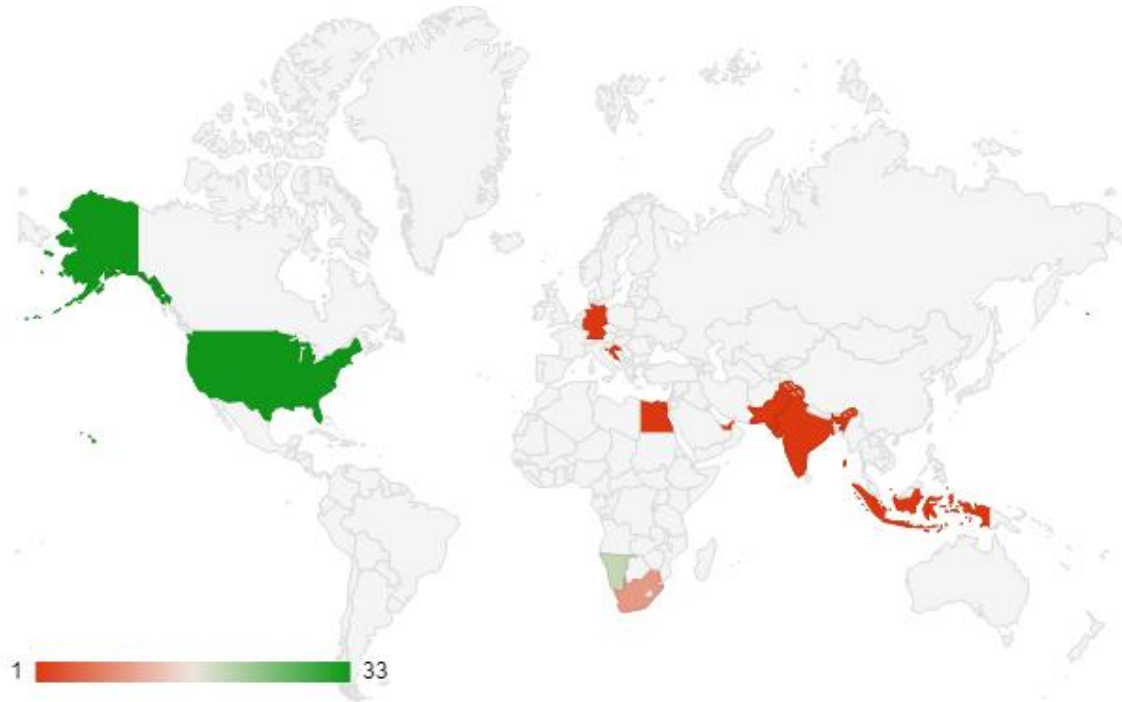
Figure 24: User demographic from April 12th, 2021 to April 26th, 2021.

4.2.3.3 Bounce Rate
April 6th - April 11th

Bounce rate is an essential metric to determine website engagement as it gives an idea if users are navigating through MSR's website, rather than just viewing its homepage. Ideally, the bounce rate should be low as it shows high website engagement. The average bounce rate for MSR's website from April 6th, 2021 to April 11th, 2021 was 52%, with a total of 117 pageviews and an average session duration of 4 minutes and 48 seconds, which shows there was some website engagement.

Figure 25: Stacked bar graph that shows the bounce rate of MSR's website between April 6th, 2021 to April 11th, 2021.

April 12th - April 26th

The bounce rate for MSR during this time period is 58% with a total of 271 pageviews and an average session duration of 1 minute and 44 seconds. When comparing the current results with the preliminary results, the time period plays a major factor as the time period for the preliminary results was only five days as opposed to two weeks for these current results. The reason behind a drastically low session duration and higher bounce rate could be because the website had no HTTPS protocol implemented between this time period, causing the website to show as "Not Secure". This lack of security warns people the website might be infected, cautioning them from further navigation through the website. The organization will lose credibility and reputation if people discover their website becomes infected. In 2020, Google took initiative and revealed they have detected and removed more than 80% of infected sites from search results. If the MSR website were classified as infected, Google would blacklist the website from the search results page, making it difficult to garner a larger audience for MSR. Based on our findings with Google Analytics, a majority of website users come from Google and this lack of security will significantly decrease their search ranking and develop poor SEO practices.

Bounce Rate vs. Day Index (April 12 - 26)

■ Interacted ■ Bounced

Day Index	Interacted	Bounced
Mon	3	4
Tue	3	6
Wed	5	1
Thu	0	2
Sat	1	1
Sun	1	1
Mon	5	8
Tue	4	4
Wed	2	6
Thu	11	4
Fri	4	5
Sat	1	3
Sun	1	8
Mon	2	5

Users
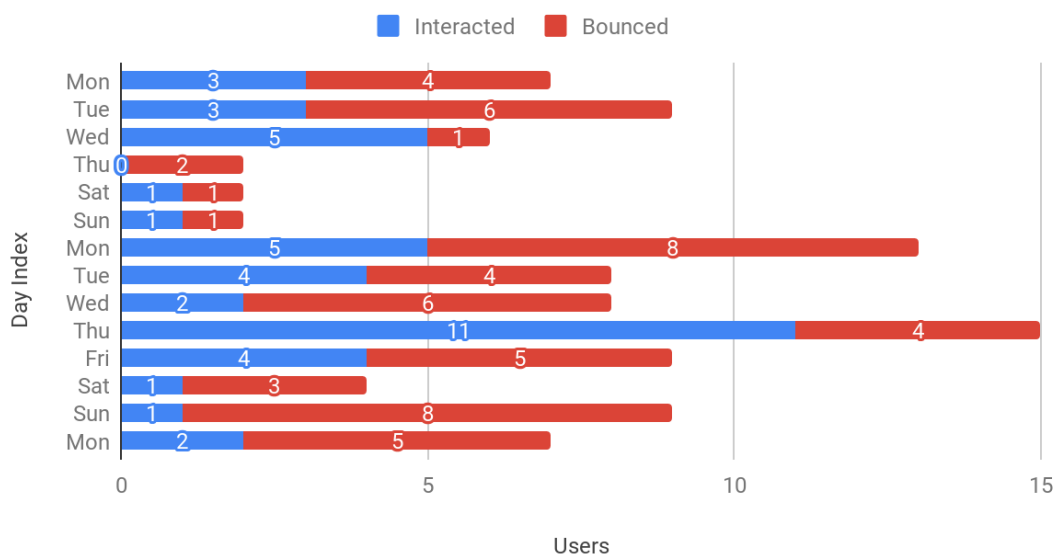
Figure 26: Stacked bar graph that shows the bounce rate of MSR's website between April 12th, 2021 to April 26th, 2021.

