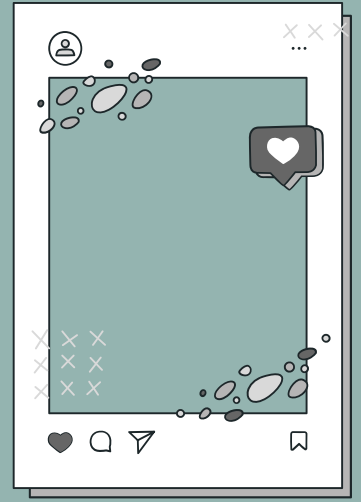
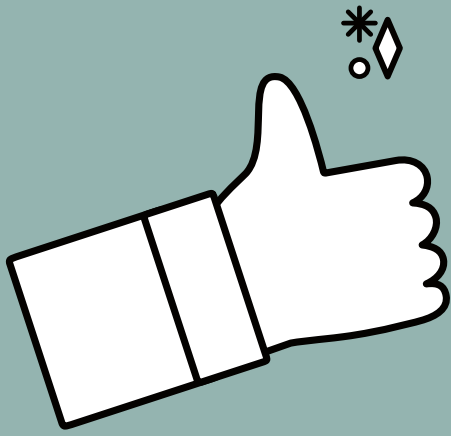


SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES FOR NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS





Hello!

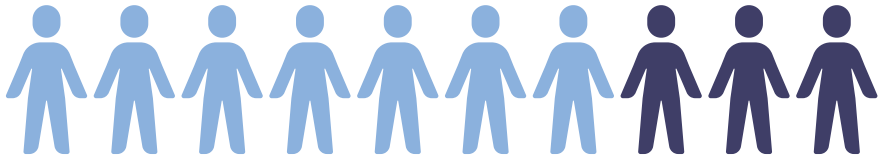
Social media is here to stay. Let's help your nonprofit maximize its impact.

With various platforms, techniques, and algorithms— social media can get overwhelming. This guide is to help you get started with some basics. Ready? Let's go!

Hi! I'm Ollie and will be helping you with social media today!



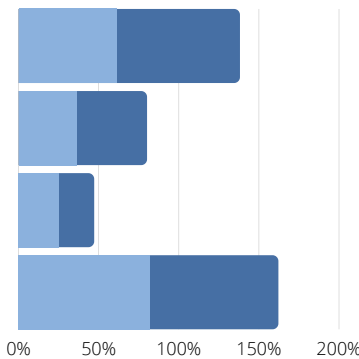
Social Media: Quick Facts



About 7 in 10 Americans use social media.¹



Instagram users spend an average of 30 minutes per day on the app.⁴



Usage of platforms by gender in the U.S.²

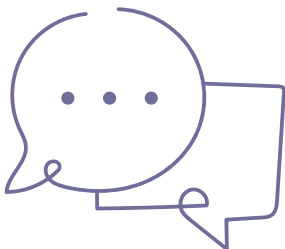
- Women
- Men



Around 4.2 billion people globally use social media.⁶



59% of users get their news from this Twitter.⁵



Around 57% of consumers on social media will follow brands to learn about new services or products that the brand offers.⁸

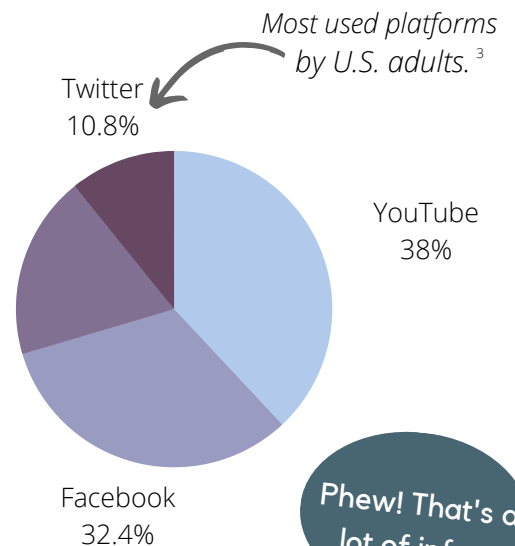


In July 2021, around **98.5%** of Facebook's audience (ages 18+) connected to the platform via a mobile phone.⁷

80% of business executives believe investing in additional resources for social media marketing is important/essential.⁹



Instagram 18.8%



Phew! That's a lot of info...



