the YMCA

FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

SOCIAL MEDIA PLAYBOOK

Tips to steward and strengthen the Y Brand

YMCA OF THE USA | UPDATED NOVEMBER 2022

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Tip: Table of Contents items link to respective sections!

Benefit-driven headlines used in this resource are provided as examples only. YMCA OF THE USA discourages actual use of these statements due to potential existing Federal Trademark protection status. Use of these benefit-driven headlines may subject your YMCA to legal action for trademark infringement.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Ys strengthen communities across the U.S., and social media helps us do that work. YMCA of the USA created this playbook to empower Y staff with the best practices, tools and resources needed to communicate our brand's mission on social media.

Welcome to the updated social media playbook created specifically for Ys!
Version 2.0 of the social media playbook features the addition of best practices by social platform (including TikTok!), guidelines for planning content with your Y's audience in mind, measurement standards and updates to content from the previous version.

This social media strategy and the playbook are just two elements of a larger initiative, the Y's Digital Transformation. **The vision behind digital transformation is to improve lives and connect people to the Y community via a seamless digital experience, and social media best practices support this vision.**

This update to the playbook is the result of many months of research that Y-USA conducted with a leading creative agency's social media team. Our work together included analysis of Y audiences and further development of Y personas to help you broaden your audience and build more authentic connections in the digital space.

We hope that this resource will help you meet your goals so that you can fulfill our shared mission of strengthening communities through seamless digital experiences.

VISION FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

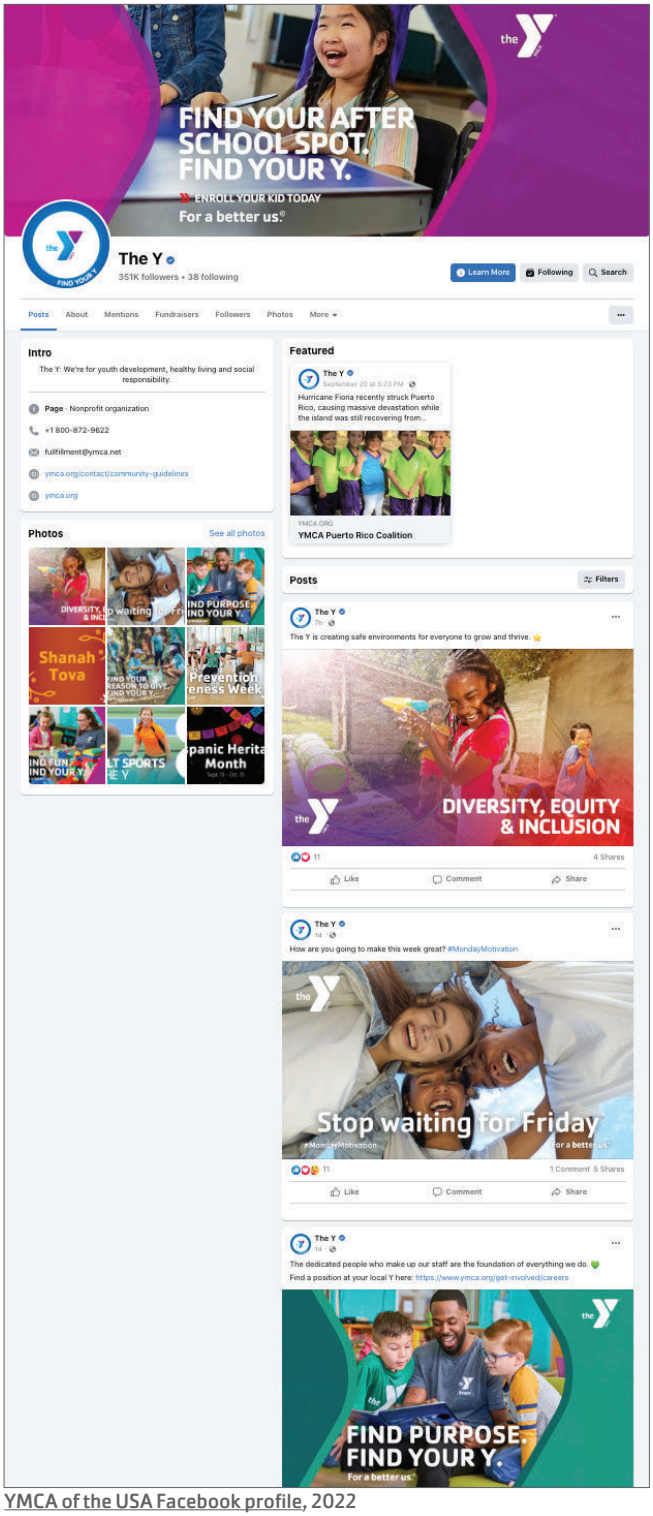
As with everything we do, we have a vision that informs our planning and strategy. As a communication tool, social media presents unique opportunities for connecting with our audiences, promoting the Y brand and conveying the Y's purpose to strengthen communities. Building an authentic social media following takes time and should be part of an overall marketing and brand-building strategy. Through this toolkit and the vision that follows, you'll learn more about how to use social media to inspire your audiences, foster storytelling, speak as a collective voice and beyond.

VISION FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

WE ARE USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO

- **Inspire, Delight, and Engage** digital audiences in order to build brand equity and to fulfill our purpose
- **Spark Actions** that help increase public interest and engagement with the Y, such as join, participate, volunteer, champion and donate as well as generate quality leads
- **Inspire Creativity** by empowering young people, members, staff and volunteers to tell Y stories through social media
- **Amplify and Tell Stories** through showcasing the impact Ys have on the people and communities they serve
- **Be a Trusted Resource** online just as we are in the real world
- **Start Conversations** around topics that are important to us in an inclusive manner
- **Use Our Collective Voice** while holding space for all that is unique to each of our communities
- **Empower Ys** by providing templates, tools and trainings that will enable you to succeed on social media
- **Listen to Our Audience** through proactive, not reactive, social media listening to better understand their needs and wants
- **Effectively Steward Our Brand** by using our social media channels to build relationships and brand equity over the long term

For a more in-depth look at our brand architecture and how to categorize your Y's programs and services, please refer to the Technical Supplement to the YMCA Graphics Guide for Brand Architecture on the Brand Resource Center.



YMCA of the USA Facebook profile, 2022

BRAND FOUNDATIONS

BUILDING A CONNECTED BRAND

A connected brand is a brand that lives in people's lives by connecting with them on an emotional level and inspiring them to connect with others wherever and whenever they are.

The Y's brand foundations play a significant role in building social strategy because they shape the way you show up online. From your tone of voice, to how you engage with your audience and moments that matter, understanding the brand at its core guides us through the world of social media.

OUR BRAND FOUNDATIONS				
BRAND PURPOSE	The Y is the leading nonprofit committed to strengthening community by connecting all people to their potential, purpose and each other			
BRAND VALUES	**CARING** Show a sincere concern for others	**HONESTY** Be truthful in what you say and do	**RESPECT** Treat each other as you'd like to be treated	**RESPONSIBILITY** Be accountable for your promises and actions
PERSONALITY	**WELCOMING**	**GENUINE & NURTURING**	**HOPEFUL**	**DETERMINED**
PERSONA/ CONSUMER	**Security Focused Shelly** Parents with young kids (0–5)	**Enrichment Focused Emily** Parents with active kids (6–11)	**Fitness Focused Fran** Empty nesters (55–64; working with no kids in the home)	**Social Seeking Sal** Seniors (65+; retired)

Note: Items in the Brand Foundations align horizontally and not vertically.

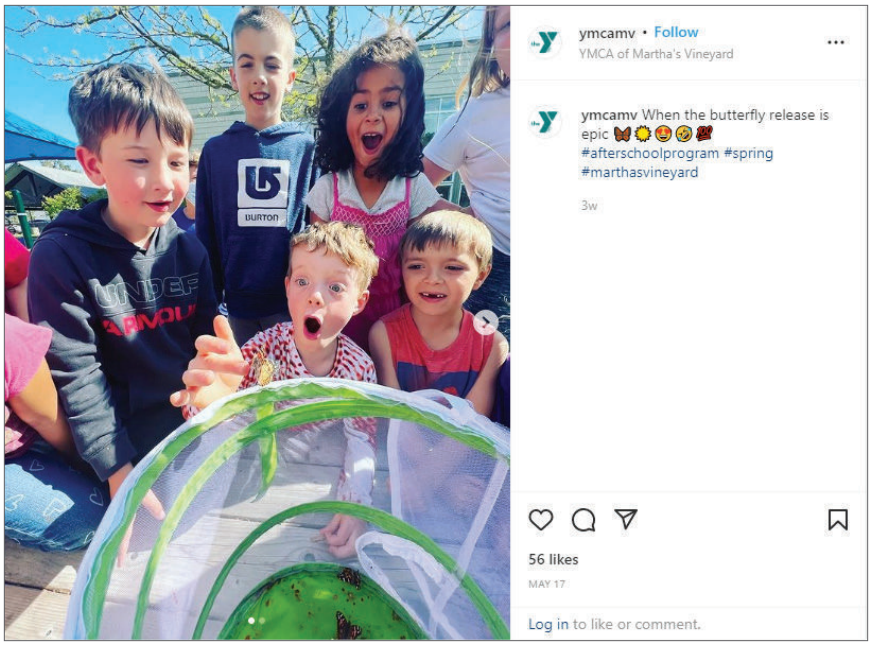
THE 10 BRANDMANDMENTS

1. SOCIAL MEDIA IS A PARTY FOR HUMANS

WHY THIS MATTERS
The #1 reason for using social media is to keep in touch with friends and family.

Interacting with brands is #7.*

Brands are crashing a human party. Let's earn an invitation! People see ads in their feeds all day, leading to a natural distaste for brands on social media — and that's okay. The goal isn't to be the coolest brand — it's to be the least uncool. Through relentless listening, authenticity, self-awareness and creativity, you can win them over.

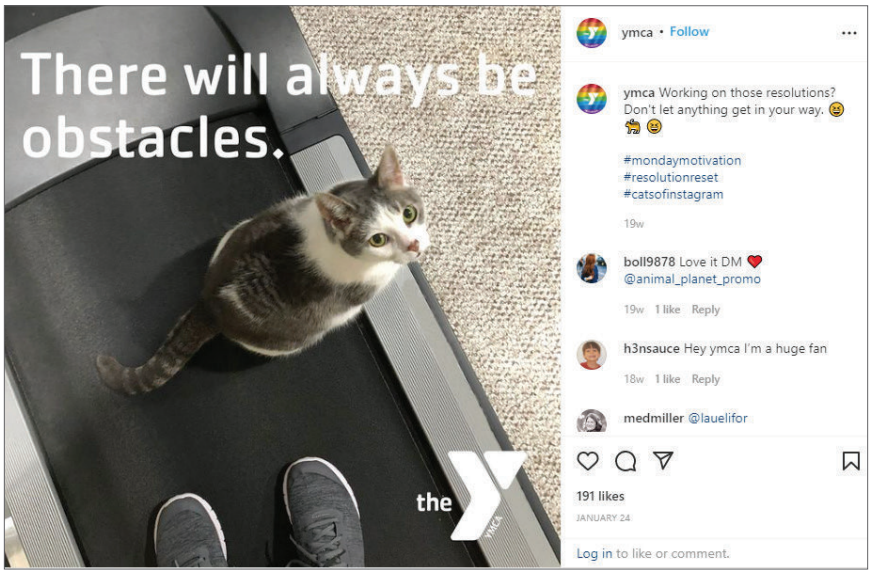


2. IT'S MORE FUN TO BE A PIRATE THAN JOIN THE NAVY

WHY THIS MATTERS
65% of consumers feel more connected to brands with a robust presence on social "that humanizes an otherwise faceless brand."*

The most successful brand social accounts naturally and organically deviate from corporately controlled messages while still staying true to the brand. You can stand out in a sea of soulless and boring accounts with playfulness and authenticity. The freedom to be creative, engaging and a little rogue will give the illusion of being a "pirate."

*Creating Connections: What Consumers Want From Brands in an Increasingly Divided Society



THE 10 BRANDMANDMENTS (CONT.)

3. GRAFFITI IS COOL, PROPAGANDA IS NOT

WHY THIS MATTERS
Relevance and context are the most important attributes for social content — over production quality, content source and length.*

On social media, the more polished an image the more it looks like an ad.

People have a very sensitive "Ad Radar" and often try to avoid ads. You must create the type of content users share — authentic, in-the-moment imagery and memes.

* Facebook Business



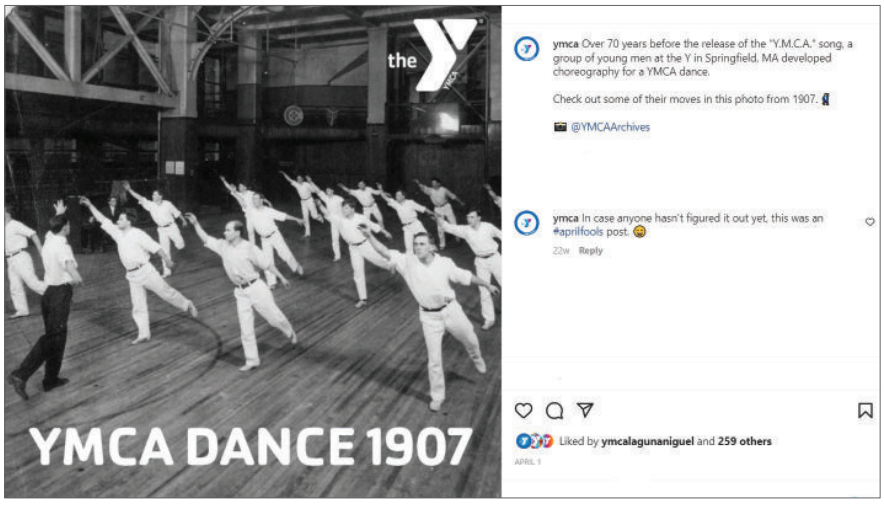
4. BE SELF AWARE

WHY THIS MATTERS
The #2 social media behavior that helps brands connect with consumers is their personality.*

You have to be honest with how you are perceived — because on social media, people will tell you.

Embrace this reality in order to build authentic respect and brand love. It's ok to break the fourth wall every now and then.

*Creating Connections: What Consumers Want From Brands in an Increasingly Divided Society



THE 10 BRANDMANDMENTS (CONT.)

5. USE HASHTAGS SPARINGLY

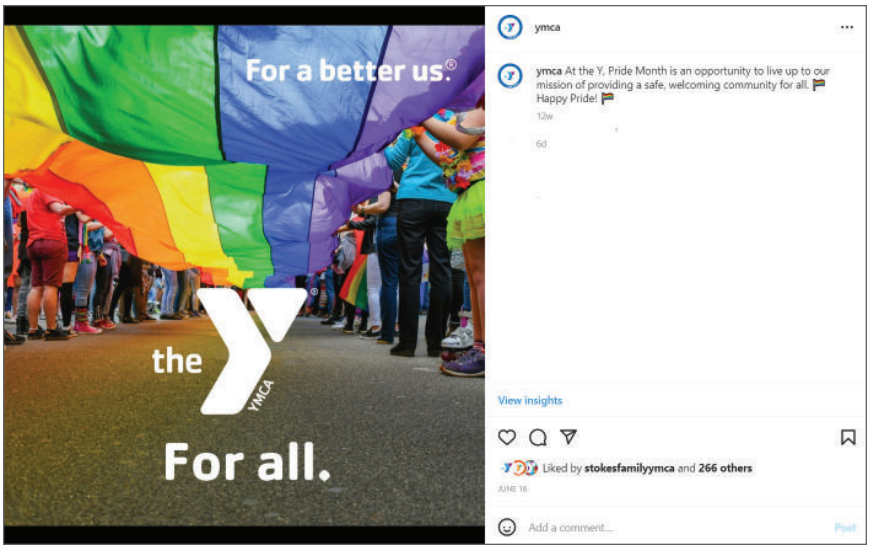
WHY THIS MATTERS
One hashtag generates the best engagement. Adding an additional hashtag decreased social engagement by 30% on average.*

Hashtags are the most useful when they connect people to a live communal or cultural event like the Oscars or the Super Bowl.

Most humans don't use hashtags. When brands do it, they are telling people "this is an ad that we're trying to make into a conversation."

Hashtags' influence and use depend upon the platform, so be purposeful. Also, not every campaign needs a hashtag to be effective.

*Instagram Engagement Report 2020



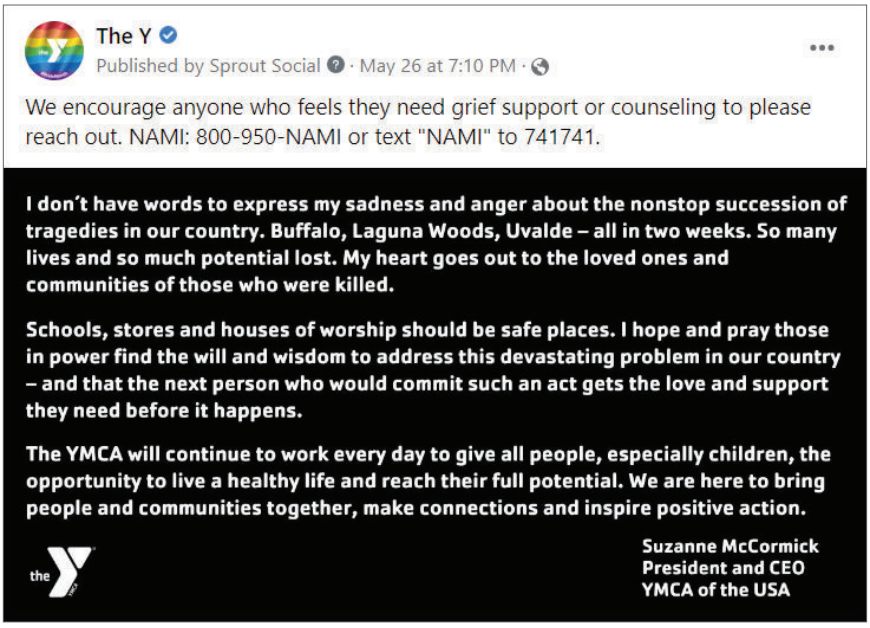
6. OPINIONS ARE REQUIRED

WHY THIS MATTERS
76% of consumers say they would buy from a brand they feel connected to and 57% more likely to increase spend when they feel more connected.*

Does your Y have opinions on music? Absolutely! What about a favorite snack? Why not? These opinions should be influenced by how your audience sees your Y not only on social media but also in their day-to-day lives.

Act like a person with hopes, dreams, frustrations, favorites, etc. because that's how people connect — with personality and perspective.

*Creating Connections: What Consumers Want From Brands in an Increasingly Divided Society



THE 10 BRANDMANDMENTS (CONT.)

7. A CAMEL IS A HORSE BUILT BY COMMITTEE

WHY THIS MATTERS
40% of consumers expect brands to respond within the first hour on social media.*

The more POV's added to a post, the less authentic it becomes.

Community management accounts for 90% of the personality-driven content on social media, so the brand personality must live through the person managing the social community. They must bring all of their intelligence, passions and interests to the table and filter them through the brand's personality.

* Sprout Social Index



8. WHEN THEY ZIG, ZAG

WHY THIS MATTERS
90% of marketers say social is what enables them to differentiate their brands in the market and stand out from their peers.*

You should want to stand out in a sea of basic boring brands that are all fighting for a sliver of attention.

Don't save your banger burger tweet for "National Burger Day" because everyone will be talking about burgers that day.

You can "zag" by standing out through your voice, content or timing.

* Sprout Social Index



THE 10 BRANDMANDMENTS (CONT.)

