hey now!
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Forward Cities
Digital Strategy

Concept

We want our online efforts to reflect the three tactics of Forward Cities; Learn, Share and Support. All of our posts and content will fit into one of these categories. Promoting inclusive innovation will be the common thread between all posts and content. We will focus on telling the story of people, places and organizations that are furthering the mission of inclusive growth and innovation in the four participating cities.

Target Demographic

The target audience for Forward Cities is anyone that can make an impact on the entrpreneaurial/innovation ecosystem in a city.

Brand Voice

The voice of Forward Cities is one of a collaborative leader. Using an active voice, focusing on strong headlines, point driven messages, and telling a compelling story will help bring this voice to life. The voice will also convey a sense of empowerment, trust, and approachability. It's important it remains authentic, conveys information and news through a positive lens, and is perceived to be a hub for current and future thinking information.

Goals and Tactics

Goal #1: Generate buzz and excitement for the event.

Tactics:
• **Twitter** will be used as the primary social media platform to drive conversation and raise awareness of Forward Cities. Twitter allows the target audience to engage in conversations and provides a platform for Forward Cities to share relevant content. Tweets will be posted every day, multiple times per day, and relevant hashtags will be checked every day to interact with users and engage in conversations. Additionally, Forward Cities' Twitter bio and Twitter header photo will be updated to better reflect the Forward Cities mission and branding.

• **Facebook** will be established and used as a secondary content sharing platform. Users will be prompted to "like" the Facebook page to keep up with this content and to experience the live video feeds that will be posted on Facebook. Using Facebook's live video tools, Forward Cities can show the speakers and events occurring at the convening in real time. This live feed will drive users to the page and convert to page likes and further excitement and awareness.

• **E-mail blasts/newsletter** will be sent out before and after the convening to generate excitement and provide a third platform for content sharing. Links to Forward Cities' social media profiles will also be available in these e-blasts.

Goal #2: Engage audience via online platforms.

Tactics:
• **Hashtags** will be used to generate conversation before, during, and after the convening. The hashtag #RoadToGrowth will be used primarily before the event to generate conversation among the target audience and encourage them to communicate with each other. This hashtag depicts imagery of the journey each city is taking in growth and development. The hashtag #ForwardCities will be used during the convening to live tweet events and happenings. This hashtag is straightforward and easy to remember. It will allow everyone to engage in conversation while the event is taking place.

• **Photos and visual media** will be used as often as possible on posts. We will strive to include some sort of visual media on every post to catch the audience's attention on a busy news feed. Twitter cards, photos, and videos will be used to draw in the audience.

Goal #3: Grow social media presence.

Tactics:
• **A "follow" campaign** featuring sponsors, participants, and speakers will be created and initiated to grow Forward Cities' social media presence on Facebook and Twitter. The campaign will be based primarily on content. Content posted on blogs and in e-mail blasts will provide direct links to

Goals and Tactics cont.

Forward Cities' social media accounts and encourage users to follow and like the accounts. This will create a funnel effect that draws the audience in with content and ultimately "funnels" them through to the Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Goal #4: Build brand awareness for Forward Cities.

Tactics:

 • **Involve Forward Cities donors, partners, and councils** by showcasing them, retweeting them, and interacting with them digitally. We will also leverage their relationships and reach on social media platforms and ask for influencers in their cities whom Forward Cities should be following and interacting with on Twitter.

 • **Engage with influencers and media** like Sarah Koch, Sheila Herrling, parterns at the Case Foundation, Kathy Pettit of the Urban Institute, and members of the RNC media. These Twitter accounts should be followed and monitored and their leverage should be used for the benefit of Forward Cities to build awareness and engagement.

Goal #5: Further the mission of Forward Cities by communicating its message across all online outlets.

Tactics:

 • **Content analysis** will be performed regularly to ensure all posts reflect Forward Cities' mission and values and are being shared appropriately on relevant platforms that are engaging the target audience. Post times and content will be adjusted as determined through analysis.

Logistics

When: Between 12:00 and 2:00, 5:00 and 6:00.

