

Marah Searle-Kovacevic Managed social media for local conventions, Spokane bid, Sasquan, and SMOFcon. She will share the presentation after the convention.

Purposes of Social Media

- Engaging people. If no one cares, nothing else you do will matter.
- Disseminating information.
- Answering questions and solving problems.

Accomplishing Your Goals

- People need to distinguish “liking” something from buying a membership, volunteering, etc.
- Don’t forget your own deadlines. ☺
- Post early & often. Plan & follow the plan. Don’t overload people’s attention span.
- If someone complains, even if they are doing it wrong. It may not be just them. Saying “you’re not doing it right” is not helpful. If too many people are having problems, you haven’t made it user-friendly enough .

Engage People

- Know your audience, post things of interest to them, not just convention info.
- Talk WITH people. This is your community. Give people ownership. When they feel ownership, they will act differently.
- Don’t sound “sales-y”

Disseminate Information

- Announcements
 - Memberships (e.g. milestones)
 - Hotel room block
 - Program participants & suggestions
 - Advertising deadlines
- Policies. Use a link. Test it. Make sure your information is clear. Some policies can be controversial. If something is going to be controversial, plan for that and be prepared to answer promptly and on message. Don’t let this happen while no one is paying attention.
- Push notifications – People won’t know when to look at the website. You can’t put information on the website without telling people to go there to look at it.
- Email lists are nice, but you only get the people you already have. Doesn’t attract new people. For a big con, you can hit email limits (X number of people per hour) without being flagged as spam.

Best Practices

- Reconnaissance & intelligence. See what other people are saying (about the convention, or about things the people at the convention are interested in). e.g. reading the pages of the puppies, knowing what their plans are, so we are prepared.
- You need someone responsible, trustworthy, attentive, and on message. If someone tweets at us, or comments on FB, you want to respond promptly.
- Make people feel heard. If people comment on your FB page or tweet at you. That is a gift. They are offering you the chance to fix their problem & make them happy. Take them

seriously, listen to their concerns. Respond to them, no matter how stupid. Make them feel important & part of your community. Even if they want something that you can't do (and that happens a lot). There isn't enough money for every good idea. Just explain to people, most people will appreciate that you took the time to explain it to them. They feel better knowing there is a reason. It's not capricious.

Things to Avoid

- Deleting negative comments, shutting down conversation. This is the opposite of making people feel valued and important. They will go somewhere else, and be unhappy there, where you can't see them.
- Nat'l Park SM person: We have rules about what is allowed in the comments. Policy provides ability.
- Moderate comments. Don't allow attacks/sales, etc.
- If you have to delete something, warn someone, then delete as needed citing policy.
- There may come a point when the conversation becomes unproductive, and you can stop the conversation.
- Don't get defensive or inflammatory. It doesn't help the situation. Makes a minor controversy into a huge one.
- Q: FB page, less than 5% of people will see it (unless you pay). Event page. Group page. Where do you post? Or in all 3?
A: I don't usually have a group. When you have 3 pages, you are spreading your message too thin. Best to pick one, and put all your information in one place. Also, post as your self, then invite everyone to share it.
A2: we see attrition in all 3. If they haven't engaged in a year, they will start to not see the posts, even though they've joined. Ask people to like the posts.(changed FB algorithm) emotion responses will keep people active.
A3: encourage everyone you know to like it. The more likes you get, the more people will see your next post. Tell your committee to like/share all posts.

Do What Works for You

- You will never keep up on every single platform.
- Everything important also goes on the website. Not as effective (because pull).
- You do have to be on FB, because most people are there. But FB is not your friend. Comment: I don't know anyone under 25 who uses FB. If we are trying to bring in a younger audience, we need to use different tools.
- You have to be on twitter. People will ask for help here.
- SnapChat younger crowd. Pay for a filter. Geographically specific.
- LJ is terrible. Will collect your information to sell to Russian trolls.
- Reddit? Dischord? Hive of scum & villainy. Does have some useful places.
- It matters less what tool you use than letting people know what tool you are losing so they know where to find you.
- Blogs lie between social media and the static website. You have to send out notice. If you post a link from FB/twitter to website; it can get mangled. Learn the yoast plug-in (make the FB post look the way you want).

- Learn about SEO if you can. We are a niche organization, don't need to get our message out in front of people who aren't fans.
- Discussion about how to present blog vs. static website, with links from FB, twitter, etc.
- Likes and followers are probably not people who will show up at your convention. You can buy followers & likes.

Preventing a Twitterstorm

- There are ways to prevent (or reduce the likelihood).
- Be online all the time. If someone posts a complaint, then you can talk to them, and talk them down. If you don't do that, they will complain somewhere else.
- Respond quickly, even if you just say you'll get back to them. Make them feel heard.
- Everyone needs to respond to the social media person immediately.
 - One day to respond to email
 - Maybe 2 hours for FB
 - 15 minutes on twitter for initial response
- Example about responding to the puppies. Responded to every single one.
- Don't want people to feel ignored. Escalate a minor complaint to a diatribe. That will be the first thing that someone else hears about you, they will amplify it, and then the internet will fall on your head.
- In London, they waited to respond, and 6 hours later Jonathan Ross quit their convention.
- Success is the twitterstorm that never happens

How Not to Panic

- People don't post as individuals. The page speaks with authority.
- You have about an hour to respond. Resolve by phone, and then post.
- Proofread responses

Truth is Your Ally

- Use facts. If you tell people things that are not consistent with their experience, they won't believe you.
- Apologize as necessary. Acknowledge mistakes. Don't double down.

Ego is not Your Friend

- Apologize as necessary.
- Acknowledge mistakes. Don't double down.
- Don't take things personally.
- People will forgive you if you give them the opportunity and let them be right. Think about United Airlines: United kills dogs; United drags people off airplanes, etc. See United CEO as an example of what not to do.
- You don't want what people think of you to be a negative.

Mitigating the Twitterstorm

- Be kind, sane, thoughtful.
- Think about how your communication will be received.
- Respond quickly.

Making Controversy Work (or How to Win the Internet)

- Be calm, friendly
- When you are in the right, people will come believe you
- Creditability achieves your goals. You can gain memberships, supporters, etc.