

Ellyn Henderson

Graham Miller

Samantha Seglin

Olivia Smith

## Social Marketing of the Redirection of HSU's Waste Stream

### **Problem Definition:**

There is a lack of awareness and participation in the redirection of the solid waste stream by HSU staff and student body. Many campus community members are unclear as to what is compostable, what is recyclable, and what is truly trash. Can this problem be alleviated through social marketing tools to help HSU identify and redirect "waste" to an appropriate outlet?

**Problem Situation:** The solid waste from Humboldt State University is either sent to Anderson, California, or across state lines to Medford, Oregon, either way it travels an average of 180 miles. According to a preliminary audit conducted by Cascadia Consulting Group, 54% of this solid waste stream is comprised of compostable/potentially compostable materials- food, compostable paper/products, and leaf/grass clippings. Furthermore, approximately 16% of what is shipped through our waste stream is recyclable. This can be attributed to the lack of a comprehensive compost system and awareness/participation on campus.

Thus far in our research we have come across **barriers** to making a collective compost system throughout the campus. Most of these issues arise from the lack of collaboration amongst various campus facilities, organizations, and HSU members as a whole. Without comprehensive education, management, and processing facilities for the

compost system problems will continually arise. For our project specifically, we wish to focus on the education and social marketing of this sought after collective compost system.

For the social marketing aspect of the food waste improvement project we will find little apprehension from students, but perhaps the major barriers will come from campus facilitators and administration. First of all, Humboldt Waste management program, Plant Ops, the J, the Depot, Housing, and any other facilities of use will have to approve the compost signs in their intended locations. In addition, the Waste Reduction Resource Awareness Program and appropriate administration will have to approve the messages and images placed on the signs. The Marketing and Communications entity of Humboldt State University has limitations on sign uses, which has been a barrier to marketing success thus far, and they will likely continue to heavily regulate and limit the social marketing.

Another possible barrier to social marketing is funding for signs. Though there are allocated funds through WRRAP, it may become an issue to find money for marketing. There are many wonderful ideas being considered, but without monetary resources available to us it will be very difficult to achieve any of them. This will require requests and approval from clubs, student and administrative organizations, and perhaps even grants.

The spread of our physical campus may also be a barrier to our marketing success. The HSU campus is known for having classrooms and buildings far apart from one another. In addition the geography and landscape tend to discourage students and faculty from traveling far from their classrooms. We need to make our signs and compost

accessible to all areas of HSU, and in doing so increase awareness and participation from all areas of the campus. Many of the campus facilities and organizations have their own regulations, and so we must be sure to abide by each set of rules, while maintaining a cohesive campus-wide project.

The lack of awareness and participation in redirecting the solid waste stream at HSU is a problem for several reasons, some of which have already been mentioned. According to the 2011 waste audit, 217 tons of compostable food waste, 31.9% of total waste produced on campus is first picked up and trucked to Eureka several times a week. Then is sent to the landfill approximately 180 miles in one direction, with the trucks returning empty. Trucking these hundreds of thousands of pounds of compostable food waste uses large amounts of fuel and causes the release of CO<sub>2</sub>. Another problem with students not using the proper compost receptacles on campus is that the Eureka biodigester, which is planned to be up and running within the year, will rely on HSU's food waste in order to generate methane energy. If students are not redirecting their food waste then the biodigester will not be "digesting" at the potential capacity it could be. It is important that the food waste makes it to the Eureka biodigester in the future because the current campus composting programs through WRRAP and CCAT are already at capacity with how much food waste their facility is able to compost. The final problem is that of Humboldt State's image and record as an environmentally conscious school. HSU provides one of the best environmental science related educations in the country and has produced great student-run programs focused around sustainability such as CCAT, WRRAP, and Take Back the Tap. However Chico State is considered to be the "greenest" Cal State University after winning numerous awards and being recognized by

the Princeton Review as one of the Greenest Campuses. This recognition has a lot to do with the students' ability to properly direct their waste stream.

