

Storytelling

Using Technology



Promotion

Promotion is one of the 4 P's of marketing. (Price, product, promotion and place). Promotion has, in the past, been in print form. The printed brochure has not gone by way of the dinosaur just yet. Many older Baby Boomer travelers still rely on printed maps, brochures, and information. There are also times when cell phone service is less than desirable or access to the internet is lacking, and access to printed information is desired. But in today's age of technology, it is imperative that a byway also connect with travelers through a variety of the new social media.

Cars and smartphones are equipped with GPS systems and are available to most travelers. Cars now may be wi-fi hot spots as are many restaurants, hotels, and coffee shops. Byways must stay up-to-date on the ways they connect with visitors to their byway and give them the opportunity to access information in the method of the visitor's choice.

Website

A website for the byway is a must and should include downloadable information and maps or at least have links to specific attractions, locations, and amenities the byway would like the traveler to find. Many travelers research their trip in advance, and, through a well-designed website, information should be found easily. Seek out a design professional, use a template, or hire a college intern to create the site if you do not have the skills to create one.

Attraction information should include a brief description, days and times of operation, seasonal changes, street addresses or latitude/longitude points, attraction website links, phone numbers, and email addresses if available. A calendar of events is also helpful for those planning trips.

Information may be updated as needed, but website information is usually more fixed than the other types of social media.

Facebook

A Facebook account is easily set-up by going to www.facebook.com and answering a few questions. Several people can be added as administrators or editors for the page. Posting to Facebook can be a shared photo of an event, written information, or sharing another Facebook account's post. This type of media is used in more real-time to let people know

of upcoming events, events as they are happening, or a quick review of what has happened. Photos attract more readership and the viewer may comment, share, or react, e.g., "like" the post.

Twitter

Twitter is an online social networking service that enables users to send and read short 140-character messages called "tweets". Registered users can read and post tweets, but the unregistered can only read them. Users access Twitter through the website interface, SMS or mobile device app.

Pinterest

Pinterest is a web and mobile application company that operates a photo sharing website. Users must be registered. Photos are sorted by categories and a user may "pin" their favorites to their "board" and refer to later. Travel locations may have their photos in Pinterest.

Blogging

Blogging is another way to share travel information. You may write your own blog about the byway experience or tap into a professional blogger to write about what there is to see or do on the byway. Blogs are easy to set up. The program will ask you to add a title, key words, and brief description and will also show the strength of your choices.

When people "google" for information, depending on your key words, your blog will come up in their search. The blog program will also assign a link to your blog. You may post that on your Facebook page or on your website to gain even more exposure to your information.

Sharing Information

The best way to use social media is for a byway to "like" another Byway or location's Facebook page or have a link to other pages. Travelers, when researching trips, may flip between website pages as shared information may lead them to your site.

You also can share information with your state's Travel Department, other byways, and the National Scenic Byway Foundation.

The National Scenic Byway Foundation (www.nsbfoundation.com) is a source of information for all byways on what a byway is, how to organize

and manage byways, and offers webinars to keep the byway professional educated and informed.

Create a Social Media Policy

In the byway's written social media policy, the topics of confidentiality and copyrights should be included. Be sure to cite any work you share and make sure you have permission to share it (especially professional photographers). Information and posts should be courteous, professional, accurate, and respectful. It is advised to use a professional account over a personal one to avoid any problems that would reflect adversely on your organization or to byways in general.

What is the Right Blend of Social Media?

All forms of social media offer statistics of some kind. Facebook can tell you how many people have "liked" your page, how many visitors have been to your page, etc. Website programs can tell how many have seen your site, how long they stayed on each page, and if they came to your page from another page. It is through this information that you can find what form of social media is best for you, what could be strengthened, and where your resources are best served when developing your marketing plan.

NSBF archived webinar, available to members on our website

January 2018 Webinar : **Build a Better Byway Facebook Page.** We dive into the basics of getting more engagement with your Facebook page followers and building a more effective page for your Byway. We'll talk about the key parts of a page that need to be completed, tips for effective posts, a simple posting schedule, post examples, and ways to gather more followers. There will be plenty of time for Q&A and we can even live-review a page or two if you'd like. Your webinar hosts are Sheila Scarborough and Leslie McLellan from Tourism Currents.

Information summary from the January 2018 NSBF Webinar

Changes to Facebook - what you need to know! Have you been hearing about the "Facebook Apocalypse?" It's the latest sign that Facebook plans to decrease the visibility of brand/organization pages in follower news feeds, unless those posts "encourage meaningful interactions between people." The reason is simple. Facebook wants you to spend more money on sponsored posts and ads. That's actually not a bad idea; their advertising can be very precise, and is currently quite affordable. If you have great page engagement right now, keep doing what you're doing unless you see that it isn't working any more. Make sure your posts are short, snappy, relevant, interesting, and almost always include a visual of some sort or a video.

Other moves that can help ensure that people see your posts: experiment with Facebook live video; encourage your page followers to select the "See First" option to see your posts first in their News Feed; and consider setting up a group connected to your page to foster more follower interaction. All the more reason to pay more attention to your own website, blog, and email list. YOU control those, not Mr. Zuckerberg. Tip brought to you by Tourism Currents - www.tourismcurrents.com

REFERENCES

Scarborough, Sheila. Tourism Currents blog. <https://www.tourismcurrents.com/social-media-success-the-most-important-steps-cost-nothing/>