

# Communication Pathways

**F**iguring out where your audience is and what messages resonate the most with them is a key component of our training. Determining the platforms that your audiences use the most can be as simple as looking at analytics and feedback on your current platforms and communication tools. How many people clicked that link in your email newsletter? Did that interesting Facebook photo get shared by anyone outside of your organization? How many retweets did your last informational tweet get? There is no catch all social media platform for all audiences and the platforms you use may be based on your organization goal.

- Closed information loops specifically to disseminate information = newsletter
- Interactive posts to speak to current audience and gain new audience members = social media platforms
- Story telling = blogs
- Feedback and questions = closed groups

**Take a moment to answer the following questions to determine which communication pathway your organization should use, build your organization voice, and create guiding interaction checkpoints.**

- What is your organizational goal or mission statement?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- What Themes will be represented in your communication efforts? (Eg Agriculture policy, current events, outreach opportunities)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- What is your organizational voice? (Informative, educational, active or passive, informal)

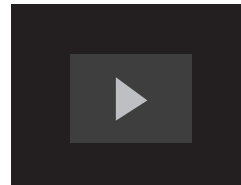
# Communication Pathways *(continued)*

- What is the purpose of your communication? What are your desired outcomes?
- What key performance indicators will your organization use to measure success? (Retweets, followers, responses, content sharing, link engagement)
- Are there comparable organizations to your own? What communication methods do they use?

# Design

**A**fter determining your audience and planning your schedule, it's time to design! Design is where you get to let your organization's personality shine. Posts and their designs should fit into your brand voice and social media plan. If you work for an organization that highlights outdoor voices and stories, media posts with minimal text could be your focus. If your organization focuses on events and event planning cohesive fliers with easy-to-understand information should be the focal point of your page. Fear not, social media pages can be a mixture of text posts and eye-catching media as long as they fall under your cohesive brand image. With premium accounts, websites like Canva make it easy to establish (or upload) an organization's identity. Even if Canva isn't your jam, creating fliers or presentations on platforms like Google Slides

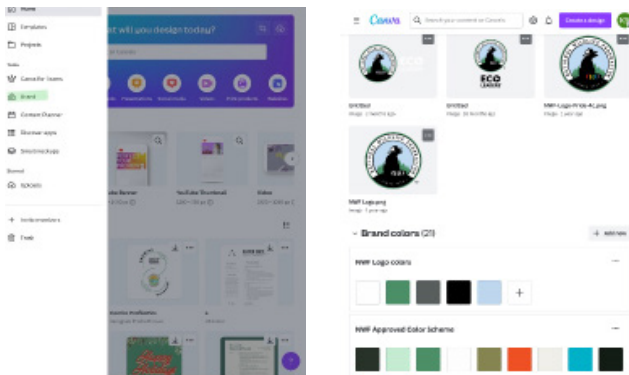
allows you to use a color-picking tool to ensure your colors and fonts match your source design material. Maintaining consistent font, color palette, and logo across platforms allows for effortless design and easy recognition.



Our most asked question is HOW can I get the most use out of Canva, Microsoft, and even Google Suites.

Tutorials! Canva has an entire [YouTube channel](#) dedicated to teaching users through step-by-step video tutorials focused on design, storytelling, and maximizing collaboration efforts.

Media posts featuring natural backgrounds, relatable images, or motivational messaging draw audiences in the most. While stock photo websites like Vecteezy and Unsplash can be helpful, social media users want to be able to connect with your organization's work directly. Using high-quality photos from community events and field days can draw in new audiences while also drawing connections between your work and your current followers.



