

Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month Social Media Toolkit



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CONTENTS

About This Toolkit.....	2
Who Should Use This Toolkit?.....	2
What is Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month?	2
Social Media 101.....	2
Social Media Channels.....	3
Twitter Best Practices.....	3
Facebook Best Practices.....	4
LinkedIn Best Practices.....	4
Instagram Best Practices	4
Best Practices for Communicating About Colorectal Cancer.....	5
1. Address misperceptions and fears around testing	6
2. Feature testimonies of those who have been screened	6
3. Provide information including alternative screening options.....	6
4. Highlight the impact of colorectal cancer and effectiveness of screening.....	7
Sample Tweets and Facebook Posts	8
Sample LinkedIn Posts	11
Other Ideas to Promote Colorectal Cancer Awareness	12
Measuring Success	15
Additional Tools and Resources	16
Glossary.....	17
References	18

Tip: Viewing this PDF in Google Chrome? Use “Ctrl+Click” on links to open them in a new tab.

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ABOUT THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit is designed to help stakeholders implement evidence-based practices when communicating about colorectal cancer. It can also help you plan, implement and evaluate your social media strategy and make the case for why it's important.

Don't have the time or capacity to implement this toolkit? Don't fret! You can still engage your audience by retweeting messages from [@GWCancer](#)

WHO SHOULD USE THIS TOOLKIT?

Public health professionals, cancer control professionals, cancer centers, coalitions, community-based organizations and other stakeholders can use this toolkit and adapt its messaging for their unique audiences and areas of expertise.

WHAT IS COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH?

Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month was established in 2000 as an annual opportunity to raise awareness about the disease and focus on research into its cause, prevention, diagnosis, treatment and survivorship. The goal is to support those affected by colorectal cancer and encourage health-promoting behaviors like getting screened, staying active and eating a balanced diet. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), among cancers that affect both men and women, colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States and is the third most common cancer in men and women (CDC, 2018). Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month begins on March 1st and ends on March 31st.

SOCIAL MEDIA 101

As of January 2018, Pew Research Center found that 69% of adults report using social networking sites (Pew Research Center, 2018). Youtube is reported as the most commonly used social media platform, followed by Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, Snapchat, LinkedIn and Twitter (Pew Research Center, 2018). In addition, a 2014 study found that nearly 75% of adults use social media to discuss health (Fox, 2014).

Social media provide a "socially mediated pathway" to distribute health-related messaging by linking people to social networks and communities that provide built-in incentives and personalized guidance to make behavioral changes (Sarkar et al., 2018). Organizations like CDC use social media to "provide users with access to credible, science-based health information" and to "reinforce and personalize messages, reach new audiences, and build a communication infrastructure based on open information exchange" (CDC, 2015).



The first step when designing your social media strategy should be to identify and learn about your audience. Ask yourself:

- Who is my intended audience? Be as specific as possible.
- What health issue or issues affect my audience?
- What action do I want my audience to take and why?
- What social media platforms does my audience use and how do they prefer to be reached with health messaging?
- What tactics will be most effective and what messages resonate the most?

Looking to establish a social media strategy for your organization or make the case for why it's important? CDC offers a variety of [social media tools](#) to create and establish a social media strategy. They also offer guidelines and best practices, evaluation strategies, tools and templates.

Remember to tailor messaging to your intended audience or audiences. Your organization offers unique strengths and expertise. Make sure to capitalize on them to make your campaign effective.

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Snapchat, Pinterest and more - social media are growing every day, along with opportunities for outreach. Below we cover best practices for some of the most popular social media platforms, but many of these tips can apply to other media like blogs, websites or phone apps.

Twitter Best Practices

- Keep Tweets below the 280 character limit. This allows other users to Retweet while adding their own comments (@names don't count toward the 280 character limit).
- Add colorful graphics including photos, videos, infographics or other illustrations whenever possible. Tweets with images receive 18% more clicks, 89% more favorites and 150% more Retweets on average (Kim, 2018).
- Post regularly and make sure content is useful and relevant to your audience.
- Don't just talk "at" your audience, interact with them. Ask questions and listen - this builds engagement.
- Tweet at author or organizational Twitter handles when possible (Tweets that begin with a username will reach all of your followers, but will be categorized as "replies"; if you want the Tweet to be seen on your main timeline, use ".@" at the beginning).
- Twitter, Sprout Social and Hootsuite as well as other social media scheduling tools offer options to shorten links as you write Tweets.
- Promote engagement with other organizations by liking or Retweeting their content. You can even add your own comment before Retweeting. Likewise, be responsive and recognize Retweets, mentions and when others share your content.
- Remember that Tweets cannot be edited once they are posted, so proofread before you post!

