

AKTIVE

SOCIAL MEDIA

TELLING YOUR CODE'S/CLUB'S STORY ONLINE



OVERVIEW

Auckland is a complex multi-cultural environment with many challenges and unparalleled opportunities to increase and sustain participation in sport and recreation. This has led to the establishment of The Auckland Approach to Community Sport, a strategic response aiming to create a world-class community sport system in Tāmaki Makaurau, community by community. This toolkit has been developed (and will be updated) by Aktive, with input from delivery partners CLM Community Sport, Harbour Sport, Sport Auckland and Sport Waitakere, based on insights and good practice examples from across Auckland.

Social media platforms are a way to attract and engage an audience by sharing relevant, interesting and valuable content and community-based input, and encouraging interaction, engagement and collaboration.

In the sport and recreation world, a key point to consider is which platforms are relevant to your organisation. If you don't have resource to manage accounts across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest or even Snapchat / LinkedIn, don't stress yourself out by feeling like you need to be set up on all of them. Pick a couple that you feel you can put your best effort into, rather than trying to do too many of them half-heartedly.

When considering each platform, ask the questions:

- Do I have an audience on that platform?
- Do I have resources/time to be able to manage it?
- How will it serve my organisation?
- Can I create appropriate content that will add value to my organisation?

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01. FACEBOOK

Love it or hate it, Facebook is probably where many of your members hang out. It is recommended that you set up your Facebook page as a business so you can access additional tools within the Facebook Business Manager platform.

Facebook's algorithm is complicated and ever changing, meaning businesses need to stay relevant and interesting in order to be noticed. Read more on Facebook's algorithm [here](#)



TIPS FOR STARTING OUT

- Use your logo as your profile picture.
- Your cover photo should be a strong, high quality image that represents your brand or current campaign e.g. a picture of your facility, members in action
- Ensure bios and descriptions are clear and concise and include keywords to make it easy to find your page.
- It's a good idea to have more than one person listed as an administrator for your Facebook page to avoid access issues if a staff member leaves. That being said, you should try to avoid having too many people uploading content as you should keep the voice of your organisation consistent. You also want to avoid people posting at the same time.
- Manage risks by clicking the 'Page' tab, and 'General' menu item - you can block certain words from being used on your page, and turn a Profanity filter off or on.
- Post useful content. Plan out what you intend to post on different days of the week. Here is an example weekly schedule using themes. The trick is to post and use different formats (videos, photos and links). As an example:
 - Monday - club happenings
 - Tuesday - technique tips
 - Wednesday - member of the week
 - Thursday - success stories
 - Friday - did you know facts
 - Saturday - something else from the world of xxx
 - Sunday - photo of the week

01. FACEBOOK

ENGAGE MEMBERS

Engage your members. Include descriptions in posts that are open-ended questions (e.g. tell us if you would like to see this in our club?) Let your members know what is happening – ask them to ‘Like’ the page and use it to share updates such as:

- Activity time changes
- New programmes
- Success stories
- New coaches.

Make it about them. People are on social media to find information that is relevant to their lives. Think about what will be useful for them. Imagine you are talking to a friend when writing on social media. Simple rule – make your posts 80% about building relationships and providing useful content and 20% about marketing your programmes and events to fans / followers.



01. FACEBOOK

PLANNING CONTENT

Mix it up to keep people interested. Vary your content. Share photos, post videos, ask questions, run contests, share research, case studies, advertise events, offer motivational quotes, conduct polls, give updates, new activity info, or put the spotlight on a member or employee.

Use a photo or video link with every post. Research shows that posts with visuals get much greater engagement; more sharing, more likes and more interaction.

Encourage interaction by asking questions.

Posts that encourage feedback have been proven to gain 90% more engagement (likes, comments or shares).

Encourage members to share their goals, results, tips for success, challenges and to shout out to each other. Run competitions inviting guests to share photos and comments. Drive people back to your club for real-life interactions and connections.

Get your content shared. People listen to what their friends like far more than advertising from companies. So, if you can get your social media content shared, it creates authentic recommendations about your product, which helps drive new members through your doors.

Add a 'Share' button for your social media platforms on all your promotional emails and website. This will encourage people to share your content, creating viral awareness of your club, programmes and events.



