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Rebranding Hillel at Syracuse University

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Abstract

My rebranding of Hillel at Syracuse University was a multi-step process. First, I had to understand what rebranding truly meant – what made a successful rebranding, what to avoid during a rebranding, etc. I gained this critical knowledge by reflecting on my education as an advertising major and consulting credible online sources on the topic. The next step was to gain a deeper understanding of my client, Hillel at Syracuse University. I again drew insights from my own experience as a student highly involved in the organization, and I also learned critical information from resources provided to me by Brian Small, Executive Director of Hillel at Syracuse University.

I learned that Hillel at Syracuse University was doing pretty well overall, but there was much improvement to be made regarding the organization's communication channels. These communication channels are paramount to the organization's success because they are the channels that Hillel at Syracuse University's audience accesses for information about the organization. The website and social media are two of the most important sources of information for the brand's audience, and both needed a lot of work.

The website had three key issues: outdated content, visually displeasing graphics, and a confusing navigation bar. To fix the first problem, I combed through the website page-by-page and updated any old content, fixed any grammatical errors, and relinked any broken hyperlinks. As for the visually displeasing graphics, I redesigned them to be more modern looking and inviting. Finally, I reorganized the entire website structure to be more user-friendly and intuitive in navigation. Now, when people visit the Hillel at Syracuse University website, they are seeing improved graphics, up to date content, and a more easily navigable interface.

Hillel at Syracuse University had fairly active social media pages before I began my capstone project, but they were not garnering much engagement (i.e. likes, comments, shares, etc.) with their posts. They lacked a clear brand voice and consistent messaging themes. Their strong brand purpose, to make Judaism relevant to students and enable them to have Jewish experiences, was not shining through their posts. I revamped the Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram accounts and implemented three key campaigns: #JewishHoliday, #MitzvahMonday, and #MakeJudaismRelevant. These posts brought Judaism into more relevant terms for the Hillel at Syracuse University audience and encouraged conversation between the brand and the audience.

Finally, no redesign is complete without a new logo. I designed twelve completely new logos for the organization. They are currently under review by Hillel at Syracuse University's Board of Governors and, upon approval, could be implemented as early as Fall 2015.

This work was both time and energy-intensive, but it was a pleasure to work with an organization as wonderful as Hillel at Syracuse University.

Executive Summary

My capstone project is dedicated to rebranding Hillel at Syracuse University. This meant taking a fresh look at all of the organization's communication channels – its website, social media, and more. I chose to complete this work for Hillel at Syracuse University because I wanted to give back to an organization that has given me so much during my time at Syracuse University. I have been involved in Hillel since my first day on campus, but I ultimately became an officer of the organization, serving as Communications Vice President of the Hillel Jewish Student Union Board in 2013. My time in that position gave me an intimate and comprehensive behind-the-scenes look at the work that goes on at Hillel at Syracuse University. I did what I could to improve Hillel's social media presence during my time as Communications Vice President, but I could see how much work remained to ensure the organization's success once my term was over. Enter: my capstone.

As an advertising major with a creative emphasis (i.e. copywriting and graphic design), I felt that my skills could help the Hillel at Syracuse University brand reach its full potential. My rebranding campaign for Hillel at Syracuse University aimed to connect with multiple constituencies: students not yet involved in the organization, students already involved, alumni looking to reconnect, potential donors deciding whether or not to donate, parents of past, current, and future students, and more. My goal was to improve Hillel at Syracuse University's brand image to a point where Hillels at other colleges and universities across the nation would view Hillel at Syracuse University as the shining example of branding efforts. To do so, I had to reconceptualize and redesign of all of Hillel at Syracuse University's communication channels.

Rebranding can be a tricky endeavor for many reasons. The original brand identity cannot be completely abandoned. To do so might leave its brand advocates feeling confused and deserted. But the new brand identity does need to step forward from the old, helping the brand grow and change for the better. I further discuss the complexities of rebranding in Chapter One.

In Chapter Two, you'll learn about my client: Hillel at Syracuse University. When I began this capstone project, Hillel at Syracuse University was lacking a strong, recognizable brand identity. It was simply known as a place on campus for Jewish students, but I knew that it was much more than that. It was an organization that provided more than a building with study spaces, a kosher kitchen, and holiday services. Hillel at Syracuse University makes Judaism relevant for its students and all who cross paths with the organization. It nurtures Jewish relationships and fosters authentic Jewish experiences. It is a home away from home for Syracuse University's Jewish students, providing opportunities for service, leadership, worship, and much more. It is a family.

The problem is that only those who come to Hillel really knew this to be true. For students who have never set foot inside the building, Hillel at Syracuse University simply doesn't exist. Or if it does, it doesn't have a positive or relevant sentiment associated with it. Some students thought of Hillel as just another uptight, boring Jewish institution where biblical teachings would be forced upon them. Some students perceived Hillel at Syracuse University to be cliquey, exclusive, and uninviting. These students did not see Hillel at Syracuse University as an organization that was relevant to them. However, in reality, it has a great deal to offer every student if they would only give it a chance.

In order to solve this problem, I had to make Hillel at Syracuse University's brand more engaging, inviting, and relevant to students, without alienating its older audience of parents, students, alumni, etc. I began by looking at the brand from a graphic design perspective and found that the majority of its graphics – from its logo to its website images – looked outdated and definitely needed to be redesigned. The website content also had a lot of outdated and incorrect information that I would need to weed through and correct. Hillel at Syracuse University's social media pages were fairly active, but the posts were not getting much engagement (meaning likes, comments, and shares on Facebook, favorites and retweets on Twitter, or likes and comments on Instagram). It was clear that the content that Hillel at Syracuse University was posting was not having any impact on its audience. In a world with so much content clutter, I had to find a way for Hillel at Syracuse University's content to better reach and engage with its audience.

To tackle the first problem – Hillel at Syracuse University's lackluster graphics – I turned to my Photoshop skills and knowledge of modern graphic design trends. As you'll see in Chapter Three, I created twelve new options for the brand's logo. I also implemented new graphics on the website and updated all of the content on each individual page. I changed the structure of the website as well in order to make it more user-friendly. As for social media, I used Hootsuite to schedule posts for entire semesters at a time. Hootsuite is a website that allows users to manage multiple social media pages in one place, so I could schedule Facebook and Twitter posts for the brand months in advance, all at once. It made the implementation of my social media campaigns much easier to manage.

Working on this capstone has been a pleasure for me. It has allowed me to combine so many of my passions in one project – Judaism, advertising, copywriting, my Hillel family,

graphic design, and social media. I hope that the work I have done for Hillel at Syracuse University benefits the brand for a long time to come. And for you, the reader, I hope you enjoy sharing the journey I took with the Hillel at Syracuse University brand, adding relevance and personality to an organization that has so much to offer its students.