Facebook Best Practices

- Facebook algorithms prioritize “meaningful interactions” over unrelated content. This means posting content that feels personal, conversational and authentic (Facebook, 2018).
- Shorter posts (around 250 characters or less) get up to 60% more distribution than longer posts (Cooper, 2016).
- Post consistently and with a variety of different content types like video or photos to maximize reach and make your content stand out (Facebook, 2018). Posts with photos receive up to 50% more likes than non-photo posts (Hershkowitz & Lavrusik, 2013).
- Acknowledge interactions and comments with visitors to your page, using Facebook analytics and insights to see how your audience is interacting with your comments. Track your results and act on them, focusing your efforts on what’s working.
- Vary your post type. Users don’t engage the same way with every post (Hershkowitz & Lavrusik, 2013).
- Consider turning on comment filters to prevent harassment in your comments section and avoid identifying people in photos without their consent (Facebook, 2018).
- More information about [Facebook best practices](#) is available from CDC.

LinkedIn Best Practices

- Use a call to action to engage readers, like “click to find out more” (York, 2016).
- Ensure that your organization’s profile is up-to-date; profiles with complete information get 30% more weekly views (LinkedIn, n.d.).
- Post consistently and ensure that your posts contain an image or other media as this is likely to increase engagement (LinkedIn, n.d.). Focus on practical and informative visuals, as this is more likely to be successful on LinkedIn (York, 2016).
- Share content that’s likely to be relevant to your professional network and provide value to your target audience (Top Dog Social Media, n.d.).

Instagram Best Practices

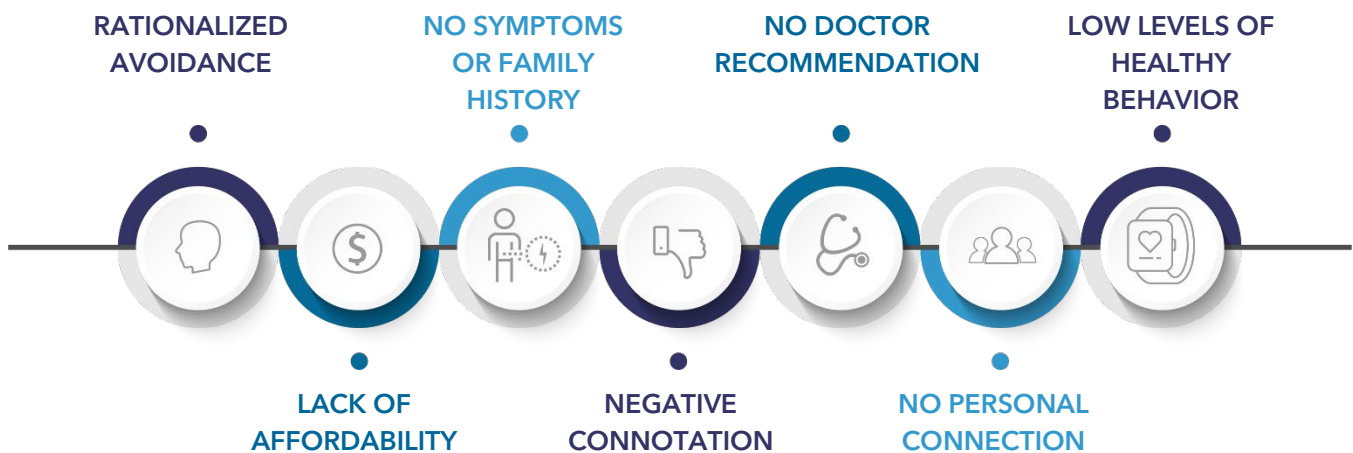
- Tell a story with your images by focusing on experience and emotional appeals over simple repetition of health information (Photoslurp, n.d.). Great images and videos create engagement, especially on a visual platform like Instagram (York, 2016a).
- Understand your audience and don’t try to appeal to everyone. Once you’ve identified your audience, be consistent with your style and branding (Photoslurp, n.d.).
- Use creative ideas like contests and post user-generated content to get your audience to participate (York, 2016). This doesn’t have to cost money; sometimes the contest award can simply be recognition for the poster.
- Stay relevant by leveraging existing health-related observances to spread your content -- connect with what other organizations are already doing for Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month (Photoslurp, n.d.).
- Make your content stand out by using simple or free photo editing tools to make your images pop (York, 2016).

