

STORYTELLING HANDBOOK



Marketing Your Project

This handbook will guide you in marketing your project. Once your content is created and published, it's time to get the word out! There are so many ways to do so – traditional media, social media, onsite promotion, and more. Use the tips and examples in this handbook to help plan and execute your promotion.

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Social Media

It's time to get the word out and get people to use your content. One of the main ways you can market your finished project is through social media. Here are few tips to help you create effective social media posts.

1 Post insider information. Think ahead while you are creating your project. Take pictures and videos of the behind-the-scenes action while creating your project. Use this content on social media to promote your finished product.

2 Embrace the visual. Tweets, Facebook and LinkedIn posts with images get more engagement. Pinterest, Instagram, and Snapchat are based entirely on images. Create a branded “featured image” to share with your post, but also create separate images for each of the main points in your content so they can be shared when you repeatedly post them to social media.

3 Customize for the platform. When sharing content, utilize the customizable posting features on each social media platform – this includes the headline, image, and a description of the content you are sharing. The more optimized your post is for a particular platform, the more effective your promotion will be.

4 Share at the right time. For maximum engagement, the content you're sharing needs to reach as many people as possible, so you have to go where the crowd is – and when they are online and active. Keep in mind that different social media platforms may not have the same peak times.

- 5 Pay attention to anniversaries and current events.** Make a list of special days (like World Water Day) and anniversaries of historic events so you can post related content on those days. Also watch the headlines for ways to link your content to what's happening locally and nationally.
- 6 Post multiple times.** Numerous studies suggest you will be more effective by promoting the same content multiple times on social media. With multiple images and multiple headlines for your content, you can engage with your followers without them even knowing a link is to the same content you posted earlier. As social media users don't see most of your social media posts on any given day anyway, consider posting multiple times to social media as a way to ensure your audience has a chance to see your content.
- 7 Use keywords in your posts.** Don't underestimate the power and effectiveness of social search. Sites like Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and other social networks have search features that operate just like search engines.
- 8 Capitalize on hashtags.** We've all seen hashtags in social media (#Rio2016 or #TheVoice). Hashtags are a way for you to categorize content on social media platforms. If you search for a specific hashtag inside a social media platform, you see every post that has used that hashtag. Hashtags are one of the best ways to organically expand your reach on social media. In order to expand your reach and get more impressions for your posts and tweets, start incorporating hashtags. Inserting random hashtags isn't going to be as effective as taking a strategic approach.

Traditional Media

When done well, traditional media can reach a wide audience – whether on TV or through other news sources like newspapers. Consider sending press releases to daily and weekly newspapers, radio and television stations, community and association newsletters , and school/PTA newsletters. Here are a few tips to help you reach out to these more traditional media outlets.

- 1 Pitch a compelling story.** If your story is not unique, there's no reason for editors and publications to cover you.
- 2 Provide a human connection.** If you have a human connection to your story – a success story, an impacted life, or another human interest angle – your story is more likely to get picked up.
- 3 Pitch to the right person.** Research the media you are pitching to to ensure you are sending your press release or calling the reporter that would be most interested in writing about your story. Don't pitch a human interest story to an investigative reporter or a social justice story to a fashion reporter.
- 4 Get to the point.** Most reporters get a lot of pitches and press releases in a day. Make sure your press release or email is clear and to the point. Tell the story of why it's important to the writer's audience within the first sentence.
- 5 Be prepared.** Be ready to answer questions. Prepare your pitch as if the reporter will run it immediately. The less groundwork reporters need to do the more likely they will use it. Give reporters facts, figures, photos, video, trends and your contact info.

6 Be accurate. Make sure that your story is accurate and not overhyped. Tell the story with nouns, verbs and facts, not adjectives. Inaccuracies or misuse of facts will likely damage your relationship with the journalist.

7 Time your pitch appropriately. Some media outlets need several weeks or even months notice to write stories. Don't pitch those outlets on the day of your event. Many media outlets, magazines and blogs publish annual editorial calendars of the topics they plan to cover. Check them.

8 Practice. Practice your pitch several times before contacting the reporters. Reciting your pitch aloud a few times to yourself or someone else can help you sound less scripted and more natural – and make you feel more comfortable in delivering your pitch to journalists.

Other Tour Promotion Ideas

Make sure your content is advertised to the people who would be most interested – your visitors. If your organization creates a local tour, or wants to promote a local tour to your visitors, here are a few suggestions:

Links on websites

Promote your tour on your website. The two best places to link to your tour are the homepage and the visitor information page. Ideally include a banner for extra attention. You can also create a separate page with links to your tour(s). If you do, include the word audio guide or tour in the url (like www.museum.org/audiotour) to improve the search results in Google.