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To my zayde, Herbert Bunis. You always let me know how proud you were of me, and I will always look up to you and love you for that. This is for you.

Chapter 1: Rebranding

What is rebranding?

The concept of rebranding spans time and space, across all industries in all corners of the world. Nothing remains completely the same forever, especially businesses, brands, and the consumers they hope to attract. In order to keep turning a profit and remain relevant in the minds of consumers, businesses need to change with the times. Sometimes, this calls for rebranding.

To “rebrand” is defined by the Oxford dictionary as “change the corporate image of (a company or organization).”¹ Changing the image of an organization can mean a handful of different things and can lead to many different executional tactics. One company might see its rebranding efforts as a means to hire new employees and get rid of old ones. Another might see it as a reason to redesign its website and office spaces. Yet another might use rebranding to rethink the services and products it offers its consumers. But one goal is consistent throughout every rebranding effort: change. And it is of course believed that that change will be for the better, bringing about a more positive perception of the company among consumers and, ultimately, higher profits and greater success for the company.

It goes without saying that the perception of a brand in a consumer’s mind is critically important to that brand’s success. That is why branding is such a major concern for companies across the globe and why they spend so much money building and managing their brand images. When those brand images go south, rebranding is critical.

Why does rebranding occur?

¹ "Rebrand." Def. 1. Oxford Dictionaries. Oxford University Press, n.d. Web.

According to Susan Gunelius of the AYTМ (Ask Your Target Market) blog, all rebranding situations are either proactive or reactive. Proactive rebranding campaigns occur when “a company [seeks]... to seize an opportunity or thwart potential threats in the future,” while reactive branding campaigns occur “in reaction to an event that is so significant that the existing brand must be changed.”² Essentially, if some aspect of a business is not working the way it should be or the way that its executives want it to be, or if they anticipate needing to change in the near future, rebranding might be the solution.

David Brier of the DBD International blog compiled a list of nineteen questions brand executives should ask before they rebrand.³ Depending on the answers to these questions, brands can better assess whether undergoing a complete rebranding effort is truly necessary and, if it is, what they should expect to get out of it. These questions can also help non-marketers understand why a company might decide to rebrand and the impact it can have on every aspect of the company. I’ve bolded the questions that are particularly relevant to my rebranding of Hillel at Syracuse University.

1. *Why are we doing a rebrand?*
2. ***What problem are we attempting to solve?***
3. *Has there been a change in the competitive landscape that is impacting our growth potential?*
4. *Has our customer profile changed?*

² Gunelius, Susan. "Rebranding Essentials – Part 1: Why Rebrand?" Web log post. AYTМ. AYTМ, n.d. Web.

³ Brier, David. "How to Rebrand: 19 Questions to Ask Before You Start." Web log post. Rising Above the Noise. DBD International, 28 Sept. 2012. Web.

5. *Are we pigeonholed as something that we (and our customers) have outgrown?*
6. ***Does our brand tell the wrong (or outdated) story?***
7. ***What do we want to convey? To whom?***
8. ***Why should anyone care about our brand?***
9. *Have we isolated exactly who should care about our brand?*
10. *Have their needs, or the way they define them, changed?*
11. *Are we asking our customer to care more about our brand — and what it means — than we do?*
12. *Is our brand associated with something that is no longer meaningful?*
13. *Is our brand out of step with the current needs and desires of our customers?*
14. ***Are we leading with our brand direction?***
15. *Are we following with our brand direction?*
16. *Is the goal of this rebrand a stepping stone (evolutionary) or a milestone (revolutionary)?*
17. *Will this solution work in 5, 10 and 15 years from now based on what we can anticipate?*
18. *Have we assigned some committee to manage the project versus someone (or at most, two people) who is/are focused, inspired and can lead?*
19. *If we were starting our business today, would this be the brand solution we would come up with?*

Challenges surrounding rebranding

Rebranding can be difficult for many reasons. It is often times difficult for a brand to truly let go of its past and fully commit to a new business model, brand identity, logo, etc. This is understandable though. As I stated earlier, the only way for a business to survive with the changing times is to change with them, and that means moving on from the past.

Rebranding can also be tricky because it is two-sided. When a company rebrands, it rebrands both internally and externally. Its executives and entry-level employees alike must adopt the new brand, while users and non-users of the brand also adopt its changes. This adaptation is critical to the success of the rebranding effort. If the company's own employees do not reflect the rebranding efforts, they were all for nothing. And if consumers react unfavorably to these efforts, the results can be catastrophic for the brand.

According to Gunelius, a common rebranding mistake occurs when companies forget about existing brand equity.⁴ They metaphorically jump ship and adopt an entirely new look, business model, product line, etc., and consumers who were loyal to the company before the rebrand can feel, frankly, abandoned. No company executive wants to lose customers it once had, let alone because of the company's own doing.

Rebranding can also be quite an expensive endeavor that some companies simply cannot afford even though they see the need for it. As you can see, rebranding is a tightrope that must be walked carefully by all those involved. It must be forward-thinking without forgetting the past, able to be realistically implemented both internally and externally, and most importantly, incite change.

⁴ Gunelius, Susan. "Rebranding Essentials – Part 4: Rebranding Mistakes." Web log post. AYTM. AYTM, n.d. Web.

Chapter 2: Hillel at Syracuse University

A Brief History of Hillel at Syracuse University

Hillel at Syracuse University has existed in one form or another since 1930, which was a hallmark year for religious life on campus. In that year, Hendricks Chapel first opened its doors and became the interfaith hub for all Syracuse University students. The Jewish Student Fellowship, which would later become Hillel at Syracuse University, was formed that same year and was led by Syracuse University student volunteers and advised by rabbis from the area. The group maintained its name and organizational structure for the next 28 years.

As was true for most American universities at the time, Syracuse University limited the number of Jewish students on its campus until after World War II. When the quota was lifted in 1952, Jewish enrollment skyrocketed, with more students identifying as Jewish than any other religious affiliation. Perhaps as a result of the significant increase in Jewish students on campus, the Jewish Student Fellowship voted in 1958 to officially become affiliated with the B'nai B'rith Hillel Foundation, which would later become Hillel: the Foundation for Jewish Campus Life, an international organization. Hillel at Syracuse University grew to become the largest Hillel in the country in the late 1960s and early 1970s, based on its number of dues-paying members. The organization was run from its office in the basement of Hendricks Chapel, where it had been since its founding.