4.2.3.4 Page Loading Speed

April 6th - April 11th

The page loading speed for the website was 13.2 seconds. Though 13.2 seconds does not sound long, this poor page loading speed would be detrimental to receiving revenue for MSR as it would cause existing or new users to digress from the website, increasing bounce rate and search engine ranking, and negatively affecting overall website engagement. Ways to mitigate the loading speed mainly lie within having properly sized images on the website, deferring offscreen images, and eliminating render-blocking resources.

April 12th - April 26th

During this time period, we used Google's PageSpeed Insight to get an in-depth look into the website's optimization. This scale was calculated by Lighthouse, whereby metrics such as speed index and total blocking time have a raw value that is converted into a score from 0 to 100. These raw metric values are

determined by Lighthouse's scoring distribution, which is a log-normal distribution derived from the performance metrics of real website performance data on HTTP Archive (2021). After addressing the necessary procedures to mitigate page loading speeds, excluding managing properly sized images due to lack of access to the website server, the website's overall optimization is now fair, but still needs improvement for both mobile and desktop platforms with page loading speeds of 1.6 seconds, an improvement from the previous page loading speed of 13.2 seconds.
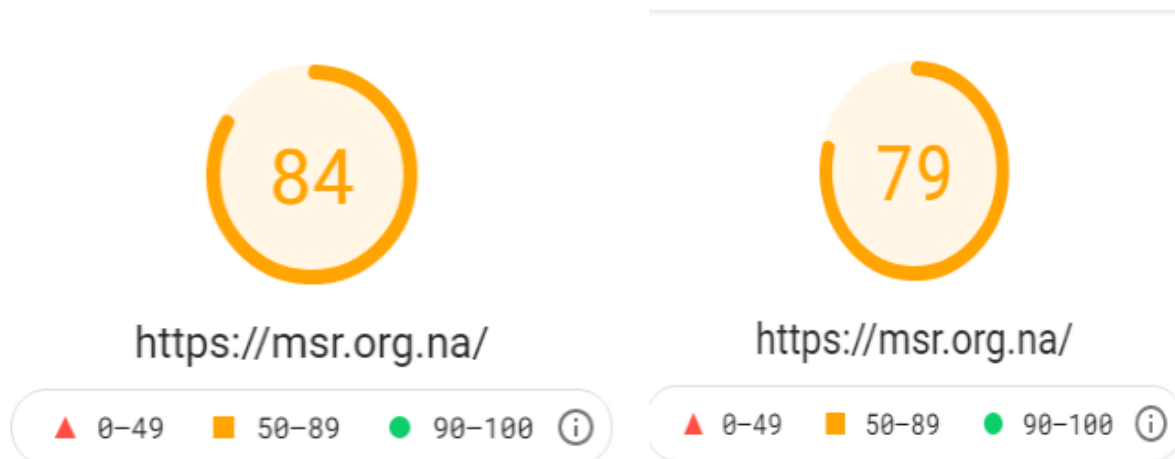
Figure 27: Performance Scoring for MSR's website for both mobile and desktop platforms on Google's PageSpeed Insights. Left: mobile devices; Right: the desktop devices(2021).

4.3 Marketing Plan

To improve MSR's online presence beyond just their website, we sought to create and carry out a social media marketing plan. Through the fulfillment of a social media marketing plan, our team grew MSR's following on Instagram and re-engaged their followers on Facebook. We accurately portrayed MSR and the work they are currently doing to their audience, driving traffic to the website, improving MSR's online presence overall.

4.3.1 Interview with Subject Matter Expert

To gain knowledge on social media marketing, our team met with Jennifer Hale, the Communications and Development Director at C5 Georgia, a non-profit based in Atlanta, Georgia. The summary of the interview can be found in Appendix I. Ms. Hale has more than 19 years of marketing experience. We learned how to rapidly grow MSR's following during our project term, enabling MSR employees

to simply provide weekly maintenance to the account after the conclusion of our project. Ms. Hale recommended our team post daily to all social media platforms, leveraging a theme for each day of the week to provide continuity as the account ages. For example, Monday will be "Motivation Monday" and will feature posts that demonstrate MSR's motivation or the motivation of MSR's members. Ms. Hale also stressed the importance of engaging with the accounts of organizations that are geographically close to MSR and align with the organization morally and ethically. In doing so, MSR will grow both their online following and their community network. In her experience, social media is the best way to grow an organization's online presence unless they are willing to spend money. Since MSR hoped to target international donors, Ms. Hale's commentary was beneficial in attracting the attention from American and European markets. From this meeting, our team had the foundation to create and execute a comprehensive marketing strategy.

4.3.2 Implementation of Marketing Strategy on Instagram

After posting across all of MSR's platforms consistently throughout the project term, we found MSR's reach to stakeholders through social media had increased. On MSR's previous Instagram account, which had been dormant since April 2019, there were only 13 followers. At the end of our project term, the newly created account had a total of 77 followers. A screenshot of the account can be seen in Appendix J. We also analyzed post metrics such as reach, shares, website taps, profile visits, and metrics. By performing this analysis, our team determined metrics varied greatly from post-to-post depending on time of the day, hashtags included within the caption, and overall content of the post. Posts were published around noon Eastern time, which is equivalent to 18:00 Namibian time. We learned from Ms. Hale that international marketing tends to revolve around the East coast of the United States, therefore noon was a neutral time for us to introduce content. "Fun Fact" posts and "Sponsor Saturday" posts had the furthest reach amongst our team's posts. Posts aimed at garnering support from the consumer tended to have a higher number of interactions than other posts. Interactions are profile and website visits as a result of viewing a post. Our team was not able to determine our demographic on Instagram since our page had not gathered one-hundred followers

prior to the completion of our project term. Hashtags proved to be a valuable resource driving post views, with an average of 16% of visitors finding the post through one of the hashtags provided in the post caption.