- Post regularly and during optimal times. Your analytics data from Instagram or other sources can help you identify when your audience is most active and likely to interact with a post (York, 2016).

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNICATING ABOUT COLORECTAL CANCER

Screening continues to be a proven tool to reduce the burden of colorectal cancer in the United States. However, according to the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable (NCCRT), barriers to screening still remain.

Barriers to Colorectal Cancer Screening (NCCRT, 2017)



The most effective messages “address misperceptions and fears around [testing]; feature testimonies from those who have been screened; and provide patients with the information and knowledge they need, including potential alternative screening solutions, to feel prepared and responsible about the process and results” (NCCRT, 2017, p.16). Despite improvements in colorectal cancer screening rates over time, 1 in 3 adults ages 50-75 aren’t getting screened as recommended (NCCRT, 2018). As a result, messages should also highlight the impact of colorectal cancer across all communities and emphasize how many lives could be saved through screening.

A recent report from the National Colorectal Cancer Roundtable estimates that **203,000 deaths could be prevented by 2030 if 80% of adults get screened as recommended.** (NCCRT, 2018)

When crafting materials and messages to encourage screening, both high and low health literacy audiences benefit from simple messages and illustrations (Meppelink, Buurman & van Weert, 2015). Consider making your messages and content highly shareable, as Cutrona et al. (2013) found that many adults are willing to share their screening experiences via email or social media.

MESSAGES SHOULD...

1. Address misperceptions and fears around testing

- Individuals may not be aware of or understand the benefits of screening for colorectal cancer (Jones, Devers, Kuzel & Woolf, 2010; Nagelhout, Comarell, Samadder & Wu, 2017). **Promote the benefits of screening.**
- Fear of test results are a commonly cited barrier to screening (Jones, Devers, Kuzel & Woolf, 2010; Nagelhout, Comarell, Samadder & Wu, 2017). **Address these fears in your messaging.**
- Other barriers to being screened include an aversion to colonoscopy due to past sexual abuse or homophobia and the perception that screening procedures are embarrassing (Rohan, Boehm, DeGroff, Glover-Kudon & Priessle, 2013; Weaver, Ellis, Denizard-Thompson, Kronner & Miller, 2015). **Promote messages that shift social norms and normalize colorectal cancer screening.**
- A common barrier around colonoscopy may also be the preparation process. **Ensure messages have a positive, reassuring tone and emphasize that screening is “worth it”** (Weaver et al., 2015).

2. Feature testimonies of those who have been screened

- **Use culturally appropriate and diverse testimonials** to reach underserved and underrepresented populations, particularly those with lower screening rates like African Americans (NCCRT, 2017). Hearing about someone else’s experience can provide reassurance and make the connection about why screening matters (NCCRT, 2017).
- **Use testimonials with cancer patients** to increase perceived severity of colon cancer, which is associated with getting screened (Lipkus, Green & Marcus, 2003).
- **Make testimonial messages and information emotionally interesting, or vivid**, as this is strongly associated with knowledge and behavioral intention to get screened (Dillard & Main, 2013).

3. Provide information including alternative screening options

- **Promote multiple screening options** such as fecal immunochemical test (FIT), high sensitivity fecal occult blood testing (FOBT), sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy.
- **Highlight screening options that can be done at home to address a variety of barriers** and allow patients to feel a sense of control (NCCRT, 2017).
- **Provide information about affordable screening options** to encourage “consumers to take control of their health, while addressing concerns about affordability” (NCCRT, 2017, p. 18).
- **Point consumers to supporting materials and visuals, as well as reliable, accurate sources of information** such as trusted websites or physicians.

