

Remember to Rotate Your Content

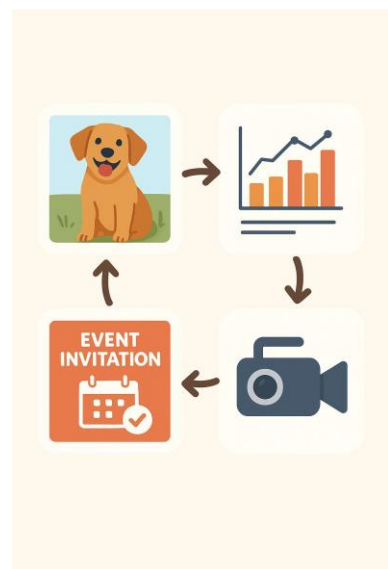
Content has been key for a number of years now to engage and motivate stakeholders and keep them coming back to your social media posts, blog, website, emails or other communication vehicles. For the people you are trying to reach, you want your content to be interesting, informative, helpful, fun – whatever speaks to them. For you and your organization, you want your content to reflect your brand and reinforce key messaging that supports your mission and goals.

Clearly, different types of content are appropriate for different audiences. An article or post meant for professional colleagues, for example, may be more technical or industry-specific in nature. You may want to remind donors or financial backers of your responsible use of funds and organizational stability. And you probably know from tracking and testing that different subject lines, messages, photos, graphics, etc., appeal to different people. This is pretty basic stuff. At the same time, it's easy to get into a routine or focus on communicating time-sensitive information, such as milestones, breaking news or events. That's why remembering to rotate your messages may be helpful in appealing to the diversity of your constituents.

Pipeline communications typically include news and announcements (everything from personnel changes to new product and service launches), milestones (our 500th dog was adopted today) and events. Then there's the content we talked about above: helpful tips and hacks, lists of interesting facts, features (stories, blurbs, photos) on staff, customers, service recipients or volunteers, financial graphics, industry-related education and more.

In addition to looking at your communications from the type of content it is, you may want to think about varying it based on your audience member type and what motivates them. Here are a few categories to consider, using one of my own areas of expertise, nonprofit communications, for examples.

Compassion and Caring – those who are driven by the desire to help or feel a connection. This is the bread and butter for most nonprofit organizations' communications, including stories and video/photos of service recipients and volunteers



at work, testimonials, case stories. Often there is a strong emotional pull. Remember that in addition to conveying the “need” or the challenge or problem, people typically want to be part of a solution and know that their participation will have an impact.

Fact-Based – people who thrive on details and FAQs. They want to see data in addition to anecdotal testimony or proof. Graphics and charts are made for facts and figures and do well on many social media platforms and as part of articles and blog posts. “1 out of 4 older adults fall each year. Here’s what we’re doing to help.”

Emergency – Particularly in the case of donations and assistance needed by nonprofit organizations, many people respond well to helping with emergency situations: natural disasters, empty food bank shelves, increase in unexpected veterinary bills. While annual membership campaigns and unrestricted giving are critical to keeping the doors open and lights on for many nonprofits, special funds may drive some people to give or give more.

‘New and Novel’ – New or innovative programs or products often have widespread appeal. Announcing your new helpline or training classes may catch the attention of people who have been scrolling past your regular social media posts. Be on the lookout around your organization for the new and noteworthy, big or small, as fodder for your content.

Deadline Driven – You likely know someone who is motivated by a deadline, whether they are a procrastinator or someone who takes more time to consider things before acting. Reinforcing timelines and deadlines can be important. “Our Facebook campaign ends tonight at 6pm and we are \$500 short of our goal.” Filling that gap also is a big motivator.

Digital communications, including social media, provide more opportunities for strategic and creative content. Clearly you want consistency and clarity in all your communications and for all aspects of your program to be aligned with overall organizational objectives. Still, addressing target audiences with refined versions of your key messaging and delivered through diverse content and media may result in both tactical desired action – opening, reading, liking, commenting – and longer term results such as making a purchase or donation, joining the team, contacting a community leader, becoming an advocate.