CONNECT VA | Powering Community Ideas, Information & Collaboration

CONNECTVA GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY BEST PRACTICES 2015

This guide was developed to help nonprofits in the region build a solid strategy for social media and web presence, based on the work of Heather Mansfield with Nonprofit Tech for Good

Liz Rennie Lungut
ConnectVA Manager, Partnership for Nonprofit Excellence
LLungut@PNERichmond.org

Contents

Regional Nonprofit Resources from The Partnership for Nonprofit Excellence

Online resources: ConnectVA https://www.connectva.org

Tw: @Connect_VA

Fb: /connectva

- nonprofit news
- social media training
- event calendar
- job postings
- community discussion forum
- items needed/available
- list of all organizations and programs in region

Volunteer Resources: HandsOn Greater Richmond http://www.handsonrva.org/

- connect your nonprofit with volunteers

Board and Organizational Development: Organizational Solutions http://www.organizationalsolutions.org/

Nonprofit Classes and Leadership Training: Nonprofit Learning Point http://nonprofitlearningpoint.org/

CONNECT VA

How to Write a Social Media Strategy

Part One: Overview

The overview should include two or three paragraphs about trends in online communications and fund- raising. Include stats about the rapid rise in online giving and smartphone and tablet use.

Consider including a quote from a thought leader about the future of nonprofit technology and fundraising.

Part Two: Goals

This section should list specific goals within a time frame of one year based on the previous year's performance:

- 25% increase in website and blog traffic.
- 2,000 new e-newsletter subscribers.
- 25% increase in online donations.
- 1,500 new Facebook fans, 1,000 new Twitter followers, etc.

Create a Social Media ROI Spreadsheet to track and report success.

Part Three: Action Items

This section should feature a list of actions items necessary to achieve the goals outlined in your social media strategy:

- Upgrade to a mobile-responsive online donation service.

- Redesign e-newsletter so it is responsive.
- Participate in #GivingTuesday, #GiveLocalAmerica, and Cause Awareness Days.

- Host a tweet chat.
- Rebrand mobile and social networks.
- Launch a presence on Instagram.

Part Four: Budget

This section should summarize how investing funds in new technology will help your nonprofit achieve its goals by financing the action items listed in your social media strategy.

Create a Social Media Strategy Budget Spreadsheet.

Part Five: Create a Content Strategy

- Blogging/storytelling is often the missing piece in a social media strategy. (Mercy Corps)
- Brand your images and create images of inspirational quotes (ONE) and stats. (Adobe Photoshop, PicMonkey, Canva, BrainyQuote)
- Create videos (Flipagram), petitions/pledges, and infographics (Piktochart)
- Create an editorial calendar that allows for flexibility while at same time allocates a minimal number of required content creation and distribution.
- Create a social media policy that encourages empowerment and trust over restriction and fear. (TechSoup and Idealware Guide to Social Media Policies, Online Database of Social Media Policies)

Prioritize Mobile Content

- 66% of email is now read on mobile devices. You must mobile-optimize your email communications.

CONNECT VA

- Mobile users now surpass desktop on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).

- Odds are your nonprofit needs a [new website](#).

- *Reminder:* Responsive design increase conversion rates by 34%.

Allocate Staff Resources

Facebook :: 3 hours weekly
Twitter :: 5 hours weekly
Pinterest/Graphic Design :: 5 hours weekly
YouTube/Video :: 2 hours weekly
LinkedIn :: 2 hours weekly
Blogging :: 5-10 hours weekly
Experimentation with new tools such as Instagram, Snapchat, Google+, Tumblr, Indiegogo, etc. :: 5 Hours Weekly
Research, reporting and strategy :: 3 hours weekly
Website and e-newsletter content :: 5 hours weekly
[Average salary of social media staff nationwide](#).

Analyze, Adapt, Improve

- Review your social media strategy annually. Adjust your goals and objectives accordingly – and consequently your [ROI Spreadsheet](#), [budget](#), and [editorial calendar](#).

- Report progress on a quarterly basis to key staff.

Conclusion

1. Prioritize your website, email communications, and online fundraising campaigns.

2. Launch a blog or news campaign for nonprofit storytelling.

3. Ramp up your social media campaigns.

4. Invest in visual content.

5. Understand that the [best new media managers](#) have years of experience with online communications and fundraising.

Priorities for Social/Web Presence:

1) Website with responsive design (mobile friendly)
2) Email/E-newsletters
3) Donation Page
4) Blog
5) Social Media Campaign

CONNECT VA

1. Leverage Fundraising Through e-newsletters

- More online donations are made from a **click in an e-newsletter than any other source**
- For every 1,000 fundraising messages delivered, **nonprofits raised $17**.

