

INTERSHIP REPORT

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Medellín

2022

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Glossary

Term	Definition
Literacy+ Program	GLOT's main program, which aims to eradicate illiteracy in children aged 5 to 15 in low-income communities in Colombia by teaching them how to read and write in Spanish
ON-GLOT	GLOT program that aimed to renew infrastructure in low-income communities by requesting international cooperation funds.
GLOT Mentoring	GLOT program that offers English lessons to individuals or organizations that desired a tailored academic model for their specific needs.
Sustainable Development Goals	Also known as SDG's or Global Goals, these are a collection of 17 goals designed by the United Nations in 2015 to "achieve a better and more sustainable future for all"
Impact Hub Medellín	An Impact Hub is a communal, entrepreneurial, coworking space for entrepreneurs and non-profit organizations looking to create a positive impact
U.S. 503c1 Public Charity	A non-profit organization exempted from federal tax payment
SEO strategy	Search Engine Optimization aims to improve a website's visibility through the analysis of the target audience's search intention

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic represented a great challenge for different non-profit organizations that carried out their activities in person. Previous reports show that several organizations had to reduce the amount of human talent that carried out the activities, as well as the budget used. Most of the reports and articles created in this situation focused mainly on how to recover funds during the pandemic. However, the human component is just as important to the proper functioning of a non-profit organization. This internship focused on making an engagement strategy for volunteers and partners of a non-profit organization through different digital marketing strategies and the creation of an Ambassador Program. As a result, it was possible to maintain an active volunteer engagement during the last months of 2021, as well as to have an engagement through e-mail marketing higher than the average expected for non-profit organizations.

Keywords: non-profit organization, COVID-19 pandemic, volunteer engagement, human talent

La pandemia del COVID-19 representó un gran reto para diferentes organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro que realizaban sus actividades de manera presencial. Reportes previos demuestran que varias organizaciones debieron reducir la cantidad de talento humano que realizaba las actividades, así como el presupuesto utilizado. La mayoría de reportes y artículos creados ante esta situación se enfocaban principalmente en cómo recuperar fondos durante la pandemia. Sin embargo, el componente humano es igual de importante para el funcionamiento correcto de una organización sin ánimo de lucro. Esta pasantía se concentró en realizar una estrategia de engagement para los voluntarios y aliados de una organización sin ánimo de lucro a través de diferentes estrategias de marketing digital y la creación de un programa de embajadores. Como resultado, se logró mantener la interacción de los voluntarios activa durante los últimos meses del año 2021, así como tener un mayor engagement por medio de e-mail marketing mayor que el promedio esperado para las organizaciones sin ánimo de lucro.

Palabras clave: organización sin ánimo de lucro, pandemia COVID-19, voluntarios

Introduction

The GLOT Foundation is a non-profit organization that seeks to eradicate illiteracy in Colombia and create a platform for cultural and language exchange. For five months, the internship focused on establishing an Ambassador Program to increase the current partners' engagement with GLOT, attract new volunteers, and improve internal volunteer participation.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, GLOT was forced to cease its in-person activities, which decreased volunteer participation. In response to this, the organization carried out consultancies with Fundación SURA to improve the organization's marketing strategy and thus improve internal volunteer participation and create the necessary resources to execute the GLOT Ambassador Program. The results obtained after these five months were positive, and the organization has decided to continue executing this program under the guidelines created by the intern.

Chapter 1: The Organization

Company history

Diana Milena Suárez, Lina Restrepo, and other partners founded GLOT in 2018 as a social entrepreneurship initiative focused on bringing education to low-income communities in Medellín through the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). After its founding, they started with small projects such as ON-GLOT, GLOT Mentoring, and Literacy+, obtaining several international cooperation fundings for their cause.

Currently, the GLOT Foundation is part of the Impact Hub Medellín community. Its Literacy+ project has established itself as a Consolidated Innovation in Latin America, a recognition granted by the Laboratory for Research and Innovation in Education for Latin America and the Caribbean. Moreover, the organization established itself in the United States of America as a 503c1 Public Charity.

Description of the organization

Legal constitution

Fundación GLOT is a non-profit organization whose resources obtained through donations, or international cooperation funds are destined for the projects carried out and the payment of administrative services.

