



Gas Lamp Players **Social Media Strategy**

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Introduction

Dear Gas Lamp Players Board of Directors,

Gas Lamp Players has always been a very special community that so many theatre makers over the years have been lucky to call home. With programs that support creative minds from 6 years old to 60+, this company is a special community that has touched many lives since its creation, and I've been lucky to witness and experience this magic firsthand.

While Gas Lamp Players has been around since before social media, it is clear that different social media platforms have become a central force in culture today. Certain platforms have also become keystones in business practices, with marketing being most effected and shifted by social media's power. Gas Lamp Players certainly has some presence on social media; the Instagram and Facebook accounts have reached sizable audiences and certainly started to build an online community for the company. However, there is no curated strategy being implemented at this time, and I think that Gas Lamp Players could benefit from a thought out and structured social media strategy in order to upgrade their social media presence and social reach. This upgrade is especially important considering the pandemic and the large stretch of time where Gas Lamp Players was put on hold; creating a strong public image that lets audiences know that the company is thriving is more important than ever to keep company members participating, keeping audiences engaged, and keeping donors interested and invested.

As such, I believe it is vital that Gas Lamp Players reevaluate their current social media presence. If the company shifts to better take advantage of certain platforms – namely Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok – the company would have potential to expand audiences and grow the "Gas Lamp" name.

I am very excited about the prospect of Gas Lamp Players developing a broader reach on social media. In this era where any individual or group has the potential to "blow up" on social media, it is important that Gas Lamp Players take advantage of that potential. I have specifically chosen the platforms Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok to cover the broad range of age groups that Gas Lamp Players typically reaches. Facebook will be used to keep in touch with older audiences, Instagram will be used most heavily for advertising and updates, and TikTok will be used to create relatable content that gives Gas Lamp the opportunity to reach broader audiences and be more attractive on social media.



Social Media

Strategy

Social Media Strategy

GOALS:

WHY USE SOCIAL MEDIA?

- Our audiences (and potential audiences) are operating on social media platforms daily
- Advertising via social media is becoming a staple component of marketing strategies, and Gas Lamp Players currently does not follow a curated social media plan

WHAT IS THIS STRATEGY AIMING TO ACHIEVE?

- **Revitalize Gas Lamp Players community**
 - Gas Lamp has excitingly made a shift towards more professional programming and a more professional feel for the company
 - This being said, something that has always been special about Gas Lamp Players is the strong familial and community feel that has always been curated and integral to the Gas Lamp experience
 - One central goal for this strategy is to communicate and cultivate that community and family feel that Gas Lamp has always had through social media content
- **Attract new audiences**
 - A large portion of Gas Lamp Players audiences derives from family and friends of Cast Members, as well as Glen Ridge, NJ residents
 - Especially with bigger and more well known shows, exciting and constant social media promotional content shared through those directly connected to Gas Lamp Players might be a great way to expand audiences

AUDIENCE:

WHO ARE WE AIMING TO REACH?

This strategy is aiming to reach three main groups:

Current Gas Lamp Players members: create a strong community online that serves as an extension of the strong familial community we've seen in Gas Lamp years past

Alumni: the goal here is to get these people reiterated by using nostalgia and simultaneously presenting the new and exciting iteration of Gas Lamp Players. We will aim to get alumni within distance to come to see shows, and old alumni to give money

Potential audience members: This is community theatre, so the best way to get new audiences is through connections to Company members and people who live close and want some entertainment

WHY WILL EACH AUDIENCE GROUP LISTED ABOVE BE INTERESTED IN OUR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS?

- **Current Gas Lamp Players members:**
 - They want to stay up to date and connected to the community
 - By creating an exciting community and series of content online, we will hopefully be able to use the online community to strengthen the in-person community at Gas Lamp Players
 - This will require highly interactive content that will mobilize current members to join the online community

- **Alumni**

- Gas Lamp Players is a special family for anyone who passes through, so these members will likely enjoy reminiscing on the past
- The goal is to make this audience nostalgic enough to donate, attend another Gas Lamp Players event/show, or even get re-involved in performance in some capacity

- **Potential audience members:**

- Live entertainment is still feeling extra exciting due to how long it was gone and how easily we know it can be pulled away from us (exemplified by recent closings on Broadway)
- By providing information about opportunities to see live theatre, and especially if the content promoting that live theatre is exciting and interesting, people might be more interested to follow the social media profiles

SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS:

WHAT PLATFORMS WILL WE USE?

