WELCOME!

"Words are, in my not-so-humble opinion, our most inexhaustible source of magic."
- Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

Academic, corporate, research, or public libraries and archives in all settings find themselves turning to social media to enhance the discoverability and accessibility of the unique and beautiful collections in their care.

It seems like a simple task – you take a picture or draft some text, post it to your chosen social media platform, and Voila! users are clamoring for more content. Yet more often than not, such overnight success rarely occurs. In reality, social media success takes time and persistence as well as some creative thinking and a great deal of planning!

Thank you for joining us in what we are sure will be a stimulating discussion of social media best practices, tips, and tricks!
Eeylops Owl Emporium!

The Visual Component of Social Media

Just like picking the right owl to take with you to Hogwarts is important, so is selecting the best social media platform for your content. Libraries are very lucky in that they have a nearly limitless supply of content that works great for social media. Now more than ever, libraries are choosing to use social media to connect to patrons and researchers. Showcasing collections and promoting services are great ways for libraries to use social media.

Social media is about making connections and starting conversations. A great way to do both is to use a well-crafted visual image to send a message on social media. The image is only one component of creating successful social media content. You also need to be mindful of the social media platform you will use to send your message.

This section of the booklet will touch on three important points for librarians to keep in mind when managing social media:

1. Selecting the best platform for your content
2. Maximizing your visual impact
3. Using social media to promote your library, collections and services
Make it Pretty

Selecting the best platform for your library's content

During our hands-on activity we identified the most popular social media platforms used in libraries today. Working through the exercise, we looked at scenarios that could work on one or more of the most popular platforms. These scenarios are all listed in Appendix I of this booklet. Below is a brief introduction to five of the most popular social media platforms and the pros and cons of using each one.

**Tumblr** (www.tumblr.com)
An image-based microblogging and social media website where users can post multimedia content in short blog posts. It has over 334 million blogs with users creating over 40 million posts per day.

**Pros:**
- Showcasing collections, new acquisitions, library spaces, behind the scenes, book arts
- Connecting to other libraries & individuals
- Promoting events
- Tying into popular culture and trends
- GIFs for promotion & communication
- Visual blogging - text and images combined to create photo stories

**Cons:**
- Long essays often get skipped
- Not for information with a deadline
- Non-visual content doesn't do as well
- Less eye-time with phone-based scrolling

**Facebook** (www.facebook.com)
One of the most popular social networking sites today. Users connect to other users and share content on newsfeeds. In 2014 had 1,390 million users.

**Pros**
- Connecting to community
- Sharing information and news (especially for breaking news)
- Reference and patron assistance

**Cons**
- Immediacy of information
- Information is pushed down especially for those that share personal and work accounts
- Younger people are moving on from Facebook
**Pinterest** (www.pinterest.com)
A photo and idea sharing website where users organize content on boards. Users pin content and curate their own social media feeds.

**Pros**
- Showcasing collections, new acquisitions, library spaces, behind the scenes, book arts
- Sharing visual information such as infographics, lists
- DIY community

**Cons**
- Short view time phone based scrolling
- Most content is visual
- People get tired of retraced content
- People curate their own boards and are very specific
- Not a good place for information with a deadline

**Twitter** (www.twitter.com)
An online news and social networking site. Users create microblog posts of 140 characters called tweets.

**Pros**
- Immediacy of information
- News
- Event promotion
- Connecting to patrons and users
- Community events and hashtags

**Cons**
- Information overload
- Short view time
- Info. is pushed down esp. for those that share personal and work accounts
- Short life time span for information
- Politics and current events heavy
- Long or multi tweet are mostly for information sharing
- People get tired of retraced content

**Instagram** (www.instagram.com)
A mobile photo sharing app where people can share photos and videos.

**Pros**
- Showcasing collections, new acquisitions, library spaces, behind the scenes, book arts
- Connecting to a very loyal and supportive community
- Tagging is very important especially for sub-groups

**Cons**
- Short view time phone based scrolling
- Most content is visual
- Content is judged on visual standards
- Users do not like reused content or a lot of text images
- Not a good place for information with a deadline
Bang for your buck

Maximizing your visual impact

You want to showcase your library and its collections in the best way. This usually means taking quality and visually interesting photographs of your collections and events. The images can be used as messages themselves or to help convey the message you want to share with your followers. We use images to connect to users so we make sure to take good photographs and to edit them in a thoughtful way to appeal to our followers.