2. Invest in a Premium e-Newsletter Service

- Sending e-newsletters via BCC is a worst practice. Many emails will go into spam folders and you won't be able to track the success of your e-newsletter campaigns.
- Sign up for "Hosted e-Newsletter" service like **iContact**, **Constant Contact**, **VerticalResponse**, or **MailChimp**.

3. Prioritize Mobile Design

- **66% of email is now opened on a mobile device**. In 2013 online donations via email dropped 21% due to **e-newsletters** and **donate pages** not being mobile compatible.
- It's crucial that you adopt a mobile-first communications and fundraising strategy.

4. Limit Stories and Calls-to-Action

- In 2015, the point of an e-newsletter is not to provide a lot of news, rather to regularly remind your supporters that your nonprofit is doing good work and to inspire them to get involved.
- Focus on 1-5 stories and keep text to a minimum.

5. Integrate Social Media

- Add a "Donate Now" button and social networking icons at the **top of your e-newsletter**.
- Add the ability for readers to **share stories**, **pin products**, etc.
- If your nonprofit is active on Instagram, you can also feature your best **Instagram** photos or videos.

6. Send e-Newsletters Twice Monthly

- Nonprofits send out and average of **3.8 e-newsletters per month**. That said, e-newsletters should be sent 2-4 times monthly with links to recent news items listed on your website or blog.
- Also, send out 4-12 urgent donation appeals per year, especially in November and December. Know that most giving occurs between 9am-5pm on weekdays.
- Test days of the week and whether morning or afternoon or **evening** results in the highest open rates.

7. Keep Subject Lines Short

Short subject lines tend to result in the highest open rate. Thus, limit your subject lines to 50 characters or less. Good examples:

> What you are doing is working (Personal)
> Wow (One/Two Word Statements)
> Help Close Puppy Mills in Missouri! (Call to Action)
> Save the Date: 8th Annual Winter Gala (Informational)
> The children of Syria need our help (Motivational)
> 8 Ways to Help the Homeless (Numbers)

· Check out **280 Subject Lines for Year-End Fundraising**

8. Add Opt-In Forms to Your Website and Blog

- Add an e-newsletter sign-up box on every page of your **website** and **blog**

9. Promote Your e-Newsletter on Social Networks

- Every 2-3 weeks, **ask followers to subscribe to your e-newsletter**.

10. Study and Mimic Large Nonprofits

- Sign up for the e-newsletter of **large nonprofits** similar to yours in **mission** and **programs** and mimic them.

CONNECT VA

Online Fundraising Best Practices

Know the Stats

- In 2013 online giving grew 13.5% in the United States according to the **BlackbaudIndex of Online Giving** and 14% according to the **Network for Good's Online Giving Index**. The average online gift in 2013 was $106 compared to $89 in 2012!
- Think your donor audience won't adopt this trend? Surprisingly, **59% of donors 66 and older** give online.

2. Embed the Online Donation Process into Your Website
- To maximize online donations, the donation process should occur on one page and be **embedded inside of your website** with your nonprofit's branding and be **mobile-optimized**.
- **Responsive design doubles giving** on mobile devices.
- **Six times more $$$ is raised through custom-branded pages** than through **third-party giving pages**.

3. Prominently Feature Your "Donate" Button
- Place a large, colorful **Donate or Donate Now button on every page**. The button color should pop out from the site's basic color scheme.
- Clicking the **Donate** button should always lead a donors directly to a donate form – never to a **list of multiple ways to give**.

4. Optimize Your "Thank You" Process
- Maximize your **Thank You landing page**
- Maximize your **Thank You emails** and include
    - your nonprofit's legal name and address
    - the donation amount
    - your nonprofit's EIN* for tax purposes
    - your nonprofit's branding
    - a pitch to follow on social networks
    - a thank you video.

5. Add Giving Impact Statements
- **Quantifying donation impact** can help increase donations.
- Be sure to create **donation impact graphics** for social networks.

6. Launch a Sustainer Program
- Launch a Sustainer Program to allow supporters to make **monthly donations automatically**. (View example of the **Humane Society of the United States**)
- Monthly donors give an **average monthly gift of** $52 ($624 annually)and give 42% more over one-year than one-time donors.
- Thank monthly donors a minimum of three times annually for their continued support.
- Promote your sustainer program on your **website**, in your e-mail newsletter, on your **blog**, and in print materials.

