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# MEDIA ENGAGEMENT FOR CSOs A GUIDE



**MEDIA ENGAGEMENT FOR CSOs**  
**A GUIDE**

*Developed by Bhutan Media Foundation and  
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## Background

All CSOs have engaged with the media at one point or another, with some engaging more than others. A few CSOs may even have a media strategy. But not all CSOs have the expertise to engage effectively with the media.

Effective media engagement requires specific skills and knowledge. However, not all CSOs have the means to engage effectively. This guide will help CSOs engage with the media in a manner that will be most useful and impactful. Our collective perception is that many CSOs continue to struggle with communications either due to human resource challenges or due to lack of skills.

The guide outlines working with traditional media – television, newspaper, radio – which requires a broad understanding of the basic concepts and workings of the media. A sound understanding of the media coupled with a set of skills to engage with them will go a long way in raising the profile of CSOs, fundraising, and effective public communication.

Our traditional approach to the use of media needs to evolve with the times. COVID-19 has created more digital media users than ever. In this digital era, websites and social media platforms present ample opportunities for CSOs to expand their reach, create awareness, raise funds and create networks of constituents for information sharing and dissemination.

The guide is tailored to help CSOs successfully navigate media engagement territory.

# Section I

## Traditional Media

### 1. Traditional Media and their Roles

#### a. What are traditional media?

Traditional media - also called legacy media - include all forms of mass communication available before the advent of digital media. They are mostly broadly referred to television, radio, and newspapers but they can include books, magazines, banners, billboards, and other forms of outdoor ads. By extension, traditional media will include ancient forms of communication predating the mass media such as prayer flags and mani walls.

#### b. What are the Roles of Traditional Media?

Traditional media play several important roles which include the following:

- i) Educating
- ii) Informing
- iii) Entertainment
- iv) Serving as a forum for public discussion and discourse.
- v) Acting as a watchdog for the government, businesses, and other institutions.
- vi) Facilitating communication

### Questions for Discussion

- Do you think that the Bhutanese media fulfil these roles?
- What other roles would you assign to traditional media?

## 2. The Concept of the Fourth Estate

The term fourth estate referred to the media is mostly attributed to British politician Edmund Burke who is quoted by Thomas Carlyle in his book 'On Heroes and Hero Worship' thus: 'Burke said there were Three Estates in Parliament; but, in the Reporters' Gallery yonder, there sat a Fourth Estate more important far than they all.' Edmund Burke is said to have made this statement in the House of Commons of the British Parliament in 1787. The term the 'fourth estate' arises from the European concept of the three estates of the realm or Parliament - the clergy (the Lords Spiritual), the nobility (the Lords Temporal), and the commoners (the Commons). The reference to the media as the fourth estates puts it alongside the three centres of power and gives it equal importance and status. By extension, this underlines the power and influence of the media.

### Questions for Discussion

- What do you think is the difference between the 'fourth estate' and the 'fourth arm of the government'?
- Where do you think the media stands in relation to the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary?

## 3. The Gatekeeping Theory

The gatekeeping theory was first propagated by psychologist Kurt Lewin in 1943. Gatekeeping is a process through which the media filters information for public consumption. A media house receives a huge amount of news and information than it can publish or broadcast.

What is ultimately published or broadcast is sifted and selected by the newsroom staff, chiefly the editors, based on a number of considerations. In the process, the news and information that comes out in the public domain is a product of personal biases, socio-cultural prejudices, political forces, and editorial policies and standards, among others. Gatekeeping occurs at different levels starting from a reporter choosing which news source to interview. However, it mostly occurs at the editor's level who makes the final decision on the news and programme content. For individuals and organisations interested to engage with the media, it is important to understand that the news and information they consume are coloured by multiple influences, hence there is room to assert their own influence.

### **Questions for Discussion**

- Who do you think are the real gatekeepers in the Bhutanese media?
- How can you exert your influence on the gatekeepers?

### **4. The Agenda-setting Theory**

The agenda-setting theory was first developed by Max McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1968. The theory underlines the power of the media to influence how their audience prioritises public issues. That is, the audience is more likely to treat an issue that the media cover frequently and prominently as more important than others irrespective of their intrinsic importance. In this way, the media can subtly influence people to think in a



certain way. The premise of the theory is that the media do not reflect reality but shape it and that the media's focus on a few issues leads the public to perceive that those issues are more important than others. For example, if the media's coverage of juvenile delinquency is frequent and prominent, the members of the public are likely to perceive the issue as more serious than it actually is.

### Questions for Discussion

- In your opinion, what issue in Bhutan has received unwarranted attention from the media?
- What issue do you think is under-reported by the media and hence its importance diminished?

### 5. Why Engage with the Media?

Engaging with the media serves a number of purposes for CSOs, including the following:

- Understand different dimensions of issues related to your field of work. Public views the media carry will help one broaden one's understanding of the issues.
- Amplify a CSO's voice and activities by reaching all sections of society, particularly in terms of advocacy and social service.
- Inform and educate the public on and encourage conversation around issues a CSO is championing.
- Inspire the public to rally behind a CSO's mission.
- Raise a CSO's national and international public profile, and raise fundraising possibilities.

## Questions for Discussion

- Can you think of any other benefit of engaging with the media?
- Under what circumstances would engaging with the media backfire?

### 1. Exercise: How do you Engage with the Media?

This is an interactive session. The facilitator will ask the participants how they engage with the media. He/she can ask any specific question such as: do you know the editors of Kuensel and BBS? How many Bhutanese journalists do you know? Do you share news and information on your activities with the media at all? If you do, how often and how do you do that? Through a press release? Invitation to your events? A phone call? The facilitator will encourage a lively discussion based on the answers to the above questions while punctuating the discussion with critical comments. The objective is to gauge the participants' level of engagement with the media and underline how it goes a long way in advancing a CSO's mission.