## Design Plan

1. Determine the type of design that best fits your post. Media, text or video
2. Check for owned media that matches your post plan (event photos, farmer photos, local landscapes)
3. Create design keeping in mind platform proportions and design purpose

## Design

- Canva
- Over (iPad)
- Piktochart
- Visme
- Infogram
- Photoshop
- AdobeSpark
- Google Slides
- Powerpoint

## Photo Sources

- Vecteezy
- Hubspot
- CoverCrops
- AgStock(paid)
- Unsplash
- Canva

# Social Media Planning

**A**fter determining your communication plan, it is time to create your social media plan and start pushing content! During your brainstorming process, you want to keep in mind the different types of content that fit your chosen communication platforms the most.

Our communications worksheet led you through determining your organization's thematic voice and the types of posts you should be creating or sharing. All created social media posts should be made with your guiding document in mind. Planning your social media posts gives you a launchpad for each month. Planning for each post can be as simple or in-depth as you need it to be. Simple planning options include creating a monthly excel sheet with dates, and platform names or assignments and filling in each cell matching its corresponding date and platform with a simple description that works as a signal to let you know what dates to post. More in-depth social media planners like Trello allow you to use a calendar or Kanban-type system to make cards to fully write each post, set due dates, add media and add labels then move each card through a to-do list as you complete each post. Other planning options include Canva, Notion, Google Calendar, and Planoly.

After scheduling your posts it's time to go from draft to actual post! First, determine the type of post that you are creating. Types of posts include text, text plus media, video, polls, question and answer sessions, and even links to events. While not every post needs a media aspect they can be crucial in content that is likely to catch your audience's eye. Graphic design websites include Canva, Over (iPad and mobile only), Piktochart, Picmonkey, Visme, Infogram, Photoshop, and Adobe Spark. Most of these creation platforms

have picture libraries that are free to use but if you're looking for more specific graphics stock photo websites such as CoverCrops, AgStock, and Unsplash. Using your original photos is even better! After brainstorming your posts, you can then start to create drafts on each media platform. Twitter and Facebook both have detailed post scheduling mechanisms where you can create posts and set a specific date and time for them to become visible to the public. Having your posts prepped and scheduled within the app helps you stick to the plan that you originally set.

To better determine what your audience likes to see you have to listen! Or at least check out the data. Each social media platform has an area where you can look at post insights, audience demographics, post details, and even when the best time of day is to get peak audience interaction. In-app listening is the simplest option and is always free. Powerful listening tools like Hootsuite, Meltwater, and Brandwatch can be used for deeper analytical information and these websites usually require a monthly payment.



Interested in learning more about rangeland management for pollinators and plant diversity? Click the link below to join Xerces Biologists, Sarah Hamilton Buxton, Ray Moranz, and Rae Powers on December 8th at 10AM/PST to learn about the ecological and social value of rangelands, management practices to support pollinators, and critical actions to maintain native plant diversity on rangelands. The webinar will be recorded and posted on youtube for those who cant make it.



XERCES.ORG  
**Saving Great Plains Grasslands: Rangeland Management for Pollinators and Plant Diversity | Xerces Society**

Grasslands in the Great Plains, and elsewhere, are rapidly disappearing. Grasslands provide critical habitat for a variety of wildlife, including pollinators and other invertebrates. Join Xerces Biologists, Sarah Hamilton...



# Social Media Planning *(continued)*

## Facebook

- Sharing news, links, photos
- Longer posts
- 1-2 daily posts

## Twitter

- Sharing news and links
- Quick short posts
- Sharing related content from other accounts
- Hashtag usage
- 3-4 daily posts

## Instagram

- Visuals and graphics
- No links to other posts
- 2-4 weekly posts

Compare the different types of post on each platform. One way to maximize your content is to take each post and slightly tweak it for each platform. Shorten a Facebook post and then use it on Twitter, take the images from your Facebook post and upload directly to Instagram. Each post can and should be cross posted for maximum reach!



**NWF Growing Outreach**  
@nwf\_AgOutreach

Part of our outreach team traveled to Oklahoma's state capital to hold a Grow More workshop w/ @ConserveOK An awesome and engaging group with the future of regenerative ag in mind makes for successful outreach events and acres of change 🤘

