

Not-for-Profit Industry

Six Expert Tips to Make Facebook Ads Work for Your Nonprofit

Facebook advertising is fast becoming a popular channel for nonprofits to reach their goals, whether that means growing their membership, filling up their events, or finding new donors.

And they are turning to Facebook ads because they work—often better than more traditional channels.

Take the [RSPCA Queensland](#), for example. Hardly anyone was adopting their bull-type breeds, because of their reputation for being aggressive. So, in 2017, they turned to Facebook ads to change people's perceptions. To do so, they created Facebook video ads that showcased how loving and friendly these dogs were.

RSPCA Queensland knew that once people saw just how “lovabull” these dogs actually are, these adorable pooches were much more likely to get adopted.

And they were right. Their campaign reached 1.2 million people and they saw a 44 percent increase in their adoption rate.

Although your nonprofit may not be filled with photogenic dogs, Tatiana Morand, content marketing specialist, has analyzed photo and video ads on Facebook and found that there are six main best practices, three for photo and three for video, that you can follow to drive similar success for your organization, no matter your goals.

Photo Ads: How to Make Your Picture Worth a Thousand Words

Since your ad might be the first introduction a potential member gets to your nonprofit, here are three tips to help you make the most of it.



Tip #1: These Types of Photos Work Best

Although there is no hard and fast rule about what to include in your ad, just remember that it is competing for real estate with adorable babies and engagement shots. So, to capture people's attention, your ad will have to stand out.

The best way to make sure that happens is to create an image that looks just as engaging as a friend's post would be. That might be why the most successful photos on Facebook feature people. In fact, images with people get 38 percent more likes and 32 percent more comments than those without.

Custom photos are also better than stock. If you don't have the resources to create something yourself, you should consider using free photo editing apps like [VSCO](#) or [Snapseed](#) to make your images pop.

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Tip #2: Build Consistency to Connect with Your Audience

If you see an ad showing you a photo of a shoe, you would expect the link to bring you to a shoe store with that shoe, right? If it brought you to a hotel website instead, you might get a little confused.

The same principle applies for whatever ad you are creating. If your nonprofit is looking for donations for a local hospital, posting a photo of a puppy won't help your cause.

Instead, Tatiana Morand has found that the most successful Facebook ads create a story around the cause they are trying to promote. For example, when [World Vision USA](#) wanted to increase donations in the wake of Hurricane Harvey, they created ads that showed real-time footage of the areas affected by the hurricane.

By showing their audience just how horrific the situation truly was, they got enough donations to help over 100,000 people.

Tip #3: Don't Forget This Part

Many organizations make the mistake of focusing only on the image they are sharing. However, once your audience has been reeled in by the photo, you will want to make sure your copy is just as effective.

Including a clear call-to-action like "Register Today" or "Donate Now" makes it more likely that your audience will respond and click through to the page you have set up.

Just don't make it too long—research shows that the ideal length for an ad title on Facebook is [just four words](#), and the ideal description isn't much longer.

Video Ads: How to Keep Your Audience Glued to the Screen

You have probably seen more and more videos popping up on your Facebook feed lately. That is because marketers are realizing that videos posted on social media [get 1,200 percent more shares](#) than text and images combined.

By posting a video ad on Facebook, you have the chance to reach a much larger audience—and share even more of your story.

Cole, Newton & Duran's Not-for-Profit Practice

Our nonprofit team has years of experience providing assurance, accounting, and tax services to a variety of organizations. Clients receive up-to-date information on the latest accounting developments and industry regulations.

Cole, Newton & Duran's team of professionals are involved in every stage of our client's engagement to ensure they are receiving high quality, responsive service.

Clients enjoy working with experts who help achieve their objectives. Clients receive industry knowledge and solutions they need to not only reach, but to exceed their strategic goals.

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Here are three ways you can make your video stand out from the crowd.

Tip #1: First Impressions Matter

What would you be more likely to click on: a happy person holding a coffee cup, or the coffee cup alone? Even if both of these images were part of the same video, the former is definitely more engaging.

That is why picking the right thumbnail for your video is so important. (Some [90 percent of the top YouTube videos](#) have custom thumbnails for a reason!). Just like the research about photo ads mentioned before, including someone's face in your thumbnail makes your audience much more likely to click.

By highlighting part of your video that is particularly fun or eye-catching, or adding text that describes your video, you are more likely to get those all-important clicks.

Tip #2: The Video Type That is Making a Surprising Comeback

Imagine you are scrolling through your Facebook feed. How often do you bother to turn on the sound to watch a video? If you answered "almost never", you are in the majority. In fact, [85 percent of Facebook videos](#) are watched without sound.

To give your video ad the most chance for success, make sure your audience can understand it even if they don't plug in their headphones. This also means including captions or easy-to-understand graphics, which help you tell your story without sound.

Tip #3: To Get the Most Views, Format Your Videos This Way

Did you know that people are [1.5 times more likely](#) to watch your video when they are scrolling through Facebook on their phone than they are on their computer?

That means you are likely missing out on a big chunk of your audience—and the donations they might want to share—if it doesn't look just as great on a small screen.

And if you are adding the captions or graphics mentioned in the last point, make sure you format them correctly for mobile. This could mean making your font slightly larger, or using a simpler design so that readers can see your post on their mobile device.

The preceding is an article by Tatiana Morand, content marketing specialist at Wild Apricot, a leading provider of Membership Management Software.

Contact Us

If you would like to discuss how Cole, Newton & Duran's not-for-profit team can help your organization with your accounting, tax, or consulting needs, please feel free to give me a call.

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