



Photo: Ludomil Sawicki

You've been using social media efforts at your firm for a while, but just aren't getting the kind of traction you'd like for your efforts. Here are three ways to engage your social media audience that goes beyond great headlines and blog posts.

Before you begin, take a look at your social media analytics to see what types of posts gained the most engagement in the past. What was the post format – video, text, photo, poll, infographic, etc. Depending on the platform, you will want to look at the engagement percentage, as well as number of shares, likes, reach, and comments.

Now that you have the history, it's time to consider new ways to engage your audience. Here are three.

Create Polls

Some people look to social media to fill their down time, to learn new things, and to engage. Polls are a great way to help people do that. Best of all, it helps you gain insight into your target audience's personality, habits, and traits – all good things to know for future marketing efforts.

What are some fun polling topics you can use to increase engagement? Here are a few ideas. You'll notice they have nothing to do with accounting. That's the point. You want them to engage so you can learn more about their lifestyles, habits, and personalities. The answers you gather can help you create future content.

3 Fun Ways to Engage Your Social Media Audience

- May: Release a poll on May 4 (Star Wars fans know why): If you had to pick a father, who would you choose? (A) Darth Vader (B) Luke Skywalker (C) Chewbacca (d) Obi Wan Kenobi
- June: It's National Iced Tea Month, do you like your tea (A) Sweetened (B) With lemon (C) Without sweeteners (D) None of the above
- July: It's National Grilling Month, what's your favorite thing to grill? (A) Chicken (B) Steak (C) Veggies (D) Grill - what's a grill?

How do their answers help with future content? First, it helps you to split test email campaigns because you can easily narrow headlines down to two choices. Second, you can leverage answers in content examples, for example, if Darth Vader were your father, his money-saving tips would include...; but; if Chewbacca was your father, your money-saving tips might look like this. Third, it knowing that you have Star Wars fans in your audience, you can align accounting topics with Star Wars whenever a new release happens, a celebrity is in the news, or collections go up for auction.

User-Generated Content

Another way to engage with your audience is to encourage user-generated content. This works well on visual platforms like Instagram and Facebook, maybe even Twitter; but, not so well on business-oriented platforms, like LinkedIn. It's also great way to get families involved.

Here's how it works.

1. Brainstorm the content ideas. Pick one to launch.
2. Determine which platform(s) you're going to use to promote it.
3. Create the post announcing the user opportunity, guidelines, and link to any contest rules when applicable.
4. Identify the timeline for sharing.
5. Monitor and comment on the posts.
6. Announce any contest winners.
7. Analyze results.

Here are some examples:

- You could release a coloring page for kids of a certain age to submit their completed page by a specified date. The coloring page could be accounting or business related. Those who submit could get a kid-friendly, accounting-related coloring book created by

your firm.

- Share a photo of an old piece of accounting equipment and ask people to submit photos of old business equipment they are still using.
- Encourage business travel photos during the summer and tie it to a blog about business travel expense tips.
- A photo-sharing campaign for “where you do your work” could inspire followers to share interesting job locations, and work environments. Use a unique hashtag to help others get engaged too, such as #MyCoolWorkSpot, and combine it with a cool, swag-bag contest giveaway.

Trending Topics and Current Events

Look to lifestyle brand’s content for inspiration for trending topics you can connect with throughout the year. For example, graduations usually take place in May and June; you could share college-bound budgeting tips. Summer is a time when parents send children to camp; you could share tips about tax breaks for parents of children who camp. Spring is about new beginnings and getting organized; you could share a financial planning infographic for the money-conscious reader.

Current events can be a little trickier. It’s important to know what to connect with, as well as how long to continue the conversation. For example, when a story breaks in the news about a celebrity’s failed estate plan, you could share tips about estate planning within days of the breaking news. But, you don’t want to drag that story back out after months if people are no longer talking about it. Rather than making your brand look current, that would make it look out of touch.

Once you’ve identified an engagement technique that resonates with your audience, boost the post to further increase engagement. For a low budget (as low as \$10 / day in some cases) you can boost a post on Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram to reach a larger target audience.

Have you tried something new that’s created a ton of engagement? If so, now’s the time to do another to keep the momentum going.

Additional Resources

- [Filler-Up: Content for Those Busy-Season Months](#)
- [Top 20 Social Media Hacks to Build Your Business](#)
- [Take Your Blog from Drab to Fab With These 9 Tips](#)

3 Fun Ways to Engage Your Social Media Audience

Disclaimer: This post originally appeared in the CPA Client Bulletin Resource Guide, © 2018 Association of International Certified Professional Accountants. Reprinted by permission.