
Digital Outreach to Support Your Record Clearing Practice

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Why Social Media?

- Wide reach
- Mostly free
- People can access in their own time, which is good for clients
- Great for networking & partnerships
- Easy to use once you get the hang of it
- Can promote websites, videos, or other existing content



Barriers and downsides

- Building your network takes effort, regular posting, etc.
- Not everyone is on social media, especially vulnerable populations
 - But people on social media will share info with friends and neighbors
- Tagging decision-makers takes a lot of thought and strategy
- Spending money is the best way to reach people that don't follow you



Messaging > Money

- Messaging is more important than money, but a little bit of money helps!
- Spending between \$100-500 can make a big difference to your work.
- But content is key. Knowing who your audience is, what your goal is for that audience, and what your audience wants to hear is essential.



First, Know Your Audience

- The audience is NEVER “the general public” and the goal is NEVER “awareness”
 - Clients and Service Providers
 - Funders, Foundations, & Donors
 - Advocates and Activists
 - Elected Officials and Policy Makers
 - Yes, even if you are a restricted program!
 - Journalists
 - Volunteers, Board Members, etc.



Next, Determine Your Goal

What are you trying to get your audience to do?

- **Call your hotline or apply for a resource**
 - Facebook and Instagram, maybe TikTok if static enough
- **Support your work with donations or volunteer**
 - LinkedIn or maybe Facebook for smaller dollars
- **Provide grassroots support**
 - Twitter or potentially Instagram
- **Make a policy change (lawmakers)**
 - Twitter (at least for staffers but occasionally electeds themselves)
- **Attend a know-your-rights presentation or legal clinic**
 - Facebook or Instagram service providers & electeds who will share your info on twitter



The Value of Targeting

- Running an advertisement on social media is a great way to achieve goals, because you can **target** your ideal audience by various demographics, interests, and location.
- In some ways, Facebook has made this more difficult, but this is still a great strategy component.



Examples of Content and Targeting

- “Geofencing” the state capital to get legislation passed
- Running a Facebook ad based on stated job category to clients who need employment services
- Promoting an event to people based on interests
- Providing resource info by zip code



Add Ad Budgets to Grant Applications

- Communications work is legal work! If you are putting together a grant application that involves client outreach, community education, policy advocacy, etc. be sure to include a line item for advertising costs!



Which platform to use and how?

- The more important thing is to get people outside of your existing network, not where your “followers” are
- But you should think about your types of followers because they can be messengers through sharing content
- People want to feel informed, inform their contacts, and signal what they agree with.



A few best practices

- Keep everything on one account, don't create accounts for individual projects
- Try to post original content when you can, not just retweets and shares
- Social media kits can help others carry your message
 - Social media kits are a vital tool for grassroots campaigns
 - Social media kits can absolutely be used for client resources, not just advocacy



Facebook

- Tends to be people who like/support you
- To the extent that online fundraising works, Facebook is a decent platform
- Give people something they can “like”, even if you’re talking about something negative
- Known for being an older audience but low-income young people still use Facebook
- Advertisements: Google is for people who are searching for answers, Facebook is for people who don’t know they need answers



Instagram

- Not just pretty pictures
 - Flyers actually do really well on Instagram
 - Screen shots of articles work well - Get a link tree for “link in bio”
- Starting to have a big activists’ scene
 - Pay attention to hash tags
- Don’t underestimate the value of “stories”
- Instagram ads can run through FB



Twitter (as of right now)

- Activists, advocates, allies, journalists, and elected officials
- Follows and retweets don't equal "likes"
- Good way to get on someone's radar, especially if you tag them
- Heartwarming stuff doesn't work super well here, but post if you have someone to tag
- One hashtag is great, three is too many



Twitter ad best practices

- Promoted tweets are inexpensive but targeting isn't as good as Facebook.
- Keep your tweets relevant to the audience that tends to be on twitter.
- Assume people won't click a link, no one does. Use graphics that are eye catching and descriptive without having too much text.
- All relevant info must be in body of tweet.



LinkedIn

- **Networking!**
 - This is where your big donors and Board members spend their time
 - Young professionals use LinkedIn to build their profiles – engage them here!
- This is a good place to make a case for donations, whether or not you ask for money directly
- This is a good place to do outreach for volunteers, so don't discount this platform or ads on the platform.



YouTube and Videos

- Post to YouTube and then embed videos into newsletters and your website
- Whenever you can, post a full video somewhere, rather than posting a YouTube link
- Take advantage of “key words” to get people to watch your video
- Use the \$700 version of PowToon to create animated explainer videos and a cell phone to do quick interviews with staff, etc.



TikTok

- Super accessible way to deliver content, especially but not exclusively to youth.
- Lots of opportunities to take advantage of a newer platform – Very few legal aid organizations or similar organizations are on TikTok so you can define how the medium is used.
- “How tos” work best here.



Google Ads

- A good way to reach people who have already self-identified as having a problem or know they want information about something.
- Google ad grants for non-profits can pay for your ads.
- Make sure whatever page you are linking to is up-to-date, relevant, informative, and accessible.
 - All of the page clicks in the world won't help if you aren't linking to good content.



Key Takeaways

- Refine your content so it's exactly what your target audience wants to hear, so they will take the action you want them to take
- Put as much relevant info in the post as possible.
- Think of ads as a way to get a message in front of people that aren't necessarily actively searching for that info
- Use targeting tools so you can get in front of your specific goal audience
- Know who is on each platform



Questions?

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