In 1993, a critical cultural change occurred within the Hillel National structure. Richard Joel became the first non-rabbi director of the organization, shifting Hillel's role as a pseudo-synagogue on campus to an organization that engages Jewish students in both religious and cultural, social, and nationalistic ways. While many Hillels across the country

still employ rabbis as religious resources for their students, an emphasis on peer-organized and led religious and social programming has become the norm.

In the mid-1990s, it was becoming clear that Hillel at Syracuse University was outgrowing its office in the basement of Hendricks Chapel. A group of Jewish university trustees initiated a campaign to finance a Hillel building, and several members of the National Hillel board contributed generous sums of money to the cause. Marvin Lender, a Syracuse University alumnus, and David Flaum became the co-chairs of the campaign until Lowell Lustig was hired to take over the campaign as an advancement officer. The campaign officially began in 1999 and continued through 2002 until \$4.6 million was raised. Construction began in August of that year and was completed just less than one year later.⁵



Photo Courtesy of Brian Small

⁵ Steinwart, Tiffany. "Hillel at Syracuse University." Memorandum to Chancellor Syverud. Syracuse University. Syracuse, NY. July 31, 2014. Electronic mail.



Photos Courtesy of Brian Small and Syracuse University

The new 16,000 square-foot Winnick Hillel Center for Jewish Life, named for Mr. and Mrs. Karen and Garry Winnick and located at 102 Walnut Place, was dedicated by Mrs. Winnick on November 16, 2003.⁶

Lowell Lustig became Executive Director of Hillel at Syracuse University in 2006 and remained in that position until 2011, continuously working to ensure the organization's financial stability. Brian Small, a graduate of Syracuse University, joined Lustig as the Director of Programming in 2007. Since then, Small has maintained impressive data on the success of Hillel's "Big Four" programs – their alternative winter and spring break trips, Passover seders, High Holiday meals, and pre-orientation program, FreshFest. Small, now the Executive Director of Hillel at Syracuse University, has identified that a total of 2,964 students have participated in one or more of those programs since 2007, with a significant and steady increase over the past three years. This past year in particular saw 949 participants in the Big Four programs, marking Hillel at Syracuse University's largest year by attendance ever. See the chart on the next page for more detailed statistics on recent attendance at the Big Four programs.

⁶ "Winnick Hillel Center for Jewish Life." *Syracuse University Archives: Buildings*. Syracuse University, 2010. Web. 2 Apr. 2015.

Student Participation for Major Hillel Programming by Year

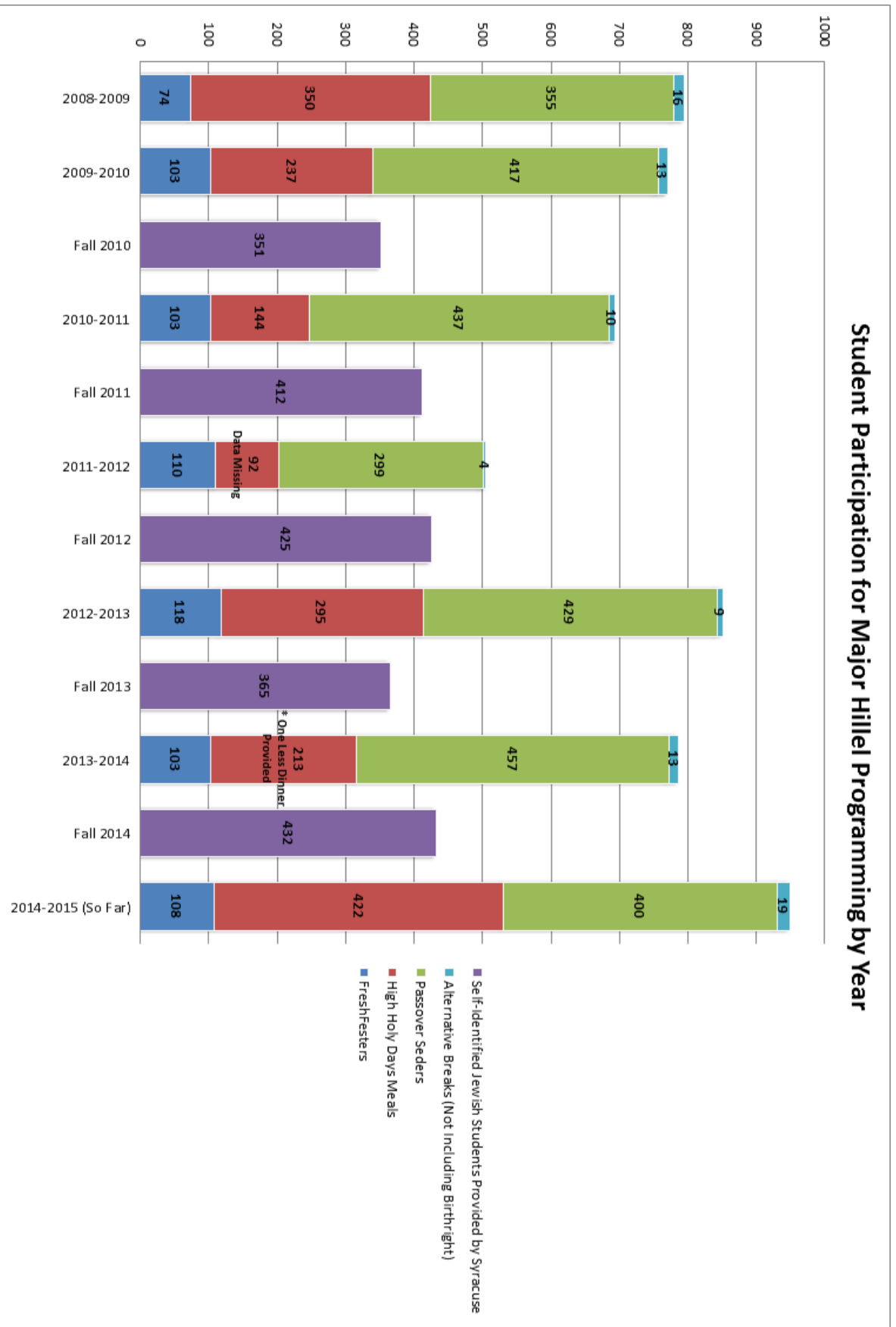


Chart Courtesy of Brian Small

The Hillel at Syracuse University brand, Pre-Capstone

My own first encounter with Hillel at Syracuse University occurred on August 17, 2011. It was my very first day on campus, and my parents had signed me up for Hillel's FreshFest pre-orientation program. The people I met through that program, including Brian Small, were so welcoming and friendly that I instantly felt like I was part of the Hillel at Syracuse University family, a feeling that has stayed with me through my entire college career.

