

# Social Media Manual

## Cancer Advocacy Academy

### Table of content

---

Project background.....	2
Main issues and struggles.....	3
Additional issues.....	4
Identified needs.....	5
Why is social media important?.....	6
What are Facebook and Twitter?.....	7
Generally applied rules and tips.....	8
Benefits of Facebook.....	9
Drawbacks of Facebook.....	10
Benefits of Twitter.....	10
Drawbacks of Twitter.....	11
Tips for using Facebook.....	11
Tips for using Twitter.....	12
Contact.....	13

## Project background

---

Nowadays, presence in multiple social media channels is a strong necessity and a very effective additional way for non-profit organisations to keep their names and brands well-recognised. Not being a part of social media world can significantly hinder non-profit organisations' chances to spread awareness of their cause and be more well known amongst relevant communities.



However, it can be a very difficult tool to not only manage but also develop a sufficient media plan that will bring long-term results and help to reach organisations' goals.

In order to identify key issues faced by the Organisations participating in the Cancer Advocacy Academy project while portraying their activities in social media, a tailored online audit had been conducted with the aim to build a clear, comprehensive Communication Strategy, enhance the access to communications online tools, as well as increase the capacity of cancer patients to best use social media channels in a way that will further benefit their work.

Based on the outcomes of the social media audit, several issues, which are most often faced by the participating organisations with regards to their communications outreach, have been identified.

In order to tackle most important matters, a social media manual has been produced to support participating Organisations' deal with these issues.

Project Coordinator invites all participating Associations to give their feedback and schedule a personalised videoconference meeting in order to discuss your current struggles and future action plan in a greater detail.

## Main issues and struggles reported by participating organisations:

- # Insufficient presence in available social media channels
- # Not enough online recognition
- # No strategic social media plan in place
- # Low amount of followers/unable to build a close relationship with the existing community to stimulate their online engagement
- # The lack of skills to use social media available tools
- # Using rather facebook than other social media existing channels (Twitter/LinkedIn/YouTube etc.)
- # Not enough people and time resources: work of social media management is added to an already full job description. Consequently, there is no one responsible for developing a strategy and only 'spontaneous' activities are in place
- # The online platforms of the Associations are not easily detected in the search engines
- # Afraid of legal regulations, privacy concerns, and potential risks in general (especially for the no-profit Association)
- # Social media engagement and growth takes time and "[...] we are not really sure if it is working"
- # "It is difficult to measure results and if the time spent is worth it"
- # "We don't have a vision..."

## Additional issues that have been identified during the audit of each participating Association. Main conclusions and most frequent problems:

---

- # There is no single Organisation within participating Associations that effectively use more than 2 social media channels at the time. Being present on multiple platforms strengthens goal achievement process and ensures continuity
- # Not enough activity or 'post as much as possible' approach
- # The social media profiles of the Associations very often have no clear orientation & character
- # Audited Associations tend to take rather ad-hoc actions instead of introducing a long-term planning and a consistent communications strategy
- # Not using social media available tools to the fullest (using specific tags/hashtags, creating events for a certain cause, as well as creating images/infographics for different social media accounts)
- # Using social networks as a megaphone, announcing events and activities and sharing only organization-centric info.
- # Low standards of the communication with online followers – low responsive rates
- # Using personal accounts for the organisation's communication purposes or mixing organisation's and personal social media accounts – the followers have no clear indication which account is relevant to most frequent activities and projects and consequently follow neither profile.
- # Too many organisation's representatives get involved in running social media daily activities and consequently, there is no consistency

- # Many Associations see the accounts are free to sign up and use, create accounts on each channel. Consequently, the Organisation has multiple profiles managed by staff members/board/volunteers
- # Not enough time investment that is necessary to stay on top of social media platforms