- **Facebook**

- Facebook is a widely popular and heavily used social media platform.
- It is good for re-sharing content from Instagram and also posting longer messages

- **Instagram**

- Instagram is the main social media platform of choice (other than TikTok) among young communities, especially in terms of advertising (at least on college campuses and in high school)

- **TikTok**

- TikTok is rising to be one of the most widespread and impressive social media platforms that has ever existed.
- People spend hours scrolling, and tapping into current trends can be a very strong way to relate to audiences.
- TikTok would be used primarily to grow awareness of the Company, because viral posts can be highly effective in promoting a group or an individual
- This would be used to hopefully grow the Gas Lamp Players brand, and also get young kids to ask their parents to sign them up for programs by making the company appear attractive on TikTok

WHICH AUDIENCE WILL WE REACH WITH EACH PLATFORM?

The audience breakdown for Social Media Platforms is different than my audience breakdown in relation to my goals.

- **Facebook**

- Facebook will mainly be used to target older audiences, ages 30+
- Most adults are active on Facebook, especially adults in the Montclair/Glen Ridge/Nutley area where Gas Lamp Players has the majority of its audiences
- Facebook is where people ages 30+ tend to share most of their own content, whether it be posts of their children achieving accomplishments or documenting a moment in their life
- As Gas Lamp Players is a community theatre, the company does have many cast members in that 30+ age group
- Many of the patrons who come see Gas Lamp shows and who are not connected to Gas Lamp Players are also in the 30+ age group
- Using Facebook to advertise will be the best way to reach older audiences

- **Instagram**

- Instagram is a platform frequented mostly by Millennials and Gen Z, who also make up a significant portion of Gas Lamp Players and connected persons.
- There is a large youth/teen program at Gas Lamp Players, so Instagram will be the best way to reach these audiences
- Many of the people coming to see their friends in shows are below 30 years old, mostly friends from middle or high school
- These friends of Company members most likely have Instagram and will see advertisements shared by those Company-member friends

- **TikTok**

- The use of TikTok would primarily be targeted towards Gen Z users (the most frequent users on the app). In fact, 63% of Gen Z uses TikTok almost daily.
- This would reach younger audiences, hopefully, those who have been signed up or who are in proximity to the company and might ask their parents to sign them up for programs

TIMELINE FOR CONTENT:

INSTAGRAM CONTENT:

- **Posts:**

- Instagram posts are the formal posts that show up permanently on a profile page. There should be **2-3 Instagram posts per week**
- Posts should not overwhelm followers, but be just enough to stay in people's minds, hence the few posts per week.

- **Stories:**

- These are the posts that disappear after 24 hours and show up in the bubbles above people's feeds.

- Post here **8-10 times per week**, more often on the lesser side. There can be more Instagram Story posts, as people tap through these frequently and there is already a high volume so it is not as bothersome when someone posts often.

POST NEW CONTENT:

- According to SproutSocial, the best time to work on Instagram is **Tuesday 11am-2pm** and **Monday-Friday at 11am**
- Gas Lamp should post on Instagram **Tuesdays at 11am, Wednesdays at 11am** and **Friday at 11am**
- ** I do not recommend that Gas Lamp turn on the feature where content is shared from Instagram directly to Facebook; content will be crafted specifically for one platform or the other, and should not overlap directly. **

FACEBOOK CONTENT:

- As per standard practice, companies with fewer than 10,000 followers on Facebook should not post more than 5 times per month – Gas Lamp Players page has 1,216 followers
- Considering this standard practice, **I recommend Gas Lamp posts 3-4 times per month**; this will keep the Company in older followers' heads while not bombarding them or breaking Facebook culture.