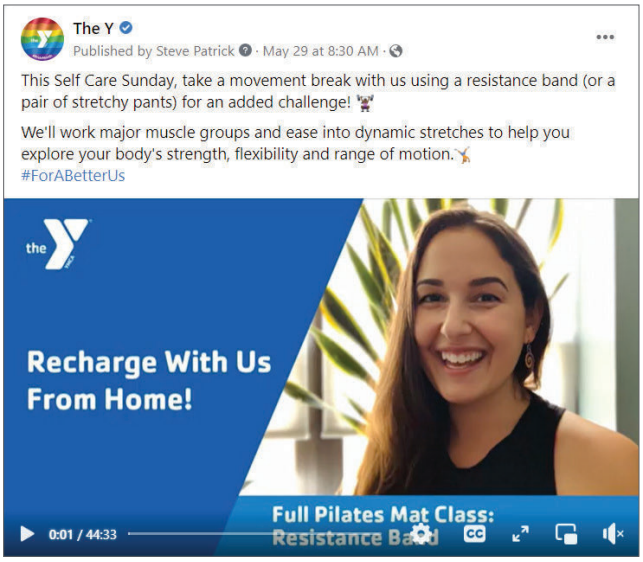
9. DON'T SELL

WHY THIS MATTERS
61% of consumers said engagement with the audience is the most important characteristic, followed by transparency (45%) and strong customer service (44%).*

Create brand love and tangible relationships that will lead to membership and donations by engaging your audience on their terms.

Building an authentic and passionate community is an investment that will pay off in the long run.

* Sprout Social Index



10. DON'T OVERTHINK IT

WHY THIS MATTERS
The average person scrolls through 300 feet of mobile content every day.*

Every post is an opportunity to refine your persona and understand your community a little more clearly. With mutual trust and partnership and keeping the Community Manager Hippocratic Oath in mind you will be able to take the shots that unlock the biggest wins.

Don't overthink it because the user doesn't — they just keep scrolling.

* The Drum



ESTABLISHING A SOCIAL STRATEGY

This social strategy was developed based on Y-USA's brand purpose, but can be adapted for your Y.

OUR SOCIAL STRATEGY			
BRAND PURPOSE	The Y is the leading nonprofit committed to strengthening community by connecting all people to their potential, purpose and each other		
ROLE OF SOCIAL	Connect with our online community to spark actions that help increase public interest and engagement with the Y as a brand, ultimately encouraging them to seek out their local Y		
SOCIAL GOAL	Increase awareness, engagement and spark conversations		
SOCIAL VOICE	Welcoming, genuine, nurturing, hopeful and determined		
CONTENT PILLARS	Brand Awareness	Get Involved (Join, Volunteer, Participate, Give)	Convey Impact

SOCIAL GOALS

These social goals are based on Y-USA's strategy. Your Y is encouraged to set your own.

1. **Continue to build and grow authentic social media awareness among key target audiences**
2. **Engage in conversations around topics that are important to our audience**
3. **Spark actions that help increase public interest for the Y and inspire advocates**

SOCIAL BELIEF SYSTEM

The Y's social belief system clearly identifies what we are 'for' — our t-shirt — and what we are 'against' — our picket sign. These beliefs govern how the Y behaves on social media.



WE STAND FOR
Our T-Shirt



WE STAND AGAINST
Our Picket Sign

VOICE & TONE

PERSONALITY

How we show up across experiences and communications when we speak to our audience. It reflects our voice, tone, manner and style, as well as our actions and interactions.

Welcoming | We're open to all and create spaces where you can be, belong and become

We believe our communities are stronger when everyone feels valued. We bring people together, inviting them to share their diverse perspectives and discover their shared passions.

Genuine | We value who you are and encourage you to be true to yourself and others

We are approachable, down-to-earth and real. We foster environments where you feel comfortable being yourself and confident connecting with others.

Nurturing | We're with you on your path to reach your full potential

We recognize that everyone has personal strengths and challenges. No matter where you are on your journey, we offer encouragement, guidance and support.

Hopeful | We believe in your ability to inspire a brighter tomorrow

Together with you and your neighbors, we can make a meaningful and measurable difference in the lives of people and communities. We motivate people to join in, get involved and take action for the greater good.

Determined | We work relentlessly to strengthen communities, starting with you

We believe that every person, family and neighborhood has the potential to bring about positive change. And together, we have the power to do so much more.



VOICE & TONE (CONT.)

SPEAK IN A CONSISTENT BRAND VOICE



WELCOMING

Accessible
Authentic
Personable
Commited



GENUINE

Grounded
Honest
Charismatic
Unique



NURTURING

Trustworthy
Positive
Informed
Encouraging



HOPEFUL

Contemporary
Forward-thinking
Enthusiastic
Playful



DETERMINED

Bold
Confident
Bright
Enthusiastic

BRAND PERSONALITY HERO MATRIX

	 Welcoming	 Genuine	 Nurturing	 Hopeful	 Determined
 Welcoming	Michelle Obama	Reese Witherspoon	Leslie Knope	Jane Goodall	Lebron James
 Genuine	Lin-Manuel Miranda	Michelle Obama	Princess Diana	Chance the Rapper	Nelson Mandela
 Nurturing	Florence Nightingale	Oprah	Michelle Obama	Mr. Rogers	Marie Curie
 Hopeful	Rosa Parks	Forest Gump	Atticus Finch	Michelle Obama	Amelia Earhart
 Determined	Wonder Woman	Malala Yousafzai	Nelson Mandela	T'Challa/Black Panther	Michelle Obama

THE Y MINDSET

People with the Y mindset are naturally civic-minded; they value belonging to a community and enrichment for themselves and their families. Whether it's attending a neighborhood gathering, meeting up with people who have common interests or networking virtually, they value connecting with people from all walks of life. Most of all, they desire cultivating a **home away from home** for themselves and their families where people from all walks of life come together to **connect, learn and grow**. They believe each day presents an opportunity not only to work to better themselves, but to be a part of something bigger than themselves.

BRINGING THEM TO LIFE IN SOCIAL MEDIA

The data featured on the next few pages is based on the audience following Y-USA's social channels. Since there are similarities between audiences who follow individual Ys and Y-USA on social media, this data can serve to help your Y create content that will resonate with your followers.

The numbers in parentheses are index numbers, which represent the comparison of data against a baseline average. For example, an index value of 100 indicates that a result matches the baseline average exactly, an index of 200 represents two times the average and an index of 50 represents half the average. This means that per the data below, this audience is 1.75 times more likely to be philanthropic than average.

Demographics

Gender Identity: 55% F | 44% M

***Racial Identity:** 62% White | 15% Hispanic
12% Black/African American | 6% Asian | 5% Other

Age: 25-65+

Location: 52% suburban | 30% urban | 18% rural

****Relationship:**
55% married | 22% single | 10% in relationship
7% divorced | 3% widow | 3% other

Location: 52% suburban | 30% urban | 18% rural

Kids: 59% have kids, 26% have 2 and 16% have 3

*****Religion:** 24% very | 37% a little | 16% not | 23% other

******Political Views:** 21% liberal | 31% moderate
14% conservative | 34% other

*Other = Mixed race, Pacific Islander, other, prefer not to say
**Other = Dating, engaged
***Other = Agnostic, atheist, other, unsure, prefer not to say
****Other = Very liberal, very conservative, other, unsure, prefer not to say

COMMUNITY

- Philanthropy (175)
- Support local (127)
- Cooking/entertaining (236)
- Family (121)

BEST SELF

- Important to look good — for self (120)
- Exercise/eat balanced diet (118)
- Follow inspiring/self-help influencers (110)

THOUGHTFUL SPENDERS

- Money savers (228)
- Make clothes last (118)
- Health has no price tag (115)
- Travel (166)

ENRICHING ACTIVITIES

- Like to learn (110)
- Play Bingo/games (127)
- Needlework (113)
- Gardening (111)
- Scrapbooking (108)

The values they hold themselves to are the values they expect in a brand.
They are loyal to brands that reflect their values (123) with 56% saying there are brands they stay loyal to.

BRAND PERSONALITY (WHAT THEY WANT TO SEE IN A BRAND)

- 72% Reliable (117)
- 69% Honest/trustworthy (123)
- 46% Smart (127)
- 45% Friendly (124)

BRAND ACTIONS (WHAT THEY WANT TO SEE IN A BRAND)

- 55% Be socially responsible (132)
- 51% Listen to feedback (128)
- 50% Improve day-to-day life (126)
- 50% Reduce environmental impact (139)
- 47% Contribute to local community (138)
- 46% Support charities/good causes (141)
- 46% Support diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) (141)
- 43% Make feel valued (124)
- 41% Support local suppliers (134)

BRINGING THEM TO LIFE IN SOCIAL MEDIA (CONT.)

*Data based on Y-USA's audience.

They are receptive to advertising and discovery in social media but the community it brings is most valuable. Word of mouth and grass-roots influencers can be impactful with this audience. They go to social media for inspiration (123), and your Y's social media can be where they find this inspiration.

STRONG INFLUENCE FROM THEIR OWN COMMUNITY

- 62% Consume friends/family content on social (127) – that's double branded content
- 60% Say the reason for using social is to stay in touch with friends and family (118)
- 41% Find new products and services via friends/family (135)

*Only 7% report being influenced by celebrity endorsements

INTERACTIONS WITH BRANDS/BRANDED CONTENT

- 10% Follow brands (113)
- 33% Find out about new products via social media (127)
- 31% Discover new products via social posts (129)
- 18% Find out about products from sponsored posts (133

WHAT THEY CARE ABOUT

WHO THEY FOLLOW	EVENTS THEY ATTEND	CAUSES THEY SUPPORT
Self-Help authors, transparent bloggers, entrepreneurs and philanthropists	**Local events rooted in music and/or food**	**Children/Family focused. Larger organizations with local branches**
Himani Kankaria (21X) (digital marketing consultant) **Anderson Cooper (106)** (CNN) **Nicole Stephens (305)** (medium & Reiki professional) **Dr. Sears (418)** (author of parenting books) **One Fit Widow (344)** (blogger) **Brian Williams (112)** (MSNBC) **Angie Hicks (658)** (founder of Angi's List) **Lisa Druxman (664)** (blogger – Fit4Mom) **Tim Morrow (494)** (San Antonio Zoo Director) **Marie Forleo (292)** (self-help books & philanthropist) **Lama Zopa Rinpoche (706)** (Buddist) **Kate Northup (522)** (self-help author) **Chuck Todd (127)** (NBC) **Frank Addante (707)** (entrepreneur & CASA Board) **Amy Corbett Storch (899)** (mom blogger)	**Atlanta Jazz Fest (587)** **Comedy Get Down (674)** **Taste Talks (396** **Fun Runs (323)** **Food Events/Markets like Smorgasburg (265)** **Wanderlust (206)** **Local Music (Naperville Last Fling, Northside Festival) (11X)** **LouFest Music Festival (184)** **Renaissance Festivals/State Fairs (313)**	**KaBoom (15X)** (playground renovations) **CNN Freedom Project (15X)** **Stop Hunger Now (11X)** **LIFT (11X)** **Children/Nature Network (8X)** **Big Brothers, Big Sisters (18X)** **United Way (14X)** **Goodwill (10X)** **CASA (879)** **Boys & Girls Club (20X)** **Volunteer Match (13X)** – always looking for opportunities

Numbers that are followed by an X reflect the likelihood of support or engagement for something. E.g., our audience is 20X more likely to support the Boys and Girls Club as a cause to support based on their interests.

BRINGING THEM TO LIFE IN SOCIAL MEDIA (CONT.)

*Data based on Y-USA's audience.

WHERE THEY ARE DAILY

Please note that respondents who provided the data below for research conducted by MRI Simmons were allowed to choose multiple social media channels when selecting the channels that they use most frequently.

FACEBOOK 70% (108)	INSTAGRAM 44% (107)	YOUTUBE 61% (115)	TWITTER 27% (111)	SNAPCHAT 22% (103)	PINTEREST 20% (125)	TIKTOK 18% (101)
Resource	**Entertainment/ Education**	**Education**	**Engagement/ Education**	**Entertainment**	**Inspiration**	**Entertainment**
FB Groups Marketplace Stories	Swipe up on Stories React to Polls Create Stories	Tutorials News Clip	Retweet (RT)/ Favorite Trending Topics	View Stories Create Stories Use Filters	Recipe Inspo Home Decor	Like/Comment/ Share Watch Live Stream Use Discovery *They don't post often

Most likely to engage with paid content

They are active posters on social media, providing Ys with an opportunity for great user-generated content (UGC) when fostered correctly.

43%
Post photos taken
(126)

37%
Comment on posts
(132)

28%
Post status updates
(131)

TAKING IT ONE STEP FURTHER

*These personas are based on Y-USA's social audience data but can be useful for targeting similar personas within your social audience.



SECURITY FOCUSED SHELLY

"I want the best for my kid and I don't want to have to worry too much."



ENRICHMENT FOCUSED EMILY

"The Y is a great place for my kids to spend time to grow as people, athletes and engaged citizens."



FITNESS FOCUSED FRAN

"The Y puts me at ease, so that I can get in the zone."



SOCIAL SEEKING SAL

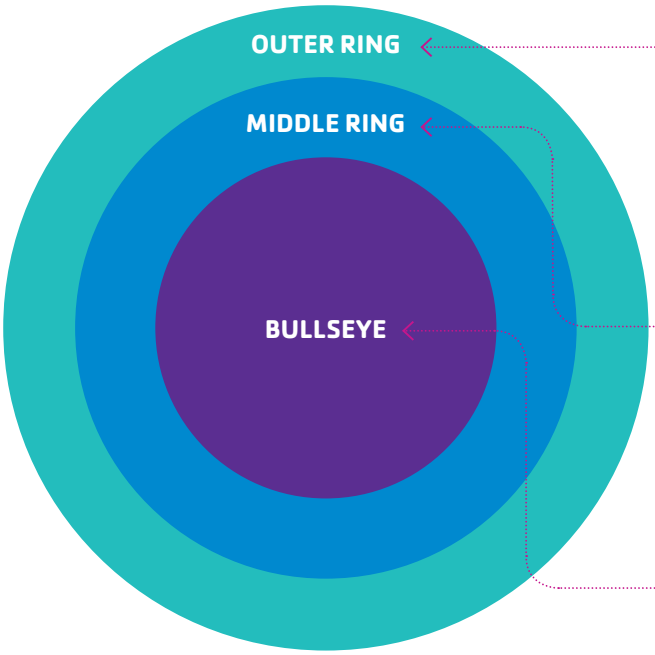
"The Y is my second home. It is where I go to see familiar, friendly faces."

THE MIDDLE RING

They are actively lurking on social media and would rather read comments than post their own (124). They pay attention to reviews (119) and talk about things seen in social media in person (105). They also believe they'd feel less connected without social media (183).

BULLSEYE

They use social media to talk about brands they like (236) and they post reviews (255), making them a great bullseye audiences. A core reason they are on social media is to post about their lives (156) and to find inspiration (190).



Y-Mindset

Desired Consumer Action:
Brand recall, brand differentiators



Desired Consumer Action:
Inbound conversation, participation with brand, trial



Desired Consumer Action:
User-generated content (UGC), testimonial, ambassador, trial of new membership offerings

PLANNING WITH PERSONAS

Personas are examples of people who have the same interests, lifestyles and priorities as people within your target audiences. The personas below were identified through market research conducted by a partner agency. These are just a few examples of the many different personas likely to be found in your community and the factors you should consider when trying to reach them through social media.

Learn more about personas and how to apply them to your marketing efforts in the webinar "Customer Personas, Journey Maps and How to Use Them" and "Young Person Persona" offered through the Digital Experience Webinar Series.

Two additional personas that speak to a younger audience, specifically ages 13–24, are in development. These new young people personas will include further information on how they interact with social platforms and will be made available in 2023.



SECURITY FOCUSED SHELLY



ENRICHMENT FOCUSED EMILY



FITNESS FOCUSED FRAN



SOCIAL SEEKING SAL

PLANNING WITH PERSONAS (CONT.)

Data based on Y-USA's audience. Refer to page 76 and page 77 for a deeper look at the interests and demographics of the four personas.



SECURITY FOCUSED SHELLY

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS*:

81% 68% 67% 34% 31% 28%

*Channels are listed in order of frequency and percentages reflect the likelihood of use for this persona.

BULLSEYE
Desired Consumer Action:
User-generated content (UGC), testimonial, ambassador, trial of new membership offerings

BIO

Shelly is a 30-year-old single mom with a baby. She has a full-time job as a retail sales associate and often must work late. Because of this, she wants to ensure that her daughter is safe and happy while she is at work. She can't afford to hire a nanny around the clock and wants to find a nurturing place for her daughter. She tries to spend as much time as possible with her daughter but needs a convenient place to keep her safe while she is unavailable.

NEEDS AND GOALS

- **Safety:** Wants her daughter to be cared for by quality staff in a safe facility
- **Convenience:** Needs child care with easy drop off and pick up that won't break the bank
- **Family Time:** Values quality time with her daughter
- **Peace of Mind:** Wants to know that her daughter is safe and happy while she is at work

BARRIERS

- Shelly doesn't know anyone who goes to the Y so she is unsure how comfortable she'll be leaving her daughter there
- Sometimes has difficulty getting off the waitlist for high demand child care programs
- Shelly doesn't have a lot of extra money to spend on child care
- Doesn't want to give up too much time with her daughter

BEHAVIORS

- Does extensive research for anything she tries for herself or her family
- Tries to keep dinnertime sacred
- Talks to adults in her daughter's life to form relationships and stay updated
- Drops her daughter off while she exercises at the Y

Shelly is most likely to discover new brands from social ads or social media posts

WHY SHE'S ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- To follow influencers
- To post about daily life
- To find inspiration
- To discuss opinions

WHAT SHE POSTS AND LIKES

- Brand content
- Photos from her daily life
- Share memes
- Updates from loved ones

ONLINE INTERESTS

- Lighthearted media
- Multi-cultural influencers
- Music and entertainment
- Black female empowerment

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Country concerts
- Yoga
- CMA Awards
- Stagecoach

"I want the best for my daughter and I don't want to have to worry too much."

PLANNING WITH PERSONAS (CONT.)

Data based on Y-USA's audience.



ENRICHMENT FOCUSED EMILY

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS*:

80% 73% 53% 24% 14% 12%

*Channels are listed in order of frequency and percentages reflect the likelihood of use for this persona.

BULLSEYE

Desired Consumer Action: User-generated content (UGC), testimonial, ambassador, trial of new membership offerings

BIO

Emily is a 42-year-old stay at home mom with two kids. Emily is super invested in them. She likes to keep them busy in lots of afterschool and summer activities. Emily's daughter loves playing soccer and basketball at the Y and her son loves any program with Legos or art. It is important to Emily and her partner that the kids are learning and growing as much as possible.

NEEDS AND GOALS

- **Programs:** Wants to find programs that challenge and entertain her kids
- **Knowledge:** Wants to be in the know about upcoming programs and events
- **Volunteering:** When her schedule allows, tries to volunteer/coach her kids' activities
- **Care:** Wants to make sure her kids are surrounded by caring and invested adults

BARRIERS

- Emily finds that the most popular programs fill up quickly so she can't get her kids in them
- With her kids in so many activities, sometimes there are not enough options for more advanced programs
- Emily worries about coordinating transportation to and from activities for two kids who take part in different programs at the same time

BEHAVIORS

- Constantly preparing for the next season (particularly summer) by researching programs that her kids will be interested in
- Emily became a member of the Y so she can have first dibs on programs and get discounted prices
- Often checks her Y's website and social media to see if there are any pictures of her kids
- Signs up for the next program immediately after one ends

WHY SHE'S ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- To keep in touch with friends/family
- To find like-minded communities
- To find inspiration
- To post about daily life

WHAT SHE POSTS AND LIKES

- Brand content
- Photos from her daily life
- Share memes
- Updates from loved ones

ONLINE INTERESTS

- Mom humor
- Feel good media
- Activity resources
- Beauty, fashion and home decor

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Wine festivals
- Disney on Ice
- Rodeo
- Book club

"The Y is a great place for my kids to spend time to grow as people, athletes and engaged citizens."

PLANNING WITH PERSONAS (CONT.)

Data based on Y-USA's audience.



SOCIAL SEEKING SAL

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS*:

70% 54% 19% 19% 19% 1%

*Channels are listed in order of frequency and percentages reflect the likelihood of use for this persona.

MIDDLE RING

Desired Consumer Action: Inbound conversation, participation with brand, trial

BIO

Sal has been widowed for over five years. His wife was the social one in their marriage. Without her around, Sal found himself alone with nothing to do. Sal joined the Y for the indoor track so that he could stretch his legs even in bad weather. He found that his social life picked up considerably and now he considers the people at the Y to be like family.