4. Highlight the impact of colorectal cancer and effectiveness of screening

- **Remind your audience that colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer death in the United States** when men and women are combined (CDC, 2018). This challenges assumptions for those who don't believe they are at risk (NCCRT, 2017).
- **Describe the impact of colorectal cancer while giving patients a way to address it** (NCCRT, 2017). Messages should highlight the fact that colorectal cancer can be prevented or detected at an early stage through regular screening.
- **Encourage physicians to remind patients to be screened.** Patients who visit their physicians frequently and who also report positive interactions with their physicians are most likely to report being screened for colorectal cancer (Ho, Lai & Cheung, 2011).
- The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends screening for average risk adults beginning at age 50 until at least age 75 (USPSTF, 2016). **Emphasize that colorectal cancer screening receives an "A" rating from the USPSTF and is a well-tested, highly effective tool for reducing the burden of colorectal cancer.**

SAMPLE TWEETS AND FACEBOOK POSTS

Date	Tweets	Facebook Posts	Message Category
Fri 3/1	<p>It's #ColorectalCancer Awareness Month! #DYK colorectal cancer can be prevented or detected early? Learn more: http://bit.ly/2Fjfs7t</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Today marks the beginning of Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. It's the second leading cause of cancer death when men and women are combined, but there are ways to lower your risk: http://bit.ly/2Fjfs7t</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	1
Mon 3/4	<p>There are several screening options available for #ColorectalCancer, including some take-home options. Talk to your doc about getting screened: http://bit.ly/2H1dla2</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Did you know that there are several screening options for colorectal cancer? Some can even be done from the comfort of your home. Talk to your doctor to learn more about getting screened: http://bit.ly/2H1dla2</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	3
Tue 3/5	<p>Colorectal cancer screening saves lives – take a second and share this brochure with someone you love: http://bit.ly/2T1b2u8</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Colorectal cancer screening rates have gone up over the past decade, but we still have a long way to go! Do your part and encourage a loved one to get screened by sharing this brochure: http://bit.ly/2T1b2u8</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	1
Wed 3/6	<p>Should you be screened for #ColorectalCancer? There's a lot of confusing info out there, but this fact sheet can help: http://bit.ly/2FiERhN</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Screening for colorectal cancer can raise a lot of questions. This fact sheet from CDC can help you start a conversation with your doctor: http://bit.ly/2FiERhN</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	3
Thu 3/7	<p>Is #ColorectalCancer really that common? Do I need to get tested if I don't have symptoms? This PSA answers these questions and more: http://bit.ly/2Fn3TMP @CDCgov</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Many people think that colorectal cancer isn't that common or that they don't need to get tested if they don't have symptoms. Get the facts from this Screen for Life PSA: http://bit.ly/2Fn3TMP</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	1
Fri 3/8	<p>"Hopefully, my heartbreak is your wakeup call." Terrence Howard explains why #ColorectalCancer screening is so important: http://bit.ly/2TEsRKw</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>"This is personal, but there is something you can do to prevent [colorectal cancer]." Actor and musician Terrence Howard discusses his family's experience with colorectal cancer and why it's so important to get screened: http://bit.ly/2TEsRKw</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	2

SAMPLE TWEETS AND FACEBOOK POSTS (CONTINUED)

Date	Tweets	Facebook Posts	Message Category
Mon 3/11	<p>Don't let questions about insurance coverage hold you back from getting screened for #ColorectalCancer. Many of the most common tests may be covered at no cost by your insurance.</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Thinking about getting screened for colorectal cancer but not sure if you're covered by insurance? Talk with your health care provider and insurer to find out what tests are covered for you: http://bit.ly/2M1WMcP</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	3
Tue 3/12	<p>Talking with your doctor about #ColorectalCancer screening may seem overwhelming. This resource can help guide your conversation: http://bit.ly/2Ch0vyH</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Preparation is key when it comes to colorectal cancer screening. This set of questions can help you start the conversation with your doctor and decide which screening test is right for you: http://bit.ly/2Ch0vyH</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	3
Wed 3/13	<p>Don't take chances with #ColorectalCancer! Get informed about risk factors and symptoms: http://bit.ly/2D2g27i #ScreenforLife</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month is a great opportunity to brush up on your knowledge of risk factors and symptoms of colorectal cancer. Get informed: http://bit.ly/2D2g27i</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	1
Thu 3/14	<p>Squeamish about getting tested for #ColorectalCancer? These testimonies are a reminder that it could save your life: http://bit.ly/2ADHo24</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Getting screened for colorectal cancer might make you feel squeamish, but remember that it could save your life! Learn from others who have been screened: http://bit.ly/2ADHo24</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	2
Fri 3/15	<p>How can you get #ColorectalCancer screening rates up in your community? Start by learning how your state measures up: http://bit.ly/2Rk05C5 #80inEveryCommunity</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>We could save an estimated 203,000 lives by 2030 if 80% of adults were screened for colorectal cancer as recommended. How does your state measure up? http://bit.ly/2Rk05C5</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	4
Mon 3/18	<p>Physicians: Your recommendation matters when it comes to getting patients screened for #ColorectalCancer. This course can help you tailor your recommendations for patients: http://bit.ly/2FpPU7V</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>How can physicians maximize the benefits of colorectal cancer screening for their patients? This CDC-sponsored continuing education activity has practical advice for implementing screening in your practice: http://bit.ly/2FpPU7V</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	4

