

BEST PRACTICE – SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CLUBS

SOCIAL MEDIA CAN BE A TREMENDOUS PROMOTIONAL TOOL FOR YOUR CLUB. IT IS THE FACE OF YOUR CLUB AND A WINDOW INTO YOUR CLUB'S CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT. IT IS A SPACE WHERE YOU CAN BE CREATIVE, FUN, AND TELL YOUR CLUB'S STORY TO THE WORLD. YOUR CLUB IS A BUSINESS AND SOCIAL MEDIA IS A REPRESENTATION OF THIS ONLINE.

THIS BEST PRACTICE DOCUMENT CAN BE USED TO ENHANCE YOUR CLUB'S USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE AND USE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS TO POSITIVELY REPRESENT AND GROW YOUR CLUB.



1. COMPLETE ALL ASPECTS OF YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES

FIRST IMPRESSIONS ARE IMPORTANT AND LASTING. SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS THAT ARE ONLY PARTIALLY COMPLETED ARE HARD TO TAKE SERIOUSLY BECAUSE THEY AUTOMATICALLY APPEAR LESS PROFESSIONAL. CHOOSE A NAME OR HANDLE THAT EASILY IDENTIFIES YOUR CLUB, AND TAKE THE EXTRA FEW MINUTES TO THOUGHTFULLY FILL OUT THE “ABOUT YOU” INFORMATION. USE YOUR LOGO FOR THE AVATAR. MAKE PEOPLE’S FIRST IMPRESSION OF YOUR CLUB A GOOD ONE.

2. YOU ARE WHAT YOU POST

USE COMMON SENSE WHEN YOU POST, LIKE, AND SHARE CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA. WHAT YOU PUT OUT THERE BECOMES A REPRESENTATION OF YOUR CLUB AND YOUR CLUB’S CULTURE. YOUR CLUB’S SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS ARE NOT PERSONAL ACCOUNTS SO IT’S IMPORTANT TO THINK OF YOUR CLUB’S IMAGE WHEN USING THEM.

DON’T CRITICISE OTHER CLUBS, PLAYERS, SCOTTISH HOCKEY OR OTHER ORGANISATIONS ON SOCIAL MEDIA – INSTEAD POSITIVE MESSAGING WILL GROW YOUR CLUB AND MAKE IT MORE ATTRACTIVE TO POTENTIAL NEW MEMBERS, PARTNERS AND SPONSORS. BE PROUD OF WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU REPRESENT AS A CLUB WHILE STAYING AWARE OF THE IMAGE YOU’RE CRAFTING AS A RESULT.

3. SOCIAL IS ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

CLUBS CAN USE SOCIAL MEDIA TO BOTH NURTURE EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS AND DEVELOP NEW ONES BY SHARING USEFUL CONTENT. WHETHER ITS SPONSORS, MEMBERS OR FANS MAKE SURE YOU ENGAGE WITH YOUR FRIENDS AND FOLLOWERS.

4. PRIORITISE YOUR NETWORKS

IT MAY BE TEMPTING TO TRY EVERY NEW SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM THAT SPROUTS UP, BUT IT'S DANGEROUS TO SPREAD YOUR MARKETING EFFORTS TOO THIN. TO START, FOCUS ON THE TOP SOCIAL PLATFORMS SUCH AS TWITTER, FACEBOOK, INSTAGRAM AND SNAPCHAT. PROVIDING QUALITY CONTENT VIA THESE OUTLETS HAS A BROAD REACH THAT'S WORTH YOUR TIME AND EFFORT.

5. INTERACT WITH YOUR AUDIENCE

PROVIDING HELPFUL CONTENT IS NICE, BUT IT'S NOT ALL SOCIAL MEDIA HAS TO OFFER. INTERACTING WITH YOUR FOLLOWERS IS ALSO KEY. BUILD CONNECTIONS ONLINE JUST LIKE YOU WOULD IN PERSON.

6. BE CREATIVE

DON'T ASK YOUR TWITTER FOLLOWERS TO "PLEASE RETWEET," OR YOUR FACEBOOK FRIENDS TO "LIKE" YOUR PAGE. INSTEAD, GET CREATIVE. YOU CAN STILL ACCOMPLISH THOSE TASKS, BUT YOU'RE BETTER OFF EARNING THEM WITH FUN HELPFUL, SHAREWORTHY CONTENT.