4.3.3 Implementation of Marketing Plan on Facebook

Our team's social media strategy for Facebook differed slightly from our Instagram strategy. MSR's Facebook page was much more well-established, therefore the foundation of who MSR is and what they do in Windhoek and Swakopmund did not need to be laid out. Instead, the team supplemented existing posts by providing new content to the page, such as pictures from MSR's most recent member training. Since our team began posting, the post reach and engagement have dramatically increased, 325% and 100% respectively. Page followers went up 182% and page likes increased 173%. The Facebook page reaches a demographic that mainly consists of people under the age of thirty-five. It equally reaches men and women. As shown in Table 4, the majority of the page's followers are from Namibia and the United States.

Table 4: Country of Residence of MSR Facebook followers.

Country	Followers
Namibia	150
United States of America	63
South Africa	23
United Kingdom	3
Malawi	1
Portugal	1

4.4 Donation Portal

We met with Bank Windhoek representatives, Albe Louw and Clifford Lyners on April 19, 2021. This meeting was to discuss creating a donation portal through the MSR website, directly linked to their bank account at Bank Windhoek.

This meeting was very insightful for us as we learned about why the bank had been slow to add this portal in the past. Bank Windhoek was in the process of testing out their own transaction portal, similar to Paypal, and was still in the testing phases. Mr. Louw and Mr. Lyners mentioned the possibility of including MSR in the trial phases of this operation; they both agreed it would take months before the process was set up. Therefore, we determined implementing the portal would not be a feasible goal within our project's timeframe. The bank also asked for MSR's donor database to already be linked within the website. Our group worked closely with the other 2021 MSR team to integrate their project onto our MSR website. This ensures when MSR is able to be set up with a donation portal, the donor database is already linked and will have a smooth transition between the two.

To link the donor database to our website, we had to understand the other 2021 MSR team's project. They were using Hubspot, a free online resource for customer relationship management (CRM). To integrate Hubspot into MSR's website, our team added a plugin through Wordpress, which was easily accessible, and then used the login credentials provided by the other team to sign into the MSR account. Hubspot allows organizations to create forms that integrate into a contact list which can then be utilized for newsletters and mass email updates. This integration was important to have a strong donor database prior to implementing a donation portal. Our team's collaboration with Bank Windhoek and the other 2021 MSR team created the basis needed for a successful donation portal. While we did not have the time to execute this aspect of our project, the work we have done to the MSR website laid the groundwork for the organization or a future WPI student team to accomplish this goal.

4.5 Summary of Findings

During our project, we collected data to determine how to improve MSR's online presence. Through interviews, we gathered new information to include on the website and social media platforms. We identified areas of improvement through our best practices checklist and online survey. Finally, we measured the effects of our improvements by comparing the website and social media analytics. After conducting this research, we provided our sponsor with an improved website, updated social media accounts, and a marketing strategy to use in the future which will be referenced in our recommendations in the following chapter.

5 Conclusion and Recommendations

In our project term, our team established a comprehensive marketing plan for MSR that addressed post types, posting frequency, and leveraged mission-based marketing concepts. It is important to maintain an up-to-date online presence to convey the importance of MSR's work to potential donors, volunteers, and members. In this section, we will outline our team's recommendations to MSR to ensure the sustainability of our work and the continual improvement of MSR's online presence.

5.1 Summary of Key Results

We interviewed MSR staff to gain updated information about MSR to add to the website. We also interviewed MSR members to acquire new testimonial content to use on the website on social media accounts.

To determine areas of improvement for the MSR website, we conducted several forms of analysis at the start of the project. Our survey respondents gave the MSR website an average rating of **7.23 out of 10**. We also found the website fully met **6 out of 14** of the best practices checklist referenced in Table 2. Lastly, we had **29 unique visitors** for the week of April 6th to April 11th with a bounce rate of **58%**. Using this information, we determined the website could be improved by adding new updates, increasing security, sharing more impactful stories and photos, decreasing page load time, and developing a working donation portal.

At the end of the project, our follow-up survey respondents rated the website an average of **9.1 out of 10**. The website now fully met **11 out of 14** of the best practices requirements, as referenced in Table 3. Furthermore, the website gained **65 new visitors** from April 12th to April 26th.

We developed a marketing strategy using research and insight from marketing experts. After using our marketing strategy on Instagram and Facebook, we saw an improvement in MSR's following. By posting everyday on Instagram from April 12th until May 7th, we gained **76 new followers** for MSR's account. We also posted frequently on Facebook during this time and saw the

post reach increase 325% and **engagement increase 100%**. We can conclude by keeping these accounts active, MSR can increase their following online.

In discussion with Bank Windhoek, we determined MSR's website needed increased security and a linked donor database before a donation portal could be created. Our team completed these two tasks and outlined the next steps needed to be completed by MSR and Bank Windhoek.

5.2 Recommendations

Recommendations for a Donor Portal

Our results indicated prior to our project, users of the MSR website were unsure of how to provide support to the organization through donations of either time or money. To address this problem, we recommend MSR work with Bank Windhoek to complete the following steps to implement an online donor portal:

- **Enroll** MSR in Proof of Concept Phase 2 of Bank Windhoek's proprietary e-commerce platform: Our team and Ms. Beukes discussed with Mr. Louw and Mr. Lyners of Bank Windhoek our initial interest in registering MSR for this program: we recommend MSR continue to follow up with Bank Windhoek. By enrolling in the trial phases of the platform, MSR will have the ability to securely collect international donations directly into their Bank Windhoek account through their website without waiting for the full testing process to be completed.

- **Integrate** Pre-Existing Form into Bank Windhoek E-Commerce Platform: Our team created a WordPress form that will collect the necessary information to input into the e-commerce platform. This form was created in conjunction with Team 1 of the 2021 WPI Namibia Cohort to ensure their Customer Relationship Management software would also be supported by the form. Our team recommends MSR utilize this form as the User Interface of the donor portal.

Recommendations for Maintaining the Social Media

Maintaining MSR's social media platform is important for continued engagement with its followers: potential donors, employers, and members. We recommend MSR use our team's **Marketing Resource Google Drive folder** to create content, plan posts, and publish said content on its social media platforms. An overview document of this folder can be found in Appendix K. Since our team established an initial following on Instagram and began posting again on the Facebook page, we recommend MSR Staff or volunteers update each social media page **once a week**. If MSR Staff and volunteers need assistance with this, we recommend they reference our training video or the aforementioned marketing resource folder.

