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BLOGPOST: Social media boost: first steps towards an editorial plan



With the existence of LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok & etc., those managing Social Media now not only have to use a multitude of various channels, but at the same time have to consider target groups and needs. To-do lists can quickly become long and unclear; the occurrence of sudden content gaps or missed topics are almost inevitable.

The solution: A Social Media editorial plan. There are a number of options, but there are some basic elements that should always be considered. We have summarised these elements in part 1 of our mini-series – for a fast and simple start to your own editorial plan.

Step 1: Define ideas & goals

As is the case for every strategy, a content strategy for Social Media requires setting a goal completely independently of the editorial plan: What do I actually want to achieve? The goals can look different for each channel, as they each fulfil quite different needs. However these goals should represent the basis for which type of content you wish to show on the channels – which in turn will be significant for your editorial planning.

Based on this you should begin initial brainstorming, which involves creating a short inspiration list with relevant topics per channel. This neither has to be complete nor clean initially, but should ideally contain as many creative ideas as possible. Possible questions:

- Which of our existing topics can we adapt for Social Media?
- Are there any current trends that we can pick up on?
- Which topics suit us that we could use regularly as serial postings?
- What is happening on Social Media in the industry and among competitors?
- What do we just want to try out?

Step 2: Bringing order to creative chaos

When you have created your inspiration lists for your channels, it is time to put them in a format that is suitable for you. Depending on personal taste and on the level of detail in your planning, you could for example fall back on the following formats or tools to define specific postings and topics for your channels:

- The classic version with pen and paper or using a calendar entry: recommended for manageable quantities of content and few channels.
- Spreadsheets: make detailed planning from a weekly to annual view possible, for larger amounts of text it can quickly become confusing.
- Within a Social Media management tool: Examples are Hootsuite or Fanpage Karma, in which it is possible to plan and publish weeks in advance depending on the channel.
- Comprehensive management tools: e.g. CoSchedule or Trello, marketing and communication can create central content, which can also be relevant to Social Media.

So the crux lies in the level of detail. You have to decide individually whether you plan separately for each Social Media channel or create a common editorial plan for all channels, potentially including other sources. It is also an individual question whether you create an annual plan in advance, or whether you plan monthly or weekly.

Our recommendation

- Research annually for all channels in advance which campaigns and commemorative days can be of use to you on a creative level and in general also record fixed dates that are relevant to you, e.g. events, product launches.
- Make a detailed plan at the end of the month for the coming month and supplement existing topics with topics that are relevant to the product and Employer Branding topics, with Content Recycling from other sources such as podcasts or studies, as well as with other content compatible with the channel objective.
- Nevertheless leave space and flexibility for spontaneous extensions, in case a new topic should arise within a time period that has already been thoroughly planned.

Step 3: Stick with it – great oaks from little acorns grow!

We have already referred to this in step 2: An editorial plan is alive and requires constant consideration and revision at regular intervals. New topics can come along at any time, or be discarded at short notice, because they no longer appear to be suitable. Regular meetups with the Content Team concerned can be helpful for continuous work with the editorial plan. On the one hand, you can distribute currently pending tasks here, on the other hand you can always find new ideas and adapt the editorial plan together.

As you can see: It is not that complicated to create the basic framework for a Social Media editorial plan. In the second part you will be given specific tips with which you can bring your basic framework on Content Planning onto a more professional level, to extract even more potential.

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