



Social Media & Communications Planning Calendar

A Month-by-Month Strategy to Keep the
Conversation Going with Your Community



The KLA Social Media and Communications Planning Calendar is intended to help you think more strategically and proactively about and be more effective in the implementation of your social media and communications throughout the year. This resource is part of our KLA Communications Boot Camp series of blog posts, podcasts, guidebooks and trainings to help you take your communications and community outreach to the next level.



You can access all the Boot Camp resources at:

KIMLUNDGRENASSOCIATES.COM

Who should use this calendar?

This calendar is intended to be used by local government staff focused on climate change, sustainability, resilience and related fields and/or the communications staff who support them.

Why is it useful?



Plan in Advance

Plan events, content, media outreach and social media posts in advance. In this document alone, there are at least 10 posts—things like World Water Day and America Recycles Day—that you can schedule months in advance. Plus month-by-month content ideas.

Think Strategically

Are there certain days/months/seasons when you want to do more than just a social media post? Whether it's create an infographic or short video or run a contest or host an event, this calendar will help you prioritize your communications and piece it all together.

Use What You've Got

Every month there are opportunities to promote work your city is doing and ways people can get involved or as a flashback opportunity to highlight what you've already accomplished. For “awareness days” and “social media holidays,” this doesn't require you do anything special or new—just repurpose content with a small twist or a hashtag.

Tap Outside Resources

You don't have to create your content from scratch. This calendar is stocked with resources that will make it much easier for you to capitalize on opportunities. Plenty of “awareness days” are organized by groups that provide free graphics, logos, sample posts, posters, hashtags and more.



Look for this icon. That's where you'll find those outside resources.

Always Have Content

Whether you are posting to your social media accounts twice a day or once a week, you will always have content ideas at the ready with this calendar. Plus there are abundant “social media holidays” and hashtags that happen just about every day -- here's a list from HootSuite <https://blog.hootsuite.com/weird-holidays-to-celebrate-on-social-media/> that ranges from #NationalPetDay to #NationalDonutDay to #NationalTalkLikeaPirateDay.

Go Where Your Audience Already Is



68%

of American adults are on Facebook



3/4

of them are on Facebook daily



Instagram sees engagement by 35% of American adults.



About 69 million Americans use Twitter, 46% of them daily. And 74% of Twitter users report getting their news on the platform.

The advertising dollars spent on social media (expected to reach \$18.4 billion in the US alone in 2019) and the robust social media platforms of major brands and media companies are proof that this is where you reach people.

How should I use it?

- 1 Keep a printed copy on your desk or bulletin board, and share it with your communications/social media staff.
- 2 Set a calendar reminder for the beginning of each month to consult this document.
- 3 If you use Hootsuite or other social media planning tool, load it up now with some of the “evergreen” posts or the samples we provided.
- 4 Localize it! Add in all the events and opportunities specific to your local community.
- 5 Use Google Sheets or other tools to create a shared calendar that your team can use to pick and choose from our list and customize.



JANUARY

New Year. New You.

New Year's resolutions will dominate conversations in January, so make sure they reflect your climate and sustainability goals. Give people simple, actionable steps they can take in their daily lives that will make them feel good about contributing to a stronger community. Weight loss goals might be hard to achieve, but switching out light bulbs and ditching plastic straws is within reach. Resolutions are perfect ways to encourage recycling, composting, cutting down on plastics, taking transit or carpooling, driving less, biking and walking more, water conservation, energy-saving steps at home and work, volunteer in the community and more.

Resolutions work well as:

- Pitch to local media for their New Year's resolution coverage
- Guest opinion article or blog post
- Short "5 ways to go green this year" video
- Daily social media posts for the first week+ of the year (use a hashtag like #GoGreenin2020 and #newyearnewyou)

MLK Day of Service

You need to plan in advance for this to have an activity related to your work, but you can also ask other departments and community partners if they have service events you could encourage people to attend. For example, if you're focused on clean water, perhaps a nonprofit is organizing a waterway cleanup.



