Building a Positive Social Media Presence

Creators: Amy Calhoun and Jamie Matczak
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Topic

Selection
We started with technology and there were a lot of different ways to take it. The guidance we got at the Training Institute was to do something that wouldn't have to be updated all the time, something that would remain relevant for a longer amount of time. So we selected this aspect of social media because it wasn't focused on the nitty-gritty of how-to use the tool, but rather on the elements to consider and be aware of and how to use social media on your own time vs. a library account.

Sourcing Content
We actually started fresh on the content. I've had speakers talk about different aspects of social media, like writing for Facebook or policies around social media, but nothing specifically on this topic. This was pretty fresh for us.

Researching new content was hard. I wasn't sure how scholarly the information should have been. I often stress the scholarly sources, but for social media, it hasn't been out there for that long, it took me a while to be okay with finding things on popular culture sites, or blogs that were written by people or our SMEs. Once I started accepting that, it became easier.

I could definitely find things, but not things that were library specific. It's not something the libraries train staff on a whole lot. Some of the content that I could find was such extreme examples of things going wrong; it was hard to find things that were more moderate or judgment calls or relatable examples. What I wanted to talk about evolved as I was researching. Bridging and bonding, negative interaction, etc. I felt kind of limited, like I was in a box of what I'm trying to find. What seemed important to include changed as I did research. It changed, and that's okay.

Course Design Process

We created an outline in a shared Google Doc, which worked really well for us so we could easily edit, then refer back and see if any edits were made. It really did serve as our guide. When we found sources, we started pasting them all in the document, so we had a general idea of what we wanted to cover. It wasn't until we started to build content that we realized we could have two modules within this module, that we could separate the module into positive and negative examples –it was a good way to keep things straight. Then we thought, if we could get the SMEs to provide the audio to support those topics, that that would make the course stronger.

I had certain things, content that I had found that drove me to storyboard the course. For each area of content I'm going to address, I knew I wanted to find examples to match the first example, so that I would have consistency in the course. My learning curve impacted the storyboard. I storyboarded things I knew I could accomplish and changed things that I knew I wouldn't be able to do in a reasonable amount of time.

We knew the topic had the potential to be fun and we wanted a lot of real life examples. We created quizzes or questions to encourage participation, with bit coins as the capital. It wasn't a quiz that's right or wrong, but participation through reflection: "To share or not to share / to friend or not to friend." We wanted to refer to these practices as guidelines or things to consider. It couldn't be a black/white thing – a lot of it is personal preference with awareness. I'm happy with the amount of interaction we had in our project.

Working with SMEs
I emailed SMEs, and they all eventually got back to me and were willing to help. They answered the questions I sent them, and once I had their answers, I asked them if they'd mind giving us some audio, based on their responses. For consistency, I gave them a script to introduce themselves and share their list of tips. I gave them 3 weeks to do it; there was some pushback, but they were all willing to do that. We linked to their blogs/website in the course as a way to promote their work.

Collaboration

We were a good match, knew we could trust that each other was going to get everything done. Working with only one other person, it helped to keep us from having too many moving pieces. We knew we were both responsible for getting the project done. We were good at setting deadlines. And we had complimentary connections –one of us with SMEs for new course content, and the other with a graphic designer for the course design elements.

Roles
I think we both had the strengths of content and writing, and both were building up comfort in Storyline. We both did a little of both the content writing and course development. I think it was helpful to play each role, so one person wasn't writing the content and one person wasn't just adding it into Storyline. But I wonder if we were doing it again, would we want to have one person design the content and one person build it in Storyline?

We could have done more collaborating outside of the two of us – invited the staff people or someone from our library to get feedback a little earlier and along the way.

Collaboration Tools
After meeting face-to-face, we checked in with each other a lot. GoogleDocs was helpful for brainstorming and organizing, but we had phone check-ins every other week and regular emails. We would set touchpoints/deadlines for our online conversations so we could have more constructive conversations when we did meet. Once we got into Storyline more, I started using GoTo Meeting to starting screen sharing so we could see content. Helping each other learn the tool AND review their content.

Technical Development in Storyline

We did look at all of the lynda.com courses, but watching Mike (Storyline consultant) at the Institute build out another mini-course as a practice example was really helpful. Interacting with it and seeing Mike build in it, helped a lot more than lynda.com content.

The module approach for our content made it easy for us to work together in Storyline – one of us did the introduction and one module; then the other added the second module and the conclusion.

I think that other groups may say they'd want more time, but I don't think that's necessarily true. Having this timeline forced me to jump into the tool and start to learn it. We'd originally planned for 3 modules, once we started building the course out, we decided that would have been way too much content/too long of a course. We got to a point where we could have kept building and we stopped. It did make me realize how much work it really is – both learning and doing it. It did make me concerned about thinking about offering this to our staff. There's something to be said for having one person doing Storyline in an organization and have more people building the content.

Storyline Lessons Learned
I spent a lot of time, knowing things weren't right, looking for lots of menus. Maybe it's because in the library world, I'm not used to being able to turn to a forum to ask questions about a piece of technology, but as soon as I would google, "Slides not displaying on left hand side of the menu," I'd find a solution. I would have saved myself a lot of time – if you can articulate the question, you'll find that the question has already been posted and answered. It's a bigger pool of Storyline users, then maybe for an ILS.
The feedback we got when we were ready for feedback made it totally worth it. You guys gave us such good feedback. The production checklist was also helpful.

Reflections & Recommendations

Training Institute Curriculum and Training
It was a really good experience! I'm really glad I got to be part of it. It was challenging but a really good opportunity! The in-person workshop was pretty quickly paced – I went away from it very energized, with a plan. I may have forgotten some of the details I learned from Mike, but it was a good introduction; it showed me what was possible, more than just the tutorials.

It was hugely helpful to have consultation calls with Mike (Storyline consultant) for our specific course review. It was also helpful to check in with other groups to see what they were doing. Hearing that others had the same frustrations with Storyline, it made me feel better that I wasn't the only one struggling. It was nice to know that we were all in the same boat.

Barriers
I was getting more and more work and responsibilities at work during this process, so I was doing more and more on this course on the weekend, and not quite keeping up with my partner and wasn't helpful to her when she needed help with states.

People will get excited about building a course but – I'm concerned about quality control and time management. We have video equipment and people will be into shooting a video to make promos for this or that, but then they enter the editing stage and realize it can take days and days and I'm concerned how long – at what point are we doing the best for the organization. I like having someone being the technical designer.

Recommendations
It would have been great to have more time during the in-person convening. We had touched on what makes a good self-paced course and good content development, but it would have helped to spend more time on it.

I also think everyone should be on the same page about accessibility and what's possible –focus more on general practices, principles and requirements for accessibility. On the second day we were encouraged to think about themes and colors – and at that point we weren't thinking *anything* near that. We weren't thinking along those lines yet.

Future Plans

One thing I'm planning to use it for, on the Storyline Showcase, I saw an example where you used one slide and used hotspots or markers to display the features of the product. It would be helpful to use that when we roll out our new intranet, so we can highlight the new areas on the site.