

Content Questions Everyone Should Ask Before Posting Anything on Social

Before we go further - know this. Digital content is part of an entire online ecosystem - website, email, live streaming, social, etc. Each touchpoint has a distinctive part to play as you reinforce your brand, serve your people, and accomplish your mission. And, contrary to popular bad practices, all points in this ecosystem are not broadcast channels.

Digital strategies are successful when they help people connect, not when they create more promotional noise.

Social media is just one touchpoint in your digital ecosystem. But, it's a place to start and one of the most common questions we get in our work with our clients. The good news is it's a lot simpler than people make it. With just a few questions, you can be confident and methodical as you get pull a plan together that works.

■ Where are my people? *Audience*

A big part of defining a content strategy is social listening. Just because Snapchat, TikTok or what's next is today's fastest growing social media app doesn't mean it's right for your crowd. Resist the pressure to jump on everything all at once, all the time. **Find one place where the critical mass of your intended audience is being "social."** Is it Facebook? Instagram? Pay attention to how they're using that space, what they're talking about, and how they're responding to each other. Refine and focus your approach based on what you learn.

■ What am I doing here? *Purpose*

Once you've found your people, figure out what need you're going to meet or problem you're going solve for them. **Your content strategy shouldn't be driven by what you want to say, but what your people are looking for.** The goal is not frequency. Post only when you have some value to offer your audience.

5 Ways to Use Social Media When You're Not in Promotions

1. Switzerland gives their Twitter account to a different resident every week.
If you really want to know what matters to a specific audience, give them the mic and see what they talk about.
2. A third grade teacher asked her students to complete this sentence anonymously: "I wish my teacher knew..."
Create a feedback mechanism to get honest, vulnerable input about real-life dreams, hurts, desires.
3. IKEA gave away the chance to win furniture any time someone tagged one of their showroom photos. If they were the 1st to tag it, they won the entire showroom.
Incentivize participation; make it worth their while.
4. Online clothing retailer Threadless lets customers vote on the next shirt to be printed.
Let people be part of a process. Trust me, they want to participate.
5. Guy Kawasaki let his audience compete to design his next book cover.
Co-creation activates different talents in your audience you may not even know are there.

■ Do I know where I'm going? *Plan*

After you find your people and clarify your purpose, you can make a plan. Just don't overdo it. **Think uncomplicated framework instead of a hefty plan.** Everyone doesn't need to sign off on the calendar, but they do need to sign off on the plan you can build a team around. Below is a *super simple* framework you can use to empower your communications team to do what they do best. Start by aligning on who and what each platform is for, then craft your content plans as necessary.

Super Simple Social Media Framework for Not-for-Profit

	Communications	Community	Promotions
WHAT	Information, Events & News Stream	Relational, Guest Services, Live Support	Marketing & Advertising
WHEN	Weekly, heavy M-F	Daily, heavy on the weekend	By campaign or project need
WHO	Staff Led	Volunteer Led	Staff & Volunteer
HOW	Routine Process, Pre-scheduled	Real-time	Pre-scheduled
WHERE	Facebook & Twitter	Facebook & Twitter	Facebook, Twitter & Instagram

■ What's on my playlist? *Calendar*

Draft a thematic content calendar when you're ready. It's just a schedule with the themes and rhythms to make sure you're talking about the right stuff at the right time in the right place. **The idea is to make sure your communication is varied, strategic, and fresh.** Again, there are some fancy formats and templates out there if you look for them. But don't over-engineer this thing. A simple, one-page chart will do.

Sample Thematic Church Content Calendar

SUNDAY	Sermon topic resources
MONDAY	This week's events & news updates
TUESDAY	Mental wellness
WEDNESDAY	Family
THURSDAY	Volunteer
FRIDAY	Staff recommendations
SATURDAY	Community

■ Who else needs to know about this? *Team*

Many times, the biggest threat to a successful digital content plan has nothing to do with the technology and everything to do with people using the technology. **Give your staff and stakeholders a heads up about the new plan.** Tell them what to expect, how it will or won't affect them, how they can participate, and where to go with questions.

■ Am I on track? *Evaluate*

Look at your stats and numbers and evaluate how things are going. **Celebrate and nurture what's working—course correct or eliminate what's not.** Spend less time on the things that don't fit your brand personality and more time on the things that do. (In other words, don't chase “vanity metrics.”) Experiment and see what you learn. Have fun with it. Make adjustments. Keep going.

■ What are the “experts” saying? *Research*

Don't look at articles and professional advice as a rule book, but as cues and context to apply to your situation. Despite what some people say, there is no fail-safe scientific formula. We're all just figuring this out as we go along. **Pay attention to best practices, but remember all expert advice has a shelf life.** Check in on occasion to see what industry insiders are saying. Here are a few expert resources to get an educated orientation:

- [Pew Research](#)
- [HubSpot](#)
- [Sprout Social](#)

■ Next Steps *The Links*

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Kem is a veteran communications strategist and brand therapist who has spent three decades shaping communication for small business, big business, non-profits, tech, finance, PR, marketing, schools, and churches. Known for her one-of-a-kind approach to making complex things simple and making hard work fun, she's in demand for her ability to produce results for leaders and their organizations.

Fun fact: while Kem spends her time working in all industry sectors, she wrote [Less Chaos. Less Noise.](#) for congregations who need a little help communicating more effectively as they work to bring help to others.

■ KemMeyer.com *The Team*

Kem's handpicked team of professionals are known for being great at what they do. But, what drives them is helping other great people solve problems, put their vision in action, meet meaningful goals, and grow good things. They build systems, design brands, dismantle silos, organize communications, design team-building messaging, and equip leaders with the tools and know-how to bust barriers and amplify results.