Mid-Quarter Self-Evaluation: Kai Eldridge

I spent the first 3 years of my college career studying social justice related fields. Although I love the subject and am passionate about making the world a better place, the work was no longer inspiring me. I studied food justice the past year, so when I felt a pull to try something in the world of social media, it made perfect sense to do so in the restaurant business. I accepted a position as social media manager intern for Elliott Bay Brewing Company having had minimal experience, but excited to try something new. My hope was that I would find inspiration in a new field that may help direct future career endeavors.

The past 4 weeks have been a fantastic experience. I am so happy to be immersed in the brewery world and social media world in a position where I am able to express myself creatively, be self-directed, and learn along the way. I love looking at how my posts have evolved over the past weeks, as I learn and grow. It’s also fun when I am in conversation with friends and realize how much beer and restaurant knowledge I have picked up just from immersion. Most of my work is independent. The only time I talk to employees or customers is when I am taking photos, doing interviews, or checking in with my supervisors. It doesn’t feel like I am actively learning a ton about beer, but when I get into a conversation about how hops are used during the season and which beers are easier to brew, I realize that I’ve taken in a lot of information.

One of my learning objectives involved researching what content and frequency of posts similar businesses were successful in doing, in order to develop a strategy to implement based on best practices. I have done this through trial and error, as well as by reading up on the topic through sites such as Forbes and social media marketing blogs like *Sprout Social*. Research has played a large role in the development of content creation and my own understanding of the field.

My next learning objective was to create fresh, new, interested content for Elliott Bay Brewing Company’s social media outlets. In the past 4 weeks I have increased not only the consistency, but also the quality of content posted by EBBC. I am proud of the photos I take and the content I am sharing, including event promotion, food specials, and employee spotlights.

Finally, I have been tracking data through *Social Report* to better understand what content is most successful with Elliott Bay Brewing Company’s audience. I have been compiling this data weekly, but have not yet begun to deeply analyze it. I hope to do so in the next couple of weeks.

I mentioned in my contract that I would record participation and interaction metrics to facilitate Elliott Bay’s participation in the *Brewers Association* sustainability tool, but after speaking with the managers at EBBC, this does not seem to be on the spectrum of work they would like me to pursue.

I do not have a typical day at work. Some days I work from home, while others I work for hours at 1 or 2 of the four brewery locations. My 30 hours a week consists of researching best practices, taking and editing photos, chatting with employees to learn more about the company, writing employee spotlights, and posting content. Being a social media manager is a full-time job, and I could easily fill 40+ hours a week with work, so I have to constantly tell myself to put my phone down and worry about my projects the following day or week. Because the job is so time consuming, I plan to take and edit a whole stock of photos to leave with the company so that they have content to post when I am gone, because no one will be in the position.

As I’ve mentioned in my blog posts, the past 4 weeks have been a rollercoaster of emotions. I love the independence that comes with my position, but I have struggled a bit with not having a mentor to teach me what is right and wrong. However, I am at a point now where I am especially grateful for an internship that offers me complete creative control and that has taught me to go with the flow and be flexible. I have learned that my ideal career will allow me to be independent, but also have a bit more structure.