

Most Effective Sweeps Promotion Platform

So, if I asked you which platform - your air, cable, radio, newspaper, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram - is the most efficient and effective place to promote your sweeps piece for the late news what would you answer?

Some of you will probably say "your air." Some may say cable road blocks. A few old timers might actually say radio. (It's definitely NOT radio.)

Nope. It's Facebook!

Here's why, and it's very simple:

- Tens if not hundreds of thousands of Facebook users like your station's page. (If you're station's page is not over 125,000+ likes, then we should have a separate conversation.)
- The majority of users on Facebook are women - the news consumers.
- 60% of those watching TV- whether Netflix, DVR, On Demand or even the decreasing percentage watching "live TV" are second-screening.
- Almost 70% of Facebook users - especially the women - say they're on Facebook either *continuously* or *several times a day* checking their newsfeeds.
- Posting content in your feed is free. Yup, that magic word.
- Facebook sponsored or "paid ads" are cheap and you can geo, gender, socio target them.

Here's what many stations are not doing and they should be: **Posting *real*/content 15 minutes before the newscast with an image/photo promoting the story in the show.** It's every bit as important as the spot you're running in your lead-in. But... we know from our research that it's equally important to do it the right way. So what's most effective?

The Don'ts and then Dos

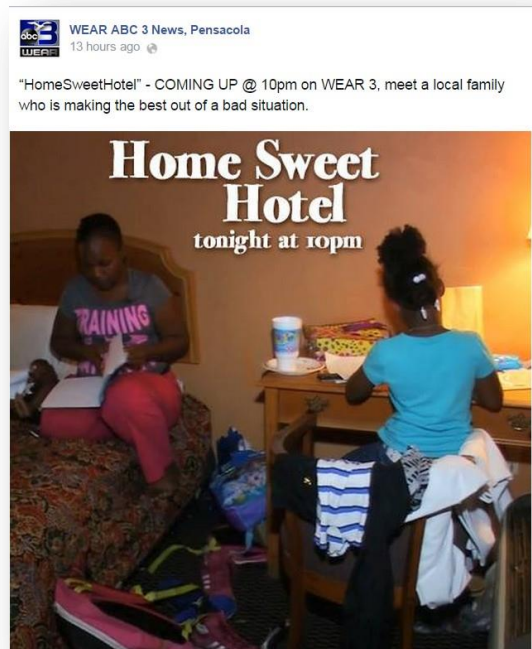
Don't

- ⊗ Don't promote a long list or rundown of the stories.
 - ⊗ Don't only promote hours before the newscast.
 - ⊗ Don't promote cheap crime or vacant house fire stories.
 - ⊗ Don't promote the story everyone else will have. (Keep in mind many FB users follow several stations, so if you're not their favorite and it's a big story, they will check out their favorite channel first.)
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- ⊙ Don't write it in the classic journo lingo - avoid the words like official, dispatcher, PIO, female, male, alleged, life threatening injuries, vehicle, etc.
- ⊙ Don't lead with a cue that it's a promo, e.g., "Tonight at 6."

Do

- ✓ Promote an emotional story that would engage the audience.
- ✓ Write it in a conversational style!
- ✓ Include behind the scenes insight or a nugget of real information so the post itself has value to users.
- ✓ Always have a link to the story or a text preview of the story with some details. Facebook gives preference to placing elements on a user's feed that have links to stories/websites. This *really* is important.
- ✓ Always use an image -- a nice big photo that engages the user works well and gets a higher preference for the feed from Facebook. A great example is the photo and content WEAR in Pensacola posted promoting a story about a family living with their kids in a hotel room. The title itself "Home Sweet Hotel" along with the photo grabs the user's attention and engages the user.
 - Again, whenever possible, add a link to a preview story to help Facebook move your post higher into the feed priority.
- ✓ Facebook edits users' newsfeeds to keep them from being overwhelmed, so if you have two great emotional stories with images, post them both, but create some time separation. Maybe post one 25 minutes before air and the second one 10-15 minutes before air. (Only 10-12 percent of your content may make it into a user's feed. The more often they click to comment, read or share something you post, the better the odds it will be fed more often by Facebook.)



It's a simple process. And do the math. If you have a few hundred thousand liking your page, then the odds are pretty good that many of those are women in the key demos. Again, it may be the most effective way to reach people and remind them to watch your newscast - especially if they're not watching LIVE TV (which is increasingly the case) and won't see any of your promos. Facebook should be a sweeps marketing priority.

If you have any questions or want to delve deeper into your social media strategy, please feel free to contact CJ&N's VP of Digital Strategies, Steve Schwaid at sschwaid@cjni.com or 941-706-1648.

Here are some additional examples of Facebook posts we thought you might find helpful.



Conversational writing, good use of questioning.



This one uses a quote from the story to engage users and video of the promo.



WSMV uses a link and a visual with the tease.



WRCB includes a link and promotes its live streaming as well as on-air.



Conversational writing and a "right now" message.