Recommendations for Maintaining the Website

MSR's website requires minimal maintenance to accurately portray what is occurring at MSR and demonstrate to potential donors why they should support the organization. Our team recommends **MSR update the calendar** portion of the website on a **monthly or bi-monthly** basis when training dates have been set. We also recommend **MSR update its testimonial page on a yearly basis** to continually demonstrate to website users the wide range of members MSR's resources reach. If MSR needs assistance in updating the website, they can refer to the user guide, found in the Marketing Resource folder, created by the 2019 WPI IQP team that was amended by our team to include up-to-date information.

Recommendations for Future Project Work

After the conclusion of our project term, our team identified areas of improvement that could be completed through future project work to benefit MSR. In particular, MSR could benefit from the creation of an employer portal that is accessible through the website. MSR could also further support its members by providing a resource section on its website. Both of these actions arevaluable in helping members find employment, however they would require a large amount of time and research.

Currently, when employers are looking for potential employees, much responsibility falls on MSR to be the connection between the employer and qualified members. Employers must contact a specific email address within the MSR office to describe what is needed for the job they wish to complete or their qualifications for employment. MSR and potential employers would both benefit from having access to an employer portal. Such a portal could consist of all of the MSR members and what their skills are. When a prospective employer visits the portal, they would be able to search the database of MSR members to find someone who fits the employer's needs. This way, employers could potentially connect directly with MSR members, saving time and resources on MSR's behalf.

Conclusion

Having a strong presence online is one of the best ways for a non-profit to increase their followers and donations. As MSR struggles to gain funding, improving their website and social media platforms would help them obtain the funds needed to operate. Throughout our project, we analyzed MSR's current website to determine areas of improvement and gathered new information to use on the site. We updated the information on the website to reflect recent events, improved security and load time, and identified the necessary steps to implement an online donation portal. We developed and initiated a marketing strategy for MSR's social media accounts. We then created a comprehensive marketing folder with resources for MSR staff to continue the strategy after the conclusion of our project. We hope our work and guidelines will help MSR build a following of potential donors and supporters so they can continue to help the unemployed population of Namibia.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Ethical Implications

The WPI student team applied for an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for their project as it does relate to human subjects. All participants were educated on informed consent before participation. The team initiated the IRB process at the conclusion of the PQP term in mid-March and received approval on 4th April, 2021.

Participation in the team's research was strictly voluntary. Participants were anonymous and did not need to answer all questions in the survey. Participants were well-aware of the content and nature of the survey prior to taking it through an informed consent page. If the team interviewed an individual, they asked for the permission of the participant should the interview need to be recorded. Interviews conducted to collect testimonials of MSR's programming were published on the website provided the participant had full knowledge of the process and had provided consent. Other recordings of interviews were not published, only recorded with permission to be used as a tool for the students to review and reflect on the answers provided. The project team appreciates all participation and worked hard to ensure the protection of all participants in their study.

Appendix B

Summary of Interview with Crystal Beukes (CEO of MSR)

Date: 3.1.2021

Time: 8:00am EST

Summary:

Our meeting started at 8 am EST (3 pm Namibian time). The team introduced themselves to Crystal Beukes and asked if we may record our interview session. With Crystal's permission to record, we started asking our questions. Crystal started working at MSR in 2016, after working for a few other non-profits previously, she helped MSR rebrand to include both women and children. After asking about the day-to-day operations, the team was happy to hear that MSR has been fully operational since August, and that the COVID-19 pandemic has not kept their members away. Members of MSR use the offices in both Windhoek and Swakopmund for much more than just help finding a job, people go to read the newspaper, find new training resources, update applications, and sometimes just come to see other members. The students asked Crystal what she was looking for with the scope of the project. She discussed multiple opportunities for the students including optimizing international searchability of the website, updating the website to be less wordy and include more graphics, updating the testimonials page, creating an ad front for members or employers to post on, and upgrading the social media to further MSR's international reach and gain more funding. Crystal described how MSR is currently struggling and that with our help hopefully more traffic will connect with the website and boost donations, as currently donors do not want to pay for the running costs of MSR and they are surviving month to month. At the end of the meeting the team asked about particular stories of success, Crystal described a few stories to us such as a man who worked as a gardener at a company and would sometimes get asked to cover the phones, eventually the company noticed he had a lot of potential working with the computers and helped him receive a further education. As a member of MSR he was able to receive the education he lacked to get into a higher educational program. He was admitted to a school of science and technology and received a degree in Computer Science last year. Currently this individual works for the school. Crystal also shared two

stories of individuals who learned how to drive through MSR's vocational training, one started his own taxi business while the other works as a driver for a mining company. The team thanked Crystal for her time in meeting and expressed our excitement to further this project in the coming months. The meeting concluded at 8:39 am EST (3:39 pm Namibian time).

Appendix C

Testimonial Interview Plan

Members to interview:
- Someone who started their own business after joining MSR
- Someone who found a permanent job after joining MSR
- A younger member (18 years old or older) to reflect how MSR is helping youth finish school and find work
- Female members to reflect MSR's rebranding
- Any volunteers who are willing to talk about their experience with MSR

How the interview will work:
- The interview will be about 20 minutes long
- We will ask MSR staff to help provide a device with video conferencing capabilities if the interviewee doesn't have access
- We will record the video conference to publish online

Questions to Guide the Conversation:
1. How did you find MSR?
2. Was the initial process of becoming a member easy?
3. What resources did MSR provide you specifically and did you find them beneficial?
4. Have you applied the training MSR gave you in the workplace?
5. What jobs have you found through MSR?
6. Did you find the seven-step program useful?
7. Are you currently employed?
8. What is the most important lesson you have taken away from MSR?
9. Do you think MSR has been a valuable resource to you?
10. Have you connected with others/ made friends through MSR?
11. Would you recommend a friend or family member to join MSR?