NEEDS AND GOALS

- **Socialization:** Talk to people about current events, life and interests
- **Purpose**: Find a reason to get out of bed in the morning and create structure in his daily routine
- **Respect**: Be recognized as a person that provides value in his community
- **Exercise:** Keep his body moving so that he won't lose physical mobility

BARRIERS

- Accessibility – getting around in bad weather is challenging for Sal. He doesn't like driving in pouring rain or when the roads haven't been cleared of snow
- Technical Abilities – Sal is not comfortable with anything digital. That means that he often doesn't receive email messages or alerts when an event or class is cancelled

BEHAVIORS

- Goes to the Y twice a day – to exercise in the morning and to play cards or board games with a group of seniors in the afternoon
- Relaxes in the Y lobby with the newspaper and a cup of coffee before his morning exercise

WHY HE'S ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- To keep in touch with friends/family
- To follow new and current events
- To feel more connected

ONLINE INTERESTS

- News
- Life conveniences (Lifelock, Mapquest)
- To connect (classmates.com)

WHAT HE POSTS AND LIKES

- Updates from loved ones
- Engages only with friends list
- Comments on posts from friends and family

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Olympics
- Major League Baseball
- US Open
- Walking

"The Y is my second home. It is where I go to see familiar, friendly faces."

PLANNING WITH PERSONAS (CONT.)

Data based on Y-USA's audience.



FITNESS FOCUSED FRAN

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS*:

68% 65% 34% 19% 15% 14%

*Channels are listed in order of frequency and percentages reflect the likelihood of use for this persona.

MIDDLE RING

Desired Consumer Action: Inbound conversation, participation with brand, trial

BIO

Fran loves food and struggled to maintain a healthy weight until she discovered exercise in her late 20s. Now fitness is part of her lifestyle. Fran and her husband both work full time. Her husband is a morning person and goes to the gym before sunrise. Fran prefers to exercise after work when she has more energy. They try to coordinate their workouts on the weekends.

NEEDS AND GOALS

- **Health:** Maintain her weight, strength and cardiovascular health
- **Variety:** She has some go-to workouts on the treadmill and elliptical, but likes to mix it up with new workout options
- **Comfort:** Fran wants to feel at ease at the gym. Hip music and trendy athleisurewear are not for her
- **Give Back:** She has reached a moderate level of success in her life that affords her a bit of time, money and experience to help others in her community

BARRIERS

- Fran is self-conscious and may lack the confidence to join in a program, new workout or volunteer opportunity if it feels intimidating or unwelcoming
- Fran and her husband do not have children at home and it can be difficult to meet and bond with others without the shared experience of parenting
- It is hard to justify the cost of a Y membership when it sometimes feels like she is only using the treadmill and elliptical machines. She can find a no-frills gym with that equipment for less money

BEHAVIORS

- Sticks to herself at the gym. She is friendly with the staff and recognizes many of the regulars, but she is there to focus on her workout
- She'd like to learn about ways to volunteer to help others in her community, but doesn't know how to get started

WHY SHE'S ON SOCIAL MEDIA

- To keep in touch with friends/family
- To find like minded communities
- To find inspiration
- To feel connected

WHAT SHE POSTS AND LIKES

- Updates from loved ones
- Viral/funny content
- Comments on posts from friends and family
- Photos from her daily life

ONLINE INTERESTS

- Food/recipes
- News/current events
- Gaming apps
- Crafts

EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Biking and hiking
- Food festivals
- Food markets
- Craft fairs

"The Y puts me at ease so that I can get in the zone."

THE SOCIAL MEDIA LANDSCAPE

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE OVERVIEW

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE BY AGE

According to the most recent data collected in 2021, Pew reported that 72% of the public uses at least one social media network. The following age groups use at least one social media network:

- 84% 18–29-year olds
- 82% 30–49 year olds
- 73% 50–64 year olds
- 45% 65+

MOST POPULAR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

According to data collected in 2021, Pew reported that 81% of all U.S. adults over the age of 18 are using YouTube; 69% are using Facebook; and 40% are using Instagram, while only 31% report using Pinterest; 23% are using Twitter; 28% LinkedIn; 25% Snapchat; 23% WhatsApp, and 18% Reddit.

DAILY USAGE

Among U.S. adults who use Facebook, 70% log in at least once a day. 59% of Instagram users log in daily, too.

USAGE IS HIGHER AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

Following are stats for users ages 18–29:

- 95% use YouTube
- 71% use Instagram
- 70% use Facebook
- 65% use Snapchat
- 42% use Twitter
- 36% use Reddit
- 32% use Pinterest
- 30% use LinkedIn
- 24% use WhatsApp

WHAT ABOUT TIKTOK?

Recent demographic data shows more than 60% of TikTok's audience is under the age of 34. This provides unique opportunities for Y camps and youth development programs to reach young people.

- As of January 2022, TikTok reports over 1 billion active users
  - The largest group is 10–19 years old (25%)
- Average time spent on TikTok per day: 89 minutes
- Nearly 40% of Gen Z say they're directly influenced by products and services they see on TikTok
- For context, Instagram has 2 billion active users
  - The largest group is 25–34 (31.2%), with 18–24 close behind at 31%
  - Average time spent on Instagram per day: 29 minutes

Learn more about updates on this emerging platform and how it could fit into your social media strategy.

Monthly active user (MAU) data, May 2020:

- Facebook: 253 million
- YouTube: 201.6 million
- Instagram: 107 million
- Twitter: 48.5 million
- Snapchat: 46 million
- TikTok: 37.2 million

LinkedIn does not disclose monthly active users, but reports 775 million total users both active and inactive.

U.S. SOCIAL NETWORK USER GROWTH, BY PLATFORM, 2020 & 2021

% change

	2020	2021
TikTok	87.1%	18.3%
Reddit*	25.9%	14.4%
Pinterest	7.8%	3.1%
LinkedIn**	6.2%	4.2%
Instagram	6.2%	3.7%
Snapchat***	4.0%	2.6%
Twitter	4.0%	0.2%
Facebook	3.3%	0.8%

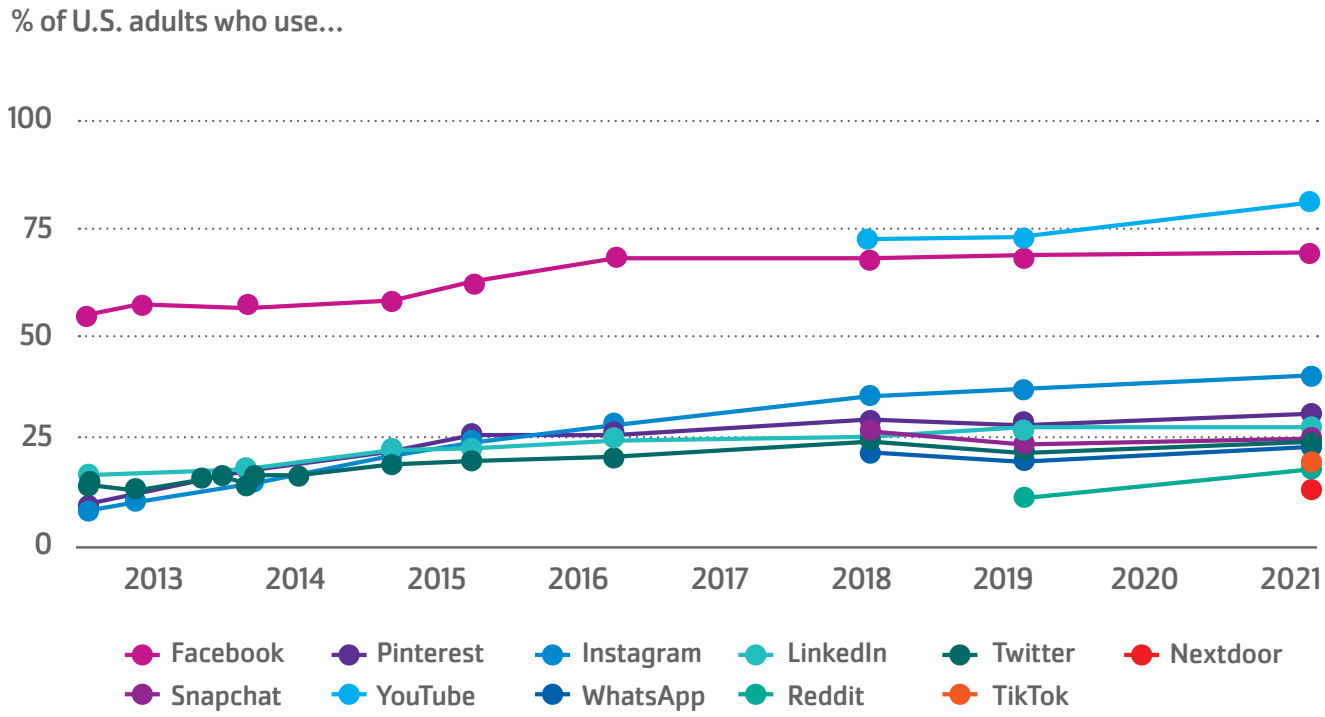
Note: internet users of any age who access their account via any device at least once per month.

*logged-in users
**internet users 18+ who access their LinkedIn account via any device at least once per month
***mobile phone users of any age who access their Snapchat account via mobile phone app at least once per month

266084 eMarketer | InsiderIntelligence.com

SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE OVERVIEW (CONT.)

Which social media platforms are most common?
YouTube and Facebook are the most widely used online platforms, and their user base is most widely representative of the population as a whole. Smaller shares of Americans use sites such as Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram and LinkedIn.



SOCIAL CHANNEL OVERVIEW

	FACEBOOK	INSTAGRAM	TWITTER	TIKTOK	LINKEDIN	YOUTUBE
CHANNEL STRENGTH	High reach, promotional and strategic targeting	Visual branding, personal	Real-time conversation	Entertainment hub, creator-focused video and culture, personal	Industry news & updates, build credibility, create a meaningful network	Video search engine, video distribution
CONTENT ROLE	Where to scale	Where to get noticed	Where to connect with culture	Where to entertain	Where to connect	Where to tell stories
KEY OPPORTUNITY	Featuring seasonal content, brand partnerships and company news	Partnering with influencers Showing what the Y experience is really like	Posting agile content Engaging with celebrities and other verified accounts	Partnering with creators to hype a trend and explore brand offerings Using trending sounds and video formats to relate to audience and show self-awareness	Building relationships Sharing brand story, organizational news	Post long-form video content Connect with your audience with meaningful stories Share educational videos that showcase the Y experience
COMMUNITY APPROACH	Light engagement & heavy customer care	Heavy engagement, proactive community engagement & customer care	Heavy engagement, proactive community engagement & heavy customer care	Light engagement, proactive community engagement	Light engagement	None
WAYS OF WORKING	Paid content, organic content, community management	Paid content, organic content, community management	Paid content, organic content, community management	Organic content, community management	Organic content	Paid content, organic content (as video content is developed)
PRIORITIZATION	Primary	Primary	Primary	Tactical	Tactical	Tactical
PRIMARY PERSONA AUDIENCE	Sal Fran Emily	Emily Shelly	Shelly	Emily Shelly	Shelly	Sal Fran Emily Shelly

STRATEGIES BY CHANNEL



We encourage you to use the following channel strategies as a guide for identifying a strategy that best fits your specific Y's social channels. The channel strategies in this playbook were developed primarily for Y-USA social channels but provide a structure and best-practice recommendations to reference when developing your Y's strategy.



NOT ALL CONTENT IS CREATED EQUAL

Cater to each platform and every audience

Create specific content for each individual platform. Audiences differ slightly platform to platform, as do best in class creative practices, so it's recommended to create content specific to each platform.

The message can be the same across all platforms but differ in delivery. For example, when sharing about afterschool programs:

- Use an afterschool promotional image on Facebook
- Post UGC* from your Y's afterschool program on Instagram
- Live tweet an image from an afterschool program while it's happening
- Share stories through the lens of the kids in the program on TikTok

*Note: Not finding UGC? Encourage your members, program participants, staff and volunteers to tag your Y (not @ymca) in their social posts.

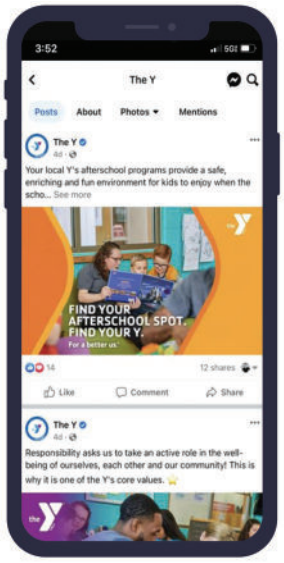
CONTENT PILLARS

The Y's content pillars can guide content and messaging across social media. It's important that you identify examples of how these pillars can reflect your efforts to curate content for individual platforms and consumer experiences.

	Y IMPACT	COMMUNITY	SUPPORT THE Y
FACEBOOK 	**Fitness at the Y** Share UGC fitness inspiration from members while taking advantage of platform tools such as Stories.	**Afterschool Programs** Share posts focused on afterschool programs. Reshare content from members.	**Volunteer Recruitment** Share website content and volunteer testimonials that encourage people to volunteer.
INSTAGRAM 	**Fitness at the Y** Share "day in the life" videos or fitness routines. Use platform tools, like Stories and Reels, to reshare content from Y classes.	**Afterschool Programs** Share UGC of afterschool activities.	**Volunteer Recruitment** Share UGC to Stories using platform features like stickers and links that direct people to volunteer opportunities.
TWITTER 	**Fitness at the Y** Share content for #FitnessFriday. Retweet and quote tweet posts by members sharing their fitness journey at your Y.	**Afterschool Programs** Reply to member posts about afterschool programs. Use platform best practices to engage both members and non-members in conversation about these programs.	**Volunteer Recruitment** Share, retweet and quote tweet inspirational stories and encourage people to explore volunteer opportunities.
TIKTOK 	**Fitness at the Y** Share instructional workouts using trending formats. Post entertaining, inspirational videos from members sharing their fitness journey.	**Afterschool Programs** Use platform tools like Duets and Stitches to engage with members' and non-members' content.	**Volunteer Recruitment** Share entertaining "day in the life" videos of volunteers to inspire viewers to volunteer at your Y.
LINKEDIN 	**Fitness at the Y** Share inspirational stories from members on the impact the Y can have.	**Afterschool Programs** Spotlight afterschool program successes and link to more information about these activities on your website.	**Volunteer Recruitment** Amplify blog articles from your website to encourage donations and volunteering.

FACEBOOK STRATEGY

The following was created for Y-USA, but can be repurposed for Ys. You are encouraged to set your own strategy, goals and cadence.



CHANNEL PURPOSE

Facebook will act as the main content hub. Be informative, promotional and focused on communicating with members, donors and volunteers.

PLATFORM STRENGTH

High reach and strategic targeting. With unmatched targeting capabilities, Facebook allows for the broadcasting of a tailored brand message.

ROLE OF CHANNEL

Drive mass reach and brand awareness. Facebook functions as a repository for all brand content.Drive brand awareness and engagement for specific demographics that aren't on other platforms. Support website traffic with link posts and activations.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE Y

Encourage the audience to connect with the brand. Feature evergreen and seasonal content, brand partnerships and organization news. Offer a chance to connect and gain a view into the lives of the audience by posting and replying regularly. Use platform tools like Stories and Reels to increase engagement and brand relevancy, encouraging the audience to become Y ambassadors.

CONTENT MIX

Use a healthy mix of organic and paid YMCA content, influencer content, as well as customer support to encourage the audience to become Y ambassadors.

CADENCE

Platform Best Practice: 1-2 posts/day, 5-10 posts/week

FACEBOOK CREATIVE BEST PRACTICES

Design for the speed of feed

- Mobile storytelling means hooking viewers early with native elements and having fast payoff. Don't bury the reward. Identify the action you'd like the user to take (simply enjoy, attend an event, sign up for camp, donate, etc.) and make sure that message is delivered within the first few seconds of the content experience. Example: if you want users to sign up for camp, your content and copy should immediately speak to that.
- Why? Users scroll 300 ft of content per day and viewers watch for average of six seconds before attention shifts. Early engagement is critical.

Integrate branding early

- Product, logo or the brand should take place in the first 1-3 seconds of a video.
- Why? 1.7 seconds is the average time spent with in-feed content on mobile. Thoughtfully integrated branding is proven to aid consumer recall.

Be cognizant of sound

- Video should be understood with sound off and delight with sound on for in-feed assets.
- Make sure video content is accessible for sound off environments as well; using closed-captions is a great way to do this. To turn on auto-generated captions, go into your advance settings in the app and toggle "show captions" option.
- Why? 85% of feed videos are seen sound off. 70% of Stories videos are seen sound on.
- To offer that delight with sound off, focus on strong visuals and a clear story.

Frame to fill the screen

- Take advantage of as much phone screen real estate as possible.
- Why? Vertical videos tend to have 90% higher completion rates.

FACEBOOK SPECS

IMAGES

Design Recommendations

- File Type: JPG or PNG
- Ratio: 1.91:1 to 1:1
- Resolution: At least 1080 x 1080 pixels

Text Recommendations

- Primary Text: 125 characters
- Headline: 40 characters
- Description: 30 characters

Technical Requirements

- Maximum File Size: 30MB
- Minimum Width: 600 pixels
- Minimum Height: 600 pixels
- Aspect Ratio Tolerance: 3%

VIDEOS

Design Recommendations

- File Type: MP4, MOV or GIF
- Ratio: 1:1 (for desktop or mobile) or 4:5 (for mobile only)
- Video Settings: H.264 compression, square pixels, fixed frame rate, progressive scan and stereo AAC audio compression at 128kbps+
- Resolution: At least 1080 x 1080 pixels
- Video Captions: recommended
- Video Sound: recommended

Text Recommendations

- Primary Text: 125 characters
- Headline: 40 characters
- Description: 30 characters

Technical Requirements

- Video Duration: 1 second to 241 minutes (recommended to keep length under 1 minute)
- Maximum File Size: 4GB
- Minimum Width: 120 pixels
- Minimum Height: 120 pixels

STORIES

Design Recommendations

- File Type: MP4, MOV or GIF
- Ratio: 9:16
- Video Settings: H.264 compression, square pixels, fixed frame rate, progressive scan and stereo AAC audio compression at 128kbps+
- Resolution: At least 1080 x 1080 pixels
- Video Captions: recommended
- Video Sound: recommended

Technical Requirements

- Video Duration: 15 seconds per story
- Maximum File Size: 4GB
- Minimum Width: 500 pixels
- Aspect Ratio Tolerance: 1%

CAROUSEL

Design Recommendations

- File Type: JPG or PNG
- File Type: MP4, MOV or GIF
- Ratio: 1:1
- Resolution: At least 1080 x 1080 pixels

Text Recommendations

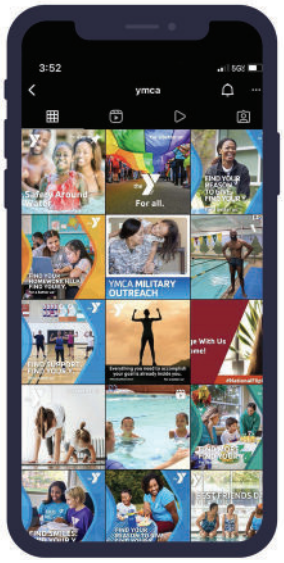
- Primary Text: 125 characters
- Headline: 40 characters
- Description: 20 characters
- Landing Page URL: Required

Technical Requirements

- Number of Carousel Cards: 2 to 10
- Image Maximum File Size: 30MB
- Video Maximum File Size: 4GB
- Video Duration: 1 second to 240 minutes
- Aspect Ratio Tolerance: 3%

INSTAGRAM STRATEGY

The following was created for Y-USA, but can be repurposed for Ys. You are encouraged to set your own strategy, goals and cadence.



CHANNEL PURPOSE

Instagram provides the opportunity to engage and inspire your audience through visual-based storytelling, connecting with the brand and offering stories that connect the brand with people's interests and passions.

PLATFORM STRENGTH

Visual branding. Instagram is the portal through which you use engaging visuals to share personal stories to engage and inspire your audience.

ROLE OF CHANNEL

Connect through the Y experience. Connect with your audience through educational, volunteer and membership opportunities and brand awareness, as well as by regularly posting, replying and DM'ing with your community.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE Y

Engage your audience through visual branding and personable connection. Use platform tools, such as Stories and Reels, to increase engagement and brand relevancy, while connecting with and building relationships with influencers, encouraging them to become Y ambassadors.