I was elected to the Hillel Jewish Student Union, which is the student executive board within Hillel at Syracuse University, as Communications Vice President in December of my sophomore year. In that position, I was tasked with running Hillel at Syracuse University's social media, specifically in relation to publicizing the Hillel Jewish Student Union's programming. I learned what it was like to be part of the behind-the-scenes team for Hillel at Syracuse University, and despite the hard work I put in during my term as Communications Vice President, I could see that the Hillel at Syracuse University brand needed even more work.

As discussed earlier, the organization was doing well, with admirable attendance at the majority of its programs. But there is always room for improvement. After all, according to a 2013 statistic, 11% of Syracuse undergraduate students self-identified as Jewish. That means that out of the roughly 14,000 undergraduate students enrolled at Syracuse University, over 1,500 self-identify as Jewish. However, only 50% of the student body disclosed self-identified their religious affiliation that year, so there could be as many as 3,000 Jewish undergraduate students. In the 2012-2013 academic year, Hillel at Syracuse

University saw 851 participants in its Big Four programs. That leaves anywhere from roughly 650 to 2,150 Jewish students unengaged by the Hillel at Syracuse University brand.

Why weren't those students engaged by the brand? There were a few possibilities. First, perhaps the programming was not drawing the students in. When students first hear of Hillel at Syracuse University, some assume that it is an entirely religiously focused organization. They do not realize that Hillel at Syracuse University has an equal, if not greater, amount of social programming as it does religious programming. Because of this great balance of religious and social programming that meets students' needs and desires, I do not think that the programming was holding back the organization.

Perhaps it was the physical location of Hillel at Syracuse University – all the way down on Walnut Place, a good 15-minute walk from most of the freshmen residence halls. Of course, this could not be helped, and I believe that if an organization cultivates a strong enough loyalty between itself and its target audience, location should not be the most pressing issue for an organization's success.

How could Hillel at Syracuse University cultivate that loyalty and affinity with its target audience? In order to answer that question, I had to identify the Hillel at Syracuse University target audience. I knew from my time on the student board that Hillel's target audience is vast – current students, prospective students, parents of students, recent alumni, older alumni, donors, Jews in the Syracuse area, etc. I thought about where all of these people were likely to be getting information about Hillel at Syracuse University from, how they were most likely finding out about Hillel at Syracuse University programs, and how and where they were most likely to share and discuss this kind of information. This led me to focus on Hillel at Syracuse University's communication channels, everywhere and

anywhere the organization puts out content and information for its audience to see and with which they can connect.

What I found were a handful of social media profiles (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) that were adequately active but had a lot of room for improvement. The Hillel at Syracuse University Facebook page boasted just over 1,000 likes as of January 2014, but as anyone with professional experience in social media will tell you, it is not just about the number of likes. Rather, it is all about engagement, and Hillel at Syracuse University's Facebook posts were not seeing much engagement. The only way to garner engagement on social media posts is to post content that people will naturally want to engage with rather than content they see as disrupting their social media feeds. Engagements in the context of social media typically mean likes and comments on Facebook, favorites, retweets, and replies on Twitter, and likes and comments on Instagram. So the fact that Hillel at Syracuse University's Twitter handle had 661 followers in January 2014 did not mean much until those followers were being truly engaged by the brand's communications.

Even though Hillel at Syracuse University's social media profiles were pretty active, I noticed that they were not garnering much engagement because they seemed fairly random, uncohesive, and one-sided. Rather than starting a conversation with its followers, Hillel at Syracuse University was just putting information out there to be read and then scrolled past. The social media profiles lacked a consistent brand voice and personality, which is extremely important for successful brands to maintain. Hillel at Syracuse University needed to bring its core brand purpose – making Judaism relevant to Syracuse University students and enabling Jewish experiences for them – to its social media.

The brand also had two other points of contact that needed improvement: its website and its logo. Both were outdated, clunky, and did not represent the brand to its fullest potential.

The new Hillel at Syracuse University brand

In the last section, I identified key aspects of the Hillel at Syracuse University brand that drastically needed improvement in order for the brand to not simply survive, but flourish. By revamping Hillel at Syracuse University's social media profiles, its logo, and its website, the brand could be stronger and better than ever before. This new brand identity needed to be engaging, modern, and true to to the core of Hillel at Syracuse University's brand purpose.

In order to connect most successfully with its most important target audience, which in my opinion is current and prospective Syracuse University students, without alienating the rest of its audience, the Hillel at Syracuse University brand had to get with the times. Simply living on a variety of social media platforms was not enough. This brand, like all others trying to thrive in this day and age, had to become a content creator and conversation starter. This content obviously had to appeal to the target, because when millennials see something that makes them smile or laugh, they are much more likely to engage with it and share it with their network of friends. Millennials do not like brands force-feeding them information or acting like faceless corporate monstrosities. They want to be part of a conversation rather than the receiver in a one-sided information transaction. They want brands to be like their friends, someone who understands what they are passionate about and what values matter most to them.

And that's exactly what Hillel at Syracuse University can be for them.

Chapter 3: Creative Executions

In this chapter, you'll see my overhaul of Hillel at Syracuse University's logo, website, and social media platforms. Notice how each execution reflects the need for the brand to truly engage with its consumers in a modern way that aligns with its core purpose: to make Judaism relevant and enable Jewish experiences.

Logo

When I began my capstone project, this was Hillel at Syracuse University's logo:



In my opinion, it was a predictable and outdated design; it was first designed in 2005, after all. Of course the color scheme would be Syracuse University's colors of blue and orange, and of course the dot of the "i" would be made into an orange. The serif typeface, while very legible, made the logo feel outdated and certainly not modern. This logo was not on trend with modern graphic design, and the only playful aspect of it was the cliché orange dotting the "i." Executive Director Brian Small gave me a handful of guidelines to follow while redesigning the logo. The new logo must:

- Maintain the blue and orange color scheme
- Include the words "Hillel" and "Syracuse University"

- Include some visual reference to Syracuse University (an orange, Otto, etc.) or the National Hillel logo (the flame)

And in keeping with my view on rebranding, I did not want to make it too drastically different from the original logo that it would be unrecognizable as Hillel at Syracuse University's.

With all of this in mind, I created twelve new logo designs. The first two are the most similar to the original logo:



Both of the designs above feature a sans serif typeface, which I believe looks much more contemporary than the serif typeface used in the original logo. Breaking “Syracuse University” into two lines and justifying the type (i.e. making it fill up the width of the text box) also helps give these new logo designs a much more modern look and feel.