01. FACEBOOK

PLANNING CONTENT

Plan ahead, have a content schedule and don't post too frequently. Post when your customers are online so you're in their newsfeed, and don't post too frequently.

Monitor and respond to comments when appropriate. A good way of engaging with your followers is to reply to comments, or at the very least, like comments. Your page will get more exposure when users tag their friends, start conversations or send your content piece to other users via Facebook Messenger.

The best way to address a negative comment is to stay positive and to not open yourself up to further negative discussion – keeping in mind Facebook is a public forum. A good approach is to move the conversation off the public forum, e.g. 'Hi XX, we're sorry to hear XX. If you'd like to flick us a direct message, we'd love to chat to you about this issue and resolve it with you.'

Facebook 'reactions' (heart, sad, angry, wow, laughing) are more effective than 'likes'. Facebook's algorithm will place more weight on content that has 'reactions' over likes, to decide what content rises to the surface of a user's news feed. That said, Facebook also recognises engagement 'bait' and will penalise business pages who engage in such practises (see Facebook algorithm article on page 2).

If you are running a paid advertisement on Facebook, be aware of the amount of text you use on images. Images with text that takes up too much of the overall graphic may not reach their full audience. You can check whether an image has too much text by uploading it [here](#)



02. INSTAGRAM

Worldwide, Instagram has 400 million daily active users. If your target market is under 35 years old, it may be worth considering marketing your organisation on Instagram. Instagram is an excellent tool to use to build your brand/image/personality through followers and hashtags. Instagram is all about visual content, and these days, aesthetics and your online profile / personality is very important. Instagram provides a great library (via hashtags) for people to discover your organisation. It can be a difficult platform to be effective on if you don't have access to inspiring imagery that is relevant to your organisation.

Instagram also makes it difficult to send people to websites – you can't hyperlink to websites in the copy of your post. You can add a URL/web link to your profile to send people to a certain destination by clicking the 'Edit Profile' button and adding a web address to your bio.

As Instagram is owned by Facebook, its algorithm is also complicated, and will determine how your posts are placed in a user's feed for various reasons.



02. INSTAGRAM

TIPS FOR STARTING OUT

Hashtags are the main way that users will discover you on Instagram. Putting hashtags in the post description is more effective than posting them as a separate comment underneath the post description.

Don't add too many hashtags – choose 10-15 hashtags per post, and ensure they change constantly or are relevant to the post. The algorithm will recognise if you simply copy the same hashtags each time and will give less weight to your posts.

Hashtags are a balancing act. Depending on your follower list size, select hashtags that are going to help you to be found. If you have under 10,000 followers, you're best to choose hashtags that don't have millions of posts associated with it, as your post will likely get lost amongst accounts with higher follower lists.

For example, if you search 'cricket' in tags on Instagram, you'll see it has 3.5 million posts associated with it. If you search 'cricketnz' there are only 487 posts with that hashtag. Users are more likely to discover your brand under hashtags with less posts associated if you do not have a huge follower list.

If possible, decide on a theme or style for the images you post – this will help build your brand and make you distinguishable from others. It may be as simple as a particular filter you use on your photos.

When you post, ask users to hashtag your brand or your tagline, for example #aktive #HERA #HERAhustle, or to tag your account name @heraeverydaygoddess, to help generate awareness of your brand and to help you discover posts from users about you.

If someone has posted up an image that you want to share, always get their approval first to reshare.

Tag (@) other accounts into your copy, for example "Excited to have @heraeverydaygoddess @teganbartlett here at our event today."

Like Facebook, Instagram will recognise and place greater value on accounts that interact with their followers. If people comment on your photo, like and reply to their comment – even if it's just to thank them. Having conversations with people via comments or direct messages is seen as very positive by Instagram.

03. INSTAGRAM STORIES

WHAT IS A STORY?

A sequential message made from photos, text or videos that disappears after 24 hours. In addition to the feed, Instagram stories are an awesome way to connect to people even though they only last 24 hours.

This type of interaction is becoming more and more favoured on social media as it's quick and easy for your followers to view – and is somewhat in their face. The good thing for businesses (including sport and recreation organisations) is there is no 'best time to post' (users will just see a lineup of unwatched stories regardless of the time of day) – this means you might connect with more people than through the traditional Instagram feed. It is also discoverable, meaning people don't need to be following your account to see your content.