CONTENT MIX

Use a healthy mix of organic and paid YMCA content, influencer content, as well as customer support to encourage your audience to become Y ambassadors.

CADENCE

Platform Best Practice: 1-2 posts/day, 5-10 posts/week

INSTAGRAM CREATIVE BEST PRACTICES

Design for the speed of feed

- Mobile storytelling means hooking viewers early with native elements and having fast payoff. Don't bury the reward. Identify the action you'd like the user to take (simply enjoy, attend an event, sign up for camp, donate, etc.) and make sure that message is delivered within the first few seconds of the content experience. Example: if you want users to sign up for camp, your content and copy should immediately speak to that.
- Why? Users scroll 300ft of content per day and viewers watch for average of six seconds before attention shifts. Early engagement is critical.

Integrate branding early

- Product, logo, or the brand should take place in the first 1-3 seconds of a video.
- Why? 1.7 seconds is the average time spent with in-feed content on mobile. Thoughtfully integrated branding is proven to aid consumer recall.

Be cognizant of sound

- Video should be understood with sound off and delight with sound on for in-feed assets.
- Make sure video content is accessible for sound off environments as well; using closed-captions is a great way to do this. To turn on auto-generated captions, go into your advance settings in the app and toggle "show captions" option.
- Why? 85% of feed videos are seen sound off. 70% of Stories videos are seen sound on.
- To offer that delight with sound off, focus on strong visuals and a clear story.

Frame to fill the screen

- Take advantage of as much phone screen real estate as possible.
- Why? Vertical videos tend to have 90% higher completion rates.

INSTAGRAM SPECS

IMAGES

Design Recommendations

- File Type: JPG or PNG
- Ratio: 1:1
- Resolution: At least 1080 x 1080 pixels

Text Recommendations

- Primary Text: 125 characters
- Maximum Number of Hashtags: 30
- Recommended Number of Hashtags: 3

Technical Requirements

- Maximum File Size: 30MB
- Minimum Width: 600 pixels
- Minimum Height: 600 pixels
- Aspect Ratio Tolerance: 3%

VIDEOS

Design Recommendations

- File Type: MP4, MOV or GIF
- Ratio: 1:1 or 4:5
- Resolution: At least 1080 x 1080 pixels
- Video Captions: Optional, but recommended
- Video Sound: Optional, but recommended
- Videos should not contain edit lists or special boxes in file containers

Text Recommendations

- Primary Text: 125 characters
- Maximum Number of Hashtags: 30
- Recommended Number of Hashtags: 1

Technical Requirements

- Video Duration: 1 second to 60 seconds (60 minutes to convert to IGTV)
- Maximum File Size: 250MB
- Minimum Width: 500 pixels

STORIES

Design Recommendations

- File Type: MP4, MOV or GIF
- Ratio: 9:16
- Video Settings: H.264 compression, square pixels, fixed frame rate, progressive scan and stereo AAC audio compression at 128kbps+
- Resolution: At least 1080 x 1080 pixels
- Video Captions: recommended
- Video Sound: recommended

Technical Requirements

- Video Duration: 15 seconds per story
- Maximum File Size: 250MB
- Minimum Width: 500 pixels
- Aspect Ratio Tolerance: 1%

CAROUSEL

Design Recommendations

- Image File Type: JPG or PNG
- Video File Type: MP4, MOV or GIF
- Ratio: 1:1
- Resolution: At least 1080 x 1080 pixels

Text Recommendations

- Primary Text: 125 characters
- Maximum Number of Hashtags: 30
- Recommended Number of Hashtags: 1

Technical Requirements

- Number of Carousel Cards: 2 to 10
- Image Maximum File Size: 30MB
- Video Maximum File Size: 4GB
- Video Duration: 1 second to 2 minutes
- Aspect Ratio Tolerance: 1%

TWITTER STRATEGY

The following was created for Y-USA, but can be repurposed for Ys. You are encouraged to set your own strategy, goals and cadence.



CHANNEL PURPOSE

Twitter is the place to have in the moment fun and proactively seek out timely opportunities. Twitter users are fairly welcoming of brand interactions. Adopt quick responses to keep up with the fast- moving timeline.

PLATFORM STRENGTH

Real-time conversation. Twitter is your window into current cultural, branded and personal moments and conversation through heavy community management and interest-based content.

ROLE OF CHANNEL

Connect with your community through real-time conversation. Drive brand awareness and education, while identifying moments to connect with your audience through social listening and participating in agile moments.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE Y

Drive brand relevancy and engagement by talking with celebrities and/or other verified accounts. Use social listening and consumer insight into audience passion points to drive familiarity and spark connection. Find trending moments to utilize in one to many proactive plays.

CONTENT MIX

A healthy mix of YMCA organic content, conversational tweets, UGC and customer support.

CADENCE

Platform Best Practice: 2-3 posts/day, 10-15 posts/week

TWITTER CREATIVE BEST PRACTICES

Keep your Tweet copy short and sweet

- The best performing Tweets are only 50-100 characters.
- Make sure your Tweet is simple, gets straight to the point, and focuses on one clear message. If you have more to say, do so visually or drive people to click-through to your landing page for more information.

Include a strong call-to-action

- Be clear and straightforward with your desired action and explicitly say "follow us", "click to read more" or "reply with your favorite [insert here]."
- This practice is especially important for follower and engagement campaigns, but is a best practice for all campaign objectives.

Incorporate strong visuals

- 97% of people focus on visuals on Twitter so it's important that yours is eye-catching and features your key message.
- Avoid text heavy images.
- Keep videos to 15 seconds or less.
- When driving to a link, consider using a Website Button to make your image or video clickable. You'll setup a Website Card to do this!
- Use captions or another "sound-off strategy" for videos with dialogue.

Other tips to keep in mind

- Limit hashtags to 1-2 per Tweet.
- Avoid writing copy in all-caps.
- Keep a conversational tone.
- Consider using emojis to add emotion.

TWITTER SPECS

TEXT TWEETS

Tweet copy:

- 280 characters

(Note: each link used reduces character count by 23 characters, electing 257 characters for Twitter copy.)

IMAGE TWEETS

Tweet copy:

- 280 characters

(Note: each link used reduces character count by 23 characters, electing 257 characters for Twitter copy.)

File types:

- PNG and JPEG are recommended BMP or TIFF files are not recommended
- Note: GIFs uploaded will render as a static image

File size:

- Max 5MB
- Image size:
- 1200 x 1200 pixels is recommended for 1:1 aspect ratio. 1200 x 628 pixels is recommended for 1.91:1 aspect ratio. Larger images will be better optimized for when users click to expand images
- Aspect ratio: 1.91:1 or 1:1. Please note that the legacy composer supports any aspect ratio between 2:1 and 1:1

VIDEO TWEETS

Tweet copy:

- 280 characters

(Note: each link used reduces character count by 23 characters, electing 257 characters for Twitter copy.)

File types:

- MP4 or MOV

File size:

- 1 GB max. For optimal performance we strongly recommend to keep files under 30 MB.

Video length:

- 15 seconds or less is recommended. Up to 2:20 is supported.

Captions:

- Closed captioning or text overlays are mandatory

Video bitrate:

- 6,000 – 10,000k (recommended 6,000k) for 1080p. 5,000k – 8,000k (recommended 5,000k) for 720p

Frame rate:

- 29.97FPS or 30FPS. Higher is acceptable (support up to 60FPS). If the available video has a lower frame rate don't try to "upsample" it

Thumbnail

- Supported files: PNG or JPEG
- Aspect ratio: recommend matching sizing of the video
- Max size: 5MB

Looping:

- Videos will loop if the video length is under 60 seconds.

Video size:

- 1200 x 1200 pixels is recommended for 1:1 aspect ratio. 1920 x 1080 pixels is recommended for 16:9 aspect ratio. Larger videos will be better optimized for when users click to expand videos.
- Aspect ratio: 16:9 or 1:1. Please note that the legacy composer supports any aspect ratio between 2:1 and 1:1.

Audio codec:

- AAC LC (low complexity)
- Video codec recommendation: H264, Baseline, Main, or High Profile with a 4:2:0 color space

TIKTOK STRATEGY

The following was created for Y-USA, but can be repurposed for Ys. You are encouraged to set your own strategy, goals and cadence.



CHANNEL PURPOSE

TikTok is an entertainment platform, focused on conversational, timely, short-form videos. Here, you'll be able to connect with your community through shared passion points, humor and trends.

PLATFORM STRENGTH

Entertainment Hub. TikTok is your connection to creative culture. TikTok is the premier destination for short-form mobile videos with added emphasis on entertainment-focused creative content and authenticity.

ROLE OF CHANNEL

Celebrate and encourage your audience to find their Y. Amplify your communities, programs and existing trends through entertainment-first content that celebrates your audience and encourages them to find their purpose/passion and areas of joy (their Y).

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE Y

Create meaningful connections and Y ambassadors through self-aware content leaning into platform features and community points of interest. Partner with TikTok creators and repurpose UGC to hype a trend and explore brand offerings. Provide 1:1 engagement on relevant trending videos.

CONTENT MIX

A healthy mix of YMCA organic content, UGC and influencer content, as well as customer support, while encouraging your audience to become Y ambassadors.

CADENCE

Platform Best Practice: 2 posts/week, 8-10 posts/month
Heavy community management: 2 hours/day

TIKTOK CREATIVE BEST PRACTICES

Create with vertical video in mind

- To maximize user and brand experience, all video assets should blend seamlessly into typical organic content on TikTok. Meaning, utilize TikTok's text overlay captions, filters, etc.

Start with a high-impact visual

- Be aware that users can quickly swipe to the next video unless there's a clear hook for them to keep watching. More times than not, the moments a brand can find a lot of success on TikTok is a result of tapping into cultural trends and viral moments.

Design with a sound on environment in mind

- All TikTok videos automatically play with sound on, and no captions or subtitles are required. However, closed-captions are encouraged for accessibility purposes.

Write concise and informative captions

- Users may not finish watching the entire video, so be sure to include critical information within the caption.

Include a strong call-to-action

- If you want users to perform a specific action, use the caption to clearly direct them to do so.

Brand Compliance Note

While TikTok content development and access to brand compliant fonts are available through Canva, Canva does not allow the use of many of the features that make TikToks so engaging. Since Y brand fonts are unavailable through the TikTok app for now, you can use the available font of your choice when editing within TikTok.

TIKTOK SPECS

VIDEOS

Aspect Ratio

- 9:16

Video Resolution

- Resolution must be ≥540*960px, ≥640*640px, or ≥960*540px

File Type

- .mp4, .mov, .mpeg, .3gp, or .avi

Video Duration

- 5–60 seconds allowed. Short videos of 9–15 seconds are recommended

Bit Rate

- ≥516 kbps

File Size

- ≤500 MB

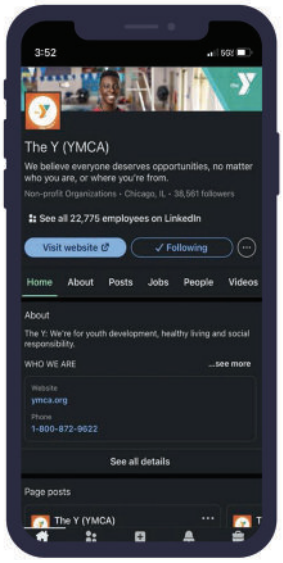
COPY

Descriptions

- 1–100 character length
- Emojis, "{}" and "#" cannot appear in the description
- Punctuations and spaces will also occupy characters
- Depending on phone model and operating system, longer text can be at risk for not showing completely on the screen display

LINKEDIN STRATEGY

The following was created for Y-USA, but can be repurposed for Ys. You are encouraged to set your own strategy, goals and cadence.



CHANNEL PURPOSE

LinkedIn is your news and updates hub, driving shareable content that consistently tells the brand story, highlights the Y community and spotlights organizational news.

PLATFORM STRENGTH

Industry news and updates. LinkedIn gives your audience the chance to catch up on the business side of the Y.

ROLE OF CHANNEL

Share Y news and updates. Push member, donor and volunteer advocacy. Produce recruitment campaigns and lead generation, share organization news and updates and provide campaign support.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE Y

Help your audience further connect with your Y. Build relationships with your audience and share brand stories that further help your audience connect.

CONTENT MIX

Share content organic to your Y, which can include third party content and UGC that mentions your Y, or the Y Movement in the U.S.

CADENCE

Platform Best Practice: 1 post/day, 5 posts/week

LINKEDIN CREATIVE BEST PRACTICES

Join the conversation

- Organizations that post weekly see a 2x lift in engagement with their content.

Aim to include an image or video in your posts

- Images typically result in a 2x higher comment rate. LinkedIn has seen custom image collages (3–4 images in one post) perform especially well for organizations.
- Video gets 5x more engagement on LinkedIn compared to other content.

Showcase what makes your brand unique

- Upload PDFs or PowerPoints to showcase what makes your brand unique. Social audiences respond best to behind-the-scenes stories that highlight your Y's unique culture and values.

Re-share posts where your Y is @mentioned

- Highlight the best of your brand by re-sharing mentions from employees, executives and key customers.

Reach new, relevant audiences with your content

- Hashtags are a great way to expose your brand to a wider audience. Identify 3-5 hashtags that are top of mind for your Y, or that are relevant to the content being posted, and add them to your posts when relevant.

LINKEDIN SPECS

IMAGE POSTS

Design Recommendations

- File Type: JPG or PNG
- File Size: 5 MB
- Image Ratio: 1.91:1 (horizontal, desktop and mobile) 1:1 (square, desktop and mobile) 1:1.91 (vertical, mobile only)

Text Recommendations

- Headline: 70 characters Introductory text: 150 characters

VIDEOS

Design Recommendations

- Video File Type: MP4
- Video Sound Format: AAC or MPEG4
- Recommended Frame Rate: 30 frames per second
- Custom Thumbnail: Optional but recommended
- Ratio: 16:9 (landscape; 1.78) 1:1 (square; 1.0) 9:16 (vertical; 0.57

Text Recommendations

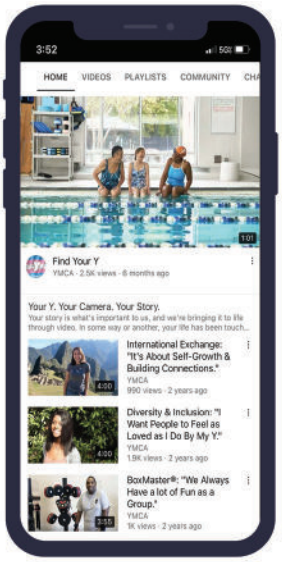
- Headline: 70 characters Introductory text: 150 characters
- Introductory text: 150 characters

Technical Requirements

- Maximum File Size: 30MB
- Minimum Width: 600 pixels
- Minimum Height: 600 pixels
- Aspect Ratio Tolerance: 3%

YOUTUBE STRATEGY

The following was created for Y-USA, but can be repurposed for Ys. You are encouraged to set your own strategy, goals and cadence.



CHANNEL PURPOSE

YouTube is the video content hub. This platform is the place for "edu-tainment," content that is both educational and entertaining.

PLATFORM STRENGTH

Video Library. YouTube is where you tell stories. The platform is the best place for entertaining and educational videos that can drive reach.

ROLE OF CHANNEL

Connect with your community through storytelling. Share short or long-form content to drive reach. Connect with your audience by sharing meaningful stories that are relevant and personable.

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE Y

Drive deeper storytelling by tapping into YouTube's targeting capabilities. Tell stories from your community that successfully show your Y's impact. Share videos that showcase the Y experience. Conduct social listening to understand what the audience wants to see.

CONTENT MIX

On YouTube, you should only share owned YMCA content, which can include stories from your Y, members and nationwide Y initiatives.

CADENCE

Platform Best Practice: 1 upload/week, 4–5 uploads/month

YOUTUBE CREATIVE BEST PRACTICES

Build for attention

- Using an emerging story arc is key to hooking viewers in a video's opening moments. Start fast and keep an upbeat pace to your story to capture and retain your audience's attention.

Build for mobile

- Use tighter framing, faster pacing, large-type supers, brightness and contrast to make sure that your video is visible on a small screen.
- The amount of global watch time that happens on mobile devices is 70%.

Build for sound on

- Leverage the power of audio elements — such as music, dialogue, and sound effects – to complement and reinforce what is happening on screen.
- 95% of of video watched on YouTube that is played with sound on.

Connect with the audience

- Use functional and/or emotional messages. Lean into emotional levers like action, humor and intrigue. Make people core to the story.

YOUTUBE SPECS

VIDEOS

Video Guidelines

- Recommended dimensions: 426 x 240 (240p), 640 x 360 (360p), 854 x 480 (480p), 1280 x 720 (720p), 1920 x 1080 (1080p), 2560 x 1440 (1440p) and 3840 x 2160 (2160p)
- Aspect ratio is 16:9 (auto adds pillarboxing if 4:3)
- Max file size is 128GB or 12 hours, whichever is less
- Accepted video formats include: .MOV, .MPEG4, MP4, .AVI, .WMV, .MPEGPS, .FLV, 3GPP, and WebM
- Video length max is 12 hours

CAPTIONS

Design Recommendations

- Video File Type: MP4
- Video Sound Format: AAC or MPEG4
- Recommended Frame Rate: 30 frames per second
- Custom Thumbnail: Optional but recommended
- Ratio: 16:9 (landscape; 1.78) 1:1 (square; 1.0) 9:16 (vertical; 0.57)

Text Recommendations

- Headline: 70 characters
- Introductory Text: 150 characters

Technical Requirements

- Video File Size: 75 KB (min) – 200 MB (max)
- Video Duration: 3 seconds – 30 minutes
- Video Captions (optional, but recommended): Video sound file size less than 64 KHz

GENERAL SEO

SEO Guidelines

- Tag your video with popular keywords that relate to your topic
- Categorize your video
- Upload a custom thumbnail image for your video's result link
- Use an SRT file to add subtitles and closed captions

BEST PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT

This section covers best practices for optimizing your social media accounts and for creating effective social media content.

ACCOUNT SET UP

Account Verification

Verifying your account with each social media platform gives your audience a sense that they've arrived in the right place. Each platform has its own instructions for verifying accounts:

- Facebook
- YouTube
- Instagram
- Twitter
- Pinterest
- LinkedIn
- TikTok

MAKING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS EASIER TO FIND

If you're looking to grow your social media audiences, these tips will improve your Y's findability on social media:

- [ ] Make sure the name of your Y is written out consistently across your social media profiles and your website. This makes it easier for people to search for your Y on their preferred social media platform.
- [ ] Link directly to your social media accounts from the homepage of your website with corresponding icons, if possible (see example below):
- [ ] Link to your social media accounts from signatures in staff emails.



- [ ] Link to accounts from email newsletters.

DUPLICATE ACCOUNTS

In our review of Y social media accounts, the automatic creation of pages by Facebook and LinkedIn based on brick and mortar locations was a common issue. These are pages that your members end up checking into and leaving reviews on.

Occasionally, this results in duplicate profiles. Search on social media platforms to see if your Y has any duplicate accounts. If your Y uses multiple names, such as official name and a colloquial or DBA name, check for each name.

- **Facebook:** How to Merge Duplicate Accounts
- **LinkedIn:** How to Merge Duplicate Accounts

Currently, it is not possible to merge YouTube, Instagram or Twitter accounts.

PREPARING FOR STAFF TRANSITIONS

Another common reason for duplicate accounts is getting locked out of an account that was managed by staff who have left.

We recommend keeping a log of usernames and passwords for your social media accounts and developing standard operating procedures for transitioning accounts when staff leave.

A social media management tool can make it easy to grant and revoke account access to others.

ANATOMY OF A WELL-OPTIMIZED TWITTER OR INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT

Both are relatively simple in their set up. Each features a short bio, a link back to your website and a profile photo. Twitter also features a cover image. Because consistency is key to brand awareness, confirm that your profile is complete and identical to the bios and profile images across all social media accounts.

Converting your Instagram account to a brand account has added advantages, like giving you the ability to add business hours, location and phone number if relevant. Set Up an Instagram Business Account.

BEST PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT (CONT.)