### 2. How to Engage with the Media

The presentation and discussion on this topic will be built largely on the previous discussion. Having engaged the participants in a discussion on how they engage or don't engage with the media, now it is time to show them the ways in which they can engage with the media.

- Contacts and network: To engage with the media meaningfully, who you know is as important as what you

know. Knowing and not knowing editors and reporters can be the difference between getting your story in or out of the news. Keep their phone numbers and email addresses handy.

- Press release: Issuing a press release is an effective means of communication. Typically, you can issue two press releases - a pre-event press release and a post-event press release. The former informs the media what an event is about and what is expected from it. The latter contains the outcome of the event.
- Call up and follow up: Issuing a press release is not enough. Several other press releases may be vying for the editors' attention. Call them up and reiterate your points made in the press release. Keep following up on your press release politely asking if your story has any chance of finding space or airtime.
- Be prepared for rejection: Understand that your story is competing for limited space or airtime with numerous others and may fall short of making it to the news. Accept the rejection. Instead of blaming the media, keep building your rapport with the gatekeepers of the newsrooms. You will have more success than failure.
- Be prepared for an editorial makeover: Understand that your story may be presented in a certain format and language that may lead to miscommunication. This happens often. This will surely disappoint you. But it is not advisable to pick a quarrel with editors but seek redressal of the issue and continue to build your rapport with them.

### 3. Press Release Writing

A press release - also known as news release, media release or, sometimes media advisory - is a written communication written by a public relations official for the media to share a piece of news, information, announcement, or an official statement. It is a well-structured write-up containing essential details about an issue. It lends better official credibility to a statement. It is a more accurate and structured form of communication than a telephonic conversation or an email.

#### Format

- Put it under your official letterhead.
- An official letter number could be included or omitted.
- Include your full official address, including physical location, phone numbers, and email addresses.
- End it with a signature line which includes the name of the contact person and his/her contact details (phone number/s and email address/es).

#### Basic Elements

- Give it a news headline or a title (eg. Prime Minister visits India or Prime Minister's India visit). Most press releases have 'Press Release' as the title.
- Give a deadline - day, month, and year of the release. The date can go to the top right-hand corner or under the title.

- If it is embargoed, mention under the title until what time and date it is embargoed (eg. Embargoed until 2 pm, 10 September 2020).
- If it is on a statement that is going to be made on a future date with the possibility of lines being added or omitted, mark it 'Check on delivery' under the title.
- It should contain 5 Ws and 1 H - what (what is it about), when (when it is happening), where (where it is happening), why (why it is happening), who (who the key players are), and how (how this has come about).
- Write it in simple language and avoid jargons.
- Keep it as brief as possible (not more than 350-400 words or one A4 side).

### **Questions for Discussion**

- How many of you have written a press release for your organisation?
- What other information would you like to include in a press release?

## Section II

# Social Media

### Social Media

Social media is an interactive technology that facilitates communication and immediate sharing of information. It also facilitates the creation of communities and groups online. Examples of social media include blogs, community applications like Facebook and Instagram, chat applications (“p2p”) like WhatsApp, WeChat, Telegram, Messenger, etc. Over the years, social media has been used extensively to launch and expand businesses as well.

#### 1. Social Media Engagement

Social media engagement measures the performance of a post via shares, likes, and comments. It is a term that is used for defining the type of impact that a post makes. A CSO with good social media engagement means there is a good number of shares, likes, and comments on the CSO’s social media account.

According to Tuvell Communications, there are five levels of social media engagement:

##### Level 1: Observing

Watching the conversation from afar without liking, commenting, or sharing.

##### Level 2: Following

Following the CSO on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.

### **Level 3: Engaging**

Interacting in a limited fashion, such as reading your content, viewing a video, or liking a wall post.

### **Level 4: Endorsing**

Actively sharing your content with others by retweeting, sharing via Facebook, Instagram, etc.

### **Level 5: Contributing**

Actively participating in the conversation and interacting with your CSO by tweeting to your brand, posting on your Facebook wall, direct messaging or commenting on a blog post.

### **Questions for Discussion:**

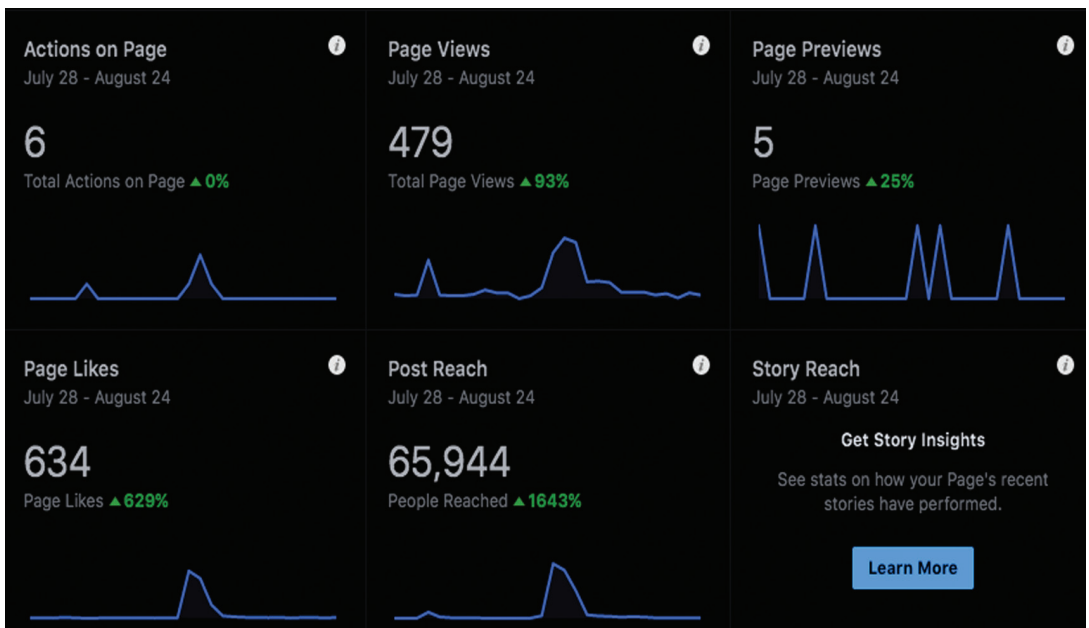
- What is the social media engagement like for your CSO's social media accounts: Good/Poor?
- Which social media platform has the most engagement: Facebook? Twitter? Instagram? YouTube?

