Social Media 101: How to Tell a Story and Grow an Audience

By: Jasmine Cordew, Social Media Content Manager
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About Me

Jasmine Cordew
Social Media Content (& Advertising) Manager
At 92Y
“Social media is not a media. The key is to listen, engage, and build relationships.”

- David Alston, former CMO of Salesforce
Why Your Nonprofit Should Invest in Social Media

- 42% of the world's population uses social media. That's 3.2 billion users worldwide.
  - 90.4% of Millennials, 77.5% of Generation X, and 48.2% of Baby Boomers are active social media users.
- 90% of NGOs worldwide regularly use social media to engage their supporters and donors.
- 55% of people who engage with nonprofits on social media end up taking some sort of action.
  - On average, 54% of these people donate time, money, or other personal items.
- Each Facebook post only reached 4% of a nonprofit page’s fans.
  - Meanwhile, 29% of the audience reached by a given post was not already following the nonprofit.
- Overall, digital ad budgets grew by 144% in 2018.
  - Small nonprofits also more than tripled their investment in digital ads.
Crafting Your Story

“Bring the best of your authentic self to every opportunity.”

- Brian Jantsch, Author
Choosing the Right Platforms

- **Determine who your target audiences are and research where they dwell.**
  - Example: If millennials are a major part of your target audience, you should consider investing in Instagram.

- **Consider the user experience.**
  - Example: If driving traffic to your website is important, consider using a platform that aids in link sharing, rather than hinders it.

- **Make yourself visible.**
  - Build a presence on multiple platforms.
Goal Setting

Think about what you want to accomplish on each platform:

- Do you want to provide information/build awareness for your cause/organization?
- Do you want to drive traffic to your website?
- Do you want to garner donations?
- Do you want to acquire volunteers?
- Do you want to highlight the work your organization is doing?

Setting goals for each platform will help you determine the best way to create content that facilitates that goal.
Creating Content

- **Draw inspiration from within!**
  - Take pictures/videos of your events, your team at conferences, your volunteers, etc.

- **Keep it simple. Go low-tech.**
  - If you’re strapped for resources, you can capture live content on a cellphone (most smartphones have pretty good cameras).

- **Research content trends.**
  - See what types of content are most popular (video is IN right now).

- **Be the curator.**
  - Find and share relevant statistics, quotes, articles, etc.

- **Use user-generated content.**
  - Share relevant content created by your community (ALWAYS provide credit).

- **Utilize the tools built-in to the platform.**
  - Many of the most popular platforms have fun, built in features like questions, polls, etc.
Creating Content

- Utilize free/low cost tools.
  - Canva
  - PowToon
  - Unsplash
  - Coolors.co
- Utilize Facebook/Instagram Stories.
  - Stories are short pieces of content that will live on these channels for 24hrs. They’re super simple to do and takes just 15 seconds.
- Share your website content.
  - Tailor it to the platform, of course!
- Browse relevant hashtags and see what competitors are doing.
  - See what’s working for competitors and replicate it in a way that is authentic to your organization.
- Use GIFs, Stickers, etc.
  - Simple (and free) way to add some humor to your feeds.
- Create content around relevant holidays, birthdays, awareness weeks/months, etc.
Examples:

**92nd Street Y**

@92Y • Aug 15

What was cool when you were young but isn’t cool now?

- Likes: 306
- Comments: 13
- Shares: 78

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"Until I treat myself right, until I honor myself, nobody else knows how to do that." - Billy Porter at 92Y

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"When I had pancreatic cancer in 2009, there was a senator whose name I don’t recall, but he said I would be dead in six months. That senator is now no longer alive." - Look who’s back and better than ever! We had the honor of having the resilient Ruth Bader Ginsburg back on our stage to speak with David Rubenstein about her cancer as Associate Justice to the US Supreme Court and the political state of our country.

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You don't have to be perfect to be amazing.
Building Your Audience

“Build it, and they will come” only works in the movies. Social Media is a “build it, nurture it, engage them, and they may come and stay.”

- Seth Godin, Author
The Painful Truth

There is no secret sauce to growing an account to thousands of followers quickly. Growing an audience will take:

● Time
● Consistency
● Good content
● Money
Management Tips & Best Practices

● **Set up business accounts.**
  ○ Using a business account where possible will allow you to track performance of posts, audience growth, and more.

● **Create an editorial calendar.**
  ○ Planning social content out a week or so ahead of time will help save you time each month.
  ○ [Airtable](https://airtable.com) is a free editorial planner tool.

● **Consistency is key!**
  ○ Keep a consistent posting schedule. Once a day across platforms is ideal, but 1-3 times per week is okay to start.

● **Dedication is also key!**
  ○ Assign social media work to one human or have the whole team pitch in and help.
Management Tips & Best Practices

- Add links to your social channels in your digital communications.
  - Links to your channels should be included in all email communications and on your website.

- Use a linktr.ee to help drive traffic from your Instagram channel.
  - This is a free tool that will help you link to more than one page from your Instagram bio.

- Pin key posts on Facebook and Twitter.
  - This will be the first post people see when they land on your page, which can help engagement.

- Utilize Highlights on Instagram.
  - This will help you organize your posts and make finding key content and information easy for your followers.

- Be authentic!
  - Your fans can tell when something seems off brand.
Management Tips & Best Practices

- Use scheduling tools.
  - Tools like Later, Sprout Social, Tweetdeck, etc. have free versions and/or nonprofit discounts.
  - Facebook and Twitter allow you to schedule posts natively.

- Test out different content types, see what your audience likes.
  - If your audience likes something, they’ll tell you. Do more of what they like.

- Boost your content!
  - You don’t have to boost every post or spend a ton of money, but putting a few dollars behind posts that are doing well can help with visibility, engagement, and growing your follower account.

- Be sure to respond to questions, moderate comments, like and share content from partners, constituents, etc.
  - This will help build engagement numbers over time.

- Be patient!
  - Growing your channels WILL take time, money, and effort.
More on Paid Posts

Platforms like Facebook and Instagram have become pay to play spaces. Since your content organically only reaches 4% of your total audience, it is recommended to put dollars behind your content to get it in front of your audience and others.

You don’t need to spend a lot of money to have your posts reach thousands. You can boost a post for any amount; the more you spend the more you get.
“Social Media is about the people! Not about your business. Provide for the people and the people will provide for you.”

- Matt Goulart, Author
References + Resources

For Statistics:

- https://mrbenchmarks.com/numbers/social-media
- https://nonprofitssource.com/online-giving-statistics/social-media/

Additional Resources:

- https://www.wholewhale.com/resources/social-media-for-nonprofits/
- https://www.wholewhale.com/tips/social-advertising-budget/
Q&A

For any future questions, feel free to email me at jcordew@92y.org!