

## SOCIAL MEDIA RECOMMENDATIONS AND BEST PRACTICES



Here are some recommendations of things to do in both Instagram and Facebook that social media experts have recommended for nonprofits. We recommend these too! You may currently be doing some of them, in which case continue to do them and consider doing them more frequently.

### Facebook

- Consider **changing your Facebook header frequently**, especially when you're promoting events, activities, campaigns, etc. You can have fun with this and do seasonal headers. Canva has great templates you can use – more on this tool on page 3.
- **More frequent posts** will create more engagement, which will attract more followers. A social media plan will help with that since you can plan out and schedule evergreen posts (posts that are relevant any time). It will take a little bit of work to create or gather those, but it will be worth the time in the long run. Try for 1 planned post a day; then add "in-the-moment" posts on top of that. Planned posts will relieve the pressure of having to post every day.
- Consider sharing **more videos/Reels**. Video helps build awareness but can also be fun and educational.
  - Note: If you end up posting anything to YouTube or another outside source, and share it to your organization's Facebook Page, be sure to add text when sharing to connect the dots for people who might not understand what the video is. This helps make the post more shareable and clickable. Most people aren't going to click on a video without knowing what it is first.
- More on videos: **Get creative** with them using different kinds of video like a talking head (person in front of the camera), videos of community activities, OR a graphic with moving elements turned into a video. These types of posts can reach more people sometimes. Check the list on page 3 for tools and apps for this.
- Make sure there are **non-Asks in between the Asks**. A schedule of planned posts will help avoid that problem. If you ask all the time for help, volunteers, wish list items, etc., your audience may get tired of following you!
- **Engage with people who comment**, even if you just say "Thanks", replying with an emoji, or liking their comment. Engagement on comments will encourage more comments and that tells Facebook that people love you – which bumps you up in their algorithm.
- Consider doing **Facebook Lives more often**. This gives you the opportunity to connect with supporters and to educate, update, and inspire. You can test this and see if your audience responds to it and how the engagement is on the insights for these Facebook Lives.

- **Be conscience of posts that make you click “See More.”** It’s ok to do this occasionally when needed for “Ask” posts (or if you’re posting something with lots of education in it) but try to keep from doing that on posts in-between. Facebook algorithms don’t like it.
- Encourage people who are involved in any activities to **tag your organization** on social media.
- **Learn from other nonprofits** doing similar work. Follow them and see what types of things they’re posting and what is getting the most engagement. Add it into your plan and test with your followers.
- **Share more impact and success stories**, community impact stories, etc. This helps prevent over-asking.
- **Experiment with Facebook Stories.** Canva has tons of templates you can use to make them extra fun and engaging.
- Use the “swipe up” function in Facebook Stories to **send followers to a specific link.** This is a great idea to try on campaign-related Stories!

## Instagram

- **Post more videos.** Get creative with various types of videos including talking head video (person in front of the camera), videos of community activities, OR a graphic with moving elements turned into a video. These types of posts can reach more people sometimes. Check the list on page 3 for tools and apps.
- **Engage with people who comment**, even if you just say “Thanks”, replying with an emoji, or liking their comment. Engagement on comments will encourage more comments.
- **Share more impact and success stories**, community impact stories, etc. You can literally share the same thing from Facebook, OR test using roughly the same story as shared on Facebook but use a different image when possible and change the wording slightly so it’s not exactly the same. I’ve seen higher engagement on the slightly different versions with different images for some organizations, but it didn’t really make a difference for other organizations (which if that’s the case for your nonprofit, then share the same on both platforms to reduce effort and save time).
- **Use hashtags in Instagram**, as it’s more important on this platform than others due to people searching for keywords. It’s recommended not to go “overboard” with hashtags. 1-4 is a common and recommended number of hashtags to use. However, it’s okay to use more occasionally, like for holidays or educational posts.
- **Consider creating a LinkTree link.** Since links are not clickable in Instagram, it’s recommended to have a landing page that “houses” multiple important links on it. There are multiple platforms you can use to do this (you can even create a landing page on your website) but the most common and easy to use one is LinkTree; check the list of tools below for more information.
  - Your most current campaign should be at the top – check out this one, for example:  
<https://linktr.ee/copperscatcommune>