Appendix D

Swakopmund Testimonial Interview Summaries

Interview 1

Date: 4.8.2021

Time: 8:01am EST

Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Name: Wenzel Thighuru

Crystal Beukes (CEO of MSR) introduced the team to Wenzel, he was the first of 5 interviews from the Swakopmund Office on April 8th, 2021. He has been a member of MSR for a few years and was very excited to speak with our team. After introductions of the team and our project we asked for permission to record the interview, Wenzel provided consent for this and the team started our interview. The lead interviewer was Katie Pothier, while the lead notetaker was Katie O'Leary. The team went through a series of questions with Wenzel and discovered he has been a member of MSR for a few years. He found MSR while he was sitting in his town politics office waiting for a job offer when he saw an advertisement promoting life skills and financial literacy training posted on the bulletin board. This ad caught his attention and prompted him to come into the Swakopmund office. Since the first few days of the new member training period required by MSR, Wenzel enjoyed himself and found the training relatively easy. Outside of the regular training Wenzel also got First Aid training, he believes this is valuable training which is not only something he can use when employed but also at home. Wenzel believes this and his financial literacy training were the most useful to him. He said that money can be difficult for people to manage, yet he had learned a lot and found himself really changing his life. Currently Wenzel is working at DHL in Swakopmund, he found the job through the help of MSR with building his resume and cover letter. They've made getting a job much easier for him. He believes a lot of people can benefit from MSR and would recommend the organization to both family and friends. He has already made many friends through the community MSR has provided him, he gets excited to see new faces in the office every time he visits.

Interview 2

Date: 4.8.2021

Time: 8:10am EST

Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Name: Rinondjo Mbuende

Crystal Beukes (CEO of MSR) introduced the team to Rinondjo Mbeuende, he was the second of 5 interviews from the Swakopmund Office on April 8th, 2021. After introductions of the team and our project we asked for permission to record the interview, Rinondjo provided consent for this and the team started our interview. The lead interviewer was Katie Pothier, while the lead notetaker was Katie O'Leary. The team went through a series of questions with Rinondjo and found that he has been a member of MSR for four years, ever since his colleagues told him that they were a great organization helping unemployed Namibians to find jobs. Rinondjo found the process of becoming an official MSR member to be very easy. As a member, he has attended different training programs on how to communicate with employers if you would like a job and how to convey respect throughout the employment process. He expressed, however, that it has been tough to find a job recently as a result of lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Rinondjo has made many friends through MSR. He finds MSR to be a valuable resource and would recommend it to his friends and family.

After Rinondjo left the interview area, Crystal Beukes, the CEO of MSR shared an anecdote about Rinondjo. Crystal explained that Rinondjo is a regular at the Swakopmund office. He used to come in every single day since he was really struggling to find a job. Some days, he would just come in, read the newspaper, say 'Good morning', and leave. She concluded her story by explaining that a while back, his tenacity had paid off and he had been hired as a security worker.

Interview 3
Date: 4.8.2021
Time: 8:19 EST
Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Name: Thomas Kamadi
In early 2019, while Thomas Kamadi was working for delivery, a group of friends introduced him to MSR. Thomas expressed how MSR proves competence through their training sessions and the resources the organization provides. Thomas mentioned how the office provides free wifi for those entering the office so they can enjoy, build stronger connections for job opportunities, or update their CV (Curriculum Vitae). Thomas explained how MSR helps fund classes for members to enroll in. For Thomas, MSR helped him take classes relating to graphic design, which helped him graduate as a graphic designer in visual arts. Members of MSR took advantage of the messaging service WhatsApp by sharing resources for job opportunities circulating around areas in Windhoek and Swakopmund. Members can also walk into the office from Monday through Thursday to read the newspaper and find job opportunities from there. The most valuable asset Thomas took from his time with MSR are

the membership training sessions the organization provided. It gave Thomas ideas on how to become a strong entrepreneur and how to manage a business with concepts such as cash pooling. Thomas said he was willing to start a business later in the future. He explained how he was working to start a business with his friend, who was also a member of MSR, as Thomas helped edit the videos made regarding his friend's business. Thomas emphasized how he used the training provided for practical uses outside of the organization. Through MSR, Thomas found part time jobs while he was studying as a graphic designer. Thomas recommends MSR to his friends and family, cherishing the great and insightful times he had with the organization.

Interview 4
Date: 4.8.2021
Time: 8:36am EST
Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Name: Emmanuella Arnat

Crystal Beukes introduced the team to Emmanuella Arnat. She has been a full-time volunteer at MSR since January of 2020. MSR has taught her a lot about cooperating with people and how to be prepared for the working environment. She first joined as a part-time volunteer and switched to full-time in May. She has learned how to help members join, input data, type CVs, and helped Ms.Crystal with whatever she needed. The team asked her how MSR has helped her. She said it equipped her to be a better person, mentally, physically, and psychologically. She has learned how to be independent. The team asked about her job search. She said that Swakopmund is a large region and it has been a tough couple of months especially with the lockdowns. She is still a full-time volunteer and simultaneously hunts for jobs in the process. The team asked what the most valuable resource that MSR has given her. She stated that MSR has helped greatly with her communication and building up her confidence as a person. MSR gave her confidence to improve her vocabulary, verbal and written skills. She is generally an introverted person, so it has allowed her to open herself up. At MSR, members feel at home and have a friendly welcoming presence. Thye feel like they are home so she has been able to meet a lot of people from different places and cultures. The team asked if she has recommended MSR to any of her friends or family. She said that she had. Very few have managed to come because of transportation and distance. However, her friend joined a few days ago and already had a call for a job. The team asked if she had any stories she wished to share. She said that from her limited knowledge, MSR helps people to get jobs and to provide them with training. She mostly does administration work. From what she hears and witnesses, they do a good job. The team asked what she hopes to find in a job. She said that she studied IT more in the programming sector. But right now, due to the administrative experience she

gained from working with MSR, she would like to work more with the administrative side. She wants to grow her interpersonal and communication skills even more. The team concluded the meeting by thanking Emmanuella for her time.