## **2. Social Media Metrics**

Social Media metrics measures the impact of your social media platform and the level of engagement of the audience with your platform. Businesses usually use software to acquire data to better understand activity as well as return on investment (ROI) on their social platforms. For CSOs, the free monitoring tools available on most social media platforms is more than enough to understand the organisation's social situation.

For instance, Facebook Insights breaks down your data for free into post reach, engagement, likes, link clicks, visitors, etc. Google analytics does a decent job on the free version as do Instagram insights, Twitter analytics, and YouTube analytics.

Understanding your metrics will help you pick the best time (insights will reveal when your platform has the highest traffic) and the ideal type of content to post that will have the impact you want.



*Facebook Page Insights for Journalists' Association of Bhutan*



Your 5 Most Recent Posts							Create Post
Published	Post	Type	Targeting	Reach	Engagement	Promote	
08/19/2020 7:30 PM		Video	Public	453	30	Boost Post	
08/18/2020 12:49 PM	Please join your respective zones.	Text	Public	878	10411	Boost Post	
08/16/2020 11:56 AM	"For THIMPHU Only" Residents to take note .. Information You Can	Text	Public	823	69	Boost Post	
08/13/2020 8:47 PM	Dear members Stay safe!	Image	Public	928	9716	Boost Post	
08/13/2020 8:09 AM	From BBS CEO Tshering Wangchuk: "Starting 13th August,	Image	Public	53.1K	4.8K751	Boost Post	

*Facebook Page Insights for Journalists' Association of Bhutan*

## What metrics to focus on as a CSO:

### 1. Engagement

It is important to keep track of audience engagement as it will reveal the real audience (sincere followers who comment, like, and share) and their perception of your organisation.

If your organisation is tagged eg. @Bhutan Centre for Media and Democracy in relation to work/issue concerning your organisation without the organisation having prompted it, it shows awareness on the part of your audience. This is an 'organic mention' and definitely good social media identity creation on the part of the CSO.

## **2. Impressions & Reach**

Impressions are the number of times your post shows up on timelines and Reach is the potential number of viewers a post will have (your platform followers and the people sharing posts shared by your platform's followers). These two are not to be confused.

It is possible to boost both impressions as well as reach on social media platforms, but this is a subjective decision. Some prefer organic reach and impression due to authenticity, some prefer paid reach and impression to gain and engage with new followers. It really boils down to what you think is best suited to further the objectives of your organisation.

### **Questions for Discussion:**

- Has your organisation used social media metrics? If yes, how?
- What post had the most reach in the last one month on your page?
- What time allows the most impactful posting by your organisation?

## **3. Social Media in Bhutan: Why Social Media**

Businesses over the world and in Bhutan have recently embraced social media as the next frontier of marketing. Their reason for it, that it is where the customers are, is the same reason CSOs and any group that works with the public should also be on social media. Here are four reasons your company should be active on social media.

1. It is where the people are. According to Napoleon Cat, a social media metrics company, there were over 500,000 Facebook users in Bhutan in June 2020. This is about 65% of Bhutan's entire population. No other form of media, traditional or new, has this level of reach to the Bhutanese populace.
2. It is where the young people are. The emerging consumer class in Bhutan, i.e., those aged 24-36 grew up with social media. To this and younger groups, social media isn't a tool or technology, it is a part of their everyday life. These groups expect your company to be online.
3. It is cost-effective. John Wanamaker, a 19th-century American retailer, famously said, "Half the money I spend on marketing is wasted." Prof. Peter Fader of Wharton School says he was wrong. In reality, more than just half of the money spent on marketing is wasted. The money that is 'wasted' goes into over-inflated advertising costs on radio, TV, and newspapers. A private newspaper in Bhutan that circulated less than 60,000 copies in the entire country last year charges over Nu 30,000 for a full-page, over Nu 20,000 for a half-page, and Nu 10,000 for a quarter-page ad.  
  
A recent Facebook campaign run by a local social media researcher found that an investment as small as \$10 every month on Facebook can make more of a difference than spending \$150 on a quarter-page ad (for reference, this particular recent campaign received just over 30,000 views in 7 days for a spend of \$15). ROIs (return on investment) on social media

marketing campaigns are much better than traditional media. Lyfe marketing finds that in the US, CPM (cost per 1000 impressions) of a full-page ad in Vogue magazine is \$1,092, while it was \$10.78 in digital media.

The researcher, based on the numbers above, notes that if you took a quarter-page ad in this unnamed private newspaper and you had this ad in every print they make in a year and every single paper they sent to circulation was sold and everyone who has this paper saw your ad, your CPM would be \$2.5 (you're paying \$2.5 for 1000 impressions). On the other hand, taking the average of the researcher's best (0.21) and worst-performing (0.63) campaigns, you get a CPM of 0.42 (you're saying \$0.42 to have your content seen by 1000 people), which is better by 6 times. If Mr Wanamaker were alive right now, he'd love social media marketing.

