

Using Social Media as a Recruitment Tool

Social Media is often perceived as being the ultimate means of spreading the word about Lions Clubs and their work in the community making an easy and cost free way of marketing clubs in membership drives. However in reality clubs have often found that their social media output goes largely unnoticed in their communities.

This guidance document aims to resolve that dilemma by outlining the means to make club PR and marketing output more visible.

The headings we'll discuss are:

The benefits of using social media in recruiting.

Getting your social media output noticed and shared by the public

On that topic, it's important to understand that social media is only one constituent that contributes towards any successful recruitment campaign. Clubs must compliment their social media output with their websites, press releases, local radio and word of mouth together in one overall plan

The benefits of using Facebook, Twitter, Instagram etc for normal club activity include

Raising more money - driving visitors to your fundraising page

Driving campaigns & publicity - letting supporters spread the word. Gaining new supporters.

Mobilising grass roots support.

Increasing trust and loyalty - by allowing them to share their voice and communicate directly as well as sharing your club news on other community social media pages.

Engaging with supporters. Having a 2 way conversations with members of the public and interacting with other Lions Clubs and organisations.

Driving traffic to your website. Providing links to your upcoming events pages, news pages and fundraising.

Using social media in a successful recruitment drive incorporates a many of these facets.

The success of club social media output relies upon large numbers of people viewing that output on their phones, tables, work computers etc so preparation towards that goal is all important.

Visibility is Key.

A club's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram page can be actively posting good news about Lions every few days, but if that page is not being seen by the public all that hard work is being wasted. Therefore before any campaign can commence the audience must be built up.

Facebook is still by far the best way of reaching thousands of people within your area and millions worldwide if your postings go viral. Just under 2 billion people log into Facebook globally on a daily basis. The numbers of people of the age range we want to reach. That is 54.8 million in the UK as of April 2020.

A quarter of these are in the 25 to 34 age range.

18.4% in the 35 to 44 age range.

14.8% 45 to 54 age range.

10.7% 55 to 64 age range.

This makes 69% access to the ideal age range for Lions membership.

To reach the largest numbers possible locally you can't rely on your Facebook club page alone. Preparation is the key.

Expanding your reach through Facebook is initially all about Likes, Sharing & Following. These are the 3 main ways of engaging with followers to increase visibility through social media. It's all about making contact with your friends, fellow Lions, fellow Lions Clubs and local voluntary organisations. Also local Facebook Groups are a quick and easy way to get your postings out to thousands of local people. Encourage your friends, fellow Lions, their partners and all you know to 'Like' and 'Follow' your club Facebook page and ask them to share the good news.

Liking - the simple click of the like button at the foot of a Facebook posting. The thumbs up symbol. A single like click will make that 'like' known to all your Facebook 'Friends'. Therefore if I have 174 friends, they will all see that I've clicked on a Farnborough Lions post and they will see it. If they in turn like the same posting their circle of FB friends will see the same thing. A popular posting should expediently increase your reach within a very short time.

As an example, I posted on Farnborough Lions Facebook page a picture of a Portuguese Lions coach displaying a Lions logo on its way to the Ukraine. It bore the simple message 'Lions en route to Ukraine with aid to Ukraine. Within 4 weeks that post had reached 82,500 people worldwide through 12,500 post engagements - likes, comments and shares. But..... that doesn't happen on its own. Increasing your audience to that level of public engagement needs managing.

1st - Encourage your friends to like the posts from your club. You can do this by a simple call to action on newsworthy postings by saying 'like and follow to keep up to date on Your Lions Club'. Also invite clubs in your zone and even further afield to like and follow your FB page encouraging them to like and share your postings.

2nd Start following other Lions Clubs in your area. You can then invite them to follow your page. Likewise like and follow other local organisations FB pages. That will enable you to invite them to like and share your postings as well as interacting and commenting on their posts.

3rd Look up local FB Groups. Many are 'closed groups' which you have to join. Before joining you can read their 'About' information to see what they're community outlook is all about. However the content can't be seen until you join. The majority of groups like this are very community orientated featuring postings such as new residents asking for

recommendations for trades people through to local charities advertising fundraising events etc. These are ideal. They have many thousands of members who regularly view local posts.

As always, in these circumstances you could come across some groups which can best be described as less than desirable. Therefore, a good test is when looking these up, join as an individual. You can then see whether the posts are of the type you'd like your club associated with. Hence if you accidentally join a foul mouthed soap box type group that does nothing more than complain about local issues, you can quietly leave the group and look elsewhere.

In my area I have joined 6 local groups to which I post occasional adverts to promote Lions fundraising and welfare activity promotions. In a few mouse clicks and a little typing I can get the Lions story out to more than 45,000 people locally.