^{1,2,3} Pew Research. "Social Media Use in 2021." <https://www.pewresearch.org/internet/2021/04/07/social-media-use-in-2021/>
⁴ Hootsuite. "44 Instagram Stats That Matter to Marketers in 2021." <https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-statistics/>
⁵ Hootsuite. "36 Twitter Stats All Marketers Need to Know in 2021." <https://blog.hootsuite.com/twitter-statistics/>
⁶ Datareportal "Digital 2021 October Global Statshot." <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2021-october-global-statshot>
⁷ Datareportal. "Essential Facebook stats for 2021." <https://datareportal.com/essential-facebook-stats>
⁸ Sprout Social. "36 Essential social media marketing statistics to know for 2021." <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-statistics/>
⁹ Sprout Social. "7 statistics that prove the importance of social media marketing in business." <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/importance-of-social-media-marketing-in-business/>

Introduction

Importance

Social media marketing is one of the best ways to stay connected and engaged within the community. Additionally, social media allows nonprofit organizations to tell their story, spread their mission, and make an impactful change while increasing donations to support their cause. Utilizing social media is a great way to keep existing donors engaged while simultaneously attracting new donors. It's fast, free (sometimes low-cost), and a convenient way to grow awareness for a nonprofit organization.

Benefits

There are many great reasons to add social media into your organization's marketing strategies. Below are just a few reasons why many organizations choose social media marketing:¹⁰

- Boosts brand awareness
- Cost-effective
- Can help improve search engine rankings
- Grows consumer base
- Can improve brand loyalty



Social media is a quick way to get your organization noticed by many!



¹⁰ Russell, D. (2021). Social media marketing guide 2021.

Basics

Before we jump right into posting, hashtagging, and Tweeting—there are a few basics we need to cover first...



Become Goal Oriented

The first step in developing a strategic social media plan for your nonprofit is defining your organization's goals. Although it may seem daunting, keep it simple and ask yourself three questions: What do you want to accomplish for your organization? What are the short-term goals for social media marketing? Finally, what long-term goals would you like to accomplish? For many nonprofits, their main goals are:¹¹

- Building organization awareness
- Engaging within their community
- Raising awareness for their mission and cause
- Supporting event fundraising

Create a
timeline for your
goals!



Identify Your Audience

Knowing your audience is crucial with social media marketing. Wanting to target the "general public," is too broad—you need to get specific.¹² Begin with the core demographics such as age, gender, geographical location, etc. If your organization already has a few social media platforms, you can learn more about your demographics through the platform's analytics feature. Additionally, it's good to create audience personas which are depictions of your organization's ideal supporters based on various information and data about your target audience.¹³ An example of a persona could be: *female, age 24-34, has a bachelor's degree, is married, wants children, and lives in an apartment.*



Choose Your Platforms

We understand that there are many platforms to choose from, and it can get very overwhelming! Especially if you have to update each platform regularly. Choose two or three platforms that can best serve your organization, making it easier to dedicate your time to and create amazing content for your organization's audience.¹⁴ Research shows that nonprofit organizations favor Facebook and Twitter for their social media efforts.¹⁵ In this guide, we will focus on those two platforms in addition to Instagram as it's gained significant popularity over the years.

