

Telling Your Story

Creating a

Climate for Success

R.I. League of Cities & Towns

2018 Annual Convention

NEW
H▲RBOR
GROUP

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Benefits of an Effective Communications Program

- ▶ **Create a climate for success**
- ▶ Inform key stakeholders – residents, voters, employees, public officials, media
- ▶ Become the “Go To” hub of information and activity
 - ▶ NGO example -- “Our Town: North Kingstown” Facebook page

The Value for Municipalities

- ▶ Reinforce core messages by proactively telling “good stories”
- ▶ Define the community as a great place to live – connected, active, informed, safe, good schools
- ▶ Define municipal government on it’s own favorable terms – professional, responsive, engaged, effective

Steer Clear

- ▶ Overtly political
- ▶ Transparently self-serving
- ▶ Playing favorites

The Key Components of a Successful Communications Effort

- ▶ Core Message – The Strategic “What”
 - How are you and your work put in context?
- ▶ Content – The Tactical “What”
 - What stories and facts reinforce your Message?
- ▶ Audience – “Who”
 - Who do you want to inform?
 - Turn them into (better) allies and messengers
- ▶ Distribution Network – “How”
 - How will you deliver your Message and Content?

The Key Components of a Successful Communications Effort

- ▶ Core Message – The Strategic “What”
 - Great place to live – well run community
- ▶ Content – The Tactical “What”
 - Events, successes, achievements
- ▶ Audience – “Who”
 - Residents, voters, employees, public officials, media
 - Turn them into messengers, and maybe allies
- ▶ Distribution Network – “How”
 - Social media

Municipality Social Media Integration

- ▶ Make social media links easy to find on websites
- ▶ Post photos/videos in addition to links
- ▶ Establish policies
- ▶ Remember to publish the “little” things
- ▶ Ask/answer questions and reply to feedback
- ▶ Not everything requires a direct response
- ▶ Residents can be helpful in amplifying

Consistency and Commitment

- ▶ Posting once per day is essential.
- ▶ Sometimes more, if content justifies it.



City of Roanoke, Virginia - Government ✓

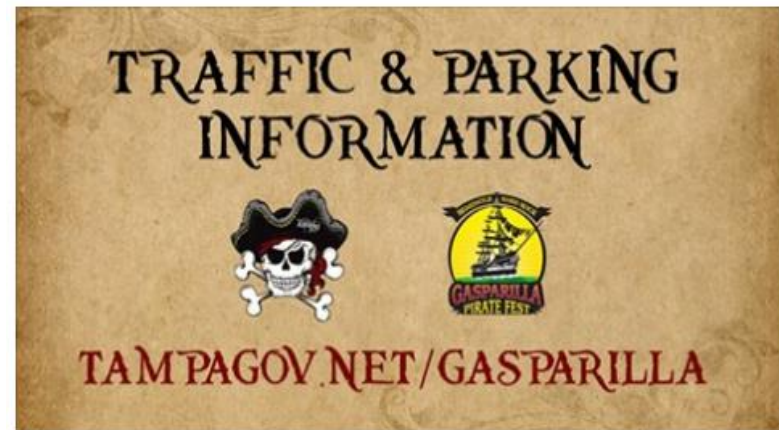


4.3 ★★★★★ (386) · 85K like this · [Roanoke, Virginia](#) · 3 posts a day

The city's award-winning Facebook Page is designed to promote the city, inform the citizens, and serve an outlet for conversations with you...

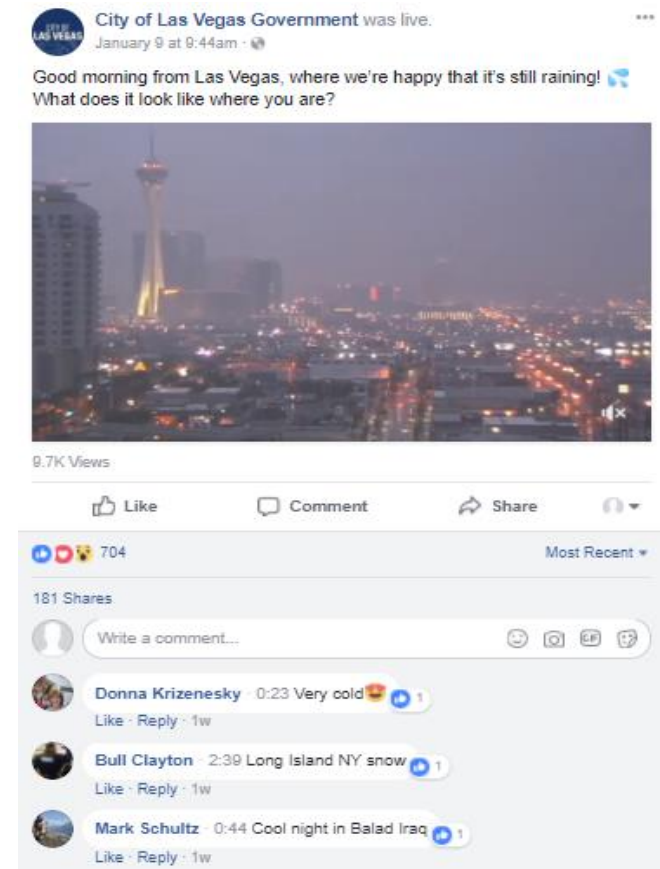
Keep Content Visual

- ▶ Try to post text with an accompanying image – even if the accompanying graphic is simple.
- ▶ A mix of images and videos will attract attention and keep your audience engaged.



Encourage Engagement

- ▶ Posting questions, polls, or other response-provoking content spreads the page's reach organically.
- ▶ Diverse content is also important.
- ▶ Only posting news will attract a specific audience and brand of engagement. Posting a variety of images, videos, events, and more makes your page more than just a space to air grievances.




Encourage Engagement

- ▶ “Lost Pets” is consistently a winner on social media

 **Quonset** @QuonsetRI · Jan 16 ▼
NK Neighbors - keep an eye out for Pip today.

 **Christine J Arepaki** @SistersInBiz
Pls RT #LostDog in #NorthKingstown #RhodeIsland
Sweet Meadow Drive area #RI
Pip got loose from his foster home. He ran towards Rte 4
near South County Nursing Home . Be on the lookout...

 1  5  4 

Know Your Strengths

- ▶ What makes your community unique?
- ▶ This content is more interesting and is more likely to be shared.



Share Community Content

- ▶ A low-effort way to increase engagement and ensure content is consistently flowing through the page.
- ▶ Also highlights unique community features.
- ▶ Be sure to credit sources.



Promote Community Events

- ▶ Consistently highlight community events to establish your page as a trusted source of information.



Examples of Successful Municipal Social Platforms

- ▶ City of Las Vegas Government
- ▶ City of Tampa Government
- ▶ City of Roanoke, Virginia – Government



▶ Thank You!

David Preston

New Harbor Group

401.831.1200

dpreston@nharbor.com