Community composting efforts are approached in a variety of different methods. However, it is common for college campuses to use a closed compost system. The compost is collected, processed, and utilized in a visually educational manner right on campus. CSU Chico's "Compost Display Area" is a focal point on campus where students can participate in compost education, see where their food waste goes, and enjoy the garden planted in the post-compost soil. Many other universities have focused their marketing efforts on student cafeterias, which is the most concentrated source of food waste. To encourage students to compost, schools such as Antioch University (NE) hold events that are focused on composting and bring the student body together. For this project, education will play a strong role. Almost every college campus with a composting program incorporates some education element. Examples of education efforts include signs, demonstrations, pamphlets, and newsletters.

**Pledge:**

"I pledge to explore and take into account the social and environmental consequences of any job I consider and will try to improve these aspects for any organizations for which I work."

-- HSU Graduation Pledge

In 1987 HSU graduates decided to institute this pledge of Social and Environmental Responsibility, and since then it has spread to campuses around the world. On the forefront of environmental consciousness, sustainability is an idea that HSU prides itself in integrating into classes, campus methods, and the student body. Has the

school lost touch with preserving the beautiful environment that naturally surrounds it? There are number programs on campus advocating environmental responsibility, but it is not promoted to the incoming freshmen that we hold sustainability with high regard. Most HSU students either figure it out along the way, or they don't. With a number of educational opportunities, enthusiastic staff members, and egger students, learning how to live in symbiosis with our natural landscapes, can be largely accepted by the student body with the incentive of bettering themselves for their community; it is key to introduce the concept that whether one chooses to stay local or move, students will take the idea of environmental responsibility with them. We are lucky that once an individual knows how to be environmentally responsible, there is enough support to continue. The concept of "it's just easy needs" to be reintroduced to the HSU student body.

### **Goals, Objectives, and Solutions**

Our group's **goal** is to increase the use of compost bins across campus, which can be measured by an increase in the overall amount of compost over time. We hope to raise the awareness of compost bins at HSU by 10% through the spring semester of 2012. Our focus is the social marketing aspect of educating the HSU community and raising awareness, but our solutions to solve the problem will focus on motivating people to use the existing compost bins.

#### **Objectives:**

- cover every area of the campus (facilities, campus areas) with compost marketing
- expand education/awareness/use of compost receptacles
- increase the awareness of compost/ bins by 10% amount (we will determine the x amount by analyzing the amount of waste collectors have per day/week they collected,

and compared over time) (and observing) (self measurement)

increase the coverage of campus marketing by 10% amount

**Guidelines to Solutions:**

Educate the members and visitors of Humboldt State University about :

- what composting is, why composting is beneficial to the campus, community, world
- the amount/type of waste that could be composted
- the ease and simplicity of being more sustainable

Motivate HSU members and visitors

- to divide waste and use available compost system on campus

Encourage

- people to compost/recycle/ divide all of their waste on and off campus, and to educate and encourage others to do the same

Criteria:

- 1) does the solution achieve goals and objectives we have created?
- 2) environmental impact (positive)
- 3) size of impact
- 4) fun, popular
- 5) aesthetics
- 6) cooperation- will people go along with it, does it bother people
- 7) can it be continued/ will it be institutionalized? or will it end after us
- 8) can it be reproduced, will other schools like it?
- 9) relevant to HSU grad pledge (social env responsibility)

The **solutions** chosen will achieve the goals and objectives we have created by increasing campus awareness of the existing compost system. Each of the solutions will encourage and motivate campus members to participate in composting with ease. Education of composting will occur as a result of their participation, but each of our solutions are made to be user-friendly and simple. The following solutions will have a direct positive environmental impact on campus as well as on the community at large. This project will be easily continued by individual students as well as through WRRAP, and it will continue to gain popularity and cooperation. The solutions are specifically aimed at gaining popularity through fun and aesthetically pleasing marketing techniques. Other schools have done similar projects, and more will continue to jump on board with this project as environmental harm becomes more pertinent over time. Overall this project speaks specifically to the HSU graduation pledge because it strongly supports living with social and environmental responsibility.

