

Chamber Name: Airdrie	Number of members: 476
Telephone number: 403.948.4412	Email: info@airdriechamber.ab.ca
Contributor: Lorna Hunt	Title: Executive Director
Website: www.airdriechamber.ab.ca	



Social Media Strategy Map

Engage. Educate. Empower.

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Prepared by: Alisha Morrissey



INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL MEDIA AT THE BOARD OF TRADE

The St. John's Board of Trade began using social media tools in April 2011 with the intent of becoming better connected increasing with both the general public and our membership.

We take seriously the Board of Trade's brand, reputation, and our relationship with our members, stakeholders and partners. Our goal with social media is to expand our networks in the virtual space in a way that is consistent with our core values.

As a result of following the initial strategy closely, the Board got fantastic feedback from the general community as well as the membership. Within the first 12 months online, the Board quietly worked on growing its online presence and built up a solid base of followers and friends who we could count on for feedback. The strategy was based on slow growth of a core audience and has so far been successful.

Social media assets used by the Board include:

- Facebook
- Twitter
- LinkedIn
- Website
- E-Newsletter
- YouTube
- 3D magazine publisher

Why the Board of Trade uses social media:

- To **connect** with our members who are using social media tools, creating a better customer experience
- To **share** Board, community and member stories and news with our key audiences
- To **promote** upcoming events, **market** our affinity programs and other benefits of membership, and **stand out** as helpful members of the community
- Two-way, strategic **communication** with our members to build relationships, issues awareness and brand understanding
- To **get involved** in conversations about us, our policy issues, and our members
- To **generate** leads for membership and advertising opportunities
- To **highlight** achievements and share successes of our members and Board through conventional media coverage
- To **influence** conversations about us, the business community and our role in society
- To **collect** information from the general public and our members about good initiatives, events, our work, etc.
- To **inform** our own members of business initiatives, opportunities and events not directly affiliated with the Board of Trade, offering additional value for members and reminding non-members of value of membership
- To **position** ourselves as experts and brand ourselves as the voice of business online and off
- To **encourage** our members to **act**
- To **grow** our social media presence – through our many online tools – and as a result our voice in the community

Who is responsible for the Board of Trade's social media?

The Board's policy research analyst, in co-operation with sales and marketing department and the CEO, will be responsible for any and all social media tools used by the Board. This includes: posting new comments/posts/Tweets/etc.; monitoring the accounts for comments, mentions and activity; and ensuring the content is up-to-date, relevant and valuable to our audience.

The role will also include the measurement of value of these social media assets as well as reporting that value to the CEO and Board.



Measurement

The St. John's Board of Trade has exceeded its original goals in terms of online buy-in from the membership and general public.

Through the use of tools including, but not limited to Facebook insights and a paid subscription to HootSuite analytics, the value of the online presence is reviewed, updated and adjusted as frequently as daily.

Quarterly the measurements are examined for anomalies, interesting peaks and valleys in use, so information can be gleaned about typical users and adjustments to the social media approach can be made to gain more users of a certain demographic.

Reporting mechanisms

Monthly reports will be presented to the Board and Executive with information pertaining to actual online activity, growth in participation, and changes to approach.

Contests, coupons, free downloads, creative campaigns will first be validated by the Member Value Committee with final approval from the Board.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES {TO BE ASSIGNED}

- Creating profiles
- Social bookmarking
- Social media marketing campaigns
- Community management
- Staying up to date on technology changes
- Manage email lists
- Commenting
- Adding new connections
- Posting video/photos/comments/news etc.
- Content planning
- SEO
- Building links
- Content marketing

Audience Profile:

The Board of Trade's online audiences include members – both active and passive, management and employees – the news media, local pundits and bloggers, the general public, politicians and bureaucracy, etc. Basically, anyone who is online can view most of the Board of Trade's online content.

However, as the Board works to advance its policy mandates, to add value to the membership and to grow its online impact, we have considered the ideal audiences and how to approach them.

Some target audiences include, junior or future executives, existing members who we need to reach in more informal ways, as well as members of the general public. Social media has helped us reach many of these groups who were unavailable to us in the past.

When we share our message with enthusiastic supporters, they pass it to others with a similar interest in what we do. The key benefit is that it drives traffic, generates sales leads and encourages awareness and understanding. We have to build trust, credibility and a relationship with those who might interact with our posted content, particularly influencers. Be social, time spent listening, establishing a presence and building a relationship with our targeted audience on social media outposts.



Our tools and how we use them:

Facebook

Description: The Board of Trade frequently uses Facebook as a social media tool. The creation of a Board Facebook Page has allowed us to create an “online community” of members and the public with a user-friendly tool already incorporated into most people’s lives. Facebook allows the Board to communicate important information to our members about events, news and other issues and frequently driving them to our website for more information.

Audiences:

- Member companies and their employees, especially ambassadors, exec. Etc.
- Sponsors, event hosts and advertisers
- Potential members – small business in particular
- Other Chambers/Board of Trade across Canada
- Board of Trade staffers and former staffers
- General public

What we post:

- Photo galleries from past events
- Links to events, newsletters, policy section of the website etc.
- New issues of Business News magazine
- Educational news items, tips etc.
- Membership surveys
- Local success stories (both members and non-members)
- Media releases and coverage for both the Board and members
- Reminders about affinity programs and other member value adds
- News and information related to owning, operating a business, human resources, management, technology etc.