Mission

Today's world has opened doors for people to learn about new cultures and languages. For this reason, many individuals choose to travel and learn a new language in a foreign country.

Unfortunately, not all individuals have the opportunity to learn other languages, either inside or outside of their country of residence. According to Buitrago (2017), 11.8% of rural schools performed lower on the 2013 Saber 11 tests in the area of English, compared to only 3.4% of urban institutions.

In response to this situation, GLOT's mission is to reduce this educational gap. In the words of its founder, Diana Suárez, GLOT is “a cultural transfer network that seeks to provide educational opportunities for the power of languages to reach everyone.” (2018)

Vision

As a network of cultural transfer and social impact, by 2023, we seek to connect different actors and reduce language-related barriers by increasing educational opportunities for:

- Equal access to basic skills (reading and writing in Spanish and mathematics) to 1500 children from low-income communities in Colombia.
- Equal access to 21st-century skills, including foreign language competencies, for 500 men and women in Colombia.

Location

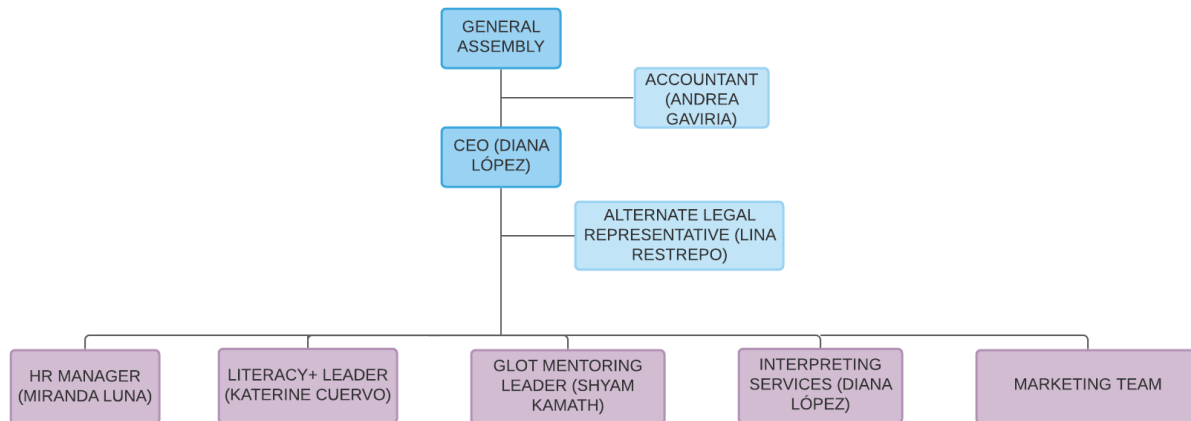
GLOT has its headquarters in Medellín, Colombia, where volunteers gather to develop their activities in communities like Vallejuelos. Likewise, the Literacy+ Program also has in-site activities in three villages near Medellín.

In 2021, GLOT acquired its title as an international organization. It is registered in the U.S.A as a 503c1 Public Charity. One of the organization's partners is in charge of compiling the necessary documentation to later make it possible for GLOT to develop in-site and fundraising activities in the United States.

Organizational structure

Figure 1.

GLOT Inc. Organizational Structure



The current organizational structure of GLOT makes communication between all leaders easy, accessible, and equal. This structure is divided into:

1. General Assembly

GLOT has a general assembly made up of partners, the CEO, and the alternate legal representative. This group makes decisions about the organization's future and activities, and it is legally accountable to the Medellín Chamber of Commerce.

2. Accountant

The fiscal auditor is in charge of the organization's accounting and finances, ensuring that everything is under control and that the guidelines presented in GLOT's Certificate of Existence and Legal Representation are followed.

3. CEO

Diana Lopez is the legal representative of the organization and oversees all areas. Because this is a small NGO, the CEO is also in charge of other areas such as GLOT's interpretation services.

4. HR Manager

The human resources manager is in charge of recruiting volunteers, keeping records of new hires, volunteers, and interns, and carrying out the different functions of human talent management: training volunteers, supervising their volunteer action, keeping records, and, in general, keeping in touch with GLOT's collaborators.

