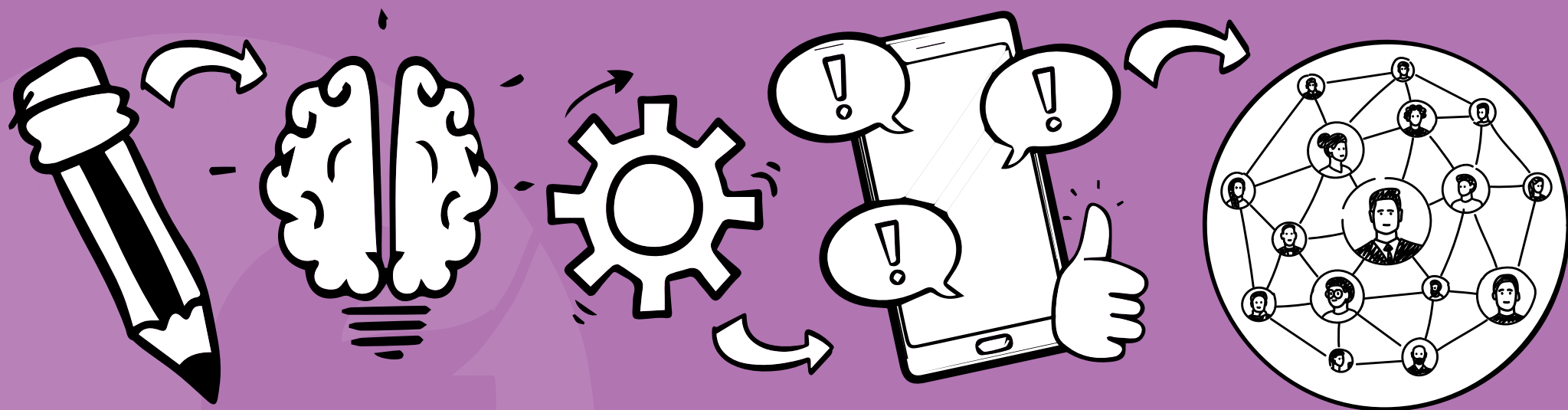Well of Values:
Youth as a Social Media
Values Promoter - Well & Values

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Values

Principles and tools of creative networking in social networks

WP4 - Manual "Digital Creator of Values"
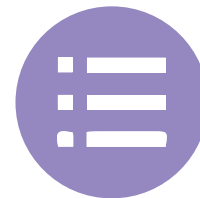
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Well
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Values

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2024

Contents

INTRODUCTION
OF THE TOPIC

Hello, everyone, and welcome to this focused discussion on the role of digitalization in promoting values.

Today we will look at why the topic of values is so important. We will go through a difficult journey from understanding what values are, how to define and implement them, to communicating the values that are important to us through social media. We hope that you find this journey interesting and full of learning and that you will be able to take away the most creative, practical, and innovative tools for your life and work.

Values are certain principles and guidelines that guide our choices. Values shape our social and economic goals and models, managerial actions, political decisions, personal choices, and their justifications. They determine a person's choice to invest their resources, energy, and time to achieve their goals and are closely related to basic needs.
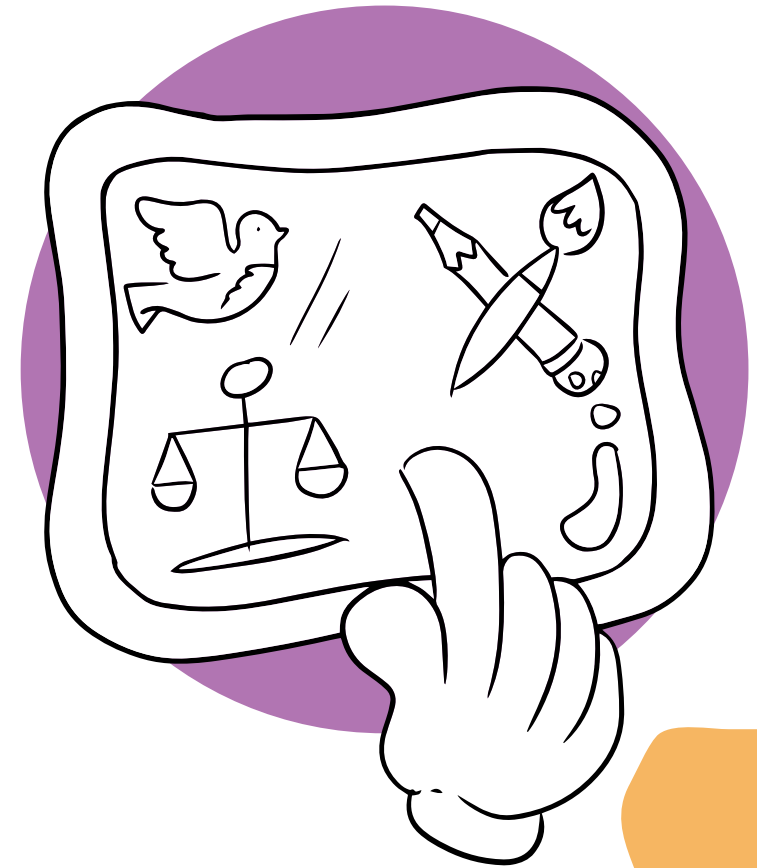
We often talk about the value of freedom, creativity, development, etc., but our actions, choices and, in general, our whole life do not correspond to these values, we are not guided by them, but only declare them. This is where the demarcation line between declarative (or manifested) and true values lies. True values can be seen in our elections, regardless of the words we say. A person who values their own ego and a person who values the community or the lives of others will make different choices.

Where did values come from historically? They are a marker by which we distinguish ourselves from others. That is, historically they have served to distinguish and define identity.

We may not think about the values in our lives, make choices and not ask ourselves "Why?". Values are most clearly manifested when there is a rather controversial choice. These are the principles we use in times of uncertainty and ambiguity.

Uncertainty and ambiguity are precisely the concepts that characterise our current life.

Everything used to be simpler because the world was simpler. We knew what was right and what was wrong, and the value was simply to stick to our guns.

When we talk about the values of any person, first of all, these are the values of me in society, this is what makes me a part of society and determines my place in this world.
Our values are what shape the future. Why are values so important in the digital age?

Nowadays challenges shed further light on the importance of digital education for digital transformation.

The rapid development of the information environment (the Internet, social networks) creates preconditions for the rapid spread of information that is not always verified, sometimes fake and manipulative. This is due to the fact that this environment is not properly controlled, but at the same time, it is easily accessible to most segments of the population. Young people spend a lot of time on social media and are influenced by it, so it is important to develop their ability to consume information, to relate it to their true needs and values, and not to "take their word for it" and be guided by unverified information in their lives.

Therefore, teaching young people to form, identify and communicate their values and take them into account when communicating on social media is the number one task today.
After all, it is the youth who may be easily deceived and tricked by phony news and stories making it difficult for them to identify. One of the biggest threats of the metaverse is that people become isolated in their own "filter bubble", which protects against new information. Scientists tend to support the opinion that such filter bubbles are quite dangerous for a democratic society and lead to the deepening of its polarization.
And here we come to our main topic: "What values are important to teach young people and what values should become the basis of society?"
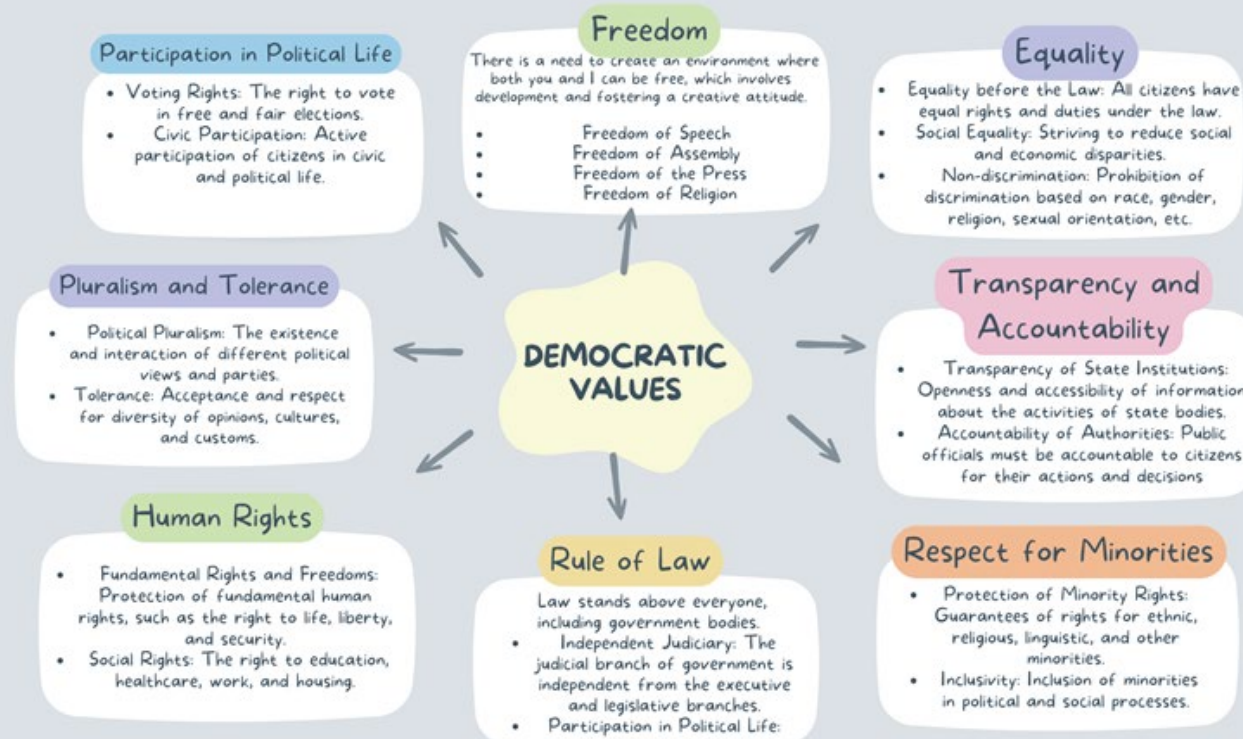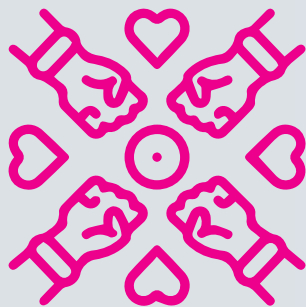
The importance of democratic values

When it comes to values, democratic values are the most globally recognised. They are the foundation of a stable and fair society. They promote the development of civil society, ensure the protection of the rights and freedoms of every citizen, and create conditions for social and political stability. Adherence to these values helps to avoid authoritarianism, corruption and abuse of power, promotes economic development and improves the quality of life.

Studies (European Social Survey (ESS), European Commission's European Youth Survey, Generation What?) show that European youth express strong support for social equality and the importance of democracy. They are less inclined to authoritarian views and more focused on individual freedoms. Young people in Europe are increasingly aware of the importance of environmental issues. More than 60% of respondents expressed their willingness to change their consumption habits to protect the environment. Young people also want to have more influence on political decisions, but often feel disconnected from political processes. Young people also express concern about inequality and social injustice.

Thus, research on youth values in Europe shows that today's young people are conscious, active and concerned about their future and the future of their society. They want to achieve personal success, but they also want to contribute to positive changes in society. These trends are likely to influence political, social and economic processes in Europe in the coming decades.

DEMOCRATIC VALUES

Freedom
There is a need to create an environment where both you and I can be free, which involves development and fostering a creative attitude.

- Freedom of Speech
- Freedom of Assembly
- Freedom of the Press
- Freedom of Religion

Participation in Political Life
- Voting Rights: The right to vote in free and fair elections.
- Civic Participation: Active participation of citizens in civic and political life.

Equality
- Equality before the Law: All citizens have equal rights and duties under the law.
- Social Equality: Striving to reduce social and economic disparities.
- Non-discrimination: Prohibition of discrimination based on race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, etc.

Pluralism and Tolerance
- Political Pluralism: The existence and interaction of different political views and parties.
- Tolerance: Acceptance and respect for diversity of opinions, cultures, and customs.

Transparency and Accountability
- Transparency of State Institutions: Openness and accessibility of information about the activities of state bodies.
- Accountability of Authorities: Public officials must be accountable to citizens for their actions and decisions

Human Rights
- Fundamental Rights and Freedoms: Protection of fundamental human rights, such as the right to life, liberty, and security.
- Social Rights: The right to education, healthcare, work, and housing.

Rule of Law
Law stands above everyone, including government bodies.
- Independent Judiciary: The judicial branch of government is independent from the executive and legislative branches.
- Participation in Political Life:

Respect for Minorities
- Protection of Minority Rights: Guarantees of rights for ethnic, religious, linguistic, and other minorities.
- Inclusivity: Inclusion of minorities in political and social processes.

But at the same time, democratic values in their traditional interpretation cause ambiguity among young people, can be perceived critically and lead to a crisis of values.

The crisis of democratic values among young people

The crisis of democratic values among young people is a phenomenon that is increasingly discussed in scientific research and public discourse. This crisis is manifested in a decline in support for traditional democratic institutions, growing apathy towards the political process, and increased vulnerability to populist and authoritarian ideologies. Here are some key points that explain the crisis of values among young people:

1. Changing social guidelines.
Traditional values that have been passed down from generation to generation are becoming less relevant to today's youth. This may be due to urbanisation, rising levels of education, the influence of the media and other factors.

3. Commercialisation and materialism.
In today's world, material wealth often becomes the central value, which leads to a decrease in the importance of spiritual and moral aspects of life. This can affect the priorities and behaviour of young people.

2. The impact of globalisation and information technology.
The Internet and social media provide access to diverse cultures and worldviews, which can lead to a loss of stability in one's own value system. Young people are often exposed to diverse and sometimes conflicting views, which can cause confusion.

4. Social conflicts and instability.
Wars, economic crises, social injustice - all of these can contribute to pessimism and cynicism among young people, leading to a rethinking of values or a loss of faith in traditional ideals.

5. Weakening of family ties.
In the modern world, the family often loses its role as the main transmitter of values. The distance between generations and the decline in the influence of parents can lead young people to look for new guidelines outside the family, which does not always lead to positive results.

6. Lack of authority.
Today's youth often lack figures who could serve as moral guides. This may be due to the discrediting of traditional leaders, scandals in politics, religion and other areas. Young people may feel alienated from political processes that they perceive as unable to take into account their needs and interests.

Manifestations of the crisis of democratic values

1. Political apathy:

- Decreased participation in elections and other forms of civic engagement.
- Lack of interest in political discussions and processes.

Young people often express distrust of political parties, the government and parliament, considering them corrupt or ineffective.

Scandals, corruption and political abuse can undermine young people's faith in democratic processes.

2. Populism and radicalisation:

- Increased support for populist and authoritarian leaders who promise quick and easy solutions to complex problems.
- Support for extremist movements and ideologies that reject the basic principles of democracy.
- Filter bubbles in the information environment and information segregation can contribute to radicalisation and extremist views.

3. Negative attitudes towards minority rights:

- Growth of xenophobia, racism and intolerance towards different social groups.
- Resistance to social changes aimed at protecting minority rights.

4. Socio-cultural and economic exclusion:

- High youth unemployment, economic crises and a lack of professional development opportunities can create a sense of insecurity about the future.
- Social and economic inequalities reinforce feelings of injustice and disillusionment with traditional democratic systems.
- Addressing the crisis of values among young people requires a comprehensive approach that includes education, family support, positive role models and cultural enrichment.

SPOD, VUCA, BANI Worlds

To begin with, we need to understand why the old ways of communicating democratic values do not work for today's youth and even lead to a crisis.
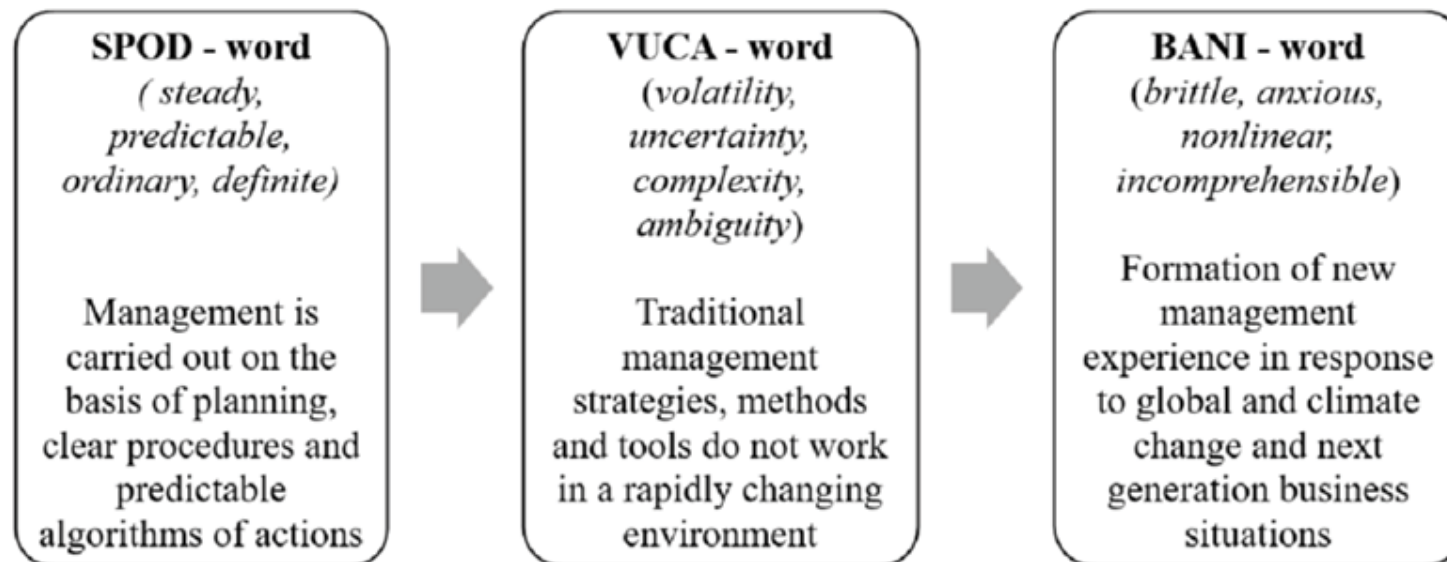
Previously, the presentation of democratic values was based on the principles and common values of the "old world" - SPOD. And it is difficult for young people to perceive democratic values presented through the prism of such values. Our task is to show democratic values through the values of the modern world - VUCA, BANI.

