

AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION

HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY POST TO A NONPROFIT'S SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

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AN OVERVIEW

For those looking to boost social media in a nonprofit, this article will tell you the basics of how to create a social media campaign for your organization. In a technology-driven world, social media has become a significant part of the advertising process for any company. Social media is a beneficial way for an organization to expand their brand to a target audience in addition to the standard digital or printed media that a company creates. Social media is important for every organization, but this article will focus on how to effectively post to nonprofit's social media accounts specifically Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. We will dive into the background of why social media is helpful in marketing, continuing to the steps in creating a social media campaign, and how to push the content to potential consumers.

BENEFITS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

When starting to create social media accounts for a nonprofit it is helpful to provide a uniformed brand across all accounts that align with the mission of the organization (Crossland, 2018). Sharing the same message across all social media accounts allows a nonprofit to strengthen their brand as their target audience will understand the mission no matter what account they check (Gardiner, 2017). Additionally, social media is another way to push the nonprofit's website and events to the target audience. Each social media account is beneficial for different purposes and it is important to understand what your need is for social media to determine which platform to use. Facebook is great for pushing the nonprofit's website to people and telling a story (Gardiner, 2017; Haider, 2018). One can tell a story on Facebook by creating photo albums for each event or about the organization to better share what type of events or the mission of the nonprofit (Haider, 2018). Using pictures especially of the target audience will push people to want to actively follow the social media accounts to see if pictures of them have been

KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Create a social media calendar
2. Think of the copy for the content
3. Choose your picture and platform
4. Post then track engagement

posted. This is a great way to encourage the target audience to tag and share the post with their friends (Gardiner, 2017). Continuing, Twitter allows people to feel connected to the nonprofit as the platform enables the organization to have more of a voice and spread a deeper message to the audience (Haider, 2018). Instagram is perfect for short videos or a couple of pictures to tell the story of the event, and to do a quick advertising for a specific update within the nonprofit (Gardiner, 2017). Consumers engage with some content more than others and it takes a few tries to understand which content your target audience connects with the most.

CREATING A SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGN

Since we have learned a little background on social media, now it is time to learn how to create a social media campaign for a nonprofit. Before one can create a social media campaign they have to understand all aspects of the nonprofit including the mission, values, the history of the organization, and who it benefits. Knowing these facts are extremely important because your content is driven from this and without understanding the organization than there will be a disconnect between the organization and the message the nonprofit is trying to push. Continuing, as a nonprofit, you have to understand who your target audience is because it helps you know how to cater the content to the consumer (Gardiner, 2017). For a nonprofit, the specific aspect of your target audience to consider are the donors. With this, you should examine socioeconomic status and gender to help focus your content and messaging to reach the audience. Understanding the consumer will help flush out what social media platforms they use and what they look for in a nonprofit (Gardiner, 2017).

After learning the mission of the nonprofit and the target audience, start to create the goals you want your social media accounts to have. For Example, having more people like and follow the nonprofit, encourages people to donate money and come to the events, or come up with fun ideas to post (Maynard, 2018). Another goal that seems really simple but can be hard to keep is trying to post daily on each social media platform your nonprofit utilizes (Maynard, 2018). Posting daily allows the target audience to know any updates the nonprofit has and it keeps the organization's name in the back of their mind as they see several posts. Continuing, come up with a list of the number of posts needed each week and what platform they will be posted on (Maynard, 2018). This helps to understand the specific content that needs to be posted.

