

## FACEBOOK TIPS AND TRICKS



If your agency does not have a Facebook page but your organization does, feel free to share this handout with the person responsible for your organization's page.

### DETERMINE YOUR STRATEGY

#### What is your Goal?

The first thing to consider in your social media strategy is **what is your goal?** Do you want to drive traffic to your website so people can locate your clinic(s) and clinic hours? Do you want to offer health education for a wide audience? Determining what your goal is will help guide the rest of your strategy. Do you want a specific Facebook page for your clinic(s), or to just post information on your organization's page? Overall, you can look to see if there is an existing social media presence for your organization. This can help you determine what ways are successful to reach your community.

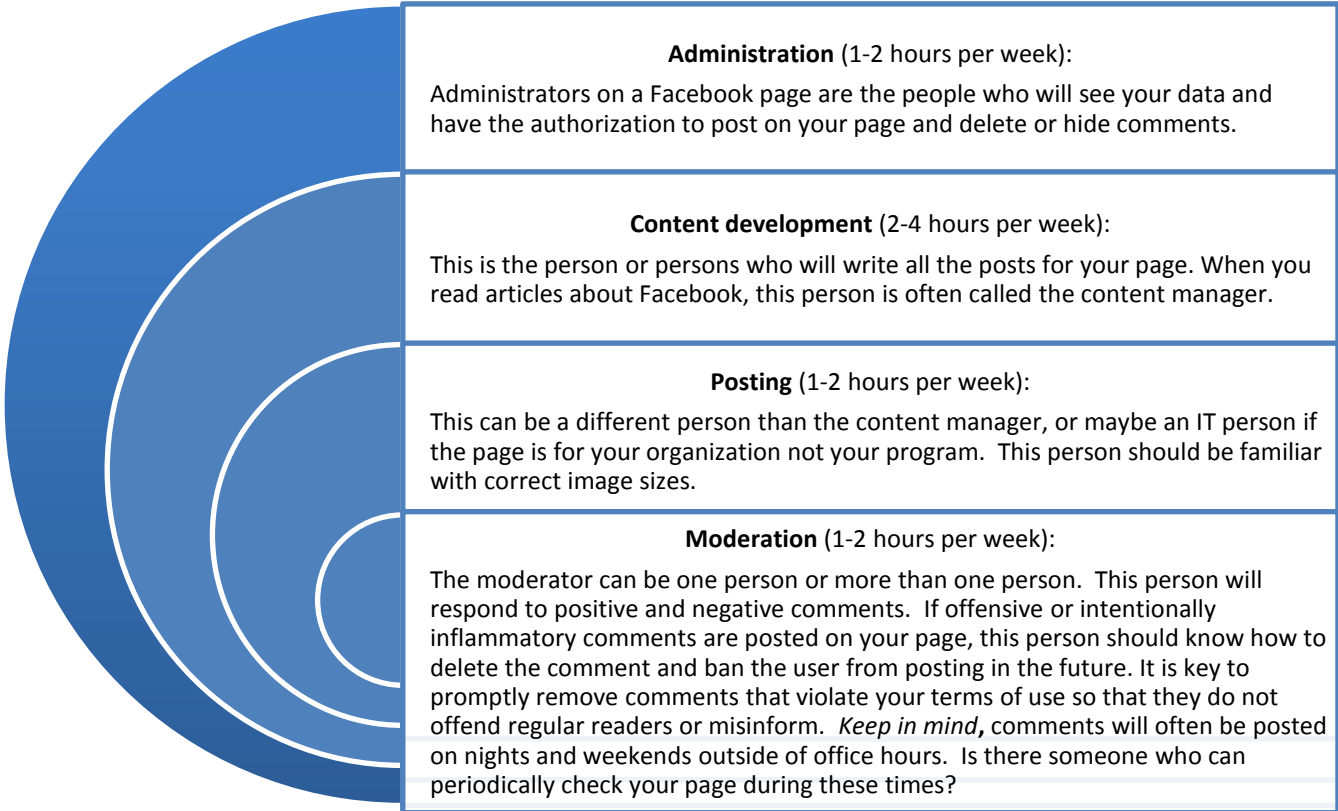
Time is the one thing that is consistently important across all of the platforms. If your clinic wants to maintain its own Facebook page, it will take time to generate the content and moderate comments. If you determine you want to try and engage your clients through social media, it is helpful if more than one person can share the responsibilities, particularly if you are interested in more than one platform. Most organizations focus on Facebook, though some also use Twitter, Instagram, or Tumblr. There are ways to automatically feed Facebook into other social media platforms, but beyond that each additional platform you utilize will require extra time. If you would like more information on this, feel free to check out our [Youth and Social Media: Engagement Suggestions](#) resource or contact Liz Gharst at [elizabeth.a.gharst@state.or.us](mailto:elizabeth.a.gharst@state.or.us) to discuss what platforms you would like to use to reach your audience.

