

MARKETING GUIDE

# Get Schooled in Social Media

## 8 Steps for Creating a Successful Campaign for Your School

## INTRODUCTION

If you're not marketing your school on platforms like Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube, you may be missing out on significant opportunities to engage your audiences and attract the support you need to reach your goals. Whether you're looking to increase alumni participation for your capital campaign or boost enrollment in your transitional kindergarten program, a social media campaign can make the difference in whether you surpass your target—or miss it.

Social media campaigns should be a coordinated effort with specific goals, audiences, and timelines in mind. Follow these eight steps to make sure your school's social media campaign is successful.

# 1 Establish F.A.S.T. Goals

Great social media campaigns have 1–2 clear goals that are:

- Focused
- Attainable
- Strategic
- Timely

## Examples

- Raise X funds for your capital campaign in two months.
- Increase alumni event attendance by X% in the new year.
- Increase qualified admissions inquiries by X% December–February.

### Exercise

My social media campaign goal(s):

a. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# 2 Identify and Understand Your Audiences

Who do you need to engage to reach your goals?

Think about your audience's demographics (age, gender, education level, etc.) and psychographics (beliefs, motivations, online behavior, etc.). Take the time to create profiles of representative members of your audience, including what matters most to them. What can your campaign leverage to meet their needs?



## Example

Alum Alex is 45 and married with two kids. He works for a tech startup and commutes 1.5 hours from his home in Oakland to Silicon Valley each day. Alex is constantly on his phone, which he's proudly set up to sync with apps and other devices that he has at home, in the car, and at the office. He checks Facebook a few times a day to see what his family and friends are doing; he posts to Instagram once a month. He believes in the power of relationships and is keen on spending one-on-one time with each of his children; he goes out with his wife out on weekly date nights; he makes a point to have lunch with his old high school teacher (and now family friend) every other month. Alex loves the personalized approach teachers and staff at your school provide students and families. He knows this helps people like him grow up to be the very best version of themselves.

### Exercise

My audience is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

and they care about \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

# 3 Choose the Most Effective Platform(s)

Which social media platform will be most effective in *moving* your audience to action?

User interviews and secondary research can help you discover the answer to this question. Also, keep in mind how your audience accesses social media platforms, whether mobile, desktop, tablet, or some other device.

## Example

Alum Alex Googles everything and seeks online advice and reviews from his friends and family mainly through email or Facebook. He's constantly on his phone, which is the easiest way for him to engage with others.

According to the **Pew Research Center** ([pewinternet.org/2018/03/01/social-media-use-in-2018](http://pewinternet.org/2018/03/01/social-media-use-in-2018)), in 2018, social media use by age looked like this:

- Americans ages 18–24 were more likely to be on YouTube, Snapchat, Instagram and Twitter.
- Facebook was used by a majority of Americans across a wide range of demographic groups.
- LinkedIn was popular among college graduates and those in high-income households.

## Exercise

Considering the above information, along with the other research I've conducted, the best platform(s) for reaching my audiences are:

Audience 1: \_\_\_\_\_ Platform 1: \_\_\_\_\_

Audience 2: \_\_\_\_\_ Platform 2: \_\_\_\_\_

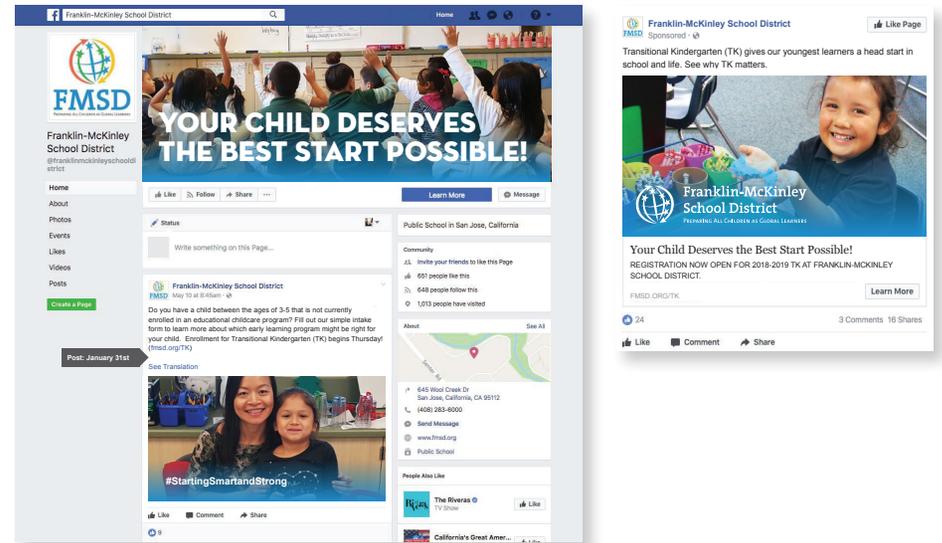
# 4 Create a Powerful, Compelling Campaign

A compelling campaign must:

- Align with your brand strategy
- Incorporate a well-considered understanding of your audience(s)
- Move people to action through this formula: Urgency + Emotion + Rationale = Great Campaign
- Utilize consistent visuals and powerful headlines
- Be short and easy to understand

Consider relevant, memorable hashtags for your campaign. Free tools like **Hashtest** ([hashtest.io/](http://hashtest.io/)) can help you determine the best hashtags to increase your campaign's reach.

