



Co-op Reflection Project

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Major: Sociology

Company: Ralph Interactive

Position: Production/Account Assistant

Dates: July 2019 - December 2019



RALPH

Ralph is a creative marketing agency, mainly working in the entertainment industry, that strive to build a brand personality for clients. Work range from being on set, producing videos, handling social channels, coming up with social marketing strategies, consulting, and many more!

1. Position and Organization

What was your position and organization you worked for co-op?

- There are 3 different *Ralph* offices - LA, NYC, and London. In each office, there is a Production department, Digital Development department, Design department, and the Social department. Each department work collaboratively to fulfill client requests, whether that is to handle brand/show social accounts, creative social strategies, execute campaigns, copywriting, etc
- I specifically worked in the NYC office. There are some projects that work across the offices, but the majority of my work were with the NYC office. The main clients of the office were Netflix, Amazon, Facebook, FX, and many more
- My position was under the Production Department. The team consisted of 6 other very experienced producers
- The production department functioned as project managers of every client/project that was happening in the office. This included client communication, time management, job distribution within the office, coming up with creative solutions, and organizing and executing shoots
- The role was a paid job and was in New York City. The NU Careers description gave me a good insight on the job role but I ended up expanding my role to a more cross-department role where I worked closey with multiple departments. More so I was able to understand the company culture from the NU careers description which was really helpful for me as I absolutely loved the environment at Ralph

THE PRODUCTION TEAM!



2. Day-to-Day

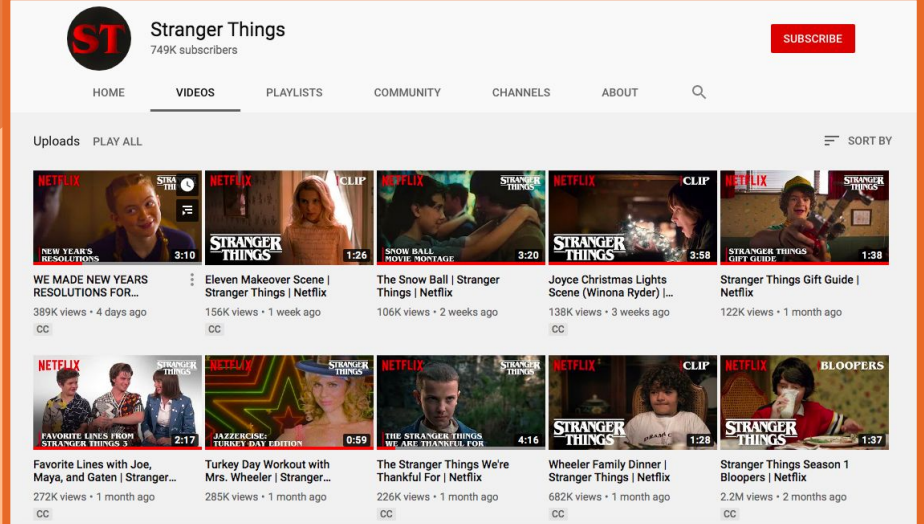
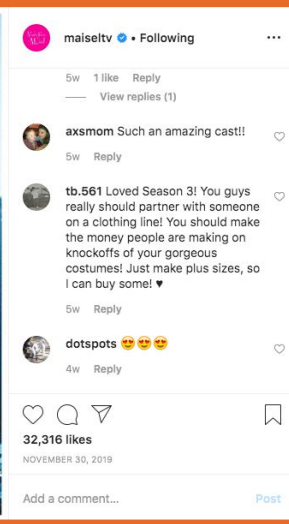
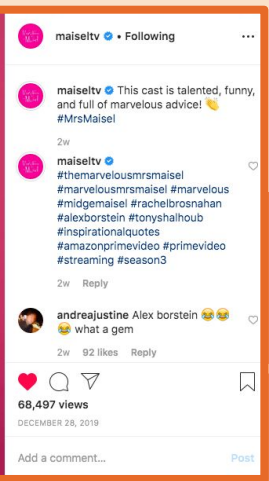
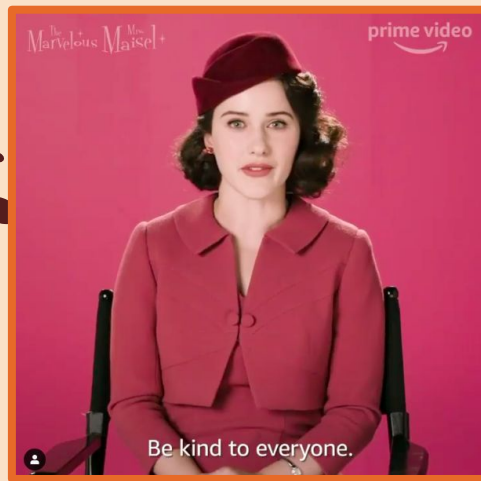
How did you spend the majority of your time in co-op? Doing what? With whom?