Add the izi.TRAVEL icon to your social media icons

izi.TRAVEL is a social media platform. After your tour is published, place the izi.TRAVEL icon next to the other social media icons on your site and link it to your izi.TRAVEL user profile.

News item or blog post on website

Announcing a free mobile audio guide is great content for your news section and for a blog post. You can link to your tour on the izi.TRAVEL website, but you should also link to the app in the app store, so people can download it and experience your content as they walk around with their phones.

Sponsors or Partner Promotion

Find partners to promote your guide/tour like hotels, local businesses, tourist organizations, etc. If your tour had local or national sponsors, ask those sponsors to announce your tour to their staff and customers. You can also ask your local tourist authority to promote your tour on their website, social media and place postcards in their headquarters.

Cross links

Cooperate with nearby museums/tours and link to each other's content from your content. This way, their visitors can see your content and vice versa.

Article in e-newsletter

Announce the tour in your newsletter. Remind your subscribers several times a year, especially if you add new content.

Landing page for WiFi

If your organization offers wifi, make a landing page – the web-page where the visitor will be forwarded automatically immediately after connection to the WiFi – that links to your tour.

Print Takeaways

Put your free mobile tour in all on-site materials - even your tickets! You can also create small, business card size cards to put on the counter that promote the tour and contain the tour's QR code and links to download the app. izi. TRAVEL has easily customizable designs: <http://academy.izi.travel/help/promotion/promotion-kit/>. Or you can use free software like *Canva* to create your own: <https://www.canva.com>

Floor sticker

You can also place a large sticker on the floor that advertises the tour.

Green graffiti

Looking for a creative outdoor idea? Try using green graffiti – like chalk graffiti – to advertise the tour. Perhaps even in the locations featured on the tour.

Sample Promotion Plan – Hometown Teams

Baseball. Soccer. Hockey. Bowling. Kickball. Surfing. People around the country are drawn to compete in these sports and many others. Still more gather on the sidelines to cheer for their favorite athletes and teams. Nowhere do Americans more intimately connect to sports than in their hometowns. The Smithsonian’s Museum on Main Street (MoMS) program will celebrate this connection in the new traveling exhibition Hometown Teams: Sports in American Communities.

A partnership of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service and state humanities councils, MoMS will travel five copies of “Hometown Teams” on simultaneous year-long tours of Idaho, Illinois, Nebraska, New Jersey and West Virginia beginning in January 2014. Over the course of six years, the exhibition will travel to 180 small towns in 30 states.

OBJECTIVES

- Generate nationwide interest and participation in national tour of exhibition
- Generate national exposure and visibility for MoMS
- Generate state and regional exposure for the State Humanities Councils

TARGET MEDIA	TARGET AUDIENCE
National Print/Broadcast – general, travel, family, entertainment, sports	Families – sports are a huge part of American life and family activities.
Online and social media – general news, travel, sports	Sports fans
Regional broadcast, print and online media in host museum locations	Young Professionals

MEDIA, TACTICS, AND STRATEGY

Story Angles

Identification of possible story angles for the exhibition, plus Smithsonian and exhibition curator for media interview.

- Sporting tradition, a family affair, backbone of a community
- Super Bowl – Feb. 2

Visuals

Selection of promotional imagery and film footage created by MoMS team

Promotional Materials

Development of materials including press kit contents (press release, PSA script, thumbnail image caption sheets, factsheets, calendar listings, etc.). A quantity of large-format postcards and will be supplied to host communities to ensure brand identity.

Long-lead Press Announcement

- Announcement of first venues on national tour
- Launch of social media outlets

Press and Public Opening at Host Museums

SITES will work closely with the host museum on their promotional plan to determine if any public programming or local stories can be expanded to a national story.

Sample Promotion Plan – Continued

Media Outreach

MEDIA TYPE	EXAMPLES
National newspapers	New York Times, USA Today and Wall Street Journal, Associated Press
National general interest, family and entertainment magazines	Good Housekeeping, Nat Geo Kids, Smithsonian
Special interest publications including film, youth, student and sports	Sports Illustrated, SI for Kids, ESPN, ESPN Deportes
National Broadcast Media	NPR, network morning news programs, CBS Sunday Morning, ESPN's The Garage, GMA (Lara and Josh both college past college athletes), Voice of America
Regional newspapers in host cities	including entertainment, lifestyle, arts, news, kids/family, sports writers

MESSAGING

Key Messages:

- Sports as metaphor for pride & community
- MoMS is the face of Smithsonian in small town America.
- 20-year-old outreach program that presents the SITES' museum quality exhibits in local community venues, with each exhibit celebrating and exploring local heritage within the context of a broad national theme.
- MoMS has collaborated with more than 900 institutions in towns across the nation. Each community rallies around the exhibit to bring it to life in a way that resonates with local and regional residents, celebrating their history and culture. Communities make discoveries and connections, bridges cultural gaps. Bringing people together, thinking in new ways, discovering their unique position within the U.S.

