

Improving FaceBook's Reach

Internal good practice, Crossing Borders.

Facebook, why is it important?

Facebook is still one of the main social networks in use, with users ranging from teenagers to more elder people; it's used as a tool for communication, organization, dissemination of ideas and, of course, social networking. Our FB page has been our online channel with more visitors and where we connect with and update our supporters and CB activities. Given FB's relevance and wide reach, we wanted to make our vision more clear in our FB page in order to get more supporters, which are also potential CB 'real-life' users, given that our target for CB activities are both students and educators.

Who makes it? What is done?

Our Aarhus coordinator and WAADN coordinator Catarina has been handling our FB page since March 2015. Despite a slight increase in our followers we still felt that we could do more, so after the second WAADN's meeting in Milan we applied the teachings of Steindor (one of our Icelandic partners) regarding how to make an appealing FB page. We now make at least one post a day, we make them more visual (using images, video, etc) and we are trying to make CB's FB page a reference page where you can get our news from.

Since when?

Since March 2015 until now.

Target groups, national, international or local focus?

Our main target groups are students and educators living in Denmark who can benefit from CB activities. Our secondary target group is broader and consists of activists around the globe who can identify with CB's values and mission and can contribute to the organization by becoming members and spreading the word about the work we do.

Digital aspects of good practice

CB has been trying to make the organization more visible on social media channels. Regarding Facebook we have taken two approaches: make the connection between Facebook and real-life practices, and integration in our action area's trending topics.

We have substantially increased our number of Facebook followers and interactions (likes, shares, comments, etc.) after our event in Aarhus' International Day. In this event we had a stand where we shared information with international students regarding our organization and the work that we do. The initial plan was to have two tablets on display, one with our Facebook page and one with our website, so that people could see the website and click 'like' on our FB page on the spot. This revealed itself quite unpractical so instead we created a contact sheet for our visitors and sent them, in the same day of the event, a welcoming email with an introduction to the organization and our online profiles. The fact

that people have talked to us earlier that day one on one made them more comfortable liking our Facebook page and getting involved in our activities, since online profiles should be seen as an extension of our 'real-life-selves' and not as something that happens in a vacuum. We followed the welcoming email with a meeting to paint posters for the #RefugeesWelcome international event and in the demonstration day we went together as "CB Aarhus".

The use of hashtags such as #RefugeesWelcome has also been crucial. By doing that we have participated in an international trending topic – meaning that when people look for #refugeeswelcome on Facebook, Crossing Borders is going to show up. We have continued using the hashtag with a series of articles we have been publishing on the topic written by CB interns and volunteers. This hashtag will later be joined by our own hashtag #InTheSameBoat, which has been the title of our event last May (<http://crossingborders.dk/2015/06/are-we-all-in-the-same-boat/>) and will be the title of our upcoming event in Aarhus and Copenhagen which will host a debate with refugees, social workers, scholars and the media about the refugee crisis in Europe. This means that when people look up the #RefugeesWelcome hashtag they will also find out about our event.

On the other hand, we have also been using that hashtag along with articles shared from other organizations and institutions that have similar values to CB, such as Amnesty International or the United Nations. Furthermore, we have been sharing selected articles from other media channels about the refugee crisis and other topics that

CB is working on. This has been made with two objectives: 1. Making CB's message, vision and mission clear for potential CB Facebook followers that are not familiar with our work, making a connection between trending topics and CB's ongoing work; 2. Making CB into a Facebook page where our followers can receive daily information on the human rights areas that CB is involved in, transforming CB not only in a page where we disseminate our work but also a page where you can get updates from different media channels filtered by topic.

Pedagogic aspects of good practice

Our new FB approach has been put in practice by Catarina, who's currently managing FB. However, given CB's methodology of knowledge transfer and youth empowerment, the methodology has been shared with all CB staff through reports. Furthermore, the page will also be temporarily managed by CB interns and volunteers who will use the knowledge they got from Catarina and from other social media trainers (for example, after our HyperYouth3000 programme, which aimed at training youth for new media), allowing CB youth to put their theory into practice.

Strength, weakness, opportunities and threats of good practice

Strength

We have substantially increase our followers' number by approximately 1000.

Weakness

Although we have more followers, we haven't manage to increase participation on the page (i.e., comments, likes, shares) at the same rate

Opportunities

Make media-specific content for FB in order to make CB's position in the international/national arena even clearer.

Threats

Lack of staff who can be exclusively assigned to develop social media channels.

Facts of method

5 participants

Target groups:

Students living in DK

Educators living in DK

International activists/potential members and supporters

Perfomed daily since March 2015

1 staff involved

Link to method:

<https://www.facebook.com/CrossingBordersDK>

Which aspects are transferable?

Participation in online trending topics can vastly improve your visibility (as an individual or an organization), as well as keeping in mind the connection between 'real' and digital. People want to see real stories written by real people, so it's important not to get lost in unnecessary formalities. Media-specific content is also important.

A success story of the good practice

Our event 'In the Same Boat' in Aarhus was greatly organized through Facebook and the communication, both internal and external, was done through this channel. The majority of the people that came to the event did it because they saw the event on Facebook and our page sparked their curiosity. We had a full event a lot of 'real-life' active participation thanks to our FB management.

Final summary: what makes it in your opinion a good method?

We have seen 'real-life' results out of our digital improvement, which is often hard to spot and evaluate. We have used what we've learned from our international partners and ut it to practice, which contribute to an increase of our organization's visibility and reach. Making media-specific content for our page and not treating it as an

extension of our webpage has had very positive results. Furthermore, we have started a 'knowledge transfer chain' in which digital knowledge will continue to be

transferred, improved, and applied constantly in our organization, empowering staff and volunteers.