AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB℠

MARKETING

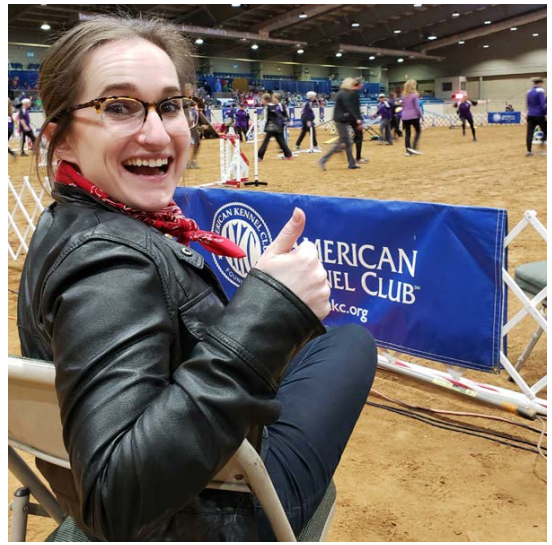
Marketing Your AKC Club & Events

MICHELE BOVÉ

Marketing Director

AURORA GREENBERG

Senior Brand Marketing Specialist



CODY BARR

Social Media Manager

Agenda

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Digital Marketing Overview

- What is digital marketing?
- Why is digital marketing important?
- Digital marketing benefits and channels

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- Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

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What is Digital Marketing?

Digital Marketing is any form of marketing that uses an electronic device or the Internet. Digital channels include search engines, social media, email, and websites to connect with the “audience(s)” you want to reach.

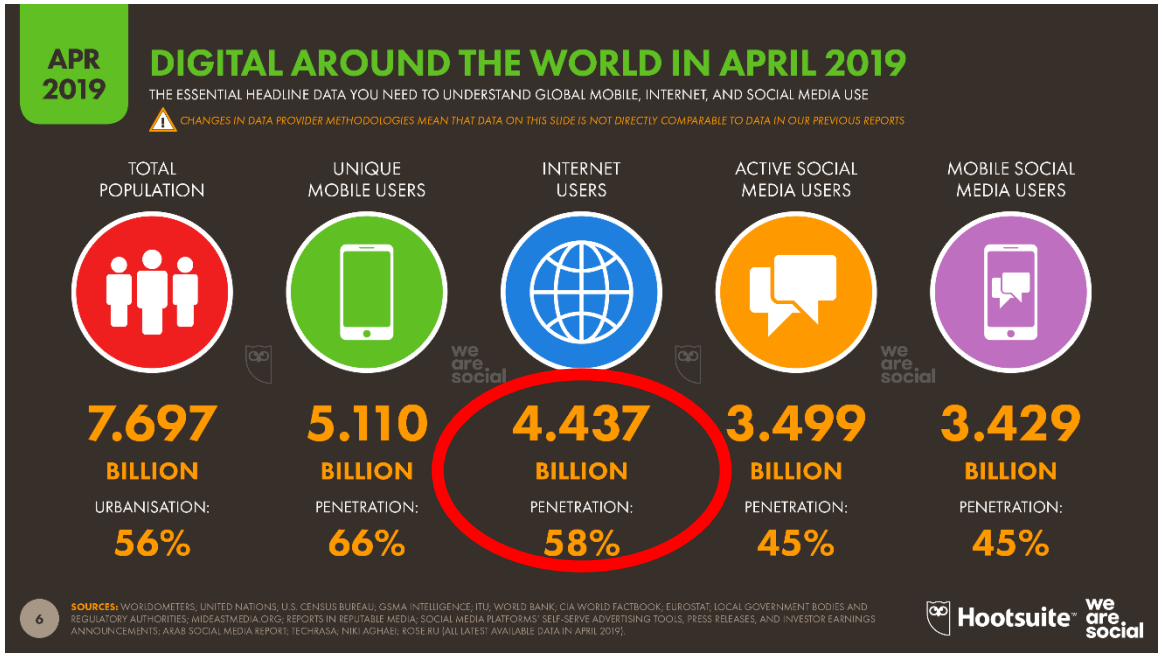
Why is Digital Marketing Important?

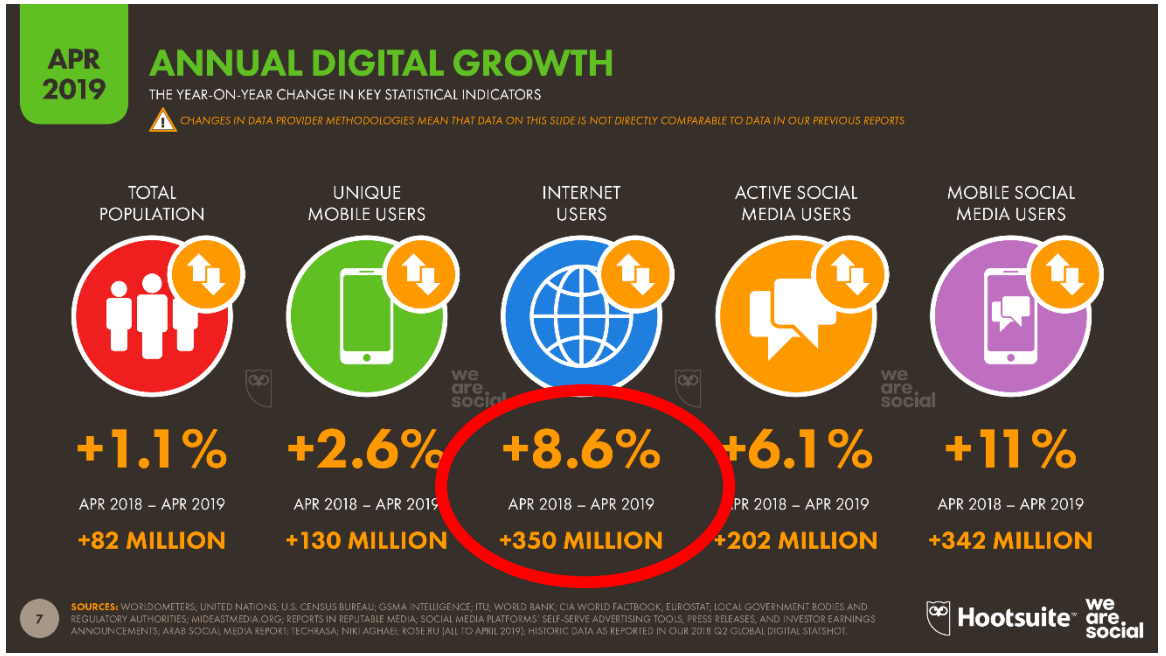
The world is becoming increasingly digital. People are consuming content faster every day.