### **Solutions**

- Integrate compost education into freshman spring preview, give example behavior and educate on importance
- feasible, we will need to ask clubs office for permission
- Pros: “early behavior priming” ID HSU as a environmentally friendly community to prospective students
- Cons: Difficult to get on the set schedule of S.P.
- Information collecting: observing people in the depot ourselves, and referencing the collectors of compost (depot workers)

- feasible depending on cooperation
- pros: gives us a base of current composting numbers, allows observe current student actions
- cons: may not produce tangible data (no numbers)
- Mapping: Where compost is on campus/how to compost info
  - very feasible, we will go around and collect data
  - pro: ID where composting receptacles are and where needed, publish for student and staff to aid the excuse of not knowing where they are
  - cons:
    - Make accessible to ENTIRE campus--> more bins and in every building
    - feasible, we will need to meet with Morgan and WRRAP director to make sure they are willing to maintain more bins
- Online social marketing tools: Pictures/videos for Facebook/ HSU page
  - feasible we will start the FB page and fill it with photos of what is/is not compostable, pics of events
- General marketing: T-shirts, flyers, bumper stickers-
  - likely feasible, may start with a low numbers, but through some fund raising will allow for more general marketing tools
- Make composting fun: sound (rewarding) bins/bball hoops/stop signs/pin wheels
  - feasible, will need to get in touch with marketing and communications to approve signage and flair
- Event opportunities/Tabling: International Composting Awareness Week + poster contest



- feasible, we need to sign up for international composting week competition and make sure it's ok to promote on campus through the proper outlets (May 7-12)

### **Implementation**

In February, we started contacting WRRAP, Plant Ops, Market & Communication, A.S., and the Clubs office in order to determine a necessary plan action for our project. Since these existing entities had already begun waste reduction and composting projects, we decided that it would be beneficial for our group to solely focus on the social awareness aspect of compost on campus. With a goal of reaching 10% of HSU's population to make an effort to compost properly while on campus, we created a pledge in which students agree to make an effort to separate their compostable products from non-compostables. In addition to our pledge, we created both Facebook and Twitter accounts in order to raise awareness of composting at HSU and our project. Beginning on Spring Preview, April 13 th, we successfully started tabling and collecting student and faculty pledges. We ended up tabling two more times, collecting pledges, posting signs around campus drawing attention to the existing bins, and raising awareness of our project by making composting fun. While tabling we held raffles, cheered for people composting properly, held a composting photo opt with WRRAP's "I dig compost" cut out, and chatted with people about composting methods and why it's important for the HSU student body to participate in gearing HSU towards a sustainable future. Because the signs we created were not accepted by the Market and Communications office, on April 30th we decided to go ahead and make flyers to disperse throughout the depot without permission. Our posters had multiple slogans the main idea of "Why not... it's easy."

Our implementation goal was to blanket the campus with our message in order to get people to change their habits. With 210 pledges and by reaching 3,000 people on Facebook, we feel that thus far our project has been successful... and were not even done yet. As for the HOP orientation packet, our materials are due by the end of May, thus we will be submitting materials to be Morgan King to approve and included with the information WRRAP and Plant Ops will be disbursing. We have spoken to WRRAP to see how much of our project they are willing to continue, but if necessary we are considering starting a club on campus to carry on the project next year.

**Alternatives- solutions you didnt include**

What will help us reach these goals:

- integrate compost education into freshman spring preview, give example behavior and educate on importance
- ways to measure compost use and behavior change- observing people's behavior in depot, ask depot/ waste management how much they are collecting on average over
- mapping compost bins for entire campus
- *adding more compost bins- make accessible to ENTIRE campus*
- *too costly, and no where for additional compost to be contained/maintained*
- *make composting fun: sound (rewarding) bins/ bball hoops/stop signs*
- *costly; WRRAP would not want to maintain batteries and condition over time*
- fb/twitter page
- Incentivize?: tabling and cheering/handing candy
- pictures/videos for facebook/ HSU page
- stop signs on trash cans