SAMPLE TWEETS AND FACEBOOK POSTS (CONTINUED)

Date	Tweets	Facebook Posts	Message Category
Tue 3/19	<p>#DYK #ColorectalCancer doesn't always cause symptoms? If you do have any of these symptoms, be sure to talk to your doctor right away: http://bit.ly/2M3MVDv</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Colorectal cancer doesn't always cause symptoms, but be sure to see your doctor right away if you have any of these symptoms: http://bit.ly/2M3MVDv</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	1
Wed 3/20	<p>Today is the first day of spring! Put a "spring" in your step by making an appointment to talk to your doctor about #ColorectalCancer screening: http://bit.ly/2M22bR9</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>You make time for spring cleaning, why not make time to talk to your doctor about colorectal cancer screening options? Don't delay, make the call today! http://bit.ly/2M22bR9</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	1
Thu 3/21	<p>There's a screening that could save your life. Actor Jimmy Smits talks about the importance of getting checked for #ColorectalCancer: http://bit.ly/2AHRbnH</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Screenings don't just happen in movie theaters! In this "Screen for Life" PSA, actor Jimmy Smits talks about the importance of another kind of screening, one that could save your life: http://bit.ly/2AHRbnH</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	2
Fri 3/22	<p>#LynchSyndrome is an inherited condition that makes you more likely to get colorectal cancer. Talk with your doctor about your family history to see if you may be at risk: http://bit.ly/2Ft5JuP</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Did you know today is National Lynch Syndrome Awareness Day? This inherited condition makes you more likely to get colorectal and other cancers. Talk with your doctor about your risk and family history: http://bit.ly/2Ft5JuP</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	4
Mon 3/25	<p>There's more than one way to get screened for #ColorectalCancer, and many tests are covered by insurance. Learn more: http://bit.ly/2QDcZG3</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Think a colonoscopy is the only way to get screened for colorectal cancer? Think again! Here's an overview of the many screening tests available. Talk with your doctor to see which is right for you: http://bit.ly/2QDcZG3</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	3
Tue 3/26	<p>Learn how @CDCgov's Colorectal Cancer Control Program is saving lives: http://bit.ly/2ABnIRB #CompCancer #80inEveryCommunity</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Did you know that the Colorectal Cancer Control Program saves lives by working to increase screening rates? Learn about this critical program and many of its successes working with clinics, health systems and providers: http://bit.ly/2ABnIRB</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	4

SAMPLE TWEETS AND FACEBOOK POSTS (CONTINUED)

Date	Tweets	Facebook Posts	Message Category
Wed 3/27	<p>Risk factors for #ColorectalCancer include family history, inflammatory bowel disease, and certain genetic syndromes: http://bit.ly/2H1KuCu</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>You may be at risk for colorectal cancer if you have a personal history of polyps, inflammatory bowel disease, certain genetic syndromes or a family history of colorectal cancer. Read more and talk to your doctor about getting screened: http://bit.ly/2H1KuCu</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	3
Thu 3/28	<p>Actress Meryl Streep says, "There is so much in life we can't control. But here's something we can: colorectal cancer." http://bit.ly/2oKp5ov</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>Screening can prevent colorectal cancer, or detect it early, by finding polyps so that they can be removed before they turn into cancer. In this PSA, actress Meryl Streep talks about getting screened and urges others to do the same: http://bit.ly/2oKp5ov</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	2
Fri 3/29	<p>"Fortunately, my cancer was caught early, but I never would have found it early if I hadn't been screened," says Robert. Learn more: http://bit.ly/2VHYwwp</p> <p>Tweet This</p>	<p>"If I hadn't been screened, I wouldn't have been able to see my son go off to college or enjoy this next chapter of my life with my wife and family." Learn more about Robert's story about getting screened for colorectal cancer: http://bit.ly/2VHYwwp</p> <p>Share Link on Facebook</p>	2