Establishing a social media presence takes a while. It can sometimes take months or even years to have the public engage with your page. We will outline some tips and tricks for getting the initial engagement with your readers, or increasing the engagement you have. In general, you may be surprised that you do not get many likes or comments or retweets until your page has been established for some time. Once people do start engaging with your page, others will feel more comfortable commenting or sharing themselves and it becomes a snowball effect.

A good first step is to see if your organization has an existing social media policy or any restrictions on what can and cannot be posted. If you do not have an existing social media policy, you will want to create one with your communications team. It is also a good idea to create a Terms of Use with posting guidelines and put that information on your "About" tab on Facebook.

## DETERMINE ROLES

For a Facebook page, it is a good idea to determine the following roles:



The estimated times listed above are for a page that is updated regularly—at least a few times per week. If your agency will not have a separate page and will only contribute content to your organization’s page, then staff in your program may only be responsible for content development and moderation of that content.

## POST CREATION

### Content Generation Ideas

Generating the content for your page each month does take a lot of time, but the good news is there are a few ways to make your life easier.

#### **1. Use a content monitoring tool.**

Google Alerts is a popular free tool. What these tools do is regularly search the web for keywords you specify (such as “contraception,” “sexual health,” or “birth control”) and then notify you when they find related content. You can choose if you want a daily or weekly email with results.

To set up a Google Alert, visit <https://www.google.com/alerts>. In the "Create an alert about" box, enter in the words you want to get email notifications for. Click "Show options" to customize things like how often you get alerts, types of websites you want to search, and the email address for your alerts. Click "Create Alert" to finish. The advantage of using a content monitoring tool is that it helps to find content that is newer, which tends to perform better on Facebook. Also, if you see an article that appears on multiple different web sites, then you can see that content is trending.

## **2. Use the "Pages Feed" feature for your organization.**

The newsfeed for your organization is the page with all of your posts. When you are signed in as an administrator and click on the title of your page, it takes you to the administrator view of the newsfeed where you can view how many people engaged with each post. On the right hand side of the page there is a link for "See Pages Feed" under the numbers of likes and follows for your page. This is a different feed which shows the posts from all organizations that your organization "likes." It helps to like as many organizations as possible, that way you can find more content to share on your organization's page.

## **3. Use Twitter or YouTube to follow Reproductive Health related organizations.**

If you do not already have a Twitter account, it does not take too long to set one up. Or if you do not want to use your personal one, you can create another one just for gathering content. One quick way to find content is to follow sexual health-related organizations on Twitter so you have another feed of article links to copy and post on Facebook. Organizations such as Bedsider, Center for Reproductive Rights, Sex Etc., Futures Without Violence, Guttmacher Institute, National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health, SisterSong, and Scarleteen, among others, regularly tweet or retweet timely content related to reproductive health.

Similarly, you can also create a(nother) YouTube account and subscribe to different sexual-health related YouTube channels if you would like to have some ideas for video posts. Though it takes time to set these up, they can be a great time saver in the end!

### Notes on Image sizes

Facebook image sizes are complicated for the main reason that the picture dimensions are different if you are looking at Facebook on a desktop versus a mobile device. According to Facebook, they recommend creating cover photos that are 828 x 315 pixels and uploading post images that are 1200 x 630 pixels. Facebook will then scale your images for mobile or desktop. If you are creating a graphic post and are unsure, when you are finished with the post, click the drop down arrow to the right of "Publish" button to schedule the post for a later time or date. Then click on "See posts" under "Scheduled posts" at the top of your feed. Once you click on the post, you have the option of seeing a "Desktop Preview" or "Mobile Preview." That is an easy way to check how your images will appear to your followers. Then if everything looks good, you can click "Publish" under the drop down arrow to the right of the "Edit" button.