- Everyday looked different at Ralph! There are so many projects happening at once in the office which meant there were dozens of accounts to manage. I liked that I was able to adapt myself into the day instead of having a routine and it made everyday exciting
- I was definitely treated as an integral part of the team as I was given the opportunity to have my own project and clients. There were times where I felt like I was given jobs that I felt overqualified for, but that led to the expansion of my job roles

Some of my daily tasks included...(but not limited to!)

- **Managing Social Accounts:** One of the many responsibilities Ralph had as an agency was to manage social media accounts for shows and brands. The first half of my time there I was handling the Instagram and Twitter account for Aperol (Campari brand). The later half I was managing the Stranger Things YouTube channel, and the Wednesday Addams Instagram account. This involved engaging with the community by commenting on and liking posts, producing content, finding analytics for social engagement, and generally making sure the social account was getting the engagement the client would like
- **Administrative:** As part of my role at Ralph, I was also in charge of most administrative jobs in the office. This included managing office inventory, organizing office outings and lunches, answering phone calls, and greeting guests
- **Executing Campaigns:** After the social strategy Ralph creates, it is also the agency's job to execute the campaign. One major client that I got to work on was Amazon's *Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* Season 3. We created social content, both motion and static, for the show's social channels and increased social engagement as the season was launching. This came with constant client communication, weekly team meetings, relaying client feedback to the design team, and always coming up with creative solutions to elevate the social channels

SOME OF THE THINGS I GOT TO PRODUCE!



3. Learning Objectives

What did you hope to learn on this co-op?

- I hoped to familiarize myself with not only the industry, but also get the opportunity to expose myself to the the process that is taken in order for major projects in the industry to be executed, produced, and engaged in
- Learn how communication is done in the professional world - both orally and written
- I hoped to learn how to manage my time well in a professional setting and also work well under pressure
- I wanted to develop the skill to work in a team and come up with creative content as a group. I work better individually so through this co-op I wanted to make sure I felt more comfortable working in a group



Photo: Amazon Prime Video/Nicole Rivelli

4. Challenges

Discuss the most difficult or challenging activity that you engaged in during co-op.