SAMPLE LINKEDIN POSTS

LinkedIn Message	Message Category
<p>Providers: March is a great time to brush up on best practices for colorectal cancer screening. These courses from CDC provide continuing education credits and are intended for primary care providers or other clinicians who perform colonoscopies: http://bit.ly/2Q9VrX2</p> <p>Share on LinkedIn</p>	4
<p>Colorectal cancer is on the rise in younger adults. These resources from the Colorectal Cancer Alliance can help providers educate their patients on the risks: http://bit.ly/2D0ZVa6</p> <p>Share on LinkedIn</p>	4
<p>The GW Cancer Center offers a continuing education module on caring for colorectal cancer survivors in the Cancer Survivorship E-Learning Series for Primary Care Providers: http://bit.ly/2CckkaH</p> <p>Share on LinkedIn</p>	4

OTHER IDEAS TO PROMOTE COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS

Host or Participate in a Twitter Chat or Twitterview

Twitter chats are a great way to expand your audience and promote engagement with other partners and organizations. You can organize a Twitter chat yourself or simply participate in another one. Twitter chats are live moderated Twitter conversations focused around a specific topic using a single hashtag. They usually last an hour and involve a list of pre-circulated questions to participants. If you are organizing a chat, reach out to partners early and provide the list of questions as far in advance as possible.

A Twitterview is an interview conducted through Tweets. For a Twitterview, typically an interviewer asks questions directly to the interviewee and participants can follow the conversation through an event hashtag. You may also open up the interview to questions from the audience. Potentially influential speakers might include researchers, cancer survivors or caregivers, health care providers or other subject matter experts.

Consider using a website to help manage the Twitterview or Twitter chat such as [TweetChat](#) or [TWUBS](#).

Promote the event to your followers. Host the event, running it similarly to how you would host a live in-person meeting (introduce topic, speaker or participating organizations, your organization). Number your questions starting with a "Q" for question. For example: Q1: Are there alternatives to colonoscopy for colon cancer screening? #FightCRCChat. Your speaker(s) can either "reply" to the question you Tweet or Tweet starting with an "A" and the corresponding number. For example: A1: Yes, lots of other options like FIT and FOBT. Learn more & ask your doc: <http://bit.ly/2fFu0OR> #FightCRCChat

Retweet or favorite the best questions posed by your followers and answers by your speaker(s) and be sure to share relevant links and resources. After the event, archive an event summary and share with participants and your other followers. Consider using tools like [Hashtracking](#) to compile analytics after the Twitterview or Tweet chat.

Live Tweet an Event or Conference

Consider live Tweeting a conference or other event around Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month. Live Tweeting is a form of notetaking which is online and interactive. During an event, conference, speech or webinar, organizers and attendees can live Tweet and use established hashtags so that everyone following the event hashtag can see the Tweet and reply. During the event you can Tweet quotes from speakers, share pictures of attendees, and Retweet messages from the attendees. When quoting speakers, make sure to include their Twitter handles to let them know you are promoting their sessions. You can also pre-write Tweets and schedule them to go out during the event if you know when certain parts of the event are planned to occur.

Host a Facebook Live Event

Facebook Live is a live video streaming service that can be used to connect with your followers in real time. Facebook Live offers the opportunity to conduct live Q & A's through

the comment function where followers can ask questions or post commentary during the livestream. You can also use this livestream service to host an interview or broadcast an event, enabling people to participate even if they are not able to attend in person.

Pick a date and time. Tell your followers about your livestream event ahead of time. Live broadcasts can last for up to 4 hours.

Promote the event to your followers. Write a compelling description for your event which will show up on your followers' newsfeeds along with the video to help people understand what your event is about. You can also add your location to the broadcast to increase discoverability. Keep track of your audience's reactions to gauge how your broadcast is being received.

Share Event Photos on Instagram

Instagram is a photo sharing application that allows users to share pictures, videos, and messages with their followers. Instagram can be a great platform for increasing engagement with your audience and sharing your mission through photos. You can use Instagram to share photos from your events and feature individuals involved with the events such as speakers or volunteers. You can also share video clips from the events by posting them to your Instagram story. Encourage followers to share their photos of your events by using a hashtag.

Pick a hashtag. Using hashtags is a way to group and organize photos together. Many users search for photos in Instagram using hashtags. If you use an established hashtag, your images may reach audiences that you usually do not reach. If you would like to create your own hashtag, make sure it is short and intuitive. You can increase visibility of your event by having followers post their photos to Instagram with a hashtag.