POST NEW CONTENT:

- **The best time to post on social media is toward the end of the week, particularly for Facebook.**
- The specific best times, specifically for facebook, are between 12pm-3pm on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and also between 12 and 1pm on Saturdays and Sundays.
- Gas Lamp Players should post on Facebook once per week at 1:30pm on on Wednesdays

TIKTOK CONTENT:

- I would recommend **3-4 posts per week** on TikTok, with a much heavier posting volume during tech weeks
- It will be easy to have cast members make TikToks and then repost them on **Instagram**

POST NEW CONTENT:

- For TikTok, they should just post **at any time of day**, but definitely still **3-4 times per week** to keep content fresh, updated, and present on people's feeds.
- Any day or time will be good for posts on TikTok, as they will be circulated regardless

TYPE OF CONTENT:

WHAT CATEGORIES SHOULD OUR CONTENT FALL INTO?

- **Nostalgic Content:** Content that makes people remember/reengage with the familial community of Gas Lamp Players
 - Used to be in order to get old members to remember why they love Gas Lamp so much and contribute
 - **Ex.** A series with old videos from the Company's past productions
- **Reminders/Announcements:** Keep the online community up to date on current happenings in the community
 - This will **1)** contribute to the feeling of a warm online community, **2)** encourage old community members to rejoin the community they once loved, or **3)** make the company look attractive to outside audiences who may want to see shows
- **Behind-the-scenes:** Show people how fun the community is
 - Makes Gas Lamp look attractive for new members to join/register for programs

WHAT ARE AUDIENCES LOOKING FOR?

To be entertained:

- Content should not only be informative about Gas Lamp Players community, shows, rituals, happenings, etc., but should also consistently be entertaining and engaging for audiences.
- This means the content must be either visually appealing or otherwise the content itself must be engaging

To see what's going on in rehearsals/the community:

- Portraying a fun rehearsal environment might be a good way to attract new company members.
- It is fun to watch people goofing around and having fun; audiences will be entertained by the goofiness of the Gas Lamp community

To reminisce about Gas Lamp memories:

- Content that shows Gas Lamp shows, moments, and other memories of the past will be attractive for audiences who have spent time in/contributed their energy to the community.
- It might be nice for current and alumni members of Gas Lamp Players to look back on good old times.

Updates about Gas Lamp Players:

- Many people who have social media check platforms frequently
- For members or potential members of Gas Lamp Players, social media might be a useful way to keep the community updated and make announcements.

WHO WILL POST AND MONITOR SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS?

WHO SHOULD BE APPROVED TO POST ON ALL PLATFORMS?

- **Marketing Director on the Board of Directors**
 - The Marketing Director will have the main authority to post
 - This responsibility will shift to the Digital and Social Media Director once this position is filled on the executive board.

- **Any Gas Lamper given permission to post by the Board of Directors:**
 - Gas Lamp community members might be given permission to post on one or more social media platform for promotional reasons.
 - An example of this circumstance may be an **Instagram Takeover**, where a cast member of a particular show may be given permission to post on the **Instagram story** of Gas Lamp Players' Instagram account during a day of rehearsal.
 - In this circumstance, the Board of Directors member who gave permission to another community member to post **must ensure that member logs out of the account, and change/document the password to that social media account.**

WHO WILL MONITOR SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTS AND MESSAGES?

Marketing Director (and eventually the Digital and Social Media Director)

- These two individuals on the Board of Directors are the only approved members of the Gas Lamp community who are allowed to respond to comments or messages on social media accounts.



Sample Content

Instagram Sample Content

POSTS FOR GRADUATING SENIORS



POTENTIAL CAPTION:

We are sad to see them go so soon, but we wanted to give you one last look at our graduating seniors! They have graced our stage, worked on memorable productions, and been core members of our community. Help us in giving a congratulations to these members on their time at Gas Lamp and in wishing them good luck on their endeavors ahead. We love you, seniors!

WHY WILL THIS BE EFFECTIVE?

In trying to build and project the image of a strong, attractive community online, showing support for current company members will emphasize the community feel of Gas Lamp Players. The goal here is to show that we support and uplift people who join our community, thus making the company more appealing to join and support as an audience member.

Instagram Sample Content (contd.)