What are these worlds and what values do they carry? What do we need to take into account now so that the next generations are engaged, active, able to cope with crises and build their future?

SPOD is the world of past generations, the world that used to be, with its own values. These values exist in order to survive and live well in a world that no longer exists. Often, when working with young people, we teach them to live in a world that has already died. The values that were adequate and acceptable to society 200 years ago are now ineffective. And, of course, young people feel that it all doesn't work anymore.

The issue is that the world is different now, and our values should at least allow us to interact with this world in a VUCA way. This acronym describes the difference between our world and the world of SPOD.

SPOD - word
(steady, predictable, ordinary, definite)

Management is carried out on the basis of planning, clear procedures and predictable algorithms of actions

VUCA - word
(volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity)

Traditional management strategies, methods and tools do not work in a rapidly changing environment

BANI - word
(brittle, anxious, nonlinear; incomprehensible)

Formation of new management experience in response to global and climate change and next generation business situations

Because our world is changing, that is, it is not stable, it is uncertain, we cannot find simple solutions as we used to. And we cannot unequivocally evaluate this as good, this as bad, etc.

But what do we feel, what do we do when we are faced with a certain difficult situation?

Our psyche, which was brought up by our parents who grew up in the world of SPOD, seeks to find some unambiguous answer - right or wrong. We want to determine what the future will look like. We unconsciously want to somehow define this world that is not defined. We want to simplify it, even though it is complex. We want to stabilise it in some way.

There is a desire in each of us to return to the old SPOD world.

And in this case, what happens when we touch the world of VUCA? We get stressed, tired, anxious.

So, youth workers themselves often don't know how to live in this world, and therefore, what to teach young people.

That is, we often do not have guidelines and values, how to be effective, how to be manifested in this kind of VUCA world.

Comparing the values of the worlds

VUCA	SPOD
Development (active learning)	Information
Creativity and innovation	Experience (paternalism)
Proactivity/initiative	Obedience (infantilism)
Acceptance/tolerance	Judgemental attitudes (xenophobia)
Systematic approach	Algorithmic, methodological (point, simplification, reduction)

VUCA	SPOD
Systems analysis/critical thinking	Rules, traditions (fundamentalism)
Vitality, humanism	Functionality (a person is a cog)
Integrity	Detail, certainty (tunnel vision)
Responsibility in belonging	Diligence (assessment orientation)
Results orienting	Conformity, normativity (nepotism)

Ways and principles of implementing values among young people

Three principles of implementing values for young people.

1) when we use these tools at the moment of choice, when these values are the conscious values of the youth workers themselves.
That is, when we are the bearer of these values, and these values are felt from us. So, we need to rebuild ourselves a little bit. That is, when youth workers are carriers of values, young people perceive these values better than when you just talk about them. That is, it is important to work to ensure that the VUCA world does not lead to existential anxiety or conflicts, that new values are not perceived as something dangerous for us, and to get to know these values a little bit.

2) The moment of interaction with young people should be relevant to our values.
For example, we cannot instill the value of tolerance or acceptance through harsh methods. At the same time, tolerance can be implemented through Creativity, Curiosity, the ability to engage with uncertainty, Co-creation, Responsibility, and Sustainability.

3) Values should be aimed at a specific result, i.e. be applied.
This is important because when we only talk about values or declare them, they are not implemented in life.
If values are introduced only in the form of a lecture, it will not work, because young people are focused on a specific sensory phenomenological experience.
Another important point is that these values are an effective tool for us to be more effective. That is, if you, as youth workers, apply these values to your tasks, you will feel how much easier it will be for you to find solutions.

Best Practices for implementing democratic values through Social Media and the Internet

The selection of best practices was based on the alignment of each project with the core EU values enshrined in the Treaty of European Union, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities, as well as the significance of its impact on Ukraine at local and regional levels. Special attention was also given to projects aimed at supporting fundamental human rights protected by the EU Charter: the right to be free from discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation, the right to personal data protection, and the right to access justice.

ZMINOTVORTSI (Ukraine)

 — a free educational worldview system for students aged 14 and older from villages and towns with populations under 10,000, where successful professionals in their fields explain how the spheres of the modern world function.

We have created a comprehensive set of 12 courses, each covering one of the main spheres of the world order, to help teenagers become more conscious, understand the interconnections between different sectors, stay informed about democratic movements in the country, and prepare for the future.

Information about the educational platform was actively distributed through social media, to which youth, as the primary audience of the project, has the most access.

Website: https://zminotvortsi.org/
https://www.linkedin.com/company/zminotvortsi/
https://www.instagram.com/zminotvortsi/
https://www.facebook.com/zminotvortsi

Project "Civil Society for Democratization"

This project is grounded in the core values of the EU, enshrined in the Treaty of European Union, such as respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. The project aims to implement democratic reforms at the local and regional levels in Ukraine and promote these values across all branches of government in the country.

Goal:
To enhance the capacity of civil society organizations (CSOs) to advocate for democratization reforms at the regional and local levels.

Objectives:

1. Engage a broader circle of CSOs in Ukraine's democratization process, focusing on organizations outside the capital. After February 24, 2022, special emphasis was placed on the role of CSOs in addressing war-related issues.

2. Improve the capacity of CSOs to communicate and interact with citizens and communities, particularly within war-related initiatives.

3. Strengthen internal control and governance, develop professional management of non-profit organizations. After February 24, 2022, the priority shifted to strengthening the institutional and adaptive capacities of CSOs in wartime conditions.

4. Improve regional and thematic dialogue on reform policies between civil society and relevant stakeholders by providing Ukrainian citizens with information about international assistance to Ukraine, countering Russian propaganda, and trends in Ukraine's economy.

On July 15, 2021, the Institute for Economic Research and Policy Consulting (IER) held a discussion titled "Democracy on Quarantine?" as part of its strategic partnership with the European Union and the "Civil Society for Democratization" project, which is funded by the European Union. The discussion also included findings from the project "The Impact of COVID-19 on the Effectiveness of CSO Cooperation with Regional Authorities in Ukraine," funded by the International Renaissance Foundation.

During the discussion, the research "Local Democracy Tools in the COVID-19 Pandemic" was presented. The research indicated that in most cases, the pandemic did not close off citizens' access to local democracy tools and authorities, although some forms of interaction were restricted. Authorities quickly established online channels for public communication. The introduction of e-democracy elements before COVID-19 helped Ukraine and other countries adapt to working under quarantine restrictions. The pandemic even accelerated the process of digitalization and the use of social media to promote e-democracy.

The project included various educational initiatives, such as training sessions and conferences like "Effective Communications in the Civil Sector," "Public Participation in Local Democracy Development," "Electronic Petitions and Other Tools for Activists," and "Youth Councils as a Tool of Local Democracy." These activities became part of an educational platform to promote democratic values at the community level in Ukraine.
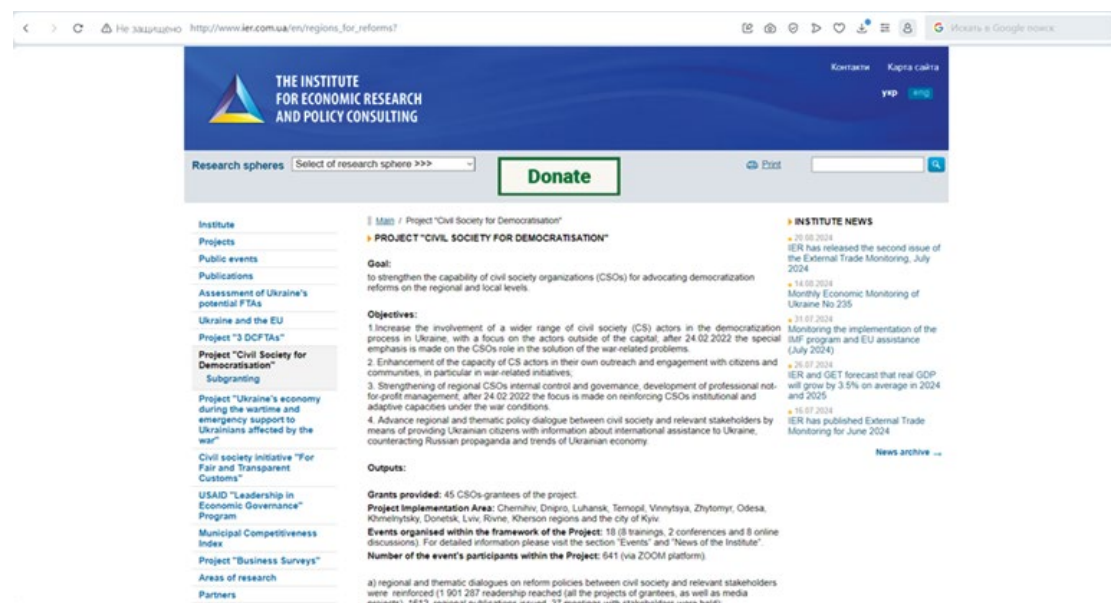
Project "Lawyer in a Smartphone"

In April 2024, the team of NGO "YurShtab" launched an online platform called "Lawyer in a Smartphone," providing free legal assistance through a personal account on the yurshtab.com website. The project's goal is to offer free legal assistance on a wide range of issues to promote legal awareness and democracy, especially for internally displaced persons, CSOs, volunteers, and military personnel, as well as to support the rebuilding of Ukrainian cities and villages. The platform is represented on social media for broader accessibility.

The activities within this project are aimed at supporting fundamental human rights protected by the EU Charter: the right to be free from discrimination based on gender, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, or sexual orientation, the right to the protection of personal data, and the right to access justice.

Key Strategies for Promoting Social Projects through Social Media:

1. Share information about the project on your Facebook/Instagram page or in groups you're part of, adding a personal comment on why this project is important to you.

2. Use popular hashtags to make your posts more visible to social media users.

3. Invite friends and acquaintances to join the social initiative, as more supporters increase the project's outreach and impact.

Each new supporter is a step toward building a democratic society. The more people learn about these projects, the greater the chance of influencing social change and addressing community issues.
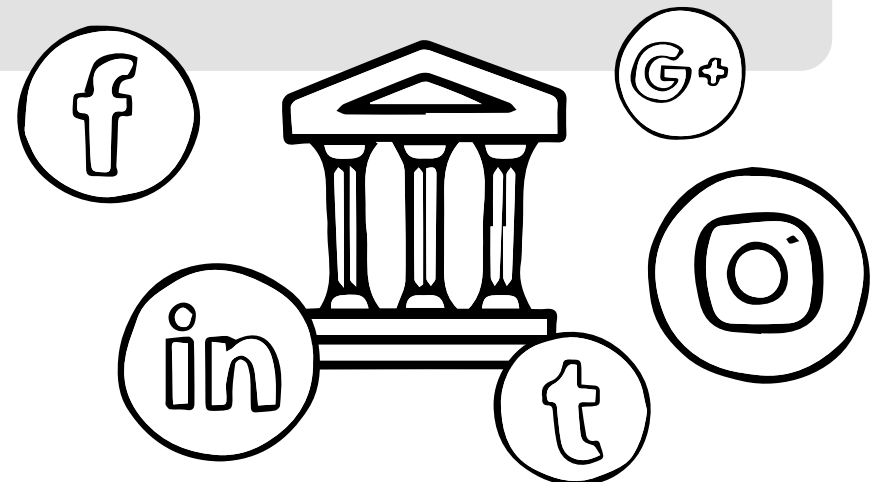
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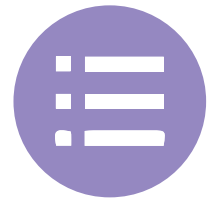
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Contents

INTRODUCTION
OF THE TOPIC

Social media has gained such popularity over the last decade and a half that its impact on brands and society is almost immeasurable. Thanks to the ease of access provided by the internet, influencers come in all shapes and sizes. They can be content creators - artists, writers, singers, or photographers who manage to turn their dreams into tangible, valuable posts that provide insight and value to their viewers. Influence allows content creators to have an impact and affect actions, beliefs or behaviours of others.

It is important to mark that no one knows how to become influential on social media. There are no specific qualities or key skills. Some may even say that luck may play a big part of it. With that being said, within the realms of social media, influence tends to expand most easily from a solid foundation of creativity. Creativity can convey a greater message than other traits, making it more valuable and effective. It is an advantageous tool for personal brand entrepreneurs who are using themselves as a product.

KEY SKILLS THAT WILL HELP TO BE INFLUENTIAL IN SOCIAL MEDIA

1. DEVELOP A UNIQUE VOICE AND STYLE
- What topics excite you? Your passion will fuel your creativity.
- Look at influential figures in your niche. Analyze what makes their content unique and engaging.
- Try different styles, tones, and formats to discover what resonates with you and your audience.

2. MASTER VISUAL STORYTELLING
- Learn basic photo and video editing. Apps like Lightroom, Canva, and InShot can enhance your content.
- Every post should tell a story. Whether through a single image, a carousel, or a video, ensure it has a clear beginning, middle, and end.

3. ENGAGE AUTHENTICALLY WITH YOUR AUDIENCE
- Reply to comments, messages, and DMs. Show your audience you value their input.
- Involve your followers in your creative process while doing polls, questions, and live sessions.
- Share your highs and lows to create a deeper connection.

4. STAY ON TOP OF THE TRENDS
- Keep an eye on popular accounts and hashtags to see what's trending.
- Don't just copy; put your unique spin on trends to make them relevant to your audience.

5. CONSISTENCY IS KEY
- Schedule your posts to ensure a consistent presence.
- Dedicate specific days for content creation to stay ahead.
- Allow room for spontaneous content that captures real-time events

6. COLLABORATE
- Look for influencers, brands, and creators whose values align with yours.
- Propose collaborations that are beneficial to both parties. Be clear about the value you bring.
- Share and support each other's content to reach wider audiences.

At the core of the notion of creativity lies the idea of persons interacting with their environment and communicating their new insights to others. The ways in which creativity manifests on social media has changed the ways in which we interact; the ways in which we think about thought leadership and intellectual property and ultimately, how we build influence in the knowledge era.

The transition from the original, dynamic web 1.0 to the current web 2.0 has introduced unique features. The effortless availability of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube, among others, made possible by advanced technologies, encapsulates the essence of Web 2.0. A notable feature of this evolution is user-generated content, allowing users to effortlessly create, share, and sometimes customise content. (Hackl et al., 2022) This accessibility has led to an increasing interest in Web 2.0 platforms. The widespread adoption of Web 2.0 technology has transformed users into both producers and consumers of content. It is pivotal to note that every new technology reveals its digital characteristics, and for users, platforms like Facebook also serve as media sharing sites. (Mahoney & Tang, 2024) In truth, users are likely to favour Facebook as a medium for sharing multimedia, as they can effortlessly share photos with friends and access them on a designated web page.

Influence refers to the consumption, sharing, and engagement behaviour of a social media user allegedly caused by a social media message, presumably published through a personal contact. In this chapter we will explore key skills needed to be influential on social media platforms. These skills include developing a unique voice, being on top of future trends, being consistent with your posts and being creative. They can be divided into categories such as digital skills and social abilities.

In this chapter we will talk about developing a unique voice, how to use storytelling in content creation, and how to engage with your followers and many more skills that are needed to share your values with the world. You'll learn about case studies of two successful green technologies campaigns.

Developing a Unique Voice and Visual Storytelling

Personal branding is seen as a product of the digital age, involving the use of technology for individuals and communities to connect and interact, especially through various forms of media. (Blyth et al.2024) When you identify your audience, you should be able to present them with topics, entertainment and information that will captivate them and meet their needs. To do it you need skills such as passion, enthusiasm, storytelling and creativity. Another important skill to have is being able to captivate your audience. You can research your future competitors. See what they are doing, learn from their brand. If they don't cover a topic that is needed, you can do it.

Life hack:

Find your niche. Try different styles and formats which resonate with you and your audience. Study influential figures, analyse what makes their content unique and engaging.

Your content represents you and your brand. Focus on your visual representation. You can find interest in learning about colours, typography and visual design techniques. They will enhance your visual content and attract more engagement. The essence of marketing is to make it easy for your audience to understand what your brand is quickly and efficiently. That's why it is important to use graphic design to help make your communication clear. Images convey emotions. They will help with the language and cultural barrier.

Another important skill is to convey your message with words. Descriptions under your posts or even speaking in your videos may build emotional connection with your followers. It can make you look funny, interesting and likeable, it can make the audience feel something or think. Use impactful language to share your values. It can be a challenge when it comes to short form content like stories on Instagram or tweets.

One of the most important skills for any inspiring social media creator to have is content creation. The importance of content creation is clear - the more engaging and creative the posts are, the more they are shared which helps with your brand's visibility. Social media influence is primarily about how stories are told and who is doing the telling. When crafting stories for social media, it is crucial to strike a delicate balance. It is vital to remain authentic and true to one's message, as people are increasingly sensitive to disingenuous narratives. Social media influence hinges upon the art of storytelling and the individuals behind those narratives. Understanding the power of personal stories in shaping beliefs and inspiring change is key. By leveraging the emotion-laden nature of our backstories and highlighting transformative journeys, storytellers can effectively engage audiences, foster connections, and influence social media users to embrace new perspectives and solutions. Due to the popularity of visual storytelling, creativity has received increased interest among social media users.