The first logo contains all of the individual elements of the original logo, but I redesigned the orange to be a simpler, two-color design and moved it from above the “i” to

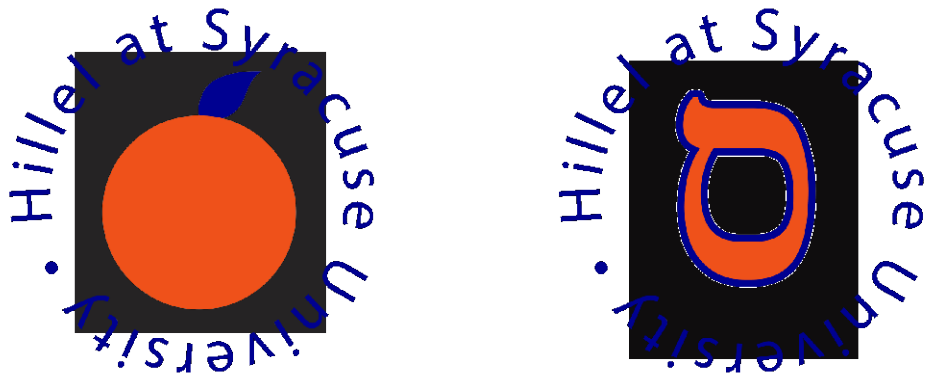
the right of Hillel. The new placement of the orange creates a nice visual balance for the logo and fixes the cliché problem of the original. The second logo replaces the orange with the Hebrew letter *samech*, which is the first letter of the Hebrew phonetic spelling of “Syracuse.” I chose to incorporate Hebrew into this design of the logo because it automatically conveys the message that Hillel is a Jewish organization.

My third logo design prominently features the orange:



Placing the “Hillel Syracuse University” text inside the orange changes the focus of the logo and makes it more playful. I chose to use a serif typeface in this design to add some interest to the text elements; had I used a sans serif, I think this design would’ve been too flat. The serifs add a nice dimension, and I especially like this serif typeface for its unique design of the dot above the “i,” making it almost resemble a lit candle. This design strikes a nice balance of simplicity and playfulness.

My next two logo designs mimic the circular design of the previous logo, but invert the elements by placing the text elements around the images:



The logo on the left again features the new orange design, while the logo on the right replaces the orange with the Hebrew letter *samech*, similar to my first two logo designs. I designed the *samech* to be orange with a thick blue outline to mimic Syracuse University's iconic bold "S" logo. I chose to bring back the sans serif typeface for these logo designs because of its superior legibility, especially given the circular path of the text elements.

The next set of my logo designs juxtaposes the Hebrew and English spellings of "Hillel Syracuse University."



The first design in this set contains only the text elements, but I added the line in the second design to separate the Hebrew and English elements a bit more, making it more legible and making the difference between them more apparent. The third design replaces the line with the orange in order to make the logo more graphically and immediately associated with Syracuse University.

I chose to use a serif typeface in this set of logo designs to mirror the Hebrew typeface used. I really like that this logo utilizes the unique fact that Hebrew is read from right to left, while English is read from left to right. The logo acts as a mirrored image, with the English text element on the right being reflected by the Hebrew text element on the left.

My next set of logo designs features everyone's favorite orange, Otto:



Anyone who is even the slightest bit familiar with Syracuse University recognizes Otto the Orange, so I thought it would be fun to bring him into the Hillel logo. Many other Hillels across the country incorporate their school's mascot into their design as well.



Photos Courtesy of Google Images

I kept the text elements nice and simple for these logo designs since Otto is clearly the focus. I chose a sans serif typeface that compliments Otto's short, squat dimensions. I added the National Hillel logo in the second design after I noticed that in this particular image of Otto, it looks like he should be holding something in his left hand. Putting the Hillel flame in Otto's hand reminded me of Olympic athletes carrying the torch at the opening ceremonies, and I think that imagery makes that logo design in particular quite powerful.

My last set of new logo designs solely feature the text elements and the National Hillel logo:



What makes this set of logo designs clearly representative of Hillel at Syracuse University is their blue and orange color scheme; I edited the National Hillel logo to match this. The first logo design in this set features the National Hillel flame enlarged and to the right of the text elements. This adds some nice dimension to the design since not all of the elements are the same height. In the second design, I moved the flame to the left of the text elements and made everything the same height, since in reality I know that sometimes it is more practical to work with logos of standard shapes and sizes. I also wanted to give Executive Director Brian Small plenty of options to choose from, including variations of the same design concept.

These logo designs are still awaiting approval from Hillel at Syracuse University's board of governors, but once one is approved, it will be implemented as early as the Fall 2015 semester.

A big part of Hillel at Syracuse University is its Hillel Jewish Student Union, made up of seven student volunteers. The Hillel Jewish Student Union has never had its own logo, so I decided to make them one.



I love this logo because of its clever integration of the Jewish star into the orange slice. I used Photoshop to edit a normal photo of an orange slice to appear as though there was a Jewish star at the center of it. Since the graphic element of the logo is so strong, I decided to use a very simple sans serif typeface with plenty of white space inbetween the letters and the rows of type. I bolded the second and fourth rows of type to add some dimension to that half of the logo, and I am exceptionally pleased with the result. I formatted it in both color and black and white versions so that the logo can be as versatile as necessary. This logo was even used on drawstring bags at this past year's FreshFest preorientation program.



Website

There were three main problems with the Hillel at Syracuse University website:

1. A lot of the content was out of date and therefore inaccurate.
2. The graphics were not aesthetically pleasing.
3. The navigation bar was not organized in a user-friendly, easily navigable manner.

In order to fix the first problem with the website, I combed through each and every page of the website, checking to see that every link worked and fixing those that did not. I edited information about the availability of kosher food on campus, updated the answers on the “Frequently Asked Questions” page, made the information about Birthright current and accurate, and made many other small changes that needed to be taken care of. Now Hillel at Syracuse University can rest assured that when any members of its target audience visit its website, they will be reading accurate and current information.

The screenshot shows the website for Hillel at Syracuse University. The header features the Hillel logo and the text "ENGAGING STUDENTS & BUILDING JEWISH COMMUNITY FOR OVER 60 YEARS" alongside a photo of students. A navigation menu on the left includes links for Home, About, Calendar, FreshFest Pre-Orientation, Taglit-Birthright Israel, Shabbats and Holidays, Kosher Food on Campus, Challah For Hunger, Merchandise, Giving to Hillel, and Contact. The main content area displays a "Frequently Asked Questions" section with a search bar and a list of questions and answers, such as "How do I become a member of Hillel?" and "What is Hillel's mission?".

