Telling Your Story

Creating a
Climate for Success

R.I. League of Cities & Towns
2018 Annual Convention

January 2018
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 its 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.

City of Tampa Government
January 19 at 2:15pm ·

TRAFFIC ADVISORY

Make sure you know what roads you’re taking and where you’re parking for the 2018 Children’s Gasparilla Extravaganza & Parade tomorrow (Jan 20th)!
You can find the road closure schedule for this weekend at http://bit.ly/2mKcGsp. Updates will also be shared on the City of Tampa Government and Tampa Police Department Facebook pages, and on Twitter from @cityoftampa and @tampapolice.
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...
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!

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