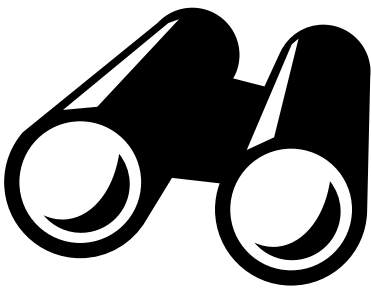
¹¹ Russell, D. (2021). Social media marketing guide 2021 2 books in 1.

^{12,13,14} Sprout Social. "A strategic guide to social media for nonprofits." <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/guides/nonprofit-social-media-guide/>

¹⁵ Warner, T., Abel, A., & Hachtmann, F. (2014). Empowered and engaged: Exploring social media best practices for nonprofits. *Journal of Digital & Social Media Marketing*, 1(4). <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/journalismfacpub/83/>

Content

Content is key. Delivering high-quality, relevant content that supports your cause has a big impact on your audience.



Look at the Past

If you have established platforms already, take a look at what content was already posted. How many likes were there? Was there a lot of audience engagement? What worked and what didn't work? From there, you can get a better sense of how to approach your content creation.¹⁶



Choose the Type

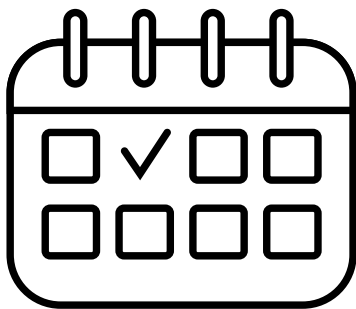
Photos, videos, or text? Depending on the platform you're using, one type of content may be better suited for one platform over the other. For example, Instagram is mainly used to share photos—so high-quality, eye-catching images would work great.



Add These Characteristics

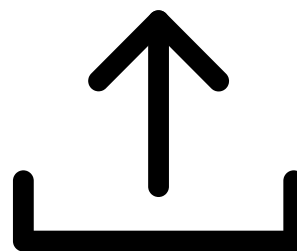
Some of the most powerful messages used by nonprofits include at least one of these five characteristics:¹⁷

- Emphasizing the impact on the person, animal, or thing
- Evoking certain emotions
- Reinforcing personal identity
- Validating a decision or action by appealing to reason
- Having a solid call to action



Create a Content Calendar

Staying organized is critical with social media marketing. You want to create a calendar that includes topic ideas, created content, the status of the content, major campaign/fundraising dates, key events, and more. These can be weekly, monthly, or even annually. This ensures that everyone on the team is on the same page. You can create a content calendar using various resources, including Excel or Google Sheets.¹⁸

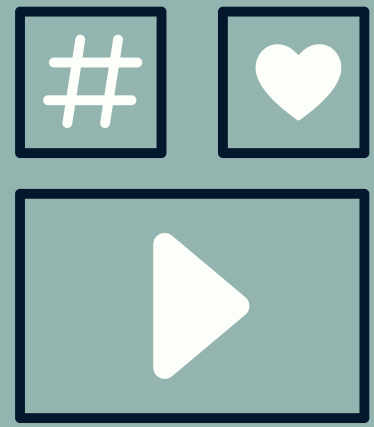
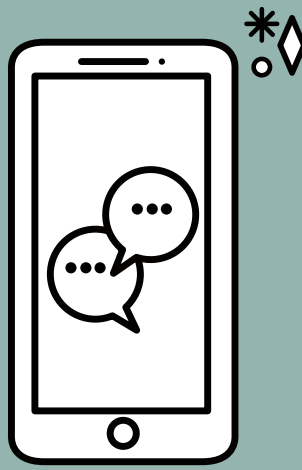
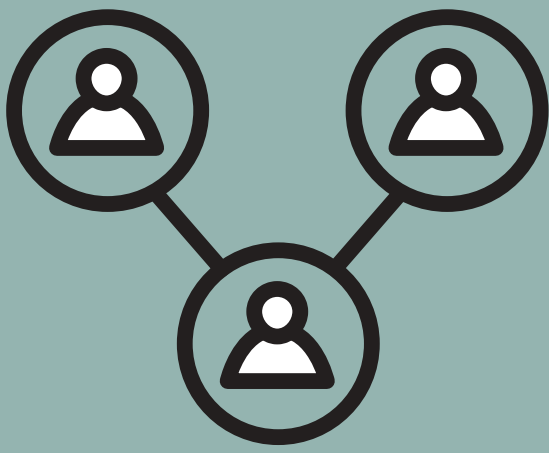