Visual storytelling is the art of conveying messages using a combination of visual elements. It is compelling due to leveraging the power of intended visuals, memory, and the audience's emotional response. In today's era, visual narratives presented as a sequence of photos, videos, infographics, and animations are considered an important driving force for creativity on social media. Thus, visual storytelling is how to make a presentation special and can make the eyes of the audience sparkle. This is due to only visual storytelling being the art of making messages captured by the memory, emotions, and desires of the audience.

The most common type of content visual creation on platforms like Instagram and YouTube is shown to predominantly represent the personal brand. Vloggers are interested in using their own pictures or videos in place of any other images.
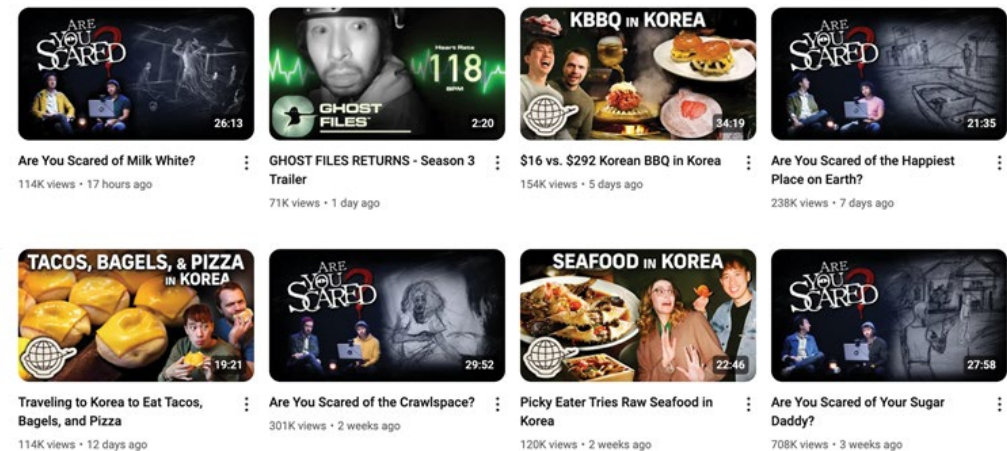
Example of a YouTube channel called "Watcher" - different series are clearly divided by different thumbnails - "Are you scared" have a picture of two presenters, main title and a drawing whereas food in Korea shows people eating different dishes. All of the thumbnails feature pictures of the channel creators. Users can identify a series based on a thumbnail which shows how well the brand image was created.
https://www.youtube.com/@watcher/videos
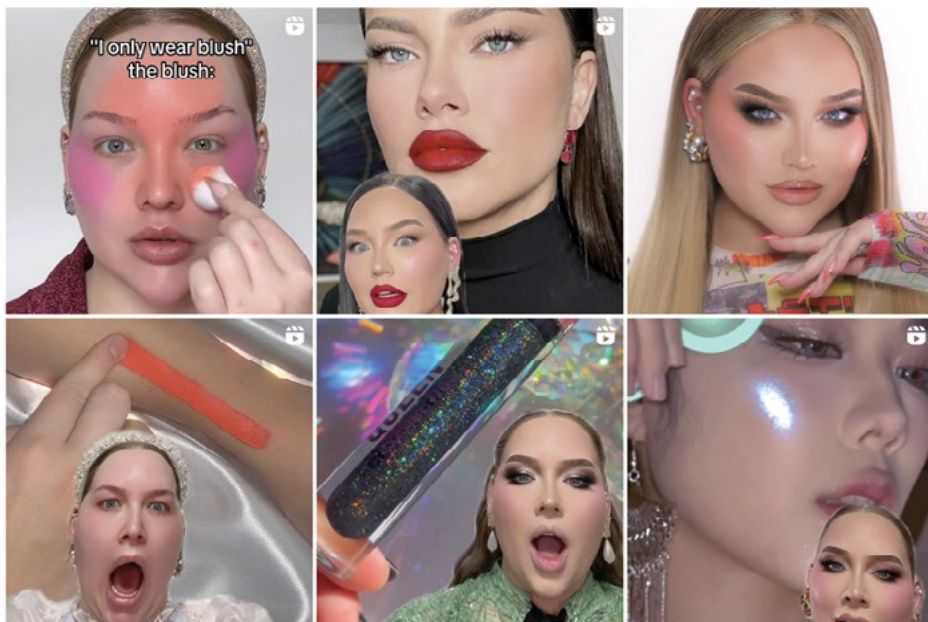
Visually telling stories provides several advantages of becoming extraordinary content, providing knowledge or insights, aesthetics, and influencing users about what the character or author creates. Such visualisation contributes to the development of digital identity, provides illustrative information about the situation, and is the evidence of the authenticity of the information contained in the post. Instagram bloggers also confessed a devotion to visual self-representation, creating stylish images of themselves that represent their unique personality. Self-representation with stylish fashion, makeup, and hairstyle are key strategies that beauty bloggers use to build authenticity and interact with other users, as a part of their beauty routines and identity in daily life.

Instagram grid of a beauty creator who shares her looks, makes relatable content and tries out different products. She is well known for her engagement with her followers. | https://www.instagram.com/nikkietutorials/

Research of pictures on Instagram of users who invest much effort in the visual storytelling reveals that they share scripted images with their own handwriting for a certain effect. Also, self-representational content contributes to the perception of relatability and genuineness of the post.

Instagram grid of a book creator. She posts most pictures with books, looking "relatable" with her audience as well as some beauty shots and pictures from her travels. | https://www.instagram.com/haleypham/

Life hack:

Every post should tell a story. Whether through a single image, a carousel, or a video, ensure it has a clear beginning, middle, and end.

Engage Authentically with Your Audience

Engagement and connection were the key importance of choosing to adopt a creative approach for social network advertising content. By engagement, we refer here to the interaction between the user and the platform in which she consumes content. In other words, we denote with "engagement" an aggregated measure of user reactions to the content and the embedded interactive elements (e.g. "Like", "Share", "Comment") combined. Engagement will create loyal long-term followers. On one level, a good social media creator wants to build a large following and to nurture that following so that they are as loyal as possible. Engagement can also be seen through the eyes of a message sender where they want their audience to respond positively to the things that they have to say. On another level, engagement can be seen from the point of view of the recipient of messages where it is about them responding to the messages that they receive. They can mean something minimal in simple responses to a particular individual or actions that are designed to show that the individual sends the message is grateful for what they have received.

Life hack:

Polls, quizzes, and Q&A sessions encourage participation and make your audience feel involved in the conversation. This interactivity boosts engagement and retention.

An important thing to have as a social media creator, is to have a relationship with your audience. One of the ways to create it is to respond to comments and messages from your followers. This will make them feel like you create a safe space for them and want to hear their stories. Even if you can only respond to a percentage of people, go for it. You can also respond to your comments and messages on other platforms. Direct responses are great, but make sure you are also fostering a sense of community with responses. Communication must go two ways, that's why you can create polls and ask your followers questions. You can also share your personal stories, which will create a feeling of intimacy and deep connection with your audience. People need to know they can trust you so don't create a fake persona. Treat your followers like your friends.

Creating a sense of community and working with the community to help drive up relevance and authenticity was an important key skill of a social media creator. Again, this is likely to work at a number of different levels of engagement. It is certainly about being able to communicate with the public about specific things you are doing. When users feel connected to a creator, they're more likely to be sharing creator's content organically and expanding their reach. It is especially important for creators sharing their values. The ultimate objective is to gather a community of people who are united in their search for companionship and support, who need a safe space to share their stories and personal experiences.

Life hack:

Reply to comments, messages, and DMs. Show your audience you value their input. Involve your followers in your creative process. Polls, questions, and live sessions are great for engagement. Share your highs and lows to create a deeper connection.

It is important to be careful online. You can't share all of your private details online for your safety. You can't also talk too freely without thinking, it can lead to hurting a group of people. Always think before you share information or speak about a topic. As a creator you are responsible for things that you are saying. That's why you need to research topics that you cover.
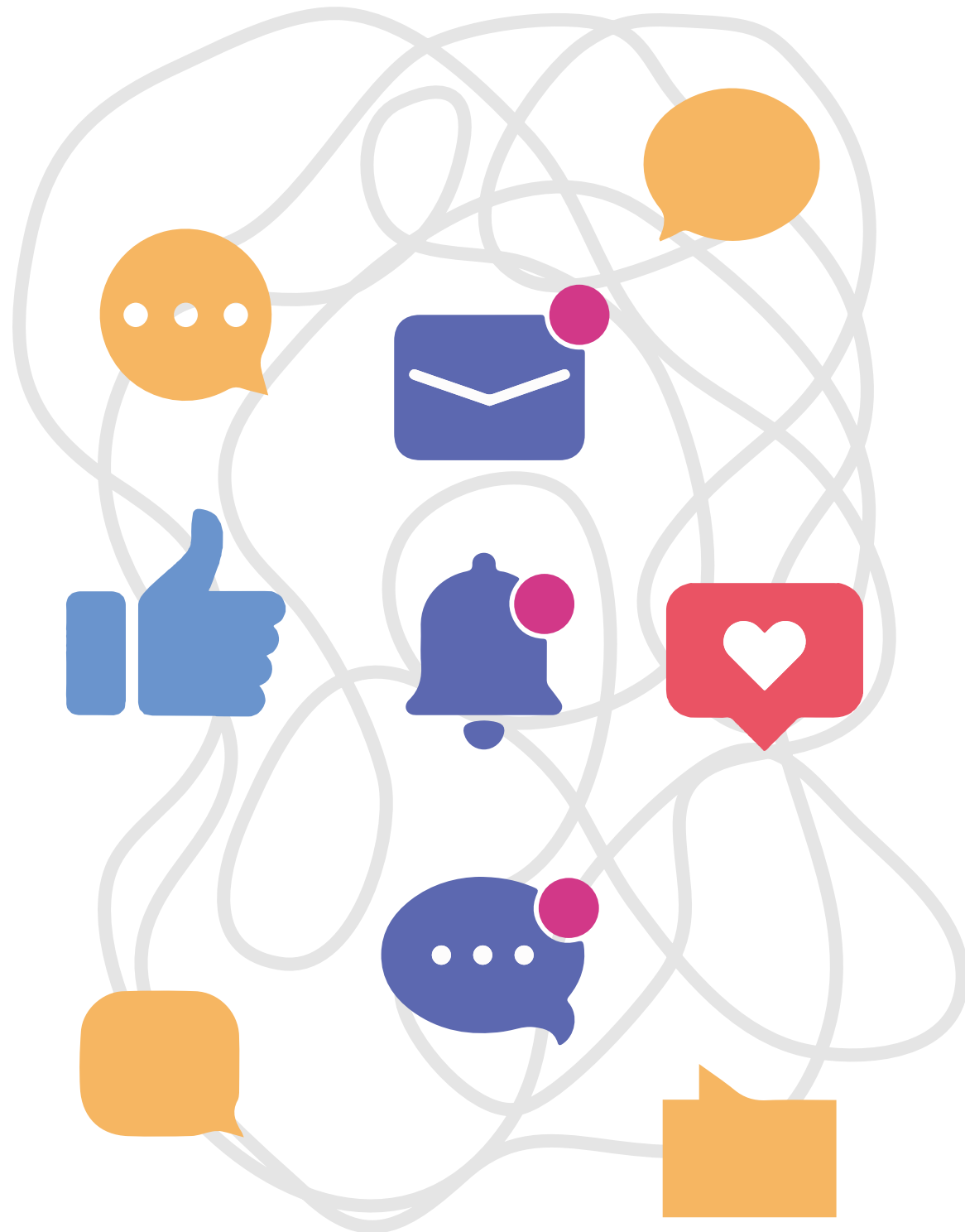
Collaborations
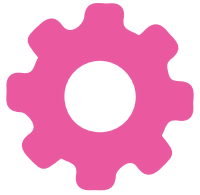
Unpaid collaborations and co-creation with other creatives, brands or audiences based on shared beliefs, passion, style, culture, or aesthetics are increasingly common across social media platforms including Instagram and YouTube. The process of collaboration—through forming partnerships, cross-sponsorship and co-creation of content—allows creators to extend the impact of their ideas to a new audience. The opportunities for collaboration on social media are endless. Artists can connect with fellow artists, exchange ideas, and inspire each other to create truly unique and innovative works. Activists can collaborate with each other in order to share their values with a bigger audience. Community-driven collaborations effortlessly bring together followers who share common values or mutual interests, effectively engendering a communal sense of belonging and collective creativity. By joining forces, creators and activists expand their influence, reach new and varied audiences, and foster the development of fresh ideas.

Activists can come together and collaborate in an effort to effectively share their core beliefs and values to a much wider and expansive audience. By uniting and joining forces, these passionate individuals can harness the power of collaboration, multiplying the impact and reach of their message. Through collective efforts, activists can pool their resources, knowledge, and experiences to amplify the voices and causes they hold dear. By extending their collaborative networks and forging strong alliances, they can connect with a larger community and engage with a diverse range of individuals who can lend their support, generate awareness, and facilitate meaningful change. By working hand in hand, activists can transcend boundaries and overcome obstacles, forging a path towards greater understanding, solidarity, and creating a lasting impact on society.

Collaborations roadmap

Look for influencers, brands and creators whose values align with yours

Propose collaborations that are beneficial to both parties

Share and support each other's content

The multiple benefits of embracing the spirit of collaboration in social media are numerous. These include the opportunities to expand one's audience base, diversify the scope and depth of their content and engage with new communities. By working together, social media influencers can also leverage each other's strengths and knowledge to create impactful and meaningful content.and enhance their creative and technical skills. In order to truly capitalise on the immense potential latent within collaborative endeavours, creators need to adopt a strategic approach. Key aspects of this approach include the meticulous identification of complementary partners, the establishment of clear and concise goals, and most importantly, the unwavering commitment to upholding authenticity throughout the collaborative process. Moreover, it becomes imperative for content creators to skillfully navigate and surmount the various challenges that may present themselves, such as ensuring the preservation of brand integrity whilst embracing novel partnerships and skillfully balancing potentially divergent creative visions.

Consistency is Key

Producing high-quality content is a crucial component of establishing a successful social media presence. However, in the fast-paced and constantly changing world of digital interaction, it is no longer sufficient to only create good content in order to stand out. Consistent posting is equally, if not more, vital. Regular posting not only keeps your audience engaged and interested, but it also demonstrates your reliability and commitment to your cause or area of expertise. When you consistently share valuable and captivating content, you establish a pattern that your followers can rely on, fostering trust and loyalty. Audiences are more inclined to engage with creators who are active and visible on their feeds. Periodic updates indicate that you are actively involved and dedicated to your content, which can significantly boost your credibility and expertise on the subjects you discuss. This dependability is especially critical in an era of increasingly short attention spans and intense competition for engagement. By maintaining a consistent presence, you can ensure that you remain top of mind for your audience, making them more likely to engage with your content, share it, and advocate for your brand or message.

In addition, a lot of social media influencers are great at creating visually appealing and entertaining content, but they often avoid discussing important issues or using their platforms to express their beliefs. This is a big missed opportunity because social media is a powerful tool for advocating and can be used to drive social change. Influencers who use their platforms to address meaningful issues not only stand out, but they also connect more deeply with their audience. Sharing your values and fearlessly speaking on important topics can attract and resonate with followers who share those ideals, creating a community of like-minded individuals who are passionate about the same causes. This shared passion and commitment can lead to increased engagement, loyalty, and advocacy.

Your social media presence is not just about the content you post, but it also reflects your values and involvement in current events. Your username, bio, and profile picture are subtle elements that can show your support for important causes. For instance, changing your profile picture to a symbol of a cause you believe in or adding a relevant hashtag to your bio demonstrates your awareness of and involvement in global issues. These actions send a strong message to your followers about where you stand and may encourage them to get more involved as well.

In addition, the comprehensive approach of aligning all elements of your social media profile with your beliefs demonstrates a strong dedication to your cause, which enhances your genuineness. In a digital environment where genuineness is highly esteemed, these actions can truly set you apart from the majority. It shows that you are not just using social media for self-promotion, but are truly committed to the community and causes you endorse. Thus, having valuable skills in social media goes beyond simply creating visually appealing content. It involves strategic planning of what and when to post, ensuring ongoing engagement, and utilising every aspect of your profile to honestly and effectively communicate your beliefs. By doing this, you not only gain a strong and loyal following but also make a positive contribution to the digital community, using your platform to have an even greater impact and influence.

By efficiently creating batches of content and employing advanced scheduling tools, you can effectively remain one step ahead of your posting schedule and effectively connect with your audience during the most opportune times. This proactive approach allows you to carefully curate your content and deliver it at strategic intervals, maximising its impact and effectiveness. Moreover, it provides you with the flexibility to focus on other crucial aspects of your online presence, such as engaging with your audience, exploring new trends, and refining your overall social media strategy. However, it is important to note that maintaining a consistent posting routine does not mean sacrificing creativity or spontaneity. While it is crucial to adhere to a predetermined schedule, it is equally vital to retain the ability to adapt and modify your content plan in response to unforeseen events or emergent topics that capture the public's attention. This agility allows you to capitalise on topical conversations and engage with your audience on current issues, fostering a sense of timeliness and relevance in your online presence. It is important to monitor the performance of your posts. Analysing key metrics such as reach, engagement rate, and click-through rates enables you to gain valuable insights into the effectiveness of your content. By tracking these metrics, you can identify patterns, understand what resonates with your audience, and make informed decisions to optimise your future content. This data-driven approach allows you to continuously refine and enhance your content, ensuring its enduring capacity to consistently captivate and engage your audience in a meaningful manner.

Life hack:

build a content calendar and dedicate a specific day for content creation. This will help you with scheduling your posts.

ROAD MAP

Weekly

Plan your content for the week every Sunday.

Bi-weekly

Batch create content for the next two weeks.