Over 5 billion Google searches are made every day (Search Engine Land).

From 2010 to 2019, Internet use has grown from 52% to 90% of U.S. Adults (Pew Research 2019).

79% of Americans have a social media profile (Statista 2019).





What Are The Benefits of Digital Marketing?

- **Reach a Large Audience and Build Awareness of Your Club or Event**
  - Engage with the public on an ongoing basis
  - Increase dog owner awareness of your Club or Event
  - Drive traffic to your Club or Event website
- **Connect with Target Audience(s) Where They Are – Irrespective of Time and Place**
- **Ability to Personalize Your Messaging/Content for Your Target Audience(s)**
- **Opportunity to Showcase Your Club's Expertise Through Content**
- **Barrier to Entry is Low – Anyone Can Get Started/Implement**
  - Digital marketing can be more cost-effective than traditional marketing – you set the budget (spend as little or much as you decide)
- **Response/Engagement for Digital Campaigns Can Be Monitored in Real-Time**
  - Ability to "test and learn" and analyze to determine what is working (i.e. driving website traffic, engagement, entries, membership) and make adjustments quickly

Digital Marketing Channels

Research & Analysis

Obtaining feedback and analyzing your digital marketing campaigns metrics enable you to better understand the needs of your target audiences(s) and measure the success of your events and programs.

- **Market Research –** surveys give you an opportinuty to see what worked and didn't work for an event, plus gain continuous member feedback.
- **Digital Metrics –** Measure the success of your marketing via Google Analytics and email, social media, and online advertising reporting tools.

Website & Landing Pages

A website or standalone landing page provides a central location to drive traffic from your digital marketing campaigns.

- **Website –** gives you credibility and a way to showcase your Club's expertise, history, events, and community outreach.
- You can continuously educate the public, as well as add contact/email info capture to aid your other marketing efforts.

Online Advertising

Online or digital advertising is targeting specific users based on their demographics/search history across digital platforms with your messaging or ads.

- **Online advertising –** includes search engine marketing (SEM), display ads on websites and video and streaming (OTT) networks, remarketing, SMS text messages, and sponsored ("native") content on other websites, etc.

Content Marketing & SEO

- **Content Marketing** – creation and distribution of content across your digital channels to engage your target audience(s). This includes articles/blogs, videos, infographics, eBooks, checklists, interviews, and social media posts.
- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO)** – process of optimizing content on your website, so it shows up in search results in search engines like Google.

Social Media Marketing

- **Social Media Marketing (organic social) –** utilization of social media channels (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter) as a free marketing tool.
- **Paid social -** paying to display ads to social media users based on profile/demographic info to raise visibility and encourage on-site engagement, clicks to website, or event sign-ups.