- *3-D structure signage*
- *problematic with poster/marketing approval*
- *spring preview tabling*
- *HSU compost videos online*
- *mascot with compost*
- *no availability of lucky the logger during school hours*
- *compost pics for HSU web page*
- *marketing and communication issue- no approval or response for this action*
- *fliers and pamphlets/ informational packets (for preview)*
- *preview and orientation went paperless*
- *app and local business gift cards?*
- *no willing participants*
- *community awareness and flyer*
- *reduce paper use; need to focus on school*
- *resident hall competition (talk to Jeremy Davis, Brietta Linney, and NRSLA)*
- *limited due to size of compost access/storage*
- *“Flash mob”- like rewarding system*
- *make video/info packet for orientation*
- *placing bright attractive/example bins in popular classrooms and buildings*
- *limited compost storage*
- *reaching out to non-environment majors (Siemans/BSS)*
- *+International Composting Awareness Week*

May 7-12, 2012

## Poster Contest

+*Distributing bags of post-compost soil*

- *issue with money*

### **Monitor and Evaluation**

#### **We are going to measure the use of compost bins by:**

- observing patterns of use (ourselves)
- surveying depot compost collectors and determining if they have seen an increase in use
- counting the number of people we talk to at spring preview to determine how many more people are aware of the compost bins existence
- counting the number of new flyers/bins on campus (compared to what was there before and measure the difference to assume an increase)
- number of people who signed the waste diversion pledge
- Number of people visiting and liking the Facebook, Twitter pages

#### **Who is going to be doing monitoring**

- us (this semester)
- WRRAP
- Depot workers

#### **What instruments**

- bins
- compost weight
- flyers
- conversation
- pledge

- internet pages

**when**

- spring preview
- Observation days
- collection over entire semester

in the following years (through WRRAP)

**Evaluation**

Our original objective was to cover all areas of the campus with compost marketing. However, over time we changed this plan to fit the limitations of the number of bins and compost areas on campus. Rather than covering every area of the campus we focused on the “hot spots”. It was important to bring awareness to students eating in areas nearest the existing compost bins. Given that there are a limited number of compost collection spots on campus it was important to focus on bringing awareness and increasing use of those spots.

Our second objective was to expand the education, awareness, and use of compost bins on campus. It was difficult to measure the increased use of compost bins because we did not have a starting number to measure off of, but we were able to measure the increased awareness of the compost bins. We created a composting pledge, which we have students sign, and the number of signatures helps indicate the increased number of students aware of the bins. The pledge also was a promise to use the compost bins when appropriate and possible, and so this could be soft evidence of the increased compost users.

In addition we set up several Internet pages that indicate the number of “likes”

and visitors to the compost page. These pages are informational and constantly updated with recent compost activity, and they help indicate the number of people aware of composting on HSU campus. Given our original goal of 10% increased awareness it can be claimed that we were close to reaching our goal. We had a large population of HSU students and visitors sign the pledge and subscribe to the web pages. In comparison to the total student population the number of pledges reaches close to this 10% objective. It was very difficult to measure the increased use of compost bins because of limited established data and research. Starting observation of the depot and compost bins earlier would have been really helpful for comparison over time.

However, we were also able to collect information and research on the eating and diversion habits of students within the depot. This information will be very helpful for WRRAP and future compost projects in terms of guiding their goals. Now that we have seen some patterns of waste diversion it is easier to see where improvement is needed. More than anything, more bins need to be made available all across campus. This is limited by the availability of compost collectors, as well as the amount of compost that CAN be collected and stored.

As the program grows so should the marketing and awareness. While the project is still in limited size it is important to increase number of people using existing bins and educating people about why composting is important. This project has been successful in increasing awareness, but more can and should be done. In addition it will be extremely important to continue observing waste patterns of students in order to identify key issues, such as: what objects are placed incorrectly in bins, where waste is being thrown, and how many people are benefiting from the posters and existing bins.

Essentially, we have laid a foundation for WRRAP to build upon, if they so choose; the information we have collected will help guide their decision for bin placement and marketing techniques in the future.