ANATOMY OF A WELL-OPTIMIZED FACEBOOK PAGE

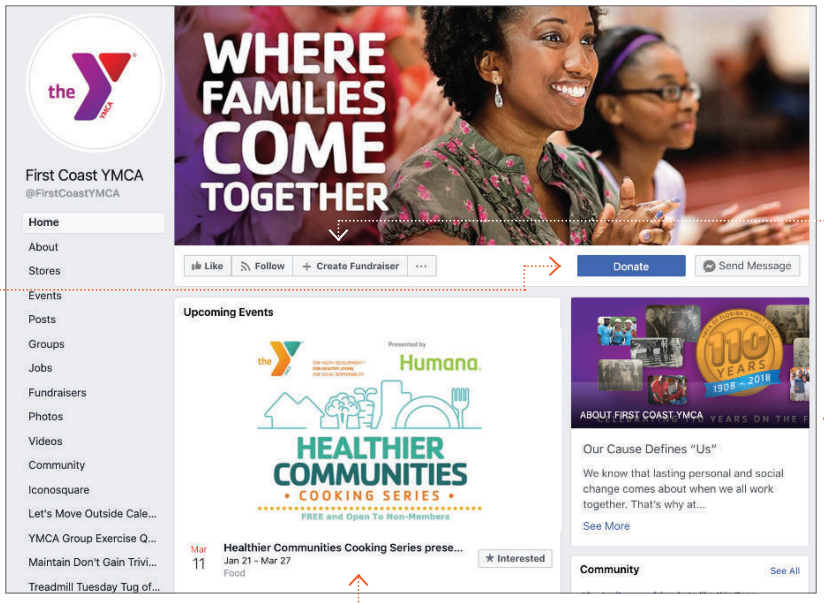
A Compelling cover image with branded messaging

B Donate call to action button*

C Individuals can create fundraisers

D Attractive image under "About" section

E Well-branded Facebook Events



***Note:** a Y has to be using Facebook fundraisers to feature this button; there are pros and cons. Learn more.

BEST PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT (CONT.)

ANATOMY OF A WELL-OPTIMIZED YOUTUBE CHANNEL

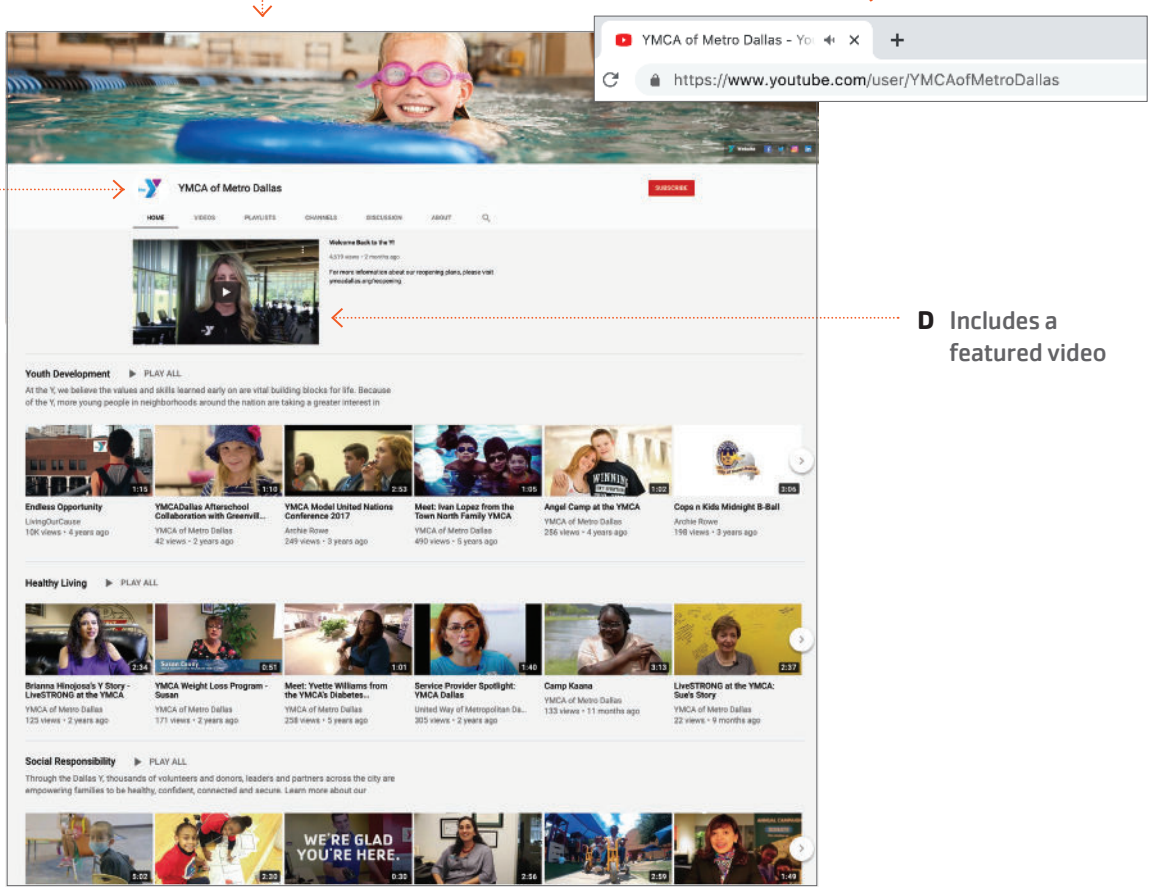
A Eye-grabbing banner image that links back to website and other social media channels

B Has a custom URL: https://www.youtube.com/user/YMCAofMetroDallas

C Branded profile photo /avatar that fits nicely within the circular frame (logo, in this case)

D Includes a featured video

E Features thematic playlists



YouTube Accounts vs. Brand Channels

Are you wondering how to get a custom URL and take advantage of these other great YouTube features? YouTube brand accounts are free and open up additional features that your Y can take advantage of.

- How to Migrate YouTube Channel to Brand Account

BEST PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT (CONT.)

ANATOMY OF A WELL-OPTIMIZED LINKEDIN PAGE

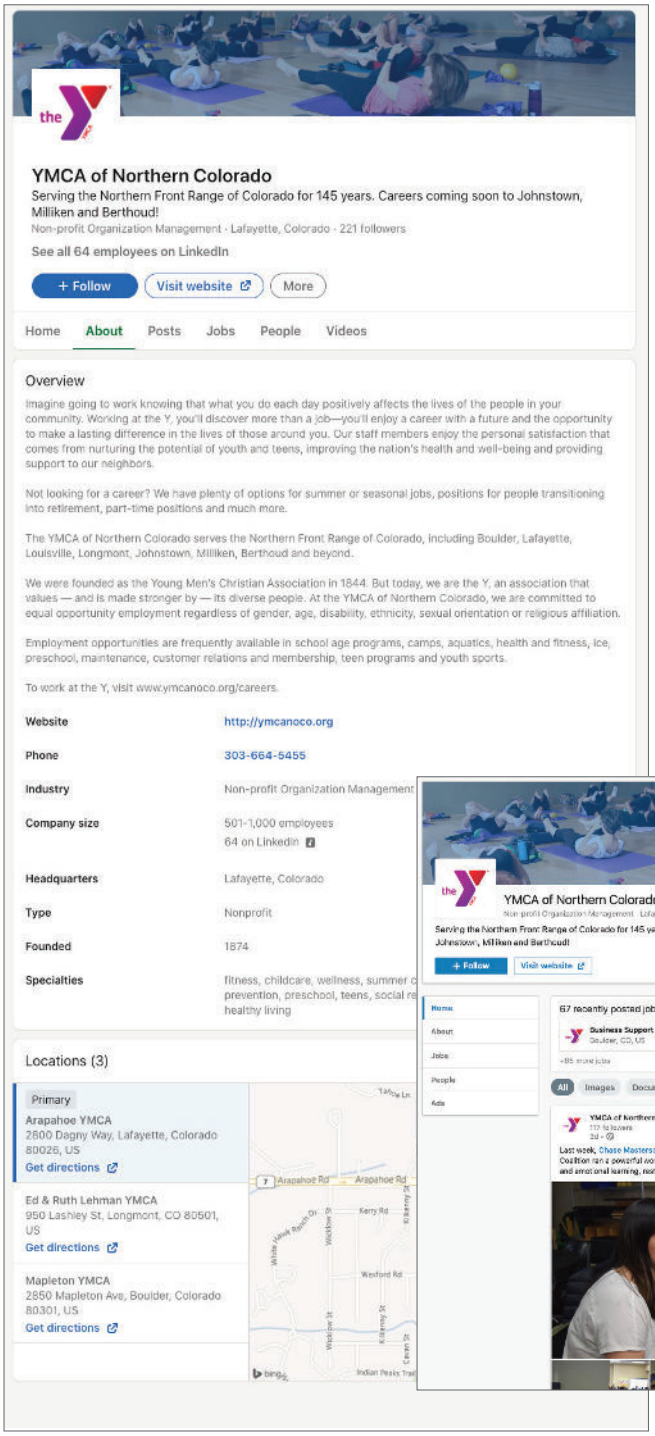
A Attractive cover image

B Complete "About" page

C Links to website

D All informational fields are filled out

E Each of their locations is listed



F Multiple job listings

G Recent posts

H Well-optimized posts with attractive photography

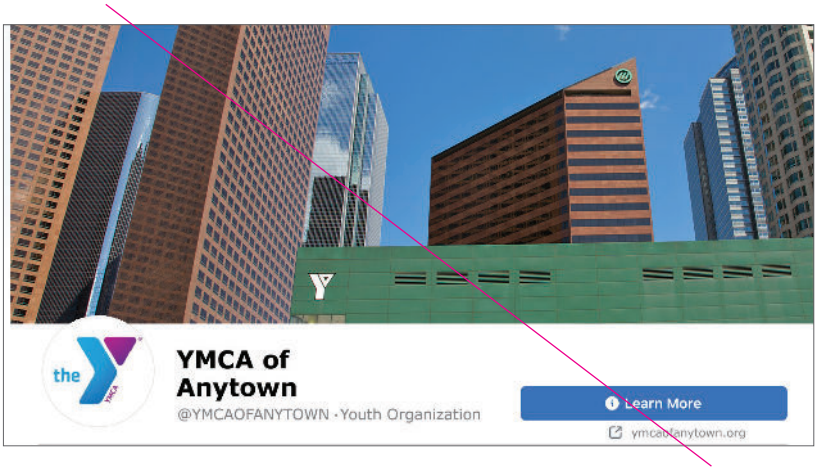
BEST PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT (CONT.)

COVER IMAGES: DOS AND DON'TS



GOOD COVER IMAGES

- Treat this space like a free banner advertisement
- Are eye catching and have a clear point of focus that your eye is drawn to
- Use Y branded colors and fonts
- Support campaigns and initiatives
- Make audiences excited to become a member or participate in a program
- Are changed regularly
- Are labeled with a photo caption and a link to your website or a campaign landing page (on Facebook only)



BAD COVER IMAGES

- Are missing
- Are updated infrequently
- Feature out of season imagery
- Feature uninspiring photography of buildings
- Feature poor lighting
- Don't tell your Y's story

PROFILE IMAGES: DOS AND DON'TS

A good profile pictures helps someone searching for your Y on Facebook, Twitter, etc. identify your account. In search results, your profile photo may appear small, so using a Y logo will ensure that people searching for your Y know they have located the correct page.

GOOD PROFILE PHOTOS

- Feature a Y logo (download logos here on the BRC)
- Are in color and allow proper clearspace*

*See the Brand Graphics Guide on the BRC for directions on clear space.

BAD PROFILE PHOTOS

- Feature a version of the logo that contains the name of your Y (the name always appears next to the profile photo)
- Feature a photo of a building, a stock photo, or a tagline
- Feature a black and white Y logo

BEST PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT (CONT.)

SOCIAL MEDIA BIOS

When is the last time you reviewed the bio copy for your Y's social media accounts?

Using a consistent bio across each one is a best practice from a brand consistency standpoint and it improves the credibility of your account.

Set a reminder to check your bios periodically so that you don't forget.

SOCIAL MEDIA POST LENGTH

Posts that contain 40 characters or less earn 86% more engagement, according to Sprout Social.

Why is this the case? Many social media users are reading posts from a mobile phone and are scrolling through many posts in a news feed. Capturing their attention with clear, concise messages is critical to getting them to do what you'd like them to do, whether that's engaging with your content or taking a desired action.

If you are sharing a call to give, for example, burying your ask in the fourth paragraph below a link almost certainly reduces the chance anyone will take the desired action (clicking and giving).

Do you feel like a post is too short? Use that opportunity to drive traffic to a page on your website where a reader could get more information and maybe explore more content on your website.

PHOTOS AND GRAPHICS BEST PRACTICES

Every social media post should include a large, attractive graphic or photo. Following are some best practices to keep in mind when creating social media content:

Do

- Use high quality photos and graphics that grab attention. Make sure that the eye is drawn to a particular point in the picture rather than bouncing all around.
- Include a graphic or photo with every post. We saw many posts in our review that were missing images.
- Make sure your graphic or photo is sized correctly for each social media platform.
  - Guide to image sizes by platform
- Make sure your graphic or photo supports your message.

Don't

- Post a flyer to a social media network. It will be difficult to read on a mobile device.
- Crop off heads or sponsor logos. This is often the result of not sizing the image correctly for each platform.

CONTENT MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

BEST PRACTICES FOR CONTENT PLANNING AND CROSS-TEAM COLLABORATION

70% of Y survey respondents cited lack of time as their biggest roadblock to success. There are a number of tools and strategies that will help you be time-efficient and strategic.

REASONS TO CREATE A SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT PLAN

- Helps get staff on the same page about what's coming up
- Makes it easier to decide what to delegate to others
- Takes the mystery out of what to post and when to post it
- Reserves time slots on your calendar for recurring content (e.g., every Friday is Fan Photo Friday or every third Thursday of the month is a a call to action for volunteers)
- Allows you to plan predictable content ahead of time so you can respond to anything new or unexpected more nimbly
- Helps you remember to ask people to do the things you'd like them to do
- Lets you look back over what you did at the end of the year to help plan the next year

YMCA CALENDAR AND TOOLKITS

- Calendar on Link.
  - Created by the Y-USA Public Relations team, this calendar outlines the holidays, awareness weeks or months and initiatives that we celebrate across the Movement
- Marketing Community on Link. Look for toolkits, announcements and discussions with your marketing and communications peers throughout the Movement

COACHING SOCIAL MEDIA TEAMS

No matter the size of your Y, organizing a team or teams to create social media content is a good strategy. Here are testimonials from Ys on how they are able to capture content across many branches and programs successfully:

Centralized Marketing Team

"[For our Y], creative and design components come out of a centralized marketing team. We make sure that our team is supporting local members in their community with good content. For campaigns, holidays, fundraising, big events across the association, we create or post the content so we have a consistent look and feel; so that it feels like one Y."

On the Ground Teams

"Yearly, I do workshops with 15-person teams. This is an in-depth workshop where we review their content calendar for the next quarter. I coach our team through biweekly emails about how often they should be posting and what best practices are.

I do this in a way that doesn't smother anyone. Through face-to-face time I have earned their trust. I'm open, I'm approachable, because there's often friction between on-the-ground staff and 'corporate' staff. It takes time. Sometimes people will push. I let teams take control and take ownership and serve in a guiding and supporting role."

COLLABORATIVE SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT PLANNING

Even if your team is smaller than the team described in the example, there are many benefits to planning social media content in a group, particularly if you are having a difficult time getting content in a timely manner.

Hosting quarterly content planning meetings gives your team a way to think about what's coming up at your Y and promote better collaboration. A monthly check-up will help you assess whether anything in the plan needs to be adjusted.

At these meetings, you may invite people who own the vision and business goals for your Y, such as executives; marketing, communications and fundraising staff; and people who are regularly on the ground with members and prospective members who understand their questions and feedback.

Use the template on page 56 to plan by month using the personas (page 20), holidays, areas of impact, fundraising, membership and other content buckets to spark ideas.

BEST PRACTICES FOR CONTENT PLANNING AND CROSS-TEAM COLLABORATION (CONT.)

GUIDELINES FOR PLANNING AS A GROUP

- **Plan topics, not social media content.** Focusing on the topics you'd like to discuss makes it easier to adapt content across communications platforms such as your website, email newsletters and social media platforms. It keeps meetings short, preventing you from getting stuck on the logistics of creating a specific post. It also makes it easier to plot social media content on a calendar.
- **Brainstorm, then edit.** It's easy to erase something off of a plan if you don't have time, but hard to come up with ideas in the first place. Your content planning session should focus on brainstorming.
- **Use cloud-based tools.** Keeping your social media plan in the cloud using a tool like Google Sheets or Airtable makes it easier to share a plan across people or teams. It also makes it simple to look back at your plan the next year.
- **Keep all parts of the member journey in mind.** Members go through a few phases of decision-making when considering whether or not to join a Y or participate in a program or service.

OTHER BEST PRACTICES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT PLANNING

FEEL – THINK – DO

Social media content should engage members and prospective members at each point in the member decision-making journey.

- **FEEL:** Someone becomes aware of your Y or a program or service and feels motivated and excited to check it out. This content uses visuals, videos, humor and heartstrings to support them at this stage in their journey.
- **THINK:** Someone considers whether or not they are able to join or participate. Member reviews, answers to frequently asked questions, statistics, facts and thought leadership all support a them at this stage in their journey.
- **DO:** Clear calls to action to "join," "sign up," "volunteer," etc. tell your audience specifically what you'd like them to do.
- **LOYALTY:** User-generated content, such as member stories and photos or engagement campaigns that encourage your audience to create and share, can turn happy members into champions for your Y.

Looking at your last ten social media posts, how many would you characterize as focused on FEEL, THINK, DO or LOYALTY? What might be missing from your current social media plan?

DECIDING HOW MUCH CONTENT TO PLAN

When working together to create a content plan, it's helpful to understand how much content to plan. Refer to the cadence section for each channel on pages 33–44.

CONTENT PILLARS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING

CONTENT PILLARS		
Y IMPACT (Who We Are)	**COMMUNITY (Get Involved)**	**SUPPORT THE Y (Donate)**
OBJECTIVE: Continue to build and grow authentic social media awareness among your key target audiences	**OBJECTIVE:** Engage in conversations around topics that are important to your audience	**OBJECTIVE:** Spark actions that help increase public interest for the Y and inspire advocates
Storytelling on a brand level Telling the impact stories	Build engagement with members for added social clout and brand love Celebrate and share UGC Encouraging non members to get involved	Create link between inspirational content and straightforward involvement opportunities

CONTENT PILLARS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING (CONT.)

Y IMPACT

OBJECTIVE

Who we are

Continue to build and grow authentic social media awareness among your key target audiences

Youth development

- A day in the life at camp, back to school routines, after school content across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram
- Weekly meal plan Instagram story series, easy recipe TikTok videos

CONTENT MIX & EXAMPLES

Fitness

- Fitness Friday inspiration across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, quick instructional TikTok videos

Seasonal Content (daily/weekly/monthly celebrations)

- Honoring Pride Month, Week of the Young Child, Black History Month, etc. with weekly posts across Facebook Twitter and Instagram
- UGC
- Instagram story shares, retweets, Facebook

COMMUNITY

OBJECTIVE

Get involved

Engage in conversations around topics that are important to your audience

UGC

Encourage users to tag your Y while participating in Y camps, activities, etc. and repost on a weekly basis

CONTENT MIX & EXAMPLES

Social responsibility and impact stories

- DEI content, drives/collections (food, coats, etc.) across Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

Link posts to drive to website for sign ups, event pages, etc.

- Volunteering opportunity link posts on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn
- Video spotlights on local heroes, employees or disaster relief
- Encourage location check-ins, particularly for blood drives, volunteer opportunities, camps or events

SUPPORT THE Y

OBJECTIVE

Donate

Spark actions that help increase public interest for your Y and inspire advocates

UGC

- Instagram story shares, retweets, Facebook post shares of member posts
- A day in the life at the Y from employees, facility tours, donor news

CONTENT MIX & EXAMPLES

- Leadership announcements, CEO messages across Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn

Donation messaging

- Utilize Facebook's fundraising tool, Instagram story fundraising stickers

Amplify blog stories from website, drive to website to encourage donations, sign ups, volunteering, etc.

- Facebook, Twitter, Instagram Stories and LinkedIn

SOCIAL MEDIA CALENDAR

Streamline your content planning process each month with these tips and a calendar template.