Email Marketing

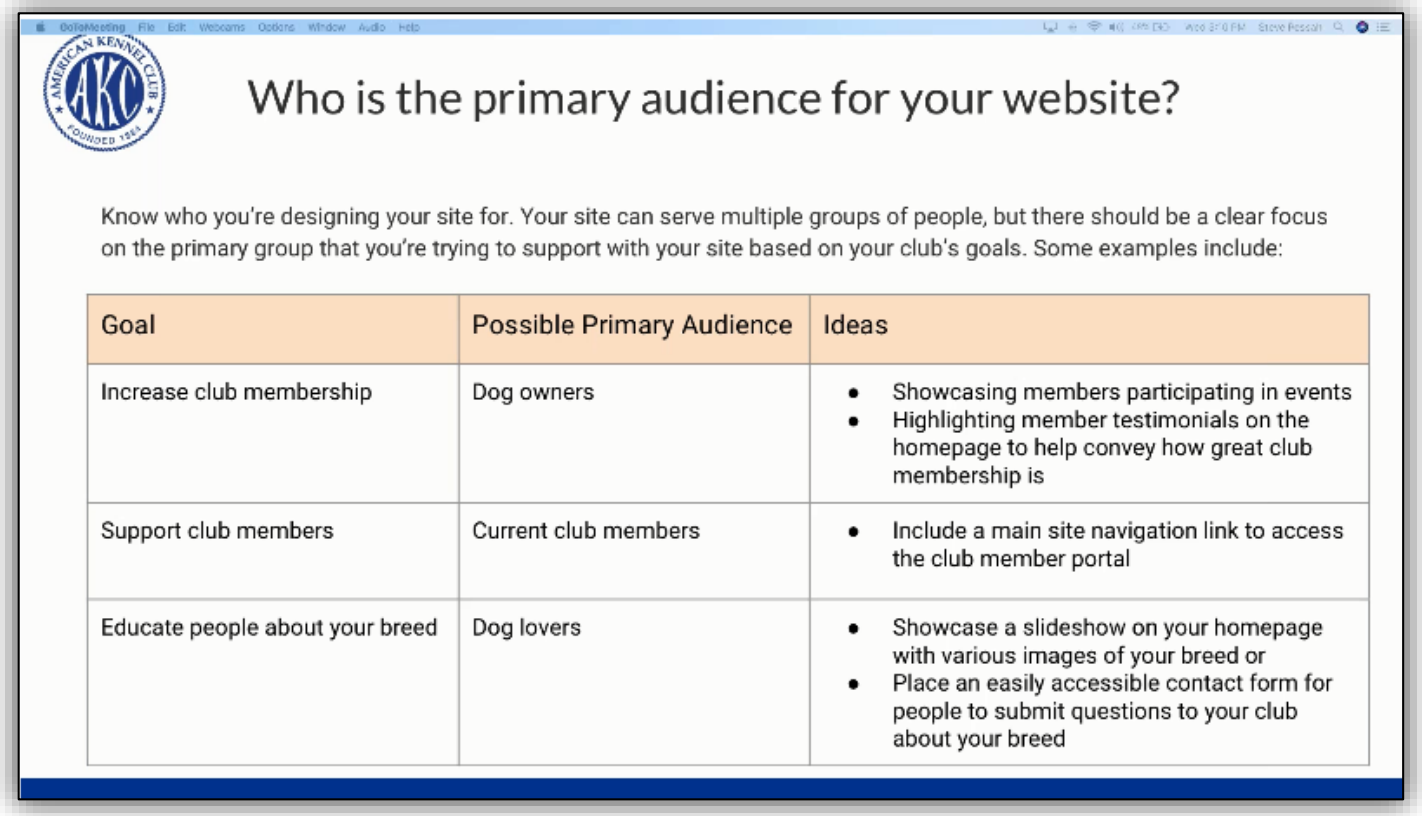
Email allows you to keep in touch with members and potential exhibitors on a consistent basis. "It's the most cost-effective solution to reach members where they are everyday—their inbox" (Business 2 community).

- **Email Marketing –** includes member emails, newsletters, event announcements, confirmation emails, and general outreach to targeted audiences

Content Marketing – Club/Event Website Tips

Your website is often the first interaction someone has with your Club or Event – make a good impression.

- ❑ **Remove/Update Outdated Info – Keep Website Content Up-to-Date and Relevant to Visitors**
  - ❑ Add event info as soon as available and on an ongoing basis
  - ❑ Include contact info, membership criteria, upcoming events
  - ❑ Photos and video content make your site more engaging
  - ❑ You can easily embed AKC intro sport videos on your website: https://akc.tv/watch/4/2026/series/intro-to-akc
- ❑ **Educate Your Website Visitors**
  - ❑ Include info about dog shows, canine sports, event etiquette, training tips, and upcoming classes and events
  - ❑ If a Parent or Specialty club, cover FAQs about your breed
  - ❑ Create an FAQ section for common exhibitor and spectator queries (e.g. events offered, costs, directions, closing dates)



Who is the primary audience for your website?

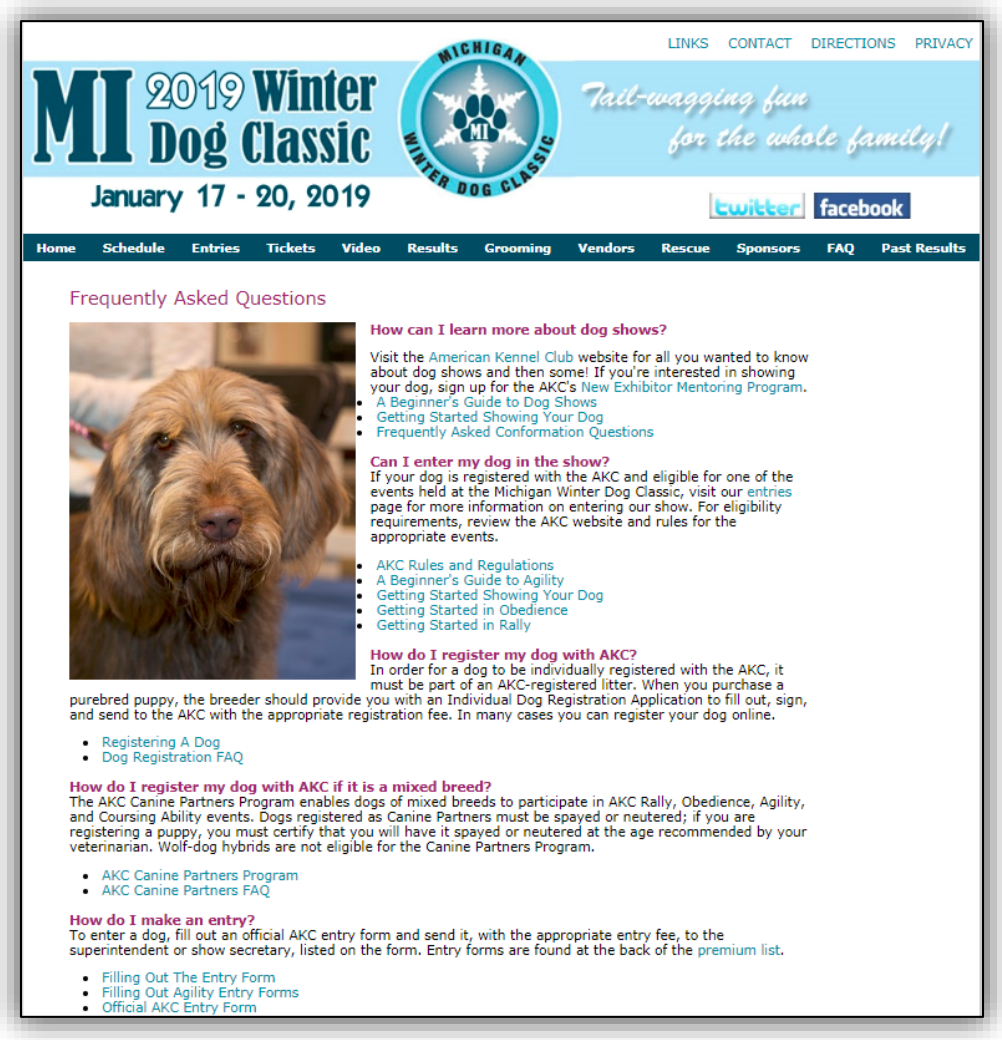
Know who you're designing your site for. Your site can serve multiple groups of people, but there should be a clear focus on the primary group that you're trying to support with your site based on your club's goals. Some examples include:

Goal	Possible Primary Audience	Ideas
Increase club membership	Dog owners	• Showcasing members participating in events • Highlighting member testimonials on the homepage to help convey how great club membership is
Support club members	Current club members	• Include a main site navigation link to access the club member portal
Educate people about your breed	Dog lovers	• Showcase a slideshow on your homepage with various images of your breed or • Place an easily accessible contact form for people to submit questions to your club about your breed

Source: Website Best Practices (November 28, 2018) – Steve Pessah, AKC Director of Digital Product

Content Marketing – Club/Event Website Examples

- **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)s:**
  - http://www.themichiganwinterdogclassic.com/faq.htm
  - https://houstondogshows.com/visitors/
- **Exhibitor Info:**
  - http://rosecityclassic.org/exhibitor-info-and-parking/
  - https://www.oksummercanineolympics.com/
- **Club Website:**
  - https://www.grca.org/
  - http://www.greenwichkc.org
  - https://www.wenatcheekennelclub.com/



Content Marketing – SEO

80% of people use search engines to find local information (Google/Ipsos MediaCT/Purchased)

. . . and 75% of people never scroll past the first page of search results.

Content marketing is one of the best ways to increase awareness of your Club/Event, but searchers need to be able to find your content.

While distributing content across your digital channels can help you reach your current audience, ranking in search engine search results (SERP) enables you to reach new people who could benefit from your expertise and attend your events.

What is Search Engine Optimization (SEO)?

Search Engine Optimization (SEO) is the practice of optimizing your content for search.

- ❑ Write great content: Google looks for pages that contain high-quality, relevant information about a searcher's query. Emphasize quality over quantity – but copy length does matter. Aim for at least 1,200 words for "informational, explainer, and about us" content.
- ❑ Make sure your page has header tags (e.g. H1 and H2) and they should include the "main or focus keyword" for that specific page, which is the "word or phrase" that briefly/succinctly indicates to the reader the content/subject of that page
- ❑ Fix or redirect broken links – and page URLs should use dashes instead of underscores

Resources

- ❑ MOZ Beginner Guide to SEO: **https://moz.com/beginners-guide-to-seo**
- ❑ How to Create Perfectly Optimized Content: **https://www.searchenginejournal.com/seo-guide/anatomy-of-perfectly-optimized-content/**
- ❑ SEMrush SEO Fundamentals Course (free): **https://www.semrush.com/academy/courses/14/info**

Email Marketing – Advantages

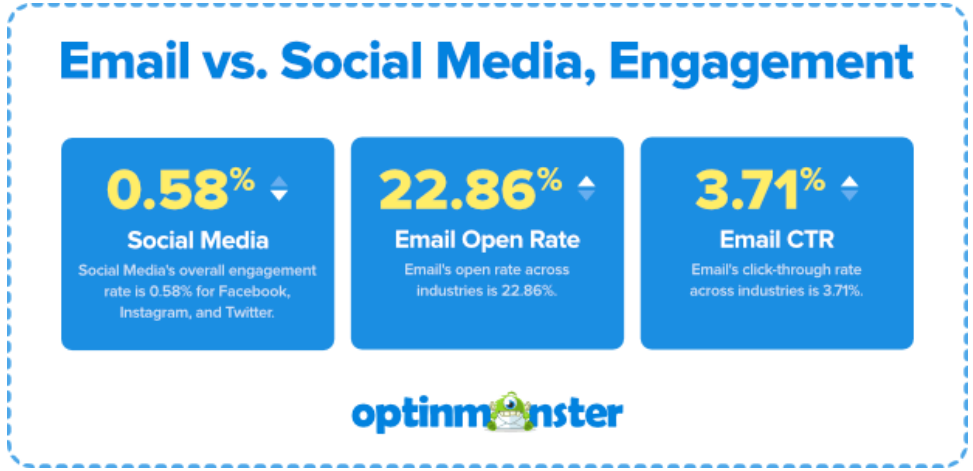
Email Marketing is the use of email to develop relationships with current and potential exhibitors and members, as well as the public/community. Relevance, personalization, and send frequency are key factors.