It is also significant to mention that we were able to create a “face” of composting for ourselves. Through tabling and social marketing we have raised awareness of the existing waste diversion project, but we have also outreached as an identifiable group, which can be sought out for questions and suggestions about compost use. Education is a huge part of relaying to people why composting is important. In order for people to learn they need to know where to look for answers to their questions; Part of our social marketing project has been to provide people with answers and to encourage them to both continue participating in waste diversion and help educate and encourage others to do the same. Overall, we conclude that our project was successful. Despite falling short of our 10% goal we were able to measure a significant percentage of the increased awareness across campus and the community. The most backbone to our problem situation is that people are unaware and unmotivated to divert their waste. Our outreach has changed the knowledge and habits of many students and community members, and the educational/media tools we have established will continue to exist and bring awareness to Humboldt County Residents.

## SOCIAL MEDIA

Email: CompostHSU@gmail.com  
[REDACTED]

Twitter: www.twitter.com/composthsu  
[REDACTED]

Facebook: www.facebook.com/composthumboldt

---

### Twitter Page:

Twitter is a “microblogging” service that allows users to interact with other users via 140 character messages, twitpics (picture messages), and twidvids (video messages). This service has become a tool for businesses and news sources to socially interact with their demographic audiences. Twitter has also become an outlet for advertisements for products, events, and organizations during the past 5 years. Our goal on twitter is to reach out to Humboldt State University students.



# Compost Humboldt

### FEATURES:

#### 1. Tweet Posts (140 character maximum)

- Compost facts
- Compost slogans, reminders, & encouragement
- Announce contests & incentives
- Support other HSU organizations and events
- Retweet followers and related posts
- Post videos



## 2. Bio (160 characters)

“This page is administered by a group of Humboldt State University students who are attempting to raise awareness and participation for composting on campus!”

## 3. Hash Tagging

The name of topics and organizations can be tagged within/at the end of our tweet posts. By doing so, our posts will be entered into the search query for the aforementioned topics and organizations. Hopefully, Humboldt State University students will search through tags, find our page, and follow us.

Examples of Hash Tagging: #Humboldt, #Green, #HSU, #Recycle, ect.

## Tweets



Compost Humboldt

Lets get ready to ... Humboldt State!

## 4. Social Interaction

- “Composter of the week” contest: The follower who interacts with our page the most will get a shout out every Friday in a tweet post.
- Announce ICAW poster contest
- Retweet Humboldt state organizations, followers, and compost related posts