Monthly

Review and adjust your content calendar based on performance and trends.
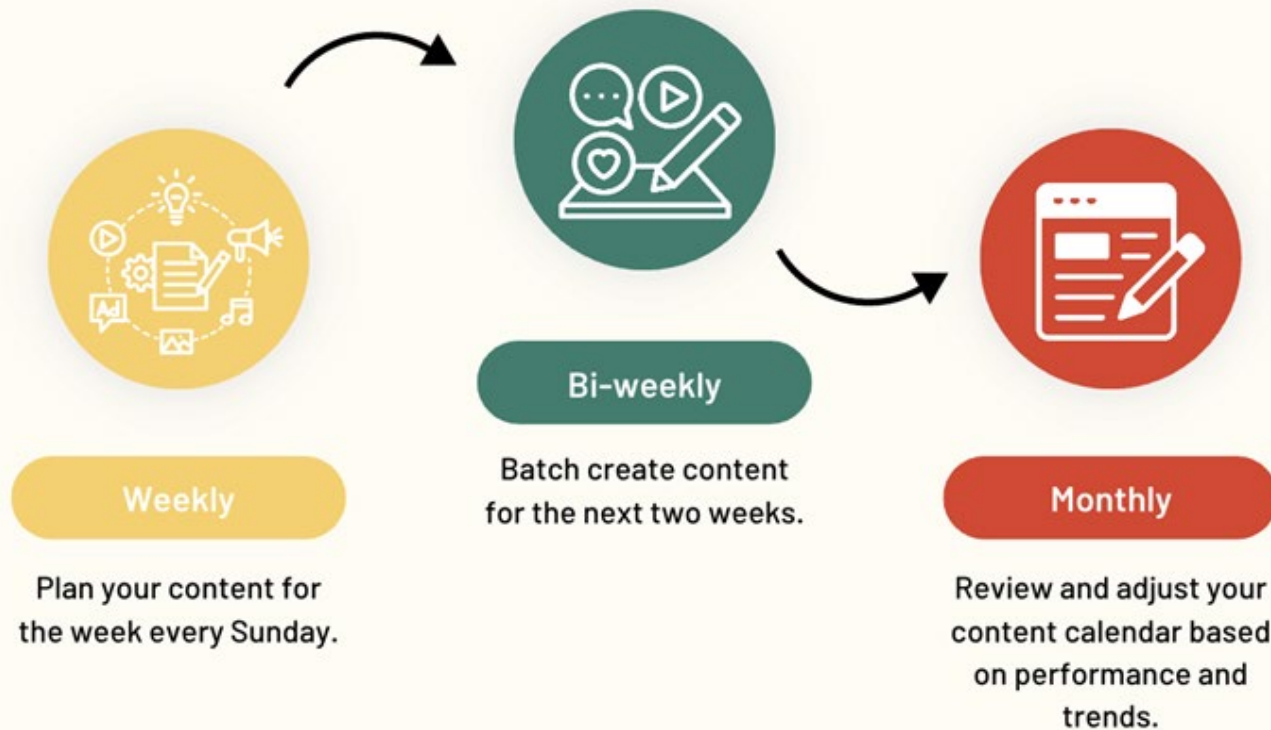
Case Studies of Successful Creative Campaigns

Using your social media abilities to promote your beliefs and support sustainability is important. Social media platforms provide a strong way to reach many people, interact with communities, and encourage action towards environmental responsibility. To show how effectively communicating through social media can impact green initiatives, here are two examples of successful campaigns for green technology.

Google's Carbon Neutral initiative, which was introduced in 2007, represented a significant commitment from the tech company to tackle its environmental impact by striving for carbon neutrality throughout its worldwide operations. Since then, Google has consistently advanced its sustainability efforts with the more ambitious goal of achieving net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. This includes not only eradicating its own carbon footprint but also promoting a shift to a circular economy by ensuring that all the energy it uses comes from renewable sources. In pursuit of these objectives, Google has invested in renewable energy projects, such as wind and solar farms, and has integrated energy-efficient technologies into its data centres and offices. The company harnesses cutting-edge innovations, such as machine learning algorithms, to optimise energy use, demonstrating a combination of technological expertise and a steadfast dedication to sustainability. This strategic incorporation of green technologies reflects Google's commitment to innovation, environmental stewardship, and long-term planning, aligning well with global and EU priorities.

Carbon neutral since 2007.
Carbon free by 2030.

Source: https://whatcanyoudo.earth/interesting-reads/realizing-a-carbon-free-future-googles-third-decade-of-climate-action/

Google's endeavours to achieve carbon neutrality and net-zero carbon emissions are directly in line with the core values of the European Union, particularly the dedication to "protect and improve the quality of the environment." The EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, specifically Article 37, stresses the importance of a high level of environmental protection and the enhancement of environmental quality as vital components of sustainable development policies. Google's initiative supports these principles by actively diminishing greenhouse gas emissions, investing in renewable energy sources, and adopting practices that reduce their environmental impact. By setting an example in the technology industry, Google not only contributes significantly to a healthier environment but also inspires other companies to adopt similar sustainable practices, thereby prompting broader systemic change on a global scale. The key capabilities Google employs in its initiative encompass advanced data analysis, technological innovation, strategic investment in green energy infrastructure, and significant cross-sector collaboration. The company's approach demonstrates a nuanced understanding of both the global energy landscape and the technological advancements necessary to transition to a more sustainable future. By leveraging its vast expertise in data analysis and artificial intelligence, Google can precisely monitor and manage energy consumption, continuously improving its environmental impact through real-time optimizations. This proactive and forward-thinking strategy exemplifies the EU's principle of sustainable development, highlighting how technology and innovation can be effectively leveraged to achieve ambitious environmental objectives. Ultimately, Google's initiative serves as a model for how large corporations can responsibly lead in environmental protection and align their operations with the highest global and regional sustainability standards, forging a path towards a greener and more sustainable world for future generations.

Another example of a green technologies campaign is the case of Patagonia's Worn Wear campaign. It was launched in 2013, serves as an outstanding illustration of a green technologies initiative that is aimed at promoting sustainable fashion practices through repair, reuse, and recycling of clothing items. This campaign is dedicated to extending the lifespan of Patagonia products with the goal of reducing textile waste and ultimately minimising the negative environmental impact that is associated with the fashion industry. In order to accomplish these objectives, the campaign offers comprehensive repair services for all Patagonia products while simultaneously providing a user-friendly platform that allows customers to easily buy, sell, and trade their used Patagonia gear.

Source: https://www.wehatetowaste.com/patagonia-worn-wear/

Beyond simply providing repair services and facilitating transactions, Patagonia's Worn Wear campaign also goes the extra mile by conducting repair tours and workshops. These tours and workshops play a crucial role in educating and empowering customers with the skills necessary to maintain and repair their own clothing items. By offering these educational opportunities, Patagonia showcases its unwavering commitment to promoting sustainable consumption and reducing waste within the fashion industry. Additionally, by emphasising the importance of skills such as product design for longevity, customer education, and community building, the campaign is successful in reinforcing a culture of mindful consumption among its loyal customer base. As a result, Patagonia has been able to foster a sense of loyalty towards its brand and strengthen its ties with its customers.

It is worth noting that Patagonia's Worn Wear campaign serves as an exemplary model for other companies operating within the industry. By aligning profitability with environmental consciousness, Patagonia has successfully demonstrated that it is entirely possible for businesses to actively contribute to the fight against climate change and environmental degradation. Furthermore, the campaign's alignment with the EU's emphasis on environmental protection and sustainability further strengthens its relevance and impact.

Future Trends

To be truly influential and make an impact on social media platforms, one must consistently and proactively stay ahead of the ever-evolving trends that dominate the digital landscape. It is imperative to not only recognize these trends but also effectively utilise them to captivate and engage diverse audiences. Accurately forecasting upcoming social media trends requires a blend of analytical abilities, creative talent, and a deep understanding of digital culture intricacies.However, due to the fluid nature of creative industries, it becomes evident that they are in a constant state of flux, perpetually transforming and morphing. Trends permeate through social media platforms, fluctuating in accordance with the changing seasons, significant occasions (such as Earth Day, which facilitates discussions on the quality of air and our planet's overall well-being), and even the cyclical nature of certain subjects, such as overconsumption or LGBTQ+ rights. Consequently, these dynamics continually reshape the very fabric of the social media landscape. Therefore, maintaining a vigilant and up-to-date awareness of these trends is not merely beneficial but vital in order to sustain relevance and forge meaningful connections with your desired target audience.

Moreover, it is crucially important to clearly differentiate and draw a distinct line between **macro and micro trends**. When delving into the realm of **macro trends**, one's attention is directed towards extensive and far-reaching content that takes into account various aspects such as environmentally conscious lifestyles and the implementation of sustainable practices. These particular trends have the propensity to undergo significant transformation and progression over extended periods, often spanning across months and even years. They possess the remarkable ability to shape and mold the perceptions as well as the attitudes of the vast online community. As a content creator or a digital entity, it is integral to diligently keep tabs on these macro trends, for they enable you to synchronise your content with the larger and more influential social movements that truly span across societies. This in turn paves the way for your engagement with a broader and more diverse audience, as their interests and inclinations gravitate towards these all-encompassing trends. These skills are crucial in establishing a strong online presence and building a loyal following. On the other hand, **micro** trends are shorter and more niche in nature. They can include challenges, viral videos, or Internet memes that capture the attention and interest of a specific subset of social media users. The emergence of platforms like TikTok has given rise to a plethora of micro trends, amplifying the importance of staying up-to-date with these ever-changing phenomena. While their lifespan may be shorter, they have the potential to cause a significant boost in engagement and bring increased visibility to your online presence.
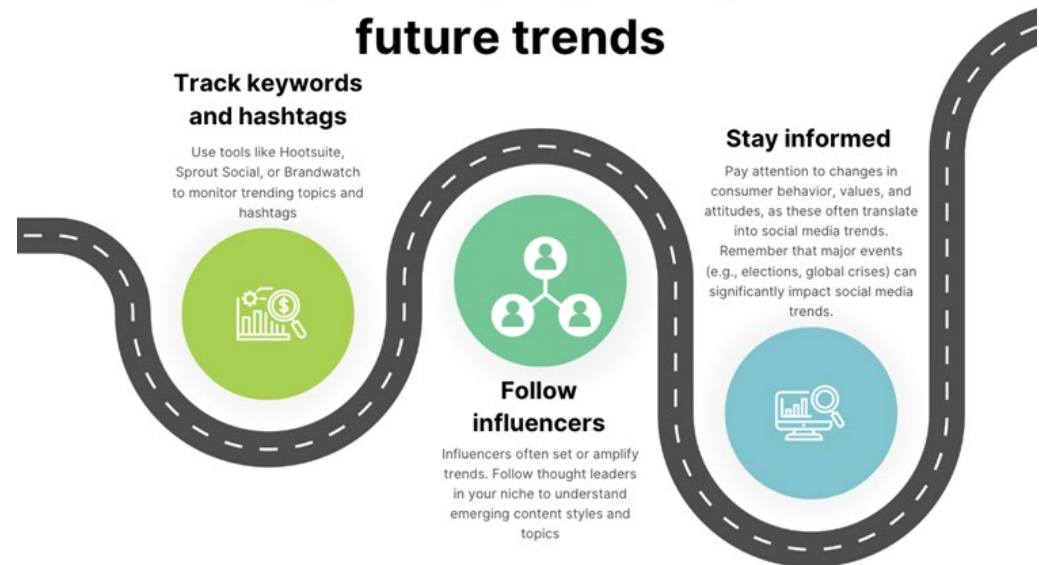
In the vast and ever-evolving realm of social media trends, influencers hold an immense amount of influence and power. This is primarily due to their deep and meaningful connection with their ever-growing base of loyal followers. Through continuous and meaningful conversations, influencers are able to stay firmly attuned to the constantly shifting landscape of social media. As such, they are able to act as the trusted guiding force within this dynamic digital world, always ready and able to fully understand and adapt to its intricate complexities. This requires a combination of technical expertise, creativity, and strategic thinking. It is important to have a strong understanding of social media algorithms and analytics.The innate ability of influencers to possess such a keen and intuitive understanding of social media empowers them to effortlessly identify and interpret the patterns and changes that shape this fascinating realm. They are the ultimate authorities in navigating the exciting world of social media, armed with an unparalleled insight that enables them to unlock the true potential of this vast and interconnected sphere. Their acute observations provide a truly unique perspective, one that has the ability to unlock new avenues and possibilities within the boundless realm of social media.

Life hack:

check new posts and trends made by influencers whose values and opinions you agree with.

It is incredibly useful and highly advantageous to thoroughly comprehend the intricacies and intricacies of digital and social media marketing. In order to achieve this feat, it is imperative to utilise exceptional tools such as the highly renowned Hootsuite, Brandwatch, or Sprout Social. By employing these cutting-edge tools, one can seamlessly monitor and meticulously identify recurring themes, invaluable keywords, and exceedingly popular hashtags that continue to gain immense traction and widespread recognition among the digital populace.

Roadmap of staying on top of the future trends

Track keywords and hashtags

Use tools like Hootsuite, Sprout Social, or Brandwatch to monitor trending topics and hashtags

Follow influencers

Influencers often set or amplify trends. Follow thought leaders in your niche to understand emerging content styles and topics

Stay informed

Pay attention to changes in consumer behavior, values, and attitudes, as these often translate into social media trends. Remember that major events (e.g., elections, global crises) can significantly impact social media trends.

Moreover, it is of utmost importance to become well-acquainted with the complex realm of search engine optimization (SEO) and search engine marketing (SEM), as these indispensable techniques play a pivotal role in maintaining a prominent online presence and ensuring maximum visibility for one's brand or organisation. By proficiently mastering the art of SEO and SEM, individuals can effortlessly stay at the forefront of the digital realm by constantly churning out the most captivating and alluring content, thus securing a substantial number of clicks and engendering a loyal and devoted following.

Furthermore, delving into the realm of digital and social media marketing also grants a profound insight into the intricacies of cultural nuances and global trends. Familiarising yourself with these vital aspects allows individuals to navigate the ever-changing landscape of social media with unparalleled ease and proficiency. It becomes crucial to remain well-informed and up-to-date about pivotal shifts in consumer behaviour, cultural movements, and societal issues that transpire both domestically and across the globe. The importance of sustainability and social justice has become a significant factor in the digital world, shaping the content of social media to effectively raise awareness and promote positive change. This focus has had a widespread impact, encouraging people from diverse backgrounds to participate in meaningful discussions and make a difference on social media platforms.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter examined the essential skills needed to make a meaningful impact on social media, highlighting the significance of creativity, storytelling, and visual imagery in crafting a unique online presence. It was emphasised that the quality of content is deeply connected to its creativity, rendering it a widely debated and greatly valued aspect of social media engagement. Creativity is not just a fashionable term, but a crucial component in differentiating a creator's brand and fostering compelling communication.

Every creator on social media has their own unique point of view based on their brand and the community they have cultivated. The ability to tell a compelling story, whether through visual content or writing, is essential in this context as it allows creators to form a deeper emotional connection with their audience, establishing trust and loyalty. Effective storytelling also involves using personal experiences and stories to motivate and engage followers, encouraging them to embrace new perspectives and ideas. This can be accomplished by sharing personal experiences and narratives, creating a more genuine and relatable connection with the audience. Additionally, it is important to emphasise the importance of strategic visual storytelling, which enhances the appeal and memorability of content through the deliberate use of images, videos, and design elements. Successful creators like those behind the "Watcher" YouTube channel and influential figures on Instagram demonstrate how maintaining visual consistency and creativity can strengthen brand identity and audience engagement. Visual storytelling goes beyond just aesthetics; it serves as a powerful tool to overcome language barriers and convey universally relatable emotions and messages.

Encouraging interaction is vital for establishing a strong social media presence. This is accomplished by using engaging content like polls, quizzes, and Q&A sessions to foster a sense of community and encourage audience participation. It's important to respond to comments, share personal stories, and create interactive experiences to build a loyal follower base and maintain authenticity. Consistency plays a crucial role, too. Having a regular posting schedule, along with using advanced content planning and analytics tools, helps creators stay relevant and maintain high engagement levels. However, it's important for creators to find a balance between consistency and spontaneity to adapt to trends and keep their content fresh and impactful.

Additionally, collaborating with others on social media provides new opportunities for growth and innovation. Working with other content creators, brands, or communities can help expand your audience, bring in fresh ideas, and build trust. Collaborating with others allows influencers and activists to amplify their messages and connect with a wider audience, leading to increased community engagement and impact. Understanding analytics and interpreting data is also important for monitoring and improving content performance. As we've discussed, the skills covered in this chapter - from storytelling and visual design to engaging with your community and being consistent - are essential for creating a powerful and authentic social media presence. Now it's your turn to put these skills to use. Every social media content creator is unique, with their own brand and community. Use your creativity, embrace your individual style, and create content that fits your platform. By doing so, you can not only build a strong and loyal following but also make a significant impact in the digital world. The stage is set - use your voice, share your story, and let your creativity shine.

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Contents

INTRODUCTION

Social networks or social media are online communities. At its basic level, online communities allow individuals to set up personal profiles, unite, communicate with, share content, and stay in touch. Social networks have acquired a leading role in the new world order. With Twitter, Facebook, and other social networks coming on the scene, the dynamics of information seems to be changing and has already changed for those to whom these networks are important. With social networks coming into existence, there seems to be a closing gap between the collection of data in the name of research and collection of data by means of surveys, interviews, observations, and focus groups.

