

7 STEPS TO BETTER DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT



BOOSTING DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

continues to be a top-ranking objective for Federal, State, Local, and UK government organizations.

TOPICS — ENGAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

When it comes to creating impact that produces real change for your residents, it's critical to know your audience, capture their attention, and nurture their interest.

Having a strategy that achieves all three takes more than just pressing "send" on an email campaign.

From building a brand to formatting messages, this checklist offers tips and tricks for organizations that want to drive real engagement with their messages, reach ALL audiences, and create better outcomes.



2 IDENTIFY AND SEGMENT THE AUDIENCE

Government organizations reach a wide variety of audiences across varying ages, cultural backgrounds, and locations. Whether speaking to residents, businesses, the media, non-profits, internal employees, or others, knowing details about each of these groups will make it easier to align a communications strategy to their interests, which helps increase the chance of engagement. Asking questions of new subscribers to a newsletter, for example, will help provide valuable information that can inform future communications.

3 BUILD THE POWER OF THE BRAND

Just like in the private sector, a brand embodies what people think of an organization through an image. But while a strong brand translates to profits in the private sector, public sector branding translates to increased trust. Developing services that create a unified experience for the public helps build that trustworthy brand. Proactive communications and transparency present two major ways to drive this change. But any audience interaction is an opportunity to promote and strengthen your organization's brand. Consistent use of logos and a color palette throughout the subscription process and in all outbound messages can help create unity in the experience.

4 SEND MESSAGES THAT GET READ

Reaching audiences has never been easier thanks to the variety of ways that technology allows residents to interact with their government. But for that same reason, the chance to make a positive impact through messaging is a short one. Concise messages with clean, clear design will make content easier to digest for readers on the go. Cut down the text, increase the font size, and use large links or buttons so calls-to-action are easier to "click" when read on a mobile device.

5 MORE CHANNELS, MORE ENGAGEMENT

While email still takes a strong presence in digital engagement, the impact of social media and text messaging are critical considerations for any communications strategy. Audiences expect timely, relevant information as soon as possible in the channels where they are most likely to see and engage with it. Using a multi-channel outreach and engagement strategy expands the audience, helps build and maintain a unified message and brand, and enhances the combined power of messaging.

1 IDENTIFY AND ALIGN MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES WITH COMMUNICATIONS

Knowing the goal is crucial to starting a strategy in a positive direction. So start by defining what success means to you, your team, and your organization. Setting a baseline gives your organization a measurable outcome to benchmark against. Make sure any objectives are realistic and attainable. The efficacy of your communications and how they engage your audience will determine your success in reaching these targets. But a communications strategy can't begin without a clear reason for the strategy in the first place.

7 ANALYZE, RINSE, REPEAT

Data is the difference between fact and opinion. It shows how your communications are contributing to the success of your objectives. Test subject lines, email content, the number of images used – anything in messages that may impact engagement. A/B testing can feature, for example, a message where 50% of the audience receives a shorter subject line to see which group opens more messages.

6 ENGAGE, THEN RE-ENGAGE

Audiences are most engaged during the initial subscription signup and when receiving their first welcome email or text message. Engagement can drop for a variety of reasons. That's why new communication touch points that remind audiences why they originally subscribed will help build increased overall engagement. Identify inactive audience members who haven't opened or clicked a recent message, and send a targeted message promoting new information on a related topic of interest.



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