<https://www.nationalservice.gov/serve-your-community/mlk-day-service>

Sample Post

Make this year your greenest yet. Whether you ditch single-use plastics, scale back on meat, commit to walking/carpooling or shopping local, there are simple steps we can take to improve our lives and the planet. Start with these ideas: <https://mashable.com/article/new-years-resolutions-environment/#O9RXm1BZlkqa>
#newyearnewyou #gogreenin2020

FEBRUARY

Love your Local Community, Sports, & Popular Culture

Take the time to map out specific events and opportunities for the coming year that are:

- **Local:** Talk with colleagues in other departments and at local nonprofits and businesses to make sure you've got all the major local music, cultural, sporting and other events on your radar.
- **Sports:** What local, national or international sporting events can you use for timely social media posts or commentary? The Super Bowl, March Madness, NBA Finals, golf and tennis tournaments, World Series, and the Olympics, just to name a few.
- **Popular culture:** Keep an eye out for ways to tap into popular culture. Some—like memes and big celebrity news—you can't scope out in advance, but references to hit shows, "it" stars and events like the Oscars you can.

Black History Month



World Wetlands Day

<https://www.worldwetlandsday.org>

Earthquake Awareness Month

For communities in earthquake zones, this is a good time to talk about community preparedness and resilience initiatives.

Valentine's Day

Host a "What Do You Love About Our Community" contest on social media using a #ILoveCOMMUNITYNAME hashtag and offer a small prize to the winner.

Or do social posts that encourage people to give their love an experience rather than a gift; to buy local, organic earth-friendly gifts; and to recycle or compost gifts (especially flowers).

Here's a blog that Austin, Texas did:

<http://www.austintexas.gov/blog/ideas-greener-valentines-day>

You can also do a funny post like these American Planning Association examples:

<http://www.planninglove.org>

Sample
Post

**#DYK The average adult spends \$160 on Valentine's Day gifts? That totals \$20B! What if we could channel that spending to local retailers, organic/seasonal flowers, sustainable gifts and experiences? Show your love and make a difference!
#ValentinesDay #GiftGreen**

MARCH

Spring has (almost) Sprung

The weather in March varies around the country, but with the time change and first day of spring, you've got free license to:

- Promote all of your opportunities to #GetOutside and live healthier.
- Highlight your parks, green spaces and trails—and efforts to protect or expand them.
- Tap into the urge for spring cleaning and gardening to share eco-friendly tips. This could include green cleaning strategies, reusing or donating unwanted items, considering energy efficiency improvements along with home repairs, composting and urban gardening.

International Women's Day (9th)

<https://www.internationalwomensday.com/WD2019>

Women's History Month

Time change

Remind people about the time change and to encourage them to make one quick lifestyle change to match it.

First day of spring

Even if the weather is crummy, this day means it will soon be a great time to get outside. Share information about parks, green spaces, trails or other outside events and activities.

St. Patrick's Day

The day is all about "green," so run with it.

Global Recycling Day

<https://www.globalrecyclingday.com>

World Water Day

<http://www.worldwaterday.org>

Earth Hour

<https://www.earthhour.org>

World Wildlife Day

<https://www.wildlifeday.org>

Fix a Leak Week

<https://www.epa.gov/watersense/fix-leak-week>

Sample Post

Spring has sprung! The return of warm weather means a chance to get outside (INSERT INFO ABOUT A LOCAL PARK OR TRAIL), hit up the farmers market (INFO RE: LOCAL FARMERS MARKETS), start a garden (INFO RE: ANY COMMUNITY GARDENS) or plant a tree (INFO RE: TREE GIVEAWAYS). #FirstDayofSpring



APRIL

Earth Month

Your job might mean it's Earth Day every day, but for most people in your community there is a single day in April when they focus on ways they can "go green." If your community already has a big Earth Day event, it's time to promote the heck out of it. If nothing is in the works, here are some options:

- Fair with community groups, demonstrations, and activities for kids
- Tree or other (pollinator-friendly plants) giveaway
- Run an art, poetry or other contest with local schools
- Host a cleanup of a local park or waterway
- Hand out reusable straws or other plastic replacements near a popular dining or shopping area
- Skip a big event, but use other communications channels (social media campaign, radio or TV interview, video, op-ed in the newspaper) to promote ways people can live more sustainably.