7. Enable Tribute Giving
- Enable the ability to for donor's to make **tribute gifts in honor of family member or friend**.
- Using a service like **DonationPay** enables you to easily have a donate page, a monthly giving page, a tribute giving page, and a gift membership page.
- Promote your tribute giving program on your website, in your e-mail newsletter, on your blog, and in print materials.

8. Launch a Social Fundraising Campaign
- Through social fundraising pages, individuals can fundraise for their favorite nonprofit by asking their friends and family to donate. In 2012, **individual fundraisers raised an average of $568**.
- Social fundraising works best for **A-Thons** and **birthdays, weddings, and urgent issues**.

CONNECT VA

- Services to help – **Razoo**
- Successful social fundraising campaigns depend upon:
    1. **Explaining clearly how the fundraising tools work**
    2. Consistently thanking and featuring top fundraisers throughout the year.
    3. Hosting friendly competitions for those who raise the most.
    4. Setting realistic fundraising goals that can be achieved, ie $2,500 or less.
    5. Promoting your social fundraising campaign on your **website**, blog, e-newsletter, print materials, social networks, etc.

9. Launch a Crowdfunding Campaign

- Crowdfunding enables nonprofits to create online fundraising campaigns for projects and programs in need of funding ie **School Desks for Orphans** or **New Website for Gray Wolf Press**
- **Indiegogo** is an example of a crowdfunding platform
- Integrate your crowdfunding projects into your online fundraising promotions.

10. Prioritize Year-End Fundraising

- 30% of all online donations are made in December. 10% of all annual giving happens in the last three days of the year and donations are **80% larger in December**.
- If your nonprofit has the capacity, launch a **holiday gift program**.
- **Important:** Online donors and social good shoppers start their research in September.

11. Build Fundraising Campaigns around Cause Awareness Days & Giving Days

- Tap into the power of **cause awareness and giving days** (**data**) like Giving Tuesday:
- **Create a page on your website** that prominently features the date and hashtag and details as least three actions that your donors/supporters can take.
- Begin promoting via email and on **social media at least one month before**.
- Be very active throughout the day on mobile and social networks. Promote powerful stats, inspirational quotes, and ask people to give.

12. Embrace Digital Wallets

- **Google Wallet** is the first to enable **digital wallet donations** and last November Google replaced Google Checkout with Google Wallet.
- **Facebook** and **Twitter** are also working on digital wallet services.

CONNECT VA

Blogging Best Practices

1. Integrate blogging into your content strategy.

- To be effective in your online communications and fundraising campaigns – particularly on social media – you must have a consistent source of fresh content.

2. Host your blog within your website.

- Download WordPress.org and host your blog on your own server inside your website.
- WordPress.org can also be used as a content management system for websites.
- There are hundreds of responsively designed, low cost WordPress.org templates.

3. Ensure that your blog is mobile compatible.

- The majority of your blog content will be viewed on tablets and smartphones, thus you must ensure that your blog is responsively designed.
- New Study: Responsive design doubles giving on mobile devices.

4. Ensure that your blog is easy to read.

- Select a two-column template with a white background and black text. Body font should be a minimum of 13 point and headlines should be a minimum of 18 point.

5. Invest in good graphic design.

- Invest time and/or $$$ in designing a banner for your blog that makes a good first impression.
- Prominently feature social network icons, e-newsletter and mobile alert opt-ins, and a "Donate Now" button on your blog.
- Custom-designed social network icons get more clicks.

6. Rotate promotional graphics on your blog.

- Create promotional graphics for your blog for events, publications, services, etc.

7. Add social sharing functionality.

- Make it easy for readers to share your blog content on social networks. [Shareaholic Plugin]

8. Enable readers to easily comment.

- Disqus allows readers to comment using their social networks identities. Respond to comments posted on your blog when necessary.
- Delete comments that you think are rude and inconsiderate, but allow those that disagree respectfully.

9. Blog at least once a week.

- That you are supposed to blog everyday is a myth. At minimum blog once or twice a week. That said, the more often you blog, the higher the ROI.
- Allow guest/multiple bloggers to share expertise and experience.

10. Title blogs to optimize SEO and social sharing.

- Consistently use keywords in your blog posts that grab the attention of readers and search engines. [Google Analytics Dashboard]

11. Format blogs for easy reading.

- Blog posts can be as short as two paragraphs. Any more than six paragraphs, make sure the writing exceptional or your will lose readers. Always include at least one image and ideally they are the same size in each blog post.
- Use bold and double-spacing for easy scanning of content..