Next, create a social media strategy which will involve several steps. First, create a social media monthly calendar that helps you plan all the content you will post and when (Gardiner, 2017). In this calendar be as detailed as you want because it will be the most beneficial for you. The calendar can include what type of post you are posting, on what platform and what time. This will help you keep track of whether you have posted for the day and how the content will be pushed to the audience. This calendar does not have to be permanent because content you planned for a month in advance might not be relevant for posting at the current moment. Use the calendar more as a guide and understand content can and will change from your initial plan. Once the number of posts are determined and the calendar is made start thinking about the photos and copy for the posts (Maynard, 2018). You want to choose the best photo that tells a story that the organization is trying to get across. For example, the nonprofit could do a post on their beneficiaries and how they are being helped by the nonprofit's money. For this post, the organization could choose a picture of the beneficiaries holding a check to allow the audience to see how the money they are giving to

the nonprofit is helping others. Thinking of the copy for each post can be difficult because you want something that is short, catchy and allows the viewer to understand what is going on in the picture if it is on Instagram, Facebook or Twitter. When considering the copy look at who the voice is of each post such as is the post from the whole company or one particular employee. Determining the voice and keeping it consistent helps to build a strong brand because it enables there to be cohesive communication across all platforms (Gardiner, 2017). Additionally, when thinking of the copy look back to your target audience and consider what they look for in content. For example, if your audience is sixty-five year olds you might not want to use a lot of slang that younger people are more aware of in your copy because it will not resonate well with your audience. The same copy potentially might not work across all platforms due to word count or different stories the nonprofit is trying to tell.

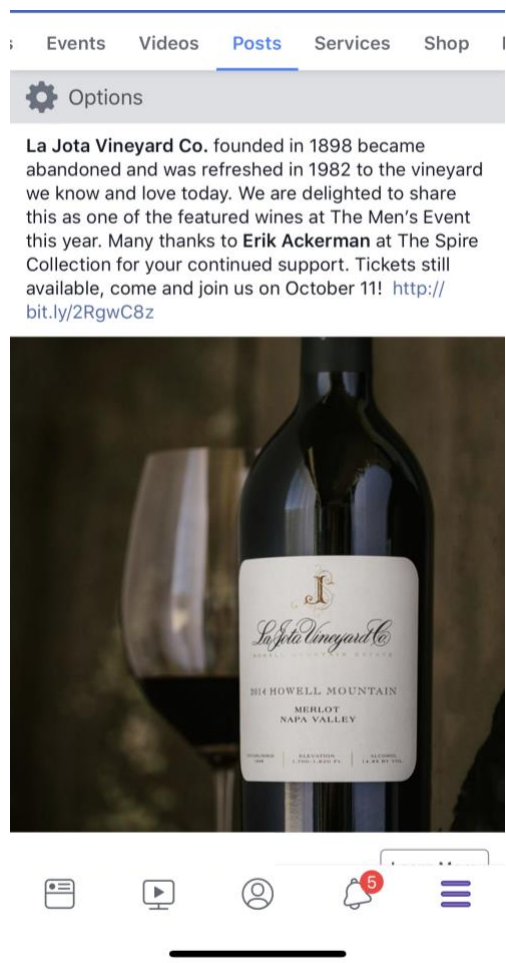


Figure 1: This is an example of Facebook copy used to promote an event.



Figure 2: This is an example of a post event content tweet that is used as a reminder to thank attendees for their support to the nonprofit and hashtags used to push the event.

Additionally, as you are thinking about your audience consider if they would respond well to hashtags. Hashtags can be a great option to add to your post because they enable people to search hashtags even if they are not following your organization and stumble upon your content. See figure 2 for examples. This is one way you can reach new audiences. Also adding a call to action to the post encourages the audience to engage with the content (Maynard, 2018). A call to action can consist of anything including going on our website to buy tickets for an event.

Once the copy and photo are finalized depending on the structure of your nonprofit the post can go through an approval process. If you are the boss and do not report to anyone else, you can post the content whenever you feel is necessary. On the other hand, if you have a supervisor, often your boss will want to see the final post before it is published (Maynard, 2018). In this case, there can be changes to the copy, photo or content altogether. Once the post is approved you can post it and start tracking the engagement. Engagement of posts includes likes, shares, views or any interaction the consumer has with the organization's content (Maynard, 2018).