Appendix E

<div align="center">Windhoek Testimonial Interview Summaries</div>

Date: 4.9.2021
Time: 8:07 EST
Location: Zoom Virtual Meeting

Lead Investigator: Katie Pothier
Note Takers: Katie O'Leary, Kimmy Hazeltine

Names:
1. David Kuume
2. Christophine Uushona
3. Halolye Eliakim
4. Dencil Stewe

#1

Has been in Namibia for 10 years
Friend told him about MSR and to come and join, so he is now a member of MSR
He says that MSR is on our side.
MSR works with an Institute so that they can accommodate whatever training we want to take
The internet has been very helpful to apply online, they're giving us stuff to use
This access helps to apply to jobs
Never attend a course through MSR, according to friend/family he goes through course at MSR, got a job through MSR after completing the course
Knows friends have helped him find MSR, everyone thought MSR was so helpful, his friends are the people in the office, they have to have a lot of tactic to prepare for interviews and things

#2
Christophine Uushona
Accounting and Finance graduated student, currently unemployed
Friend is a member, and recommended that she join
Coming home from school she didn't have daily access to newspaper
Provide newspaper to read and look for jobs
You have access to internet, and can send out CVs making copies to send out to jobs
Not done any courses, but can offer training

When you're filling in the form you fill out what you want them to do for you, she wrote that she wanted help with financing because that will really help you

Would recommend to friends, most of her friends who are struggling to make copies, her friends introduced her to MSR and she shares the understanding

#3

Graduated in April 2020, currently unemployed

Joined MSR two months ago

Since graduating, has struggled to find work

Makes copies to apply to jobs, here and there

Not have done any course through MSR, but the sources they offer are very helpful

Some MSR members cannot afford these courses, MSR really helping through donors they can afford to do the courses they want to do

Would recommend someone, in terms of job opportunities, looking for jobs is much easier at MSR than at home

#4

Dencil Stewe

Joined MSR 5 years ago, attending a course, applied

Still looking for job

Helps with internet access, is able to use MSR's internet to do work and research for courses

Job sites reach out and members are called to work for these temporary jobs

When applied to course he's in now, met a few members in the course and connected because they are all members at MSR

Most of course are funded by government and MSR is notified about this

At the end of the day, MSR has helped us link up with courses that normally wouldn't be able to take

Appendix F

Pre- Website Evaluation Survey

MSR Website Evaluation Survey

Hello! We are students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI).
We would like for you to participate in our survey of the accessibility and aesthetics of the Men on the Side of the Road (MSR) website. You do not have to participate if you choose not to; however, we would greatly appreciate any feedback you may provide. The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete.

Would you feel comfortable with participating? Thank you!

Why are we conducting this survey?
Men on the Side of the Road (MSR) is a non-profit organization located in Windhoek, Namibia, Africa that works with the city's unemployed population to train them in useful skills and to connect them with employers. We are a team of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) who are working with MSR. The team's goal for this project is to improve MSR's online presence in hopes that it will increase their social media following, prompting an increase in overall funding and support from potential donors, members, and employers. The results of this survey will be anonymous, but will be published through WPI and used to inform us on how to improve MSR's website and online presence.

Who are we surveying?
MSR employees
Website users: Potential donors, general users, members
Adults 18-64 years of age

What information will be collected?
We are interested in learning about individual's opinions on the usability of the website. This includes opinions on the aesthetic, ease of use, and overall content available on the site.
No personal information will be needed and the survey does not ask for names
The respondent does not have to answer all the questions and can stop the survey at any time.

What will we do with this information?
Our team will take the information collected through this survey and update MSR's website to fulfill its greatest potential according to survey participants. We will also be sending a survey after updating the website to understand how our implementations will be received. Overall the surveys are going to help this team increase website traffic to encourage donors to support the organization.

For more information about this research, about the rights of research participants, or any case of research-related injury, contact:
The WPI MSR project group, Email: gr-MSRTeam2@wpi.edu
WPI IRB Manager Ruth McKeogh, Tel. +1 508-831-6699, Email: irb@wpi.edu
WPI Human Protection Administrator Gabriel Johnson, Tel. +1 508-831-4989, Email: gjohnson@wpi.edu

☐ **I agree to participate in this survey.**
(check the box for yes)

WPI   **MSR**

1. What country are you taking this survey from?
    a. Namibia
    b. United States
    c. Other: _____

2. If you google search "MSR" in another window does MSR's website come up on the first page?
    a. Yes
    b. No

3. If you google search "Men on the Side of the Road" in another window does MSR's website come up on the first page?
    a. Yes
    b. No

4. How easy was the website to access/find?
    a. Very easy
    b. Easy
    c. Neutral
    d. Difficult
    e. Very difficult

5. How easy was it to navigate the website?
    a. Very easy
    b. Easy
    c. Neutral
    d. Difficult
    e. Very difficult

6. Is there any page you feel needs more information?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. If yes, please explain what you would like to see more information about?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

7. Would you say the information provided on the website is helpful *in knowing what resources are available*?
   a. Very Helpful
   b. Somewhat Helpful
   c. Netural
   d. Somewhat Unhelpful
   e. Very Unhelpful

8. Would you say the information provided on the website is helpful *in knowing how to donate time or money to MSR?*
   a. Very Unhelpful
   b. Somewhat Helpful
   c. Neutral
   d. Somewhat Unhelpful
   e. Very Unhelpful

9. Would you say the information provided on the website is up to date?
   a. Yes
   b. No

10. Would you say the information on the website would make you want to support the organization?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. If no, what could the website include to help this?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

11. Overall, how would you rank your experience while using this website on a scale of 1-10? (circle one)

Terrible		Poor		Average			Good		Excellent	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

WPI

MSR

12. Any suggestions on how to better improve the website?

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Appendix G

Post- Website Evaluation Survey

MSR Website Evaluation Survey

Hello! We are students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI).
We would like for you to participate in our survey of the accessibility and aesthetics of the Men on the Side of the Road (MSR) website. You do not have to participate if you choose not to; however, we would greatly appreciate any feedback you may provide. The survey should take about 10 minutes to complete.

Would you feel comfortable with participating? Thank you!

Why are we conducting this survey?
Men on the Side of the Road (MSR) is a non-profit organization located in Windhoek, Namibia, Africa that works with the city's unemployed population to train them in useful skills and to connect them with employers. We are a team of students from Worcester Polytechnic Institute (WPI) who are working with MSR. The team's goal for this project is to improve MSR's online presence in hopes that it will increase their social media following, prompting an increase in overall funding and support from potential donors, members, and employers. The results of this survey will be anonymous, but will be published through WPI and used to inform us on how to improve MSR's website and online presence.

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No personal information will be needed and the survey does not ask for names
The respondent does not have to answer all the questions and can stop the survey at any time.

What will we do with this information?
Our team will take the information collected through this survey and update MSR's website to fulfill its greatest potential according to survey participants. We will also be sending a survey after updating the website to understand how our implementations will be received. Overall the surveys are going to help this team increase website traffic to encourage donors to support the organization.