12. Create title images.

- To improve social sharing, create custom title images for blog posts. [Pinterest, Facebook, Nature Conservancy]

13. Diversify your blog content.

- That blogs must be editorial and in first-person and only about your NGO's mission and programs is an antiquated idea.

14. Share breaking news.

- Summarize a breaking news story or make a statement about the news story.

15. Post calls to action.

- Ask readers to donate, sign a petition, share your nonprofit's page on Facebook, follow you on Instagram, become a volunteer, buy a t-shirt, etc.

16. Share infographics.

- Write up a [brief summary about an infographic](#) relevant to your mission and programs. Be sure to bullet point key stats in your summary.

17. Summarize findings of important reports.

- Briefly summarize the finding of [important reports](#)relevant to your mission and programs. Be sure to bullet point key stats and data.

18. Create a stats blog post.

- Compile a list of [powerful stats](#) relevant to your mission and programs. Update your stats at least once a year.

19. Share stories from the field.

- Blog while on location in [photo essay format](#).

20. Share resources.

- Blog [health tips](#), [recipes](#), [parenting advice](#), etc.

21. Interview experts.

- Interview [thought leaders](#), professionals, and activists.

22. Create numbered lists.

- [Numbered lists](#) are always the most popular blog posts. Examples:

  [10 Reasons Why You Should Quit Smoking](#)
  [11 Facts About Nuclear Energy](#)
  [10 Wedding Traditions from Around the World](#)

CONNECT VA

Facebook Best Practices:

1. Know the Stats

- 1.32 billion monthly active users as of June 30, 2014. 829 million log on everyday and 1.07 billion are monthly active mobile users.

- 65% of Facebook users are 35 or older and 58% of its members are female.

- 82% of Facebook's daily active users are outside the United States and Canada.

2. Create a Facebook Page

You must have a personal Facebook Profile before you can create a Page for your nonprofit. If you set up your nonprofit's presence on Facebook as a personal profile, you can request that it be converted into a page.

Facebook Pages have "Fans" or "Likes."

- Benefits: Status Updates show up in the News Feed, you can add Apps, and view Insights.
- Disadvantages: You have to promote it heavily off Facebook to grow your fan base or purchase advertising.

While logged into your personal Facebook account, go to facebook.com/business > Create a Page.

3. Set Up Your Facebook Page

- Upload a square avatar (180 x 180 pixels). (View National Wildlife Federation, Free Morgan Foundation)

- Upload a Timeline Cover (851 x 315 pixels).

4. Create Custom Tabs

- Custom tabs are not visible on Facebook's mobile website or inside Facebook's mobile apps.

- Pagemodo is the best low-cost option to create custom tabs and contests.

- Custom tabs have less visibility on the new Facebook Page design. If you create custom tabs, tab icons are 111 X 74 pixels.

5. Enable Page Recommendations and Direct Messages

- Turn on "Similar Page Suggestions" and "Messages" in your Admin Panel. Page Suggestions may become your primary source of new Likes.

6. Prioritize Status Updates

90% of the power of a Facebook Page is in the "Status Updates." (View Nonprofit Organizations)

- When posting links, always include a short personal statement and know that you can edit link titles, descriptions, and images.
- Post 4-6 Status Updates per week.
- Occasionally ask a question in your status update.

7. Give Your Fans What They Want

Share content that inspires activity:

CONNECT VA

- Success Stories
- Photos and Videos
- Inspirational Quotes
- Breaking News
- Calls to Action

Alternate posting links and uploading photos.

No Activity = Loss of News Feed exposure. Only 5-10% of your fans see you status updates.

8. Get Staff and Volunteers Involved

- Encourage staff and volunteers to regularly "Like' your nonprofit's Status Updates to increase News Feed exposure and secure more engagement.

9. Use Facebook as Your NGO

- Use Facebook as your nonprofit and participate in other's Status Updates, such as partner organizations, broadcast and print media, politicians, etc.

10. Highlight Featured Likes

- In your Admin Panel select and feature three pages that your nonprofit has liked.

11. Tag Other Pages to Foster Good Will

- To tag (or mention) other pages use the "@" symbol.

12. Add Milestones to Your Timeline

- Add Milestones about your nonprofit's history and program achievements to your Timeline.

13. Highlight and Pin to Top Status Updates

- Highlight posts. You can also "Pin to Top" posts.

14. Monitor Your Insights

- Monitor your Page's Insights on a regular basis.

- Even though "Reach" has dropped significantly in recent months, the drop is less noticeable in net fans and referral traffic.

