

■ by Marcus Goodyear

Four Steps to Social Marketing

Last year, digital media (and especially social media) became a lifeline connecting our campers during the pandemic. More than a marketing tool, our digital content has helped us maintain relationships and guide people to reflect on what camp has meant to them — from the moments of zany fun to long reflections that might seem out of place on Instagram and Facebook.

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A focused team can coordinate the effort using a simple four-step loop.

1. Plan: Sync Strategy and Commit
Social media is a way to maintain relationships that campers and staff forge at camp. We see it less as a tool for pushing our message than as an extension of camp itself, a place to gather people that became friends while they were at Laity Lodge Youth Camp.

That paragraph is adapted from our “Complete Social Media Handbook.” It sounds fancy, but it is just a Google doc we share internally with the people who write posts. It covers things like the needs of our target audiences, voice, tone and content strategy.

2. Publish: The Hootsuite Pipeline
There are many tools to choose from; we like Hootsuite since we manage about 10 channels with about 10 stakeholders. A clear approval workflow makes it easy to involve people at the right stage. Posts are scheduled for approval in Hootsuite — first from the communications team, then from a director of the camp or program whose channel will receive the content. At any stage, users can edit a post or reject it with a note about the problem. We try to schedule most of our posts two to four weeks ahead, but we also publish some posts the same day.

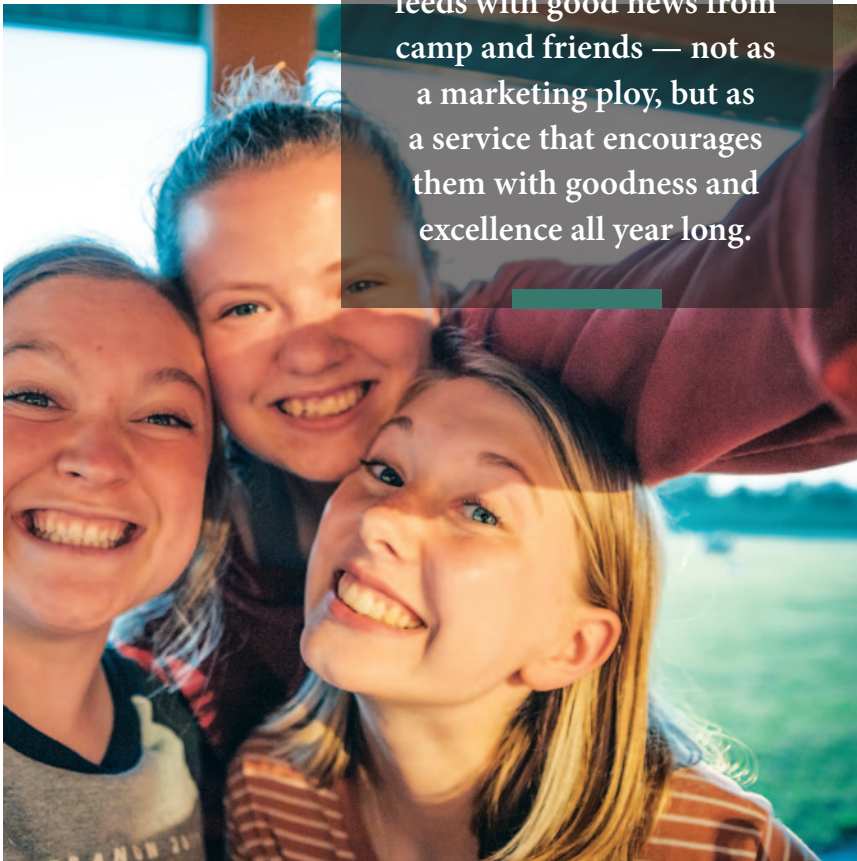


Photo courtesy of Camp Lebanon (2019)

Interactive posts reinforce real relationships.

3. Engage: Social Means Social

We encourage full-time staff to engage in social channels as themselves. Our senior director leaves comments regularly, which is always a hit! To help with this, each week, we send an internal email to all staff that includes links to our favorite recent posts alongside our weekly devotional and announcements from human resources. We also talk about ways people can be social media ambassadors for the organization if that interests them.

4. Reflect: Metrics Matter

Each week, we review the analytics from the previous week in a simple email that summarizes what we posted, what worked, what didn't and what's coming up. Mostly it is screenshots from our Hootsuite analytics dashboard, but we also include an "advertising value estimate" to help us think about cost versus investment. This is often not more than \$100 a week or so, but it helps us think about how much we want to invest in various tools and ad boosts.



If you'd like to see any examples of our social strategy or our analytics reports, don't hesitate to email me at mgoodyear@hebfdn.org. ■



Marcus Goodyear is the director of communications for the H.E. Butt Foundation, where he has worked since 2005. His passion is helping others continually improve the quality of their work and sharing irresistible stories for the common good.

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