The screenshot shows the website for Hillel Syracuse University, specifically the page for Taglit-Birthright Israel. The header includes the Hillel logo and the text "ENGAGING STUDENTS & BUILDING JEWISH COMMUNITY FOR OVER 60 YEARS". A navigation menu on the left lists various options like Home, About, Calendar, and Taglit-Birthright Israel. The main content area features a photo of students on a camel and text describing the trip, including a quote from Lyuba Polinkovsky, '11.

The second problem with the website was its visually displeasing graphics. I again went through every single page of the website looking for graphics that needed to be redesigned. The majority of them were on the home page of the website and looked similar to this graphic for the Judaic Studies department at Syracuse University.



These graphics reflected the design style of the original Hillel at Syracuse University with their clunkiness and outdated feel, so I redesigned each one to reflect the new and improved graphic design style of the brand, incorporating the new orange graphic and sans serif typeface.

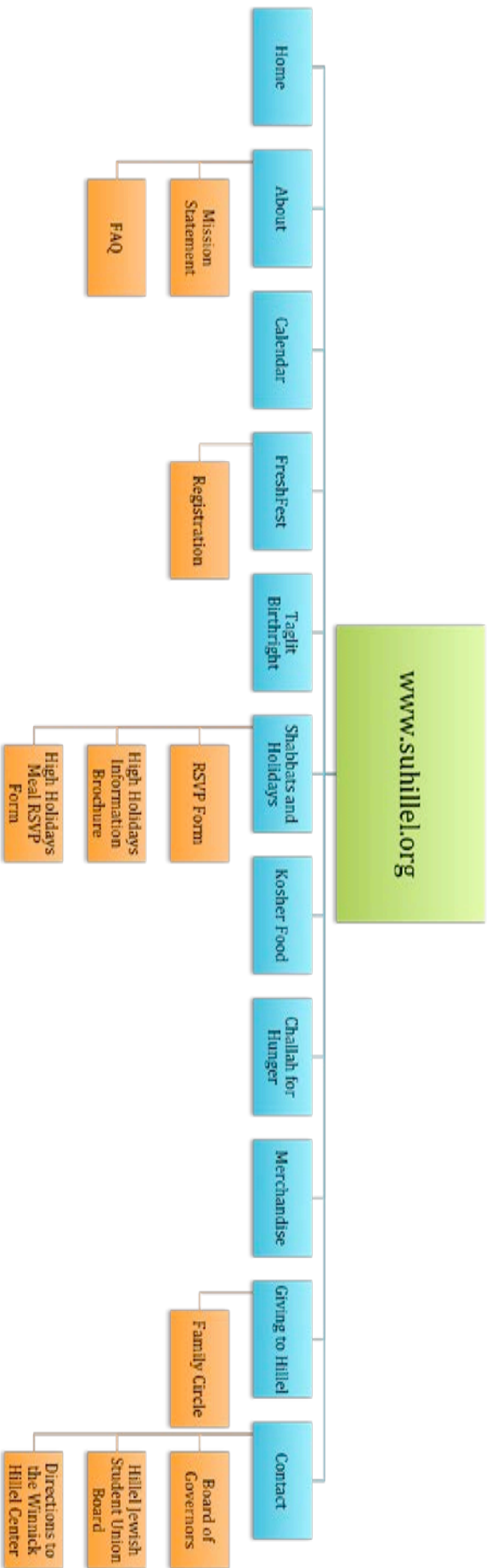


These new graphics have been fully implemented into the website, as you can see below. Once the Hillel at Syracuse University logo is approved, it will be implemented into the website as well.

A screenshot of the suhillel.org website. The header features the Hillel Syracuse University logo and the text "ENGAGING STUDENTS & BUILDING JEWISH COMMUNITY FOR OVER 60 YEARS" next to a photo of students. A navigation menu on the left includes links for Home, About, Calendar, FreshFest Pre-Orientation, Taglit-Birthright Israel, Shabbats and Holidays, Kosher Food on Campus, Challah For Hunger, Merchandise, Giving to Hillel, and Contact. The main content area has a "FALL 2014 NEWSLETTER" banner with a photo of a woman, a photo of a person picking fruit, and a "Challah for Hunger" banner. A search bar and a "Check out our Events Calendar!" graphic are on the right. A sidebar on the right contains a "CLICK HERE to RSVP for Shabbat Dinners" link and a list of organizational links: Syracuse University's Hendricks Chapel, Hillel at Syracuse University's Mission Statement, Hillel at Syracuse University's Board of Governors, and Syracuse University's Jewish Studies. The footer includes copyright information for 2014 and a login link.

The third piece to solving the website puzzle was the navigation bar. It was not user-friendly in that some pages were placed under certain page headings that did not seem intuitive or logical. For example, the full time staff's contact information was under the "About" panel rather than the "Contact Us" panel. After rethinking what made the most sense, considering what would be most user-friendly, and looking at other university Hillel websites, I crafted a comprehensive plan for the website navigation bar. This would involve moving pages around, deleting some pages, moving information from one page to another, and even creating some new pages.

The new setup of the navigation bar, which is laid out graphically on the next page, makes much more sense than the original one. The fact that all of the pages of the website are grouped and organized much more logically now make the website, as a whole much, more intuitive to navigate. Information is much easier to find with this new setup and I believe this will bring more people to the website and keep them on it for a longer duration of time.



Social Media

The majority of Hillel at Syracuse University's target audience is defined by its heavy presence on social media platforms. It goes without saying that college students, prospective students, recent alumni, and even parents of college students spend more time on social media than ever before. According to a New York Times article published in September of 2013, a professor at Purdue found that his college students spent an average of 123 minutes a day on the computer. Thirty-one of those minutes, on average, were spent on social media platforms.⁷ That means college students are spending one quarter of their time online on social media platforms, and that is a big deal for brands. If a brand does not meet its audience where they are naturally spending so much time, the brand cannot survive.

To boost Hillel at Syracuse University's social media presence as I discussed in the previous chapter, I created a handful of individual yet cohesive social media campaigns across Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. These campaigns all acted to bring the Hillel at Syracuse University brand purpose to life; they made Judaism relevant and enabled Syracuse University students to have Jewish experiences.