15. Have Multiple Admins for Your Page

- Have more than one Admin for your Page

16. Schedule Status Updates in Advance

- Use the scheduling function to post updates in advance. Don't use HootSuite to post to Facebook.

17. Add Facebook Icons to Your Website and Blog

- To grow your page, add social media icons to your website and blog.

18. Add Facebook Location to Your Page

CONNECT VA

- 89% of Facebook users are mobile. Smartphone user check Facebook an average of 14 times a day.

- To enable your fans to check into your page, add your address in your Admin Panel.

19. Merge Your Facebook Places Page(s)

- Facebook Places Page are automatically created when a Facebook user checks into your nonprofit and you do not have the Location functionality added to your page.

- If you discover that your nonprofit has a Facebook Places Page, then claim it and request to merge it with your page. The names of the pages must be similar and once merged the likes are migrated over to your page.

20. Merge Your Facebook Community Page(s)

- Facebook Community Pages are automatically created when individuals enter their "Work and Education" in their personal profiles.

- Again, request to merge your community page with your page.

21. Enable Facebook Sharing on Your Website and Blog

- Add "Share" functionality to your website and blog.

22. Integrate Facebook Into Email Communications

- Add a Facebook icon to your e-newsletter and integrate social sharing.

23. Empower Your Fans

- Offer Facebook Covers for your fans.

24. Experiment with Facebook Events

- Often your fans will see your events in their "Suggested Events." To maximize RSVPs, integrate Facebook events into your website and email communications.

25. Experiment with Advertising

- It's worth experimenting with $100-$1,000 in advertising to see if it makes a difference, however, knowing well the kind of content that gets shared can produce similar results with zero expense. [Facebook Advertising Tips]

CONNECT

Twitter Best Practices

Introduction to Twitter

- At the heart of Twitter are small bursts of information called Tweets, Retweets, Replies, and Mentions.

- Twitter has 271 million active users who send 500 Tweets daily.

- 78% of Twitter active users regularly access Twitter on either a smartphone or tablet. (Responsively Designed Websites)

25 Twitter Best Practices

1. Become an expert resource for your cause and prioritize getting retweeted by tweeting and curating good content. (View @EarthShare, @Food_Tank, @GatesFoundation)

2. Mix it up. Don't only tweet your own content. Tweet news articles, blog posts, images/videos, etc.

3. Follow the 80/20 rule of content marketing. For every five tweets, four should be related to your cause and one should be a direct ask.

4. Curate good content through retweets.

5. Post 2-8 tweets/retweets a day spread throughout the day. Tweet later in the day and on weekends.

6. Use HootSuite to schedule tweets for an international audience, on the weekends, or while you are on vacation.

7. Use proper punctuation and spelling and clear concise language.

8. Tweets that include links receive 86% higher retweet rates. Upload retweetable photos to stand out from the clutter. (2:1 Aspect Ratio :: 600 x 300 pixels)

9. You can upload up to four photos. Tweets that include good photos are retweeted 3X more often.

10. Tweet inspirational quotes: "Activism is my rent for living on this planet." – Alice Walker

11. Tweet powerful stats: 1 in 4 girls will be sexually abused before the age of 18 in the United States.

12. Convert quotes and stats into visual format.

13. Don't be a #hashtag spammer. Use hashtags strategically and not in every tweet.
SPAM: Quit #Smoking! It's bad for your #health and costs a lot of #money! #cancer #cigarettes #quitsmoking
Not SPAM: Study Finds 80% of All #Antibiotics in U.S. Used for Big-Ag.

14. Create and promote a hashtag for important events, such as an annual conference (#15NTC) or marathon.
- Promote the hashtag in print and online conference promotion materials.
- Have one person dedicated to promoting live during the event. The need a laptop, a smartphone or tablet, and photo editing software.
- Upload quotes of speakers in visual format.
- Tweet/retweet 6-10 times per hour.
- Take photos and video in real time. (Video Essay)
- Storify your live tweeting.

15. Host quarterly or monthly tweet chats. (7 of the Best Tweet Chats for Nonprofits) You can also participate in tweet chats.

16. Organize a fundraising campaign around a cause awareness day. (Giving Day Playbook)
    - Create a page on your website that prominently features the date and hashtag and details as least three actions that your donors/supporters can take.
    - Begin promoting via email and on social media at least one month before.
    - Be very active throughout the day on mobile and social networks. Promote powerful stats, inspirational quotes, and ask people to give.