Most of the images shown on the Othmer Library’s social media platforms are taken by the staff using their phones or with a library supplied camera. We edit our photos in Photoshop or create new content using Canva.

Staff use Photoshop to edit photos and create animated GIFs. More information can be found on the Othmer Library Tumblr LibGuide which has step by step directions on using Photoshop to create animated GIFs. (http://guides.othmerlibrary.chemheritage.org/tumblr/gifbasics)

We also use Canva a free online graphic design program to create content. Canva is great for creating infographics, signage, quote images, and other text based graphics. (https://www.canva.com/)

General Image tips
- Take the best pictures you can
- Be ready to take a photo at any time
- Use creativity to showcase books
- Take photos at library events and activities
- Highlight behind the scenes work
- Ask staff to photograph interesting donations, acquisitions, found in books etc., things they find in their daily work
- Let staff and patrons know what kind of material you are looking for, encourage them to share their finds on social media

Photoshop and other photo editing software
- Edit your photos thoughtfully - be mindful of size, focus quality, backgrounds and other distracting elements
- Make animated GIFs (our GIFs are made from images from our collections)
- Create image slideshows

Canva
(Using Canva to make text more visually interesting)
- Plain text vs visual quotes
- Making flyers to promote events or create announcements
- Use Canva to create infographics and Pinterest posts
- Create templates or guides for staff
- Encourage staff to be creative
Online resources

Maximizing your visual impact

Creating GIFs from book images

http://graspingthecross.wordpress.com/2008/09/19/how-to-make-an-animated-gif-in-adobe-photoshop-elements-60/
http://brands.tumblr.com/howtogif (this is a list of tutorials)
http://blog.library.si.edu/2014/02/library-hacks-creating-animated-gifs/
http://lifehacker.com/the-complete-guide-to-making-animated-gifs-1503276993
http://thetechgears.com/top-3-methods-to-create-animated-gif-from-video/
http://www.wired.co.uk/magazine/archive/2013/03/how-to/how-to-animate-a-gif-from-a-video-clip

Using Photoshop Elements

http://www.photoshopelementsuser.com/category/free-tutorials/
http://photoshopelementstips.blogspot.com/
http://www.photoshop.com/tutorials
http://www.photokaboom.com/index_e_PSE.htm
Understanding Photoshop Layers
http://www.dummies.com/how-to/content/the-essentials-of-working-with-layers-in-photoshop.html

Canva Tips and tricks

https://designschool.canva.com/
https://www.lovelyblogacademy.com/canva-tips/
https://www.groovypress.com/reviews/canva-become-professional-designer-fast/
PLANNING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA CONCOCTIONS

Bringing the right ingredients together to make a magical social media post.

**Required Apparatus:**
- A collection & library services to share
- A little creativity balanced with preparation
- Staff with knowledge and passion for the collection

**Required Ingredients:**
- Dates and Themes
- Engaging Visual
- Thoughtful Text
- Useful Tags

**Planning Tips**

i. Whether you are a team of one or many, set aside a little planning time, like monthly, to plot your upcoming calendar. An hour of planning can de-stress the whole process.

ii. Prioritize dates and focus on getting those done. It’s hard to keep up with every date on the calendar so pick the ‘holidays’ that correspond best with your collection or community.

iii. It’s okay to let a date pass without a targeted post. You can’t be on top of everything and there is always next year.

iv. Delegate dates to others or let team members volunteer for topics they know.

v. Use draft and queue features in your social media platform if available!

vi. Diversify the posts so you have a mix of fun, educational, event notices, behind the scenes, etc. You don’t want to desensitize your audience with a barrage of too similar posts.

vii. Leave room for spontaneity. Topics on social media can be fleeting; if a pop-culture moment is happening and you have something from your collection to add to the conversation, then by all means drop what’s planned and go with the flow.

viii. Have a draft folder of filler posts that don’t correlate to a specific date and can be posted on unplanned days or when the library gets too busy to fuss with social media.

