

SOCIAL MEDIA

Fundamentals of Running and Growing a Social Media Channel

THE CENTRE FOR LIFELONG LEARNING
AT KNOX COLLEGE, TORONTO

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Introduction and Overview

About the Course

In this course, we explore many different ways to run and grow a social media channel. While those strategies usually break down between research/planning, posting, and engaging (discussed below), there are many more! Use this course as a springboard to your own creativity, and keep exploring ways to grow.

Exploring and Defining Growth

Common Metrics

Growth is entirely your own, and on your own terms

Common metrics organisations try to grow include

- Followers
- Engagements
 - Comments
 - Saves
 - Shares
 - Clicks
 - Direct messages
- Reach
- Any other metric relevant to your organization

Vanity Metrics

It's also important to note that some metrics are considered vanity metrics, which means they're not terribly impressive on their own, like

- Followers
- Impressions
- Likes

Remember, though, that these "vanity metrics" provide a benchmark for us to analyze growth. For example, saying you reached 1,000 people on its own isn't a lot of information...but if you only have 10 followers, that's miraculous! On the flip side, if a post reaches 1000 people but you have, say, 1 million followers, that's really bad!

Vanity metrics are good when we use them to benchmark or compare against something else. It's key to match your ministry's goals with social media metrics, where examples may include:

- Donations: Clicks to your website or donation platform
- Attendance at events: Positive comments confirmed attendees on Facebook and LinkedIn events
- Feedback: Comments

Document your analytics!

Growth Through Research and Planning

To grow, we often start by learning: this is the research and planning portion of growth. Anything that involves learning, planning, strategizing or assessing falls into this category.

Researching could involve actions like:

- Reviewing analytics to find out what top posts are
- Taking a course like this one
- Conducting consumer feedback (online or offline)

Planning could include things like:

- Making a content plan for a month,
- Scheduling video creation for your ministry, or
- Building a paid ad campaign

Growth Through Posting

Posting is the most common and obvious growth strategy. It simply refers to the deployment of content.

Posting can refer to:

- Organic content or
- Paid ads

Posting also gets us to explore:

- Frequency
- Repurposing
- Testing or experimentation

Growth Through Engagement

We can grow social media channels by simply interacting with others! Engagement gets our name out there in a way others welcome, making it more enjoyable and passive. Engagement also takes (relatively) less time than posting.

Engagement activities include:

- Following accounts
- Sharing content (and tagging the original creator)
- Commenting on posts
- Direct messaging

**Remember, engagement
doesn't include likes!**

Tying it Together: Doing All Three

Balance each activity: all three growth strategies (research/planning, engagement, posting) are equally important.

Posting takes the most amount of time: dedicate accordingly
If possible, try to have multiple people do this.

Engagement takes the least amount of time: schedule short amounts of time to do this

Research and planning typically get done monthly and quarterly
Be intentional in what you do and why you're doing it

actics and Ideas

How to grow on social media isn't something commonly taught, we have to explore to find these! Use these ideas, brainstorm others, and test your own:

- Diversify the keywords in your posts
- Post more frequently
- Popular content topics:
 - Memes
 - Smiling faces
 - Animals
 - Babies
- Run ads
- Do more:
 - Posts and
 - Engagement
- On Instagram stories, use location markers to get found within locales
- Prioritise YouTube shorts
- Influencer marketing
- Tie your social media to email marketing as well

Align your goals with your actions.

While obvious, people often forget to do this! For example, if you want people to donate more, you have to post the link to your donation page often.