17. Most people ignore direct fundraising asks on Twitter. Rather, you need to inspire your followers through storytelling.

18. Use Twitter to build your e-newsletter list. (The Power of Email Fundraising, Plunket on Facebook)

19. Don't over engage. Reply wisely and respond to legitimate DMs (direct messages).

20. Follow strategically. (@Habitat_org, @NPRNews)

21. Use "Favorites" and "Lists" to organize the chaos and feature your most important tweets. You can have up to 1,000 lists with 500 members each.

22. Use "Lists" to promote chapters and nonprofit allies, volunteers, donors, etc. (@WWF)

23. Use a URL shortening service.

24. Use Vine: vine.co (This Breath Made Possible, Diabetes UK)

25. Use Flipboard: flipboard.com

CONNECT VA

Pinterest Best Practices

1. Know the stats.

- Pinterest launched in private beta March 2010 and by August of 2011, Time Magazine named it one of the "50 Best Websites of 2011."

- Pinterest has 70 million users. 85% of its registered users are women. 81% are 26-54.

- 70% of Pinterest users are based in the United States.

2. Set up a business profile.

- NGOs new to Pinterest should sign up as a business. If your account was created before November 14, 2012, you can convert your personal profiled into business account.

- Enter "Business Type."
- Add your website.
- Upload a square avatar.
- Add your location.
- Verify your website to get access to analytics.
- Do not link with Facebook or Google+, but do link to Twitter.

3. Follow, like, and comment other Pinners.

- To begin, follow a small selection of nonprofit pinners to get a sense of how the "Home > Following" view functions.

- Take a day or two to browse, "Like" and comment on pins posted by others to get a sense of the Pinterest community before you start pinning.

- **Please Note:** There is no easy way to remove the "Picked for you" functionality – only a pin at a time.

4. Create your first boards.

- Next, create your first boards (at least 5). If location-based, add a map and write descriptions to optimize SEO. See: National Wildlife Federation, Water.org, SFMOMA

5. Add pins to your boards.

- Add the "Pin It" button or bookmarklet to your browser and pin anywhere from the Web or upload a pin directly from your computer. Be sure to "Edit" to add a website link or you will not get referral traffic from Pinterest.

6. Repin pins to your boards.

On Pinterest it's important to curate good content. You are what you pin/repin.

7. Build your boards slowly.

- Pin or repin 2-4 times daily spread throughout the day. Afternoons (2-4pm) and evenings (8pm-1am) have the highest repin rates.

8. Pin/repin visually appealing and/or interesting content.

- Only pin content that is visually appealing or interesting. That means no pinning of annual reports and "Donate Now" buttons. If you're not getting repinned, you're not doing it right.

9. Feature your best boards to make a good first impression.

- Organize your boards and set your board covers.

10. Write pin descriptions to maximize SEO.

- Write short, smart pin descriptions to optimize Pinterest Search.

- You can also add hashtags to pins to increase exposure of your NGO.

11. Brand your images.

- Add your logo or avatar to your images. [Adobe Photoshop]

12. Add "$" to increase sales and donations.

- If your nonprofit offers products for sale, add a price.

- 21% of Pinterest users have bought something they saw on Pinterest.

13. Monitor referral traffic from Pinterest.

Track your pins and review your referral traffic from Pinterest:

pinterest.com/source/YourWebsite.com

14. Pin inspirational quote images.

- Create images of inspirational quotes. [PicMonkey] [ShareAsImage] [Canva] [brainyquote.com]

15. Pin powerful stat images.

- Create images powerful stats and infographics.

16. Grow your Pinterest following.

- Download the Pinterest mobile app and add the Pinterest icon to your website, blog, e-newsletter, etc. [Nonprofit Tech for Good]

Is Pinning Illegal?

- [Pinterest Terms of Service] [National Geographic][No Pin Code] [12 Most Picture Perfect Ways To Ensure You're Legally Using Online Photos][ShutterStock]

- Only pin, post, and share photos that you nonprofit is comfortable with.

- Where to get free photos? Foter, Creative Commons

LinkedIn Best Practices

1. Know the stats.

- LinkedIn launched May 2003 (same year as Blogger and Myspace) and by the end of the first month had 4,500 members.

- Today LinkedIn has more than 347 million members in over 200 countries and territories. 75% of its new members are located outside of the United States.

- College students and recent graduates are the fastest growing demographic – currently 39 million.

2. Prioritize your personal profile.

- As a nonprofit, you can create a LinkedIn Group and a Company Page, but you must have a personal profile first.