4. It is where activism happens. Social media has made it easier than ever before to run activism and awareness campaigns.

### **Questions for Discussion:**

- Has your CSO advertised on any social media?
- If yes, did you achieve your goal?

### **4. Best Practices for CSOs and Non-Profits**

1. Enroll as a non-profit. Not only does it correctly identify your company, it also opens up a few 'hidden' features on Facebook, like the 'donate' button.

2. Focus on Visual Marketing. A big part of why non-profits all over the world are focusing on social media is their success from visual marketing. If you build a few social media post templates and use a service like Canva, visual marketing is free and powerful. We'll look at how to do this below.
3. Create a strategy and branding guide. Consistency is important on social media. A branding guide keeps your posts consistent (aesthetically) while a strategy keeps your posting consistent.
4. Conduct a social media audit. A social media audit is an examination of your social media strategy. It helps you understand what you are doing well and what you could do better. As well, it can tell you what others (your 'competitors' in that they have the same goals and target audience as you) do that is working or not working.
5. Develop a social media policy. For a CSO, it is crucial to develop a social media policy document so that those posting on your behalf know what is acceptable or unacceptable. There is a template document in this booklet.
6. Use planners. Schedule your posts with services like Buffer.

## **5. Social Media Strategy**

When you use social media as an individual, you get to engage with content you like, to curate your newsfeed in such a manner that everything on it is desirable to you, and in general, do whatever you want to. Using social media as a business is different. You no longer post

things as you like. You cannot like and share everything on your feed. You have to design a social media strategy based on your goals, research (both competition and demographics), and best practices. In general, a social media strategy has the following things:

- Brief: What platforms are you using? How active will you be? Will you talk to people via your account? How often?
  - Goals: What goals do you want to achieve with this strategy?
  - Posting strategy: What kind of content? How many times a day will you post? What times of the day will you post? When will you post what kind of content?
  - Content plan: Divide the content you want to post into different themes – this will help you keep up a consistent posting schedule. Where are you getting content?
  - Outreach strategy: Where will you find new audience? How will you engage them? Are they the people you want to target? How can you make sure you're hitting the proper demographics?
  - Competition research: Who are they, what do they do right? What could they do better that we will?
1. Posting: The content you share, reshare, or engage with.
  2. Community management: talking to the people who are talking to you or who already follow you. Making sure you respond to their messages, questions, and comments on time. Making sure they stay happy.

3. Outreach strategy: reaching out to people who do not follow you. Making new friends. Cultivating clients.

### An Example of a Social Media Strategy:

**Brief:** This package has 14 posts a week over all possible platforms (listed below), and community management and outreach (30 minutes a day). At the end of every month, I will send you an analytics report with highlights of the A/B tests I have run that month, tweaks to the strategy, and general insights.

**Goals:** The aim of this package is twofold: build the company’s social media presence and at the same time, generate leads.

**Strategy:** Currently, we are targeting Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest (in order of importance to the overall strategy).

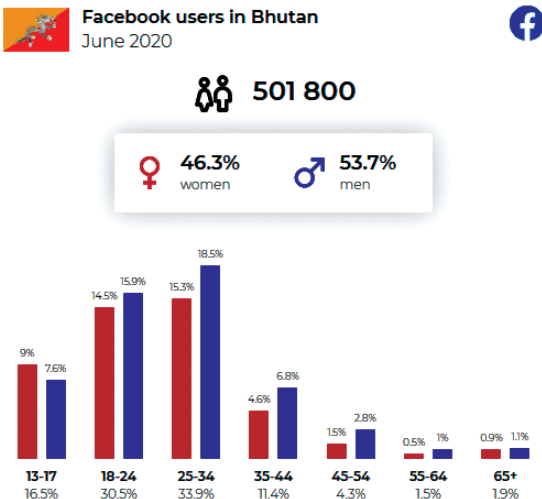
Platform	Methods	No. of posts/week	Type of content	Goals
Instagram	Regular posts, use of stories to make highlights -- “testimonials” “current projects” etc., and solid community engagement. Outreach too.	4-5	A grid will have design spotlights on the edges and something about the company (or a fun challenge at some point or a post to get attention from potential clients from a specific industry) in the middle.	Recreate []’s online body of work on social media, a portfolio of your work, beautifully crafted. Connect with potential clients (target a specific industry - check outreach section)
LinkedIn	Develop the company page a little. Give team members content to post. Use slideshow functionality to showcase client work. Target B2B clients. Write short copies of design-related content.	1-2 for the company page. 2-3 for team members to post.	Slideshow of client work. Rewritten short form copies of design-related stuff. Target specific niches.	Develop an authentic and authoritative voice in the design community. Create a substantive LinkedIn page, since it acts sort of like the landing page of a company’s social media.

Platform	Methods	No. of posts/week	Type of content	Goals
Twitter	Share website content. Outreach to and chat with potential clients directly. Share other design-related content. Including humor.	7+	Design-related content sourced from [] sources, i.e. news articles, tutorial videos, etc. Industry-specific content based on what industry we're targeting.	Become an active member of tech Twitter. Potentially generate leads through outreach.
Facebook	Posts. Sharing to Facebook groups. Occasional campaign.	1	Updates about the company. Website stuff.	Just to have a presence on Facebook. Maybe use the group functionality to get some clients too.
Pinterest	Just posting for aesthetics. Gotta make sure to slap the logo on all content going here.	1-2	Client work.	Nothing real, just to have a presence in the minds of creatives. .

