



## Give-Education Social Media Guide

Give-Education is a movement borne out of and fueled by social media. Created as a response to both the decadence of Thanksgiving and the overt consumerism of Black Friday and Cyber Monday, Give-Education challenges people to use social media for good and crack open their wallets to help their communities instead of buying *stuff*. So, to make Give-Education really work for your nonprofit, you're going to have to harness the power of social media.

In this guide, we'll discuss strategy, tips and best practices for using social media on Give-Education Day.

### Give-Education Day Content development

The first thing your nonprofit needs to do to get a jump on Give-Education Day is create content. To optimize your social media marketing and drive traffic to your Give-Education page, here's what you'll need:

#### Video

Having a video could be the difference between a successful day and a ho-hum day. That's because videos, in addition to giving your nonprofit a bold and impactful way to make your case for why people should donate on Give-Education Day, perform well on social media. Facebook's algorithm *loves* videos and prioritizes them in users' feeds. That means that you'll get more organic (or *unpaid*) reach and more bang for your buck if you pay to advertise it. You don't need a film crew and a huge budget to make a compelling video. In many cases, all you need is a smartphone and some free video editing tools like YouTube Editor or Kizoa. It's also the perfect opportunity to engage a volunteer videographer. Put a call out on social media or have your

volunteer coordinator do some legwork to find a capable volunteer who can help you create a video for Give-Education Day.

## **Photos**

Across all social media platforms, photos perform better than text or links alone. So to grab users' attention on social media and keep it on Give-Education, you'll need to gather photos that help tell the story of your nonprofit's work.

## **Share graphics**

A “share graphic” is an image that works to drive engagement on social media. The purpose of share graphics is to inspire and encourage shares, retweets, regrams and drive traffic to both your social media accounts and your Give-Education page. The thing to keep in mind with shared graphics is what will inspire your audience to share them. Consider what your followers might be interested in sharing with their friends, what a graphic would say about them to others, and what would be appealing for them to post to their own social media accounts. You can keep it simple by creating graphics with text overlays (Canva is a great tool for this) or you can kick it up a notch by working with a graphic designer to create an infographic (Fivrr is a great place to find graphic designers who will create one-off pieces at a low cost).

## **Testimonials**

Testimonials are important to nonprofit fundraising because they show the human impact of the work you do and give the public stories they can personally relate to. A story of how your nonprofit helped someone in need is much more powerful than numbers or statistics. So you'll want to collect testimonials to use on Give-Education — you can use them in a variety of ways (videos, share graphics, link/text posts, photos) and they can be powerful tools for driving traffic and donations. Do some digging to pinpoint stories that might make good testimonials and start reaching out.

Some of these pieces of content require a fair amount of time to put together. With that in mind you'll want to give yourself plenty of lead time to gather and build content. These pieces of content will be important tools to drive traffic to your Mightycause page and engage your audience so it's worth taking the extra time to make sure you've got thoughtful, high-quality content to share with your supporters.

## Social media strategy for Give-Education Day

There is an overwhelming number of social media platforms available and new ones are popping up all the time. Just when your nonprofit got the hang of creating Vines, they discontinued it, and Snapchat's all the rage. So instead of detailing each and every platform you *could use* on Give-Education we'll discuss social media strategy that can be applied to the platforms of your choice.

### Use your time and energy wisely

Take a look at your online audience. Where is your online community most active? Where do you have the most followers? That's where you'll want to direct most of your energy. Go where your audience is. If your biggest and most engaged audience is on Twitter, don't spend your time focusing on Instagram. Don't expend energy trying to figure out how to use Snapchat to fundraise on Give-Education if that's never proven effective for you before. Stick with what works.

### Set aside a budget for advertising

Social media advertising is inexpensive and surprisingly powerful. For a fraction of the cost of a print ad, you can reach thousands of users on social media. How much your nonprofit spends on advertising is up to you and your budget, but we highly recommend setting aside *some money* for advertising on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. (Tip: You can create ads for Facebook and Instagram simultaneously through Facebook Ads Manager.) Here's what we suggest:

- **Boost posts:** On Facebook, you can strategically pay to boost your posts to get more reach. Pay to boost your heavy-hitting content on Give-Education to have a greater impact. Even \$10-\$15 can help your post reach thousands more people than it would organically.
- **Create pre-Give-Education ads:** Let people know you're participating this year and build hype for your campaign with ads leading up to the big day! You could get creative before the event and run an ad with a link to a Give-Education page on your website where you tease your campaign and encourage people to sign up for emails.
- **Target your ads:** Facebook, Twitter and Instagram all make free targeting tools available to you so that you can make sure the ads you're paying for reach the

people you want. Make sure you understand how to use them and check that your ads are reaching the right people.