- On LinkedIn, there is no separation of personal and professional. Don't post anything you wouldn't want a potential employer, your boss, or donors to read.

3. Publish content to the Home feed.

- To build your personal brand on LinkedIn, share content to the Home Feed to be seen by your followers. If possible, post two to three times a week. (The Pulse)

- If you don't have very many followers, then add your LinkedIn profile link to your email signature: linkedin.com/in/heathermansfield

- You can also participate in LinkedIn Groups.

4. Encourage staff to prioritize LinkedIn.

- Encourage staff, volunteers, and board members to add your nonprofit to their work/volunteer experience.

- If you have the capability to customize profile pictures, offer to add an avatar to their profile pictures.

5. Be proactive and generous.

- To receive recommendations and endorsements, you have to give recommendations and endorsements.

6. Claim your NGO's Company Page.

- Odds are your nonprofit has a Company Page. Find it and then claim it.

7. Set up your NGO's Company Page.

- Add description, a cover image (646 x 220 pixels), a logo (100x60 pixels), and an avatar (50x50 pixels).

- Select the "Nonprofit" category and add a website and add designated admins, specialties, and your groups.

- Create Showcase Pages.

8. Grow your Company Page following.

- Encourage staff, volunteers, and board to follow and interact with your page and add a LinkedIn icon to your website, blog, and e-newsletter.

9. Post updates on a regular basis.

- Post updates at least 2-3 times weekly. When posting, alternate between posting links with thumbnails and uploading photos directly.

- Periodically "Pin to Top" your most popular updates.

- Monitor your page analytics.

10. Experiment with LinkedIn Jobs and Ads.

- Experiment with LinkedIn Jobs. A 30-day posting is $195.

- Minimum bid for a click on a "Sponsored Update" is $3.50.

- LinkedIn launched LinkedIn for Nonprofits in 2013.

11. Create a LinkedIn Group.

- There are over 2.1 million LinkedIn Groups of which 87,000* are organized under the "Nonprofit" category.

- Create a LinkedIn Group using your nonprofit's name or that of a cause, such as "Support Animal Rights." You can change your group's name up to five times.

  1. Select the Nonprofit Category and upload a logo (100x60 pixels).
  2. Summary and Description should be brief.
  3. Select "Request to Join."
  4. "Yes" to Group Directory and display on profile.
  5. Create a "Members Only" group.

12. Set up your LinkedIn Group.

- Upload a hero image* (626 x 200 Pixels), post Group Rules, and set up your templates. (View Social Media for Nonprofit Organizations)

- Keep your LinkedIn Group closed. (View National Wildlife Federation)

13. Monitor for spammers.

- Monitor your LinkedIn Group for spam. If you do not "Block & Delete" spammers, your members will leave your LinkedIn Group.

- Initially allow everyone to post, but if spam gets out of control, then change to "Submit everything for approval."

14. Prioritize announcements.

- Send weekly announcements under "Manage."

15. Grow your group membership.

- Promote your LinkedIn Group on your website, blog, e-newsletter, and social networking sites.

CONNECT VA

Instagram Best Practices

1. Use Instagram to Report Live

When reporting live from the field or from events and conferences, your new media manager should be adept at using Instagram to capture moments and events in real-time through photos and video. Always include a short caption, and like other social networks, inspirational quotes and powerful stats significantly increase engagement. When the event is over, you can convert the images into a web-based slideshow using Slidagram or a video slideshow using Flipagram.

2. Share Screenshots of Photos a.k.a. Regram

Using the screenshot function on your smartphone, you can add images to your smartphone's photo library that can then be shared on Instagram. You can create screenshots of your own photos or of branded images that you have posted on other social networks and then share them on Instagram. You can also share screenshots of compelling photos posted by others. When using images from others, be sure to tag them if they have a presence on Instagram using the "Add People" function. It's also worth noting that images embedded with quotes and stats are very popular on Instagram.

3. Add Hashtags to Captions, and Like the Photos of Others

Nonprofits that consistently use hashtags on Instagram have twice as many followers as those that don't. Instagram users regularly monitor hashtags, thus enabling your nonprofit to gain more exposure to potential new followers. In addition to your event and cause awareness campaign hashtags, your nonprofit should also monitor and use the hashtags that are most popular on Instagram. Also, as part of your event reporting and cause awareness campaigns, you can crowdsource images and videos on Instagram by asking your followers to use your hashtag when sharing images on Instagram and then convert the images using your hashtag into a slideshow or embed them directly into your website or blog.