WHY USE IT?

Tagging people or followers into your story is a great way to interact with them and gives them a sense of importance. Adding a personalised approach to your stories, for example showing your face or giving an insight into the day to day work, can help people relate to you. People like to feel like they are a part of something, in a world that is entirely behind screens.

Again, content uploaded to your story should be on brand and should be pleasing to watch. Posting videos where your camera is moving around too quickly, or blurry boomerang clips are not enjoyable for people to watch. It's still very much about aesthetics even though it's short lived, however it doesn't need to be as polished as imagery you might post to your feed.

Despite them only lasting for 24 hours you can download full stories or highlight them. This means they will pin to your profile and can be rewatched.

Instagram stories were born as a way to match Snapchat's success – Snapchat is solely 24-hour stories. Instagram has a much larger user base and a search engine for things that people are interested in so it's a much more effective option in building brand awareness. Snapchat relies on you building a follower base first, particularly as you can't search for hashtags or content via Snapchat.

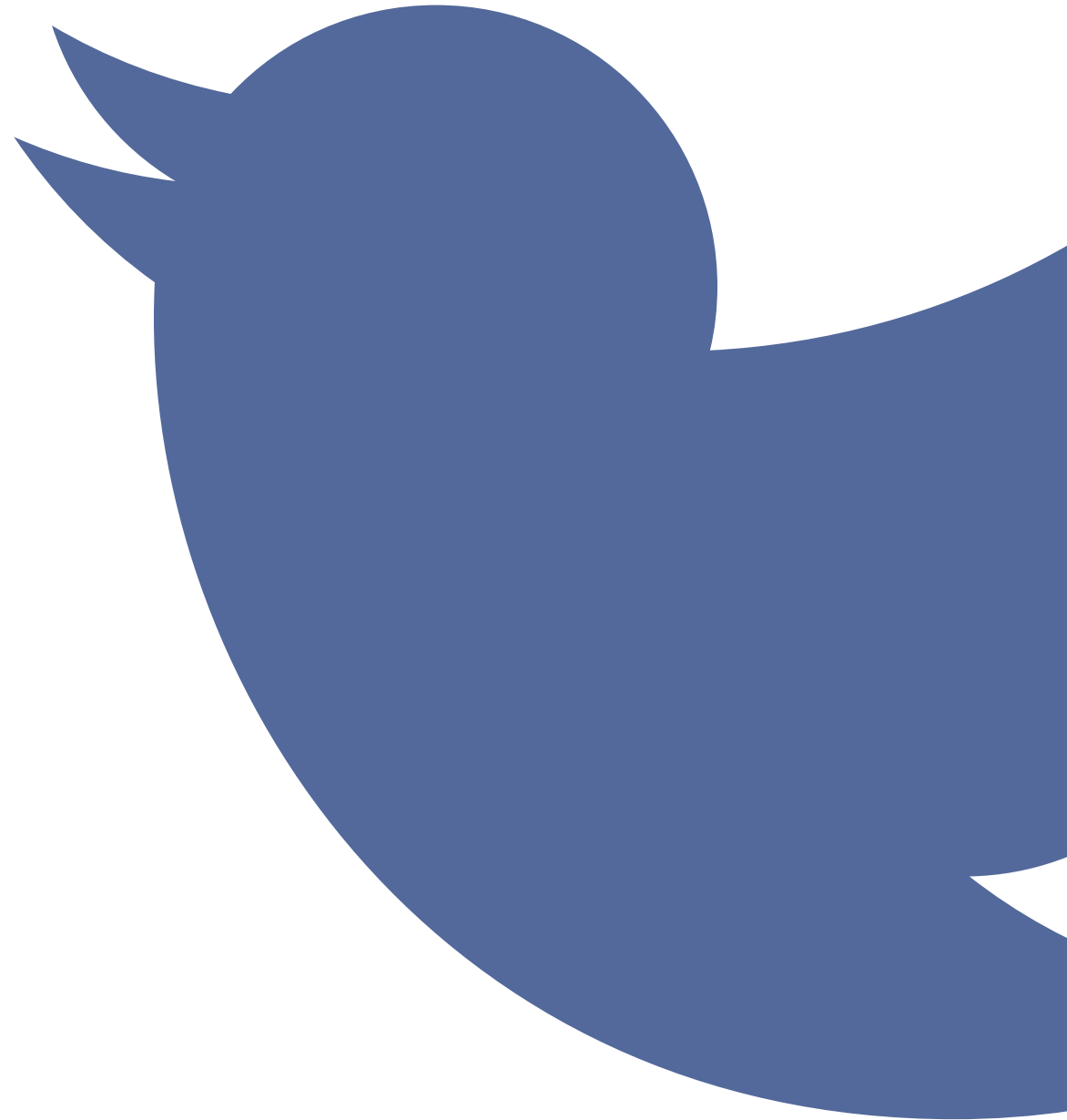
04. TWITTER

Twitter is a conversational platform geared towards real time business updates and live hashtagging, though in New Zealand it has a fairly low reach compared to Facebook or Instagram.

It allows you to easily post updates that might impact your customers or clients, for example a bank will post updates of any outages to their online services via Twitter; and also lets you interact (retweet) with users who tag your organisation.

Despite being a bit clinical in terms of layout and content, you can still create a fun online presence by adding humor or memes (text on image) to posts, even if the message you're sending out is something mundane.

Twitter could be compared to talk back radio – it's live, contains topical conversations, news, politics.



04. TWITTER

TIPS FOR STARTING OUT

If you want to connect with people within your industry, follow them. By following them, you have the chance of them following you back.

Share partners and supporters tweets that are relevant to your industry. By doing so, you can drive traffic to the club or code's profile and engage more closely with followers.

Tailor and create each tweet to suit your audience's needs and desires - avoid automated tweets when possible.

Do not use too many hashtags. Although hashtags can be helpful when trying to engage with an audience, using them too much can make your tweets harder to read which can be off-putting to your audience. Research has shown that two hashtags per tweet is most preferable.

