

Tips for making great social media posts

1. Think about your target audience and what they like and need. Find out what your followers are talking about on social media and join the conversation.



Hennepin City Library connects their library resources to a topic that was trending at the time of their post.

2. Different social media platforms have different content requirements and posting rules as well as different user bases. Tailor your content differently for each social media site.



Compare the Facebook post on the left to the Twitter post below. The Twitter post is shorter and uses @ to mention the service while the Facebook post has more room for text.



3. Be personable. Talk casually while still representing your library well. Good rule of thumb is to type like you talk and pretend you are talking to a friend, coworker, or familiar patron.



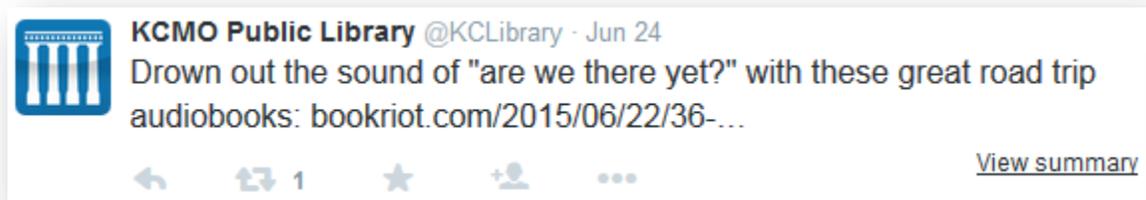
This Des Moines Public Library librarian is being personable by mentioning her name and being available to answer questions.

4. Avoid library jargon. Use language that makes sense and appeals to everyone.
5. Shorter content is better. Twitter only allows for 140 characters which includes links and pictures. For Facebook, three lines of text or less get more likes, comments, and shares.
6. Include a picture with your post if you can. Pictures that complement the post generate more engagement and make people click.



This simple post about signing up for a library card is more compelling with a picture of a new library card holder.

7. If you are sharing a link or photos, provide context. Answer the question: why should I click?



8. Be helpful. Anticipate your audience's questions and answer frequently asked questions. Share tips and tricks such as how to use the catalog, how to use databases, or how to find new authors. Let people know that you can answer their questions.

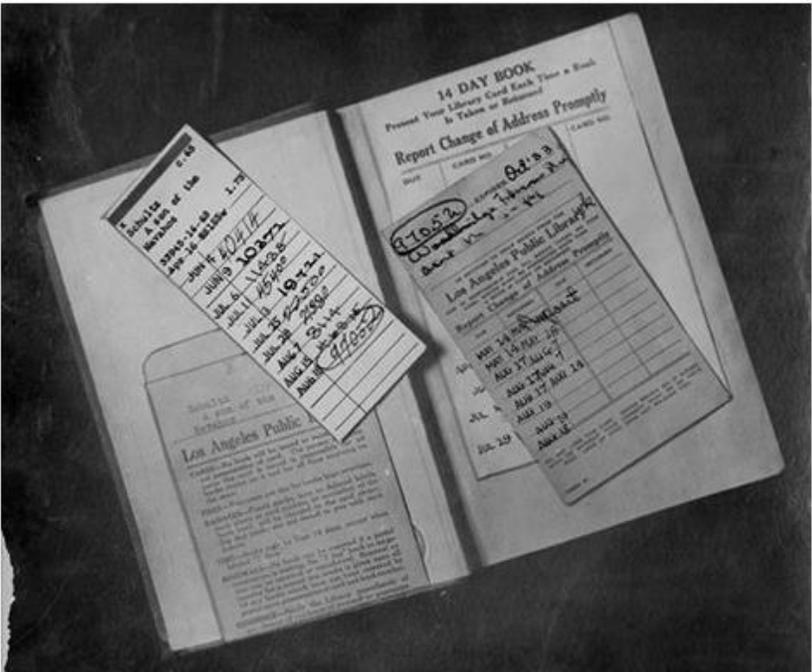


9. Share the library's story. Announce library milestones and convey why they are important. Give followers a behind-the-scenes look at the library.

 **Los Angeles Public Library**
June 25 at 7:29pm · 🌐

#ThrowbackThursday We've always been innovative! In 1931 we had a self-service system in place.

"The borrower, after selecting the book wanted, writes on the library's book card, left, their library card number, as shown by the numbers circled. The librarian then stamps on both cards the date the book is due back to the library. The new process eliminates delays and standing in line."



Like · Comment · Share

👍 35 people like this.

This post shares some history about LAPL.

10. Network and create relationships with your followers. If someone mentions the library, acknowledge it, thank them, and follow them.