5. Literacy+ Leader

The Literacy+ leader is a graduate in Early Childhood Education who is in charge of program planning together with the CEO. She creates the work plan and acts as a mentor for volunteers entering the program. In addition, she conducts performance analysis to make the necessary changes to the program.

6. GLOT Mentoring Leader

The GLOT Mentoring leader is in charge of planning the program and offering it to potential clients. He works with the CEO to create an offer that allows different companies and individuals to access the GLOT learning program.

7. Interpreting Services

The CEO leads interpreting services. This service is offered to companies that require it for their events. A small team of interpreters is available to attend different events, and the profits are destined for GLOT's programs.

8. Marketing Team

Finally, the marketing team is composed of the CEO and three graphic designers who are in charge of creating the company's branding, graphic pieces for social networks, and product design for GLOT.

Chapter 2: The Internship

Problem identification

In 2019 and early 2020, GLOT was carrying out its on-site program Literacy+, which focused on teaching reading and writing skills to children between 5 and 15 years old in the community of Vallejuelos, Medellín. The program had 20 volunteers who visited the site every Saturday for 4 hours.

GLOT also had 48 international volunteers between 2019 and 2020, most of them from countries such as the United States, Great Britain, and Canada. These volunteers supported Literacy+ activities in Vallejuelos, if they spoke Spanish, or gave English classes for low-income communities.

Additionally, GLOT successfully carried out three cultural exchanges between 2019 and early 2020. The largest was the Medallo Language Camp, held together with the Mayor's Office of Medellín for three days. This event brought together about 70 participants from Colombia and other countries and attracted new volunteers to the organization.

Due to the pandemic caused by COVID-19, GLOT was forced to pause its on-site volunteer activities. Moreover, the closing of borders and the cancellation of international flights kept the organization away from international volunteers interested in volunteering in Colombia. Although some decided to stay with GLOT through virtual meetings, most of them decided not to participate, as they wished to carry out in-site activities in the country.

The lack of volunteers in the organization, especially those who can support social media management and communications activities, has made it difficult for GLOT to continue its activities effectively. This greatly impacts the reach of the organization, as the main reason it thrives is thanks to the time and impact that volunteers donate to the activities of the different programs it has.

Internship objective

To increase volunteer participation in GLOT through the implementation of the GLOT Ambassador program.

Specific Objectives

- To generate dialogue among the organization's partners to raise awareness about literacy and languages as a means of social transformation.
- To establish the GLOT Ambassador program's SOP and general structure.
- To enhance volunteers' engagement with the organization through social media and internal communications methods.

Role and duties of the intern

The intern will be developing activities as Volunteer Manager and Communications

As part of the GLOT Ambassador program:

- Establish the GLOT Ambassador program and its guidelines
- Recruit ambassadors for the GLOT Ambassador program
- Facilitate opportunities for cultural and language exchanges
- Evaluate the scope of the GLOT Ambassador program

Within the framework of communications:

- Create a monthly newsletter to attract potential volunteers and increase the engagement of existing partners
- Create a blog to position GLOT with SEO strategy
- Improve GLOT's internal communication channels

Internship timeline

The timeline of activities was defined between the CEO and the intern. These activities were verified each month to make corrections, redefine objectives, and make sure that the deadlines proposed were achievable and realistic.

Revisions were made each week, except for special dates like holidays. However, all the documents were shared with the CEO to make sure they had access to all the modifications made during the dates when no meetings were held.

By the end of September

- Established the mission, vision, objectives, and values of the GLOT Ambassador Program
- Established the roles, responsibilities, and recruitment criteria of the ambassadors
- Created an event playbook for the GLOT Ambassador Program
- Publication of needed volunteer positions.

By the end of October

- Created GLOT'S newsletter and articles guidelines
- Issued one (1) newsletter to interested partners
- Established the guidelines for GLOT's blog
- Hosted one (1) event within the GLOT Ambassador Program Framework

By the end of November

- GLOT's social media plan is established
- Issued one (1) newsletter to interested partners
- Hosted one (1) event within the GLOT Ambassador Program Framework

By the end of December

- Host one (1) celebration event to connect the GLOT team
- Issued one (1) newsletter to interested partners

By the end of January

- Established the requirements to create GLOT's blog
- Issued one (1) newsletter to interested partners

By the end of February

- Analyzed the scope of the internal communication channels and their efficacy
- Analyzed the current KPIs of the GLOT Ambassador program's KPIs

- Established the marketing strategy to recruit new volunteers and ambassadors

Chapter 3: Contributions to the Organization

Achievements

The objectives established for this internship were:

1. To generate dialogue among the organization's partners to raise awareness about literacy and languages as a means of social transformation.
2. To establish the GLOT Ambassador program's SOP and general structure.
3. To enhance volunteers' engagement with the organization through social media and internal communications methods.