The first campaign reminded students of upcoming Jewish holidays, what these holidays commemorate or celebrate, and what programming Hillel at Syracuse University would be offering for each holiday. Each post in this Facebook and Twitter campaign used the hashtag #JewishHoliday so that Hillel at Syracuse University's posts would be seen with other posts on the subject matter. Using hashtags also helped make our content easier for Hillel at Syracuse University's target audience to find. If they knew a holiday was coming up

⁷ Rubin, Courtney. "Technology and the College Generation." *The New York Times*. *The New York Times*, 27 Sept. 2013. Web. 5 Apr. 2015.

and wanted to see content about it, they would likely search #JewishHoliday and see the brand's content. If they then wrote their own post and included #JewishHoliday, it would be easy for Hillel at Syracuse University to find as well. The #JewishHoliday campaign covered both major and minor Jewish holidays, from Hanukkah:

The image displays four screenshots of social media posts related to Hanukkah and Jewish holidays. Each post is enclosed in a black rectangular border.

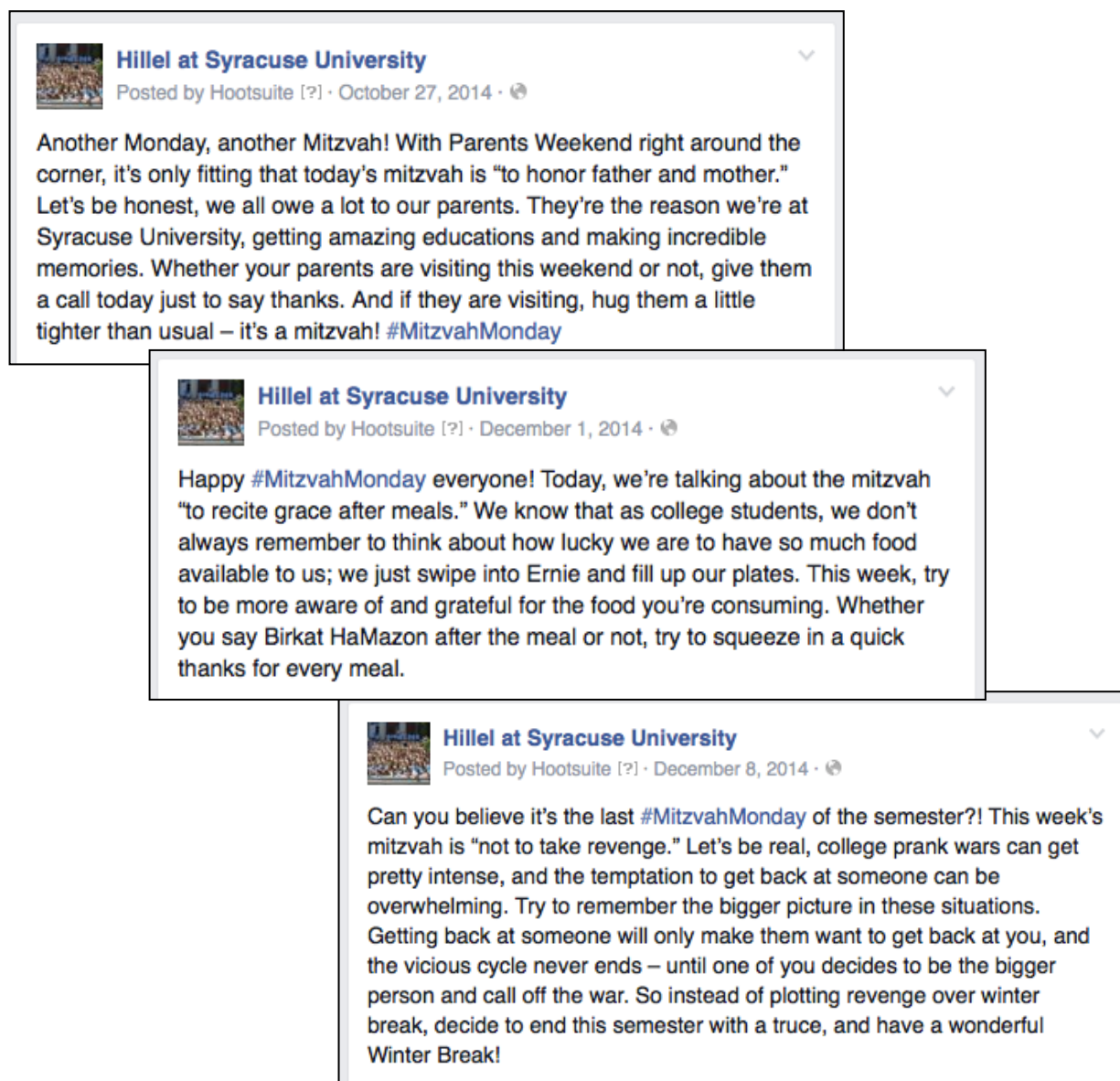
- Post 1 (Top Left):** From Hillel at Syracuse University, posted on December 16, 2014. Text: "Hanukkah, the Festival of Lights, begins tonight at sundown! It commemorates the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem after the Maccabees' triumph over the Greeks. Hanukkah is celebrated by the lighting of the menorah each night. Check back every other night of Hanukkah for a Hanukkah fun fact! #JewishHoliday #Hanukkah"
- Post 2 (Top Right):** From Hillel at SU (@HillelatSU), dated Dec 18. Text: "Happy 3rd night of #Hanukkah! Do you know what the 4 Hebrew letters on the dreidel stand for? Hint: it's about a miracle! #JewishHoliday"
- Post 3 (Middle Left):** From Hillel at SU (@HillelatSU), dated Dec 22. Text: "Happy 7th night of #Hanukkah! The candle in the middle of the menorah is known as the Shamash, helper, candle. #JewishHoliday"
- Post 4 (Bottom Right):** From Hillel at Syracuse University, posted on December 23, 2014. Text: "Happy 8th and final night of Hanukkah! If you've been lighting your menorah correctly every night, you should have gone through 44 candles by now! #JewishHoliday #Hanukkah"

To the start of a new Hebrew month:

The image shows a screenshot of a social media post from Hillel at Syracuse University, dated December 21, 2014. The text reads: "Tonight is Rosh Chodesh Tevet, otherwise known as the beginning of the new month. Tevet is the 10th month of the Hebrew year. #JewishHoliday #RoshChodeshTevet"

