AEG·ICA
advocacy expert group
international council on archives
groupe d'experts en sensibilisation
conseil international des archives

Social media strategy

February 2016

1. Goals

All of our social media activities will be underpinned by the three key objectives of the ICA as listed in the *ICA Strategic Plan 2014-18* (available online at http://www.ica.org/17036/reference-documents/ica-strategic-implementation-plan-20142018.html):
- Repositioning Archives as essential in good governance, administrative transparency and democratic accountability (formerly Raising Awareness);
- Monitoring and influencing the development and use of new technologies, especially in relation to the challenges of providing access to information, protecting citizens' rights and preserving collective memory, which are all implicit in archives management;
- Building capacity (in particular new competencies and skills) in the records and archives profession (as stated in 2008), so that it can handle the twin challenge of managing digital records and archives on traditional media.

Specific goals shall be in line with the working plan and objectives of the Advocacy Group itself, as outlined below:

Goals: what do we want to accomplish?	Audience: who is this relevant to?	Strategy: how can we achieve this?	Impact: why does this matter?	Example post content
Promote the use of the Universal Declaration on Archives (UDA) which is a central pillar of the ICA's advocacy program	Archival sector, members of the public	By explaining the meaning of different sections of the UDA and their relevance to the sector and the wider public	The UDA stresses the relevance of archives to the wider society and the importance of access. Raising awareness of the UDA will help those involved in the archival sector define their objectives on the one	Key concepts explained with real-life examples; the register (including milestones); reporting how other groups relate to UDA

			hand, and on the other hand will help shift the public image of archives from exclusive or intimidating to open and welcoming of different perspectives.	

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Promote awareness of archives in general; offer advocacy expertise when needed	Members of the public	By highlighting how archives engage with their stakeholders (communities, organisations, businesses, governments, users, etc) in different countries and contexts	As above	Posts based on real-life examples of: projects which focus on widening participation and inclusiveness; the use of archives in political and social processes (reconciliation, human rights issues, etc); archives at risk and the impact of damaged or destroyed archives; also showcasing archives as a profession (what makes it special?) and the importance of both ensuring preservation and providing access
Develop and promote a media toolkit to assist archivists in dealing with media and/or using media to promote archives	Archival sector	By initiating discussion about what would constitute a useful media toolkit; by engaging followers in the process of designing the	This will provide a platform for sharing experiences and knowledge and identifying differences, thus encouraging esprit de corps throughout the archival sector	Asking for opinions with regards to local conditions and needs, involving others in designing the toolkit; publicising promotional images

		toolkit (crowdsourcing)	and strengthening the international archival network.	

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Promote advocacy related activities and increase online presence of these activities; offer advocacy expertise when needed	Archives, members of the public	By including regular posts which relate directly to advocacy	As above	Investigating differences between countries; sharing practices with regard to safeguarding vs access, workshops, conferences; sharing experiences with regard to external pressures (financial, political, etc); image gallery - photos from various activities: conferences, outreach activities such as International Archives Day (June 9), accessions, moving, improvements, etc.

2. Social media platforms

Facebook will be used to publish longer posts, covering the areas outlined above (short versions of opinion pieces, news articles, etc.).

Example:
Archives can be instrumental in safeguarding human rights. A set of principles on the role of archivists in support of human rights states that "Archivists ensure that they select, acquire and retain historically and legally important materials without discrimination based on race, color, ethnic origin, gender, sexual preference, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, economic or other status" This set of principles is still being developed and you can become part of the drafting process by submitting your opinion. To read more, go to http://bit.ly/1tcPByn

Twitter will be used to: publicise Facebook posts; engage in conversations with other users; initiate online debates.

Example:
Archivists can have an important role to play in safeguarding human rights. Join the debate on our Facebook page: [hyperlink]

3. Audience

Our audience will be broadly divided into two categories: archive professionals and members of the public who are not directly involved in archival work.