In this chapter we will discuss the social usefulness of the content in the social networks. For this purpose, we first discuss the different types of content available online. Content, in a wider perspective, can be anything available over the internet as surfable or usable data. But here we mainly dwell with user-created content. Content can be a lot of things: blog posts, reviews, music, videos, podcasts, lists, maps, photographs, profiles, social bookmarks, and countless others. Broadly speaking, they can be divided primarily into three types. The first set is what the users prefer to create (or come across) and keep with themselves like bookmarks, contacts, friend lists, and blogrolls. The objective may be that they want to keep it for themselves or they are incapable of sharing it. The second set of content is those content that is created for oneself or for a limited readership. This may include blogs, diary, journal, note-taking, photographs, etc. The last set, popularly known as News 2.0, is the content where an individual creates content because one wants other people to see it. This group includes announcements, articles, audio, blog posts, bookmarks, current events, classified ads, experts, reviews, and photographs taken by professionals. (Santos, 2022)

This chapter provides life hacks and a "road map" to ensure that your content stands out for its value, engages audiences meaningfully, and fosters a positive impact.

Types of content

Creating content is the most crucial and vital aspect of social media. Whether it's through writing engaging blogs, crafting captivating tweets, producing visually appealing videos, designing attractive infographics, or delivering impactful presentations, the power of content cannot be underestimated. In fact, content acts as the very foundation of all social media posts, giving them substance, relevance, and value. Some may even say that content encompasses not only the textual part but also involves the creation of meaningful hashtags, user and location tags, and exciting giveaways to enhance user interaction and engagement.

What type of content to use?

Video

- Great way to grab attention and keep people interested
- Perfect for showing off your brand's personality, explaining things in a fun way, or giving a quick demo.
- Can make your message more memorable and engaging

Image

- Powerful when you want to catch someone's eye fast.
- A good picture can tell a story, create a mood, or make your content pop.
- Use them on blogs, social media, ads, and more to keep things fresh and visually appealing.

Text

- Fundamental element of communication
- Provides detailed information and context that images or videos can't fully convey
- Ideal for explaining complex concepts, telling stories, and providing instructions or educational content

In the context of Web 2.0, content plays a pivotal and indispensable role in linking individuals and communities across these vast digital networks. What you choose to share on your social media profile has significant implications as it represents your unique identity, values, and interests to others. Furthermore, visual elements, such as images, hold tremendous importance on platforms like Facebook, Snapchat, and Instagram. These images have the power to attract and captivate the attention of other users, making them more likely to engage with your content. Therefore, it's essential to carefully select and utilise high-quality images that align with your aesthetic preferences or personal brand image.

Another essential type of content is videos. Whether it's through live streaming, creating captivating reels, or sharing insightful clips from your podcasts or YouTube videos, videos offer a dynamic and immersive medium to connect with your audience. They can help forge a deeper, more personal connection with your followers, enabling them to experience your content in a more engaging and interactive way.

It is crucial to comprehend the nuances of each platform you are using and learn how to effectively communicate and engage with your target audience through these channels. By understanding the unique features of each platform, you can optimise your content strategy, maximise your reach, and achieve meaningful impact and influence in social media.

Understand Your Audience's Values and Empower Them

Prior to establishing your brand and developing your content, it is crucial to deeply understand who your target audience is. Having a comprehensive understanding of your audience serves as the cornerstone of any truly successful content strategy. For example, if you aim to discuss essential topics such as environmental conservation and sustainable living, it is paramount that your content is specifically tailored towards young individuals who are actively seeking to transition their lifestyle towards a more sustainable and eco-friendly direction. This particular group is typically driven by a deep-rooted desire to make a positive impact on the world and highly values content that strongly aligns with their core beliefs and values. Therefore, it is of utmost importance to craft your content with the utmost care, ensuring that it provides valuable insights, actionable information, and impactful messages that resonate deeply with your target audience. By doing so, you will not only engage and captivate your audience but also foster a loyal and dedicated community of individuals who are passionate about the same causes as you are. So, take the time to truly comprehend and empathise with your target demographic, as this understanding will form the bedrock on which your entire content creation and brand development efforts will stand, enabling you to build a strong and enduring relationship with your audience for years to come.

Life hack: Develop detailed profiles of your ideal audience members, considering their pain points, values, and what social issues matter to them. This will help you tailor content that meets their needs.

Once you have carefully pinpointed and comprehended the unique needs and demands of your intended audience, it is crucial to actively seek out and deliver the most suitable and relevant material to them. This will effectively address their concerns, meet their expectations, and foster a strong bond with your audience. A very successful way to do this is by arranging live question and answer (Q&A) sessions. This allows you to engage directly with your audience and create a real connection. This interactive approach not only builds trust and credibility but also allows your audience to freely ask questions and receive immediate, personalised responses that empower them to share their stories. It is through nurturing these direct interactions that you can cultivate an even deeper relationship with your audience, genuinely catering to their individual needs and desires.

Life hack: Invite your audience to share their experiences related to the topic you're discussing. User-generated content not only increases engagement but also fosters a sense of community.

Make sure to consistently and frequently monitor the performance and effectiveness of your content to ensure optimum results. Pay close attention to important measurements like engagement rates, click-through rates, and conversion rates in order to gather deep understanding. By doing so, you will gain a comprehensive understanding of which strategies are performing exceptionally well and identify areas that may require enhancement. With this valuable knowledge, you can adjust your strategy to make improvements that will be smooth and long-lasting, ultimately setting the stage for even more success in the near future.

Life hack: Use social media analytics tools to gather data on your audience's demographics, interests, and behaviour. Understand what content resonates with them by analysing which posts get the most engagement.

Adaptation is crucial for navigating the constantly changing digital landscape and achieving success. What works today may not work tomorrow, so it's important to stay flexible and adjust your strategies to meet the current trends and preferences of your target audience. By staying innovative and continuously experimenting, your brand can remain relevant and make a lasting impact on your audience. It is important to customise your content to fit your audience. This means conducting a monthly analysis of your data and making adjustments to your personal brand. Regular evaluation will help keep your content fresh and relevant. Another way to ensure that you are meeting your audience's needs is to directly ask them what they would like to see. Utilise data analytics tools to identify trends that will help you understand your audience's preferences and popular topics.

Life hack: Create opportunities for your audience to provide feedback on your content. Use surveys, comments, and direct messages to gather insights, and adjust your strategy based on what you learn.

Factors Influencing Content's Social Usefulness

In social networks, content has different levels of social usefulness. In this sense, it has been determined that certain contents have a greater social usefulness than others. The social usefulness of content depends on several factors. They include perceived relevance, timeliness, and possible future sharing. Relevance refers to the useful potential that the production of opinions might have for others. Content should align with the interests, preferences and needs of your audience. Understanding what the audience cares about, ensures the content is relevant. Content is also regarded as more useful if it deals with events which took place in the recent past, as opposed to those occurring a long time ago. Timeliness plays a central role in social networks. News has value and is typically found at the centre of social networks, both offline and online. News is informative about what has just happened; they increase our knowledge of current (future) states of the world; and they should be of interest to most people, as opposed to updates or personal communications only pertinent to close ties. It needs to be remembered that content that remains relevant to time can continue to be socially useful long after its publication. The content can be also updated to reflect new information or changing circumstances, which maintains its usefulness.

Life hack: Content that is well-researched and fact-checked is more likely to be considered socially useful.

The third factor that distinguishes the incredibly useful and highly sought-after social network content is the undeniable potential for these interactive activities to be further amplified and shared amongst individuals in their networks. This phenomenon is backed by the perfect combination of being up-to-date, ensuring that the information is current and applicable, and the inherent desire to acquire knowledge, leading to a greater inclination to share. In reality, the perceived worth of the content is closely linked to how widely it is shared within the vast and interconnected network.It is important to note that the way in which the content is presented plays a pivotal role in influencing how it is consumed and subsequently shared. Elements such as passive engagement in the form of comments and likes, as well as well-crafted calls-to-action such as thought-provoking questions and exciting contests, significantly contribute to the overall reception and dissemination of the content. In fact, they not only shape the content consumption experience but also foster a sense of community engagement that further amplifies the spread. Furthermore, it has been observed that content that goes above and beyond by providing useful tips, practical guidelines, and actionable advice truly enhances its social usefulness by empowering users to actively apply the acquired knowledge in their own lives. (Shahbaznezhad et al.2021)Such enriching content becomes an invaluable resource for individuals seeking to improve their personal and professional spheres. This symbiotic relationship between the content and its users ensures that the social network becomes an optimal platform for knowledge discovery, sharing, and growth.

Life hack: Content that has a viral element and is easy to share can reach a wider audience.

One way to significantly increase the amount of reactions and engagement on social media is by posting as frequently as possible, inundating your social network with a plethora of content. However, it is important to note that this approach can potentially harm your social value and reputation, as flooding your network with irrelevant or low-quality content may lead people to disconnect from you, ultimately diminishing your overall online presence. Instead, to effectively maximise reactions and cultivate a meaningful online presence, it is crucial to adopt a more systematic approach by focusing on creating "good content" when posting. The definition of "good content" is subjective and varies depending on the specific needs and interests of your audience. Therefore, taking the time to understand and cater to the preferences of your recipients is of utmost importance.

To strike the perfect balance between posting frequency and content quality, it is essential to tailor your content to cater to individual preferences, ensuring that your posts are perceived as valuable and relevant. This can be achieved by utilising various techniques to engage your audience, such as captivating thought-provoking questions, sharing compelling and relatable stories, or incorporating interactive elements that encourage active participation and feedback.

Consistency in posting is also a key factor in maximising reactions on social media. By establishing a regular posting schedule, you can provide your audience with a familiar and anticipated experience, increasing their anticipation and eagerness to engage with your content. Additionally, adapting your content based on audience feedback and continuously evolving their needs is essential. By actively seeking and incorporating feedback, you can fine-tune your approach and ensure that your posts align with the evolving expectations and interests of your audience.

Ultimately, achieving an optimal balance of quantity and quality, understanding your audience's needs, incorporating engaging elements into your content, maintaining consistency in your posting strategy, and actively seeking feedback will have a profound impact on maximising reactions and overall engagement on social media.

Craft Content with a Purpose

It is essential to acknowledge that the digital space is already inundated with an overwhelming amount of trivial and insignificant chatter. To truly make a significant impact and be seen as a valuable resource, it is crucial that the content created has the possibility of raising an issue, teaching something, making people happy or adding value to someone's life. Avoid simply forwarding content, always prioritising a personal approach and worrying that the message has real content and is aimed at a specific audience segment. Generate content for a broader purpose than a mere view counter.

Life hack: Use storytelling to humanise social issues and make your content more relatable. Share real-life stories or hypothetical scenarios that illustrate the impact of the issue or the solution you're promoting.

It is important to emphasise and highlight the significance of crafting and sharing high-quality materials. In an era where platforms are continuously promoting viral content, the distribution of useful and relevant information has become increasingly vital. It is important to understand that the quality of your content plays a significant role in determining the attention and recognition it receives from both the platform itself and the individuals within your network.

Life hack: Create content that educates your audience about important social issues, provides useful tips, or raises awareness about causes. Infographics, how-to guides, and explainer videos are effective formats.

A social media creator should search for information for as many (credible) sources as possible to stay informed. This may mean watching seminars or listening to podcasts, reading newspapers, having Google Alerts about a specific topic and being present on social media platforms. Your awareness will promote your account.

How to Craft Content with a Purpose:

1. Identify causes that are important for you and your audience. Ensure that the cause you choose is the one your audience cares about.

a. Deeply understand the cause you are promoting. Do research, search for issues and current challenges as well as impact on different communities.

2. Partner with established organisations (NGOs, charities or even influencers) who are already active in the cause that you have chosen. This step will amplify your message.

3. Create informative content that educates your audience about the cause, its importance and its impact on society. Remember to share ways in which your audience can contribute to the cause.

a. Consider creating a series of educational content.
b. Engage with your audience, create quizzes or polls that educate and engage with them.
c. Include a strong call to action that will guide your followers to get involved in the cause.

PROMOTE POSITIVE SOCIAL CHANGE

Choose a Cause
Identify causes that resonate with both you and your audience, such as mental health awareness, environmental sustainability, or social justice.

Collaborate
Partner with NGOs, charities, or influencers who are already active in these areas.

Educate
Create content that informs your audience about the cause and how they can contribute.

Case Studies

In the present era of technology, social media plays a significant role in shaping public opinions and initiating discussions on important societal issues. Businesses are increasingly leveraging these platforms to bring about meaningful change through the promotion of diversity, equality, and inclusion. These efforts not only improve their brand reputation but also create a broader societal impact by involving communities in conversations and action. We will analyse two prominent initiatives—Dove's "Real Beauty" and Microsoft's "We All Win"—that effectively utilise social media to challenge prejudices, advocate for inclusivity, and align with the fundamental values and legal frameworks of the European Union. By examining these campaigns, we can observe the influential role of digital platforms in promoting social welfare and upholding the principles laid out in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

Dove's "Real Beauty" campaign, which began in 2004, sought to challenge the narrow and unrealistic standards of beauty often portrayed in the media. By featuring women of different body types, ages, ethnicities, and backgrounds, Dove aimed to redefine beauty in more inclusive and diverse terms, promoting the idea that all women are beautiful and should embrace their natural appearance.

Source: https://www.liveoakcommunications.com/post/why-dove-s-real-beauty-campaign-was-so-successful

This campaign strongly aligns with several core values of the European Union and the provisions of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. It supports the principle of human dignity by advocating that every individual, regardless of physical appearance, has inherent worth. By challenging societal beauty norms, Dove emphasises that all women deserve to feel confident and respected, aligning with Article 1 of the Charter, which asserts that "Human dignity is inviolable. It must be respected and protected." Furthermore, Dove's campaign advocates for equality by rejecting discriminatory beauty standards and promoting the inclusion of women from all walks of life. This approach supports the EU's core value of equality, aligning with Article 21 of the Charter, which prohibits discrimination based on any grounds, including sex, race, colour, or ethnic or social origin. By showing diverse women in its advertisements, Dove reinforces the message that all individuals should be treated equally, regardless of their physical characteristics. The "Real Beauty" campaign also contributes to gender equality, particularly in media representation. By challenging the traditional portrayal of women in advertising and promoting diverse female representation, Dove addresses the gender bias often seen in the beauty industry, aligning with Article 23 of the Charter, which mandates equality between women and men in all areas, including media representation. Dove's "Real Beauty" campaign successfully combined commercial goals with a powerful social message that resonates with the EU's commitment to human dignity, equality, and non-discrimination. By promoting a more inclusive definition of beauty, Dove has encouraged a broader cultural shift towards acceptance and self-confidence, reflecting the values enshrined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.
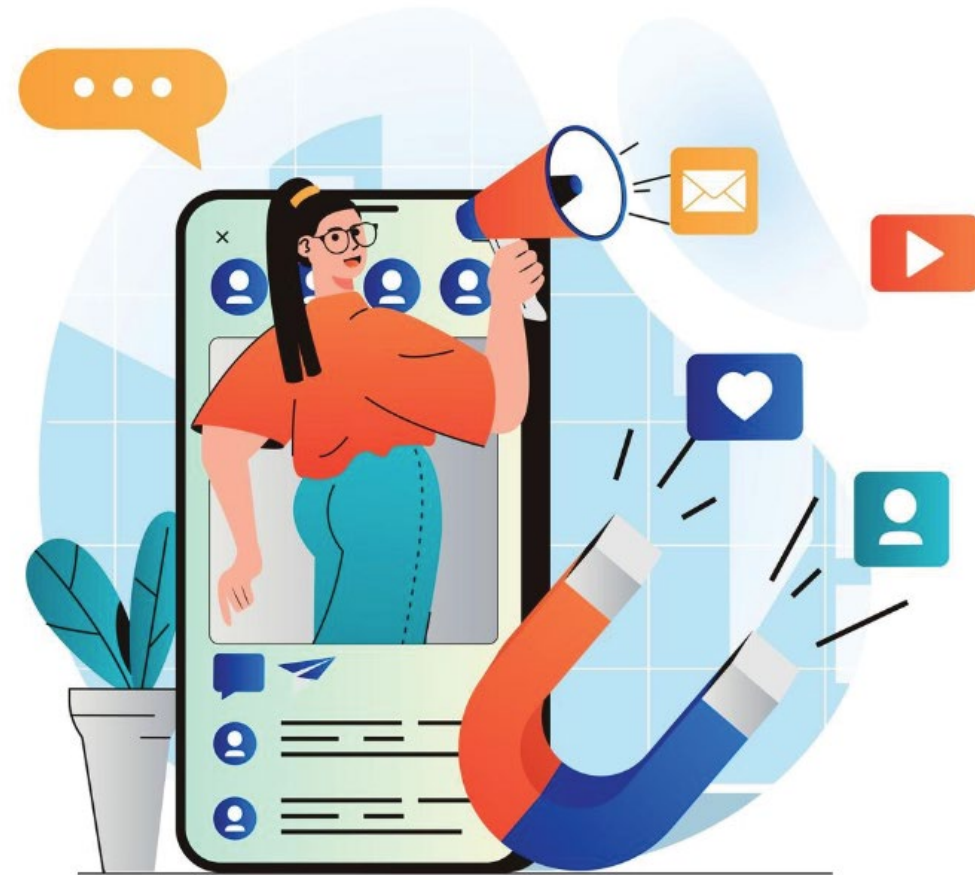
Microsoft's "We All Win" campaign, showcased during the 2019 Super Bowl, centred around the Xbox Adaptive Controller, a device designed to make gaming accessible for players with limited mobility. The commercial featured real stories of children with disabilities using the Adaptive Controller, highlighting Microsoft's commitment to inclusivity and accessibility in gaming. The ad emphasised the importance of ensuring everyone, regardless of physical ability, can enjoy the gaming experience.

