



SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

How to reach your audience and get them involved

INTRODUCTION

- / “Oh hey, can I ask you some interesting questions our audience will relate to, and post it on our social media?”
- / “This is a great group shot that shows the human connection in our work, let’s show this off on our Facebook channel!”
- / “Hmmm... our NGO has a lot to say about that new report that came out, I’m going to write about this on Twitter and also share it on Facebook so our followers can learn more about what we do.”

Welcome to the social media guide that will show you how to make your social media content more effective! This guide goes beyond posting a new picture and quote. It is about how to make sure your great content gets in front of the right people and provides the tips and tricks to grow your audience. Please use this guide as your introduction to the technical aspects of social media. You will see a change in how people respond to your social media content if you follow this advice.

WAIT WHAT?!

Some interesting facts on social media. Did you know that:

- / 92% of NGOs around the world have a Facebook Page,
- / 72% have Twitter and 39% have Instagram
- / 74% of NGOs agree that Facebook is effective for their communications and fundraising strategy and almost everyone agrees that social media is important if your organisation needs volunteers.

*Taken from the 2018 Global NGO Technology Report <http://techreport.ngo>

Quality over quantity

SOCIAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE RIGHT NOW

One of the main challenges for individuals working with social media has been to keep up with the explosion of social channels.

Many have struggled to understand audiences and how to create original content for them. Hootsuite, a popular social media management tool, has predicted that in 2018 many organisations will focus on making their social media content better instead. In 2018, social media is moving towards smaller groups of audiences where your biggest advocates and the real communities you create, matter more.

Quality is more important than quantity.



Another positive development this year is that more and more people are using social media as the first place they look for organisations. This is exciting, as it means people on the internet are no longer searching for you on traditional search engines.

Your first impression is now in your own social hands!

Make sure that people feel they know you

WHAT, WHY AND HOW!

In a NGO, it is about educating your followers in a compassionate way about what you do and why it is important. Once you show your audience what you do, they will be also be interested in how you do your work. Content that explain how you perform your work and what your day-to-day looks like can have a powerful effect on your followers!

THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD CONTENT

Sometimes we take content for granted. You and your colleagues do the work you do because it is necessary. That is the why of your organisation and your mission. But how do you explain this to your followers? Have a look at the news, personal stories, government decisions, and current affairs in your environment. Don't take all of this information for granted – this is your why. Share these insights with your audience. And don't forget that even though there might be other organisations that do the same work as you, show and tell your followers how your organisation does things differently!

Last but not least, if you have already taken your audiences on a journey through these stories – it is also important to share all that which you celebrate at the office. New legislation? A new head of development or a new intern? Did you hit a milestone in a project? Share everything, but be aware it is relevant for your audience!

Social media is about communicating with people in a way that people feel they know you.

Be recognisable

WHAT IS YOUR VISUAL IDENTITY?

What is your organisation's brand? Your brand is: the colors you use in all of your printed materials or website, your logo, and the "voice" you choose to communicate in. Is it happy? Serious? Jokey? You know your cultural environment best.

A clear voice and brand makes your organisation more human and creates a brand that your followers will trust. Don't underestimate the importance of a well-designed brand. If you are consistent in your voice, design and colours, you are already doing excellent.

Do you use graphics to share your stories in a fun way? Here are some basic tools you can use to edit if you have a smartphone.

IMAGE TOOLS & WEBSITES



Free image creation tools
Free stock photo websites

Your brand is: the colors you use in all of your printed materials or website, your logo, and the “voice” you choose to communicate in.

Content

HOW TO PICK & CHOOSE SHAREABLE CONTENT

Many social media networks require that you post content quite often. But did you know you don't have to create original content all the time. You can also “repurpose” content.

This means sharing and posting other content you find. This is an easy way to show your followers what your organisation stands for and supports. Be sure to follow likeminded organisations and tune into what they are sharing. Don't hesitate to share the same content (with your own comments), your fellow organisation will appreciate it and maybe decide to share your content too! It also helps if you tune into what your main audience share and care about. Last but not least, you can also re-share your own popular social media posts from the past! Changing a picture or another detail in an old post and re-sharing it, can work well.

Choose for your purpose and audience

CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLATFORM

- / Good for real engagement and two-way exchange with your audience.
- / Good for when you are a natural authority on a certain topic.
- / Good for visually engaging, high quality content.
- / Good for communications with professionals about your organisations' developments.

- / Space for dialogue.
- / Space for sharing your message.
- / Space for displaying your organisation.
- / Space for profiling your organisation.