Preparation for your recruitment drive by sharing your club Facebook postings with local community groups is essential. However, it's important to keep it relevant. Community group administrators quickly get fed up with local organisations constantly posting stuff which has little bearing on their locality. Therefore think carefully through what you're posting.

In the preparation phase and throughout your social media posting think who am I targeting?:

- a) People who you would like to support your club with an activity such as fundraising?.
- b) People you as a club can help such as local organisations, charities or individuals who would benefit from the help your club can give. Or... people who can assist you working on a welfare project?
- c) People you would like to recruit into your club. Individuals who are able to offer service to the community through the work of Lions and who could contribute to your club, or..... a mixture of all these facets.

Giving careful consideration to these factors will build up trust, interest and community engagement in your club output. Hence my remark above about keeping it relevant. At the time of writing I am posting updates on what Lions Clubs in Poland and the Ukraine are doing to relieve the suffering caused by the Russian invasion. This is relevant because it is a current ongoing news story, but also because local people have contributed the LCIF Ukraine Appeal through a recent Lions Quiz Night that raised £1000 for LCIF in the Ukraine.

These postings have been popular as they've also been shared by the District 105SC Facebook page. In turn other clubs and their members have shared the news of the relief Lions Clubs in the midst of the troubles are bringing to their communities.

It's easy to post pictures and videos of your club's newsworthy items. Therefore, it's easy to stay current and exploit the interest created by that.

With these aspects in mind, distributing the word about the good works of Lions in your community and further afield will build trust within your locality so the public will want to read your postings, not just scroll past.

That said, the burning question is what can I use that is interesting to fill that level of output?

This is where subscribing to Lions Facebook pages and Groups is a useful source of material. The District website under the Clubs>Marketing tab has a useful page of graphics and leads to Lions videos highlighting projects and recruitment. [Click here](#) to visit this page.

You can quantify the public reaction to your club posting - Page Views, Post reach, New likes, number of shares etc.

Because of the Facebook news algorithm, the more clicks your engaging posts get today, the more visibility and clicks your website links will get tomorrow.

Building trust and links with other community FB pages will increase your visibility through shares and likes.

It's all free. General posts can be done as often as you like without incurring overheads. Paid for advertising is possible which can be targeted at specific demographics and locations fairly cheaply. I know of a small number of clubs who have used Facebook advertising successfully starting at about £5. That said, obvious care is needed when investigating this option.

Local community Facebook pages are an ideal way of increasing your audience.

With all social media postings consider who you are aiming this posting towards:

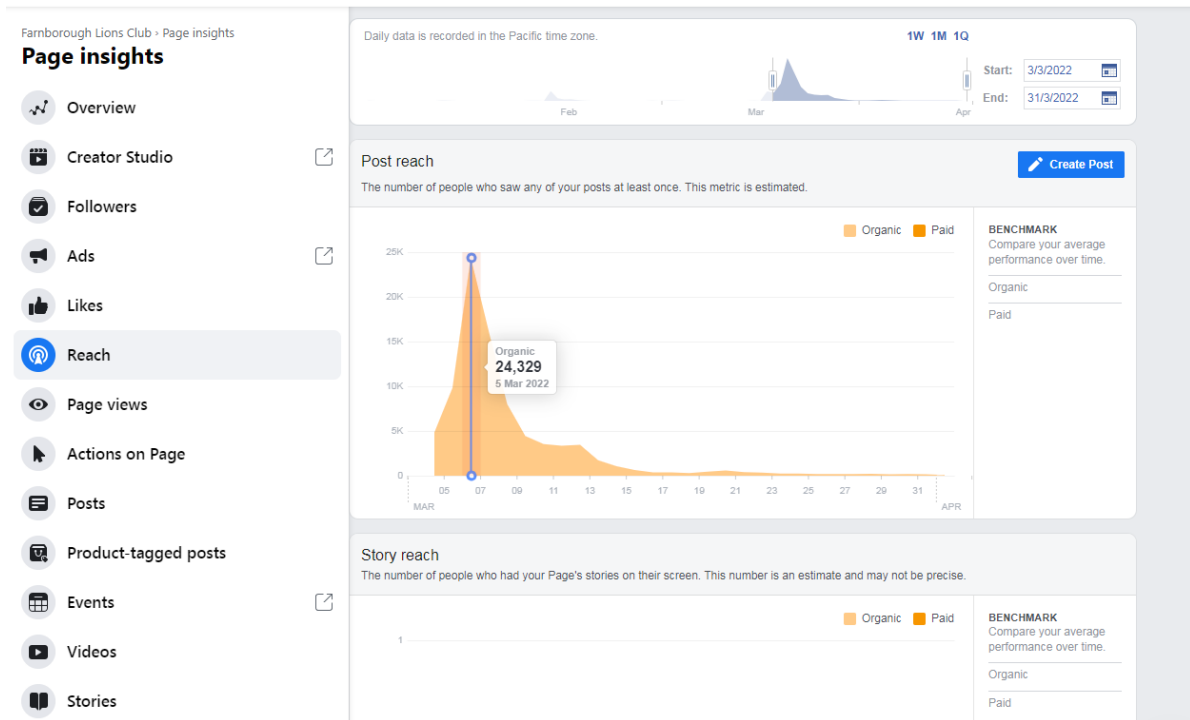
- a) People who you would like to support your club with an activity such as fundraising?
- b) People you as a club can help such as local organisations, charities or individuals who would benefit from the help your club can give. Or... people who can assist you working on a welfare project?
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Clearly the last aspect above is the relevant point to work upon once your initial preparation phase has been completed. During the preparation phase when you've primed friends and fellow Lions to 'Like' and 'Share' your club social media postings, attained a good working relationship with local community Facebook pages and built your audience. This is gauged by the number of likes and shares plus the number of 'reaches', 'engagements' etc.