Source:https://www.branding.news/2019/02/08/microsoft-empowers-kids-with-disabilities-to-improve-their-game/

This campaign aligns with several fundamental EU values and specific articles within the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, particularly concerning inclusivity, accessibility, and non-discrimination. It promotes the right of individuals with disabilities to participate fully in social and recreational activities, aligning with the EU's core value of respect for human rights. Article 21 of the Charter prohibits discrimination on any grounds, including disability. By designing the Xbox Adaptive Controller, Microsoft directly supports the inclusion of disabled individuals, ensuring they have equal access to gaming. The campaign also embodies Article 26, which recognizes and respects the rights of persons with disabilities to benefit from measures designed to ensure their independence, social and occupational integration, and participation in community life. Microsoft's focus on accessibility and adaptive technology in its gaming products exemplifies how companies can contribute to the social integration of people with disabilities by creating products that cater to diverse needs. By promoting inclusive gaming, Microsoft's campaign champions the core EU value of equality. It demonstrates that all individuals, regardless of physical ability, should have equal opportunities to participate in recreational activities. This focus on equality aligns with the EU's broader commitment to ensuring that every person is treated fairly and has access to the same opportunities. Microsoft's "We All Win" campaign is a powerful example of how corporate social responsibility and product innovation can intersect to promote inclusivity and equal access. By focusing on the needs of gamers with disabilities, Microsoft enhances its brand reputation and contributes to the broader societal goals of accessibility and non-discrimination, as outlined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights. This campaign reflects the EU's dedication to building a more inclusive society where everyone has the opportunity to participate fully, aligning business strategy with core European values. Given the increasing importance of social networks in shaping public perceptions and sparking conversations around important social issues, it is crucial for social media creators to possess key skills that enable them to effectively utilise these platforms for promoting inclusivity, diversity, and equality.

Conclusion and Future Trends in Content Sharing

In this article, we analysed the social usefulness of content shared in social networks. By focusing on social usefulness in your content strategy, you can create meaningful connections with your audience and contribute positively to the digital landscape. Use these life hacks and road map steps to guide your content creation process, ensuring that your efforts not only engage but also empower and educate your audience.

The sharing content landscape is rapidly changing and evolving due to advances in technology, shifts in user behaviour, and the rise of new platforms. These changes are expected to continue in the future, with decentralised models enabled by blockchain technology and Web3 anticipated to play a key role in giving users ownership of their data and content. Non-fungible tokens (NFTs) are also gaining popularity among artists, musicians, and creators as a way to share exclusive content and provide unique experiences to their audiences. In addition, AI algorithms are becoming more sophisticated in curating and customising content, leading to highly personal and tailored feeds that cater to individual preferences. Innovative AI tools like ChatGPT and DALL-E are allowing users to generate and contribute unique text, images, and video content, enhancing the diversity and creativity of shared materials. Furthermore, augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) technologies have the potential to redefine content sharing by offering captivating experiences for users. This is expected to drive a surge in demand for short-form video content in the near future, as audiences gravitate towards engaging and concise video formats. The development of interactive and shoppable videos is also progressing, enabling viewers to actively engage with the content they consume and creating a strong connection between consumers and creators.

As the creator economy continues to grow, platforms are exploring various monetization tools to empower creators and provide them with sustainable income opportunities. Emerging platforms are prioritising creator-centric features, such as enhanced analytics and content protection mechanisms, to support individuals across various disciplines. The increasing popularity of smart speakers and voice assistants is also leading to the emergence of voice-driven content sharing, while platforms centred around community building and niche interests are predicted to flourish in the future. Additionally, there is a growing awareness of the environmental impact of digital footprints, leading to a shift towards more sustainable content-sharing practices and the development of eco-friendly initiatives in content creation and sharing. Overall, the landscape of sharing content is continuously evolving, driven by technological advances, user demands, and cultural changes. The future promises transformative growth and innovation, leading to a more diverse, immersive, and sustainable content-sharing ecosystem.
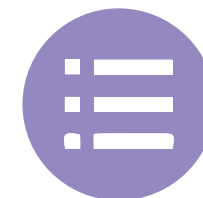
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INTRODUCTION
OF THE TOPIC

In today's digital age, social networks have become powerful platforms for marketing and advertising, offering unparalleled opportunities to reach diverse audiences. This power can be harnessed not only for commercial purposes but also for promoting social products and values that address pressing societal issues, such as inclusion, diversity, and equity. One of the most significant areas where social networks can make a difference is in campaigns that promote the inclusion of migrants and minorities—groups often marginalized in traditional media channels.

The promotion of social products and values through creative marketing on social networks is both a challenge and an opportunity. It requires marketers to think beyond conventional strategies and develop innovative approaches that resonate with audiences on a personal and emotional level. Unlike commercial products, social products—such as campaigns promoting inclusion—must convey a message that is not only persuasive but also empathetic and culturally sensitive.

This chapter, following the rationale of promoting European values, aligned with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights, is dedicated to inclusion. We provide case studies from Portugal in which the potential of social networks for such promotion is evident. We hope this can provide a clear vision of how to develop and implement such strategies provide a successful roadmap for the actors involved and bring forward more effective strategies.

Overview of creative marketing and advertising

Creative marketing and advertising in social networks have revolutionized how brands and organizations connect with their audiences, turning these platforms into powerful tools for not only commercial success but also social impact. Unlike traditional marketing, which often relies on broad, one-way communication, social networks enable dynamic, real-time interaction that fosters deeper relationships and community building.

In this context, creativity is key. Effective campaigns go beyond simple promotion to engage audiences through innovative approaches such as storytelling, user-generated content -any form of content, such as text, images, videos, reviews, or social media posts, created by users rather than brands or professional content creators-, and influencer collaborations. These strategies allow brands to create emotionally resonant content that captures attention and encourages participation and sharing.

Social networks are particularly effective for campaigns that promote inclusion and diversity. These platforms offer the ability to target specific demographics, making it possible to reach marginalized communities, such as migrants and minorities, with tailored messages that reflect their experiences and aspirations. By using visuals, videos, and narratives that authentically represent these communities, brands can create campaigns that challenge stereotypes, promote understanding, and foster a sense of belonging.

Creative marketing and advertising in social networks blend technology with human connection, providing a powerful means to not only achieve business objectives but also to promote social values like inclusion and diversity. This approach enables brands to contribute to meaningful change while building stronger, more engaged communities.
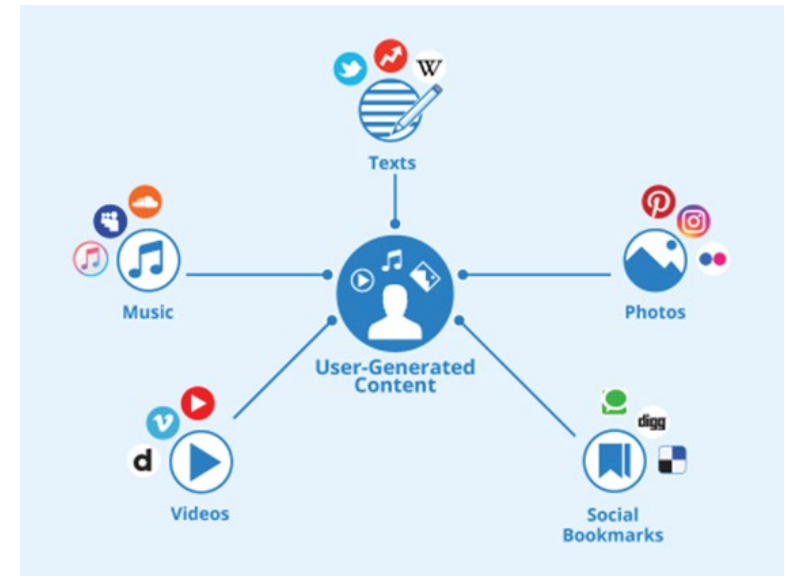

Fig.: User-Generated Content - Author: Seobility - License: CC BY-SA 4.0 (source: https://www.seo-bility.net/en/wiki/User-Generated_Content)

# Key principles of creative marketing in social networks

When developing a social media campaign, understanding the key principles of creative marketing is essential to create content that resonates with and engages your audience. Authenticity is crucial; being genuine in your messaging helps build trust, as people connect more with brands that reflect real values and honest communication. Avoid overly polished or insincere content to maintain this authenticity.

Storytelling plays a significant role in conveying your message effectively. Narratives—whether through text, images, or videos—help build emotional connections with your audience, making your campaign more memorable and impactful. Alongside storytelling, engagement is key to success. Encourage interaction by creating content that invites participation, such as polls, questions, or challenges. The more your audience interacts, the stronger their connection to your brand becomes.

Visuals are also essential in capturing attention, so ensure your content has visual appeal. High-quality images, videos, and graphics are necessary to stand out in a crowded social media feed. To complement your visuals, maintain consistency in your brand voice, style, and posting schedule. Consistency helps build brand recognition and trust over time, reinforcing your brand identity.

Targeting your content to a specific audience is another fundamental principle. Use the targeting tools available on social media platforms to focus on demographics, interests, and behaviors relevant to your campaign. Additionally, make sure your campaign is inclusive, reflecting and respecting the diversity of your audience. Inclusive content speaks to a broader audience and fosters a sense of belonging.

Finally, embrace innovation by experimenting with new formats, features, or ideas. Social media is constantly evolving, and creative campaigns often stand out by trying out new trends and approaches. By following these principles, you can create a social media campaign that not only reaches your audience but also resonates deeply, leading to higher engagement and a more impactful message.
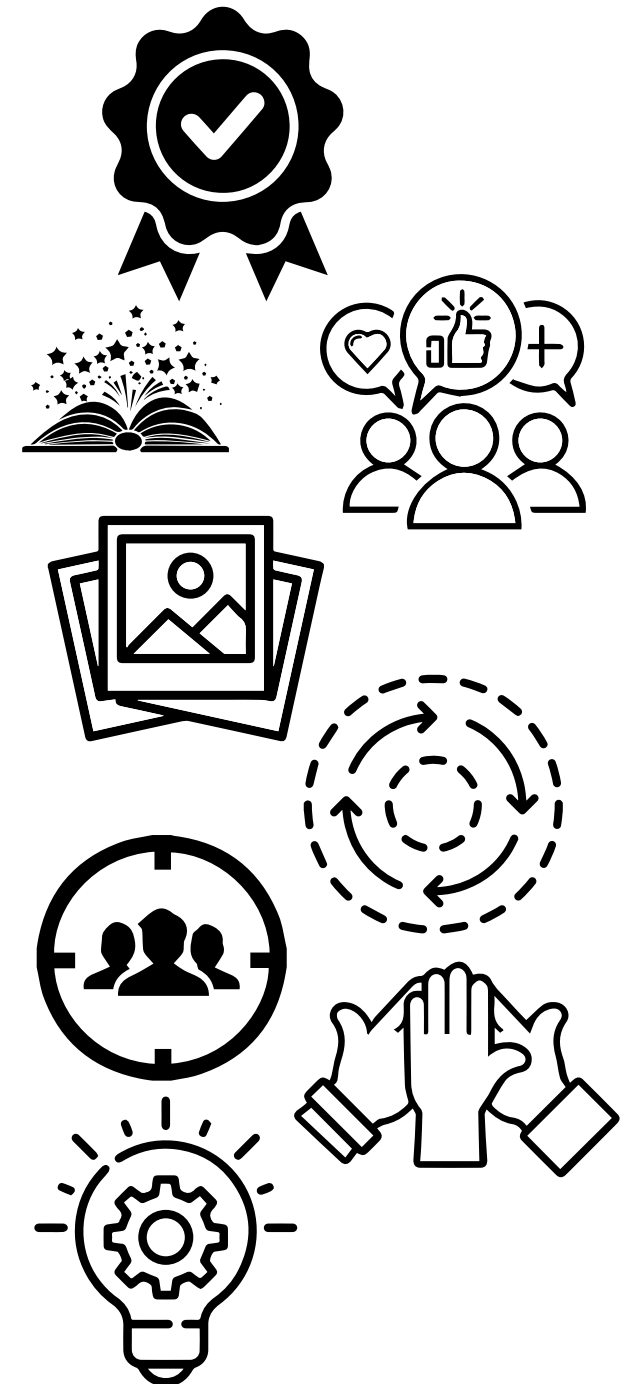
Developing a unique brand voice and identity is essential for standing out in the crowded landscape of social media. Your brand voice is the distinct personality and tone that you convey through your messaging, while your identity encompasses the visual and emotional elements that represent your brand. Consistency is key—maintain a unified tone and style across all platforms to build recognition and trust.

To develop your brand voice, start by defining your core values and the emotions you want to evoke in your audience. Whether your tone is formal, friendly, or humorous, it should reflect your brand's mission and appeal to your target audience. Authenticity is crucial; your voice should feel natural and sincere, not forced or overly scripted.

In terms of brand identity, focus on creating a cohesive visual style that includes your logo, color scheme, and design elements. These visuals should be instantly recognizable and aligned with your brand voice. Visual appeal and consistency in your design choices will help solidify your identity in the minds of your audience.

Ultimately, a strong brand voice and identity differentiate your brand from competitors, creating a lasting impression that fosters loyalty and connection with your audience.

Strategies for promoting social products and values, e.g. influencer partnerships, user-generated content, interactive and immersive experiences, emotional and storytelling approaches

Promoting social products and values through social media requires a thoughtful and strategic approach that resonates with audiences on a deeper level. Traditional marketing techniques may not be as effective when dealing with social causes, as these require a more genuine, human-centered approach to create meaningful impact. Several key strategies can be employed to promote social products and values effectively, including influencer partnerships, user-generated content, interactive and immersive experiences, and emotional and storytelling approaches.

Influencer partnerships are a powerful tool in promoting social causes because they allow brands to leverage the credibility and reach of individuals who are trusted within their communities. Unlike traditional advertisements, messages delivered by influencers often feel more personal and authentic, especially when the influencer is genuinely passionate about the cause. To maximize the impact of influencer partnerships, it is crucial to choose individuals whose values align with the social product or cause being promoted. When an influencer's audience sees them supporting a cause, it not only raises awareness but also encourages their followers to engage with the message and take action themselves.

User-generated content (UGC) is another effective strategy for promoting social products and values. Encouraging users to share their own experiences, stories, or perspectives related to a social cause can significantly enhance the authenticity and relatability of a campaign. UGC creates a sense of community and shared purpose, as people feel they are contributing to something larger than themselves. For example, a campaign focused on environmental sustainability could invite users to share photos or videos of their own eco-friendly practices. This not only increases engagement but also spreads the message organically as users share content with their own networks.

Interactive and immersive experiences offer a more engaging way to communicate social values, making the audience feel directly involved in the cause. Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) are particularly effective for creating immersive experiences that allow users to step into the shoes of others or explore issues from a new perspective. These technologies can be used to simulate real-life scenarios, such as the challenges faced by marginalized communities, thereby fostering empathy and understanding. Interactive content, such as polls, quizzes, and live Q&A sessions, can also make the audience feel more connected to the cause, as they are actively participating in the conversation.

Emotional and storytelling approaches are perhaps the most powerful strategies for promoting social products and values. Stories have a unique ability to humanize abstract issues, making them more relatable and compelling. By sharing the personal stories of individuals affected by a social issue, brands can evoke empathy and inspire action. For example, a campaign promoting mental health awareness might feature testimonials from individuals who have overcome mental health challenges, highlighting their journeys and the impact of support and resources. These stories can be shared through various formats, including videos, blogs, and social media posts, each tailored to the preferences of the target audience.

Promoting social products and values requires a multifaceted approach that leverages the power of influencer partnerships, user-generated content, interactive and immersive experiences, and emotional storytelling. Each of these strategies contributes to creating campaigns that are not only impactful but also resonate deeply with audiences, encouraging them to engage, share, and take action. By combining these elements, brands and organizations can effectively raise awareness and drive meaningful change around the social causes they champion.

Tools for creating and managing ad campaigns

Creating and managing ad campaigns requires a range of tools that help streamline the process, improve targeting, and optimize results. Social media platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter offer built-in advertising tools that allow you to design, launch, and track campaigns with ease. These tools typically include features for audience targeting, budget management, and performance analytics, making it easier to reach the right people and adjust strategies on the fly.

For more advanced needs, third-party tools like Google Ads, Hootsuite, and Buffer provide additional capabilities such as scheduling, cross-platform management, and in-depth reporting. These platforms also offer integrations with other marketing tools, allowing for a more comprehensive approach to campaign management. Tools like Canva and Adobe Express are essential for creating visually appealing ads, offering easy-to-use design templates that don't require advanced graphic design skills.

Using these tools, marketers can efficiently create, manage, and optimize ad campaigns, ensuring they reach the right audience and achieve their desired goals.

Metrics and analytics for measuring success

Measuring the success of social media campaigns relies heavily on understanding and utilizing metrics and analytics. These tools provide valuable insights into how well your content is performing, allowing you to refine your strategies and maximize your impact. The key to successful measurement is knowing which metrics matter most for your specific goals.

Engagement metrics are among the most crucial indicators of success. These include likes, shares, comments, and retweets, which show how actively your audience is interacting with your content. High engagement typically signals that your content is resonating with your audience, driving interest and conversation. Additionally, reach and impressions measure how many people have seen your content, providing a sense of your campaign's visibility and potential influence.

For campaigns focused on driving traffic, click-through rates (CTR) are essential. This metric tells you how many people clicked on a link within your post, leading them to your website or landing page. A high CTR indicates that your content is effective at encouraging action. Similarly, conversion rates track how many of those clicks result in a desired action, such as signing up for a newsletter, making a purchase, or donating to a cause.

Follower growth is another important metric, especially for long-term brand building. Tracking how your follower count changes over time can help you understand the overall appeal of your content and brand presence. Rapid growth often reflects successful campaigns or content strategies, while stagnation might signal a need for adjustment.

Advanced analytics tools, such as Google Analytics and social media platform insights (e.g., Facebook Insights, Instagram Analytics), offer more detailed data. These tools can provide demographic information about your audience, helping you tailor content more effectively. They also allow you to track user behavior on your website after clicking through from social media, offering deeper insights into the customer journey.

Finally, sentiment analysis (the process of using natural language processing (NLP) and machine learning to determine the emotional tone or opinion expressed in a piece of text, usually rated as positive, negative, or neutral) can be invaluable for understanding how your audience feels about your content or brand. This analysis assesses the tone of comments and feedback, helping you gauge public perception and identify potential issues or areas for improvement.