91% of U.S. Adults like to receive promotional emails from companies they do business with (MarketingSherpa).

Email is almost 40 times more effective than Facebook and Twitter combined in helping businesses acquire new customers (McKinsey).

Email Marketing Advantages:

- ❑ Price and Ease: email is an inexpensive way to market your Event or Club compared to many other types of marketing.
- ❑ Reach: people are more likely to see an email than a social media post. However, beware of sending too much email!
- ❑ Personalization: recipients are more likely to respond to/take action on emails that look like they have been specifically tailored to them and their interests
- ❑ Testing Options: Ability to segment your email list to better target users, as well as A/B test subject lines, your email creative, or call-to-actions to see which versions are most successful.
- ❑ Reporting: email offers real-time metrics reporting, such as open rates, click-through-rates, and conversions to measure success.



Email Marketing – Design Tips

More than half (56%) users open emails on their mobile devices, and up to 80% will delete an email that does not display correctly on their mobile device.

❑ Email Recipients Should Be Able to Quickly Scan Email & Understand the Info It Includes

- ❑ Keep your email design simple. An email's layout should help the recipient understand what information they should read first and where their eyes should go next. Headlines and images can help focus attention.
  - ❑ Keep your email under 600 pixels wide, so it renders properly across most devices (e.g. desktop, tablet, mobile)
  - ❑ Use a mobile-friendly or responsive email template
  - ❑ Use email-safe fonts that are supported across different ESPs: **https://templates.mailchimp.com/design/typography/**

❑ Brand Your Emails to Build Trust with Recipients

- ❑ Include your logo and link to your Club/Event website and social media accounts (e.g. Facebook, Instagram)
- ❑ Adhere to the rules of the CAN-SPAM Act – emails should have a method of unsubscribing, a non-deceptive subject line, and your Events/Club's name and address in the email footer.

❑ Compel Recipient Action/Engagement

- ❑ Increase opens by keeping your subject line short (so it fully displays on mobile) and include pre-header text
- ❑ Write compelling Call-to-Action (CTA) copy and use a CTA button or link to get recipients to click-through