*Content Plan: As the table above suggests, there are a few different kinds of content we are going for. They are: **client work**, **design-related content from []**, **design-related content from other sources**, **content about []**, and **Industry-specific content**. Here's how our bi-weekly content plan looks like (initial is the social media and color describes the content).*

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
I	IT F	IL TT	T P	I	IT	ILT
T	ITTF	ILT	IT	TP	IT	ILT

### Best Practices by Platform Facebook



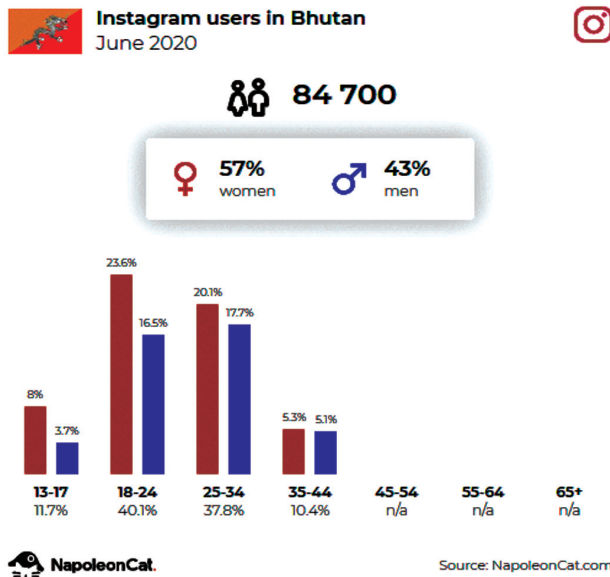


## Best Practices

1. Schedule posts for peak times. Currently there seem to be four peak hours 9-10am, 12-1pm, 4.30-5.30pm, and 8-9pm. But these are general hours that won't always reflect the peak times for your niche audience.
2. Keep your content unique. Facebook's algorithm is built around their pages because they have many pages that will keep creating content. So, if you're looking to turn your company's Facebook page from a passive landing page that is waiting for potential clients to message them, to an active page that creates customers as you go, create content that is unique. Even if it is not fully related to the product you are selling, if you can explain why such content has a place on your page and it is unique, go for it.
3. Keep your captions accessible. When writing captions, make sure they are accessible to the group you're targeting. We'll look at this a bit in the UX-writing section.
4. When working with groups, be the driver of content for the first few months. During this time, be active about sharing all kinds of interesting, on-brand content you can think about. Groups eventually become self-sustaining in terms of content and other people will start sharing. Your job is to nurture it in its infancy.
5. Filler content. Ideally you would be posting at least once a day every day. But that can get difficult in the long run. And if you have a high-quality branding guide, it can get expensive too. So, be clever about finding and managing filler content. News stories are great as filler content..

6. Stay on-brand. When developing a branding guide, build it to be specific but give yourself enough space to manoeuvre. And stay in that lane.
7. If engagement on one of your posts has stalled, wait a few hours and share it on your personal page or ask a friend to do the same.

## Instagram



## Best Practices

1. Like with Facebook, keep your content unique and schedule them for best posting times.
2. The Instagram equivalent of filler content on Facebook is stories. Even if you can't post regularly, be sure to post to Instagram stories everyday. This will keep your organic reach up.

3. Use the highlights feature. A big problem with social media has always been its inability to store information that people always need. If you have a website, you most likely have an FAQ, a services/products page, etc. It's difficult to keep regular info like that on a social media site like Facebook. So, you'll most likely have to regularly repost some information. Instagram's highlights feature is a game-changer in this regard, as now you can store relevant content on top of your page for all times. Keep your services/products, policies, FAQs, easily available right here.

## WeChat

Brief: Probably the most versatile social media app in existence. WeChat's popularity in Bhutan is directly linked to the country's low literacy levels. Hold-to-talk services like Line and WeChat are popular in countries with low literacy levels and complicated scripts (like China and Taiwan) as the voice message is a direct substitute for texting.

WeChat is not end-to-end encrypted meaning that content you share with someone on this platform is stored on a central server somewhere. The app carries many functionalities that are unavailable outside China, so for Bhutan, WeChat is more P2P (peer-to-peer) than social media.

A successful WeChat strategy respects that Bhutan's adult literacy rate is still low (51% for women and 76% for men in 2018) and works almost exclusively with groups.

## Best Practices

1. Focus on the groups feature. WeChat groups can be large, but exactly how large should be irrelevant as a good social media strategy limits groups to 10 people. This way a user feels like they are exclusive and important to your company. And it is easier to manage 10 groups of 10 people than 1 group of 100.
2. Stickers. WeChat allows you to customize stickers. Make high quality stickers that your clients will want to use in their everyday life and make that part of your branding.
3. Voice messages and PDF catalogues. If you keep your groups small, people you add to these groups are less likely to leave. Send them voice messages that involve some level of production and share PDF catalogues of your products and services regularly.

## 6. Social Media Auditing

In social media, auditing means to look at someone's social media profiles and analyzing what they do right and wrong. It lets you think about social media from a different perspective. You are no longer using or consuming social media. You are here to understand why people engage with social media accounts the way they do. Auditing teaches you what type of content, timing, etc. do well on social media. If you have a competitor who is doing well thanks to social media, auditing can help you dissect their success so that you can also do as well as, if not better than, them.

## Things to look at when doing an audit:

1. Post Information. When was the post made? What time? Describe the post with adjectives and nouns.
2. How many followers does the page have? What is the average number of likes/comments/shares (i.e. “engagement”) on their last 10 posts? What is their engagement/follower ratio?

The above research can tell you what a “good” piece of content looks like. Look at what words are repeating in the “describe the post” section.