Prioritize Shareable Content

The goal is to spread your message and mission to as many individuals as possible. One way of doing so is to create content that is likely to be shared by others. This includes adding photos or videos, posting an impactful story, infographics, or even exciting facts. Be sure to offer content that your audience (and beyond) will find valuable.¹⁹

Psst! Don't forget to spell-check!

¹⁶ Sprout Social. "A strategic guide to social media for nonprofits." <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/guides/nonprofit-social-media-guide/>
¹⁷ Miller, K. L. (2021). *The nonprofit marketing guide: High-impact, low-cost ways to build support for your good cause*. John Wiley & Sons.
^{18, 19} Hootsuite. "Social media for nonprofits: 11 essential tips for success." <https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-for-nonprofits/>



Let's get started.

The next few pages will help you begin your nonprofit organization's social media strategy.

We know social media is important, we know there are various channels, and we know how important content creation is- so what's next? The following pages will help guide you through the most important basics of getting started with three of the most popular social media platforms that nonprofits use.

Did you know? Globally, the average social media user spends around 2 hours and 25 minutes each day on social media! ²⁰Wow!

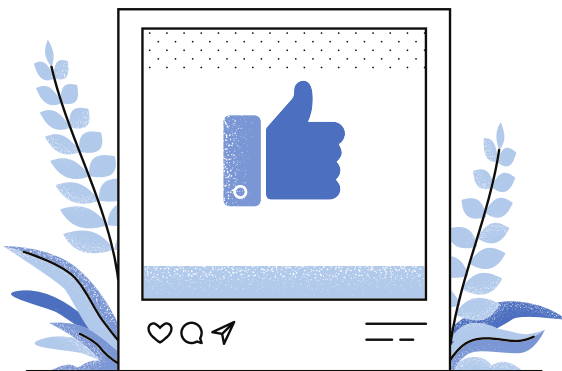
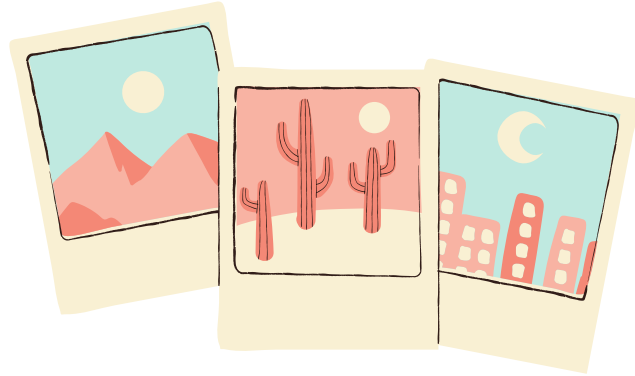


Facebook

With 2.74 billion users monthly and 1.82 billion people logging in daily, Facebook is one of the most popular social media platforms.²¹

Use Photos & Videos

Photos and videos add visual appeal to your content. Utilize images and videos that represent or speak to your organization. This is also an easy way to create content high-quality shareable content.²²

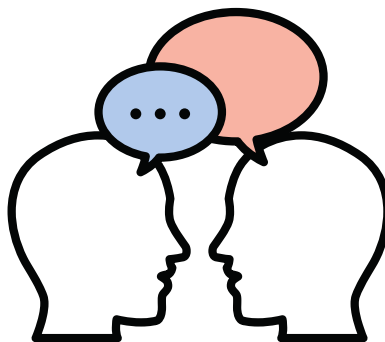


Post Specific Content

Content should focus on addressing your audience's needs while keeping them interested. Creating content categories (i.e. client stories, volunteer highlights, special events, etc.) will keep your content fresh and organized.²³ Don't forget a clear call to action, this will help build awareness and keep your audience engaged.²⁴

Stay Engaged

Engaging with your audience should be a priority. Answer questions, respond to comments, join conversations, look for relevant hashtags, and more. Be sure to create a personable brand voice when interacting with your audience, so they feel more connected to your organization.²⁵



Psst! Look down here!