- As part of the Production department, there were times where the team was in charge of organizing major events. I was lucky to be in the office when the agency took over the execution and marketing for *Rihanna's* New York Fashion Week show in September. This was a highly anticipated event even in the fashion and entertainment industry and *Ralph* was to make sure the marketing campaign as well as administrative tasks such as VIP invites were managed
- I was a part of the team that researched into some of the influencers and guests that was invited to this event. This was a part of the marketing plan where some of the top tier fashion influencers and professionals were invited to create even more anticipation. It was necessary for me to research into who would be able to benefit the marketing of this event and actually reach out to them to see if they would be interested in coming to the event
- After creating a solid list of guests that would benefit this event, it was also our role to book their hotels, flights, and cars. This was one of the most challenging thing I had to do, and something I did not imagine myself doing during my co-op. It was absolutely crucial to be organized and punctual while also fulfilling the demands given by each guests. Some wanted to be flown to different cities, some required +1 guests, some requested certain hotels, and so it was extremely difficult to make sure each of these requests were met
- I think it felt so much of a challenge for me because the guests were all A-class VIP guests that I could not disappoint. I was also communicating with these guests on behalf of *Amazon* and *Fenty* so it was a lot of pressure for me to make sure I was always being professional
- I made sure I stayed calm under pressure, and reminded myself to have a good sense of urgency at all times. I also got guidance from co-workers who have dealt with urgent tasks before which really helped me stay positive in such situations

5. Highlight

Please describe the most exciting, meaningful, or interesting job, task, activity, etc. that you did during your co-op. Why was it exciting, meaningful or interesting?

There were so many jobs I felt very proud of at *Ralph*, but one that really made me feel confident and really tested my skills was the execution of the *Marvelous Mrs. Maisel* campaign. This was another project with *Amazon* but this time was much more extensive and long term. My boss had given me this account as my last role at *Ralph* to really sum up my time there but also to use all of the skills I gained throughout my co-op. I was trained enough to take on this account, but was not prepared for how overwhelmingly exciting it all was! The campaign itself was divided in four different phases, each phase consisting of 20 - 50 different content we had to produce. Thus, everyday I was fully dedicated in executing each asset we had to send over to the client and it was absolutely crucial for me to be on top of everything. Some of the things I did was to meet with the designers to discuss each asset and go over creative visions, communicate with the client multiple times a day and meet with them every week to sync, research into other popular shows to see what the competition shows are doing in their marketing plans, deliver assets constantly to the client and relay feedback to the designers, deliver project files of every single asset we produced for the global clients to post on their platforms, and the list goes on! Regardless of how challenging this project was, I felt the most fulfillment and satisfaction being a part of the team. We produced some of the most eye-catching content for the show and it was really an honor to be working for the season launch of such a popular show. Even though it did get really stressful at times, I felt very confident about what I was doing and felt like I was trusted by my co-workers. This was all very meaningful to me and made my time at *Ralph* worth it.

D Deadline

'Marvelous Mrs. Maisel' Season 3 Audience More Than Doubles Season 2's – Nielsen

Streaming of The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel's third season more than doubled the level for Season 2, according to new figures released Tuesday ...

2 hours ago



W TheWrap

'The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel' Season 3 Was Watched by 3.2 Million Viewers Its First Week, Nielsen Says

Nielsen released its ratings for the third season of 'The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel' on Tuesday, revealing that an average of 3.2 million viewers ...

2 hours ago



6. Preparation

How was the preparation (resumes, etc) and interviewing process (before this co-op) for you?

One thing I got the opportunity to do in my role was to do first round interviews for the next co-op who was to going to be taking over my position. I was able to experience what it was like to be an employer and figure out some of the things in a student that an employer would find attractive. For students who are applying for their first co-ops, I would really recommend researching into the company well, and making sure you are very confident during your interview. Employers want to see students being excited about the interview but also have some strong and persuasive elements and confidence can really say a lot about you!

Resume



One of the insecurities I felt before applying to *Ralph* was my lack of experience in the media and entertainment industry. I felt like I was not qualified enough to work at such a new and exciting agency that dealt with one of the biggest companies in the industry. However, with the help of Lisa, I was able to build a resume, that may not have proven my professional experience in the field, but highlighted the wide range of job experience I had and the general passion I had for marketing. I was told by my peers that rather than focusing on the number of professional experiences I had, I should make sure my employers knew that I had a good foundation of skills that could be applied to any kind of job role.