Metrics and analytics are vital for measuring the success of social media campaigns. By focusing on engagement, reach, CTR, conversion rates, follower growth, and sentiment analysis, you can gain a comprehensive understanding of your campaign's effectiveness and make data-driven decisions to enhance future efforts.

5 KEY SOCIAL MEDIA METRICS TO TRACK

ENGAGEMENT

REACH

CONVERSION RATE

CLICK-THROUGH RATE

BRAND AWARENESS
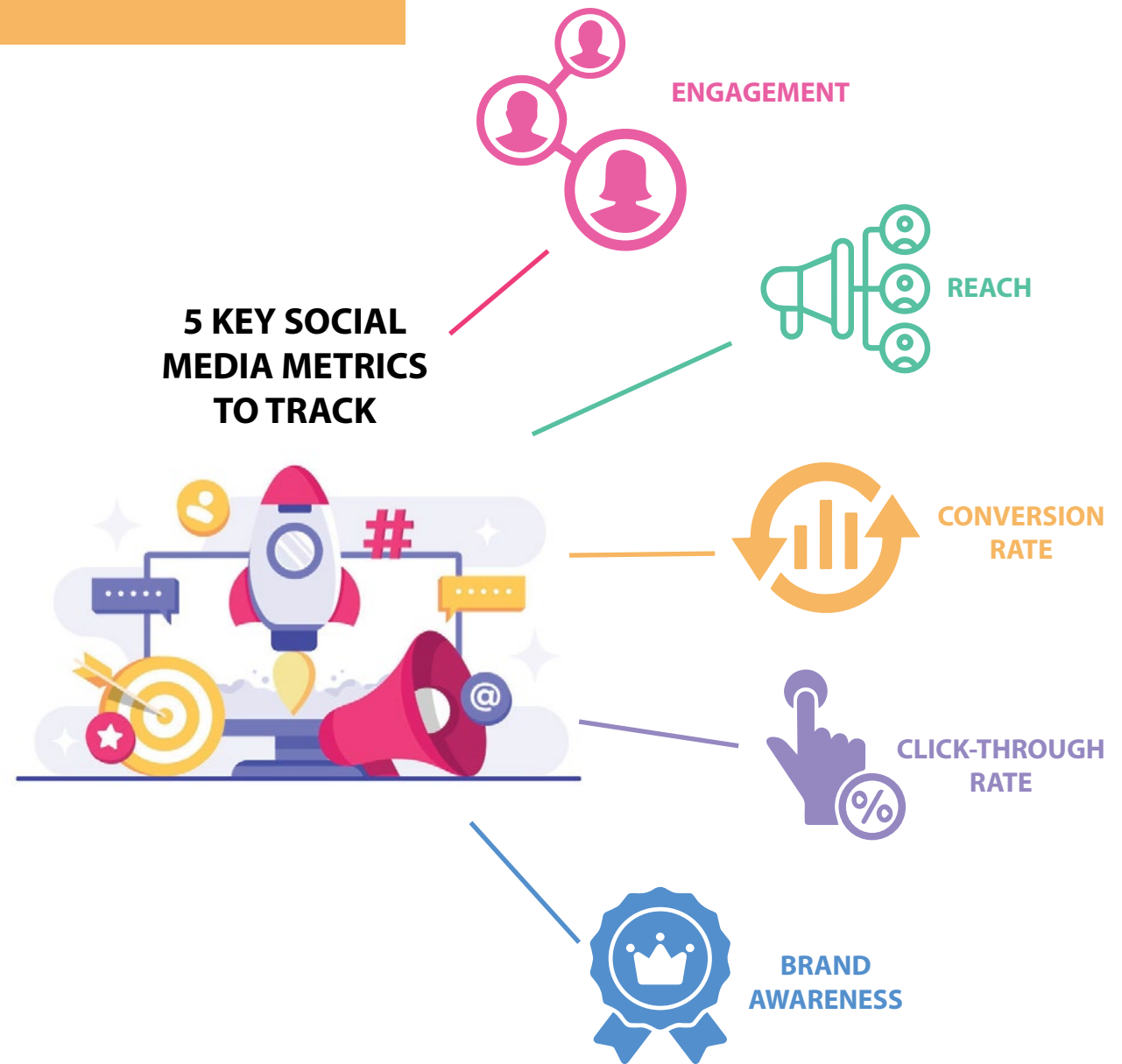
"Gerações em Rede 2023" is a long-term initiative under the Agora Nós Program in Portugal, aimed at reducing digital exclusion among the adult population residing in the country. The project seeks to contribute to social inclusion and reduce social isolation by empowering adults with essential digital skills.

This initiative engages civil society organizations in the national effort to decrease digital exclusion. Participating organizations commit to several key activities as part of their involvement in the project:

● Setting Monthly Goals: Organizations propose specific monthly targets for the number of adults they aim to empower with digital skills.

● Volunteer Coordination: They determine the number of volunteers who will participate in the project, focusing on mobilizing young people to contribute to this cause.

● Scheduling Training Sessions: The organizations are responsible for organizing and scheduling digital literacy sessions, where young volunteers will provide hands-on training to the adult beneficiaries.

● Partnering for Outreach: They also identify and collaborate with partners who can help in recruiting beneficiaries for the training sessions.

Gerações em Rede 2023: Promoting Social Inclusion through Digital Empowerment

By fostering intergenerational cooperation and focusing on digital empowerment, "Gerações em Rede 2023" plays a vital role in bridging the digital divide, enhancing social inclusion, and combating the social isolation of adults in Portugal.
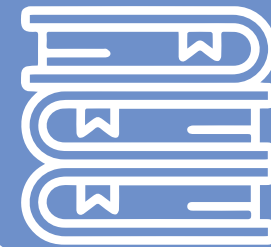
Wethe15

We the 15 is an initiative that has been spouting in Portugal from an international initiative to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities. It highlights the challenges, good examples, and people working globally to promote inclusion of people with disabilities.

Also, it hopes to raise awareness and show how people with disabilities, who make up 15% of the world's population, have a pivotal role in society. One of the focus is related to the paralympic movement. Their motto is " Let's break down the barriers that keep us apart" and they have been very successful in their online campaigns.

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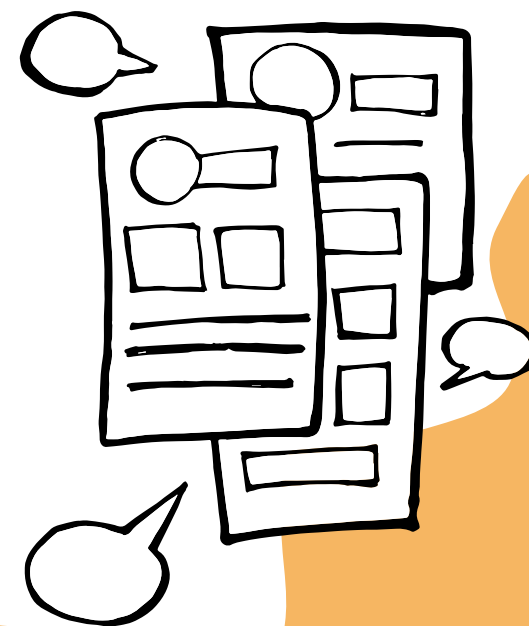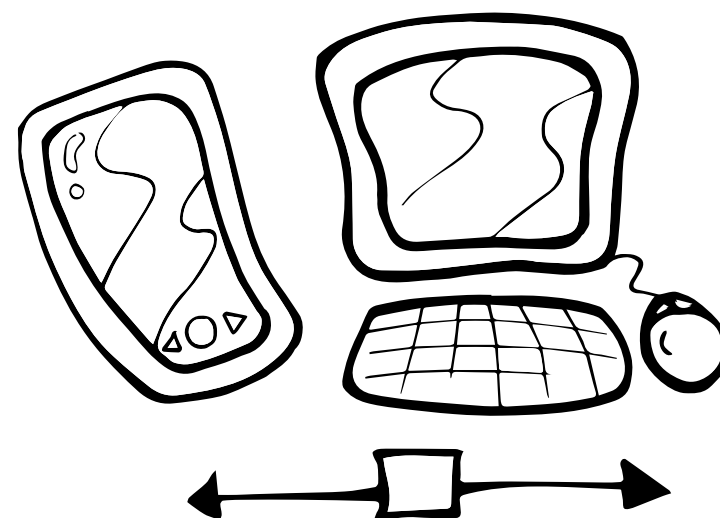
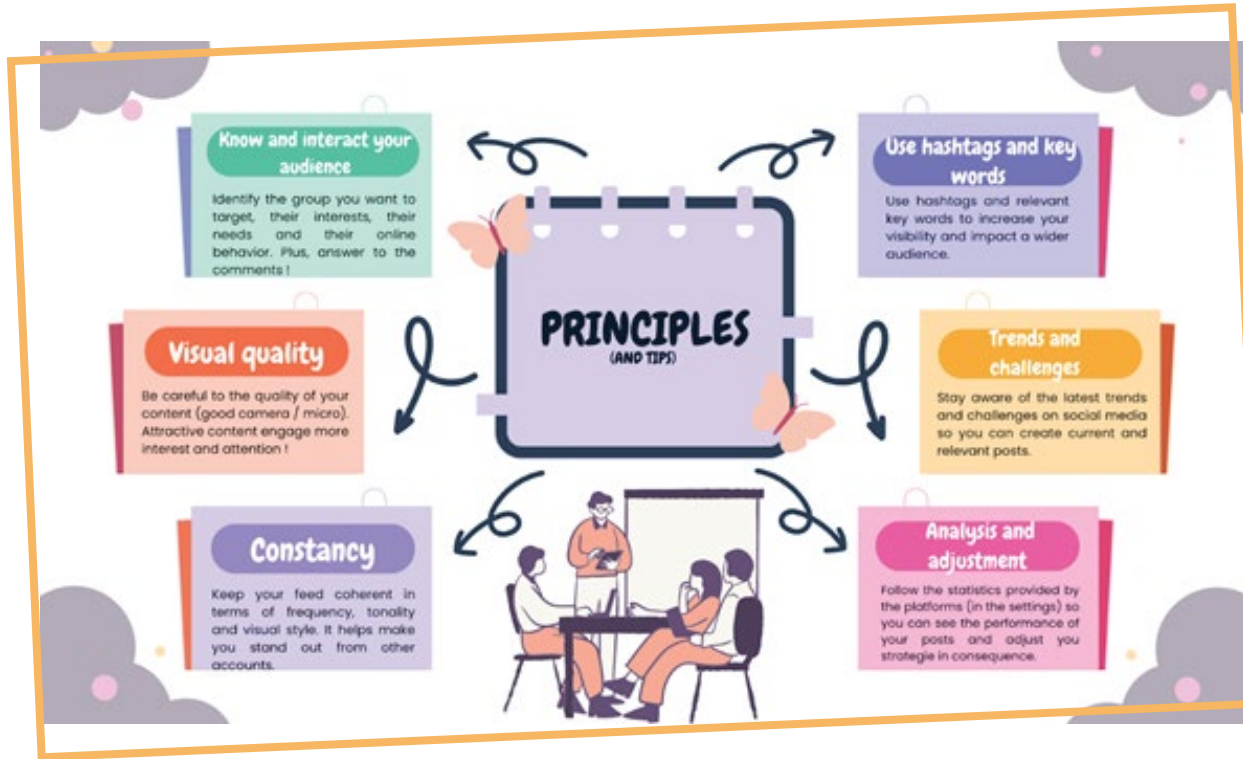# Contents

INTRODUCTION
OF THE TOPIC

In the modern digital age, social networks have emerged as powerful platforms for promoting European values. We chose to develop the core European value that is the protection of the environment (Article n°37 of the EU Charter of fundamental rights) by focusing on the use of green technologies. In this context, we are stating how big and strong communities created via social networks are smart and strong actors for promoting environmental protection and advocating for green technologies.

Specifically, creative networking involves leveraging digital tools to foster community engagement, spread awareness, and drive collective action towards sustainable practices. This approach not only amplifies the reach and impact of environmental campaigns but also encourages innovation and collaboration among diverse stakeholders. In this context, various Cypriot initiatives serve as exemplary case studies, showcasing best practices in the effective use of social networks for environmental advocacy. By exploring these initiatives, we can gain valuable insights into how creative networking can drive significant progress in the fight against environmental degradation.

PRINCIPLES AND TOOLS
OF CREATIVE NETWORKING

Know and interact your audience
Identify the group you want to target, their interests, their needs and their online behavior. Plus, answer to the comments !

Use hashtags and key words
Use hashtags and relevant key words to increase your visibility and impact a wider audience.

Visual quality
Be careful to the quality of your content (good camera / micro). Attractive content engage more interest and attention !

PRINCIPLES (AND TIPS)

Trends and challenges
Stay aware of the latest trends and challenges on social media so you can create current and relevant posts.

Constancy
Keep your feed coherent in terms of frequency, tonality and visual style. It helps make you stand out from other accounts.

Analysis and adjustment
Follow the statistics provided by the platforms (in the settings) so you can see the performance of your posts and adjust you strategie in consequence.

Effectively utilizing the **principles** and **tools** of creative networking can greatly enhance your impact, particularly in promoting environmental protection through green technologies.

Here we gathered the main principles and tips so you can create a vibrant, engaged online communities.
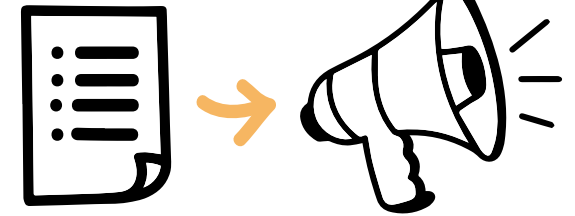
Explaining the principles

Knowing and interacting with your audience helps building a dedicated community that feels heard and valued, fostering trust and encouraging active participation in your initiatives. For environmental campaigns, this could mean targeting eco-conscious individuals, younger demographics interested in sustainability, or communities directly impacted by environmental issues. Interactions through comments and direct messages foster a sense of community and engagement.
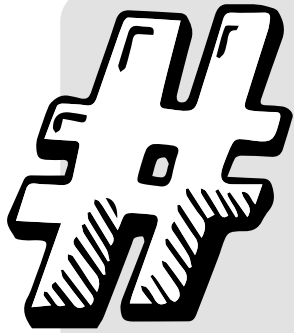
Using hashtags and keywords strategically can amplify your reach, connecting you with like-minded individuals and groups who are passionate about sustainability. As a matter of fact, effective use of hashtags and keywords can enhance the discoverability of content. For instance, hashtags like #GreenTech, #SustainableLiving, and #EcoFriendly can connect posts with broader environmental discussions, increasing visibility and engagement.

High **visual quality** ensures your content stands out in a crowded feed, making it more likely to be shared and discussed. Here are some suggestions of tools:

ONLINE SKETCHING TOOLS

IOS and Android
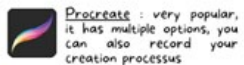
Procreate : very popular, it has multiple options, you can also record your creation processus

Concepts : mostly used for vectorial drawings

Adobe Fresco : used for its precision, with a wide range of brushes

Windows and MacOS

Krita : one of the best, you can do everythinhg on it

Clip Studio Paint : many advanced artistic tools

Affinity Designer : excelent for drawings a,d sketching, even if it's main aim is graphism

All plateforms

Canva : ideal to create attractive visuals with no need of graphi knowledge

Tayasui Sketches : easy and powerful application

MediBang Paint : personalized tools, also used for cartoons

● = free version

TOOLS FOR CONTENT CREATION

Graphic conception

Canva : ideal to create attractive visuals with no need of graphi knowledge

Adobe Spark : easy and quick graphic creations

Editing

Photoshop : to edit pictures easily

Final Cut Pro : to edit videos

Image and video bank

Unsplash : free access high quality pictures

Pexels : free access pictures and videos

Interactive content

Typeform : to create interactive surveys and polls

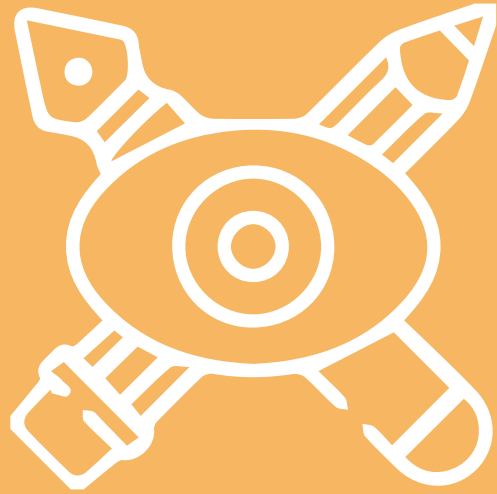**Instagram** : to create polls directly on the Instagram story

Free access sounds and music

Epidemic Sound : for high quality sound effects and music

Bensound : for high quality and free access music under Creative Commons' Licence

Consistent posting and a coherent **visual style** keep your audience engaged and looking forward to your content, strengthening your online presence. Maintaining a consistent posting schedule and visual style helps in building a recognizable brand.

Staying updated on **trends and challenges** allows you to tap into current conversations and movements, making your content more relevant and impactful. Regular **analysis and adjustment** of your strategies based on performance data ensure that your efforts are continually optimized for maximum engagement and effectiveness. This data-driven approach allows for continuous improvement and optimization of strategies.

Practical examples of using tools

Here are some examplesof intriguing infographics:


Canva and Adobe for Content Creation

Using Canva and Adobe to create visually appealing graphics and videos can make your environmental messages more attractive and shareable. For example, infographics about the benefits of green technologies or tutorials on sustainable practices can effectively convey complex information in an engaging format.

Instagram and TikTok for Youth Engagement

Instagram and TikTok are particularly effective for engaging younger audiences. Creative videos showcasing eco-friendly practices, participating in sustainability challenges, and collaborating with influencers can amplify your reach and impact. These platforms' visual and interactive nature makes them ideal for promoting environmental initiatives. Some very good examples will be showed into the paragraph "Best practices of successful Cypriot environmental campaigns and networks in social media".