Arbor Day (in many communities)

<https://www.arborday.org>

April Fool's Day:

Share a cheesy joke or clever video related to your content.

National Park Week

<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/npscelebrates/national-park-week.htm>

National Library Week: Libraries are a natural community gathering spot for folks across the socio-economic spectrum, so give a shout out to your local branch(es) and think about ways to partner on future events, trainings, pop-ups and other outreach.

National Garden Month

Tax Day

Dark Sky Week

National Volunteer Week: This is a great opportunity to a) honor those volunteers who have helped in the past or b) reach out to folks to ask for help in the future.

<https://ww2.pointsoflight.org/nvw>



National Community Development Week

<https://ncdaonline.org>



Sample Post

April showers bring...lots of excess water. Do you have a rain barrel in place to #SoakUpTheRain? Easy way to prevent stormwater runoff + save money on watering your lawn + plants. Check out this short EPA video on the benefits + getting started. #everydropcounts <http://bit.ly/2HnDk6n>



MAY

Let Bikes & Public Works Take Over

For many local government staff in the climate and sustainability space, Bike Month (which includes Bike to Work Day and often Bike or Walk to School Day) and Public Works Week make May an active month for events, outreach and social media. Luckily for you, they both offer a suite of communications, event planning and social media tools to make your job easier.



Consult the American Public Works Association (APWA) website (<https://npww.apwa.net/>) for resources based on each year's Public Works Week theme: poster, event ideas, social media posts and more.



Check out the League of American Cyclists website for Bike Month resources: poster, event ideas, social media posts, biking data and other promotional materials. <https://bikeleague.org/bikemonth>

Clean Air Month



Wildfire Community Preparedness Day

<https://www.nfpa.org/>

Hurricane Preparedness Week



Allergy and Asthma Awareness Month

<https://www.aafa.org/asthma-and-allergy-awareness-month/>



International Compost Awareness Week

<https://www.compostfoundation.org/ICAW/ICAW-Home>

Sample Post

It's #CompostAwarenessWeek! In the US, more than 30% of household waste is organic material, like kitchen scraps & yard/leaf waste. Backyard compost is an easy & cost efficient way to manage this waste, with the added benefits of nutrient-rich soil and limiting #climatechange emissions. Could it work in your yard? <https://www.epa.gov/recycle/composting-home> [INCLUDE INFORMATION ABOUT LOCAL COMPOST OPTIONS, WORKSHOPS, AND RESOURCES]



JUNE

Climate Change Check In

You can find opportunities to talk with your community about climate change every day of the year, but do you? As the halfway point in the year, June is a good time to do an honest assessment of your climate change communications. Do your citizens have baseline education about climate change, your climate initiatives and solutions?

Depending on the conditions in your community, the start of the summer might be the right time to talk about how climate change is already taking a toll through hurricanes, heat waves, poor air quality, drought, flooding (or recovery from spring flooding), and wildfires. It's also a good time to scope out your communications plans for the rest of the year. Where applicable, use your communications to talk to your community about:

- **Causes:** What do scientists say about the weather and how it relates to climate change?
- **Impacts:** What are we already seeing not just worldwide but right here in our backyards?
- **Solutions:** What can we do as individuals and as a community to both limit climate pollution but also make our families and community more resilient?



World Environment Day

<http://worldenvironmentday.global>

First day of Summer



National Pollinator Week

<https://pollinator.org/pollinator-week>

Start of hurricane season



World Oceans Day

<https://www.worldoceansday.org>

Sample Post

Pollinators like bees are responsible for 75% of our crops, and they're dying off at record numbers. What would our grocery stores and food options look like without them? Check out these striking visuals and celebrate #PollinatorWeek [INSERT LOCAL RESOURCES/EVENTS OR A TIP RE: POLLINATOR FRIENDLY PLANTS] <http://bit.ly/2GiW2ML> #SaveTheBees #pollinator @pollinators



JULY

Summer Fun in the Sun & Water

In the thick of summer, people are vacationing, soaking up the sun and looking for ways to cool off. That gives you the perfect opportunity to talk about:

Smart travel: Share tips for making vacation travel more sustainable. If your community is a summer tourist destination, share ways that your visitors can be good stewards while in town.