To view audience reactions, open up your club Facebook page on a laptop or PC. In the 'Manage Page' column on the left click on the 'Insights' tab for a graphical rendition of your page's performance.

Likewise clicking on 'Publishing Tools' will give you a numerical reading of recent posts to let you accurately interpret how your page is growing day by day and what posts prove popular. Screen shots of these 2 views are shown below.

As a rule of thumb, the preparation phase can take about 2 weeks at a minimum if you're making 2 or 3 postings a week and spreading these across multiple local Facebook groups.



Published posts

Posts	Reach	Engagement	Date	Private
A small insight into what Lions Club...	59 People reached	5 Post engagements	30 March 2022 at 16:46	Publ
Our thanks go out to the people of F...	455 People reached	100 Post engagements	20 March 2022 at 15:27	Publ
Farnborough Lions Club updated th...	263 People reached	11 Post engagements	11 March 2022 at 16:47	Publ
Farnborough Lions Club added an e...	100 People reached	4 Post engagements	11 March 2022 at 16:05	Publ
	218 People reached	13 Post engagements	6 March 2022 at 13:00	Publ
	82570 People reached	12499 Post engagements	3 March 2022 at 14:57	Publ
	457	41		

However, if you can make this period a longer duration, all the better. Trust builds up over a long period of time so if your page has a long history of followers this preparation phase can be minimal, your audience is already in place. Therefore, if your page reflects a rising trend in reaches and engagements, you are ready to promote your recruitment campaign.

As part of normal social media output the public may ask questions or make comments about the content. Many of these are just words of encouragement, or perhaps tagging their friends. If a question is asked get your Facebook Administrator to answer it quickly and publicly. In the unlikely event of a negative question or critical comment arising ask the participant to PM (personal message) the Administrator with 'happy to discuss this further' please PM me. That takes any downbeat and or harmful comments out of public view.

Mentioned earlier was the need to keep your other publicity outputs attuned with your social media. Where possible include links to web pages that give a fuller explanation of your post. Ideally this is a page giving the full details of a recent club event. [Click here](#) for an example where the Facebook posting thanked the people of Farnborough for their outstanding support for a Lions Quiz Night held in aid of the LCIF Ukraine Appeal. Include your website links in releases to the local papers.

Alternatively, if your social media posting is about the work of LCIF and you know of a supporting website, include that link in your posting.

Likewise when arranging your Recruitment Evening/Meet the Lions Event or other event type specifically for recruitment ensure you have a dedicated web page with all the details including contact names and numbers, email addresses etc.

Also create a 'Facebook Event' - a calendar feature of Facebook which allows people to list whether they're attending or interested. That will then be sent to all who are 'following' or have 'liked' your page. When they tick the attending or interested box, all their friends will see that event post which they in turn can express their interest.

Another useful source of publicity is your local radio station. Many, especially the commercial stations want to raise their profile in promoting local charities and other local worthy causes. Therefore, as part of your campaign plan look up your local radio websites. Many will have events calendars. These are easy to complete and have the capacity to include a web page. Ensure your webpage is included.

If you have a story of a recent success in your club such as fundraising for a local causes, aid to the less fortunate, helping to house Ukrainian refugees etc, get your Club PRO to write a press release detailing these successes and other Lions activities and wrap these stories into a release promoting your Meet the Lions Event.

Once complete, send that to the local radio station Newsdesk offering a spokesperson from your club to give an interview. While that probably won't get on the 'News', an engaging story could create enough interest to get a feature on a breakfast or mid morning radio show enabling your spokesperson to talk about Lions and promote your recruitment event. A separate media interview guide on how to run radio interviews will follow.

Also forward that press release to the local newspaper, including pictures of successful club events and engaging stories.

Best wishes with your recruitment events. If you'd like further advice, please email the Marketing Team at marketing@lions105sc.org.uk

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