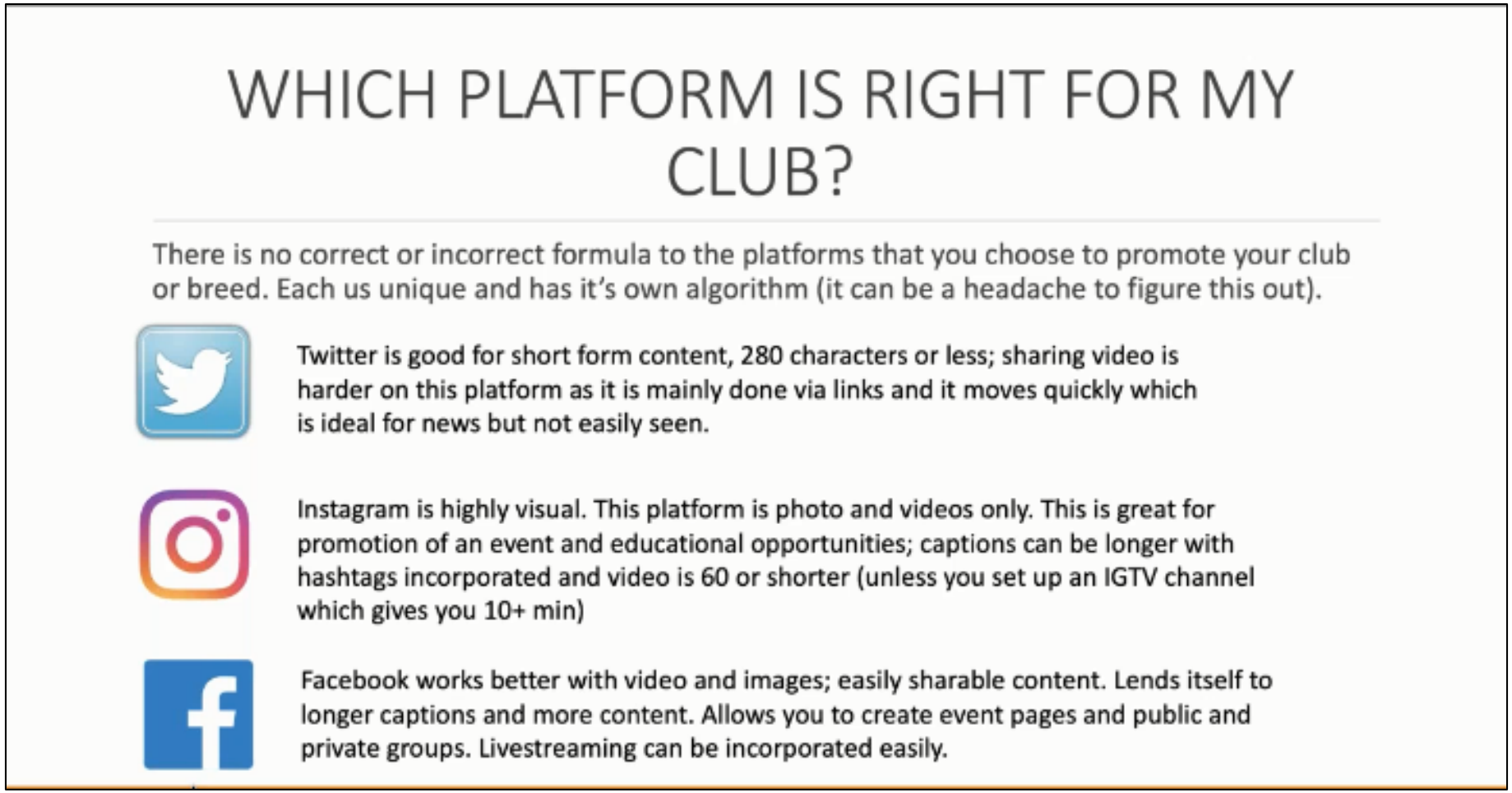
Resources

- ❑ Low-cost email services providers: MailChimp, Constant Contact, Campaign Monitor
- ❑ Really Good Emails (email design samples): **https://reallygoodemails.com/**
- ❑ HubSpot Guide to Email Marketing: **https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/email-marketing-guide**

What Is Social Media?

Source: **Finding Your Social Media Voice** (March 27, 2019) – Brandi Hunter, AKC Vice President of Public Relations and Communications

Social Media Channels



Source: **Finding Your Social Media Voice** (March 27, 2019) – Brandi Hunter, AKC Vice President of Public Relations and Communications

How Are Facebook Pages and Groups Different?

PAGES

All Content Is Public-Facing; Recommended for Use as the Main Club Page

- REQUIRE FREQUENT POSTING CADENCE AND MODERATION
- REQUIRE CONSTANT STREAM OF OPTIMIZED CONTENT
- OFFER COMPREHENSIVE AD MANAGEMENT
- OFFER ELABORATE AUDIENCE INSIGHTS AND DATA
- REQUIRE SINGULAR BRAND VOICE
- VERIFICATION = TRUST & CONFIDENCE

GROUPS

Content Contained Within Group; Recommended for Club Member Conversations

- FAVORED BY THE ALGORITHM
- MEMBERS CAN REPORT/FLAG CONTENT
- DO NOT NEED HEAVY POSTING CADENCE
- ALLOW YOU TO SCREEN MEMBERS VIA ENTRY QUESTIONS
- GROUP-SPECIFIC FEATURES
- OFFERS THREE PRIVACY LEVELS (OPEN, CLOSED, SECRET)
- CAN BULK INVITE MEMBERS

Why Are Facebook Groups Important?

“Groups are as central to Facebook as friends. More than 400 million people belong to a Facebook Group that they find meaningful.”
– Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook CEO

Recent Updates:

- ❑ Brand new Groups Tab becomes a newsfeed that pulls in all activity from Groups the user is in.
- ❑ Brand new Group “matching” product to connect users with related Groups.
- ❑ CTA popups to join Groups will appear when you are in Facebook Watch and Facebook Marketplace.
- ❑ Users can share directly to Groups from Status Update window.
- ❑ Launch of Group-specific products and features that align with “Group Type”.

All these changes will affect the algorithm that decides what posts surface for individual users. Facebook will prioritize Group posts in order to amplify their new products – which they always want to be as successful as possible.

Establishing a Facebook Group: https://www.facebook.com/help/1686671141596230/?helpref=hc_fnav

Facebook Groups – FAQs

Can my Club establish multiple Facebook Groups?

Yes, Clubs can establish multiple groups. But before establishing a group ask “Who is the audience?” and “What can the Group offer to my Club or Community?” You should also establish posting guidelines and rules for your Group.

Who runs the Facebook Group(s) that my Club establishes?

Groups can have multiple Admins who post as your “Club” within the groups you establish.

How do I add Club Members or other people to my Facebook Group?

Facebook Group invitations can be sent out in bulk using existing email lists. They will be automatically approved as members.

Do I need someone dedicated to post?

It’s up to you and how active your community is! Groups are great because you don’t need a rigorous posting cadence – the community helps create the content!

Can the “Group Admins” moderate posts from Members and the general conversation?

Yes! Moderation is key! Group roles function like Page roles. You can give different access to different Club members.

Digital Marketing Analysis

It is important to track your Club's digital marketing campaigns, so you can measure success. This will enable you to decide what adjustments need to be made to the strategy and/or budget, including if certain channels should be more of a focus.

Implement Tracking:

- ❑ Decide what metrics, or Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), are important to your Club to track. This will enable you to measure the success of your digital marketing campaigns. This could be clicks to your website, engagement of social posts, or sign-ups for your event.
- ❑ Add UTM parameters to links: enables you to track campaigns in Google Analytics, **https://ga-dev-tools.appspot.com/campaign-url-builder**
  - ❑ e.g. https://www.akc.org/?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=2019juneshow-fbevent&utm_content=event-post1

Website Metrics:

- ❑ Implementing Google Analytics and Google Tag Manager (GTM) on your website helps you track how visitors came to your website – e.g. social, email, search engine search, online ads, direct (typing your Club URL in a browser) or third party (i.e. InfoDog or other websites)
  - ❑ How-to resources: **https://analytics.google.com/analytics/academy/**, **https://www.linkedin.com/learning/topics/google-analytics**
- ❑ Adding the Facebook Pixel to your website enables you to target Facebook ads to people who have visited your website (e.g. retargeting)

Emails Metrics:

- ❑ Email Metrics: Open Rate (Opens/Emails Delivered), Click Rate (Clicks/Emails Delivered), Click-to-Open Rate (Clicks/Opens)
- ❑ Email Metrics Benchmarks: **https://www.smartinsights.com/email-marketing/email-communications-strategy/statistics-sources-for-email-marketing/**

Social Media Metrics:

- ❑ Each social media channel (e.g. Facebook, Instagram) has a reporting insights tool, so you can track engagement (e.g. likes, clicks, shares)

Market Research & Feedback – Tips

Obtaining feedback enables you to better understand the needs of your target audience(s) and measure the success of your events and programs. You can use these insights to create new marketing strategies and implement new programs.

