Social media is now a common communication tool used by natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation management agencies and advocacy organizations. Many of these agencies and organizations across the United States have adopted social media, believing it offers an inexpensive way to inform and communicate with their constituencies and the general public. However, very few management agencies and advocacy organizations have used social media to disseminate research findings related to how natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation areas are managed.

This poster reports on lessons learned by the Institute of Outdoor Recreation and Tourism at Utah State University in their efforts to present scientific information to “followers” via social media. We provide a series of best practices and recommendations that management agencies and advocacy organizations can use to present scientific information in ways that understandable, informative and useable.

OVERVIEW & PURPOSE

Social media is now a common communication tool used by natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation management agencies and advocacy organizations. Many of these agencies and organizations across the United States have adopted social media, believing it offers an inexpensive way to inform and communicate with their constituencies and the general public. However, very few management agencies and advocacy organizations have used social media to disseminate research findings related to how natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation areas are managed.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED...

BECOMING A PRESENCE ON FACEBOOK

1. Realize Facebook is the preferred platform for OLDER PEOPLE, not everyone
2. Facebook is a PAY TO PLAY platform.
3. Include your Facebook PAGE LINK everywhere
4. Use PERSONAL FACEBOOK PROFILES to invite friends to like and follow your page
5. Mix up they TYPE OF CONTENT posted. We use posts that:
   - Mention and link to a recent news story
   - Mention and link to a scientific publication
   - Mention and link to research and educational material provided by partner organizations
   - Publicize upcoming events
   - Define outdoor recreation specific terms (e.g., “glamping”)
6. Always include PHOTOS AND VIDEOS with posts
7. ENGAGE with your audience
8. Use HASHTAGS ubiquitously
9. Hold CONTESTS
10. ANALYZE DATA on your posts’ reach and impressions

BRANDING IS EVERYTHING

Your agency/organization must have a CLEAR vision of how they want to be perceived. This vision must be CONSISTENTLY reflected in every form of communication between your agency/organization and your clientelle.

BY THE NUMBERS

74% of U.S. adults use at least one social media platform...

- 71% use Facebook
- 23% use Twitter
- 26% use Instagram
- 28% use Pinterest
- 28% use LinkedIn

Your unique brand should...

- BE SIMPLE
- BE UNIQUE
- resonate with your TARGET AUDIENCE
- BE CONSISTENT across platforms and other types of media