Who we like:

The Board of Trade uses Facebook to recruit new members, to actively engage current members and inform the general public. To encourage likes of our page we should be making regular contact with anyone directly contacting us, liking back member companies and business-related pages, while also expanding our social media sphere offline by word of mouth.

Twitter

Description: A frequently used but casual social media tool, Twitter has allowed us to have on-going and informal dialogue with members and non-members about issues, events, news, etc. – typically driving them to our website for more information or sharing links. Twitter has a maximum of 140 characters per tweet.

Audiences:

- Member companies and their employees, especially ambassadors, exec. Etc.
- General public
- Media
- Marketing/communications members companies
- Other Chambers/Boards of Trade across Canada
- Governments and bureaucracy
- St. John’s hashtags, lists and groups

What we tweet and how:

- Photos and tweets about our events and those we’re attending
- Upcoming events and information
- General info – Events online, advocacy, issues, etc.



- Media relations – both releases and coverage
- Links to member news stories/good news stories etc.
- New issues of Business News magazine
- Reminders about affinity programs and other reasons to join
- News and information related to owning, operating a business, human resources, management, technology etc.

Using Hastags and handles:

- When mentioning a person or a business you should tweet at it, this is achieved by writing “@” - then the handle. For example: @stjohnsbot
- Hashtags are used to group topics together, allowing people to search for a common phrase to see what others are tweeting about the same topic. This is quite useful at events, or around larger initiatives. For example #Outlook2012

Tweeting is a very interactive social media tool that requires constant attention. Given that you can “tweet” from nearly any mobile device, there is more of an expectation that one will respond immediately. We need to be mindful to balance spending too much time on Twitter with responding to our followers in a timely fashion. Realistically we should be “tweeting” several times a day and responding to all @ tweets and direct message as needed.

Re-tweeting is a tool that saves time and allows us to recognize our members and their comments. This can be done if we see something in the Twittersphere about members, our events and activities or business in general.

Following others is one way to build a community on Twitter. The Board follows members, local business people, pundits, municipal, provincial and federal government representatives, other Chamber’s and business organizations, local media, and anyone else whose voice is heard loudly in the local digital world.

LinkedIn

Description: Used daily, LinkedIn allows the Board to connect with members, colleagues, partners and other stakeholders. The creation of the Board LinkedIn group allows us to build, maintain and cultivate our business relationships and network, while gaining access to member perspectives without the prying eyes of the public. We use this tool for crowd sourcing and to communicate important information to our members about events, news and other issues.

Audiences:

- Member companies and their employees, especially ambassadors, exec., etc. The LinkedIn group is closed to the public.

What we post:

- Links to photo galleries on our Facebook page
- Links to events, newsletters, policy section of the website etc.
- New issues of Business News magazine
- Educational news items, tips etc.
- Membership surveys
- Local success stories (both members and non-members)
- Media releases and coverage for both the Board and members
- Reminders about affinity programs and other member value adds
- News and information related to owning, operating a business, human resources, management, technology etc.

Approval of Group Members

- All new group members must be “approved” by before joining, either after asking to join or by being pre-approved by the administrator.



The account is set up so that all those who “apply” to be a member receive the following automated message:

“Hello, The St. John’s Board of Trade is a members-only group, where members can discuss policy, events and other Board information in confidence. After receiving your request, we’ll confirm membership with our records, which may take a day or two. If you’re not a St. John’s Board of Trade member, but would like to remain in the loop, please check out our Facebook page, Twitter account or sign up for our bi-weekly e-mail newsletter. And, of course, consider becoming a member of the Board of Trade. There are many benefits that can help you grow your business. Thanks for your request, Board of Trade Staff”

Once approved, they will receive an automated approval message that says:

“The St. John’s Board of Trade LinkedIn group is a members only discussion area, where members can talk freely about Board events, policy priorities and other Board of Trade related matters. Welcome to our group and get into the discussion. Feel free to post jobs at your firm, your own promotional materials for events and news items other members would be interested in. Thanks again for your membership and if there’s anything we can do to help, please don’t hesitate to contact our staff at 709-726-2961. Board of Trade Staff”

PERSONAL STAFF SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

The Board understands that many staff members have personal social media accounts (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, blogs, etc.). We also understand that from time to time they are checked while at work. Here are a few guidelines and standards we hope you will all consider for your own personal social media:

- If tweeting, posting on Facebook, or working on a blog are not part of your job description, keep it to a minimum.
- If you find an instance where the Board of Trade is mentioned online, consider it the same as a media call and flag it to the vice-president of policy and communications, who will use the communications standards and guidelines to determine appropriate action. Please do not respond to any comments, posts or tweets related to the Board of Trade from your personal social media accounts.
- If you have information to share about a client’s success or relevant business info for our audiences, please bring these to the attention of the marketing and communications team, and they will be shared with our online communities through the corporate accounts.
- Board of Trade employees are encouraged to use social media tools and participate in social media and networking websites to provide customer service, connect with business contacts and generate business leads. This is voluntary and achieved by using personal accounts (Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn) and through blogs and public forums. At no time, should a staff member create a social media account with a name resembling those of the St. John’s Board of Trade’s, as this would conflict with the official accounts.
- The Board of Trade expects that everyone who participates in online communities through blogs, forums, articles, discussions or their personal accounts recognizes that you are an employee of a relatively public company, and as such there is an expectation that you will conduct yourself in a professional, respectful manner, especially if you list St. John’s Board of Trade as your employer.
- Follow the rules in the St. John’s Board of Trade’s Employee Manual. These rules also apply to employee behaviour within social networking and other public online spaces.