Don't forget to add a "donate" button to your Facebook page. This is a quick way for users to donate to your cause. You can even add the button to your posts and videos!



²¹ Hootsuite. "140+ Social Media Statistics that Matter to Marketers in 2021." https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-statistics-for-social-media-managers/#Social_media_usage_statistics

²² Russell, D. (2021). Social media marketing guide 2021 2 books in 1.

²³ Sprout Social. "A strategic guide to social media for nonprofits." <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/guides/nonprofit-social-media-guide/>

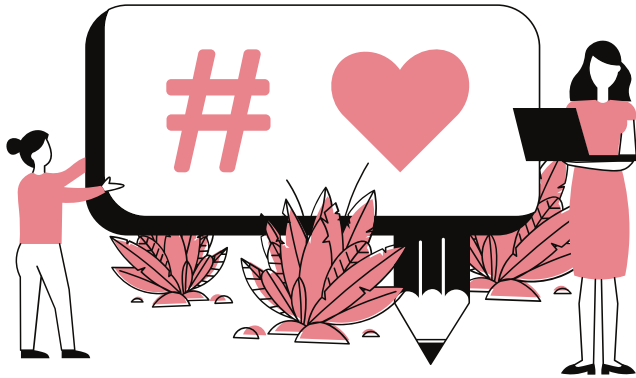
²⁴ Miller, K. L. (2021). The nonprofit marketing guide: High-impact, low-cost ways to build support for your good cause. John Wiley & Sons.

²⁵ Sprout Social. "A strategic guide to social media for nonprofits." <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/guides/nonprofit-social-media-guide/>

Instagram

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Around 1 billion individuals visit Instagram each month and users spend an average of 30 minutes per day on the app.²⁶

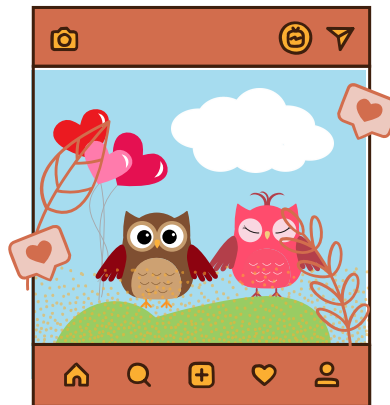


Captivating Captions

Adding a couple of sentences along with hashtags and emojis to your image is a great practice. Hashtags are essential and can help you gain new followers, so look for relevant and trending hashtags to add to your post to boost visibility. Finally, be sure the message accompanying your image creates additional value and engages your audience.²⁷


Quality Content

Decide what type of images you want to post and why they'll be interesting to your audience—professional photos or stock images are great, but you can also take high-quality photos on your phone. You may need to edit your images beforehand, such as cropping or adjusting brightness. Don't forget to mix videos in with your images to keep content fresh and interesting.²⁸



Use Instagram Stories

Utilizing Instagram stories is a great way to keep your followers updated without overwhelming their feed. Use this feature to showcase behind-the-scenes footage at your organization, special events, quick updates, and more. Although these stories only last for 24 hours, you can save them to your Instagram profile for your followers to see.²⁹



Psst! Don't forget to write an interesting bio on your profile. This helps users get a better understanding of your organization!