CONTENT BUCKETS

A content bucket is any topic you want to talk about with your audience. It can include content aimed at a specific audience (seniors, families, children, etc.) or about specific programs (aquatics, social services, childcare, etc). A good first step in collaborative content planning is to come up with a list of content buckets that you talk about on a regular basis. Your content buckets can include content for specific audiences (active seniors, families with young children, prospective members) or content related to specific programs and services (swim/aquatic, social services, etc.).

EVERGREEN CONTENT

Evergreen content is content that is always relevant and never becomes outdated. It's highly likely that your Y has new member information; information on ongoing programs like swim and soccer; and information on child care and community services that doesn't change very frequently.

To make the most out of the time you have invested in writing your website copy, you can adapt existing copy into a series of 1-2 sentence social media posts on a specific topic.

Think about a post encouraging people to sign up for a newsletter. You likely won't need to write ten posts on this topic. Your audience typically won't recall the message you posted a few months back, so you can write a few messages and rotate between them, making a note of the last time you posted each message so that you keep things fresh without having to reinvent the wheel each time.

To accomplish this, consider saving all of the social media content you create in one place. Using a spreadsheet, you can save content in different tabs organized by month or by topic. Having this library of pre-written content can reduce the need to create "fresh" content on a daily basis, and can also ensure that you remember to highlight all of your programs and regular calls to action on a monthly basis.

Additionally, because some evergreen content is only relevant seasonally or annually, being able to refer back to old posts on the same topic will save you time. Freshen these posts with new details and graphics.

6 KEY QUESTIONS TO ASK DURING A CONTENT PLANNING MEETING

1. **What's coming up this month?** Are there topics related to the content buckets list you can talk about this month?
2. **What do you want people to do as a result of seeing your social media posts this month?** Many Ys report difficulty in setting goals for their social media platforms. By asking this question, you'll be able to focus on the goals that matter.
3. **What evidence or metrics do you have that tell you if anyone took that action?** Tools like Google Analytics can help you understand if your social media content has driven traffic to your website or to a specific page on your website, and if anyone has completed a form or taken any other actions.
4. **What's going on in your audience's life this month?** Are they setting goals for the new year? Getting kids ready to go back to school? Asking this question can help you create content that is timely and relevant to your audiences.
5. **What broader conversations are happening outside of your Y?** On networks like Instagram and Twitter where user profiles are public by default, using hashtags can help you connect with new audiences. Many awareness weeks and months, Movement-wide initiatives (e.g. Welcoming Week) and holidays have hashtags associated with them.
6. **Who can help you get the word out this month?** If you're working with partner organizations, you might have opportunities to tag other social media pages or accounts in an effort to get your content in front of your partners' audience. In other cases, you might coordinate with someone offline for the joint promotion of an activity. In any case, this is a critical question to ask to maximize your efforts.

Refer back to this checklist every month when you're doing your monthly content planning meeting or session. This removes the roadblock of starting from scratch every month. Review your checklist once a year to make sure it's still relevant.

SOCIAL MEDIA CALENDAR (CONT.)

BEST PRACTICES FOR PLOTTING TOPICS IN A CALENDAR

- Planning topics instead of posts makes it easier to assign topics to days within a calendar.
- Start by plotting out topics that are time-sensitive, such as programs that have a specific sign-up deadline. Note the date that an event or program starts in italics. That will help you make the distinction between when an event is happening and when you're promoting it through a social media post.
- After you've planned time-sensitive content, add more evergreen topics to your calendar, such as member stories, storytelling about your mission and evergreen calls to action like "sign up for our newsletter."
- When possible, leave evergreen content on the same day each week or each month. For example, Fridays are always "fan photo Fridays." Put out a call to action to volunteer on the third Thursday of each month if no timely event is happening that day.
- By establishing patterns, you will reduce the amount of time that it takes to plan content on a calendar on a monthly basis and it will ensure that you're spacing similar content out. This can also help you remember to promote calls to action at regular intervals.
- Having a few evergreen backup posts on hand can be helpful if you have an unexpected hole in your calendar and need to plug it at the last minute.

EXAMPLE CALENDAR

Content Buckets:

- Healthy families
- Blood pressure
- Military outreach
- Holiday
- #TBT (throwback Thursday)
- Drives/collections (food, school supplies, coats etc.)
- Membership/join
- Camp

AUGUST

SUN	MON	TUES	WEDS	THURS	FRI	SAT
1	2	3 – Healthy Families	4	5 – #TBT	6 – Camp	7
8	9	10 – School Supplies Drive Reminder	11	12 – #TBT	13 – Membership/ Join	14
15	16	17 – School Supplies Drive Reminder #2	18	19 – #TBT	20 – Camp	21 – School Supplies Drive Event
22	23	24 – Blood Pressure	25	26 – #TBT	27 – Membership/ Join	28
29	30	31 – Military Outreach				

SOCIAL MEDIA CALENDAR (CONT.)

CONTENT PLANNING TEMPLATE

Content copywrite: SARAH BEST STRATEGY

This template is an example of how to plan social media content by month. See page 20 for description of personas and how to apply them to your social media content planning. Download the template as an Excel file here.

	CONTENT BUCKETS	Month – e.g. January
		Goals for this month:
Content Themes, Campaigns, and Initiatives: What's Coming Up This Month? What Are We Promoting?	**Evergreen: Youth Development** - Afterschool - Camp - Changemakers - Child care - Early learning - Education/leadership - Food programs - Out of school time - SAW/swim - Sports - STEM - Youth & Government --- **Personas to Consider:** **- Parents of Younger Children/Security-Focused Shelly** **- Parents of Older Children/Enrichment-Focused Emily**	**Tip:** Save your content planning template by topic or by month of the year so you can repurpose for later use. We recommend using Excel.
	Evergreen: Healthy Living - Blood Pressure - Cancer survivorship /Livestrong - Diabetes Prevention - Falls Prevention - Gymtimidation - #HealthyHabit - HEPA - Healthy families - Recipes - Sports/recreation --- **Personas to Consider:** **- Fitness and Wellness/Fitness-Focused Fran** **- Empty Nesters/Social Seeking Sal**	
	Evergreen: Social Responsibility - ASYMCA & Military Outreach - Community - Diversity, inclusion, equity - Drives/collections (food, school supplies, coats etc.) - #GoodNeighborGoal - Newcomer Services - Senior support - World Service - Volunteer --- **Personas to Consider:** **- Empty Nesters/Social Seeking Sal**	
	PR Calendar	
	Holidays	e.g. Veterans Day
	Daily, Weekly, Monthly Celebrations & Events	e.g. Breast Cancer Awareness Month
	Instagram and Facebook Stories	
	Other/Misc. YMCA history/trivia #TBT Core Values	
	Fundraising/Donations	
	Membership/Join	
	Regular/Reoccurring Content Streams	

THE BASICS OF BOOSTING POSTS: HOW AND WHY

You may have noticed that organic reach on Facebook is quite low, especially after the drastic update to their algorithm in 2018, when Facebook announced they'd prioritize non-branded content in feeds. On Instagram and Twitter, #hashtags and @tagging can help you to reach new audiences. Since Facebook and LinkedIn limit the reach of posts created by businesses and organizations, the benefits of using #hashtags and @tagging is greatly diminished. This can be overcome on Facebook for a relatively low cost by boosting posts on the Facebook/Instagram ad network. Boosting posts allows you to increase the number of people you reach, target specific audiences and achieve your social media goals more strategically.

REASONS TO BOOST POSTS ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM

- Organic/unpaid reach of posts is **as low as 2%** on some Facebook posts in spite of the platform's popularity across age demographics
- Helps you reach fans of your Facebook page (and you can boost posts to Instagram at the same time!)
- Helps you reach prospective members in your communities
- Can be done for as little as $10/post
- **Takes as little as five minutes** once you learn the process

GETTING STARTED

- You need to have access to a Facebook profile and a Facebook advertising account. Go to business.facebook.com to get started.
- You cannot boost posts within a group

FACEBOOK ADS VERSUS BOOSTED POSTS

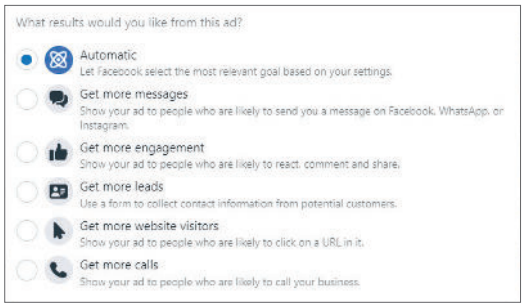
- Boosted posts are **the same** as Facebook ads
- Both appear in the Facebook advertising system
- **Boosted posts offer a simpler set of options**, making it easier to place an ad than with Facebook Ads Manager

OBJECTIVES

Identify what you want people to do as a result of seeing your boosted post. For example:

- Send people to your website
- Get more people to like, comment and share your post
- Get people to watch a video
- Get people to send you messages through Facebook Messenger

Below are the **four objectives** you can choose from in a boosted post:



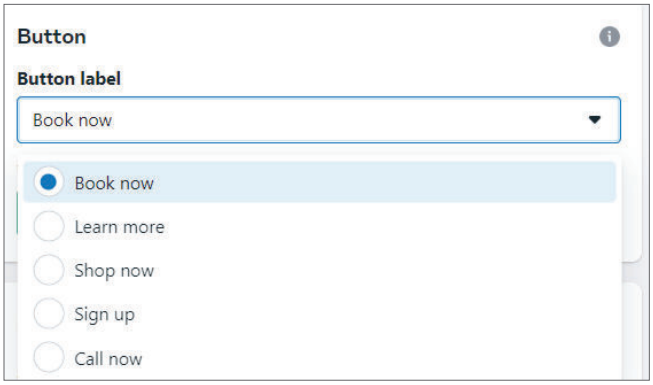
The objectives you have access to are contingent on the type of post you are creating:

- **Get more website visitors** – shows up when you link to your website and allow Facebook to pull in an image from that page
- **Get more engagement** – shows up when you manually attach an image to a post
- **Get more messages** – shows up for posts with links or photos and only makes sense if you want to direct your audience to Facebook Messenger
- **Get more people to watch your video** – shows up when you post video content

THE BASICS OF BOOSTING POSTS: HOW AND WHY (CONT.)

POST BUTTONS

For any post that drives traffic to a website, you can choose from a number of buttons that reinforce your call to action:



PLACEMENTS

This is another way of asking where you want the ads to run:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Facebook Messenger

Tip: Facebook will try to pick this for you—don't let them! Toggle "off" Automatic Placements and select the networks you'd like to send the post to. Consider your audience's technology habits when making this decision.

DURATION AND BUDGET

Duration and Budget lets you define how long you want the ad to run and what your total budget is.

- **Scenario A** – you want to make sure your current audience sees your content. Try boosting a post for four days at $5–10.
- **Scenario B** – you want to promote a special campaign or event. Try 10 days at $50+ to reach more people and increase the likelihood of meeting your goal.

TARGET AUDIENCE CONSIDERATIONS

- Each person can only see a limited number of ads per day.
- There's a lot of competition for eyeballs on social media. That means your target audiences should be pretty broad – shoot for audiences of 50,000+.
- One way to do this is to target a television viewing area (DMAs) instead of a city or town. This can be helpful in metropolitan areas where you also want to include suburban areas, or in rural areas where a Y draws from a few different communities.
- Alternately, you can adjust the radius of your ad to not just include a city but also include surrounding areas. Think about where your members live and go from there.

TYPES OF AUDIENCES

Generally, social media audiences tend to fall into two groups:

- **Your fans:** People who like your page, people in your Facebook groups, people who visit your website, your member email list
- **People in your community:** People who look like your fans, people who share common interests (in youth sports or running, for example), and people who have certain demographic characteristics (like parents)

Age, goals, interests, financial concerns, family size and employment status are just some of the factors that impact the daily planning and decision-making of both fans and community members. When crafting and publishing content on social media, it helps to clearly identify who you're trying to reach and what influences impact their decisions. Page 20 includes just a few examples of the many different personas likely to be found in your community and the factors you should consider when trying to reach them through social media.

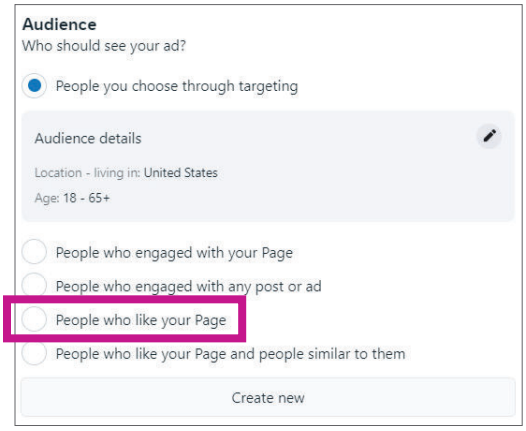
THE BASICS OF BOOSTING POSTS: HOW AND WHY (CONT.)

BOOST POSTS TO MORE THAN ONE AUDIENCE AT A TIME

Once you've boosted a post, the boost button turns into a "Boost Again" button. You can select a different audience the second time.

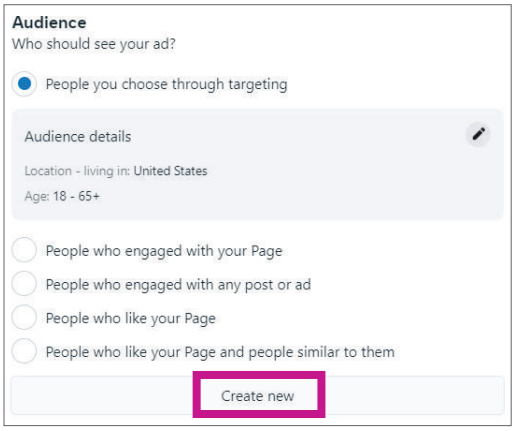
TARGET PEOPLE WHO LIKE YOUR PAGE

If your engagement is low, it may be because some people aren't seeing your posts at all. One useful preset boost option that can increase the reach is boosting to people who already like your page. This option still allows you to target specific geographic and age demographics who can then share it with others who might like to see it.



CREATE A NEW AUDIENCE

- Create and save new audiences that share certain demographic characteristics or interests
- Save the audience in order to access and use again
- Give it a good name that you'll remember for later use



AD REJECTION TIPS

- Avoid too much text in the image. In Fall 2020, Facebook eased up on these restrictions a bit. Learn more.
- Avoid graphics that look like newspaper circulars or flyers
- Use simple graphics and photography and let your caption do the talking
- The word "you" sometimes triggers ad rejection

ISSUES OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

If your post discusses an issue of public importance, it may be flagged for rejection. These topics include:

- civil and social rights
- crime
- economy
- education
- environmental politics
- guns
- health
- immigration
- political values and governance
- security and foreign policy

To boost posts on those topics, each individual on your team will have to verify their identify with a state ID and write a disclosure about who is paying for the ad (your Y). Learn more.

THE BASICS OF BOOSTING POSTS: HOW AND WHY (CONT.)

PIXELS

A pixel is a little bit of code a web developer can put on every page of your website that can help you create an audience of your website visitors or people who are similar to them. It can also help you understand whether someone has taken a specific action.

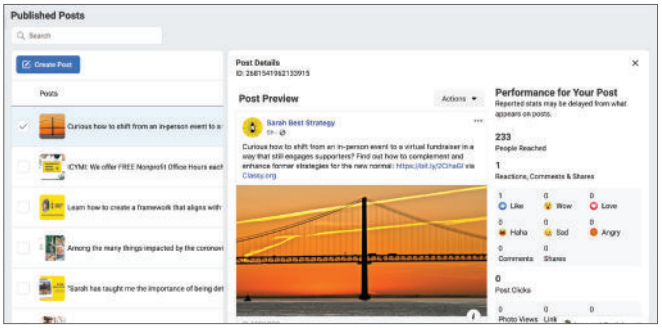
Similar to Google Analytics code, pixel code can be placed on every page of your website.

Currently, pixel retargeting (showing ads to people who have visited your website in the past) is limited in California due to privacy laws. Additionally, some types of pixel code are no longer supported by Facebook. The advertising industry is currently developing solutions to create pixels that are compliant with new guidelines. Learn more.

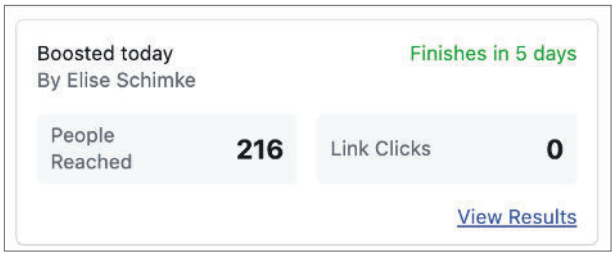
EDITING, RESCHEDULING OR DELETING BOOSTED POSTS AND VIEWING RESULTS

Head to your Facebook page's publishing tools to edit, delete or reschedule a post and to view, edit or delete a boost/ad.

Clicking on a post in Publishing Tools will open up a panel that will tell you how many people saw your post, how many engaged with the post and how many clicked on a link.

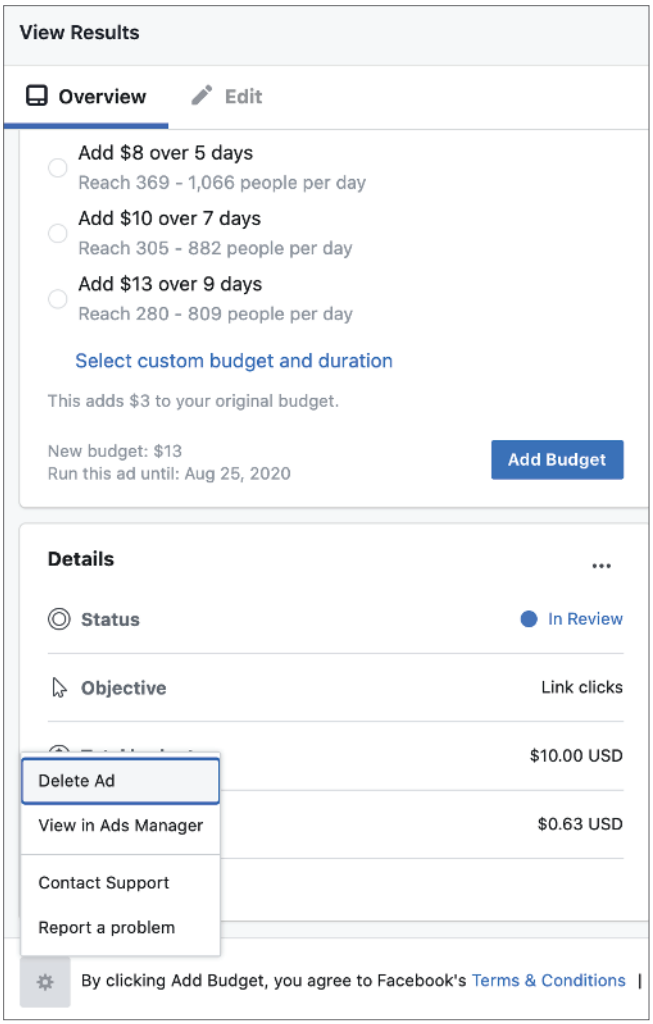


To delete a boost from a specific post through Publishing Tools, scroll to the bottom of the information panel and click on "View Results."



On the next screen, scroll to the bottom of the results panel and look for a gear icon. Clicking on the gear will enable you to select the option "Delete Ad."

Boosted posts can also be deleted in Ads Manager.



COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT



TALKING WITH YOUR COMMUNITY

Consistent conversation is vital on social media not just to handle complaints, but also to build relationships. It also helps build a more robust understanding of your community which leads to better content that hits on trending topics.

It's important to remember engagement is a conversation. Brands shouldn't sound like robots — your Y should sound like a supportive community leader. It's important to remember that, at the end of the day, the Y is still a brand and you should always take a backseat to your audience.



COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT

The customer service portion of communicating with your audience. This is where you manage concerns and resolve issues.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The everyday interactions that aren't tied to customer service needs. These engagements help build brand equity and reinforce positive sentiment.

Reacting/liking and responding to comments (e.g., "Thank you!").

COMMUNITY MANAGEMENT HIPPOCRATIC OATH: FIRST, DO NO HARM

The Community Management Hippocratic Oath is an oath of ethics for engaging with your community on social media. Think of it like rules of the road that you'll use as you develop your community management strategy.

1. Act with Integrity
Represent your Y with integrity and never put the brand in harm's way.

2. Know the Rules
Commit to knowing legal rules around engaging and sharing UGC.

3. Read the Room
Be sensitive and thoughtful when it comes to content around social justice, diversity, equity and inclusion.