- **Share more Stories and Reels.** Instagram is pushing its users to publish and consume more video content. Reels get more engagement than traditional posts and videos. You can actually schedule Reels from Facebook Meta Business Suite! [Here's a good read on some of the top stats regarding Reels.](#)
- Encourage people who are involved in any activities to **tag your organization** on social media.
- You can **use the Donate sticker on Instagram Stories** for campaigns. Please note this is different than the “swipe up” feature that allows followers to “jump” straight to whatever link you’re trying to send them to. To do this, you have to exceed 10,000 followers. (Fun Fact: You don’t have to have 10,000 followers on Facebook to do this though!)

## Tools recommended by Emily:

- **Facebook’s Meta Business Suite** – this is a tool that’s currently being updated frequently. This is (ideally) your “one stop shop” for reviewing your Page’s insights, scheduling posts, responding to comments and messages, and more. You can also schedule posts and reply to comments for Instagram from Meta Business Suite, saving you time and making it more convenient.
- [Buffer.com](#) – scheduling tool (preferred over Hootsuite but both tools work similarly) The free version of this is a great option (you can have up to 3 social accounts linked verses Hootsuite’s 2) [Here’s the link to upgrade Buffer with a 50% nonprofit discount.](#)
- [MeetEdgar.com](#) – scheduling tool that has a very smart system and will share posts that are saved in the “archive” by the date in which it was last shared. This tool is REALLY nice for when you have a pretty decent amount of content in any given category (examples: having a robust stories category; a stats & facts category; a category for quotes; etc.). [Here’s the link to try out Meet Edgar for free.](#)
- **Find more hashtags** at <https://top-hashtags.com/>
- [Linktree.com](#) – tool to “house” multiple links on a landing page. This is especially helpful for Instagram.
- [Canva.com](#) – online design tool that allows you to create graphics, videos, PDFs, etc. – the list goes on. The more you use it, the more you’ll be able to do with it! The sky’s the limit! It’s free to sign up and nonprofits can upgrade to a free pro account [through this link.](#)
- [CapCut](#) – a free digital video editor. CapCut has a large library of music, sound effects, and special effects and filters to add to your videos, and it is truly an all-in-one video editor that makes attractive and professional social media videos. You can also add captions to your videos quickly and easily.
- [Animoto.com](#) – video tool that’s great for when you want something a little different than Canva’s video capabilities and a simpler tool than a full-on video editor like CapCut! The free version is great but [here’s the link to upgrade with a nonprofit discount](#) if you want to check it out as well.

## Other tips:

- **Worth repeating: Have. A. Plan!** Creating a social media plan will help you stay consistent and lessen the burden of posting daily “in the moment”, and you can map out what you want to post for weeks at a time. You can choose to share a specific topic on certain days (like #MotivationalMonday, #ThrowbackThursday, #FunFactFriday, etc.) so you eventually memorize your posting schedule and it helps you speed up the planning process. Be sure to check your insights to see what posts are performing well and which aren’t so you can switch things up when needed.
- **Consistency is best and quality over quantity.** Focus on 1 or 2 social media platforms (or 3 if you have the ability) and do those couple really well. Spreading yourself thin by being on all platforms will only “hurt”, not help. It gives you the space to be more strategic and produce better quality and engaging posts.
- **Follow social media expert, Julia Campbell**, for frequent up-to-date advice on all things social media, specifically for nonprofits!
  - [Julia’s YouTube](#)
  - [Julia’s Website](#)
- Remember to **give any new ideas multiple weeks or even months** to gauge whether it’s working or not for your audience before deciding to ditch them. And only try 1 new thing at a time so you can easily tell what’s working and what’s not.
- Put a time on the calendar to **review your analytics regularly** (1 time per month is ideal). This will show you what’s working and what you need to change.