



Social Media (Part II): Build Your Brand

Are you just posting to post or reposting other people's material? Does social media itself seem like a giant black hole that is too big and ominous? If we went to your page, would people know what you offer? Social media is complicated, and the algorithm is changing every time. This article delves into building your brand online and making social media fun or funner. The more you can find the joy in posting, the more you let YOU show through, the more effective you will be in reaching your target audience and potential clients.

Some of the first areas you need to identify for your brand:

- Color Scheme (Pick three to five and stick with those colors in all of your social media). Create a look that shows who you are while projecting a professional image.
- Logo: Do you have a symbol representing you, your business, or your organization?
- Same social media handle on each platform. Yes, go to every platform you plan on being on and set up your business profile. This process will ensure no one will use it in the future.
- A boilerplate is a concise paragraph about the business that you can use in a press release: you often revisit your boilerplate for social media.
- Font (Do you want something more feminine with curves and swoops? Do you want something strong, bold, and boxier?)
- Pattern for Your Posts (Suggest You Look at Instagram to see themes. They are as easy as every other post: a picture and a written image or as complex as a nine image grid. Some do rows of images in the same pattern others do not.)
- What problem are you solving for the world? Ending Domestic Violence, Violence Against Women, Violence Against Men and Boys, Teaching Teachers Self-Defense? There are so many ways you can achieve the goal of showing what you do on your social media platforms.
- Your Mission, Vision, and Values for Your Business (This will help you plug these items into your posts.)
- Topics to Cover:
 - What is ESD?
 - What services do you offer?
 - What is your target audience? (Yes, you want to post that so people know if they fit your demographic. It doesn't mean you can't deviate, but it does help you with posting catered to your target group)
 - Got Testimonials?
 - What are the most recent data and surveys you can share about your industry?
 - Have you had events recently that you want to share?
 - Do you have personal stories to share?

- Success stories in the industry?
- What about top news stories and tying them into your post grid.
- Always refer back to the problem you are solving.

Noted: You do not have to reinvent the wheel, but you do have to make that wheel your own. People want to connect with you and learn who you are. By creating a solid look and presence on social media, you are capable of upping your following and upping your clientele base.

You can use other people's content to position yourself as the expert. However, you need to make it your own or give credit where credit is due (tag the individual whose content you are using. If it is their picture or image, ask permission or have it showing who's content you are reposting). If you do not teach the content you are offering online; it is not recommended that you use it in your posting. If you say you are trauma-informed yet haven't taken classes and don't know what that means, that may not be the way to go. Always modify content to fit your brand, business, and profession, along with adding your own flare. There are tools and tricks to make the job easier and faster. We will be exploring those in future blog posts.

If you are a one-person show and don't have a budget for a social media team, try picking two or three platforms to post on. Yes, you read that right. Set up your profile on all platforms, but you can direct people from the platforms you are not using to the social media outlets you are. You can also duplicate your posts on all platforms you post on by using a square posting template. While Instagram is moving towards a rectangular look, it still has a square grid. Doing legwork beforehand and mapping out the structure of your posts then becomes easier to post, and it isn't as stressful starting from scratch. If you have written content on your website, plug that into your social media. Make your social media work that much easier. What is also helpful is having set templates for your social media. Several companies help with this process and often have pre-made templates that you can cater to fit your brands, such as inputting your font or your colors.

Know that your brand is an extension of who you are or the group you organize with. You, as a human, are constantly evolving. Your social media is doing the same. So, every three months, look at your templates, social media content, and pages to decide if this is the avenue you want to continue on. We know social media can be its own beast and understand that it isn't always easy to do if the process doesn't feel natural. Do what you can, when you can. Be consistent and look at social media as a gateway for those to access your services and see the great work you offer. We know that having fun doing social media isn't everyone's reality, but we believe in your capabilities.

If you have business-related questions surrounding your ESD business, feel free to email us: info@ESDProfessionals.org.