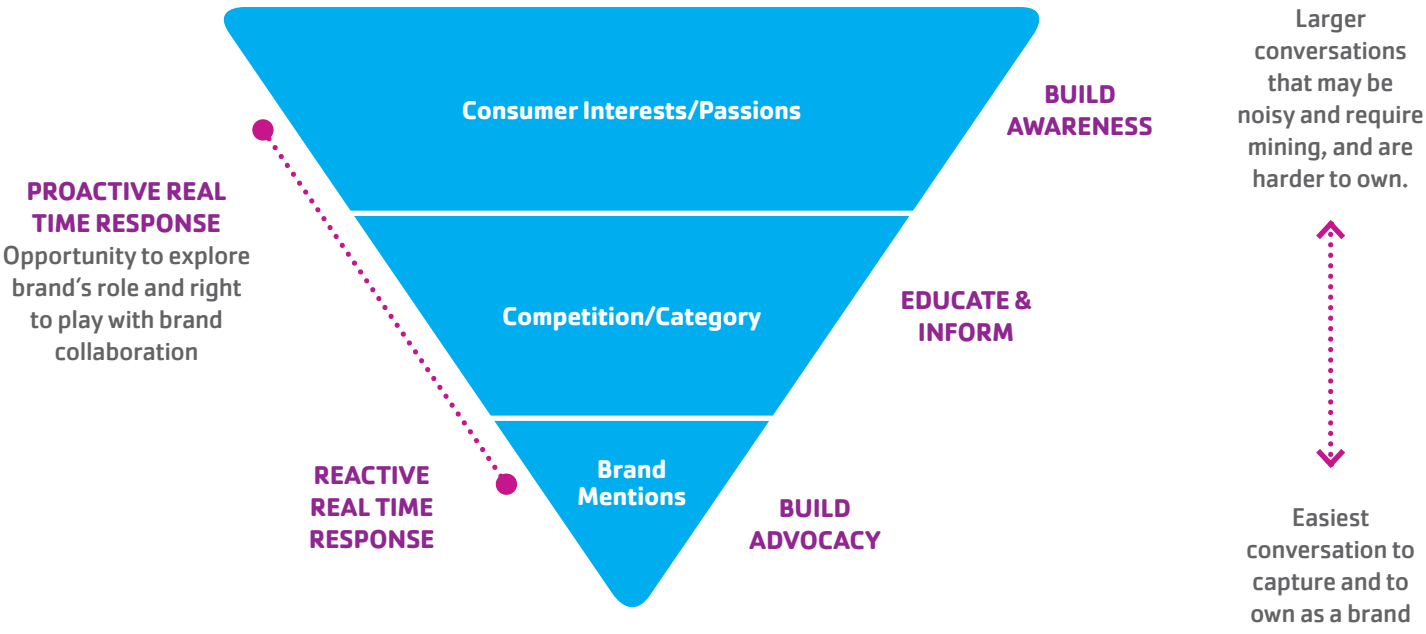
4. Live the Brand
Represent the voice of the Y brand, not your own personal voice.

LISTENING: REAL TIME CONVERSATION FRAMEWORK

Leverage keyword monitoring to determine opportunities to capitalize on conversation and learn.

This framework organizes keywords across categories that help align (and prioritize) keywords to business objectives.

Secondly, you can leverage these keywords to learn more about how consumers behave around specific passions and interests, ultimately helping to sharpen communications.



USER GENERATED CONTENT PROCESS



Discover Content
UGC should be surfaced by looking at brand tags and mentions across social platforms. You can also find content by looking at relevant keywords.

Content Vetting
UGC can come in many varieties, but should fully align with brand objectives and embody the brand personas. Make sure to vet both the content and the user to ensure you're holding true to the brand.

User Permission
Your Community Manager should reach out to obtain approval from the content creator.

Create Copy
Once approved, create copy and schedule post into the organic calendar.

Publish
After full alignment, Community Manager will proceed with scheduling and posting.

ORGANIZING UGC APPROVALS

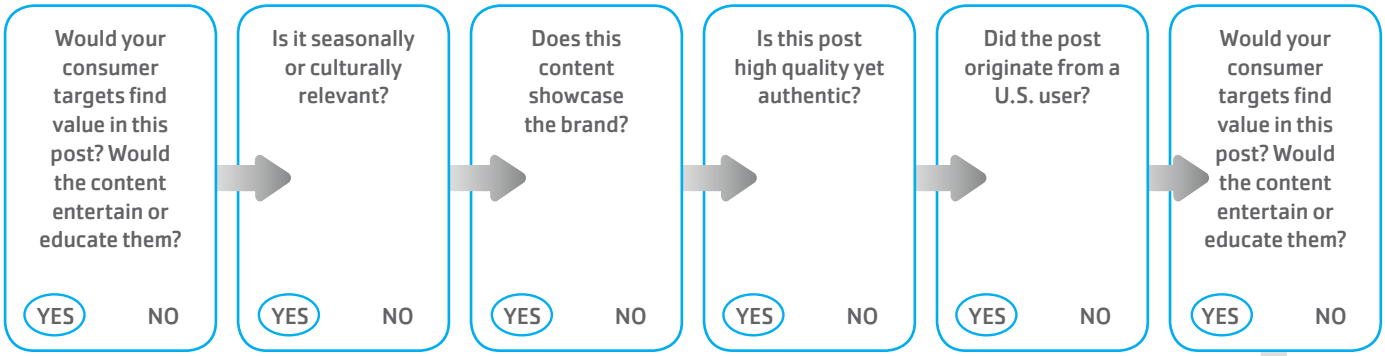
Organization is critical when sourcing, gaining alignment, gathering permissions and approvals.

We recommend creating a collaborative UGC tracker that includes:

- Date posted
- Platform
- Image URL
- Username
- User vetting
- Brand team notes (if needed)
- User permission requested
- User permission granted
- Additional notes (if needed)
- Screenshot of permission

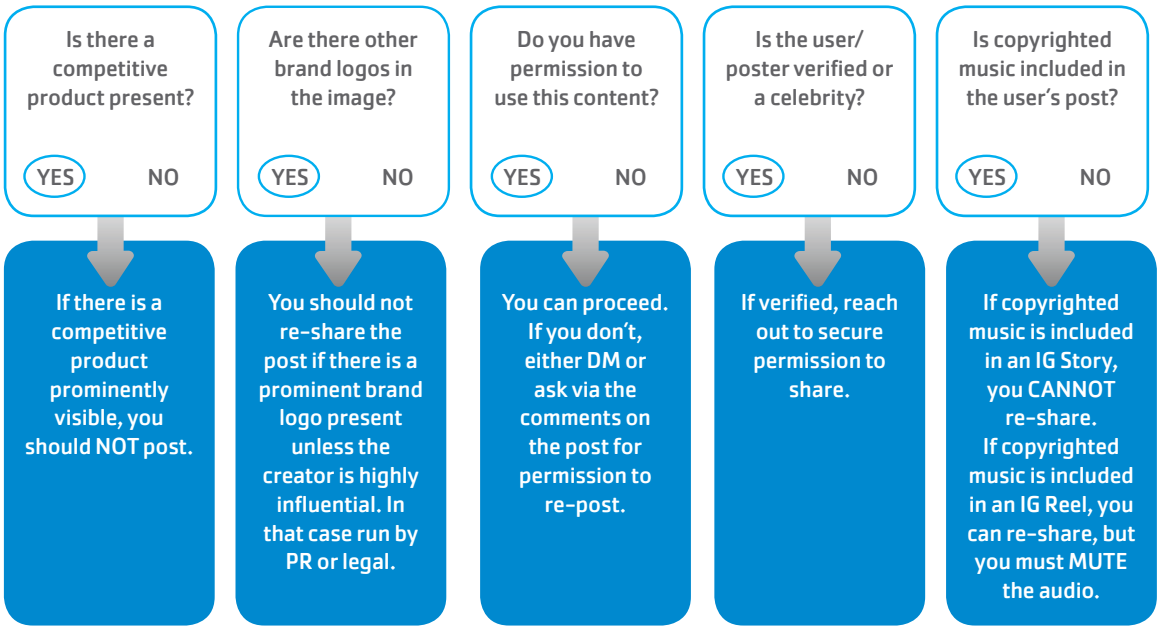
VETTING UGC CONTENT

THESE QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ASKED BEFORE POSTING:



OKAY, GO
If the answer is yes to all of these questions

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED BEFORE POSTING:



*Despite the rigor of this Decision Tree, this is still a subjective process. It is possible to follow each guideline and still select UGC that may not work.

ASKING FOR USER PERMISSION

You should always obtain user permission to ensure full brand safety and to avoid risk.

We recommend that the Community Management Team reach out to each UGC creator (via DM or comment) to request permission and ask them to provide a signed photo release.

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT TOOLS

Social media management tools can support your goals while alleviating common roadblocks to success. The following were selected for their capabilities, ease of use and adoption across Ys.

SOCIAL CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT (CRM)

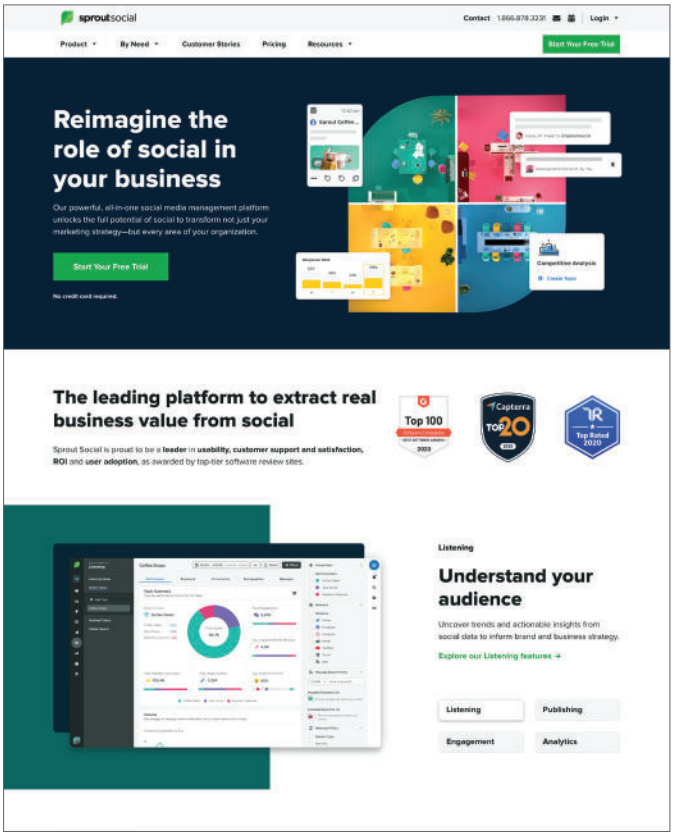
70% of Y survey respondents cited lack of time as their biggest roadblock to success. Social media management tools present an opportunity to improve time efficiency and optimize your social media strategy without adding staff.

Benefits of Social CRMs:

- **Work Across Teams and Centers:** Manage social media programs across departments, branches, programs, camps, etc.
- **Approval Workflows:** Create approval workflows between supervisors and staff or between teams
- **Metrics Capture:** Improve the ability to capture metrics on social media efforts in a time-efficient manner
- **Brand Equity:** Help improve the Y's brand equity through making it easier to respond to inquiries from members and prospective members
- **Automation:** Direct inquiries to the right place via chat bots, e.g. Y-USA's Facebook chat bot directs local Y-related questions to use Find Your Y

SPROUT SOCIAL UPDATE: Sprout Social has been selected by Y-USA as an enterprise solution for Y marketers. Learn more.

Additional examples of social CRMs: Sprinklr, Hootsuite



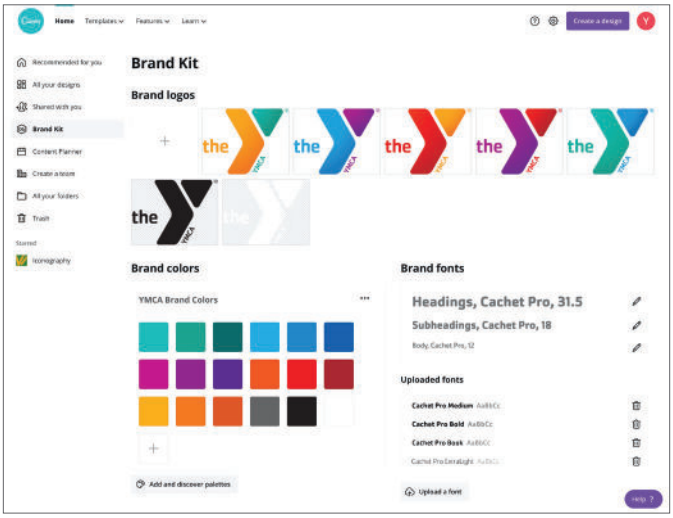
SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT TOOLS (CONT.)

CREATING SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS

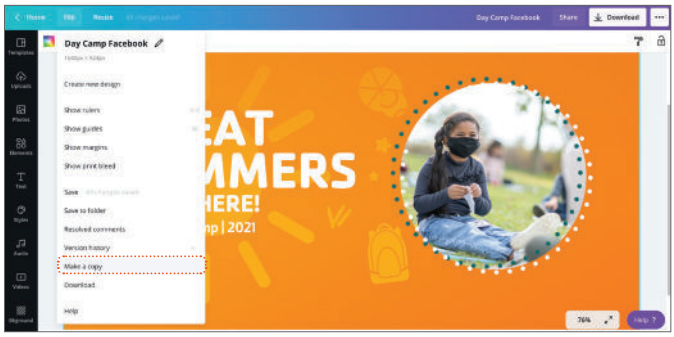
During the review of local Y accounts, one common issue that we observed were challenges around the creation of high quality, branded images for social media posts that were sized appropriately for each of the social media platforms. Canva and Lucidpress can help address this problem, even among Ys with small teams.

Canva

- Canva is a low-cost tool geared toward people who are not graphic designers. It can help users create social media graphics that are on-brand and easy to resize across social media platforms, increasing efficiency.
- Canva contains 60,000+ design templates for social media posts, Facebook cover images, Facebook events, Instagram Stories and YouTube videos, Snapchat Geofilters, Pinterest pins, as well as a broad range of print collateral materials.
- With a Canva for Nonprofits account, Canva users can save brand colors, logos and fonts in a brand kit, and update the colors and fonts in any design template to match. You can upload your own photography or access built-in stock photo options. Register now to get Canva's premium features for free.

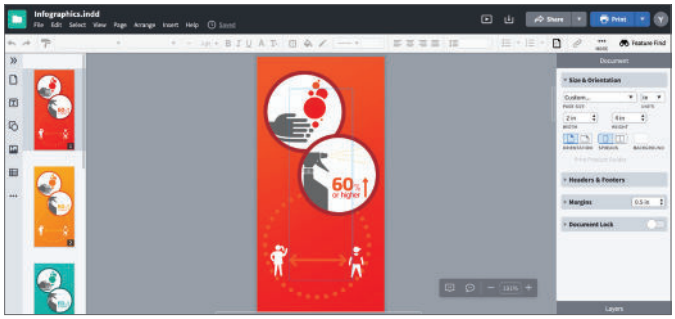


- For Ys managing social media in teams, one recommendation is to have a graphic designer set up templates for the types of content they tend to post, such as member stories or program sign up, then have other members on the team copy the templates and update them with specific information.



Lucidpress

- Lucidpress is an alternative to complex design programs like Adobe InDesign and Microsoft Publisher.
- InDesign files downloaded from the Brand Resource Center can be uploaded and customized.



- With paid account(s), Lucidpress users will have access to robust brand controls, and customizable templates that lock down critical Y brand elements.

SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT TOOLS (CONT.)

FUNDRAISING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA

Classy is a fundraising platform that can facilitate giving through landing pages that are optimized for storytelling and donor conversions. Many Ys report having success with the tool, which integrates with Salesforce and Raiser's Edge, as well as with Meta fundraisers.

Classy has modules for a variety of fundraisers, such as website giving and monthly giving, fundraising events, crowdfunding and peer-to-peer fundraising.

Storytelling

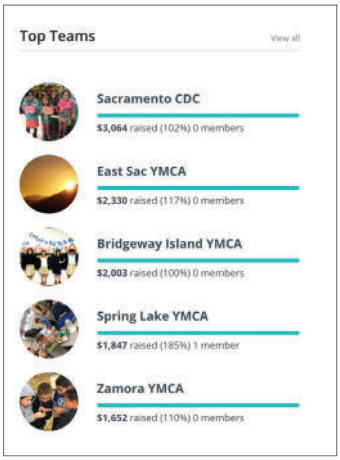
In the example below, the Superior Douglas County Family YMCA of Superior, WI, gives donors concrete examples of how their support makes a difference in their community.



Peer-to-Peer Fundraising

In the example below, YMCA of Superior California in Sacramento organized teams of donors to meet their goal.







TRACKING RESULTS

IDENTIFY WHAT YOU'D LIKE PEOPLE TO DO

Setting social media goals can be intimidating. The best place to start is by asking "what do we want people to do as a result of seeing our social media posts?"

Examples of goals might include:

- Sign up for a program
- Donate
- Volunteer
- Sign up for your newsletter
- Engage with your social media content

IDENTIFY EVIDENCE

Identify what evidence you have about whether or not they did what you wanted. There is often digital and business evidence to show whether they took any actions.

Examples:

- Sign up for a program ➔ Visits to sign up page from social media, number of sign ups
- Donate ➔ Visits to a donation page from social media, number of donations
- Volunteer ➔ Visits to a volunteer page from social media, number of completed volunteer forms
- Sign up for your newsletter ➔ Visits to a newsletter sign up page, mailing list growth
- Engage with your social media content ➔ Number of likes, comments and shares, engagement rate

Ys that have been successful with tracking results often have a good handle on Google Analytics. It can tell you how people have arrived at specific pages of your website and what they did once they got there.

SOCIAL MEDIA BENCHMARKS

There are certain industry benchmarks that can tell you whether your results are typical for the platform you are using. Social media management tools can make tracking these metrics easier and can help you track competitors' metrics.

- **Account Growth:** Across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn, an account growth rate of 1–2% month–over–month or 12–24% growth year over year is normal.
- **Engagement Rate:** Engagement rates are calculated by dividing engagements by impressions, or in the case of Instagram, engagements by followers. This is an average over a 12–month period and varies from network to network:
  - Facebook: 0.06%
  - Instagram: 0.7%
  - Twitter: 0.04%
  - LinkedIn: 0.04%
  - TikTok: 0.04%
  - YouTube: 0.04%

SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

Reflection

- My goals
- Experiments I tried this month
- Outcomes of those experiments

Metrics That Help You Understand Performance

- Impressions (total number of times posts were seen)
- Number of engagements
- Engagement rates (by platform)
- Significant engagement
- Summary of significant new followers and interesting comments

Metrics That Help You Understand Your Goals

What We Wanted People to Do	Evidence of Whether They Took That Action	Results

Common Paid Metrics

- Amount spent
- Impressions
- Cost per 1,000 Impressions (CPI)
- Link clicks, video views or leads generated
- Cost per link click, video views or leads

MEASUREMENT TEMPLATE

– We recommend pulling yearly numbers and dividing by 12 to get monthly KPI's for your Y.
– If social media goals are different for your Y, make sure to update that column as well as associated metrics as appropriate

SOCIAL MEDIA GOALS	METRICS	MEASUREMENT TOOLS	MONTHLY BENCHMARK KPIs
Increase Awareness/ Following As a communication tool, social media presents unique opportunities for connecting with your audiences, promoting the Y brand and conveying the Y's purpose to strengthen communities. Continue building and growing an authentic social media following among your key target audiences.	• Reach/Impressions • Followers		**Impressions:** **Impressions/Post:** **Posts Published:** **Followers:** Net Followers*: Total Engagement Rate (ER) %: • FB ER%: • IG ER%: • Twitter ER% • LinkedIn ER%: • YouTube ER%: • TikTok ER%:
Increase Engagement Listen to your audience through proactive, not reactive social media listening to better understand their needs and wants AND start engaging conversations around topics that are important to your Y in an inclusive manner.	• Post engagement (clicks, likes, shares, comments, etc.) • On site engagement (pageviews, time on site, etc.)		Engagements: Engagements/Post: Sessions: Pageviews: Pages/Session: Average Time per Session:
Increase Conversations/ Spark Actions Spark actions that help increase public interest and engagement with the Y, such as join, participate, volunteer, champion and donate as well as generate quality leads.	• Brand mentions (positive sentiment) • Leads (requesting info, signing up for newsletters, etc.) • Customers (find your Y usage, donations)		Brand Mentions: Positive Sentiment: Non-Negative Sentiment: Find Your Y Events: Join Events: Donate Events:

*Net Followers = followers gained or lost.