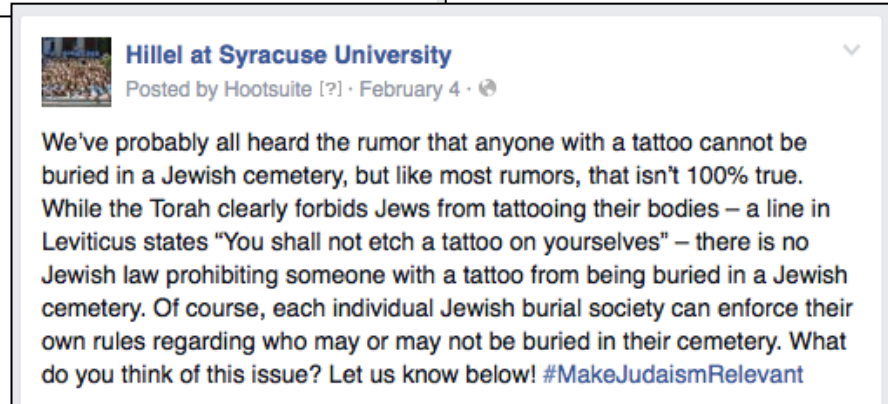
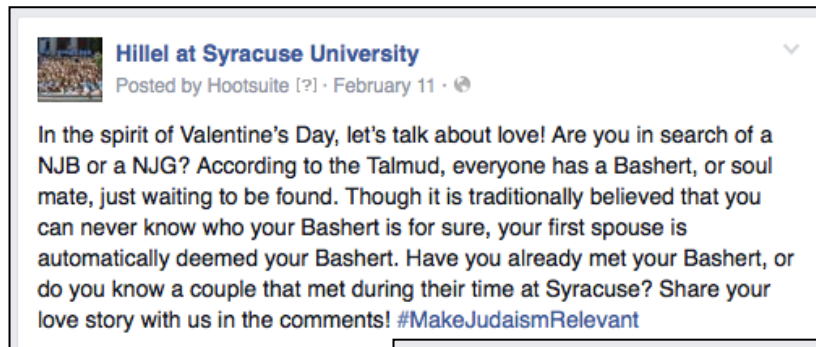
The next social media campaign that I implemented was #MitzvahMonday. In Judaism, a *mitzvah* is a good deed that is usually done out of a sense of religious duty. It is widely held that there are 613 of them listed throughout the *Torah*, and practicing Jews traditionally aspire to complete as many of them as possible throughout their life. Since

there are so many, I was inspired to pick out those most relevant to college students for this campaign to show students that they can still lead a life of *mitzvah* on campus. This campaign, launched in the Fall 2014 semester, consisted of weekly Facebook posts explaining one *mitzvah* that any college student could realistically accomplish.

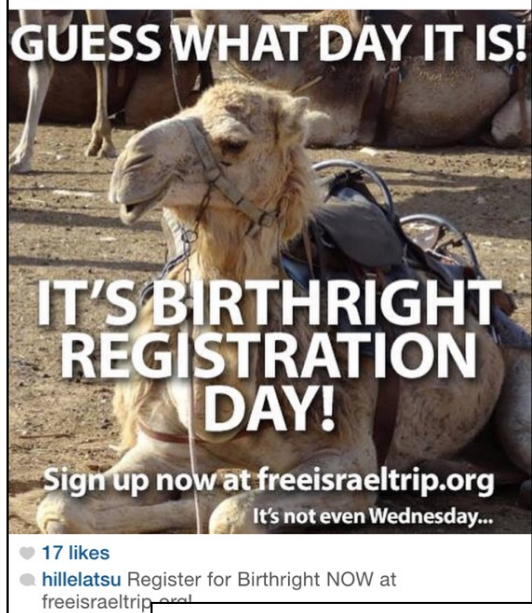
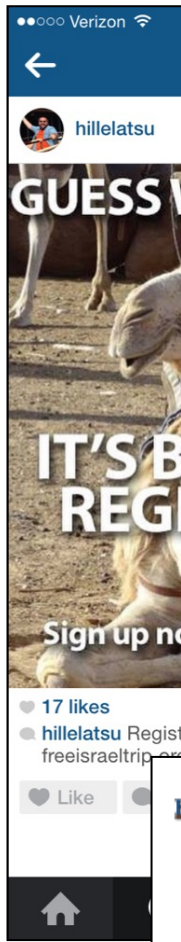


As you can see, these posts were written with the intention of being as relevant as possible to Hillel at Syracuse University's target audience, with references to campus events and college life in general.

To follow up the #MitzvahMonday campaign, I launched the #MakeJudaismRelevant campaign at the beginning of the Spring 2015 semester. This campaign again aimed to take topics that college students were likely to already be talking about and answer the question, “What is Judaism’s stance on x?” The #MakeJudaismRelevant campaign covered topics from intermarriage to environmental responsibility and helped students gain insight into what Jewish law had to say about these issues. It was also intended to spark conversation about these topics among any of Hillel at Syracuse University’s audience.



I further employed the Hillel at Syracuse University Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram pages as platforms to remind the brand’s audience about upcoming events. Weekly reminders to sign up for Shabbat dinner were posted every Tuesday or Wednesday afternoon, and other reminders were scheduled when upcoming events, such as the Passover *seder* in the Dome or Birthright Registration Day, called for it.



Hillel at SU @HillelatSU · Feb 10
 Intrigued about our big announcement? Use the hashtag #LetMyPeopleGoOrange to let us know what you're thinking!

Hillel at SU @HillelatSU · Mar 9
 Make your Zayde and Bubbe proud. Come to Hillel to get your Passover Seder tickets after Spring Break.

Finally, I used Hillel at Syracuse University’s Instagram account to post old photos using the popular hashtag #tbt. These photos are great ways to garner engagement with Instagram followers because of the memories they draw up for the audience as well as those in the actual photos.



These social media efforts were all scheduled and executed using Hootsuite, which is an online application that allows users to aggregate a variety of social media profiles in one space. Through Hootsuite, I was able to plan posts for both Facebook and Twitter at the same time, weeks and even months in advance. This made the planning and execution of these campaigns much more streamlined and easy to manage.

Conclusion

I believe that my work on the Hillel at Syracuse University social media profiles has made a significant difference for the brand. The brand saw increased engagement on the majority of its posts and, as mentioned previously, it is all about engagement. The brand now has a more consistent voice across all of its communications channels, and its brand purpose is also much more apparent now. It can be difficult for brands to maintain their social media profiles, websites, and any other communications channels, but doing so is extremely important for a brand's success.

I sincerely hope that this capstone work serves Hillel at Syracuse University well for years to come, as it has so far. I have equipped the brand with all of the tools necessary to move forward and continue producing content that will appeal to its audience and convey its core brand purpose. I believe this organization is an incredible one that provides amazing services and programming for Syracuse University students, and I trust that with this rebranding work, many more students will be motivated to walk through the doors of Hillel at Syracuse University.

To ensure that these step forwards are not lost, I have created a comprehensive guide for future students who will have a part in crafting and managing Hillel at Syracuse University's communication channels. This is critical for the future success of Hillel, because if each new student in charge of the brand's communications disregards what the student before accomplished, all is lost. Under the guidance and direction of Brian Small, and with the help of my guide and this capstone project, Hillel at Syracuse University is in good hands.

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