## **Social media tips for Give-Education**

### **Internal workflow**

Managing social media can seem to outsiders like it would be fun, but it's a real job and it can be a fairly stressful one at that ... *especially* on a high-stakes day like Give-Education! There are ways you can manage your social media internally that will make the day run smoother so you can keep calm and fundraise on.

### **Appoint a social media manager**

If your nonprofit has a dedicated social media manager, this is an easy and obvious choice. But if you don't have a full-time staffer who manages your social media accounts, you'll need to appoint one. Often nonprofits will simply hand off control of their social media accounts to the youngest staffers at their organizations, but unless those youngsters have fundraising, marketing, communications and customer service experience, that can be a huge mistake. Make sure the person you appoint is up to the task and understands your nonprofit's message, goals, and strategy for Give-Education. Your social media manager will be in charge of making sure that posts fire when they should, supporters receive a speedy response to any questions or issues, comments are responded to politely and promptly, and for live-posting updates about milestones and anything that cannot be scheduled in advance. If you have the human resources, this manager can also delegate responsibilities as needed.

### **Schedule anything you can in advance**

Twitter's Tweetdeck and Facebook's Publishing Tools both allow you to schedule posts in advance. *Take advantage of these tools!* You can also use tools like Hootsuite and Buffer to schedule social media for Give-Education Day ahead of time. Scheduling as much as you can in advance will allow you to manage your time better on Give-Education Day, avoid any silly mistakes like typos or broken links, easily coordinate posts across multiple platforms, and focus your attention on engaging with your followers rather than scrambling to get posts up.

### **Meet regularly**

You can keep everyone on the same page and make sure nothing important slips through the cracks by meeting with your team regularly. You may want to caucus every other week leading up to Give-Education Day and bump it up to weekly as the big day approaches, or add some time to an existing standing meeting, but the important thing is to bite the bullet and *have the meeting*. We recommend sending out agendas to keep your meetings on-track and distributing notes afterward (because it's easy to forget what was said in a meeting). Meeting will ensure that your team is communicating and working together toward your Give-Education Day goals.

## **Tips for Success**

It's tempting to look for "hacks" to increase your nonprofit's social media visibility when you have so much riding on Give-Education Day, but the truth is that you can't cheat the system. However, there are guidelines you can use to make sure your posts are seen and things you can do to make sure you're maximizing your impact on social media.

## Pre-Give-Education Day

### **Analyze your social media activity**

Social media platforms give you free tools you can use to track your performance on social media so *put them to use*. It's easier to clone past success than go back to the drawing board, so take a look at your social media performance for the past year, or at least the last quarter. What posts or tweets performed best? Can you identify anything they all have in common? What time of the day are your social media accounts most active (Facebook Insights and Twitter Analytics tell you)? Is there a type of content or post that gets more attention than others? Find the bright spots in your social media history and work to replicate them!

### **Focus on getting followers**

Take a look at all of your channels of communication with your supporters. How are you urging your donors to follow you on social media? Do you have links to your social media accounts in all of your e-blasts? Are you plugging your social media accounts in your mailers? Do you have prominent links to your social media accounts on your website? Have you ever paid for an ad with the CTA to like your page or follow your account? Do all of your volunteers know about your social media accounts, and are they being asked to follow them? Are your employees linking to your social media accounts in their email signatures? Do an audit of what you're already doing to get social media followers and fill in any gaps you find.

### **Get to know your audience**

Social media collects data about its users, and much of that data is available to your nonprofit at no cost. On Facebook, take a look at People in Insights to see what kinds of people are following you and engaging with your posts. You might be surprised with the results! Knowing where most of your followers are located can help with ad targeting, and demographics (such as gender and age) can help you figure out how to best talk to your social media audience. For instance, if 70% of your Facebook followers are women between the ages of 45-54, a testimonial from another woman around the same age might resonate more with them.

### **Look to the experts for inspiration**

Odds are, there is a national organization or at least a larger organization working in the same area of the nonprofit sector as your organization. Local animal shelters and rescue groups have The Humane Society of the United States, Best Friends Animal Sanctuary, and the ASPCA as national counterparts. Food banks have hunger relief organizations like Feeding America, Bread for the World, and World Food Programme addressing hunger on a larger scale. Environmental nonprofits have Greenpeace, the Sierra Club and The Ocean Conservancy working on the same issues. And so on. You may not have their huge staff, operating budgets or followers, but you can peek at their social media and see what they do — what works well for them? Is there something they're doing over and over? What kinds of stories do they tell? What CTAs do they use? How are they talking about the issues? Study the big dogs and get inspiration from their social media presence.