An audit of your “competitor” should look like this:

Audit of [company name]

Date: [when you’re doing the audit]

Accounts: [company’s social media accounts]

## Observations:

- Stats: Follower count and other stats listed in the “running tests” section above.
- Content: what kind of content do they use? Do they follow a specific posting style? Do they use hashtags? What kind of content seems to be doing best?
- Activity: how often do they post? How fast do they respond to messages and questions?

Compare: How are their social media different from yours? Are they doing better or worse? Why do you think so?

Learn: what can you learn from their social media? Will you change your strategy in any way based on theirs?

## 7. Writing for Social Media/UX Writing

UX writing is an emerging part of the digital marketing field. The idea is that users tend to respond to certain phrases and words better than others. UX writing, therefore, is writing to maximize user experience. The trick is to find these “better” phrases. Here’s a good process to follow to write the best captions:

1. Use keywords research. When we covered keywords research in a previous section, we said that in social media, keywords are mostly relevant because they let you learn the language of the people you’re targeting.
2. Use demos and interests research. When writing a good caption, be mindful of who your audience is, speak to their interests and sensibilities. If your target demographics is niche in a way (i.e. age, income level, interests, etc.) feel free to use references. If your audience is more diverse, avoid using any specific references that might alienate them.
3. The ‘Tom Burns’ rule. Tom Burns was the writing professor of the author of this document. His favourite joke in class was, ‘guy goes a doctor, says “doc it hurts when I do this” \*raises arm\*, doc says, “then don’t do that”.’ The point of this anti-joke is if the way you’re writing a sentence runs into an issue, or it becomes awkward, stop trying to write the sentence that way. Write it another way.
4. Write it over and over again. Write every caption a few different ways.

5. Avoid adverbs. Adverbs are words that “qualify” actions words, i.e. verbs. So, by definition they dampen whatever energy verbs bring. Stephen King’s tip for writers is to avoid adverbs altogether.

These five points are related to caption-writing in general. Combine these with the following best practices from UX-writing:

1. Use the active voice. Speaking in this long, drawn-out sentence can sound calming and nice, but when you are looking to sell, do it with more energy. Talk about now. Give words energy. Keep your sentences short. Speak in the now. Use the active voice. Following is an example from UX planet:

Don’t: The Search button should be clicked when you are ready to search for an item.

Do: Click the Search button to search for an article.

2. You don’t need to tell them everything in the caption. Be like the CIA and give them information on a ‘need-to-know’ basis.
3. Folksy is best. When choosing between writing a proper-grammared, technical-sounding caption and a folksy caption with a grammar error or two, choose the latter.
4. Supplement the post, don’t reword it. Captions almost always accompany visual content. Resist the urge to describe what is going on in the content, the caption should always add more detail. In fact, you can get away with removing a lot of details from the content precisely because you can add them in the captions later.

5. Throw out AP. AP is the most popular editorial style of writing. A few of the tenets of this rulebook say to use ‘one’ instead of ‘1’, precise time and date instead of vague ‘manyanas’. Ignore those rules. Go with the folksy approach, your audience will find that more natural (unless you’re targeting journalists).
6. Be lean. Start with the objective then end with a call-to-action (CTA).
7. Keep it short and be precise. Only write what you have to.
8. Avoid vague verbs.
9. If you’re going to be funny in the caption, be careful to not hurt people’s sensibilities. In general, avoid irony and sarcasm, and use straight humour.
10. Think like a designer. Only keep what is absolutely necessary, if a part doesn’t go well with the overall picture, replace it with something else.

## 8. Outreach Strategy

Outreach, in social media, is when you try to look for new followers. This is different from community management, which is when you engage with the people who already follow you. An outreach strategy contains information on who to target, how to target them, and most importantly, when to target them. While it is always good to message as many people as you can to see if they’re interested in your product, doing so can hurt your branding. Moreover, seeming too eager to message people on the internet is always a bad thing.



- Brief: What platforms are you using? How aggressive is your outreach going to be? Is there a branding guideline?
- Goals: What is the goal of your outreach, follower-count or lead generation?
- Demographics: Who currently uses your product? What demographics does your industry usually attract? What is the demographics of the platform you're using? If possible, make a list of accounts you want to target.
- Script: Develop a brief script on what you'll say to people. Try to cover as many broad topics as you can.

### Best Practices

1. Start small. Speak to your friends about helping you practice with outreach.
2. Know who you're targeting. The most important part of outreaching is knowing who you're targeting. Start by targeting folks who follow your competitor's page. If you've run paid campaigns for your page before, use the audience insight from those to inform your demographics going forward.
3. Follow the outreach table. The worst thing you can do is to appear spammy or creepy. The table exists to prevent you from doing that.

Date	Length of time spent	Accounts interacted with	What kind of interaction?	How likely to be a lead?	Industry?	Follow up?	Do not spam. Rest till?
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4. Keep pictures and graphics ready. A lot of times, people will ask you for pictures of your products/services. They may even ask you for prices. Keep pictures and graphics on all your devices at all times. Too many outreach sessions fail because you tell them you'll send them pictures "later."
5. The Script. If your outreach is for a specific cause or event, develop a script. In it, you should preempt questions and have ready answers for them.
6. Use cold calling best practices:
  - a. Say "you" more than I (some say 10 times more).
  - b. Keep your texts short.
  - c. Your scripted copy shouldn't be longer than 50 words.
  - d. Stalk them on social media, but do not use overly personal information that clearly resulted from a 1-hour stalking session. Limit your "knowledge" of them to what is easily available on their profile.
  - e. Don't talk about your company too much (unless they ask), centre the conversation around your services.

## 9. Visual Marketing

Visual marketing is the new trend in social media marketing. On Facebook, image posts tend to do 3.5X in terms of engagement than text posts. In a recent survey by Social Media Today, 91% of marketers all over the world agreed that visual marketing was the most important part of their social media strategy.