Visuals such as photos and videos are always more attractive on your Twitter profile. Such visuals have shown that engagement has risen more than when posting statuses. By using media related tweets, it provides more opportunity to boost audience appeal and stand out from the crowd.



05. LINKEDIN

LinkedIn is a professional platform where users are able to promote their organisation as an attractive company.

Organisations can post job opportunities and job seekers can post their CV's. LinkedIn allows users to create profiles and make connections with other users to create an online social network connection representative of real-world professional relationships.

WHY USE IT?

When used properly, LinkedIn can attract the public to your club or sporting code.

1. Attract potential volunteers and employees.
2. Profile allows you to build trust with new and current members.
3. When people Google search your club or code, your LinkedIn profile will appear first.
4. Check on competitors and research how they conduct their activity.
5. Audience for LinkedIn are seeking news and events for your club or sporting code.



05. LINKEDIN

TIPS FOR STARTING OUT

Write a good summary for your club or code. By writing a summary, you are making a first impression that visitors of your profile will remember.

Recommendations are a great way of creating trust with your audience. These recommendations can show prospective volunteers and employees that your club or code is a successful and has many positive traits.

Post relevant news and events frequently to allow for content to appear on people's newsfeeds across LinkedIn.

Similar to Facebook and Instagram, LinkedIn works off an algorithm which changes frequently meaning organisations need to stay current and interesting. However, LinkedIn reveals some further information around its algorithms including that content is edited by real people instead of mechanically by bots. This means that content can be displayed more easily on the newsfeed compared to Facebook and Instagram.



LOOKING FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

There is a range of resources available to assist with various aspects of marketing and communications planning and activities.

As noted, Sport New Zealand has several specific resources on marketing and communications for clubs.

These are available at Sport NZ

[Click Here](#)

[View our Marketing and Communications Toolkit here](#)

HERE TO HELP

Your Regional Sports Trust/Organisations are also here to help – please don't hesitate to contact us if you would like to talk through any of this material and/or assistance for your club and/or code.

More information can be found at the following:

aktive.org.nz >>

harboursport.co.nz >>

sportauckland.co.nz >>

clmnz.co.nz/counties >> 

Information in this toolkit is for guidance only and does not constitute formal professional advice. Where specific issues arise in your club/code, advice should be sought from the relevant expert(s) as necessary.