- / High percentage of adults use it.
- / Used by both women, men and a younger audience.
- / Most users are young, curious and visually oriented
- / Used by employees and professionals

- / Recommended to post when your followers are most active, which you can check in the insights section.
- / Recommended to post just after lunch, around mid-afternoon and just after COB.
- / Recommended to post outside office or school hours.
- / Recommended to post before breakfast, during lunchtime and just after COB



- / < 10.000 followers: 5-10 posts a month
 - > 10.000 followers: 1 – 2 posts a day.
- / Ideal amount of tweets per day: 1 to 5 .
- / Max 3 hashtags per post.
- / Minimum of 1-2 times a week, max twice a day.
- / One post a day helps you grow your audience quickly,

Facebook is designed to facilitate discussions and encourages you to ask questions or simply make announcements.

Twitter is a “serious” platform in the ngo sector: you can discover important developments by following organisations / authorities / experts.

Instagram is the social media platform with the best engagement rates. It provides good opportunity to share live video clips with your audience.

Linkedin is the best platform to share industry-related insights and developments.

KEEP IN MIND

With all platforms, posting frequency and consistency is important.

Be selective with your resources and make an honest assessment of how much time you can spend on creating social media posts. We recommend choosing no more than 2 platforms if you're just starting out. If you're struggling to keep up, being on every social media network is absolutely not a must! Shift your time back to 1 or 2 core platforms.

OTHER PLATFORMS

Other social media platforms that can help you:

Buzzsumo

Remember when we mentioned repurposing content? You can use different tools to find this “curated” content. One such tool is BuzzSumo, a service that analyses trending buzzwords – specific subjects that you are interested in (for example “reproductive rights”). The website will show you the most-shared content that is related to this subject. The best way to use the the site is to search for buzzwords related to your organisation or sector, identify the most-shared content on different social channels, and then share it on your own channel along with your organisation’s comment on this piece of content.

Hootsuite

Hootsuite is a tool that comes in handy to organise your Twitter lists and monitor all of the Twitter accounts you follow. You can set up different streams to monitor a hashtag for an event so you can see all the coverage, or you can set up a stream with your potential donors so you can monitor all the news they publish. Whatever combination of information is of interest to you on Facebook and Twitter, Hootsuite can help you systematically



stay on top of it! It also allows you to tweet from inside the platform, so you can retweet and reply to anyone you want.

CoSchedule, Buffer, Sprout, and Later (for Instagram)

These are all paid services you can use to plan your social media content. We recommend looking at this type of service only if you have a lot of pre-planned content (pictures, graphics, etc.). Otherwise, posting your content from within each of the social media platforms themselves is perfectly fine! The same goes for analysing your total reach and engagement rates. We recommend getting familiar with the analytics inside each of the platforms before looking into more complex analytics services as these tend to be quite costly.

Audience

KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE

If you haven't already, you should consider creating profiles of your followers. We call them audience personas. These profiles are helpful as consultation tools for you to consult when in doubt about how to communicate with followers.

You will need some demographic data and information about your ideal followers. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter and Instagram provide all of this information in their "Insights" section, available from the home page navigation.

Another great idea is to conduct your own focus group interview. Invite a couple of your supporters to come and speak to you. If you don't have any yet – invite some people from your local community whom you would like to have as supporters. Ask them questions about what matters to them, what they like to read on social media, and why they support your cause. This can give you very valuable insights. If you don't have time for the focus group suggested here, you can also gather this type of information in an email or simply by asking followers directly on social media.

TIP

Hubspot, has a guide to creating the ideal buyer persona if you want to go more into detail with this

Audience

ENGAGE WITH YOUR AUDIENCE

Engaging or responding to all comments with a like or comment of your own is another way of nurturing a good relationship with your followers. Responding to the direct, private messages in your inboxes is very important.

Here are a few tips:

You can start the conversation. A good starting point is asking about challenges – what challenges do people have in their own lives when they try and live out the values they share with your organisation? What tips or tools can you give them to make their lives easier as they try to be a better environmentalist etc.? If you have a website, you can write a blog posts or social media posts (or both!) around this answer. You'll be shocked at how quickly people will follow you once they understand there are humans behind your organisation. Have an opinion when it comes to current events or other topical news. This especially goes for subjects that are trending. For example, at the beginning of each year, look up all of the public holidays, important events



and UN days that are relevant to your cause and plan your social content. *Always discuss with your colleagues whether sharing your opinion on any political or sensitive matter is wise for your organisation.

Always respond, also to negative comments. This one is important. It takes a team to decide on your policy when it comes to negative comments. As a rule, always make sure that you avoid responses that make any situation worse – keep it neutral. If a remark is particularly harsh, a great tip is to offer your critic a cup of coffee or phone call to further understand their view. Again, staying safe is always important.

We hope you enjoyed learning more about social media content and management! If you follow this guide to decide which channels to use and what type of content you want to focus on in your organisation, you are in a good position to make good decisions on: how much time you will need to dedicate to social media and how to plan your content in advance.

We look forward to seeing your posts!

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