

19 Tips to Promote Your Recreation Activities Using Social

Your community has a wide variety of recreation events to offer people all year round, but continually promoting and advertising each one can feel like just as much work as their overall administrative management. Social media is an impactful and inexpensive way to promote recreation activities in your community, and with the proper tools and processes in place, it doesn't have to add much time to your existing promotional processes and workflows.



With 3.96 billion active social media users in the world, it's a good bet adults and adolescents are using these platforms to engage in your community. What follows are 19 proven best practices for promoting your community's recreation events using social media.



Civic Tip:

As you read our tips, know that you don't have to be active on all the social media accounts referenced. Leverage the platforms you have in place today, or add one more that you think may fit your community if you have time to manage it properly. If your community is not using social media at all today, we recommend starting with just a Facebook account as the best way to reach the greatest number of people possible, and then adding a second account, such as Twitter, in the future.

General Tips:

1

Every time you open any new class, course, or league for registration, promote it via all your social media channels. Include a link to register online directly using your recreation management software.

2

The day before registration ends for classes and leagues, send a series of “Last Call” posts, tweets, and messages to create a sense of urgency. Include a link to register online.

3

Always include photos in your posts. Photos are more likely to gain the attention of social followers scrolling through news feeds.

4

Whenever possible, use high-quality local photos and imagery. Stock photography is a great alternative, but when possible, obtain release forms so that you can use engaging photos of real program participants at your facilities.

5

Use video whenever possible. Just as photos are more engaging than text-only posts, videos are more engaging than photos. Again, you may need release forms, but including a video of last year’s little league baseball team celebrating its victory as you promote this year’s league registration will help you generate interest and sign-ups.

General Tips (continued):

6

Share recorded videos of key events. Record portions of sporting events or classes and use the footage to create promotional posts to encourage registrations the next year. Who wouldn't want to sign their daughter up for soccer camp after seeing a video of girls her age feeling confident and forming friendships?

7

Share any news articles or blog posts that you create on your local government website about your recreation programs on all your social media channels, especially Facebook and Twitter. Remember to include photos or videos.

8

Create brief bios for your community instructors if you haven't already, and promote them individually via social media. Encourage your instructors to share the posts with their followers as well.



General Tips (continued):

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After your participants have registered for community activities using your recreation management software, encourage them to share their anticipated participation on social media. A robust recreation management software will allow people to directly generate a social media post to encourage their friends and family to view the same course registration details.

10

To help you manage your social media campaign, invest in a communication tool that will allow you to schedule social media posts and other communications in advance, via multiple platforms and channels. Start your week by spending 30 minutes scheduling your posts in advance, and then add to them as needed.



Tips for Facebook:

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For individual community classes and one-time events, create a Facebook event page and allow people to RSVP that they are attending. By RSVPing to your event, it will create a status update in their news feed, sharing with their friends and followers that they are attending—a source of social sharing and free advertising.

12

Consider paid Facebook advertising to promote your most important community events, classes, or courses, especially those that are revenue generators for your community. For example, for a few weeks before you open your community's softball league for registration, invest in a Facebook advertising campaign to promote registrations. Facebook allows you to target specific demographics, and easily set a maximum budget and campaign duration.

13

Use Facebook Live to stream live footage of key community events, like the final five minutes of the junior basketball league play-offs, or part of a demonstration of glass blowing from one of your art classes. Facebook Live offers an easy-to-use platform to engage with prospective program participants using live broadcasts and will very likely get people thinking about signing up for future opportunities.

14

Solicit feedback using Facebook polls. Ask community members what types of classes and events they'd like to see offered in the future using an easy-to-manage Facebook poll.



Tips for Twitter:

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When sharing news and promotions about your community events on Twitter, add relevant hashtags to help people not already following you to find your stories. For example, if you're promoting registration for your new archery class, add a hashtag for your community name, and consider such additional hashtags as #archery and #archerylessons #CommunityNameEvents.

Tips for YouTube:

16

YouTube has a diverse demographic within its subscriber base, including the 65+ age group. The searchable nature of this platform ensures your content reaches the target audience. Use key search terms in your video post title and description to help amplify the reach of your social video content.

Tips for Instagram:

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Instagram is an impactful way to engage with younger community members. Use it to upload photos taken at recreation events in your community. Just like with Twitter, use hashtags and add location identification tags for your community facilities. Encourage those who attend events to tag your community profile as well to increase shares and followers.

Tips for Pinterest:

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Create a Pinterest Board for each of your primary community recreation events, leagues, and classes. Cultivate photos as a further strategy for promoting community programs.

Tips for LinkedIn:

19

Like Facebook, LinkedIn offers targeted advertising opportunities. Without the need to spend significant ad dollars, you can target those in your community based on their interests, ages, and hobbies. For example, target active adults between 18 and 65 with ads for your adult, community soccer league.



No matter how many platforms you use, by following these best practices, you'll easily amplify the reach of your recreation promotions and increase program participation.