## Identified needs based on the conducted audit

---

- # Redefine social media networks as new channels for the Association's brand
- # Better support and online availability for the patients who are not always able to get in touch and come in person (seeking for online contact/help/information)
- # Training on changing the image of Association in social media
- # Efficient use of internet for the promotion of the Association projects
- # Improvement based on long-term strategy planning
- # More accurate and frequent activity
- # Increase of name recognition
- # Increase of the number of followers
- # Getting well-informed and up-to-date with legal regulations, privacy concerns, and potential risks in general to ensure comfortable online activity
- # Producing interesting and relevant content which the community will share in own networks
- # Build strong online connections who read, share and talk about the Association's social media activity

## Why is social media important?

---

### SOCIAL MEDIA – YESTERDAY

*Started as a tool for interpersonal communication*



### SOCIAL MEDIA – TODAY

- ✓ *interpersonal communication*
- ✓ *organisational promotion & means of relaying information*
- ✓ *interactive engagement with stakeholders, influencers & decision-makers*
- ✓ *advocacy tool – some MEPs use as a means of consultation*
- ✓ *intra-organisational communication*

## What are Facebook and Twitter?

### FACEBOOK

- On-line social networking service
- 1.28 billion users worldwide (monthly active, March 2014)
- Users express approval of content by 'Like', 'Share', or 'Comment'
- Interactive
- Users express opinions about content by 'Comment' or 'Reply'
- Can have individual or organisation pages

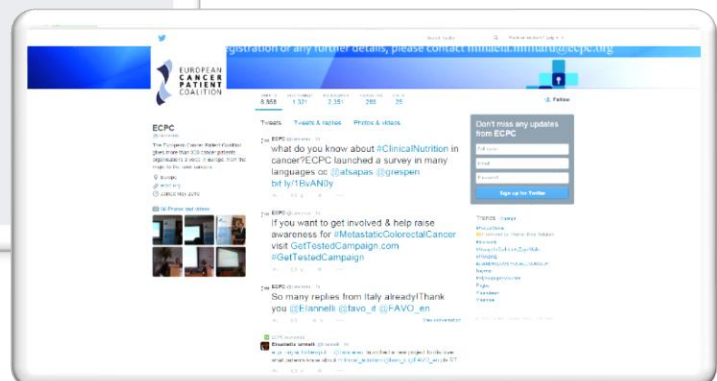


### TWITTER

- On-line mini-blog social networking service
- Over 500 million users worldwide
- Users express approval of content by 'Retweet' or 'Favourite'
- Interactive
- Users express opinions about content by 'Reply'



### Example (European Cancer Patient Coalition)



## Generally applied rules and tips

---

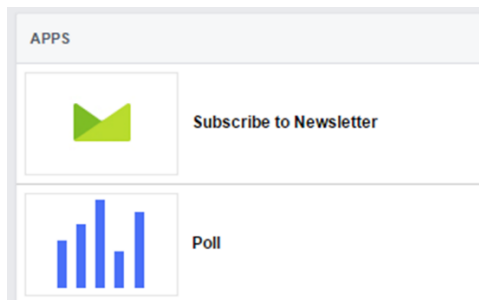
- # Social media isn't going away, you can't ignore it!
- # Make sure your organisation's brand is visible in social media
- # Stay active to better support patients who are not always able to come or contact you in person
- # Every opportunity you have to syndicate your content and increase your visibility is valuable
- # Your social media networks are just new channels for your brand's voice and content
- # Set a clear social media strategy
- # Use a social dashboard to consolidate your social media channels into one place and manage from that central nexus
- # Communicate your best practices and awareness campaigns with your followers
- # Social media activity does require time investment
- # Don't get discouraged by a low number of followers: It's better to have a little amount of online connections who read, share and talk about your content with their own audiences than a high number of connections who disappear after connecting with you the first time
- # Produce interesting content to attract your community
- # Images are another tool that should be in a social media managers arsenal, as they create emotions and social media users are more likely to share it
- # Do not post 'as much as possible'
- # Stay up-to-date with latest legal regulations, privacy concerns, and risks in general
- # Avoid creating multiple profiles set up by staff members or volunteers who are eager to help. Confusion and chaos can ensue when it is unclear which account is being used
- # Assign a social media lead who is responsible for identifying and establishing the main accounts





