
WILSON AND WASHBURN

Business Analysis & Redesign

Executive Summary:

Wilson and Washburn is a local, historical pub featuring craft beers, signature cocktails, and comforting pub fare. As a nod to two notorious madams during Omaha's lawless pioneer days, Wilson and Washburn transports back in time in a relaxed yet captivating atmosphere. Unfortunately, as captivating as the history and space are, Wilson and Washburn's unfortunate online presence leaves nothing for newcomers to remember. The current digital marketing strategy is inconsistent and has no clear directive about its goals or whom it wishes to attract. With an overhaul of digital marketing and clear objectives, Wilson and Washburn can prove to be a must-stop destination for locals and tourists alike.

In order to recreate Wilson and Washburn's online footprint, three marketing efforts must be addressed and clarified. A clearly defined target audience, uniform branding guidelines, and a visible call to action on all marketing efforts are essential to any successful business. While Wilson and Washburn has neither of the three, implementing these marketing efforts will undoubtedly increase awareness and encourage online and in-person traffic while leaving a lasting impression on new and veteran customers.

Business Background

Wilson and Washburn is a local Omaha, Nebraska pub highlighting smoked meat dishes, craft beers, and signature cocktails. The building is in downtown Omaha in a restored 19th-century brick building in the middle of the old "Sporting District" (a common 19th-century euphemism for gambling and prostitution.) Anna Wilson and Josie Washburn give the bar its iconic name. The two madams were very notorious in Omaha, owning some of the largest homes in the area and authoring revolutionary books exposing the harsh reality of prostitution. Today,

the restaurant pays a subtle homage to the two ladies with its décor some publications have labeled as "whorehouse chic."

Wilson and Washburn has been in operation since 2014, serving the local community and several out-of-towners in the area to attend a show at the Orpheum, just next door. Owned since its inauguration by local Omahans Jeff Luby, Wilson and Washburn's advertising boasts the establishment as a "local hang" and even a "work from home" location with free Wi-Fi. The primary target audience is working-class locals looking for a good beer at the end of a long day. Wilson and Washburn's current demographic consists of locals who undoubtedly learned about the bar by passing by or word of mouth. They are primarily males ranging from the late 20s to late 50s with low to average household incomes. They like craft beers after a long day at work and enjoy watching local sports on the bar's TVs while eating a smoked brisket sandwich. This current demographic represents Wilson and Washburn's primary revenue source.

Current Strategy

Social Media:

Wilson and Washburn remains infrequently active on only three social media platforms: Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. The company Twitter account is the least utilized, with the last update being in April 2019, and while Facebook and Instagram post more frequently, the content is the same on both platforms. In addition, each platform shows no apparent branding and further reveals no targeted marketing towards a specific target audience.

[Facebook](#) – 5,103 likes, 5,284 followers – Last post was November 23, 2021

The Wilson and Washburn Facebook account posts minimal content, posting mainly pictures of current dishes, restaurant closings, and new hiring opportunities. Posts usually occur

once a week, with the occasional twice a week. Unfortunately, no brand recognition is utilized on the posts, and several posts have grammatical and spelling errors.



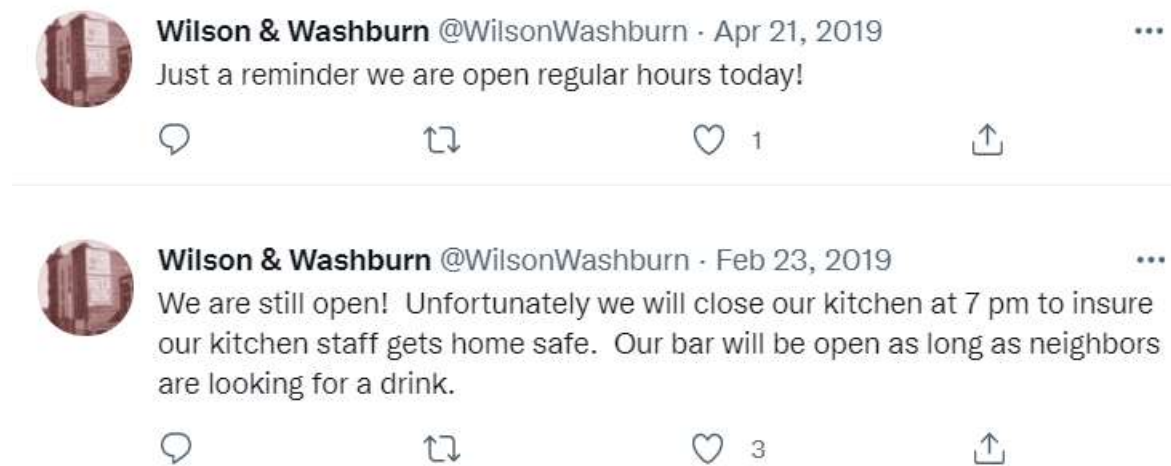
[Instagram](#) – 1,531 followers, 249 posts – Last post was November 23, 2021

The Wilson and Washburn Instagram account shows no differentiating qualities from the Facebook page, with the exact content shared on both platforms.



[Twitter](#) – 1,550 followers – Last post was April 21, 2019

Wilson and Washburn's Twitter account has remained inactive for almost three years and seems only to give information on operating hours.



Promotions:

Unfortunately, Wilson and Washburn does not currently promote any events, campaigns, or contests, except a daily happy hour and an occasional discount for specific dining groups and holidays.