### **Post consistently**

Running a nonprofit is busy work and we know that social media can often take a backseat to making sure your day-to-day operations are running smoothly (and occasionally putting out fires). But social media is about building a relationship with your followers — and you can only build that relationship by being a constant presence in their feed. So make sure you're posting regularly leading up to Give-Education Day, and beyond that, responding to comments and getting involved in conversations. Not only will this make your followers sit up and pay attention to what you post on Give-Education Day, the fact that they have shown an interest in your posts will make the platform more likely to show your posts to them

### ***What to post***

### **Links to your Give-Education page**

Seriously, *don't forget about this!* No matter what you're posting, make sure you have a link to your Give-Education page! Each and every time!

## **Videos — Facebook Loves Them!**

We discussed how important videos are to your Give-Education campaign above, and part of the reason is that Facebook loves videos. Facebook prioritizes videos in users' feeds, which means you'll get more organic reach. Facebook specifically rewards videos that have been uploaded directly to Facebook with prioritization and increased reach (as opposed to links to YouTube or Vimeo videos). While you don't have to have more than one edited video for Facebook, think about how you can incorporate videos into your posting schedule. Lo-fi videos captured on smartphones like quotes or interviews with your staff, a virtual tour of your facilities, or impromptu testimonials from people who visit your facility (make sure to get them to sign a release!) can be effective and easy to execute.

## **Peeks behind the curtain**

As much as it's important to maintain a professional, respectable image, people *love* behind-the-scenes looks at operations. Whether it's a movie set or a nonprofit, people enjoy seeing things they wouldn't see in their everyday lives. For example, one of our Community Engagement Specialists at Mightycause was a social media manager for an animal shelter. Some of the most popular content on their Facebook page was videos of staff doing their jobs. Things like walking dogs and brushing cats, volunteers doing dishes and loads of laundry, tours of the dogs and cats in the kennel. These were everyday things that didn't seem particularly compelling to staff that saw those things happening. But since most people don't get to see the work that goes into caring for animals at a shelter, it was fascinating to the shelter's followers on social media. And it builds a sense of trust and transparency, which inspires people to donate.

## **Images**

You have a lot to compete with on social media. The average Facebook user has 338 friends, which doesn't even include Facebook Pages they follow. A great way to get people to *stop scrolling and pay attention* is by posting an eye-catching image. You don't need to be shocking or controversial; high-quality images that help tell the story of what your nonprofit does are all that's needed.

## **Thank yous**

You know that “thank you” is so important in fundraising, and social media is no exception. Be sure to thank your social media audience for spreading the word about your Give-Education fundraising efforts and helping you reach your funding goals. Get creative — you can say *thank you* in many ways, such as creating an image to thank your followers, going around with a smartphone and recording staff members and volunteers saying thank you, etc.

## ***When to post***

### **Kickoff**

Let everyone know that Give-Education has begun!

### **Milestones**

Post when your nonprofit reaches a fundraising milestone: The first \$500, the first \$1,000 and so on. Seeing that your campaign is picking up steam can build excitement on social media!

### **Peak hours for your nonprofit on social media**

The truth is that there are no hard-and-fast rules about “the best time to post.” There has been some research on when it’s best to post on social media that you can use as a starting point but remember! They’re not rules. To figure out what’s best for your nonprofit, you’ll have to look at your analytics. You’ll probably find that it varies between platforms. You can test posting at different times to monitor what times your audience is most likely to respond.

### **Final hour**

Plan to make a push for donations during the final hour of Give-Education. A deadline creates urgency. It can be the push some people need to actually pull out their wallets and donate. So don’t be afraid to lay it on a little thick! Let your followers know how much time is left and how far you are from your funding goal.

## **Social Media Do’s and Don’ts**



**Do:**

### **Keep it short and sweet**

Social media is fast-moving and people generally will not read novella-length posts. If you need to expand on a point, do it elsewhere (like your blog, website or Give-Education page). You can then share the link with your social media followers.

### **Be authentic**

Most people on social media don't like to be advertised to so stay away from sounding like you're pitching a product on Give-Education and focus on telling your story and connecting with your audience.

### **Be available**

Social media is interactive, so in order to avoid *talking at* your followers, you will need to be available to *talk to* them. Your point person should be responding quickly to messages, responding to comments and engaging online during Give-Education.