**Organizing Yourself or Group**

i. Keep a calendar (paper, outlook, google, trello). Some calendars offer more functions than others like the ability to share with a team and assign tasks, get reminders, mark things as finished, or archive ideas for subsequent years.

ii. Kanban: a project management tool. The main principle is that each project is broken into individual tasks that are put on cards and arranged on a list so that all progress can be visually identified and tracked. For more info: https://zapier.com/learn/project-management/kanban-board/

iii. Don’t make your calendar system too complicated, this can discourage use from group members.
Our Trello Planning

We created a team on Trello of people who work on library social media. The boards we share as a team are for Tumblr blog planning and Pinterest planning. The Lists on our Tumblr Board are: Current Month’s Posts, Current Month’s Themes, Completed Month’s Posts, and lists for Future Months for any advanced planning. For each planned post we create a card for the Current Month’s Posts List. The card can be assigned, labeled, commented on, and send notifications; then when the post is finished it is moved to the Completed List. At the end of every month the Completed list is archived so that we can review it the next year. We use the label capability to track the theme-type of a post, i.e. Fun Day, Historical Date, In the News, Holiday, Organization-related, Birthday, Death Day, etc. This allows us to visualize that we have a variety of posts.
Correlating social media posts to dates and themes

i. Search the web for historical dates as well as silly dates. Keep in mind your collection and community and look for calendars that correlate to your needs and mission.

ii. Sometimes you know a historical date and then search the collections or sometimes you happen across a collection item that you want to highlight then find a date on which it would fit best.

iii. The not obvious collection/theme combinations can still have impact with the right tie or interpretation.

Compiling suitable content

i. Keep audience in mind. What and to what complexity are your followers interested in knowing about your post topic?

ii. Match tone and style of text to subject. A tragic event is not funny and ‘hug your cat day’ is not tragic.

iii. Diverse styles of content work differently on each social media platform. You can put the same topic on each platform just adjust each post’s content to that platform.

iv. As library representatives our constituents expect factual, impartial information from us so double check what you write, but you don’t have to be stodgy.

v. Search your catalog for indications of illustrations within books (ill. In the description field).

Choosing tags that add to discover-ability

i. Be broad and state the obvious; if something is historical, tag it #history.

ii. Avoid obscure tags that would be hard for users to remember or think to search.

iii. Get on the bandwagon with like organizations and share tags across content.

iv. Look for the most used tag for a subject.

v. We have a tag for our original content and use #reblog for sharing other’s content.

vi. If you need to collect and analyze stats for a specific collection/project you can designate a specific tag, but note that this means nothing to users.

vii. Too many tags = clutter so be selective.

Summary:
A little organization and forward thinking can alleviate a lot of the stress around being successful on social media. Planning content and the way it is revealed is vital to having a meaningful impact on your audience with the least amount of hassle on you. Social media gives your library an opportunity to be a presence in the daily lives of your community so use this magic wisely.
KEYS TO SUCCESS: ONLINE & OFFLINE

In addition to well-planned and visually intriguing content, success for a library’s social media depends heavily on creating and nurturing relationships with both users and the members of one’s social media team - whether your team consists of two people or ten. Below are tips for doing just that – luckily (or unluckily?) there’s no need to hop on a broomstick to catch these keys to success.

Recruiting Staff & Encouraging Collaboration
- Remind colleagues that social media isn’t solely a tool for event promotion. Work done throughout the rest of the library has a place too.
- Talk about how social media work can be integrated into everyday workflows.
- Include student workers and interns in the library’s social media efforts. Provide them with content guidelines and training in how to compose effective social media posts.