Types of Surveys:

- ❑ Member Outreach: regular surveys to members to measure member satisfaction and obtain input on event/community outreach suggestions, etc.
- ❑ Post-Event Member/Volunteer Feedback: what went well and what didn't and obtain ideas for the future
- ❑ Post-Event Exhibitor: Reach out to exhibitors/attendees after an event to obtain feedback: satisfaction with event, any scheduling or site issues, things they liked, suggestions for the future
- ❑ Website User Surveys: using tools such as Usabilla or HelloBar, you can ask short surveys to better understand whether visitors are finding the information they need on your website
- ❑ Public Input: obtain feedback on new programs, etc. by conducting short social surveys or polls or reaching out to people who have contacted your Club for "more info"

Survey Tips:

- ❑ Keep your surveys short: as survey length grows, the survey completion rate drops
- ❑ Only ask must-have questions and limit your open-ended text boxes
- ❑ Surveys can be sent via email, embedded on a website, or posted on social media as polls

Resources

- ❑ Free or low-cost survey/feedback platforms: Google Forms, SurveyMonkey, JotForm, SurveyGizmo, Social Media

Promote Your Event

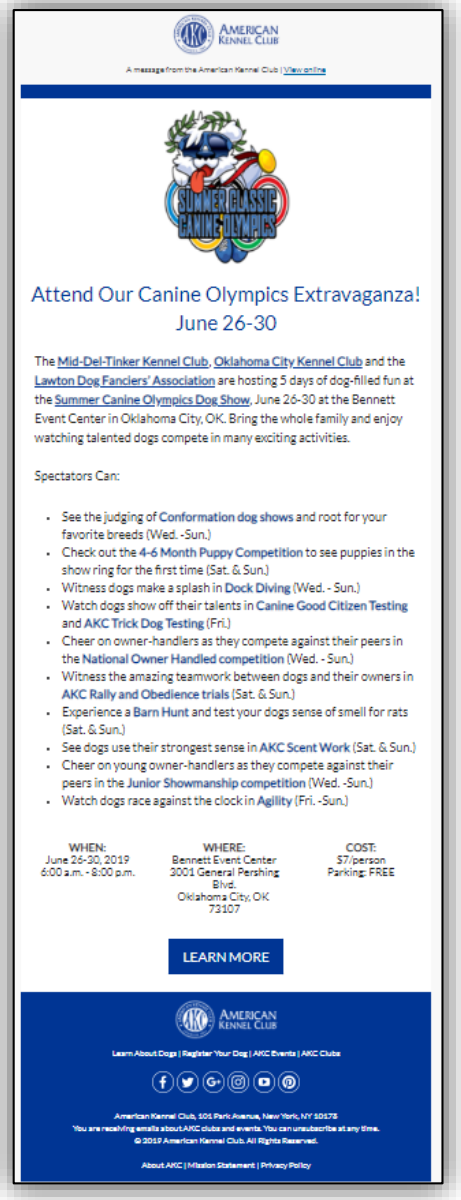
Club & Event Promotion – Ideas

Email Marketing – Engage with Club Members, Community Leaders/Press, Exhibitors Year-Round

- ❑ Pre- and Post-Event Emails – Drive entries through emailing past exhibitors to enter your event (e.g. when show site is final, "save the date" when judging panel is set, premium list is posted); send them a "what to expect" email about the show; send a post-event survey email to gauge satisfaction
- ❑ New Club Member Welcome Email Series – when a new member joins your club create a 2-3 email series that introduces them to the Club, highlights volunteer opportunities, and surveys them about their interests (e.g. they may have marketing, PR or video/photo editing skills or contacts)
- ❑ Monthly or Quarterly Newsletter – update Club members, past exhibitors, local media, etc. about the recent club activities (show your impact!), upcoming events your Club will have a presence at, dog care or training tips, etc.

Content Marketing – Create Written & Visual Assets to Market Your Event

- ❑ Article – detail all sports/programs and special attractions, etc. at event (for email, ad, and social distribution)
- ❑ Photo and video assets – share on digital channels and give to club members and media to build awareness



AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

A message from the American Kennel Club | View online

SUMMER CLASSIC CANINE OLYMPICS

Attend Our Canine Olympics Extravaganza!
June 26-30

The Mid-Del-Tinker Kennel Club, Oklahoma City Kennel Club and the Lawton Dog Fanciers' Association are hosting 5 days of dog-filled fun at the Summer Canine Olympics Dog Show, June 26-30 at the Bennett Event Center in Oklahoma City, OK. Bring the whole family and enjoy watching talented dogs compete in many exciting activities.