Connect your Instagram to your other social media accounts to cross-promote your activities and increase engagement with your audience.

Share Your Event on Snapchat

Snapchat is another social media platform to help you share photos and videos with your followers. Snapchat has over 158 million users with a majority of users under 30 years old (Lee, 2018). You can share photos and videos individually with followers or share them in your Snapchat story. Photos and videos in your Snapchat story are visible to followers for 24 hours. You can use the story feature to promote your event, provide exclusive content such as behind the scenes footage or send a call to action. Share your story to your local "Our Story" to be featured on Snapchat's map of stories and gain more visibility.

Utilize Snapchat's unique features to promote your organization and events. Geofilters are location-based filters that can be used on photos and videos to further promote your cause as followers can then use these geofilters in their own posts. In the past, Snapchat has created geofilters for Giving Tuesday and donated to a designated charity every time someone posted using one of those geofilters. Snapcash is a feature that allows users to send money through Snapchat which could be a useful tool for soliciting online donations.

Check out this [Snapchat guide](#) for more information.

Promote Your Cause on Pinterest

Pinterest is an online tool that can help users discover and organize creative ideas by serving as a vision board. Pinterest can be used to drive more traffic to your website by adding eye-catching images, infographics, or quotes to your Pinterest boards and linking them to your website. Pinterest boards function as albums or folders in that they categorize pins for users to peruse. If you are just starting out with Pinterest it may be good to include general boards showcasing your organization's mission in addition to adding event or fundraising boards for Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month.

[Link your website](#) and other social media accounts to your Pinterest by including them in the profile header to expand your exposure. If you have a YouTube channel or photo sharing page consider sharing those videos and photos on Pinterest as well.

Publish a Blog Post

Publishing blog posts can be a great way to highlight the successes of your organization and promote your events. Consider writing a post with a call to action for your readers to attend your Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month events. Personal stories of patients or survivors, for example, can make for powerful blog posts by connecting with the reader emotionally. Use visuals such as photos and videos to illustrate your narrative and engage readers.

[Create dialogue](#). Use your blog not only to share stories but also to communicate with your readers and increase engagement. Ask for audience feedback on your content and promote a space to discuss issues and share success stories.

Host a Reddit Ask Me Anything

Reddit is a social news aggregation, content rating, and discussion website. An Ask Me Anything (AMA) is a feature on Reddit where users can interview someone with a notable trait such as a researcher or other expert through posting questions to the Reddit message board. The AMA begins with the interviewee posting an introduction about themselves and then users respond with questions and comments. Users can "upvote" posted questions to indicate that are also interested in knowing the answer to those questions. AMAs can be scheduled to start and stop at certain times or be open-ended in duration. Consider hosting an AMA with a colorectal cancer expert or survivor.

[Publicize your AMA](#) through your other social media channels to draw more participants.

Host a Colorectal Cancer Survivors Meetup Event

Consider hosting a meetup for local colorectal cancer survivors. It doesn't have to be a formal support group setting or even have cancer survivorship as the main focus. It could simply be a social activity intended to gather cancer survivors, caregivers or family members who have been affected by cancer.

Consider reaching out to local organizations to solicit donations or prizes for the event. Organize a giveaway or prizes to encourage people to use your hashtag and engage with your content. Twitter and Instagram photo contests are another great way to get your followers involved and engaged.

You might also consider hosting a special webinar or panel to promote colorectal cancer. Make sure to reach out to potential partners early to ensure support. Check out [Communication Training for Comprehensive Cancer Control \(CCC\) Professionals 101](#) for more information on working with local media.

Best Practices for Engagement Events and Activities

- Plan early and well
- Expand your audience and reach by partnering with another organization
- Make sure you use an original hashtag (unless it makes sense to use an established hashtag)
- Involve well-known local figures to help raise the profile of your event(s) and increase participation and engagement

MEASURING SUCCESS

Looking to measure the success of your social media campaign? Twitter, Facebook and Instagram offer free analytic tools to allow you to demonstrate the impact of your social media efforts.

