

FACT SHEET 2

TIPS FOR GENERATING SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

Social media is all about starting a conversation – posting an article, link or photo that captures the attention of your audience, sparks a debate or prompts shares – more people see your post, become aware of your brand, and so it goes on.

If your resources are stretched, or you don't have a smart strategy, your Facebook page or blog might be feeling a little flat. Maybe you simply want to grow your audience but aren't sure how. Here are a few smart tips for generating compelling content your readers will love.

1. Be relevant Hooking your readers for the first time is one thing, but the key to social media is to keep them coming back for more. It's therefore essential you consistently provide actionable, engaging and relevant content. Make your posts stand out from the crowd by giving your readers supporting evidence – photos, infographics, research or quotes that support what you say.

2. Speak the right language It's important to build a rapport with your readers. The key is to understand your audience and why they're interested in you in the first place. What do your readers want to know from you? What do they like and dislike? Knowing your audience will also help you develop the right tone – in order to engage your audience it's important to have more of a conversational approach, but you need to talk their language, so take a look at industry-specific forums, Twitter and Facebook pages to see how your audience is already communicating with each other. Remember, you may find you have to adopt a different style depending on whether you're posting to Pinterest, Instagram, Twitter, Facebook or your company blog.

3. Become a trusted reporter You can engage your audience by using social media to become a trusted reporter or source of information. Share links to relevant news and information in a timely manner – no one wants to read news three days late – and provide your own comment or opinion on the news to ensure what you're sharing is of value. Tell your audience why this information is relevant to them.

4. Inspire shares Your content needs to be shareable – you want your content to 'go viral' in order to draw the attention of new readers. In Facebook terms, this means you want people to click the 'share' icon and on Twitter you want people to 'Retweet' – you want people to share your blogs to their own social media feeds. So what makes something viral?

- Content that is entertaining – we all need a little light relief. Sharing funny videos or pictures is guaranteed

to up your share rate, but make sure the content is relevant to your followers.

- Factual information – people love to learn new facts, so sharing how-to guides is another way of guaranteeing shares.
- Motivational – motivational posts can inspire shares and capture the attention of your audience.
- Controversial – posts that are controversial or ask questions will inspire your audience to engage with you and each other.

And don't forget to make it easy for your readers to share your content. If your blog is lacking a 'share' toolbar, no one's going to post your latest post to their Facebook page or Twitter feed.

5. Keywords When generating content, always think about keywords. What will your as-yet untapped audience be searching for online? Including relevant keywords in your blogs and social media posts can help draw your content to the top of the Google rankings. To help you, there are free online tools such as Google AdWords and Wordtracker that can help you identify the most valuable keywords for your subject. Use of keywords also extends to the title of your content – what title can you use that most reflects what you think people will be searching for in order to find your content?

6. Quality over quantity Although it's important not to spread your resources too thin – there's nothing worse than committing to every single social media channel only to post once in a blue moon – it's just as important not to overwhelm your readers with frequent, meaningless posts. Commit to a frequency you can maintain, and spread your posts throughout the day.

7. It's not all about you. It might be tempting to use social media to post links to your own website content exclusively, but you'll build better relationships if you share, follow and comment on other people's posts, too. Start by following industry groups, organisations and peers and engage with their content, commenting on or sharing their posts where relevant to your subscribers.

If in doubt, talk to an expert. The team at Bella Media are experts in social networking and content generation. Call 02 9398 2755 to talk to us about your social networking strategy and management.