Solar power: If you've got solar power incentives for homes and businesses, advertise that now. If you have added solar panels to municipal buildings, highlight the energy they are producing and money they are saving.

Water conservation: Whether or not water restrictions are in place, the heat of summer is when people will be most responsive to messages about water efficiency and conservation and what they can do inside their homes and with their lawns and gardens.

July 4th

National Clean Beaches Week



Earth Overshoot Day (Date varies, but it August 1, 2018)

<https://www.overshootday.org>

Sample
Post

If you're hitting up a beach for vacation this summer, chances are you'll see evidence of plastic pollution -- discarded and washed up plastic bottles, caps, bags, food containers and straws. It's a good reminder to choose reusable options and avoid single-use plastics whenever possible.
#endplasticpollution #skipthestraw #cleanbeaches



AUGUST

Back to School

Kids of all ages are going back to school, and here are some ways to tap into that:

- If you've worked with a local school on solar power, energy efficiency, a school garden or other sustainability project, highlight that.
- Spotlight local schools, teachers and students doing good work on sustainability initiatives.
- Think about partnerships you can forge with teachers and schools in the coming year, and find out if there is an opportunity for you to send an informational (or event promo) flyer home in kids' backpacks.
- Offer to come to schools to present on climate change, energy and sustainability.
- Plan now for an art, poetry or other contest during the school year.
- If your community is also home to a college or university, are you connected to their sustainability initiatives?
- Compile a list of books or podcasts related to sustainability or your local community and pitch for either summer vacation or back to school.

National Wildlife Day

National Book Lovers Day (share some book ideas related to climate change, sustainability and/or local culture)

**Sample
Post**

Kids and teachers are heading back to school, making it a perfect time check out this list from @mygreenschools of 99 simple ideas to engage kids hands-on with sustainability, wellness, waste, energy + water. Lots of ways to make this school year green. #backtoschool
<http://www.mygreenapple.org/sites/default/files/resources/gados-99-ideas.pdf>

SEPTEMBER

Preparedness & Resilience

With climate change, each of our communities will be facing more severe weather in the form of more frequent and/or severe hurricanes, flooding, drought, wildfires, precipitation and more. That makes it critical for us to talk with our communities about being prepared for a disaster and steps we can take to make us more resilient.

As **National Preparedness Month**, September is a smart time for that conversation. The Department of Homeland Security's Ready.Gov website (<https://www.ready.gov/september>) offers ample resources including weekly themes, hashtags, videos, graphics and social media posts.

Bonus: If electric vehicles are part of your climate action or sustainability strategies, make sure National Drive Electric Week is on your radar for September. You can get event ideas, promotional materials and more at <https://driveelectricweek.org/>

9/11 Day of Service and Remembrance

Zero Emissions Day

First day of fall

National Public Lands Day

World Rivers Day

<http://worldriversday.com>

International Coastal Cleanup Day



Car Free Day

Sample Post

FEMA reports that 60% of Americans have not practiced what to do if a disaster strikes, and 61% don't have an emergency plan. Go over these 4 questions with your family to be ready. #PrepareNow
<https://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan>



OCTOBER

Winter is Coming

For most of the country, this change of season makes energy an obvious topic on which to focus. The arrival of cold weather will remind people of the drafty houses and high energy bills just around the corner. Many communities use this as “Energy Action Month” and encourage people to take steps to prepare their homes for winter weather.