## Facebook Page:

### 1. About

- Official page topic
- Description
- Twitter page link

### 2. Posts

- Status updates
- Pictures, images, maps
- Videos

### 3. Likes

- Related pages/compost info

4. Once 30 people like your Page, you'll get access to **insights** about your activity.

### 5. Facebook Polls

- Survey students

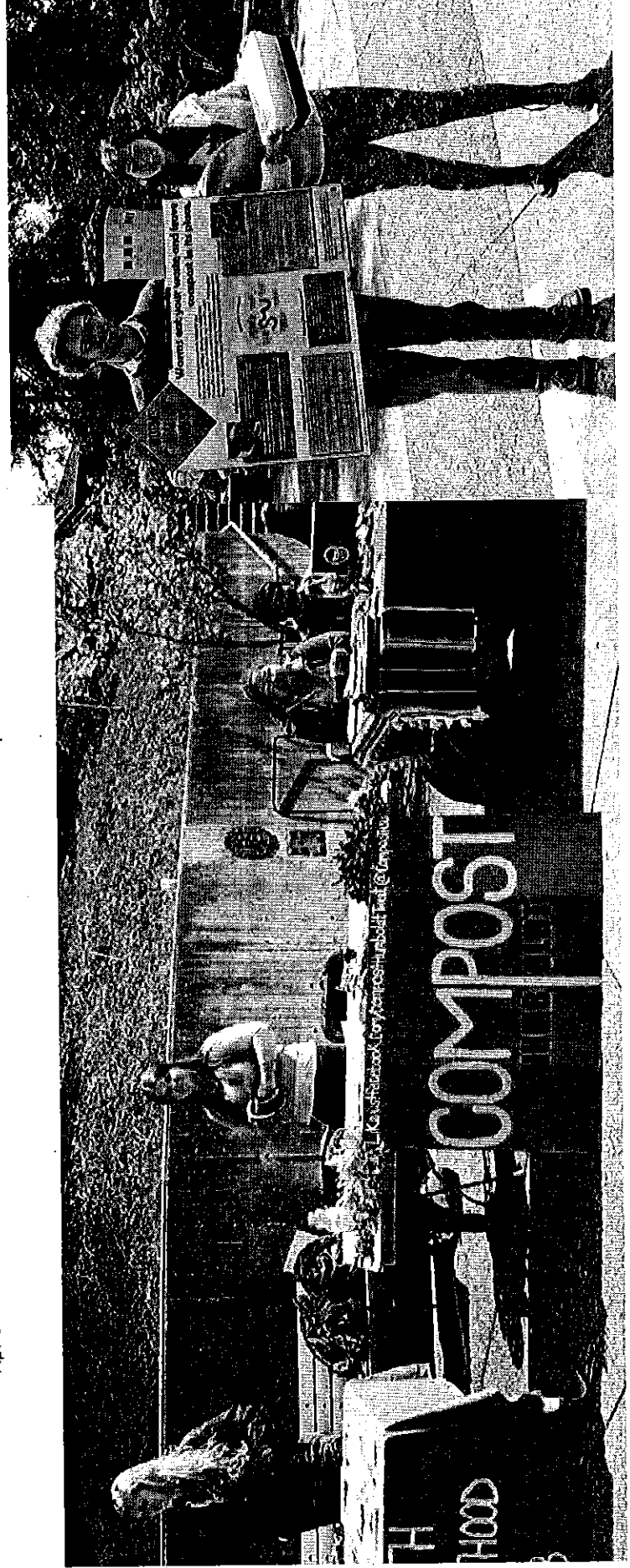
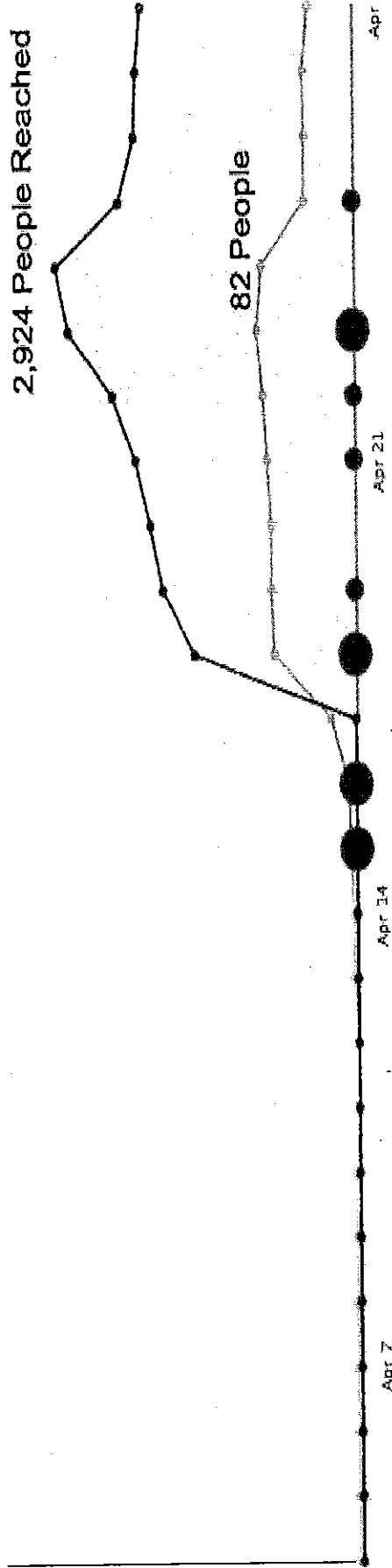
6. Invite Facebook friends to like us