7. BE WARY OF SPAM

NOT EVERY TWITTER FOLLOWER IS A FLESH-AND-BLOOD PERSON. HOW CAN YOU TELL? IF THEY'RE FOLLOWING 20,000 PEOPLE BUT HAVE ZERO FOLLOWERS, THE CHANCES ARE THEY'RE FABRICATED. (DON'T CLICK ON ANY LINKS THEY MIGHT SEND YOU.)

8. BE TRANSPARENT TO GAIN TRUST

SHOULD YOU RUN INTO AN ISSUE THAT CAUSES A FLURRY OF CRITICISM ON SOCIAL MEDIA, THE WORST THING YOU CAN DO IS TRY AND HIDE FROM IT. RATHER THAN DELETE COMMENTS, TRY AND RESPOND THE BEST YOU CAN, AND DON'T BECOME DEFENSIVE. WORK TO REMEDY THE ISSUE AND LET THOSE WHO CARED ABOUT IT ONLINE KNOW WHEN IT'S RESOLVED.

9. ENTERTAIN AND INFORM

THE FOCUS OF THE VAST MAJORITY OF YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS SHOULD BE TO ENTERTAIN AND TO INFORM. YOU ARE REPRESENTING YOUR CLUB'S IDENTITY, VALUES, AND CULTURE WITH HOW YOU POST. IF YOU WANT TO ATTRACT NEW MEMBERS, FANS, PARTNERS, AND SPONSORS THEN ENTERTAINING AND INFORMATIVE POSTS WILL HELP.

10. AVOID POOR GRAMMAR AND SPELLING

FEW THINGS REDUCE YOUR CREDIBILITY AS QUICKLY AS GRAMMAR MISTAKES AND SPELLING ERRORS CAN. TO HELP AVOID THEM, PREP YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATES IN A DOCUMENT OR SPREADSHEET AND PROOFREAD BEFORE YOU HIT "SHARE."

11. BE VISUAL

PHOTOS AND VIDEOS WILL BOOST YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA STRATEGY. TWEETS THAT FEATURE IMAGES EARN 150% MORE RETWEETS, ARE FAVOURITED 89% MORE, AND LEAD TO 18% MORE CLICKS.

12. KEEP YOUR BRAND CONSISTENT ACROSS SOCIAL NETWORKS

YOUR CLUB HAS A CULTURE AND IDENTITY AND YOU SHOULD PORTRAY THIS IN YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA, SO DON'T LOSE YOUR IDENTITY WHEN YOU'RE WORKING ACROSS SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS. CAREFUL PLANNING CAN HELP WITH THIS.

FIRST ESTABLISH A CLEAR VISION OF YOUR BRAND BEFORE YOU SET UP YOUR VARIOUS ACCOUNTS (OR TAKE THE TIME TO DO SO ASAP IF YOU'VE ALREADY SET THEM UP), THEN HOLD TO THAT VISION AS YOU POST IN EACH NETWORK. THIS CAN INCLUDE USING THE SAME PROFILE PICTURE, BUSINESS NAME AND COLOUR SCHEME SO YOU'RE EASILY RECOGNISABLE.

13. SHARE WITHOUT EXPECTATIONS

JUST BECAUSE YOU'VE STARTED PUTTING TIME AND EFFORT INTO SOCIAL MEDIA DOESN'T MEAN YOU'LL SEE BIG RESULTS RIGHT AWAY. SIMILAR TO STARTING OUT WITH A BUSINESS, YOUR REACH MAY BE SLOW AT FIRST UNTIL YOU MAKE CONNECTIONS, BUILD A REPUTATION AND DEVELOP A STRATEGY. CONSISTENCY AND PATIENCE CAN PAY OFF.

14. Don't Fixate on the Numbers

It's painfully easy to get caught up in the numbers game, but don't. While having lots of Facebook fans and Twitter followers can be good, it really depends on the quality of those relationships.

If you have 1,000 Twitter followers that are all spam accounts, your tweets are being delivered to an audience that doesn't truly exist and won't benefit from your social media efforts.

15. Have Fun

Have fun with it! Try new ideas, post different types of content, and always keep your messages upbeat. Share success, your club's values, and tell your club's story. Positive and fun messaging will grow your club.