Sub messages:

- MoMS develops exhibits meant to stimulate thought and conversations that instill both pride and awareness about a community and its impact.
- MoMS carefully identifies and embraces broad exhibit themes that resonate in every community and reflect the spirit of America.
- In 2014, MoMS launched “Hometown Teams.” The exhibit showcases the connection between towns and their teams. The exhibit will showcase the sports, individuals and artifacts that have been an indelible part of every community, for well over one hundred years.

SPOKESPEOPLE

Smithsonian

- Carol Harsh, Director, MoMS
- Robbie Davis, Project Director, MoMS
- Bob Santelli, exhibition curator – Director, GRAMMY Museum

SCHEDULE

DATE	TASK
September 2014	Draft press release, fact sheets, image captions and other press materials
October 2014	Compile local programming information
November 2014	Announce launch of tour
January 2014	Press Preview and Public Opening at First Host Museum

Social Media Plan Template

Primary goal of campaign:

Secondary goal of campaign:

How will you measure the goal you wish to achieve?

Example goals: To drive traffic to your website; to sell tickets to an event; to raise awareness for an exhibition opening; to increase shares, likes, or comments on a specific channel; to build your membership base; to gain museum volunteers; etc . . .

Measuring your goals: Think about using tools like Facebook Insights or Twitter Analytics to measure overall reach, or new followers added, or the number of engagements—likes, shares, comments. If measuring web traffic, set up a Google Analytics account to track the users coming to your website from your social media posts.

Things to think about:

- Who is the audience? (Age, gender, location)
- Based on audience, what's the best platform for the campaign?
- Will multiple platforms be used?
- Who on staff will work on the campaign?
- What are the proposed dates of the campaign?
- Do the dates coincide with a local, state, or nationwide initiative?
- Will the campaign have a specific hashtag? Check the hashtag for previous use.
- Which local/national partners can you ask to share your content?
- Will you use paid ads from Facebook, Twitter, Google Ads or another service? (Facebook ads are effective and can be very inexpensive.)
- Share information about the campaign with staff members.
- Ask staff members and friends to share content on their accounts.

- What times make most sense to post for your intended audience?
- Do you have a specific url? Track it using sources such as bit.ly
- What's the tone of voice of the campaign? Serious, light-hearted, professional, socially aware, etc.

Resource links:

<http://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-create-a-social-media-marketing-plan/>

<http://marketingland.com/4-components-best-social-media-campaigns-140715>

<http://coschedule.com/blog/social-media-strategy-template/>

Create sample posts for others to review:

DATE	PLATFORM	TEXT	IMAGE
February 18	Twitter	Missed our Valentine's series? Visit #TheCuddlyMuseum and swim in the adorable sweetness. http://sfy.co/u2qb	Valentine's image

How We Did:

GOAL	STATS	ANALYSIS	LESSONS LEARNED

Tips for Ensuring Success:

- Ask for help sharing the content from partners in your area.
- Write and schedule the content ahead of time using a scheduling tool such as Hootsuite or the Facebook scheduler.
- Collect your data as soon as possible after the campaign is over.
- Look at timing. When are most of your followers online?
- Be available to like, thank, or respond to people on social media.

Code of Conduct

_____ is dedicated to providing a harassment-free experience for everyone, regardless of gender, gender identity and expression, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, ethnicity, religion (or lack thereof), or technology choices. We do not tolerate harassment of participants in any form. Sexual language and imagery is not appropriate for any venue or platform, including talks, discussions, Twitter, Facebook, and other online media. Participants violating these rules may be asked to leave or have their comments and submissions deleted at the discretion of the organizers.

Thanks to The Ada Initiative for developing this open code of conduct and sharing it with a Creative Commons Attribution license.

Use the code of conduct on the opposite page (page 18) to set boundaries for any event or online discussion your organization hosts. You can put the code of conduct on your website and link to it from the social media profiles of your organization. You can also hand out a printed version or have a sign at any hosted event at your organization.