Interview



I was very nervous about this interview as I did not know what to expect and some of the things I knew I may be asked seemed like an on-the-spot knowledge question about the media industry. It was hard for me to get a grasp on *Ralph* from their website and I felt like I did not do enough research on the company. However, after going through the first interview, I had a much better understanding of the company culture and felt like I could really fit into their environment. My entire co-op hunting process was a little longer than I thought it would be, but it was completely worth it!

7. Self-Reflection

How did your co-op experience affect you?



Self-Esteem

Although *Ralph* made sure I felt welcomed and at-home in the office, at the end of the day I was the 'intern' in the office. At times it really mentally affected me as I was never really put in a situation where I felt less than everybody else in the room. I definitely feel like this changed my behaviors as a student, I look at myself differently after going through some lows, but also started to feel much more confident about myself as I was able to overcome these negative periods.



Criticism

There were multiple occasions where my manager or my coworkers gave me feedback on how I was doing. At first I found it hard to take in criticism but eventually I started to process every feedback I received differently. I really feel like I have become a different person in the professional world, I am able to craft emails, share ideas, and work better in teams. From this co-op I think I have a more optimistic perspective on criticism and have been able to deal with feedback much better to benefit my own growth.



Media

I see any form of digital campaign differently now. Before, it was hard to think what I was seeing online was created by people. Now that I know the process behind the production of everything I see, I consume it differently and I digest it with a more critical approach. There are a lot of campaigns that are not socially aware or are delivering messages that can be very problematic. Knowing that they are created by other people scares me to an extent but it was really eye-opening to be in pitch meetings and brainstorming as it made me realize that I had to make sure I consumed media with an open eye.

8. Next Steps

Did this co-op help you decide what you want to do next?

Moving to New York City and experiencing the city life was one of the best decisions I made. It was such a good environment to be in and it motivated me to do better and achieve more. It felt like there were so many opportunities there and I would like to move back again to be in the hub of the digital industry. This co-op opened so many doors for me; I now know that digital marketing is something I enjoy and am good at, I do well in a smaller company or agency, and the company culture is really important for me. I would like to continue exploring the digital marketing world but in a different industry for my next co-op and my future career. I was able to learn that I find this job really interesting and I want to continue building my career in the field.



Academic Reflection: Inequality

Stigma, social status, and social class that are embedded in society are often produced/reinforced through the media. Whether this is through news reports, movies, or TV shows, the media can be utilized in both extremely positive and negative ways. Through my *Race and Pop Culture* class I took right before going to co-op I was able to develop a more analytical perspective when consuming any form of media. I truly believe that pop culture and the media are very powerful in society, and being a part of the production of media content during my co-op really got me thinking about the information consumers are forced into, and some of the social inequalities that consumers are unwillingly accepting/consuming.

I also do believe that media have been changing, and the representation of minorities on any form of media have increased. At *Ralph* I got to watch people work on the show *The Patriot Act* by Hasan Minhaj which was a very popular Netflix show that was hosted by a minority and discussed a lot the social issues that are present in modern society. It was very encouraging for me to see an Asian male hosting his own show and I saw Netflix as a more socially aware company. However, it was quite disappointing to see the production team from Netflix to be predominantly caucasian males, and seeing them bring up issues such as racial inequalities in a very insensitive manner. As a minority myself, I felt very uncomfortable and disappointed. It was evident that a lot of the institutions are still very white and even though a company may seem socially aware, their work-space racial diversity does not say so. The media industry is run by a certain social class and it made me questions some of the shows that encourage diversity as something large companies are profiting from.

Being exposed to how media is produced, and what kind of people are capitalizing over them, got me thinking about some of the things I see on TV. Although it was uncomfortable and disappointing, it did encourage me to stand up for myself and my own community in such situations and bring up ideas that could lead to these shows delivering a more socially aware message. Knowing that there are inequalities within big corporations, it almost forced me to feel responsible and discuss racial inequalities in these meetings to better create media content that actually represent the minority communities, and avoid institutional racism in the media industry.