

Title: From DC to Cairo, Not Just A Tourist Attraction

Team: Katie Applebaum, Hanan Khayal, Lauren Zeigler



The Challenge

Before we departed for the United States and Egypt, many of our family and friends questioned our intention to visit the other country. Safety and concerns about inclusivity were major topics of conversation. We quickly realized that neither the average Egyptian nor American citizen have an accurate image of what the other country is like. Instead of understanding realities on the ground, they get a biased portrayal from the media. This disconnect helps to ensure that misperceptions and assumptions remain the dominant narrative.

We soon realized, that our videos and photos were a pleasant surprise for the same people who questioned our trip. The Americans were surprised by the beauty of Egypt, while Egyptians realized there is more to Washington, DC than politics. It was from this realization— that visual content has the power to dispel myths and challenge assumptions— that *From DC to Cairo* was born.

Project Overview

To counter the status quo, this project offers a view into the everyday life among average individuals living in Cairo and Washington DC. *From DC to Cairo* will be an Instagram account offering viewers a glimpse into the food, shopping, festivities, sights, and most importantly, the people of Cairo and Washington. We will capture photos around the cities we live in and tell the story behind that photo. We will caption all photos in both English and Arabic, so we can gain a following from both countries and ensure it is accessible to a wider audience.

The Goal

The goal of this Instagram account is to gain a following from both the United States and Egypt, and ultimately scale up to a global reach. We want to break the stereotypes and false perceptions people have when they imagine Cairo and Washington, and more broadly when they imagine individual Egyptians and Americans.

Population Served

Our targeted population is Americans and Egyptians. Since it is an Instagram account, our population is likely to be millennials and younger. We will first engage our own networks on these accounts to generate a strong following base, and then via word of mouth spread virtually to our friends' contacts. We will initially target account holders who have expressed interest in

travel, international affairs, and other related topics. Through specially curated content, we can reach a wider audience and expand the conversation beyond our own networks.

Project Milestones

Phase 1: Implementation and Success Research (1-2 months)

Research successful Instagram marketing. We want to learn how social media influencers gain followers, have an impact, and set themselves apart from other Instagram accounts.

Phase 2: Content Development (2-3 months)

Take a range of photos and gather content, stories, and experiences. Prior to launching the Instagram page, we want to have at least 15 photos ready to post so there is a steady stream of content.

Phase 3: Launch and Progression (5-6 months)

Launch the Instagram account and continuously post photos and videos. As our Instagram following grows, we will ask followers to submit their own photos and stories for posting. All photos and videos will be reviewed for content and operate under the principles of Do No Harm.

Phase 4: Reflection

The project team will reflect on what content was most effective in stirring conversations and received the most engagements (measured by likes and comments). We will also determine if it is worthwhile (and possible) to curate content outside of Cairo and Washington, DC. During this reflection, we will also develop a content calendar to ensure that our account remains vibrant and active.

Expected Outcomes

- People who engage with the Instagram content get a firsthand look at the daily realities of life in Cairo and Washington, DC.
- Viewers will have the chance to comment and ask questions, jumpstarting a dialogue. In addition, other individuals will be empowered to curate their own content and submit to our account for posting.
- Users will have a better understanding of daily life in each country and counter dominant misperceptions that negatively affect portrayals of the other country.

Furthering the Foundation's Mission

One of the main objectives of the Foundation is to break the barriers and misperceptions between Egyptians and Americans. This Instagram account will further that mission to correct misperceptions and introduce realities on the ground in Egypt and the United States to a broader audience.