Here’s how to put energy on the radar screen in October:

- If your community offers incentives or rebates for energy efficiency (home energy audits, weatherization), promote them big-time
- Share resources for ways people can get homes winter-ready. These can be DIY tips or those requiring professional help, If you don’t have that content ready you can borrow tips, videos and other resources from the Department of Energy <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/energy-saver>
- Consider a partnership with a local hardware store to set up displays and/or set up a table at farmers markets, football games or other events. Include a “DIY Station” where people can practice caulking and weatherstripping
- Pitch media on any of the topics or opportunities listed above

Energy Action Month



Energy Efficiency Day
<https://www.energyefficiencyday.org>

International Day of Climate Action



Campus Sustainability Month
<https://www.aashe.org/get-involved/campus-sustainability-month/>

Halloween



National Community Planning Month
<https://www.planning.org/ncpm/>



Imagine a Day Without Water
<http://imagineadaywithoutwater.org>

Sample Post

As we prepare to greet winter weather (and energy bills), take this short online quiz from the #DOE to test your knowledge about your home’s energy use. Bet you learn something new + useful! @Energy #saveenergy #savemoney <https://www.energy.gov/articles/quiz-test-your-home-energy-iq>

NOVEMBER

Taking a Step Back

November is a good time to take a deep breath heading into a busy holiday season and end-of-year crunch. Use that time to get a little introspective about your communications and social media. As you reflect on what is/isn't working, here are a few questions to ask yourself and your team:

- Have we been maximizing our graphics? Tweets with images receive 150% more retweets than text-only. Facebook posts with images see 2.3x more engagement than those without. Source: <https://blog.hubspot.com/marketing/visual-content-marketing-strategy>
- Were we able to incorporate video this year/could we next year? The average user spends [88% more time](#) on a website with video.
- Are we telling good stories?
- Did we take advantage of the seasons to convey our messages, specifically related to weather, disasters, preparedness and resilience? Consult the Ready.Gov website for resources: <https://www.ready.gov/calendar>

Election Day

Time change: Remind people about the time change and to make one quick lifestyle change to match it.

Thanksgiving

Small Business Saturday

National Take a Hike Day



America Recycles Day

<https://americarecyclesday.org>



World Town Planning Day

<https://www.planning.org/international/worldtown/>



Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week

<https://hhweek.org>

Sample Post

The time change might mean we “fall back,” but use this marker as a chance to move forward with steps to green your lifestyle. Switch out an old lightbulb for an energy saving LED, put some reusable bags in the car, or ditch the plastic straw. Simple changes add up. #timetogogreen

DECEMBER

Year End & Year Forward

People are crazy busy at this time of year, which means already short attention spans will be stretched to the limit. But there are some topics that will grab people's attention. Here are three opportunities to consider for your communications and social media each December:

- **Holidays.** Share tips for being more sustainable and climate-friendly when shopping for gifts, putting up holiday decorations or entertaining guests.
- **Year end.** This is an easy opportunity to get additional legs out of events and stories from earlier in the year. Every media outlet will be doing year-end stories, so pitch your "best of." Or run some quick social media and website analytics to share your most popular content of the year—that makes for an easy batch of social media posts.
- **Year forward.** What's on the horizon for your climate and sustainability work next year?
- **First day of winter.** Good day to repurpose winter preparedness and energy-saving tips.
- **Shop Smart.** Use the holidays to encourage people to shop local, limit waste and buy green gifts or experiences.

Sample Post

#DYK that Americans throw away 25% more trash from Thanksgiving to New Year's than any other time of year? This extra garbage amounts to 25 million tons of trash. Let's break that cycle this year. Shop local to avoid extra packaging from shipping. Consider alternatives to wrapping paper. Gift experiences not things. Skip the plastic. Here are some more ways to reduce waste over the holidays. [ADD LINK TO LOCAL RESOURCES OR BLOG POST HERE]



Keep the Conversation Going.

You've got sustainability and climate action goals. You need to engage your community and get people to take action to reach those goals. People are hungry to know that their local government is doing something, and they want to be part of the solution.

You're busy. And so are they.

Your plate is full, and chances are your community members are in the same boat. Use this calendar to be more strategic, proactive, efficient and effective with your communications and social media to facilitate meaningful, ongoing, equitable engagement.



Still not enough time?

KLA can help. We offer Communications services that include:

- Social media and communications calendar
- Content strategy
- Social media posts
- Campaign branding
- Blog posts, website content and email marketing
- Graphics
- Video

[KLASUSTAINABILITY.COM](https://www.klasustainability.com)