²⁶ Hootsuite. "44 Instagram Stats That Matter to Marketers in 2021." <https://blog.hootsuite.com/instagram-statistics/>

²⁷ Nonprofit Tech for Good. "10 Instagram Best Practices for Nonprofits." <https://www.nptechforgood.com/2021/04/05/10-instagram-best-practices-for-nonprofits-2/>

²⁸ Russell, D. (2021). Social media marketing guide 2021 2 books in 1.

²⁹ Donor Box. "Top 10 Instagram Tips for the Modern Nonprofit (2021)." <https://donorbox.org/nonprofit-blog/instagram-for-nonprofits/>

Twitter

Twitter has an advertising audience of around 353 million and is the sixth ranked mobile app.³⁰

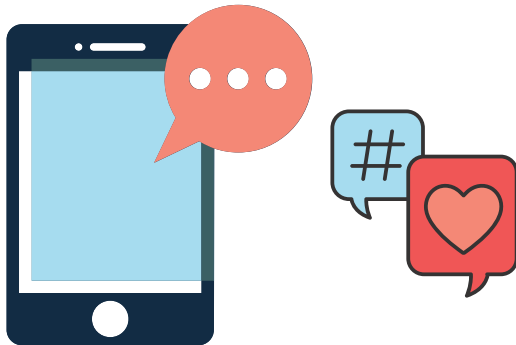
Think Character Limits

Currently, Twitter has a 280-character limit (this includes spaces!) So be mindful of your wording. Keep your Twitter content precise, valuable, and targeted to your audience.³¹



Measure What Works

We know that various types of content perform differently depending on the social media platform— so keep track of what content works for your organization's feed! For Twitter, many users tend to engage more with content that involves statistics, lists, how-to posts, and quotes.³²



Don't Forget Hashtags

Twitter is known for its hashtags— so don't forget to use them! The platform recommends using no more than two hashtags per tweet. The effective use of hashtags has the chance to increase your following. Keep hashtags relevant to your topic and not too general, so your Tweets don't get lost.³³



Hey! Over here!
Don't forget to add photos where they fit in your tweets. People love photos!



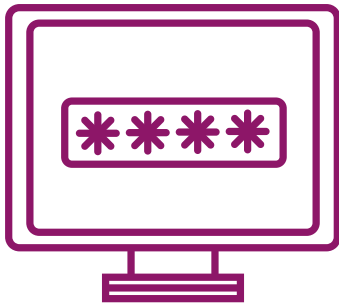
³⁰ Hootsuite. "36 Twitter Stats All Marketers Need to Know in 2021." https://blog.hootsuite.com/twitter-statistics/#Twitter_user_statistics

³¹ Classy. "25 Twitter Tips for the Modern Nonprofit." <https://www.classy.org/blog/twitter-tips-modern-nonprofit/>

^{32, 33} Russell, D. (2021). Social media marketing guide 2021 2 books in 1.

Your Account

From creation to managing, here are some helpful tips regarding your organization's social media accounts.

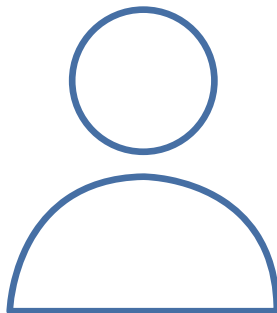


Instagram

Creating an account on Instagram is simple. Once you've signed up, be sure to either sign up as a business account or switch an existing account to a business profile. This will give you better access to promoting posts, viewing insights, and more. Additionally, optimize your profile to do business! This means adding a good profile photo, writing a solid bio, adding contact information, and even your website.³⁵

Look! Down Here!

Don't forget to write down your email and password somewhere safe (and memorable).
I keep forgetting mine...