## # Make use of new tools

- I. Available apps can help you to connect with current and potential members
- II. Explore other recent apps such as 'contact' and 'become a member'



## Benefits of Facebook

---



- # Excellent platform to promote Organisation's campaigns and achievements
- # Opportunity to interact with members and friends across Europe and beyond
- # Ability to attract large number of users willing to support good causes such as patient organisations
- # Potential to share multiple forms of media and interact with followers
- # Many tools available for all kinds of businesses to increase their exposure

## Drawbacks of Facebook

---



- # Content is not searchable or visible as e.g., no unifying hashtag to bring people to the discussion
- # Limited interaction between organisations
- # 'Pay to Play' model – Boosted Posts & Sponsored Posts to appear higher up newsfeeds & increase reach
- # Algorithms determine which posts are seen, and which remain on the bottom of the News Feed
- # Facebook lowers the organic reach capability for brand pages, to balance out the personal versus commercial content on the News Feed

## Benefits of Twitter

---



- # Good short-term way to immediately communicate Organisations' messages
- # Opportunity to engage with members and other NGOs across Europe and beyond
- # Many EU decision-makers and influencers on Twitter
- # Increases visibility in policy circles
- # Content easily searchable through, e.g., hashtags

## Drawbacks of Twitter

---

- # Tweets limited to 140 characters
- # Fast-paced discussion, short life-span
- # Messages frequently missed, due to high number of Tweets
- # Can be chaotic and unstructured – almost 'spam'

## Tips for using Facebook

---

- # Update Facebook regularly, so that your page is visited often – helpful to plan in advance
- # Post pictures and videos – these are the most popular posts
- # Keep posts short and interesting – use links to additional information
- # Use relevant hashtags to be more searchable but use conservatively
- # Ensure coherence and consistency in posts and across social media platforms
- # Publish content regularly
- # Inconsistencies in frequency and style of posts undermine your Organisation's branding

### *Pay your attention to:*

- # Cover photo should convey your Organisation's values

- # Coherent universal visual identity across platforms is a good way to reinforce branding
- # Clear guidelines to ensure consistency and alignment of content and style, also with Twitter
- # Comprehensive strategy with centralised planning could improve content quality and timing
- # Visual content is more engaging and should be increased
- # Strategy should include planning of content
- # Live posting from events is ideal for Twitter but should be avoided on Facebook
- # Posts should be current and coordinated, relating to current news developments and opinion, inviting users to express their views

## Tips for using Twitter

---

- # Keep to 140 characters – the rest of your message will be cut off
- # Include pictures and videos – these are the most popular Tweets
- # Use relevant hashtags to be more searchable but use conservatively
- # If starting a Tweet with '@', precede by '.', otherwise your Tweet will only be seen by your followers and the person you have Tweeted
- # Retweet often as a way to engage with your followers – planning calendar is useful
- # Send similar Tweets at various times of day, to reach different audiences
- # Engage with other stakeholders on Twitter proactively

- # Consistency between the numbers of daily updates and style is important
  - # Agree upon a standard style to follow and ideally centralise the management of Tweets so as to avoid diverse styles
  - # Increase engagement by inviting your followers to Tweet questions for events
  - # Engage around events
  - # Go beyond thanking stakeholders after events and engage more proactively with them on an on-going basis
  - # Plan Tweets ahead of an event, to ensure coherence and consistency
  - # Use of hashtag in foreign languages could help attract more non-English speakers
  - # Be careful not to mix too many languages too many times
- 



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

FEEL WELCOME TO PROVIDE YOUR VALUABLE



**AT:**

Anna Rek

ECPC Community & Communications Manager

Tel: +32 2 721 41 14

e-mail: [anna.rek@ecpc.org](mailto:anna.rek@ecpc.org)