### **Be human**

Your nonprofit is made up of people. Your nonprofit helps people. So let the human side of your work be present in your social media accounts. Be real, be funny, be humble, be empathetic, be kind. Be the kind of person you'd want to follow on social media. Don't be afraid to introduce your social media audience to the people who pull the strings behind the curtain! When people get to know your nonprofit and trust you, they will be more likely to donate. Seeing the "human side" of your nonprofit makes people feel personally invested in your success.

### **Go beyond the "ask"**

Have you ever had a friend that only contacts you when they need something? Annoying, isn't it? Well, that's what it can feel like when a nonprofit does nothing *but* ask on social media. Don't be so focused on asking that you forget to build relationships. Post things that might interest your audience, let them know what's happening at your nonprofit, have conversations, allow your followers to share their thoughts, *ask questions*.

## **Use the #GiveEducation2024 hashtag**

It's the easiest way to be part of the Give-Education conversation!

### **Don't:**

#### **Be afraid to ask**

It's always surprising to find that people in the nonprofit sector sometimes skirt around directly asking for help because it can feel uncomfortable, but it happens a lot. It's important to overcome that fear of asking. Ask directly and sincerely for help. If you don't ask for help, you won't receive it. Your social media followers *want to help you* — that's why they follow you! Remember that fundraising isn't about begging; it's about asking. You may think it's obvious the you're posting a link where they can donate because you want donations, but *you need to ask*. Never leave out the ask!

#### **Spam your followers**

This has more to do with *what* you post than *how often* you post. Don't go crazy with hashtags. Never tag a slew of your followers. And don't start direct messaging people out of the blue or post a bunch of memes without comment. These are *quick* ways to lose followers and damage relationships.

#### **Post without purpose**

We all have a friend on social media who posts things just to post, right? Don't be that friend who posts poorly thought-out nonsense just for the sake of posting. Make sure you always have a purpose behind what you post. Whether you have an obvious CTA like donate or a more ambiguous purpose like engagement, check yourself before you post. Ask yourself, "Why am I posting this?" If the answer is, "Because we haven't posted in awhile," don't post it.

#### **Be unprofessional**

It's fine to use abbreviations, a million emojis, and slang when you're posting on your personal social media accounts or texting friends, but on your nonprofit's social media? Don't even think about it! You don't have to post in AP style, but make sure you use proper spelling and grammar. Being *too* informal can damage your credibility and reputation.

## Get bogged down by technical questions

There is no magic number of times per day to post on social media, no witching hour for posting that will guarantee that your post goes viral, no secret hack to cracking Facebook's algorithm. Social media managers that are all about numbers and science don't tend to do a very good job. So just don't worry about it. Use whatever knowledge you can find in your social media analytics. Follow best practices. Focus on delivering authentic, high-quality content and building relationships with your social media audience.

There really aren't many "tricks" to being awesome at social media. But, using the information provided here, you can utilize social media to make your Give-Education campaign a runaway success.

## Sample Social Media Templates

Feel free to use these samples as starting points for developing your own call-to-action. Remember, you know your mission and your audience best, so lean on your expertise and knowledge of your audience to craft a message that speaks directly to them. In general, **give your donors a clear challenge that they can help you solve, and make your ask direct and clear.**

### EXAMPLE 1 – Short Social Media Blurbs

- It's "Give-Education Day!" Help **Alumni High School** continue to provide **XYZ** with your gift of \$25, \$50, or even \$100! **<Link>**
- **During #GiveEducation2024, we need to raise \$5,000 to purchase XYZ. <LINK>**
- Your \$125 gift right now will help ensure our students have access to **XYZ**. Donate your most generous gift now and join our work! **<LINK>**

### EXAMPLE 2 - Story

We need your support and so does XYZ student/family. **<share a short testimonial or story of grant impact>**.

**Your gift of \$25 will support students and families like **ABC** with **XYZ**. While there are many things that we worry about on a daily basis, a quality education shouldn't be one of them.**

Together we can make sure that every student achieves success. Thank you for your generous support!

### EXAMPLE 3 – Specific Project Request

How have **XYZ Schools** helped shape you? If you have the **Alumni Spirit** racing through you, we need your kindness and generosity to ensure our future alumni achieve success.

**For Give Education Day, we need to raise \$3,000.** Through the end of this year, the team at **Alumni High School Education Foundation** will be creating Care Packages for students. These Care Packages will be filled with nonperishable snacks, activity books, toothbrushes, and toothpaste. We want to make sure our students have what they need to be successful in online schooling.

Each care package costs \$10 to create, so please consider a **donation of \$20 or more** today!