

How to start and manage your social media presence

1. Create goals for social media use
 - a. Look at your strategic plan and other library goals and think about how social media could help meet goals or address a problem in your library.
 - b. Identify the audience you would want to reach to meet your goals and how you would address that audience.
 - c. Think about how you would measure to see if you are meeting your goals.
2. Choose the right social media platform for your library. Different platforms have different user bases and work well with sharing different types of content. You should investigate the platform to make sure it meets your needs.
 - a. Investigate the social media platform's user base to see if your target audience is present on the platform. The Pew Internet study is a good place to start:
<http://www.pewinternet.org/2015/01/09/demographics-of-key-social-networking-platforms-2/>
 - b. Learn about the posting and content rules of the social media platform to see if they would allow you to post content that would help you meet your goals.
3. Create a social media team or, if your library is smaller, appoint an individual staff member to manage your social media presence.
 - a. Make time for social media and schedule it into your work so that content is being posted in a consistent manner. Make a plan on how to cover the duties during staff vacations and sick days. Different tools (such as Hootsuite and TweetDeck) can help you schedule posts ahead of time and manage multiple platforms at once.
 - b. Create a social media policy to guide your social media use. Some questions to consider:
 - i. How often will you post?
 1. Some thoughts on timing from David Lee King:
<http://www.davidleeking.com/how-often-should-you-post-to-social-media/>
 - ii. What will you post about? What will you avoid posting about?
 - iii. What kind of voice will you use? Professional, friendly, or another voice?
 - iv. How will you handle complaints or inappropriate messages that you may receive through social media? When will you remove content?
 - c. Get ideas from the Social Media Policy Database:
<http://socialmediagovernance.com/policies/>. Also keep in mind any policies your municipality may have for social media use.
4. Get a feel for the social media channel
 - a. Spend some time investigating the site. Listen to what others are talking about and how they talk about it.
 - b. Follow peer libraries, patrons, community members, and other community organizations.
 - c. Think about how you can fit into the conversation.

5. Create content
 - a. Create a style guide for your social media manager or team on how to post content. Some things to take into consideration:
 - i. How will you refer to the library?
 - ii. Will staff members be anonymous?
 - iii. What type of pictures will you share and where will they come from?
 - b. Consider making an editorial calendar- a document that lists the content and/or events you would like to talk about on social media and when and how you will talk about them.
 - c. Follow your policies, style guide, and schedule to post to your social media profile.
6. Use analytics to measure success
 - a. Become familiar with the analytics tools that are available for your social media platform.
 - b. Gather your analytics data in a consistent manner and use the data to measure whether you are reaching your social media goals.
 - c. Find out what is working and what isn't, and use this information to modify your social media use.
 - d. Continue to observe how your followers and others are using social media, and update your policies and content as appropriate.

Resources:

The Librarian's Nitty-gritty guide to Social Media by Laura Soloman

Managing Your Library's Social Media Channels by David Lee King

www.davidleeking.com by David Lee King

What's on your mind? A Social Media Workshop by Melissa McLimans, Emily Passey, Vicki Tobias at WILS World 2015. Slides available: <http://www.slideshare.net/wilsjen/whats-on-your-mind-50857505?ref=http://www.wils.org/news-events/wilsevents/wilsworld-2015/wilsworld-2015-presentation-and-workshop-slides/>