For more information about this research, about the rights of research participants, or any case of research-related injury, contact:

The WPI MSR project group, Email: gr-MSRTeam2@wpi.edu

WPI IRB Manager Ruth McKeogh, Tel. +1 508-831-6699, Email: irb@wpi.edu

WPI Human Protection Administrator Gabriel Johnson, Tel. +1 508-831-4989, Email: gjohnson@wpi.edu

☐ **I agree to participate in this survey.**

(check the box for yes)

1. What country are you taking this survey from?
   a. Namibia
   b. United States

   c. Other: _____

2. If you google search "MSR" in another window does MSR's website come up on the first page?
   a. Yes
   b. No

3. If you google search "Men on the Side of the Road" in another window does MSR's website come up on the first page?
   a. Yes
   b. No

4. How easy was the website to access/find?
   a. Very easy
   b. Easy
   c. Neutral
   d. Difficult
   e. Very difficult

5. How easy was it to navigate the website?
   a. Very easy
   b. Easy
   c. Neutral
   d. Difficult
   e. Very difficult

6. Is there any page you feel needs more information?
   a. Yes
   b. No
   c. If yes, please explain what you would like to see more information about?

   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____
   _____

7. Did the online donor portal work for you if you click to open the link?
    a. Yes
    b. No

8. Would you feel comfortable donating to this organization through the online donor portal (hypothetically)?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. If no, what could we do to make this feature more appealing?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

9. Would you say the information provided on the website is helpful *in knowing what resources are available*?
    a. Very Helpful
    b. Somewhat Helpful
    c. Netural
    d. Somewhat Unhelpful
    e. Very Unhelpful

10. Would you say the information provided on the website is helpful *in knowing how to donate time or money to MSR?*
    a. Very Unhelpful
    b. Somewhat Helpful
    c. Neutral
    d. Somewhat Unhelpful
    e. Very Unhelpful

11. Would you say the information provided on the website is up to date?
    a. Yes
    b. No

12. Would you say the information on the website would make you want to support the organization?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. If no, what could the website include to help this?
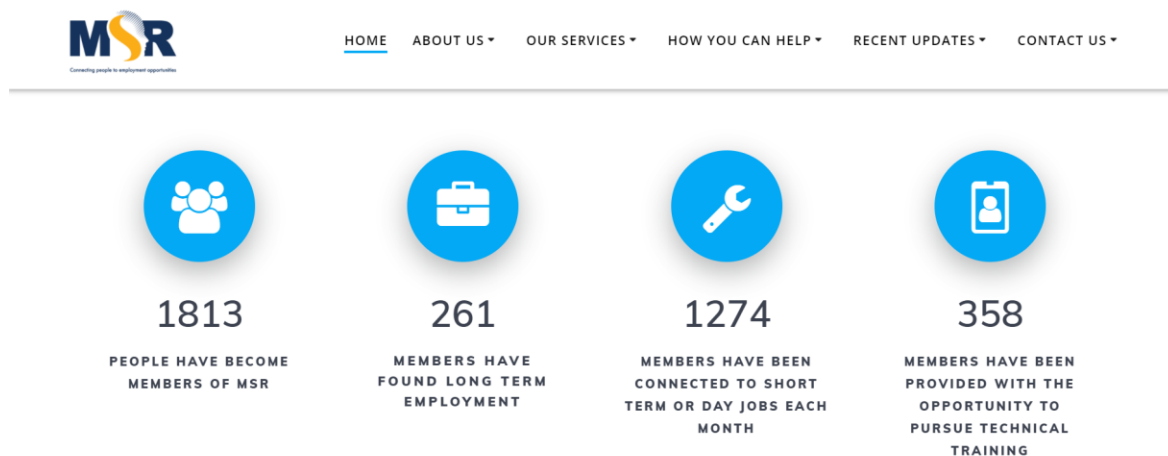
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

13. Overall, how would you rank your experience while using this website on a scale of 1-10? (circle one)

Terrible		**Poor**		**Average**			**Good**		**Excellent**
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

14. Any suggestions on how to better improve the website?

    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____
    _____

Appendix H

Updated Website Pages

Updated member totals on MSR homepage

Updated staff on MSR team page

Updated announcements under "recent updates" page

New member updates under "recent updates" page

HOME   ABOUT US ▾   OUR SERVICES ▾   HOW YOU CAN HELP ▾   RECENT UPDATES ▾   CONTACT US ▾

May 2021

Membership Training

May 11 @ 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

*MSR Office – Windhoek, 82 Hans Dietrick St
Windhoek, Khomasdal Namibia + Google Map*

Find out more »

« Previous Events

+ EXPORT EVENTS

New events added to the calendar

Appendix I

Summary of Interview with Jennifer Hale (Communications and Development Director at C5 Georgia)

Date: 4.6.2021

Time: 12:00pm EST

Summary:

The interview began at 12pm EST. The team introduced themselves and Jennifer Hale told them her career background. She worked in marketing for the Atlanta Braves for 16 years before joining C5 Georgia, a nonprofit that helps underprivileged youth succeed through camps and educational support. Jennifer is the head of marketing for the organization. The team showed her the website and social media accounts and stated that their biggest concern is the ability to continually update the website and social media and also the time constraint of finishing by mid May.

Jennifer said social media is the only way to increase traffic without spending money. If set up properly, the organization can maintain the accounts with once per week updates. Jennifer claimed Instagram to be the best platform to attract a large audience, at least from the United States. She suggested posting every day during the project term, for each day having a particular theme. Jennifer used examples like "motivation Monday" as well as posts that specifically highlight donors and sponsors, having a designated day to thank them. Hashtags should be used to their fullest potential on Instagram and need to be specific and intentional. It is also important that we follow anyone connected to MSR as well as our own friends and family to build MSR's following. Jennifer then suggested that we spend two days each week explaining what MSR does.

To create content, Jennifer suggested using Canva, specifically the app version on our phones. She also said PicMonkey was another useful app. She told us to create specific content that said things like "donating $20 will help our organization accomplish this." In addition, emotional content like interviewing volunteers is helpful to gain support. For the website, Jennifer stressed the importance of creating an easy way for people to donate online.

