Tips for Managing a Facebook Page for your Department, Office or Club at CSB/SJU

Facebook is a great and evolving tool to engage directly with interested members of your department, office or club community at, and outside of, CSB and SJU. This document is intended to provide guidance for having a successful and engaging experience for your department, office or club and your audience.

Set a target number of weekly posts and stick to it

Generally with a sub-page for the universities, posting two to four times a week should be more than sufficient. It is entirely up to an individual page manager but if a department doesn't intend to update a page at least once a week, it may be worth considering a different social media platform, such as a blog.

Keep track of when posts get the best response in terms of likes, comments and shares. Studies have been done to determine when the best times for a brand page to connect with their audience but they can be somewhat contradictory: http://blog.bitly.com/post/22663850994/time-is-on-your-side contradictory: http://www.buddymedia.com/newsroom/2012/09/salesforce-buddy-media-facebook-timeline-best-practices-wall-posts/. It’s best to monitor your individual community and its patterns of engagement.

Don’t publish until you’ve reviewed your update

Re-read your posts, captions and photo cutlines several times before you hit publish. Use proper punctuation, spell words correctly, be sure references to CSB/SJU proper nouns have the right style. If you have questions, see the style guide available on the Communication and Marketing Services internal webpage: https://sharepoint.csbsju.edu/cms/Pages/editorial_policy.aspx.

Losing a few minutes of timeliness on Facebook is well worth the benefit of ensuring your post is well and thoughtfully constructed.

Consider using Facebook’s scheduler feature to allow you to post a draft of your content, re-read it and make any necessary edits before it goes live.

Consider how you want links to appear in your post. When you add a link to a Facebook update, Facebook will automatically recognize that information and pull in a “preview” of the page to which you’ve linked. This means it may not be necessary to include a full URL in your status update.

Focus on posts that won’t get lost in your followers’ feeds

Changes to Facebook’s Edge rank algorithm have impacted the likelihood your post will show up the newsfeed of someone who likes your page. Keep tabs on how Facebook algorithms may be effecting what your followers are seeing. This will require some moderate monitoring of new Facebook developments using news sources like Mashable: http://www.mashable.com or Inside Facebook: http://www.insidefacebook.com/ on a semi-monthly basis.
Posting photos is a good way to ensure you show up in the largest number of follower feeds. For more tips to posting content that agrees with the algorithm, check out this story from Mashable: http://mashable.com/2012/08/30/improve-facebook-edgerank/

Prompt responses

Post content that invites a response from your audience. End with a question, ask them to like or share the update, or write a caption for a photo.

After you prompt that response, listen to what your community may be telling you with their interactions or lack thereof. Think about why that happened and work to avoid it in the future. When you hear responses back, engage with your audience, when reasonable.

Be open and transparent

As a matter of practice, CSB/SJU invites and encourages comments and engagement. However, CSB/SJU encourages you to be upfront with your followers about where the boundaries of good behavior and comportment on your Facebook page lie.

You are encouraged to formalize and draft official page policies. When doing so, consider guidelines from these sources:

Seattle University: http://www.seattleu.edu/marcom/Inner.aspx?id=53083
CSB/SJU: http://www.csbsju.edu/CMS/Social-Media-Sites/Comment-Policy.htm

Keep Track

Use Facebook’s native tools, called Insights, to keep track of growth and change from your audience over time. Monitor on a regular basis, monthly or weekly, vital statistics including likes and simple engagement metrics and consider tracking that information in a spreadsheet or similar tool. Facebook won’t keep track of your vital statistics indefinitely so be sure you’re maintaining a separate, secondary record of the information you’ve deemed necessary for tracking.

Facebook will give you more information about Insights when you set up your page, or conduct a simple web search to find the latest tutorials to understand the tools’ evolving features.