TRACKING THE SUCCESS OF SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

After content has been posted it is important to track the success of the post. This can be done through different methods such as Facebook which tracks the amount of engagement you have received (Maynard, 2018). Additionally, you can use Google analytics to track the success of your post (Maynard, 2018). After the post has been up for at least a couple of days and you are not satisfied with the success of the post you can boost it. Boosting a post means you are expanding the reach to more potential target audiences by paying money to the platform to push the organizations content (Brandi, 2018). The reason why one boosts a post may be to combat the algorithms used by social media platforms that prevent some viewership by followers (Gardiner, 2017). You can boost posts on Instagram by creating ads to better reach your target audience (Lua, 2018). See figure 3 for an example. Additionally, you can boost your Facebook posts in several ways such as a carousel ad, or paying money to promote the post (Maynard, 2018). Only about 10% of Facebook followers see the content you are posting (Brandi, 2018).

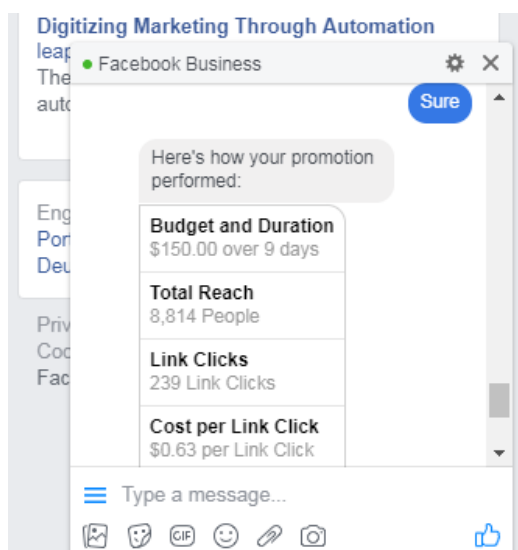


Figure 3: This picture shows the type of statistics Facebook gives you after an organization boosts a post.

By boosting the post, the nonprofit is able to set an age, demographic, location, and people who liked similar pages in order to ensure more people see your content (Maynard, 2018). A carousel ad is where you create a three to four picture ad of something the organization is trying to promote like an event and expand the audience to people who have liked similar pages (Maynard, 2018). This allows people to have

the potential to see the post even if they are not following the nonprofits page. If you are unsure which ad will perform better, on Facebook an organization can conduct a split test which runs two ads at the same time for a short period and tracks which ad performs better (Maynard, 2018). From there you can pick which ad the organization should pay more money to boost (Maynard, 2018). Additionally, on Facebook, if you are promoting an event it is smart to make an event page and have the post on the nonprofits business page link to the event page to allow the audience to learn more about the event (Maynard, 2018). You can also promote your tweets by clicking promote tweet in your activity of the tweet and selecting your audience (Twitter, N/A). Again even boosting your tweet helps spread the content to a wider consumer base. Finally, when wanting to boost your Instagram content you can go to your profile, click engagement and set for how many days the content should be pushed to the consumer (Lua, 2018). Facebook is the easiest platform to boost your posts. Another way to easily gain engagement on the nonprofits content is to post at certain times of the day and several days a week. For Facebook, it is smart to post either at 9 am or 2 pm to 3 pm because that is when people are on that platform the most (Gardiner, 2017). The best time to post on Instagram is 10 am or 2 pm to 3 pm (Maynard, 2018). Users often check social media in the morning and the afternoon during work (Maynard, 2018). Finally, a good time to post on Twitter is at 12 pm and from 5 pm to 6 pm (Gardiner, 2017).

IN SUMMARY

Some content will work better than others for your nonprofit's posts. It is important to play with different content to see what works best. Create a social media strategy that works for your nonprofit and always try to keep your consumer in mind. Remember to keep the nonprofit's brand and voice apparent to create uniform content across all platforms. Lastly, the more you start to post to the nonprofit's social media accounts you will better understand how to create content that your consumer wants to see.

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