Objective 1

For the first objective, the CEO and the intern defined the following KPIs to measure the participation of partners in intercultural dialogues and events. The numbers in bold represent the results obtained throughout the internship.

- Number of newsletters created and sent: **4**
- Number of ambassadors: **23**
- Ambassador's nationality: **Colombian, British, American**
- Number of involved languages: **Two (2) - English and Spanish**
- % of women participation: **70,8%**

Objective 2

The intern created the following resources for the GLOT Ambassador Program:

- GLOT Ambassador Program Mission, Vision, Goals, and Objectives
- Ambassador Profile Descriptions
- Ambassador Program SOP
- GLOT Ambassador Event Playbook

All these resources are found in a shared folder in GLOT's corporate Google Drive.

Objective 3

Thanks to the advice of marketing experts from the Fundación SURA, clear and achievable objectives were established so that the GLOT Foundation could project its actions to the public and enhance its marketing strategy.

In terms of the effectiveness of internal communication and engagement for active partners, a monthly newsletter was produced that addressed topics such as culture, active activities, updates on what GLOT had done in the previous month, and invitations to participate in volunteer roles and events. The open rate of this campaign is shown in the figure below.

Figure 2.

GLOT Newsletter open rate divided by language group

<input type="checkbox"/> GLOT Español Group created on 2021-10-12 10:27:10	11 subscribers	61.76% open rate	14.71% click rate
<input type="checkbox"/> GLOT English Group created on 2021-10-05 12:05:48	3 subscribers	100.00% open rate	41.67% click rate

The image shows the open rate (percentage of opened emails) and click rate (percentage of opened links) per group. The GLOT Foundation issues its newsletter to two different groups according to the language used by its recipients.

According to Campaign Monitor, the average email open rate for email marketing in the nonprofit area is 26.6%. This shows that the GLOT Foundation's newsletter campaigns were successful. It is worth noting that there were no unsubscribes, and no mail was sent as spam.

Limitations

During the internship, clear objectives were established as to what the GLOT ambassador program was intended to achieve and what tasks were to be performed to accomplish them. However, when it came to executing those activities, several challenges were encountered that are common for most small non-profit organizations. These challenges include:

1. Lack of funding for current programs,
2. lack of human resources with paid and permanent positions,
3. lack of marketing expertise.

Thanks to these findings, it is possible to identify that the success of certain GLOT Foundation programs depends largely on the financial and human resources and intellectual capital available. In the case of the GLOT Ambassador Program, there was a lack of both technical and financial resources since the best way to make the program work was through a marketing strategy that, for the most part, must be carried out by a paid expert.

Conclusions

This internship demonstrated that for a small non-profit organization to achieve its objectives effectively, it requires financial and human resources as well as intellectual capital. For that reason, it is important to receive the right guidance from external entities and individuals, so that non-profits can improve and thrive through the learning of new intellectual resources and acquiring funds.

By receiving marketing advice for the organization, an effective email campaign was established, and a year-end event brought GLOT's partners together to discuss the future of the organization, increasing their involvement in GLOT as an NGO.

It was also possible to establish clear guidelines that will make it possible for the organization to keep running the GLOT Ambassador program. Thanks to the resources created through this internship, the foundation has decided to continue developing this program under strict guidelines that are necessary for the foundation's reach to be broader and more successful.

Recommendations

After analyzing the achievements of this internship, the following recommendations are made for GLOT to keep growing and having successful results in the areas that were intervened by the intern:

- Follow and update the GLOT Ambassador program SOP and guidelines to ensure a successful outcome from this project.
- Continue to send newsletters and broaden the recipients' list to external partners who may be interested in collaborating with GLOT in the future.
- Keep track of the marketing strategy that was created along with Fundación SURA and update it in case there are adjustments to make.

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