## A good piece of content is:

Relevant  
Funny

Knows who its audience is and why they could like it

Tries to stand out without being redundant

Not complicated...

### Five-Step Content Creation Process:

1. Research. Use your audit research to understand who your demographics is, and what kind of content they engage with.
2. Group. To make it easier for yourself, “group” all your content into themes.
3. Source. Use high quality, royalty-free images (unsplash.com and pexels.com), and design elements (flaticon.com and thenounproject.com).
4. Brand. Remember your branding guideline and the templates you made in that.
5. Build. Use a free software like Canva to build your content.

### Best Practices

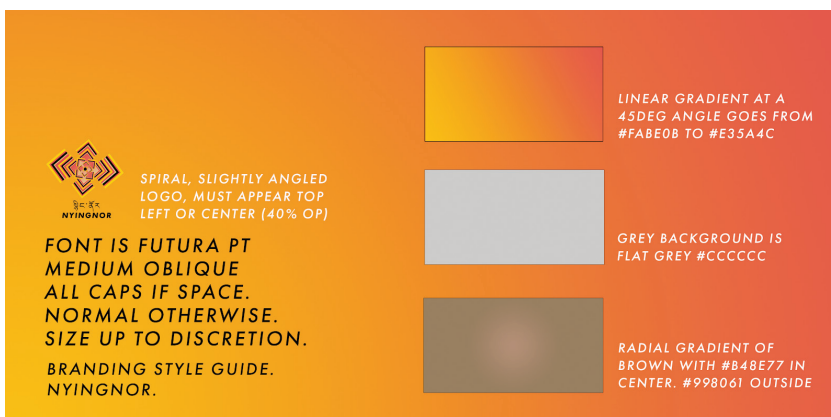
1. Remember your branding.
2. Learn a little about designing:

- a. When you're starting out, and letting your eyes get used to designing, limit yourself to three-tones. Use a dark tone, a light tone, and a mid-tone. As you become more versed with designing, you'll learn more about design.
  - b. Use negative space. Negative space refers to the part of a graphic/photo where there is limited object. Negative spaces help tell a story. If they don't, use this space to hold words.
  - c. Readability > Aesthetics.
3. Be consistent with your design elements. Do not use well-decorated digital illustrations of people's faces one day, then stick figures the next.

## 10. Branding

Here is what a branding guideline typically looks like. What it should contain:

- Hex codes of colors used. A palette if that is relevant.
- Fonts used, including size and type.
- Logo placement guidelines. Also, if you plan on changing your logo colors, a guideline on what combos.



## 11. Paid Campaigns

Consumer-heavy sites like Facebook have made running a paid campaign as easy as possible. If you have an acceptable credit card on you, this process is as easy as clicking “boost post” or “promote page” on your Facebook page. Where this class comes in is making your sponsored posts more effective, which also means it’ll lower your effective cost (i.e. you can either get 100 views with 1\$ or 200 views with 1\$; the per view in the first case is 1c and 0.5c in the second).

Once you’ve logged into your page’s Facebook Ads Manager (go to your profile, there is a downward triangle on your top right, in that dropdown is “Manage Ads”):

1. Choose your ad’s objective. Some of them are:
  - a. Brand awareness: Let people know about your company.
  - b. Reach: This type of ads focuses on getting more reach, you might get low engagement on these.
  - c. Traffic: Get people to visit your website or call you on WhatsApp.
  - d. Engagement: Boost engagements numbers on a post.
  - e. Video views: Increase views on your video.
  - f. Lead generation: Useful if you use a service like Hootsuite that collects and stores information on potential leads.
  - g. Messages: Get people to message your company page.
  - h. Catalog sales: Use images, carousels, and slideshows to showcase your catalog.

2. Name and A/B Test. Once you've told Facebook what you want to do, it'll ask you to name the campaign (helpful to do this). It'll also ask if they want to do A/B tests for you. Click yes for now, but we'll learn to do A/B tests for normal tests in the next section, so you can choose No here if you want.
1. Choose your audience. Here is the most important part of running a campaign. You can choose the following things:
  2. Include, exclusively target, or exclude people who already like your page.
    - c. Location. Facebook lets you pick the location your ad will appear in. Know that geo-located info like this is never 100% accurate, especially in small places like Bhutan's cities.
    - d. Demographics. Facebook lets you target people with specific interests. Use the demo and interests research we got from previous classes to target your audience here.

(note: there is an speedo-meter looking graphic that appears in this section that tells you the estimated reach of your ad based on the location and interests you have specified. Since a place like Thimphu only has 100,000 population, specifying interests will drop this number significantly, take care to use enough interests to keep the number of target audience around a healthy 30,000)
4. Ad Placements. Where do you want your ad to show? Stories/Posts? Facebook/Instagram? Facebook gives you the option to run an ad on Facebook and Instagram

simultaneously, so that's not a difficult choice. The choice between stories and posts is based on the kind of content you're boosting (primarily, what aspect ratio the visual is in).

5. **Budget and Schedule.** Once all of the above information is placed, you're ready to run your ad. In this section, choose how much you want to spend and how long to run the ad for.
6. **Choose your ad.** This is step 6 if you started making the ad from Facebook Ads Manager. The other way of boosting an ad is to click "boost post" on posts you've already posted. In that case, this step is not necessary. In the first case, you have the choice of what images/videos to boost, what format you want to boost them in (i.e. standalone, carousel, slideshow or catalog).