Facebook

When creating your Facebook business page, fill out as much detail as possible! This includes adding an eye-catching cover photo, an interesting bio, and a username. Be sure to add multiple page administrators so that other people have access to the account. You can also control various roles for your team members on the account as well. Don't forget to review your page's settings; this is a behind-the-scenes look at who visible posts, banned words, and more.³⁴



Twitter

When signing up for a Twitter account, it's essential to create a strong password (including letters, numbers, and symbols) and confirm your account before you begin personalizing your profile. When creating your profile, be sure to connect with others—it's all about networking! Also, don't forget to add a good profile and header image to attract your audience's attention.³⁶

³⁴HootSuite. "How to Create a Facebook Business Page in 7 Easy Steps" <https://blog.hootsuite.com/steps-to-create-a-facebook-business-page/#>

[How to create a Facebook Page for business](#)

³⁵HootSuite. "How to Use Instagram for Business: A Practical Step-by-Step Guide." <https://blog.hootsuite.com/how-to-use-instagram-for-business/>

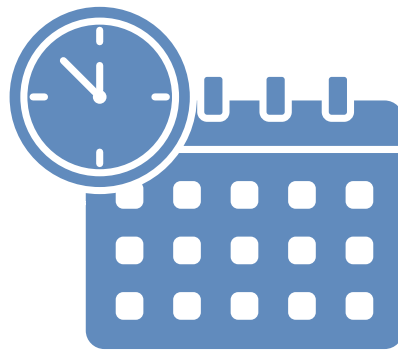
³⁶Sprout Social. "How to Start a Twitter Account for Your Business." <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/how-to-start-twitter-account/>

Think About...

Here are a few valuable tips to keep in the back of your mind when managing your social media presence...

Time

Keep updated with the best times to post on various social media platforms. For example, the best time for posting on Facebook is Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9am-1pm, Instagram is Monday-Friday at 11am, and Twitter is Wednesday from 9am-3pm.³⁷



Tracking

Be sure to regularly track and measure your content's success on the social media platforms you're on. You can review various insights by running reports on Facebook, Twitter, etc. On Instagram, if you register as a business profile, you can view each post's insights and how much engagement that post received.³⁸



Key Messages

Key messages involve the information you want your audience to notice, share, and learn about your nonprofit. They simplify your social media marketing, keep your organization aligned, and help organize your various audiences by targeting the right groups. They're a great way to effectively communicate your nonprofits mission and cause.³⁹



Hey!

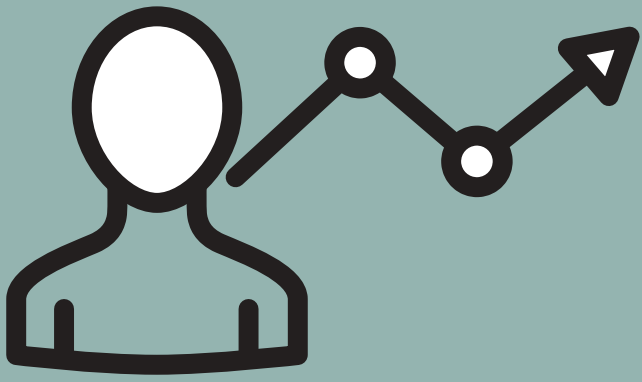
Don't forget to connect with your audience! Users love interacting with brands and organizations!



³⁷ Sprout Social. "The best times to post on social media in 2021." <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/best-times-to-post-on-social-media/>

³⁸ Sprout Social. "A strategic guide to social media for nonprofits." <https://sproutsocial.com/insights/guides/nonprofit-social-media-guide/>

³⁹ HubSpot "The Ultimate Guide to Nonprofit Marketing in 2021." <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/how-to-run-a-lean-mean-nonprofit-marketing-machine>



Conclusion

Nonprofits of any size can benefit from a social media presence. It just takes a little time, patience, and dedication.

The opportunities are endless with a deep understanding of your target audience, knowledge of available social media platforms, and producing creative content. In addition, your nonprofit organization will maximize its impact by raising money for its cause and spreading its mission to new audiences.



PHEW!
We made it!
Now, go have some fun
and get creative with your
social media strategy!