Tool	Description
Facebook Insights	Allows users to track page likes, post reach, number of visits, specific posts and who is following your page. According to Facebook, “posts that get more likes, comments and shares show up more in News Feed and are seen by more people. Posts that are hidden, reported as spam or cause people to unlike your page reach fewer people.”
Instagram Insights	Available in the app for users who have an Instagram Business Profile. This tool allows you to see overall account metrics, follower demographics and metrics for your Instagram stories such as impression, reach and replies.
Snaplytics	Paid service that allows users to manage their Snapchat stories, Instagram stories and Instagram accounts and can help identify the most engaging content across platforms.
Twitter Analytics	Allows users to see and download detailed tracking information about Tweet activity, engagement, audience and trends over time. Log in with your Twitter username and password to learn more.
Viralwoot	Helps track Pinterest analytics, schedule pins, promote pins and gain new followers. This paid analytics tool provides statistics about your reach, activity and engagement scores. It also provides you with an influence score and tells you what you need to do to boost your Pinterest presence.



ADDITIONAL TOOLS AND RESOURCES

These social media, communication and design tools can help you enhance your online presence and overall communications strategy.

Tool	Description
Canva	Allows users to create visually appealing graphics and photos for social media and print materials; includes a collection of low-cost or free stock photos and backgrounds.
CDC Infographics	Provides a gallery of CDC-designed infographics to visually communicate data or information.
CDC on Flickr	Designed for public health image sharing. CDC images include public health photos and graphics developed for public health events that users can comment on and share.
CDC Public Health Image Library (PHIL)	Free image library from CDC.
Communication Training for Comprehensive Cancer Control Professionals 101	Comm 101 is a no-cost online training from the GW Cancer Center on establishing a media and communications strategy and working with the media.
Communication Training for Comprehensive Cancer Control Professionals 102	Comm 102 is a no-cost online training from the GW Cancer Center on planning, implementing and evaluating evidence-based communication campaigns.
Guide to Making Communication Campaigns Evidence-Based	Companion guide to Comm 102 training that explores the process for planning, implementing and evaluating a communication campaign.
GW Cancer Center Social Media Toolkits	Additional social media toolkits for other health-related observances throughout the year.
Hootsuite	Social media management platform that allows users to schedule social media posts, keep up with trends and followers, and collect basic analytics for evaluation.
Media Planning and Media Relations Guide	Companion guide to Comm 101 training that covers working with the media and establishing a communications and media strategy.
Periscope	Live-streaming video app to show events or videos live to your audience on social media.
Sprout Social	Paid social media management platform that allows users to schedule social media posts, keep up with trends and followers, and collect basic analytics for evaluation.
Thunderclap	Social networking tool that allows you to “crowdsource” your social media campaign to increase its impact.
TinyURL	Link shortening service that allows for customization of URLs to make them more memorable.
Tweetdeck	Platform from Twitter that allows for pre-scheduling Tweets and graphics.

GLOSSARY

Ask Me Anything (AMA): A feature of Reddit where users can interview someone through posting questions to the Reddit message board

Facebook: A [social networking](#) site that allows people to create personal profiles and stay connected with others (www.facebook.com)

Facebook Live: A live video streaming service provided through Facebook

Feed: News feeds which you receive straight into your account

Followers: People who have agreed to receive your Tweets or Facebook posts

Hashtags (#): A form of metadata tag that makes it possible to group messages

Instagram: A photo sharing application that allows users to share pictures and videos to their followers either publicly or privately to pre-approved followers (<https://www.instagram.com/>)

Live Tweet: To post comments about an event on Twitter while the event is taking place

Pinterest: A website where users can discover information mainly through images, GIFs (animated images), and videos (<https://www.pinterest.com/>)

Reddit: A social news aggregation, content rating, and discussion website (<https://www.reddit.com>)

Retweet (RT): Re-posting of someone else's Tweet

Snapchat: An image messaging application where messages auto-delete after set amount of seconds

Tweets: 280-character text messages

Twitter: An online [social networking](#) and [microblogging](#) service that enables users to send and read short 280-[character](#) text messages, called "Tweets" (www.twitter.com)

Twitter chat: A live moderated Twitter conversation focused around a specific topic using a single hashtag

Twitter handle: Your Twitter name that begins with the "@" sign. For example: @GWCancer

Twittersphere or Twitterverse: The total universe of Twitter users and their habits

Twitterview: A combination of the terms Twitter, a popular microblogging platform, and interview. It is a type of interview for which the medium restricts the interviewer and interviewee to short-form responses

See Twitter's "[Twitter Glossary](#)" for more.

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