## Best Practices

1. **Boost a post that's already doing well.** As we've talked about over and over again in this, marketing is all about finding something a majority of people like and using that to grow your audience and customer pool. So, unless you are promoting a completely new product/service, do not run ads on fresh posts. It's better to make the post first then wait to see how the people who saw that post organically respond to it. Facebook/Instagram tells you when a post is doing better than your recent average. Boost a post then.
2. **Check your campaigns everyday.** It is a good idea to constantly check in with how your ads are doing. Once you've run a few ads, you'll have some data to use as a baseline to compare performances.

3. Mobile first. In the placements section (no. 4 above), Facebook lets you pick which platform your ad will be primarily shown on (mobile/web, android/iPhone). Since most Facebook users in Bhutan seem to use their phones for the service, it is a good idea to design ads for mobile.
4. Know what you want. While it is a good idea to specify demos and interests, if your campaign is targeting something broad like improving reach, it's better to go with a broad target.
5. Use template best practices (source: Hootsuite):
  - a. Image ads
    1. Headline: 25 characters
    2. Link description: 30 characters
    3. Body text: 125 characters
  - b. Video ads
    1. Headline: 25 characters
    2. Link description: 30 characters
    3. Body text: 125 characters
  - c. Facebook Stories ads
    1. Text: No set character count. Aim to leave 250 pixels text-free at the top and bottom of the ad.
    2. Campaign objectives: Engagement, messages, catalog sales, store traffic
  - d. Carousel ads
    1. Headline: 25 characters



2. Link description: 20 characters
  3. Body text: 125 characters
- e. Slideshow ads
1. Headline: 25 characters
  2. Link description: 30 characters
  3. Body text: 125 characters
- f. Collection ads
1. Headline: 25 characters
  2. Link description: n/a
  3. Body text: 90 characters
- g. Messenger Inbox ads
1. Headline: n/a
  2. Link description: n/a
  3. Body text: 125 characters

## 12. Social Media Policy

Developing a social media policy is important for CSOs and non-profits who operate under strict regulations. This policy is a simple document of Do's and Don'ts to guide anyone posting on behalf of your company. A special section of this policy is dedicated to outreach - what language can your social media managers use when texting with your followers? The policy may also set guidelines for how employees of the office may use their social media.

### 1. Information

[Company Name]'s official social media tags are:

## 2. Purpose

[Company]'s social media is to be used for community engagement and public information dissemination.

## 3. Declaration

Team members must declare all their social media accounts on which they post in their own person and where their identities may be linked to the company.

[Team member], [Role], [Company Name]: [@username] on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

## 4. Security Protocols

The login information for the pages defined in section 1 shall be given only to [Team member] and [Team member]. Login information shall be changed if any team member with the information leaves the team or every one year on [Date]. The backup login security codes shall be given to [team member]. The password recovery phone number is [Phone number] belonging to [team member] and email address is [email address] belonging to [team member].

Team members with login access cannot share login information with any other team member or non-team member. They must use secure devices to log into the company pages, and they may not use public access or shared computers like internet cafes to login.

## 5. Compliance

CSO Act. [Company]'s social media accounts are part of the organization and fall under the regulations of The Civil Society

Organizations Act of Bhutan 2007. [Company]’s social media accounts shall follow the act, particularly Section 3.7 that defines the “don’ts” for a CSO. They shall also follow Sections 11 and 12 that define and regulate donations and charitable collections. Privacy and Confidentiality. Information exchanged on [company]’s social media accounts are private and confidential and any team member with access to this information shall handle it as such.

### **Guidelines for employees**

Employees may not engage in sharing or commenting content that negatively reflect [company] or that violate other sections of this document from accounts listed in section 3.

## **13. SEO**

Search engine optimization (SEO) is customizing your website in such a manner that it appears early in search results for specific keywords. The first result of a Google search is clicked on by 25-35% of users. By the 7th result on the first page, the click rate falls to about 5%. In other words, people are more likely to press on the top search results instead of browsing through all of them. Businesses and companies that want to maximize their website traffic should compete for these top positions. SEO is the toolkit that helps you do that.

### **Best Practices**

#### **1. Keyword Research**

Try to “guess” what keywords people searching for your industry are most likely to use. Use their language, vernacular, and slang in your web pages. Google has

a free keyword research tool: <https://ads.google.com/home/tools/keyword-planner/>

## 2. Optimize your website

- a. Make your website and webpages as fast and responsive as possible.
- b. Get a domain name that is relevant to your industry and when naming URLs for your webpages, use keywords from the webpage people are most likely to search.
- c. Get an SSL certificate for your website. It is what adds “https://” to your URL. Google punishes websites without an SSL certificate in their search rankings.
- d. Clearly define your meta tags and meta description. When completing a webpage, your website will ask you to fill in meta tags and meta description. Use keywords to fill this.
- e. Ask your web developer to optimize your site for mobile usage.
- f. Site map. Always display a sitemap to help your users navigate your website efficiently.

### h. Media Content

- a. While media content is more engaging than text, they also take up a lot of space and therefore, cause websites to load slower. A trick is to use .jpg and .jpeg image files over .png as they are smaller in size.
- b. Define alt text for all media content. Images have their own SEO ranking and a clearly defined image

can help the rest of your website improve their SEO standing.

#### **i. Links and Backlinks**

- a. One of the most underutilized but powerful sources of SEO ranking is links. If many other websites link to yours, Google will consider your site an authority on the topic and give it favorable search positions. So, create content that other websites would want to refer traffic towards.
- b. Add links from your own pages to other websites.
- c. Create links between your own webpages. These internal links also give an SEO boost.

#### **Resources**

*Moz's guide. Incredibly simple and powerful -*

*<https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo>*

*Hootsuite's course. Hootsuite is just in general the best. - <https://education.hootsuite.com/collections>*

*Library of resources - <https://www.stylefactoryproductions.com/blog/10-free-seo-resources>*

*Google's SEO. The original resource- <https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/7451184?hl=en>*