This is a great infographic that details recommended 2017 image sizes for Facebook as well as other platforms:

<https://makeawebsitehub.com/social-media-image-sizes-cheat-sheet/>

## BEST PRACTICES

### Best Practices for Creating Facebook Posts

In creating your posts each week, consider the following:

1. **TIMING & DAY** of your posts — check Facebook Insights for the peak days when your readers are most active on the site. You may want to post your most important content on the days with most activity.
2. **FREQUENCY** — There can be a huge range: do you want to post once a day? Three times per week? Check your post insights regularly and see if an increase or decrease in post frequency makes a difference in reach, engagement and click-throughs.
3. **LENGTH** — Many studies over the years show that Facebook users prefer short posts, about the length of a tweet or just over (approx 160 characters).
4. **POST TYPES** — Experiment with post types (photo posts, link posts, video posts, events, quotes, infographics, quizzes, calls to action) and regularly review which ones do well with your audience. Keep in mind that one of the many factors in Facebook's News Feed Ranking Algorithm is that a user will see more of the post type that (s)he interacts with most. In other words, for readers who tend to like/comment/share photo posts, they'll see more of that type in their news feed. Whereas, readers that interact with link posts, for example, will see more link posts. This is why it is good to continually mix it up and keep testing.
5. **CONTENT** — Ideally, your page is known for one key focus. What information can your Facebook readers consistently rely upon you to provide for them? Broaden your topic range, but still stay on track with your area of focus most of the time. Then, periodically mix it up with something fun, off-topic, entertaining, humorous, or thought-provoking. Try fill-in-the-blanks, questions/polls, caption-this, etc.

Modified from: <https://www.facebook.com/marismith/posts/10151836686065009>

### Additional best practices for posts

- Use pictures! Links to articles with images get distributed the most. Second best is an image where you can add text. Text only posts get the least distribution.
- Use the Schedule feature for posts to deliver the content when your audience is most engaged. Recent data shows people are most online mid-day around 1PM, but are more likely to engage (e.g. click on an article) with content posted around 7PM.
- Humor can be a good way to reach your audience. Meme generators are one way to turn something informational into something funny and informational.
- Choose articles with titles that encourage readers to click on to learn more, e.g. 9 Things You Never Knew About Your Sexual Health.
- Include content that is easily shared, e.g. inspirational quotes, as a part of your mix of posts.

### Tips for Increasing Engagement

- Increase engagement with Partner Organizations—“Like” more organizations and share content from other pages.
- Highlight partner organizations’ Facebook and in-person events.

- Shares get more views—re-post a good article from a partner organization and both pages will get increased traffic.
- Including questions and calls to action in your posts encourages engagement.
- Use wording that encourages click-throughs such as “Check it out.”

#### General Tips for Non-profits/Government Agencies on Facebook:

- At any given time, there are approximately 1,500 stories that Facebook could potentially show you each time you view your News Feed.
- Older "important" news will take priority over newer less important updates, e.g. a post from a couple days ago about a friend's new baby will get priority (until you see it) over a newer update from a brand Page that you've liked.
- The new reality is that small businesses and nonprofits are competing with major brands for that coveted real estate in the News Feed—on both desktop and mobile, of course.
- 75+% of Facebook users access the platform via mobile where the News Feed space is obviously even smaller than desktop.
- If you want the Facebook News Feed to be a primary social marketing channel, then you'll need to buy guaranteed reach in the form of Facebook ads (including promoted posts).
- The CDC has a great social media guideline  
<http://www.cdc.gov/socialmedia/tools/guidelines/>

Modified from: <https://www.facebook.com/marismith/posts/10151901030505868>

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Changes happen often in social media, and can be difficult to follow. Facebook regularly changes its News Feed Ranking Algorithm which means that you may have a strategy that is effective for several weeks or months that one day does not work as well. One option is to follow some “thought leaders” on Facebook such as Mari Smith or Beth Kanter, who regularly monitor the changes and write posts that explain what the changes are when they are made. Even so, it is best to think of social media as another communication tool. Focus on how to best engage with your audience and think about what you can do to encourage them to support your organization.

Keep in mind there is a “tipping point” on engagement. If not many people engage with your page, it can take time for this to change. Once people begin to interact with your content more, you will see your posts reach more people. As this number grows, engagement follows, and the cycle builds on itself. Even a couple of posts with great content per week can create an effective social media presence.

Regularly measure and monitor your reach on Facebook, so when changes to the News Feed Ranking Algorithm occur you can adjust your strategy and modify accordingly. Finally, consider paid advertising—this can dramatically increase your presence on social media. You can pay for certain posts to be disseminated to an audience that you define or you can create an ad and pay for new page likes. If you have questions on advertising, or on anything else in this document, feel free to contact Liz Gharst at [elizabeth.a.gharst@state.or.us](mailto:elizabeth.a.gharst@state.or.us).