Branding:

The Wilson and Washburn branding is unclear across the utilized social media platforms and offers little on the website. However, the website boasts a brick background matching the restaurant itself and headlines pages with a saloon-style font. These design elements are the viewer's only clue of what Wilson and Washburn looks like in reality: haunting prints of old-fashioned call girls, rich fabrics curtains, and glimmering candles in a dim setting.

Earned Media Coverage:

- <https://www.ketv.com/article/now-serving-omaha-wilson-and-washburn/36026271> by KETV April, 16, 2021
- https://omaha.com/entertainment/nightlife-review-this-old-building-holds-a-very-modern-bar/article_e2749b6b-ec3a-59a8-b97e-9488885033d4.html by Omaha World Herald July 20, 2017
- https://omaha.com/entertainment/omahadines/plus/food-prowl-omahas-best-veggie-burger/article_e3dec5f8-ea66-5b82-ba05-486f88b96473.html by Omaha World Herald July 20, 2018
- <https://hoodline.com/2019/06/3-top-spots-for-fish-and-chips-in-omaha/> by Hoodline June 4, 2019

Evaluation

Wilson and Washburn's overall digital communication efforts are severely lacking.

While a functional company website and social media platforms exist, the lack of a clear target audience, branding guidelines, and a discernable call to action leave the establishment's marketing efforts up to chance. Restaurant and bar competition is high in the Omaha area, and without clear digital marketing strategies, Wilson and Washburn's brand and revenue will ultimately suffer. "Great content brands an organization as a trusted resource and calls people to action...and great content means that interested people return again and again" (Scott 34).

SWOT Analysis:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Relatable voice/perspective - Constantly changes menu and posts on Instagram - Good sense of community - Has enough space to entertain - Great aesthetics - Has working website and some social media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Social media only shows food - No events to bring in more people - Needs more foot traffic on social media - Website is outdated and somewhat hard to navigate - Not appealing to target audience - Nothing to set W&W apart from other bars - Barely notice updates event space because there is nothing to draw customers up there - No marketing efforts other than occasional social media posts
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Messaging: Develop clear audience, create branding guidelines, and have a clear call to action across marketing efforts. - Update social media: Post more historical facts about W&W, more photos inside of actual madams and historical Omaha, vary posts across platforms, post more frequently, utilize email marketing. - Promotions: Live music, Partner with local history tours, Partner with local breweries, Weekly events, Drawings for signups to bring in more guests. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lots of bar competition in downtown Omaha - Not enough funding for new marketing strategies - Competitors have more materials and events - Could fend off locals if gets too touristy

Upon reviewing the Wilson and Washburn digital content, there seems to be no clearly defined target audience. The social media posts range from food pictures, beer recommendations, and sporting event announcements to craft cocktails and historical pinup-type references. The varying content confuses what the organization is trying to be, and without a clear audience, Wilson and Washburn cannot remain relevant or with any significant returns.

The Wilson and Washburn digital assets have no defined branding. Without clear company branding, Wilson and Washburn's posts and mission are inconsistent and unrecognizable, leaving the online audience unable to discern what they are viewing online.

Further, Wilson and Washburn has no clear call to action, leaving no trail of next steps for their online audience to take. As a result, each post on social media falls flat, and with no email marketing to speak of, Wilson and Washburn relies solely on their social media presence to attract and retain customers.

Recommendations

Redefine Target Audience:

For Wilson and Washburn to successfully market to the correct audience and create appropriate content, a clearly defined target audience must be established. Below are two target personas to formulate digital content, creating more intended scope and encouraging engagement.

- **Target Persona #1** – Matt is a 41-year-old male. He works downtown and lives on the edge of the suburbs with his wife and two children. He often stops off at Wilson and Washburn after work with a few coworkers or to meet a local friend. He knows the bartenders, likes craft beers and a good brisket sandwich. He likes history but not enough to do any research. He enjoys catching the game on TV but doesn't want to fight through crowds of 20-somethings with pitchers to get a spot at the bar.
- **Target Persona # 2** – Kristen is 32 and lives to find excellent local spots. She researches before heading to a new town and scours social media to see where recent pop-up events are happening. She is newly married and relocated to the Omaha area a few months ago. Kristen likes an unpretentious bar with historical implications. If there is live music and a new cocktail she can post on Instagram, even better.

Create Branding Guidelines:

Wilson and Washburn has no defined branding across all digital marketing and social media platforms. As a result, the posted content shows no defining elements, consistency, or uniformity in any definite way. According to Adobe, having a cohesive branding effort causes four positive effects: consumers respond to consistency, the brand becomes more tangible, the company will stand out from the crowd, and the branding will boost loyalty (Adobe Spark).

Wilson and Washburn is currently active on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram but with no clear branding or definition between platforms. To stimulate excitement and engagement, Wilson and Washburn will now formulate individual postings for each platform, post regularly, and use specific branding guidelines to promote uniformity and consistency to increase followers and build a reputable social media presence. For example, Facebook will be used primarily to inform followers of events and promotions, and Instagram will highlight new menu items and show visuals of promotional events.

New Branding on Social Media:

New branding on social media will display moody images, the Wilson and Washburn signature gold and rich colors, and modern-saloon style typography.





Call to Action:

Wilson and Washburn currently displays no clear call to action, and with a limited online presence and almost no promotions, there is no real reason for customers to stop in. The new call to action will read “Become part of history at Wilson and Washburn” and feature as a button on several new promotions and events, including email marketing, Wednesdays at W&W, raffles, live music events, and brewery partnership happenings.