THE BOARD OF TRADE'S SOCIAL MEDIA RULES TO LIVE BY: Do's and Don'ts

Social media is about sharing content. It encompasses a broad sweep of online activity, all of which is trackable and traceable. These networks include blogs you write and those to which you comment; social networks; professional networks; live-blogging; and social bookmarking. There are regularly new online tools and advances that will introduce new opportunities to build your virtual footprint.

As an organization, St. John's Board of Trade believes that social media can drive business and support your professional development efforts. We are also aware that social media will not be used exclusively for business.

Keeping that in mind, we attempt here to provide reasonable guidelines for online behaviour by employees and directors when participating online on behalf of St. John's Board of Trade. As new tools on the web are introduced, and new challenges emerge, this document will, of necessity, evolve.

Below represents our social media policy and related social networking guidelines.

Customer Service Rule: If you find someone who has a question or concern you think you can help with, take the conversation offline, solve the issue and close the loop online. Don't try to solve it in a public forum.

Don'ts

- Never post personal thoughts or comments, inappropriate photos, questionable information, jokes etc. or anything else that would jeopardize the Board of Trade's reputation as a professional organization.
- Never have an argument online, question the motives of other users, get defensive or openly criticize the policy or practice of any municipal, provincial or federal government department or partner.
- Never post confidential or in-house materials without approval.
- Never post any information or conduct any online activity that may violate applicable local, provincial or federal laws or regulations.
- Never use all capital letters.
- Never use your own personal online relationships or the organization's network to influence polls, rankings, or Web traffic for you own personal gain.
- Never post about controversial or potentially inflammatory subjects, including politics (with the exception of topics relating to and in line with our public policy on the issue), sex, religion or any other non-business related subjects.
- If in doubt, don't post it!

Do's

- Be consistent maintain brand integrity.
- Encourage stakeholders to create content about the St. John's Board of Trade and our policies and share it with others and encouraging fans to talk about our issues to others.
- Crowd source, remember this is a resource to gather information, not just disseminate it.
- Where possible our social media strategy should also support other components of our strategic plan, including off-line products like Business News, affinity programs, events, policy papers etc.
- Drive traffic to the Board's website.
- Be transparent. When participating in any online community, disclose your identity and affiliation with St. John's Board of Trade, your members, and your professional and/or personal interest. When posting to a blog, always use your name. Never create an alias, and never be anonymous.



- Integrate other communications tools including email marketing, CRM, SEO, online advertising, where possible.
- Follow the terms and conditions of use that have been established by each venue used for your social networking activities.
- Always identify all copyrighted or borrowed material with citations and links.
- Always ensure that what you're posting is accurate, truthful and without factual error.
- Always spell- and grammar-check everything. Content never disappears entirely once it's been posted.
- Always correct errors promptly, admit your mistake, apologize if necessary, correct it and move on.
- Always use sentence case format.
- Keep the tone of your comments respectful and informative, never condescending or "loud."
- Always write reasonably, factually, and with good humour.
- Always get approval for a post when:
 - o Responding to a negative post. If a blogger or any other online participant posts an inaccurate, accusatory or negative comment about St. John's Board of Trade or any members, do not engage in the conversation without prior approval of the CEO, VP of Policy & Communications or the Chair of the Board.
 - o Posting recommendations for colleagues on professional social networking sites. The recommendations and comments you post about current and former St. John's Board of Trade employees or directors can have consequences, even if you are making the recommendations personally and not on behalf of the organization. Therefore, we ask that you clear all potential recommendations and comments with the CEO for anyone who is or has been associated with the organization during the past 10 years. You must also indicate in your recommendation that it is a personal recommendation and not that of the organization unless you have been authorized to do otherwise.
 - o If you are contacted directly by a journalist regarding issues of concern to the organization, clear the query with the CEO, Chair of the Board or communications team.

Glossary:

Crowdsourcing – Using social media tools to gather information from a larger group of people, allowing the Board to make better decisions based on member feedback.

HootSuite – A pay-for-use program used to schedule tweets, Facebook updates, LinkedIn pages, that also has an analytical tool built in, allowing us to see how successful our strategy is and where we can improve.

Insights – An analytical tool for Facebook that's provided to business pages for free. It doesn't have the same value-add that the paid subscription HootSuite provides, but is quite useful.

Hashtags – The use of the number sign (#) to group information together based on topics within Twitter.