- *Archive professionals* – ICA members, all those employed or volunteering with archives, archival students, ie those who have and/or are in the process of acquiring the relevant professional knowledge and experience. They will likely be keen to discuss specific issues to do with institutional and professional needs, such as, for example, funding; technological changes; professional development; the political and economic climate, etc. They will be confident using professional jargon (abbreviations, technical terms) which might be obscure to non-professionals. They will likely be keen to engage with Advocacy Group's social media as a platform to discuss issues, exchange ideas, express concerns, publicise success stories. This audience might include ICA partners, records managers, librarians and conservators.

  'Risk assessment': While this audience can potentially be quite easy to engage and knowledgeable, they might also be seen as exclusive through using professional jargon. They can potentially be inward-looking and don't always know how to address communication outside their own circle.

  How this audience will benefit from interacting with our profiles: our social media platforms will provide space for them to discuss various professional issues and share knowledge on issues affecting archives as institutions as well as people working and volunteering with these institutions.

- *Non-professionals* - members of the public with an interest in areas which often depend on archives, such as governance, legal matters, heritage, research, record keeping, genealogy, and more. They will likely be engaging with specific aspects related to their area of interest. They might lack the professional knowledge and might not be familiar with technical language. It will take more effort to engage them - they will have to be specifically targeted with themed posts which will showcase how archives are relevant to the society at large. They are likely to engage by sharing and 'favouriting' our posts but possibly less so in debates and discussions. This audience will include donors or creators of archives.

  'Risk assessment': While this audience can be quite difficult to engage at first, they can be potential catalysts in widening engagement and bringing topics related to archives into other professions.

How this audience will benefit from interacting with our profile: they will discover how archives are relevant to their lives and be able to share their experiences of or hopes for engaging with archives.

4. Posts

1. Frequency – once a week. The most important rule is that it's regular, preferably on the same day. We may decide to use Hootsuite to schedule posts. A schedule of posts should be prepared in advance, with anniversaries and special events scheduled in for the whole upcoming year; themes decided for the forthcoming month; and posts worded and ready to be published two weeks in advance. Additional posts can be published if there is any urgency.
2. Language – informal but professional, using correct spelling and punctuation, and ensuring all hyperlinks and images work, inclusive, politically neutral but emotionally engaging.
3. Visual style – the same set of images should be used for both Facebook and Twitter (one for the profile picture and one for the headline)
4. Nature of posts

- original as much as possible (rather than retweeting or sharing)
- where possible, retweeting should be accompanied by own commentary which adds something to the content/puts it in the context relevant to our mission statement
- retweeting posts from ICA partner's platforms can assist in developing a collaborative partnership
- more specific details to be decided, depending on the platform. Facebook can accommodate longer stories and short opinion pieces; Twitter is more suited to announcements and short thought-provoking statements. There should be a link between the two platforms every time a post is published.
- accompanied by visual content where relevant, as much as possible - there is a dramatic increase in interactions where visual content is present

5. Authorship - posts should be a collaborative effort, overseen by two people (at present Jenny Scott and Marta Lomza). Group members will be encouraged to submit posts about their projects, as well as any issues they would like to see discussed by wider groups.

6. Access – a special email address will be created which will be used to create and manage both Facebook and Twitter profiles. Access to this email will be limited to ICA Advocacy Expert Group Chairperson and social media coordinators.
7. Twitter and Facebook accounts will require regular monitoring in order to respond to comments, questions, etc., in a timely manner that is appropriate to ICA policies and guidelines.

5. Evaluation

This strategy should be reviewed periodically to ensure goals are being met and discuss whether aspects of this plan need to be changed.

Evaluation procedures will take into account:

- the number of followers (as compared to the previous count)
- number of interactions (broken down by type)
- quality of interactions (details of discussions, comments, etc.)

This Social Media Strategy was approved by the ICA Executive Board in May 2015.