Spectators Can:

- See the judging of Conformation dog shows and root for your favorite breeds (Wed. -Sun.)
- Check out the 4-6 Month Puppy Competition to see puppies in the show ring for the first time (Sat. & Sun.)
- Witness dogs make a splash in Dock Diving (Wed. - Sun.)
- Watch dogs show off their talents in Canine Good Citizen Testing and AKC Trick Dog Testing (Fri.)
- Cheer on owner-handlers as they compete against their peers in the National Owner Handled competition (Wed. - Sun.)
- Witness the amazing teamwork between dogs and their owners in AKC Rally and Obedience trials (Sat. & Sun.)
- Experience a Barn Hunt and test your dogs sense of smell for rats (Sat. & Sun.)
- See dogs use their strongest sense in AKC Scent Work (Sat. & Sun.)
- Cheer on young owner-handlers as they compete against their peers in the Junior Showmanship competition (Wed. -Sun.)
- Watch dogs race against the clock in Agility (Fri. -Sun.)

WHEN: June 26-30, 2019 6:00 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.
WHERE: Bennett Event Center 3001 General Pershing Blvd. Oklahoma City, OK 73107
COST: $7/person Parking: FREE

LEARN MORE

AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB

Learn About Dogs | Register Your Dog | AKC Events | AKC Clubs

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Club & Event Promotion – Ideas

Social Media Marketing – Employ Organic & Paid Posts

Organic:

- ❑ Create a Facebook Event – include all the event specifics (location, schedule, ticketing, etc.)
- ❑ Hashtag – create event-specific hashtag that will be used in all social, email and other marketing promotions
- ❑ Live content – Post event photos and videos to encourage social engagement; look into using Facebook Live and Instagram Stories, (If your Club has Junior members, they are probably pros at this and can assist.) You can also gather photos and videos for use in your post-event marketing.

Paid Social:

- ❑ Target potential exhibitors via ads. Your organic social posts can also be "boosted" on Facebook to reach a larger audience: **https://www.facebook.com/business/help/347839548598012**
- ❑ Reach people who have visited your website (via Facebook Pixel), have attended past events (via uploading email lists as a Custom Audience), or live nearby the event site (geo-target the ads)
- ❑ How to create a Facebook Event Ad: **https://www.facebook.com/business/help/860042077457803**

Why Are Facebook Events Essential?

“Over 35 million people view a Public Event on Facebook every day.”
– Mark Zuckerberg, Facebook CEO

Recent Updates:

- ❑ Brand new Events Tab designed to make finding interesting local events with ease
- ❑ On mobile, tab will be located in bottom menu bar next to Groups
- ❑ Tab will feature daily recommendations, map view of local events and events your friends are attending
- ❑ New calendar tools will allow for easy organizing with friends

All these changes will affect the algorithm that decides what posts surface for individual users. Facebook will prioritize Events in order to amplify their new products – which they always want to be as successful as possible.

What Are the Benefits of Facebook Events?

Event becomes one stop shop for all information (time, location, schedule, ticketing, etc.)

Discussion tab functions as a Facebook Wall – allows for posting, live streams and engaging with people.

Adding AKC as Co-Hosts allows AKC to have editing and boosting privileges.

Event surfaces on Host and Co-Host's Page.

Facebook creates a unique QR code for every Event.

Facebook Events – FAQs & Resources

How do I create an Event?

https://www.facebook.com/help/572885262883136/

How do I boost an Event?

https://www.facebook.com/business/help/151920999504756?ref=fbb_create_event

What if I want to sell tickets?

https://www.adweek.com/digital/facebook-teamed-up-with-eventbrite-on-a-ticketing-distribution-and-sales-feature-for-pages/

What should the Event Cover Photo look like?

https://sharethis.com/best-practices/2018/08/facebook-event-photo-size-tips-and-tricks/

Promote Your Event – Offline/Other Channels

Digital marketing should be paired with offline and third-party marketing, PR/communications and on-site activations.

Offline Marketing:

- ❑ Print advertisements in dog publications, dog sport magazines, and local newspapers
- ❑ Reach out to local websites with event listings and request that these sites include your event
- ❑ Ask local veterinary, dog training, and dog care facilities and pet retail locations, as well as local businesses, to add your event to their newsletter or client outreach and to distribute your flyers or postcards
  - ❑ Create a "short vanity link" (via bitly.com or other tools) and include it on all print collateral. By adding UTM parameters to the link you create (link can send people to your Club or Event website), you will be able track the success of your offline marketing via Google Analytics

PR/Communications:

- ❑ Create a press release and media alert to get the word out about your event, including opportunities for spectators and any special programs, demos or new exhibitor tours you are offering at your event. Invite local press to attend your event.
- ❑ Resources and templates: **https://www.akc.org/clubs-delegates/promote/**
- ❑ Best Public Relations for Clubs - Brandi Hunter (AKC Education Summit): **https://akc.tv/watch/23/1414/collection-video/best-public-relations-and-social-media-practices-for-clubs-brandi-hunter/?ctx=/watch//21/1410/akc-topic/akc-education-summit**

Club Promotion (On-Site)

- ❑ Sign-up for a booth at community or other dog-related events to show the great work your Club is doing; offer CGC or AKC Trick Dog testing
- ❑ Create "About Us" flyer or brochure about your Club, plus a postcard that list any upcoming events, for your Club's check-in/information table
- ❑ Include a paper or digital sign-up sheet to "learn more about your Club" – obtain event attendee email addresses for future marketing

Questions?

Government Relations

Wednesday, July 31 at 8:00pm ET

Sheila Goffe

AKC Vice President of Government Relations