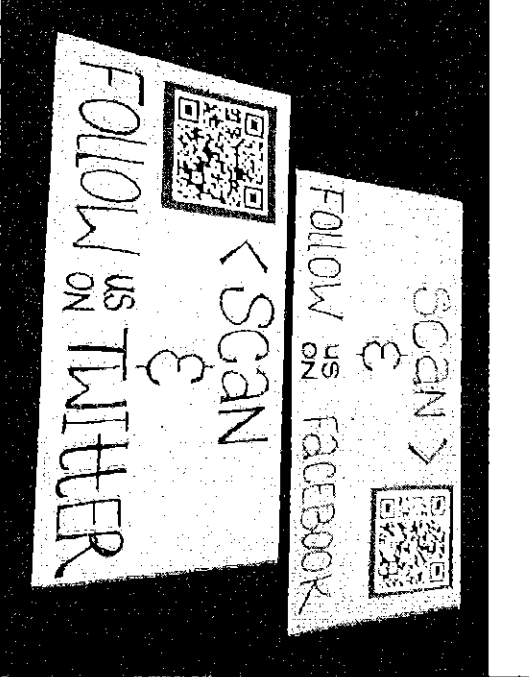
### 7. Events

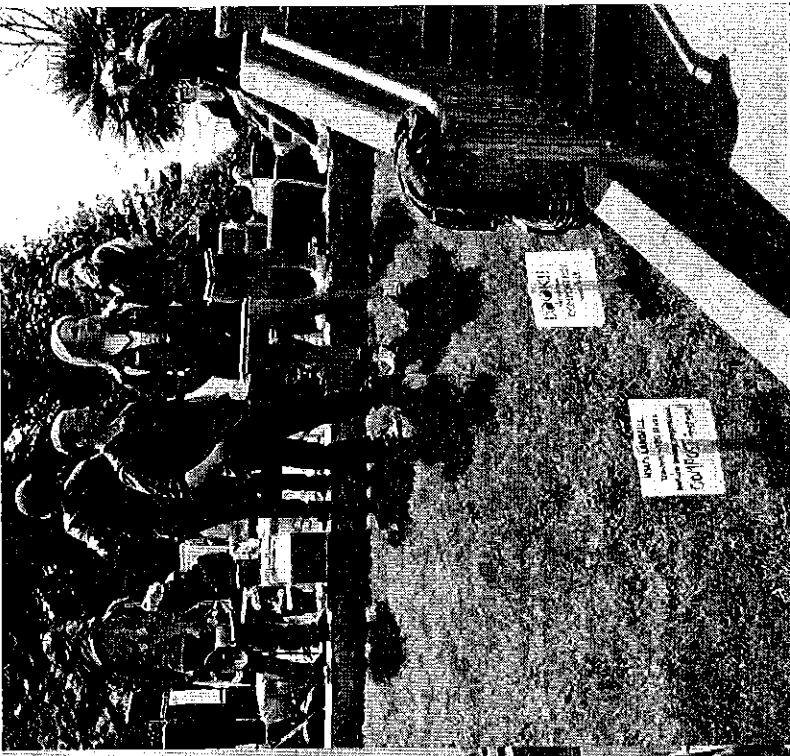
- Spring Preview
- Int. Compost Awareness Week
- WRRAP meetings?

Total Likes? Friends of Fans? People Talking About This? Weekly Total Reach?  
**85**  $\uparrow$  6.25% **34,860**  $\uparrow$  14.02% **37**  $\downarrow$  -54.88% **1,847**  $\downarrow$  -4.94%

Posts? People Talking About This? Weekly Total Reach?







# COMPOST

## HUMBOLDT

Like our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/humboldt.compost>

Worms eat your waste and leave compost in its place

THIS IS NOT A TRASH CAN

Sort of just the opposite of composting. Compost is made from organic materials that are broken down by microorganisms. It is a natural process that can be used to improve soil and reduce waste.