Working with a Group
- Expect there to be difficulties when working with a social media team of any size.
- Address issues when they arise. Don’t wait for the problems to get worse.
- Remind yourself that these conversations, while possibly awkward, are necessary for the well-being of the library’s social media.

Posting Library Content on Parent Organization's Social Media
- Schedule a regular meeting schedule with the individual(s) responsible for the organization’s social media accounts and discuss ways that the library’s content may be more visible.
- Try developing a consistent posting schedule (e.g., specific day and time) for the library’s content on the parent organization’s social media.
- Don’t reinvent the wheel. Look at the content the library has already produced and see if there are ways to present the content in a fresh way on the parent organization’s social media.
Handling Comments

- Analyze comments if they appear to be “trollish” in nature. Is it clearly spam? Is hate speech present? Is it negative feedback regarding the library and its services? Determining the type of comment is the first step toward appropriate action (e.g., deleting comments, blocking users, reporting users, replying directly, sending a private message, etc.). Consult social media guidelines (if available) and/or consult a supervisor. Through it all maintain a level head.
- Rejoice in the positive comments/messages and express appreciation. Saying “thanks for the support” or “glad you enjoyed the program” goes a long way. Not only are you showing the friendliness of the library, but you are also demonstrating how active and engaged the library is.
- Respond promptly to users when they answer a question that you have posed. (e.g., a “Caption this Photo” contest or a trivia question). Users have taken the time to leave responses and the library needs to acknowledge these responses.

Being Social

- Develop great relationships with other institutions & individuals by following them, leaving comments on posts, sending messages, liking/sharing content. Such efforts show your support & help you build rapport.
- Initiate conversations to find out what kind of content users want to see.

Measuring Effectiveness

- Take some time to evaluate the performance of your library’s social media on a monthly basis to better understand how your content is being received.
- Make use of platform-specific statistics tools as well as third-party products like Google Analytics (GA).
- Record quantitative figures such as: number of followers, impressions, “likes,” shares (retweets, reblogs), page views, number of pages viewed per session, percentage of new vs. returning visitors.
- Record qualitative figures such as: comments/questions from users, staff responses to comments/questions, acquisitions information (GA), users flow information (GA).
- Don’t reserve checking your metrics to once a month when you need to assemble a report. Keep an eye on your numbers and engagements on a daily basis. Being aware of the activity on your social media on a daily basis is important for understanding which users (individuals, institutions) are interacting with your content. It’s also important to keep an eye out for comments and/or questions because you will want to respond to these promptly.
Appendix I:

Answers for the Eeylops Owl Emporium Activity

Basically there are no wrong answers when it comes to these scenarios most of them can work well on any platform. The scenarios were written for a right answer with some room for debate about adding additional media platforms.

**Tumblr**
1. You staff comes across a great vellum binding with clasps that looks like it is straight out of Hogwarts
2. Your library hosting a local comicon aimed at teens and you want to promote it using fandom based announcements
3. You start a monthly reader advisory service where you recommend books based on themes and you want to create a visual list of books to read

**Facebook**
1. You have some great online resources to help people who just graduated from college create a résumé.
2. Your library is running a one book event and you want to promote it to a broad audience.
3. You want people know about your public program schedule for the current month.

**Twitter**
1. Your library is closing for an emergency and you want to alert your patrons.
2. You’re having an author event that day and you have a few tickets left.
3. You want to get involved in a specific topic conversation with a lot of users all at once.

**Pinterest**
1. Your staff come across a lot of cool-looking typography during their work.
2. You run a craft event at your library and people ask you for ideas or instructions.
3. You want to promote the visual resources in your library.

**Instagram**
1. Look how pretty [blank] is. I want to show [blank] to other interested individuals.
2. You found a beautiful binding in the stacks while shelving and someone told you it is #marbledpapermonday.
3. The dust jacket of this book is hilarious it’s a shame the rest of the book is so boring.