KPI BEST PRACTICES TEMPLATE

MONTHLY BENCHMARK KPIs

Impressions:
Impressions/Post:
Posts Published:
Followers:
Net Followers*:
Total Engagement Rate %:

- FB ER%:
- IG ER%:
- Twitter ER%:
- LinkedIn ER%:
- YouTube ER%:
- TikTok ER%:

Engagements:
Engagements/Post:
Sessions:
Pageviews:
Pages/Session:
Average Time per Session:

Brand Mentions:
Positive Sentiment:
Non-Negative Sentiment:
Find Your Y Events:
Join Events:
Donate Events:

When pulling monthly, quarterly or campaign reports, include this chart and look back at benchmark KPIs to analyze how content performed.

Over time, adjust benchmark KPIs based on monthly performance.

Looking ahead to 2023, keep the below in mind when pulling together reports to refine strategy.

- Which types of conversations drive the most engagement – specific consumer passions or relevant occasions involving the Y?
- Which platforms and content types work best at driving engagement and relevance?
- Are there any patterns in your Community Manager's responses that lead to more engagement?

EXAMPLE

MONTHLY BENCHMARK KPIs

Impressions: 835,362
Impressions/Post: 4,519
Posts Published: 185
Followers: 575,732
Net Followers*: 1,816
Total Engagement Rate %: 2.0%

- FB ER%: 2.0%
- IG ER%: 3.7%
- Twitter ER%: 1.6%
- LinkedIn ER%: 4.2%
- YouTube ER%: 0.9%
- TikTok ER%:

Engagements: 16,839
Engagements/Post: 91
Sessions: 403,259
Pageviews: 1,669,980
Pages/Session: 4.14
Average Time per Session: 1:12

Brand Mentions: 19,514
Positive Sentiment: 21%
Non-Negative Sentiment: 90%
Find Your Y Events: 87,384 (Social: 443)
Join Events**: 11,260 (Social: 44)
Donate Events**: 313 (Social: 4)

NOTE: These monthly benchmarks are unique to Y-USA's social channels. We recommend your Y explore this exercise at a local level. We recommend pulling yearly numbers and dividing by 12 to get monthly KPI's for your Y.

ADDITIONAL BEST PRACTICES

PHOTOGRAPHY FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

TELLING STORIES WITH COMPELLING IMAGES

Compelling images share many of the same characteristics as a good book that draws you in from the first page, they:

- Introduce characters
- Transport you to a place
- Feature specific details
- Evoke an atmosphere
- Can be told over time, e.g., Instagram and Facebook Stories and posts with slide shows let you tell the story across multiple images

QUICK TIPS FOR IMPROVING PHOTOS

- Determine what story you want to tell first
- Natural, real and inviting
- Not posed or forced
- Focus on an individual subject vs. a crowd
- Have a clear point of focus so the eye will go to a specific point in the photo
- Make use of lights and tripods
- Tell stories over time, e.g., throughout a campaign across a series of photos
- Don't have to be posted live — it's okay to photograph something, edit and post later

Visit the Brand Graphics Guide for additional information on the Y's approach to photography

SELF-EVALUATION

Look at a sample of ten images that you posted to your Instagram or another social media platform. Have you used a variety of images? If not, what types of images are missing?

OPTIMIZING PHOTOS FOR BOOSTED POSTS ON FACEBOOK AND INSTAGRAM

Avoid using images with too much text on them. This helps ensure that your photo does the work of grabbing attention, directing the eye to a specific point in the image, and making it more mobile-friendly. Let your copy do the work of communicating written information instead of your image.

If copy takes up more than 20% of your image, you might not be able to boost your post on Facebook or Instagram. Facebook has this tool for checking whether your image will be rejected.

BRC RESOURCES

Looking for Y logos, campaign toolkits, brand guidelines, photography and more? The Brand Resource Center (BRC) is a valuable resource for Y marketers and staff who work on social media or other communications. It features:

- Logos and Areas of Impact
- Image library
- Brand guidelines

Types of Photography



LANDSCAPES
Transport you to a place



PORTRAITS
Introduce characters



STILL LIFES
Provide details to focus on



MOODY PHOTOS
Evoke an atmosphere

VIDEO FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

VIDEO BEST PRACTICES

Upload video files to each social media platform individually. Social media platforms prioritize the distribution of content that is uploaded directly to their platform vs. linked to from a competitor's platform (e.g., linking to a YouTube video in a Facebook post).

This means that you can post the same video to Facebook, YouTube and even LinkedIn, although you may need to shorten a video to post it on Instagram, Twitter, TikTok, etc.

Smartphones with high resolution cameras, GoPros and DSLR cameras all make shooting video more accessible—no need for professional equipment. Light and sound are important to making a quality video. Investing in an inexpensive lapel microphone and using natural light or clip or ring lights will improve the quality of your video. When shooting outside, taping a sponge over your microphone cuts down on wind noise.

VIDEO FOR YOUTUBE

Because YouTube is owned by Google, it presents some unique opportunities for search engine optimization (SEO). You can integrate focused keywords into the title of your video, video description and the tags section if content in your video is commonly misspelled, like your Y's name. Video transcriptions/closed captions are a best practice both for search and for accessibility purposes.

Connect the dots for your audiences. Ask where they would need to go to take steps to participate or join. Include a link back to your website or a specific landing page that will help them learn more or take that next step.

Brainstorming YouTube content ideas

If your Y struggles to create YouTube content on a regular basis, you're not alone. A good place to start brainstorming content for this popular platform is to look at content that is popular among YouTube viewers in general.

According to Pew Research, popular content areas include food, sports, music or dance, hobbies and skills; and content for kids.

Make this work for your Y: This is good news for the Y since we're already working in many of those spaces. Build interest in your Y and tap into the most popular content types with videos on **sports skill development, swim/aquatics, healthy food and lifestyle; hobby and skill development; or kids' activities.**

VIDEO RESOURCES FROM Y-USA

- "Your Y. Your Camera. Your Story." Video storytelling series and resources:.
  - Video playlist on YouTube

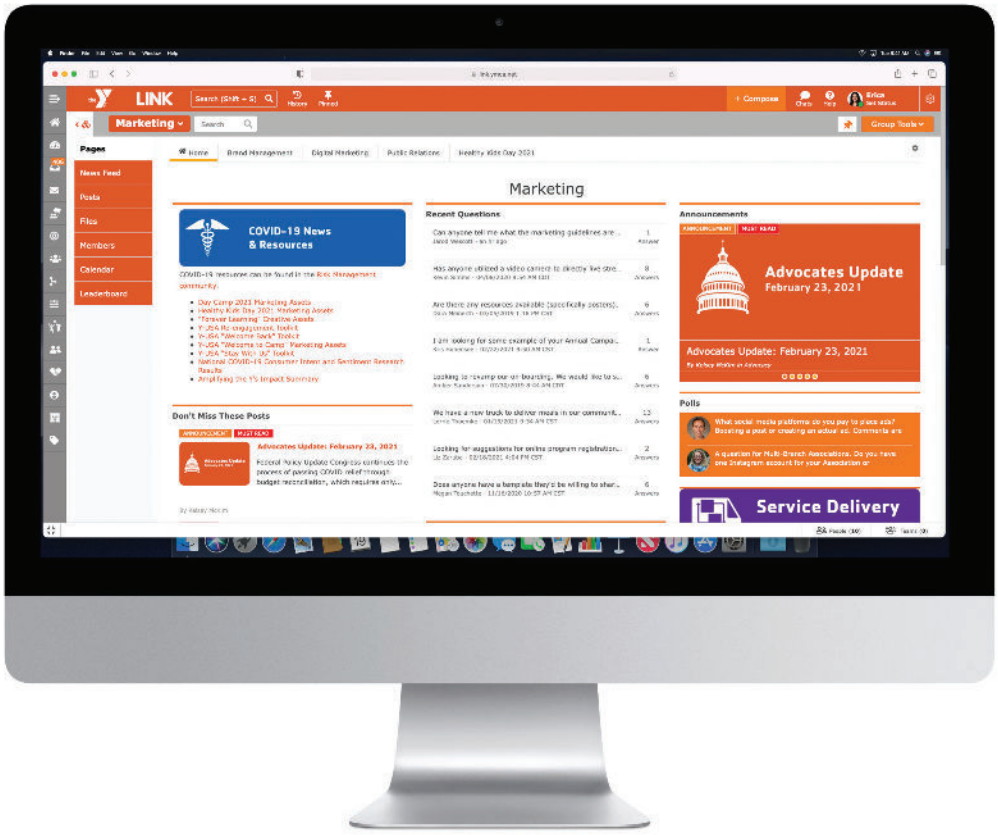


  - Storyteller's Guide
  - Video Storytelling Steps & Tips
  - Storytelling Checklist
  - Check out this post about the series within the Link Marketing Community. Pose questions and video storytelling tips here to engage in conversation with the Y-USA content producer and other Y colleagues!
  - If you have a story that you'd like Y-USA to produce for this series, please email digital@ymca.net with the subject "Video Storytelling Pitch."
- Video Resources on the BRC
  - Video art cards
  - High definition b-roll footage featuring a multitude of activities, ethnicities and age ranges that may be repurposed for your video productions

APPENDIX

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES AND POLICIES

The Link Marketing Community is the best place to access timely resources, toolkits, policies and more to help you achieve your marketing and social media goals. It's also a great place to connect with Y colleagues to discuss social media strategy, share successes, pose questions and learn about upcoming webinars and other relevant events. Below are links to some of the valuable resources hosted within the community.



- Brand Management
- Crisis Communication
- Digital Marketing
- Healthy Kids Day resources and updates
- Photo/Audio/Video release forms (English, Spanish, Chinese)
- Promoting the Brand
- Public Relations
- FREE Association of National Advertisers (ANA) membership!
- FREE Smart Insights Membership
- Inclusive Language Style Guide

For hands-on support or consultation, contact a service-delivery partner Y with expertise in marketing and communications.

- SPDY Intake Form
- SDPY Areas of Expertise and Contact Information List for MarComm
- SDPY Directory for MarComm

To learn more about SDPYs and all of the support available to you, visit the Service-Delivery Partner Ys page on Link.

Follow these external sources for industry news, best practices, events and more:

- Social Media Today
- American Marketing Association (AMA)
- Sprout Social
- HubSpot Blog
- Smart Insights

AUDIENCE INTEREST

*The following data is based on the researched conducted in 2021 through MRI Simmons and is based on Y-USA's channels.

This data takes a deeper look at the interests of the four personas presented earlier in the playbook. Once again, the numbers in parentheses represent the comparison of data against a baseline average. Refer back to page 16 for more information.

	Y-MINDSET	SAL	FRAN	EMILY	SHELLY
	OUTER RING	MIDDLE RING		BULLSEYE	
PODCASTS	• Chicks in the Office (121) • The Short Porch (139) • Up and Vanished (168) • Uninterrupted (114) • 2 Dope Queens (115)	• Pardon My Take (199) • Lights, Camera Pod (212) • Starting 9 (194) • Barstool Sportsbook (233) • Foreplay (183) **only 19% of audience listens to podcasts	• Pod Save America (151) • Fresh Air with Terry Gross (159) • S-Town (139) • The Lively Show (327) • My Favorite Murder (121)	• Chicks in the Office (195) • Up and Vanished (212) • Call Her Daddy (207) • My Favorite Murder (150) • The Lively Show (267)	• Chicks in the Office (154) • 85 South Comedy Show (132) • S-Town (128) • Angry Drunk (138) • Call Her Daddy (162)
AUTHORS	• Lysa TerKeurst (113) • Padma Lakshmi (116) • Brittany Packnett (118) • Matt Bellassai (115) • Tim Wise (116)	• Robert Reich (178) • Jeff Passan (168) • Stan Lee (173) • Jared Carrabis (224) • Skip Bauless (290)	• Robert Reich (135) • Stephen King (130) • Rick Wilson (128) • The Pioneer Woman (236) • Lin-Manuel Miranda (161)	• The Pioneer Woman (209) • Lysa TerKeurst (223) • Lin-Manuel Miranda (120) • Stephan Speaks Relationships (164) • Jen Hatmaker (248)	• Derrick Jaxn (588) • Mona Scott-Young (416) • Dr. Farrah Gray (305) • Glennon Doyle (130) • The Queen Code (383)
MOVIES	• Harry Potter (130) • Pitch Perfect (142) • Beauty and the Beast 2017 (133) • Hallmark Moves (116) • Hidden Figures (150)	• Star Wars (172) • Batman: The Dark Knight (256) • Forest Gump (174) • Goodfellas (158) • The Blind Side (121)	• The Song (279) • Food Matters (263) • Anne of Green Gables (260) • The Hate you Give (241) • The Resurrection of Gavin Stone (248)	• The Notebook (323) • Beauty and the Beast 2017 (225) • Fifty Shades of Grey (347) • Pitch Perfect (187) • The Hangover (134)	• Beauty and the Beast 2017 (325) • The Notebook (257) • Fifty Shades of Grey (457) • Pitch Perfect (316) • Harry Potter (194)
TV SHOWS	• Saturday Night Live (110) • The Tonight Show (115) • NBA on TNT (114) • Late Show w/ Colbert (116) • The View (131)	• NFL on CBS (199) • Stranger Things (136) • ESPN First Take (237) • Seinfeld (134) • Fox Sports: MLB (157)	• Outlander (241) • Rizzoli & Isles (239) • Masterpiece PBS (224) • Anderson Live (205) • Project Runway (186)	• Ellen DeGeneres (210) • The Today Show (140) • This is Us (251) • E! News (210) • Grey's Anatomy (305)	• Love and Hip Hop (581) • Teen Mom (566) • Mob Wives (503) • Keeping up with the Kardashians (455) • Being Mary Jane (375)

AUDIENCE SUMMARY

Please note that the following data from MRI Simmons may not balance to 100% due to the following data/search parameters:

- MRI data identifies Hispanic as an ethnicity within white. Hispanic/white percentage may overlap based on responses
- Rural locations were not included within the location search since most Ys are in communities identified as suburban and urban
- MRI data for religion and politics includes an option for respondents to select "would prefer not to answer"

	Y-MINDSET	SAL	FRAN	EMILY	SHELLY
	OUTER RING	MIDDLE RING		BULLSEYE	
DEMOGRAPHICS	Gender: 55% F | 44% M Age: 25-65+ Location: 55% Sub. | 30% Urb.	Gender: Male Age: 55+ Location: 55% Sub. | 23% Urb.	Gender: Female Age: 45+ Location: 55% Sub. | 18% Urb.	Gender: Female Age: 25-44 Location: 55% Sub. | 20% Urb.	Gender: Female Age: 25-44 Location: 55% Sub. | 18% Urb.
RACIAL IDENTITY	62% White | 15% Hispanic | 12% Black/ African American | 6% Asian	80% White | 5% Hispanic | 13% Black/ African American | 3% Asian	84% White | 10% Hispanic | 4% Black/ African American | 8% Asian	77% White | 21% Hispanic | 7% Black/ African American | 8% Asian	51% White | 20% Hispanic | 38% Black/African American | 9% Asian
WHY THEY'RE ON SOCIAL	Inspiration & community	To connect & stay informed	Inspiration	Resource/village	Me time
EVENTS & HOBBIES	• Local food and music events • Fun runs • Renaissance festivals/state fairs	• Olympics & US Open • MLB • Photography/art • Fishing & walking	• Food/cooking • Crafts & sewing • Gardening & home DIY • Travel	• Mom humor • Family activities • Coupons & deals • Pop-culture	• Music/ entertainment • Black/AA empowerment • Career search • Painting/ drawing & yoga
TOP INFLUENCERS/ SITES	• Friends & family • Self-help authors • Transparent bloggers • Entrepreneurs • Philanthropists	• News & politicians • Classic rock, blues musicians	• Food bloggers & chefs • Lifestyle & travel bloggers • Authors (romance, women/family empowerment)	• Mom bloggers • Beauty bloggers • Reality TV	• Multi-cultural influencers • Black/African American producers and artists • Reality TV
CAUSES THEY CARE ABOUT	• Large organizations with local branches focused toward children/ families • KaBoom • Boys and Girls Club • Big Brothers, Big Sisters	• Politics, art and environment • Public Art Fund • Open Society Foundation • The Nature Conservancy of NY	• Health & wellness • Go Red for Women • No Kid Hungry • Together Counts	• Kid-focused organizations • Box Top for Education • March of Dimes • Girl Scouts	• Female empowerment • My Black is Beautiful • Black Girls Rock • My Fav F word is Feminism
CHANNEL STRENGTH					

CURRENT LINKEDIN AUDIENCE

The following data is based on Y-USA's LinkedIn followers. Many from this audience are professionals who are interested in working for the Y, so the data could be used in the development of staff recruitment content for your Y.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Gender Identity: 64% F | 36% M
Racial Identity:
75% White | 7% Hispanic | 11% Black/African American | 13% Asian
Age: Primarily 35-44
Location: 51% Suburban | 38% Urban
Relationship: 52% Married | 36% Single | 12% in Relationship
Kids: 42% have kids
HHI: $50k- $150k- highest percent is $75k-$100k

PERSONALITY

Outgoing & Energetic (110)
Friendly & Compassionate (114)

ABOUT THEM

Important to continue to learn new things (111)
Family is extremely important (115)
Like to be well informed (116)
Interested in other cultures (177)
Exercise at least 1x/week (117)
Optimistic (143)
Enjoy volunteering (105)
Stability is important to them. Prefer job security over a higher paycheck (143)
Interested in the arts (137)
Like to travel (142)
FTE working within IT (231), Education (154), Healthcare (125), Manufacturing (147),
Accounting (120) and Financial services (147)

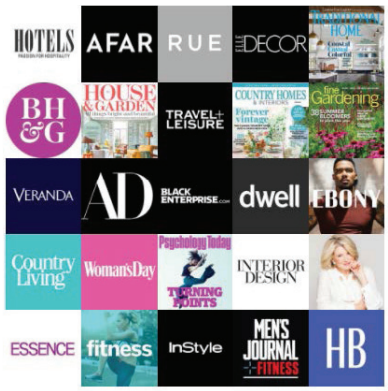
WHAT THEY DO ON LINKEDIN

Make connections (536)
Look for jobs (454)
Engage with content (562)
Follow a company (552)
Watch video content (518)

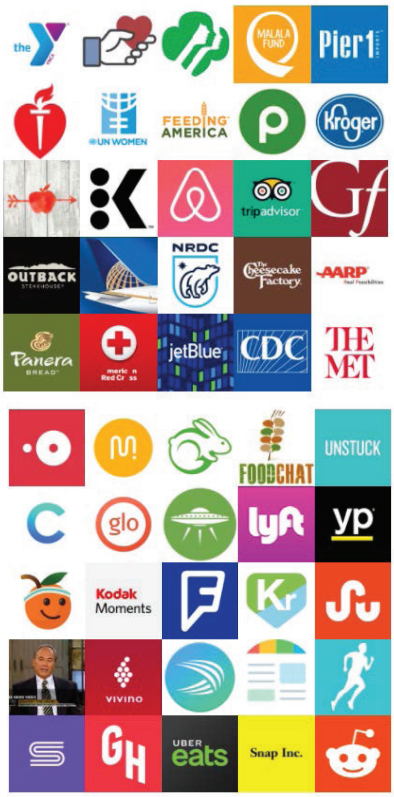
TOP MEDIA



TOP MAGAZINES



TOP PRODUCTS & SERVICES



STAY CONNECTED AND INFORMED

One of Y-USA's goals is to empower Ys through providing new campaign assets and resources, sharing best practices and starting conversations that will help you share ideas across the Movement.

Connect with your colleagues who manage marketing for their Ys in the **Link Marketing Community**.

Y-USA will update this resource annually to keep up with changing trends in social media, Ys' needs and your feedback!

All artwork and imagery used in this document is for visual reference only and should not be extracted from this PDF file.

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