

SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Produced by the National Organization for Rare Disorders (NORD®)

OVERVIEW:

- Learn how to use social media to connect with your community and boost donations.
 - › Did you know 55% of people who engage with causes via social media are inspired to take further action, such as donating money (68%), volunteering (53%), donating items (52%) or attending an event (43%)¹?
- Engage your advocates and Board members in your social media campaigns to amplify your message and expand your reach.
- Generate a social media policy to set guidelines, boundaries and best practices for the interactivity on your social page.

SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY FOR NONPROFITS:

How can you reach a larger audience and create connections with supporters with limited resources? You need to first create a social media strategy. Here are some helpful steps:

Set Goals that Align with Your Organization's Mission:

- Setting goals that support the overall mission of your organization will not only promote cohesion between your social media and your communications but also resonates with your team members and volunteers.
- Your goals should be SMART: specific, measurable, actionable, realistic and time-based. This will help with setting clear metrics and objectives by which to measure your performance.

Know Your Audience:

- What are the demographics of your current social media following? What attracted them to your cause? What excites them and how do they want to get involved? Know the answers to these questions and you will know what content to share on social media to engage them.
- If you don't have the answers to these questions, consider using an analytics platform to learn more about your current followers. Think about using social listening or drawing insights from conversations at your events to help you better understand the make up of your audience in order to attract new followers.

Choose a Platform and Develop Your Content:

- Depending upon the demographics of your followers and the type of content you would like to share, identify the ideal social media platform for your community. With limited resources and staff, it may not make sense for your organization to focus on creating a following on multiple platforms at first.
- People tend to engage most with content that is entertaining, inspirational and educational. Review your past posts to determine what content performed well. You can also ask your community directly via a survey what they would like to see on your page.
- Create a social media content calendar to plan the frequency of your posts around the most popular days and times of engagement on your platforms of choice.

¹ "Digital Persuasion: How Social Media Motivates Action and Drives Support for Causes." Georgetown University's Center for Social Impact Communication and Waggener Edstrom Worldwide, December 14, 2020

Engage with Your Community:

- It's not enough to post. You need to engagement on posts. Respond to comments and questions to show that you want to connect with your community and encourage conversation.
- Empower your advocates and staff to amplify your message by sharing sample content for them to promote to their networks.
- Your Board members have the responsibility to leverage their networks to advance the mission of your organization. Social media is a tool that can be leveraged to do just that. Include your Board not only in your social media strategy conversations, but also as organizational ambassadors promoting the organization's work on their personal accounts.

Track Your Results:

- Review what social media content and strategies have been successful in boosting engagement and lead to donations. Run weekly or monthly reports so you can adjust future content as needed.

GENERAL TIPS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT:

- Review your programs and think about the message you want to share about them. Think about what makes your organization unique.
- Social media marketing includes sharing editorial content. Promote the people, places and things within your organization; lift up your mission. You need to give your audience a reason to choose your organization when you have a call to action.
- Never overestimate attention spans. You only have a brief amount of time to capture your audience's eyes. Carefully select the right image or craft a tempting caption to draw your audience in. Keep video content brief when possible.

- Provide a healthy mix of content, from pictures to graphics and videos. Post on a consistent basis, be it twice a week or twice a month. The frequency does not matter, but the consistency does.
- Encourage engagement to surpass social and translate to your organization at large by sharing links to your website or encouraging sign ups for your newsletter.

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES:

It is a best practice to create a social media policy, should your organization's account fall prey to inappropriate content or behavior. This policy can be shared on your website or social media page and set guidelines and boundaries as well as professional standards and best practices for all who engage with your organization. Here are some sample policies:

Straightforward Guidelines for Responsible Social Networking:

- Be honest about your identity.
- Make it clear that the views expressed are yours alone.
- You speak for yourself, but your actions reflect back to [ORGANIZATION NAME].
- Use common sense.
- Play nice and treat one another with mutual respect and professionalism.
- Respect the privacy of offline conversations.
- Don't post anything you wouldn't say in public.

Guidelines for Employees Who Reference Your Organization:

As [ORGANIZATION NAME] employees, you are encouraged to interact and be a part of social media communities where [ORGANIZATION NAME] is present. As you are participating in these social networks, you represent [ORGANIZATION NAME].

- Blogs, wikis and other forms of online discussions are individual interactions, not company communications.
- Use common sense and be mindful that what you write will be public.
- Identify yourself—your name and when relevant, your role at [ORGANIZATION NAME]—when you post something about our organization. Clarify that you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of [ORGANIZATION NAME].
- If you blog outside of [ORGANIZATION NAME] and it relates to your work, use a disclaimer such as: “The postings on this site are my own and don’t necessarily represent [ORGANIZATION NAME]’s positions, strategies or opinions.”
- Respect copyright, fair use and financial disclosure laws.
- Don’t cite or reference clients, partners, volunteers or vendors without their approval.

REFERENCES:

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