Take a look at an example of a great campaign theme:



Franklin-McKinley School District Social Media Campaign.

# 5 Allocate the Proper Resources

Be realistic about what resources you can allot to a campaign and you'll be able to set a more realistic benchmark for success.

### Consider:

- Who will create the campaign content (e.g., copy and design for paid ads and posts, etc.)?
- Who will oversee your campaign?
- Who will implement, monitor, and adjust your campaign?
- What's your budget for paid media (e.g., Facebook and Google ads)?
- What visual assets do you have available (e.g., in-house video and images vs. stock)?

Free online tools like **Canva** ([canva.com](https://www.canva.com)) make it easier than ever to create beautiful social media graphics tailored to the size requirements of each platform. You can also find free stock photographs on sites like **Unsplash** ([unsplash.com](https://unsplash.com)) or **Pixabay** ([pixabay.com](https://pixabay.com)).

### Did you know?

A sound social media campaign typically includes the promotion of your campaign via paid media. While a budget of \$500 in paid media can be effective, \$2,000–\$5,000 is more typically necessary if you want to have specific, dependable campaign results.

# 6 Adjust Using Real-Time Analytics

The beauty of social media is that you can maximize your campaign's performance and reallocate funds to the tools that are working best *during* the campaign, in real time.

Don't wait to do this until after your campaign is done.

### Exercise

What tools will you use to analyze your campaign (free vs. paid)?

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Who will analyze the data and recommend adjustments?

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### Did You Know?

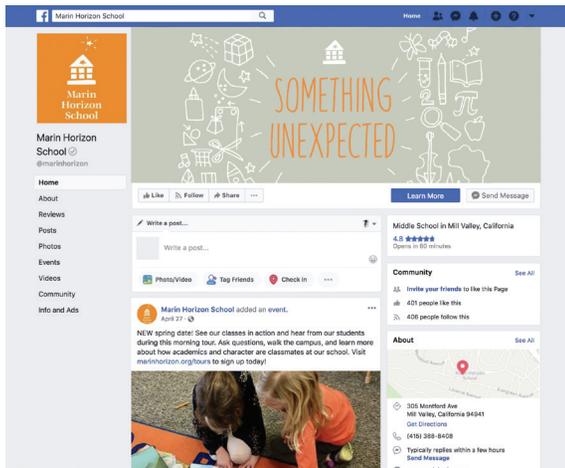
Each social media platform has its own analytics that enable you to review your campaign's performance in real time. You can also track all of your social media analytics through tools like **Hootsuite** ([hootsuite.com](https://hootsuite.com)) or, for just Facebook and Instagram, **Iconosquare** ([pro.iconosquare.com](https://pro.iconosquare.com)). And the free tool **Followerwonk** ([followerwonk.com](https://followerwonk.com)), allows you to better reach your Twitter followers by informing you of when they're online and where they're located.

# 7 Reflect

You'll evaluate and adjust your campaign while it's happening, but you should also conduct a postmortem.

## Consider:

- What worked well in moving your audience to action?
- What didn't work?
- Did you allocate enough budget, resources, and time to your campaign?
- Did you meet your goals? If not, were they unrealistic or did other factors come into play?
- What else can you learn to improve future campaigns?



Marin Horizon School Social Media Campaign.

# 8 Repeat

Through this process, you are guaranteed to better understand your target audience, social media platforms, what worked best, and what missed the mark.

The best time to start planning for your next campaign is when insights are still fresh and relevant. To make your next campaign even stronger, consider everything you've learned about your audience, social media platforms, the design and writing of posts, and your campaign's performance.

For additional research and stats on social media trends, check out these resources:

- [givingreport.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2018-GivingReport-English.pdf](http://givingreport.ngo/wp-content/uploads/2018-GivingReport-English.pdf)
- [mrbenchmarks.com](http://mrbenchmarks.com)
- [spreadfast.com/social-media-tips/social-media-demographics-current](http://spreadfast.com/social-media-tips/social-media-demographics-current)
- [pewresearch.org](http://pewresearch.org)



## Learn More

Mission Minded is a branding firm that works exclusively with nonprofit organizations.

We believe that a brand that sets you apart is essential to a nonprofit's success. Every day we guide nonprofits to uncover the big, bold idea that will attract more people to their work. Because in today's world, a worthy mission is not enough. You've got to communicate what makes you unique at every opportunity.

Our clients successfully raise more money and attract the support they need to achieve their goals. To find out how Mission Minded can help your organization, call us today at 415-990-9360.