**All**
1. You and your staff come across a lot of really cool stuff during the work day.
2. I’ve never heard of the [your library’s name].
Apendix II:

General Tips

Finding content, editing images, and writing engaging text are all important for creating social media posts that will resonate with users. Platform-specific content as well as content that works well on multiple platforms helps you maximize your posting and can help you reach different types of followers. Engaging with these followers is also critical for social media success. The following list provides tips for create and maintaining robust, personable, and quality social media presences.

**Promoting Collections is often the primary reason that libraries decide to use social media. It can be great for:**
- Highlighting special collections and archives; ask yourself: "what makes our library special?"
- Helping patrons discover material they wouldn’t think your library has
- Promoting new acquisitions and newly processed material

Be sure to add a bibliographic link (permalink), finding aid, and/or digital library link for your content as well as brand your posts to your library!

**Promoting the library and creating a library brand is an important part of marketing your library. Be sure to:**
- Use hashtags to promote the library and encourage patrons and staff to use them
- Add links to your social media to your outgoing communications to patrons (e.g., pick-up notices and dues slips)
- Increase your library name recognition by using it as your voice (e.g., "We here at the Othmer Library...")
- Increase your library profile within an organization by branding your own content
- Promote your social media IRL and your IRL on social media (business cards, table set ups at events, event hashtags, etc)
- Show patrons behind the scenes at your library
- Encourage staff to share what they love about your library

**Promoting books and reading comes naturally to some types of libraries like public and academic but all libraries can benefit from promoting reading and books. Tumblr and Instagram have a very engaged bibliophile community, you can join in by:**
- Showing off beautiful books and bindings (books arts)
- Celebrating readers and reading
- Promote the awesomeness of libraries
Appendix II:
General Tips Cont'd

One of the fun parts of social media is getting involved in internet trends and pop culture events. It’s fun for followers and can help you promote your library’s collections in new and inventive ways. Think about things like:
- Movies, tv shows, comics, fashion - make clever ties ins with pop culture events
- Celebrate fandoms
- Follow trending tags, breaking news, political trends etc.
- Cash in on viral posts by welcoming new followers and offer similar content
- Have a GIF conversation with your followers

Social media can also be useful in assisting with research and aiding patrons. Researchers will often reach out for help on social media. You can help researchers and patrons on social media by:
- Promoting reference services where patrons are
- Answering questions asked on social media
- Posting questions on social media
- Encouraging research-related conversations
- Connecting researchers with your library or other institutions

As you branch out into various social media platforms some things to keep in mind:
- Try not to over cross post the same exact content. This can cause visual fatigue for followers who follow on multiple platforms.
- Be mindful of what works on what platform and don’t try to force the wrong content to fit on a social media platform.
- Be patient. It takes time to build a following and develop relationships.
- Don’t let fear of potentially negative comments stop you from joining the social media fun. It’s very rare that you will receive negative/trollish comments.
- Share your successes, big or small, with staff and management.
- Never forget: libraries are lucky in that they have a whole building filled with content for social media. Make use of it all and use it well!
APPENDIX III: USEFUL RESOURCES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

Below are some resources, both online and in print, which contain useful information for cultivating a meaningful social media presence for your library. Included are the Othmer Library’s Social Media Guidelines.

Online Resources


- Brooklyn College Social Media How-To: http://bcsocialmedia.tumblr.com/

- Othmer Library’s Social Media Guidelines: http://guides.othmerlibrary.chemheritage.org/tumblr/socialmediaguidelines

- Internet Famous: Strategically Marketing Your Special Collections Online: http://librarylinknj.org/content/internet-famous-strategically-marketing-your-special-collections-online

- Othmer Library’s Tumblr for Libraries & Archives LibGuide


Print Resources

- The Librarian’s Nitty-Gritty Guide to Social Media (2013) by Laura Solomon

- The Librarian’s Nitty-Gritty Guide to Content Marketing (2016) by Laura Solomon

- Social Media for Creative Libraries (2014) by Phil Bradley

- Managing Your Library’s Social Media Channels (2015) by David Lee King

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