• Multiple sources (Hootsuite, Buffer, AdWeek, HubSpot) advocate posting on Twitter to target business professionals during their downtime. This mainly includes lunch breaks and commutes home after work.

• We also need to factor in the geographic location and time zones of all four cities. While those in Cleveland may take an 11 a.m. lunch, professionals in New Orleans generally won't be taking Twitter breaks at the same time, which is 10 a.m. in their region.

How often: 3-4 posts per day May 2-13 to determine and evaluate performance and adjust digital strategy as needed to better engage the target audience.

• Become more data driven with post amounts after May 13

• Post times and post numbers to be further developed after this date.

• Regular conversations and questions encouraging hashtag use May 2-conference.

• Live tweet during the conference (June 14-17)

Types of Posts
All content will fit into five main types/categories.

Curated Content
  • This content will be pulled from the "features" section of the website.
        o Ex. Relevant news stories, fast facts and figures/infographics.
  • These posts will occur at least 2x/ week.

Cleveland Posts
  • These posts will highlight the Cleveland locations and businesses involved with the
convening.
  • We will develop content that ties these stories back to the mission of inclusivity.
  • These posts will also tie back to the convening and showcase what is happening during it.
  • They will also showcase what Cleveland has to offer for the people attending the convening.
  • These posts will occur at least 2x/week.
  • During Convening: "Check in" at tour stops and encourage participants to do the same.

Forward Cities Success Stories
  • We will pull from the case studies being created for press and use statics and information to
design infographics and posts to tell these stories.
  • We will use the blog on the website as the platform to develop this original content and
deploy from there.
  • These posts will occur at least 1x per week.
  • During Convening: feature 1 on 1 video interviews showcasing the relationship building side

Preview Speakers, Achievements, Sponsors and Participants
  • We will highlight the speakers coming to the convening and showcase their work in
developing inclusive economic growth in their communities.
  • We will use live action shots from the photo galleries on the website when possible
  • These posts will occur at least 2x per week.

Conversation Posts
  • These posts are meant to generate conversation and response with thought-provoking
questions and invitation to showcase experiences.
  • Participants will use the appropriate hashtag.

Throwback Thursday Posts
  •These post will create nostalgia for past convening's and generate excitement for the Cleveland
one.
  •They will feature photos from past convening's with an emphasis on people who have
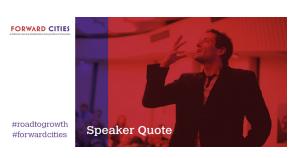attended multiple convening's.

Content examples and sample posts

Check out this awesome article featuring the new Women's Development Center through @ECDI and @SBDC #forwardcities #roadtogrowth #cle

This image would link to this article:
http://www.freshwatercleveland.com/devnews/ECD-IWBC042516.aspx

@ForwardCities Cle Convening is stacked with amazing thinkers and doers! #forwardcities #roadtogrowth #cle

This image would link to a bio about whichever speaker is featured in the post.

It's #forwardthinkingfriday! Tag someone making an impact in your city and how, they might be featured on our blog! #forwardcities #roadtogrowth #cle

Measuring Success
For this project we are focused on creating brand awareness. Since we are not pushing people to a specific conversion our measurements will be tailored to measuring brand awareness as best we can. The below is what we will use to measure success.

Benchmark
In order to track changes in brand awareness we will benchmark against your baseline metrics. These will be on each report and used for comparison to measure against.

Followers
This will measure general awareness, but also help assess if the followers campaign we run is working.

Engagement
This will help us understand if people are actively digesting the content we post, or just watching it go by on their news feed.

Reach
This will help assess if we are utilizing the correct stake holders. As we engage people who have large followings, this number will rise.

Website Traffic
We will measure an increase in website traffic and further break that out to see where the traffic is coming from. Assessing this will help us decide what calls to action to use with this audience and what channels they are accessing information through, as well as what kinds of content is resonating.

Search Volume Data
Using Google Adwords Keyword Planner and Google Trends we will check the volume of searches for Forward Cities, and track it over time to see if search volumes are increasing.

Volume of Mentions
This will help us assess the size of a conversation. If certain subjects are garnering more attention than other we can shift focus to capitalize on them.