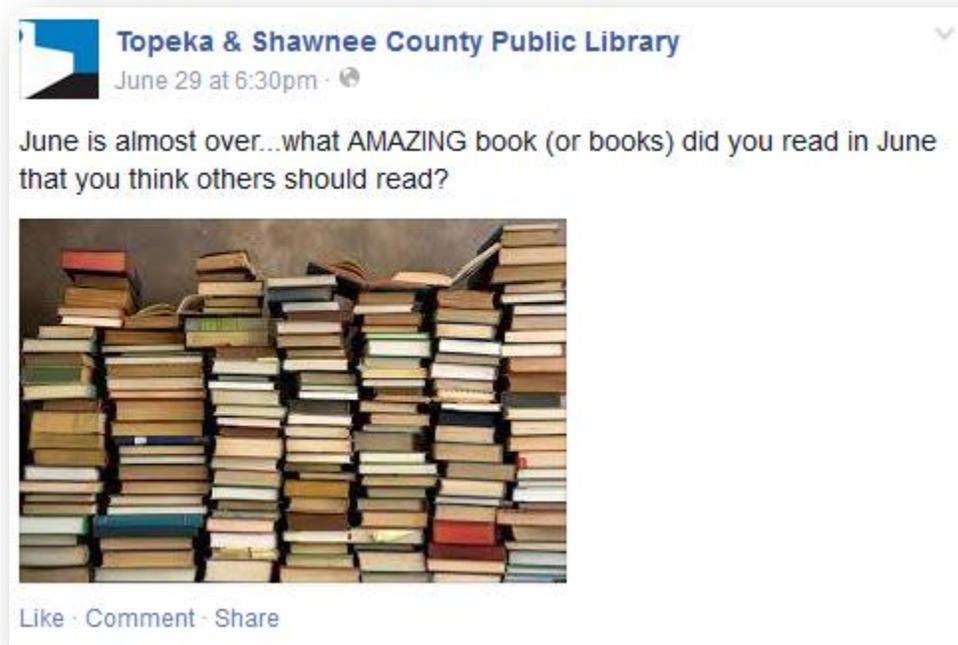
Charlotte Mecklenburg Library thanks a patron for their mention on Twitter.

11. Whenever possible acknowledge community partners or program sponsors and share social media content with them in order to expand your audience.

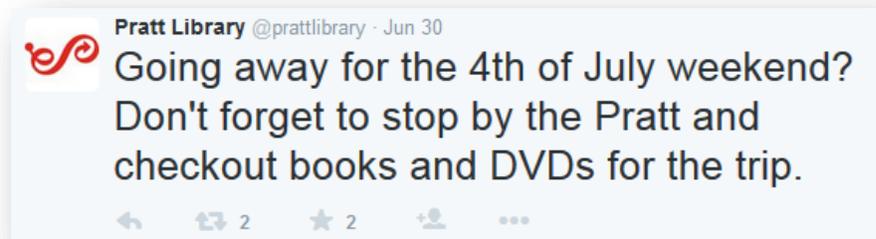


Columbus Library retweeted a post from one of their partners to spread awareness about the event.

12. Encourage audience involvement. Ask questions to your followers, such as what are you reading now?



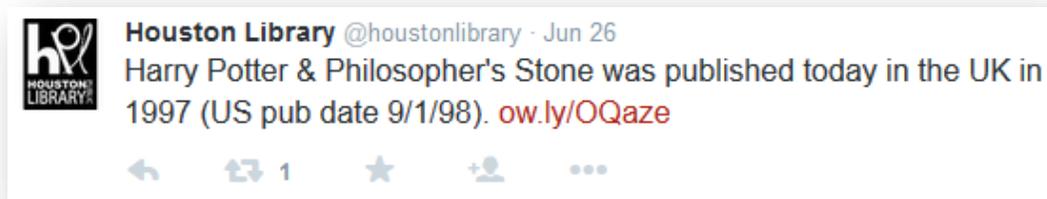
13. Include a call to action whenever possible to guide viewers on what to do next, such as visit your catalog or website for more information.



14. Explain how the patron will benefit from attending a program or trying out a new database.



15. Include content other than just promotions for programs. Too many promotions can make your social media page seem like a lot of ads which people tend to ignore. Include other content helpful or entertaining to your audience.



16. Be consistent about posting. Assign the work and schedule it into your duties. Have a goal for how many posts you will make in a given time (per day or week). Make a plan on how to cover staff sick days or vacation time.

Resources:

Doing Social Media so it Matters by Laura Solomon

Face2Face: Using Facebook, Twitter, and Other Social Media Tools to Create Great Customer Connections by David Lee King

The Librarian's Nitty-gritty guide to Social Media by Laura Soloman

Managing Your Library's Social Media Channels by David Lee King. *Library Technology Reports*. American Library Association TechSource. 51(1).

Tweaking Twitter: webinar by Laura Solomon <https://vimeo.com/131233444>

100 Libraries to Follow on Twitter by Matt Anderson

<http://www.mattanderson.org/blog/2013/01/11/100-libraries-to-follow-on-twitter/>