VIDEOS OF OLD SHOWS



2 seconds



2 seconds

insert video here

length of clip

POTENTIAL CAPTION:

Next up, we have the cast of _____ performing musical number "_____. " We can't believe it's been _____ years since this cast graced our stage already, but we hope you enjoy this blast from Gas Lamp Past!

WHY WILL THIS BE EFFECTIVE?

The goal of posting old videos of big musical numbers from Gas Lamp Mainstage productions past is to both tap into the **nostalgia factor** that is key to Gas Lamp Players' new social media strategy, and also to **attract new potential audiences and company members**.

In terms of reaching current Gas Lamp community members and alumni, we want to remind them of how fun rehearsing for and performing these big musical numbers was, and also bring back memories of that specific time in their Gas Lamp career. The hope is to bring up cherished memories for old and current Gas Lampers to remind them of why they love the company and community, and to keep people coming back to do more shows.

For potential audiences, the goal with these videos is to give them a taste of the quality live theatre they will be able to see if they decide to come see a Gas Lamp Players production. And, for potential company members, these videos will hopefully show the work that they would be able to take part in upon joining Gas Lamp Players. These videos could even show parents of potential Gas Lampers what their children could be involved in if they register their child for one of the company's programs.

Facebook Sample Content

REGISTRATION ANNOUNCEMENT



POTENTIAL CAPTION:

We're back! Gas Lamp Players' summer camp is finally back in person in Ridgewood Avenue Auditorium, and we cannot wait to have all of our talented junior performers back in the space. This summer, our juniors will be performing the smash hit "**Frozen Jr.**," and the program will run from **June 27th - July 15th** for campers ages 6-14 years old. Registration is open now, so go claim your spot at <https://www.gaslampplayers.org/>.

WHY WILL THIS BE EFFECTIVE?

This will be effective in using social media as a space for reminders and community updates, thus serving a double purpose: keeping Gas Lampers up to date with happenings and announcements in the community, and drawing people to Gas Lamp's social media as they know important information might be posted.

This message would be most effective on Facebook because it is largely parents signing up their children for the summer camp programming, and Facebook is where parents tend to spend most time considering social media. In general, older age groups are more active on Facebook.

TikTok Sample Content

SHOW-RELATED TIKTOKS

When considering what TikTok content will be most successful for a community theatre company like Gas Lamp Players through personal and interview-based research, the clear answer is show-based content based on successful TikTok trends.

Because this strategy and sample content is not based on a specific show and rather is meant for general use, I have compiled a collection of examples demonstrating the type of content I have in mind:

Introducing the start of a new rehearsal process:

<https://vm.tiktok.com/TTPdBRpPvD/>

Showing different Gas Lamp Players traditions:

<https://vm.tiktok.com/TTPdBRxtj6/>

Connecting a TikTok trend to the show:

<https://vm.tiktok.com/TTPdBRPUQQ/>

Showing off the set / pre-show rituals:

<https://vm.tiktok.com/TTPdBR5kdY/>

Behind the scenes magic / showing costume changes:

<https://vm.tiktok.com/TTPdBR5taW/>

POTENTIAL CAPTIONS:

[Captions will be specific to each post, they should be goofy and relatable for audiences.]

WHY WILL THIS BE EFFECTIVE?

One goal of posting backstage content is to give outside audiences a chance to peek into Gas Lamp Players culture and get excited about the prospect of joining the community. By showing off different rituals, traditions, and the vibe of the community, this type of content will hopefully compel people to register to be part of a Gas Lamp production and become part of the family.

Another goal that can be accomplished with behind the scenes content is to get people excited about coming to see specific shows. By showing bits and pieces of the set, costumes, and maybe even rehearsal footage, potential audience members will hopefully be intrigued enough to buy tickets and see the full production.

Furthermore, as noted in the social media strategy itself the generation that uses TikTok the most is Generation X. By posting appealing behind the scenes content, Gen X kids who live in and around Glen Ridge, NJ (where Gas Lamp Players is based) might want to join the community and ask their parents to

register them for a program. This will best be accomplished by having not only the Gas Lamp Players TikTok page post, but also by encouraging Gas Lamp company members to make TikToks during rehearsal breaks and designated TikTok times as well.