STOP SORT



NO LIGHT  
NO LIQUID  
NO MEAT  
NO OIL  
NO PLASTIC

NO PLASTIC  
NO LIQUID  
NO MEAT  
NO OIL

COMPOSTING

Ellyn Henderson  
EMP 411- Compost Project  
Activity Log (outside of class hours)

Research/analysis/planning

- Beginning of Semester= 4 hours
- Throughout Semester= 3 hours
- Writing for class assignments= 2 hours
- Final project= 4 hours

Meetings/Messaging

- TC= .5 hours
- Morgan (WRRAP)= 2.5 hours
- Andrew (WRRAP)= 1 hour
- Phil (WRRAP)= 1 hour
- Depot workers= 1 hour
- Group= 5 hours

Observation of Compost Bins

- Thursday (3/5/12)= 1 hour
- Tuesday (3/10/12)= 1.5 hours
- Thursday (3/12/12)= 1 hour
- Wednesday (3/21/12)= 2 hours
- Tuesday (4/3/12)= 1.5 hours
- Thursday (4/5/12)= .5 hours
- Tuesday (4/10/12)= 1.5 hours
- Friday (4/13/12)= .5 hours
- Monday (4/16/12)= 1 hour
- Tuesday (4/17/12)=.5 hours

Posting signs/ Guerilla Tactics/ Media Pages

- Creating= 1.5 hour
- Posting= 1 hour
- Media page sharing, commenting, updating= 2 hours

Tabling/ Pledges/ Verbal Outreach

- Spring Preview= 4 hours
- Depot verbal outreach= 2 hours
- Various Tabling/picture days= 3 hours

Samantha Seglin  
EMP 411- Compost Project  
Activity Log (outside of class hours)

Research/analysis/planning

- Research throughout semester= 5 hours
- Writing for class assignments= 2 hours
- Final project= 3 hours

Meetings/Messaging

- Morgan (WRRAP)= 2 hours
- Andrew (WRRAP)= 1 hour
- Phil (WRRAP)= 1 hour
- Group= 5 hours

Observation of Compost Bins

- Thursday (3/5/12)= 3 hours
- Tuesday (3/10/12)= 2 hours
- Thursday (3/12/12)= 3 hour

Posting signs/ Guerilla Tactics/ Media Pages- Photo editing

- Editing Photos/creating Guerilla posters= 4 hours
- Posting Signs= .5 hour
- Media page sharing, commenting, updating= 3 hours

Tabling/ Pledges/ Verbal Outreach

- Spring Preview= 4 hours
- Depot verbal outreach= 5 hours
- Various Tabling/Picture days/Collecting Pledge signatures/Flash mob= 9 hours

Total = 52.5

February:

Preliminary Research	Total: ~ 2 hours
<i>Problem Background/Statement</i>	<i>Due February 21</i>
<i>Goals and Objectives</i>	<i>Due February 28</i>

March:

<i>Weighing Alternatives</i>	<i>Due March 20</i>
<i>Implementation Strategies</i>	<i>Due March 27</i>
<i>Meet with Marketing, WWRAP, Clubs office</i>	<i>March 30: 1 hour</i>

April

Facebook/Email/Twitter Accounts set up	April 1: 3 hours
Facebook/Twitter updates	Total: ~ 8 hours
Knitting Beanies	7 beanies ~ 5 hours
Poster Making	April 10: ~ 2 hours
<i>Monitor and Evaluation Plan</i>	<i>Due April 10</i>
Spring Preview Tabling	April 13: 10 am - 4 pm
Stop Sign Design/Proposal	April 18: 2 hours
Code Scanner Generation/Table Signs	April 22: 1.5 hours
Observation (x5)	Total: ~ 5 hours
Tabling	April 26: 12 pm - 2:45
Flash Mob	April 30: 3 pm - 4 pm
<i>Presentation Group Meeting</i>	<i>April 30: 6:30 - 8:30pm</i>
 <i>Group Presentation</i>	 <i>May 1, 2012</i>

# Graham Miller outside hours.

Research/Analysis/Planning	
Beginning of Project	3.5
Middle of Project	3
Final Project	3
Flash mob	1
Meeting with Morgan	2
Tabling permit	0.5
Staking permit/prep and set up	3.45
Spring Preview tabling	4.5
Spring Preview Set up	2
Social Marketing	3
WRRAP meeting	1
Meeting with Marketing	0.5
compost bin observation	7
Group meeting	5
Writing for assignment	2
Facebook	2
Tabling	2
Total	<del>45</del> 45