Once we post on Instagram, that content should be duplicated on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and if it is a video, Youtube. While there is software out there to help people post to multiple platforms, Jennifer said that it was not worth the cost.

When editing videos, she said to make sure the content is "snackable." People don't want to watch long videos so it is important that the content is cut tightly into easily digestible clips and that consumers have become accustomed to choppy editing.

When the team posed a question to Jennifer regarding the effectiveness of affiliate programs and how to promote them, she indicated that programs such as Amazon Smile take a long time to receive approval and may not add up to a substantial amount of revenue for a small organization. Jennifer recommended using our time elsewhere since our days on the project are numbered. She suggested instead that we add a LinkTree to the accounts directing users to links that will directly support the organization, It is best for an online donation portal to be established rather than using platforms such as GoFundMe, as these companies take transaction fees out of donations and it can look unprofessional for an established non-profit to utilize.

Once content is posted, Jennifer stated the importance of engaging with organizations similar to MSR both in Namibia and internationally. She recommended that we comment and like their posts, as well as report content that is beneficial to our following on our Instagram story, ensuring the organization is tagged.

Finally, once we have more metrics from our posts and on our following, Jennifer suggested we analyze where the majority of MSR's donors are from and who is engaging with our posts. We should cater the timing of posts to this target demographic. Until then, the posts can cater to EST timing, as this is how the world operates on social media. She told us to not be afraid to experiment with the timing of our posts either. Now that many people are working from home, the timing of posts isn't as critical for peak engagement.

The team thanked Jennifer for taking the time to meet with us and for giving us so many great recommendations to consider as we establish our marketing strategy. The meeting was concluded at 12:57pm EST.

Appendix J
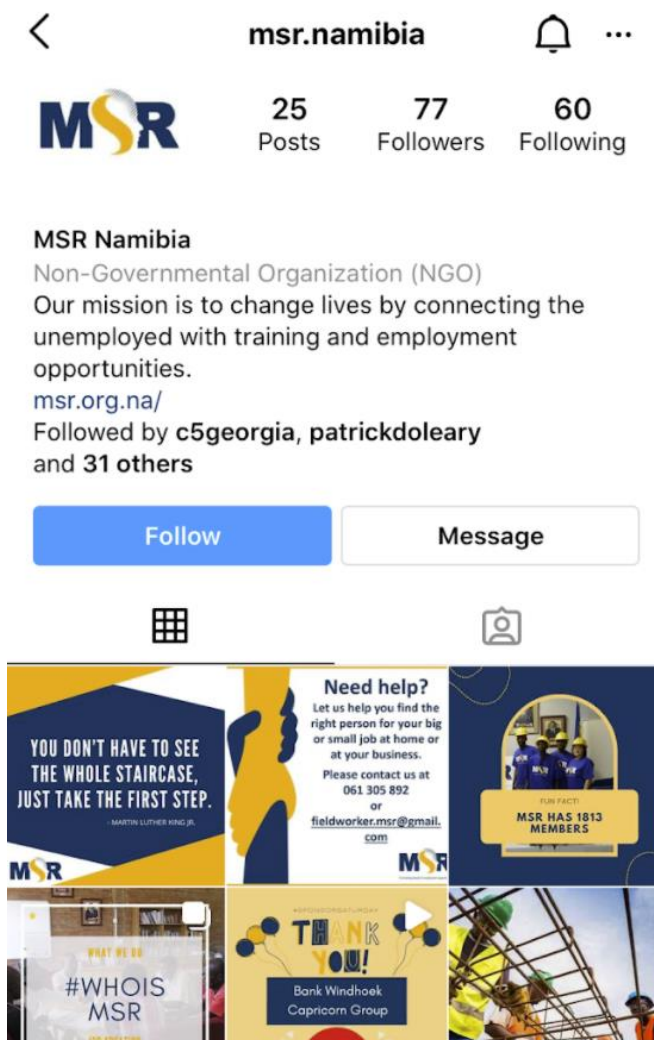
MSR's New Instagram Page

Appendix K

Marketing Strategy Overview

The best way to grow an online following is to have a consistent marketing strategy for your organization's website and social media accounts. This document will describe an effective strategy for MSR to follow, including how often updates are needed and what type of content to add. This strategy will outline the minimum steps to take, however, more activity is encouraged. To learn how to use the website or social media platforms, please see the [User Guide](#).

Website

Once a week, log into the website to check for any updates from Wordpress or any of the installed plugins

Once a month, add new events for the upcoming month to the calendar

Every 3 months, add a new article to the announcement page. This could be as short as uploading a photo from a training and writing a few sentences about it

Once a year, add one or two new stories to the "member updates" page

Facebook

Once a week, post to Facebook. To keep engagement high, post different types of content to the page. A typical month of posts could look something like this:

> Week one: A post advertising MSR workers
>
> Week Two: A member highlight
>
> Week Three: Pictures from a recent training or event
>
> Week Four: A fact or statistic about MSR

Instagram

Once a week, post to Instagram. Just like with Facebook, make sure that the type of content varies. A typical month of posts could look something like this:

> Week One: A post highlighting a member with a quote or a story in the caption
>
> Week Two: A post describing what MSR does or any resources they provide (see the #whoisMSR content for examples)
>
> Week Three: Pictures from a recent training or event
>
> Week Four: A post about donations or thanking a sponsor

Hashtags:

Using hashtags on Instagram will help reach a wider audience. Here is a collection of hashtags to start. Depending on the content of the post, different hashtags could be added.

#Namibia #MSR #Employment #MSRNamibia #NamibiaUnemployment #Jobs #Africa #nonprofit #Windhoek #Swakopmund #ngo #donate #charity #DoGood #giveback

Creating Content

A selection of pre-made content can be found in the content folder of the marketing resources. However, new content should also be created to ensure that new photos are circulating through the page. We recommend that content is not reused for at least 6 months. To create new content, we recommend the following:

Canva:

Canva is a free tool to create designs and social media content. There is a web version found at canva.com and also an app version that can be downloaded on your phone. To get started, create an account using your email.

Canva offers many templates or you can use a blank page to create a post. From the homepage, select the "social media" design option. Then select your chosen type of social media. From there, you can search for template designs depending on what type of content you are creating. For example, if you are using a quote, you can search "quote" and look through the possible templates. Once you select a template, you can customize it by uploading your own photos, adding text, or adding other elements.