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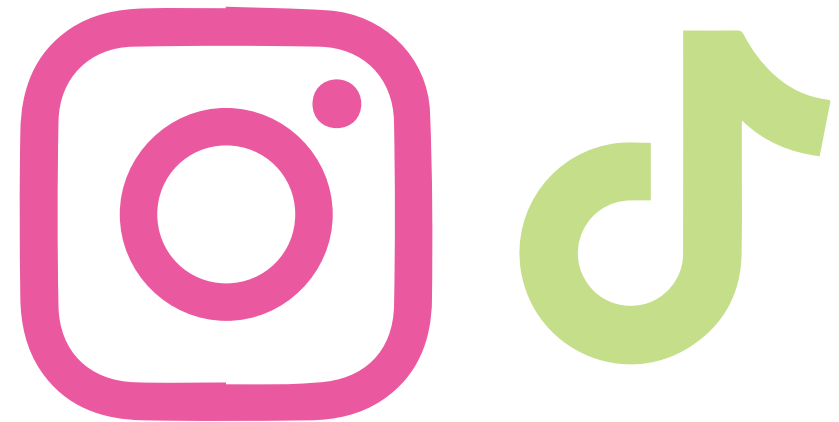
Topical Teaching/Learning Methodologies for mastering Creative Networking Tools for promoting environmental protection

To effectively harness the power of creative networking tools for promoting environmental protection, educators can integrate various modern teaching and learning methodologies. These approaches enhance students' digital and creative skills while fostering civic engagement and amplifying youth participation. Here are some effective methodologies.

Digital Social Learning

Digital social learning involves using online platforms and social media to facilitate learning through interaction and collaboration. It leverages the connectivity of the internet to create engaging and dynamic learning environments.

For its implementation social media platforms (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) must be used to create groups or pages dedicated to environmental topics. Then is essential to encourage students to participate in discussions, share relevant content, and collaborate on projects and to teach them to use tools like Canva and Adobe to create visually appealing posts that can be shared on these platforms.

The benefits of this methodology are promotion of active participation, engagement and sense of community and collaboration. Moreover, it helps providing real-world experience in using social media for advocacy.
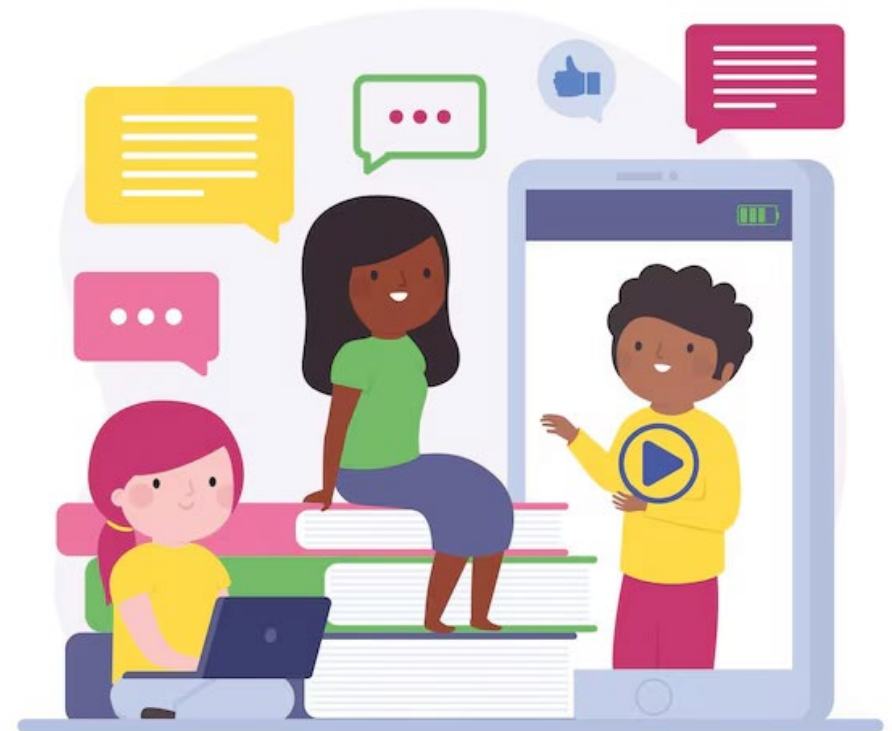
Online Collaborative Learning

Online collaborative learning involves students working together virtually to achieve common goals. This method emphasizes teamwork, communication, and problem-solving.

The best way to implement this methodology is through group projects where students must create campaigns or initiatives promoting environmental protection using creative networking tools like Google Docs, Trello, and Slack for project management and communication. Have students also use tools like Canva and Adobe Spark to create and present their projects.

Online collaborative learning develops teamwork and communication skills, enhances creativity and innovation through collaborative efforts and provides practical experience in project management and execution.

Smart and 4.0 Learning

Smart and 4.0 learning involves using advanced technologies like artificial intelligence (AI), virtual reality (VR), and data analytics to create personalized and immersive learning experiences.

The introduction of new AI-powered tools can help in content creation and audience analysis for social media campaigns. On the other hand, VR creates immersive simulations of environmental scenarios, helping students understand the impact of various technologies. Moreover, even if it will sound complex, it is very useful to teach students how to use analytics tools to measure the effectiveness of their campaigns and adjust strategies accordingly.

This methodology provides immersive and engaging learning experiences, offers personalized learning paths based on individual needs and equips students with advanced technological skills relevant to modern digital environments.

Project-Based Learning (PBL)

Project-Based Learning involves students working on a project over an extended period, which allows them to explore real-world problems and challenges.
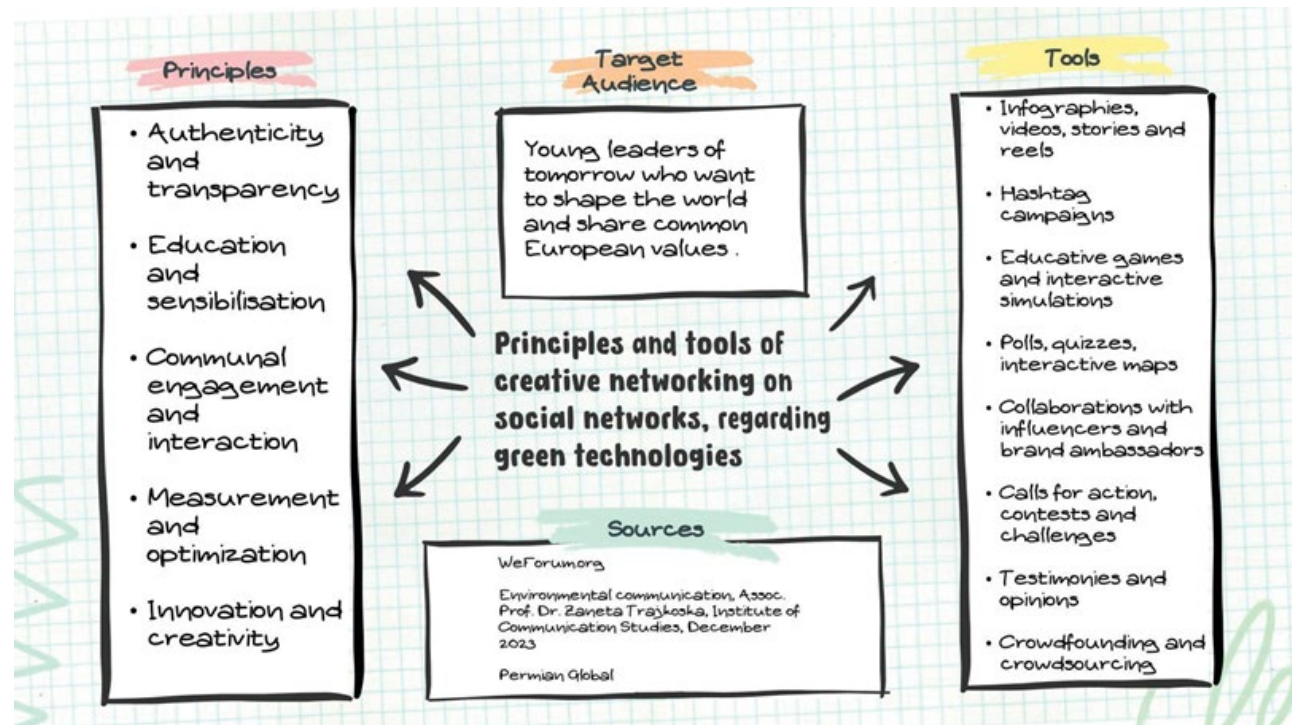
For implementing PBL it is necessary to assign projects focused on creating and executing social media campaigns to promote green technologies. Have students conduct research on environmental issues and target audiences and then use creative networking tools like Canva, Adobe Creative Suite, and social media platforms to implement their campaigns.

PBL encourages deep understanding and engagement with real-world issues, develops critical thinking, research, and problem-solving skills and provides hands-on experience in using digital tools for advocacy.

In line with the principles outlined in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and the core values of the European Union—particularly the promotion of sustainability, environmental protection, and participatory democracy—it is crucial to examine how social networks can be leveraged for environmental advocacy. These values guide the selection of best practices in social media use, reflecting the EU's commitment to fostering responsible citizenship and sustainable development. In this context, we will analyse three exemplary movements and initiatives in Cyprus that utilize social networks to promote environmental activities, each embodying these shared European ideals.

Thus, all of them follow the correct principles for a great and functional campaign:

Principles
- Authenticity and transparency
- Education and sensibilisation
- Communal engagement and interaction
- Measurement and optimization
- Innovation and creativity

Target Audience
Young leaders of tomorrow who want to shape the world and share common European values.

Principles and tools of creative networking on social networks, regarding green technologies

Tools
- Infographies, videos, stories and reels
- Hashtag campaigns
- Educative games and interactive simulations
- Polls, quizzes, interactive maps
- Collaborations with influencers and brand ambassadors
- Calls for action, contests and challenges
- Testimonies and opinions
- Crowdfounding and crowdsourcing

Sources
WeForum.org

Environmental communication, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Zaneta Trajkoska, Institute of Communication Studies, December 2023

Permian Global

Save Akamas / Save Cyprus' Forests

These movements focus on protecting specific natural areas in Cyprus, like the Akamas Peninsula and various forested regions. They use social media to mobilize public opinion, organize protests, and campaign against developments that threaten these areas. Their posts often include beautiful images of the areas they aim to protect, updates on legal and political develop-ments, and calls for public support.

Source:
• INSTAGRAM: @saveakamas

Source:
• https://www.foecyprus.org
• INSTAGRAM: @foecyprus
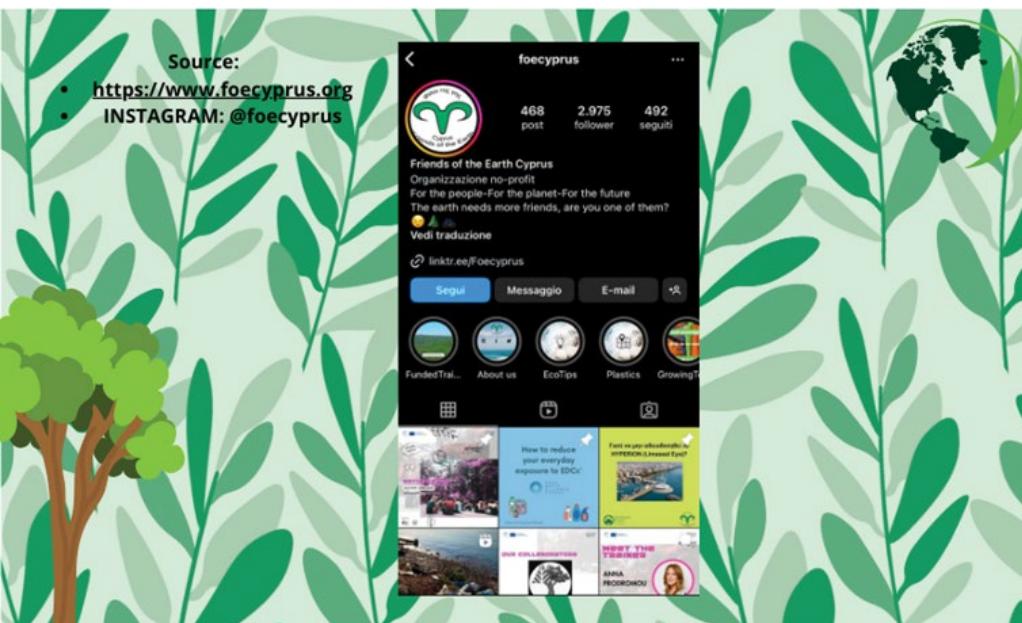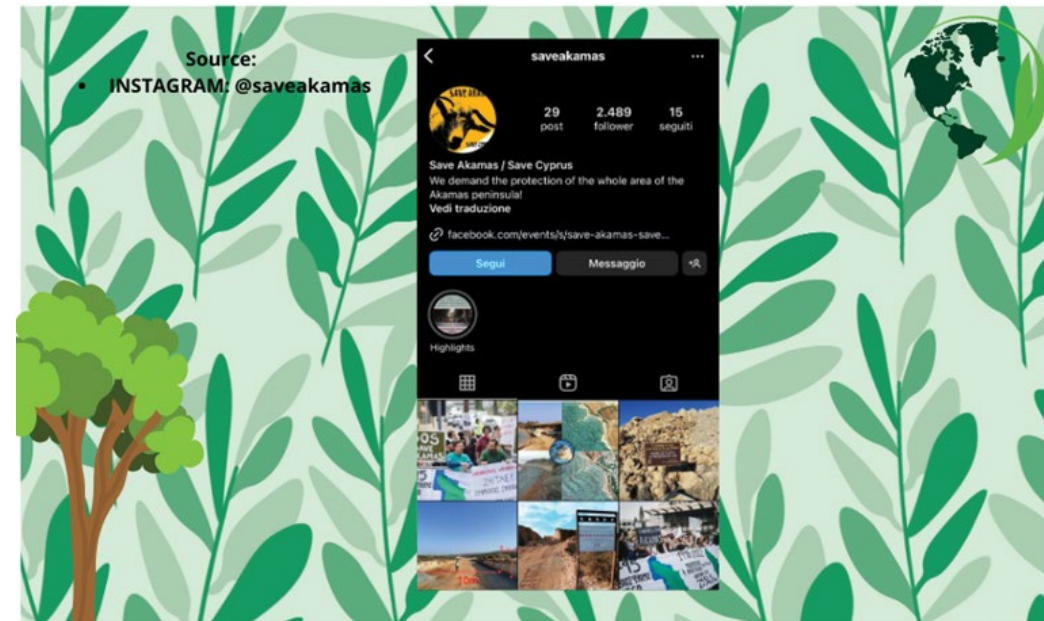
Friends of the Earth Cyprus

Friends of the Earth Cyprus is an environmental NGO that uses social media to campaign for various environmental issues, including renewable energy, waste reduction, and climate change. Their campaigns often include online petitions, educational posts, and calls to action for community involvement in environmental projects.

Zero Waste Cyprus

Zero Waste Cyprus promotes the principles of reducing, reusing, and recycling to achieve a zero-waste society. They leverage social media to share tips on waste reduction, organize workshops, and advocate for policy changes. Their online presence is a central part of their strategy to engage with the community and spread their message.
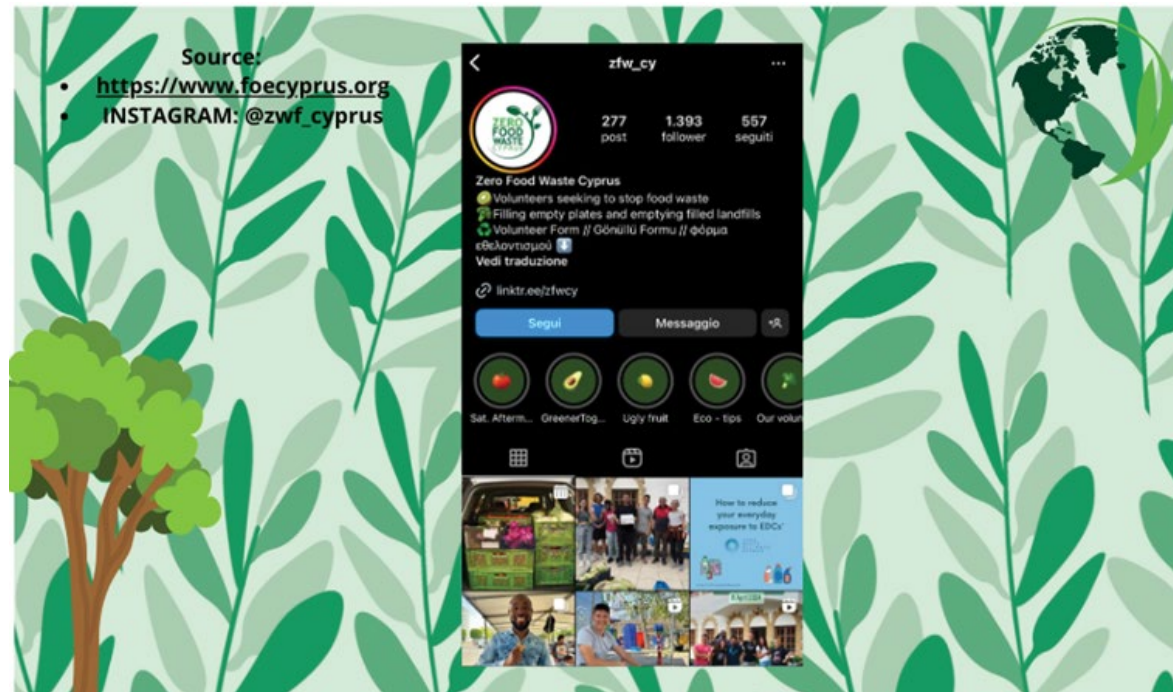
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# of Well Values

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