Another way to grow your Instagram following is to regularly like images posted by others. Each day take a couple of minutes to like at least 10 images posted by those you are following. In the future Instagram will likely enable users to forward their favorite images posted by nonprofits to their followers which will help your nonprofit gain new followers (similar to retweets). But until then, your nonprofit is limited to promoting your Instagram web profile, using hashtags, and liking the photos of others.

4. Use Third-Party Instagram Apps

There are number of third-party Instagram apps worth experimenting with. In addition to Slidagram and Flipagram, your nonprofit, should explore Statigram for tracking your Instagram analytics and Copygram which allows you to print your Instagram photos (good for volunteer appreciation gifts and as a fundraiser at events). You can also use Pic Stitch to create collages of your Instagram images and Pixlr-o-matic for advanced photo editing.

5. Share at Least One Image Daily

To gain followers on Instagram, you must be active on Instagram. If possible, post once in the morning and once in the afternoon or evening. Instagram images and video have peak activity during the first four hours after sharing, so to be consistently active, you need to post twice daily. If you cannot be active that often, then sharing one image or video daily is enough activity to build a following slowly but surely over time.

Many nonprofits already participate in cause awareness day campaigns. Unfortunately it's without a strategy in place because most nonprofits aren't aware of the campaigns until the actual day of the campaign when they see other nonprofits tweeting, sharing, and posting about the campaign. To effectively use mobile and social media to raise funds on cause awareness days, you need to prepare months in advance. The first step is to decide whether your nonprofit will create your own awareness day campaign or build your campaign around an already well-known awareness day, or both. Then when planning your content strategy, add the awareness day campaign(s) to your editorial calendar. At a minimum, you need at least six weeks to prepare for an awareness day campaign. Once scheduled, to effectively promote and build excitement for your campaign, your nonprofit should:

- Create a page on your website that prominently features the date and hashtag of the cause awareness day and describes why the cause is important. It should also detail as least three actions that your donors and supporters can take on the awareness day, such as make a donation, sign a petition, share the page with their social networks, become a volunteer, and so on. This page should also prominently feature a donate button, an e-newsletter, mobile alert opt-in forms, and social network icons.

- If fundraising is central to your campaign, you can also create a crowdfunding project and/or a social fundraising campaign to encourage others to raise funds for you nonprofit during the campaign. If you do so, add a "Fundraise" button and pitch your awareness day campaign page.

- Consider hosting a tweet chat, Google+ Hangout, or webinar on the day of the campaign. Promotion for these online events should be integrated with your campaign page and included in all email promotions.

- Design a set of promotional images and graphics for your campaign in order to maximize promotion and sharing on mobile and social media. Be sure to embed your avatar or logo and the hashtag for the campaign on the images and graphics.

- At least one month before the cause awareness day, send out a save the date email announcing the campaign and ask donors and supporters to follow you on social networks so they can promote the campaign to their social networks on the awareness day. You should also encourage donors and supporters to subscribe to your mobile alerts so that they receive a text reminder on the awareness day. If you will be running a social fundraising campaign, encourage donors and supporters to create their fundraising pages in this email and provide a link to your fundraising guide. You should send a reminder email one week before the awareness day and again on the morning of the day.

- In the weeks and days before the awareness day, send out countdown tweets, updates, and posts on mobile and social media. Always include the campaign's hashtag and a link to your campaign page. You can also create a Thunderclap (thunderclap.it) to enlist your followers to help promote your campaign.

- On the morning of the awareness day, your first tweet, update, and post should announce that it is a cause awareness day. For example, "*It's #WorldWaterDay! Help us provide clean water to the 780 million people worldwide who go without: yourlink.org*" These are consistently the most popular tweets and updates on mobile and social media on awareness days. Post your announcement multiple times throughout the day for those in different time zones, but with different stats or powerful statements. If your audience is global, schedule these announcements to be sent throughout the 24-hour period of your cause awareness day campaign. Your announcement should also be sent in a mobile alert on the awareness day, preferably in the morning during working hours.

CONNECT VA

- On the day of your campaign, tweet and retweet a wide variety of content at least twice per hour and link to your campaign page and use the campaign hashtag as often as possible in your tweets. For other social networks, post two to three times throughout the day. Also, be sure to thank donors and supporters in real-time on mobile and social media.

- In the days following the campaign, update your campaign page. Summarize the campaign's success and thank donors and supporters for their participation. In addition to fundraising totals, you could list the number of page views, retweets, and shares received as well as the number of petition signatories, volunteers, and so on. You should also announce the date of next year's campaign, if possible.