SOAR Marketing Strategies

SOAR programs across the nation are looking for attention-getting ways to communicate with government officials, community providers, potential volunteers, and funders about the work SOAR is doing to help people who are experiencing or at risk of homelessness access Social Security benefits. Most of these stakeholders will look online to find information about your program.

The purpose of this webpage is to help you get the word out about the amazing work your SOAR program is doing in the community and to help you access funding from foundations, private donors, and businesses operating in your communities.

Increase Your Online Presence

Most people initially find the information they are looking for on the internet. It is important that you inform stakeholders (e.g., legislators, community service providers, potential volunteers, and funders) about the amazing work you do in your community via the web. This section includes information and tools designed to increase the online visibility of your SOAR program.

Build Your Brand

In order to create a lasting impression on viewers, it's helpful to use a consistent brand across web-based platforms. Doing so helps reaffirm your SOAR program's reputation for providing top-notch services that have a huge impact on your community. Include your SOAR program's logo wherever possible! The SOAR TA Center can support your efforts to create a logo to meet your specific needs. For more information, contact us at soar@prainc.com.

Many companies utilize infographics to relay complex processes and pieces of information into easy-to-understand visuals. Infographics can be easily created and reused across different platforms. You can post them on your website, share them on social media, include them in attempts to access new funding, and distribute them as handouts for meetings. Fortunately, the SOAR TA enter has staff able to help turn your outcomes and program specifics into infographics that you are then able to use. To access this resource, contact soar@prainc.com.

View the Balance's "How Nonprofits Can Inspire Supporters with Infographics" to learn more.

Creating a Website

Creating a website dedicated to your organization's SOAR activities can be done in addition to your organization's existing website or by creating an independent site. Either way, here are some tips to consider as you create a site that captures all of the life-saving awesomeness of your SOAR program.

SOAR-Branded Websites

Several SOAR programs across the country have developed beautiful and effective SOAR websites. View some examples and get inspired! If you would like to share your website or social media successes, please contact us at soar@prainc.com.

- North Carolina
- Clark County, Washington

Mission

It is important that everyone who comes to your website can easily understand who you are and what you do. You should include your mission and a small, easy-to-understand description of your services on the front page.

Donating Funds

In addition to including the impact that SOAR has on your community with easy-to-understand numbers, you should also make it easy for potential donors to fund and support your work. Donate buttons should be on your website's main page, and links to donate should also be included in all staff email signatures.

Include Impact

It is important to include solid, concrete numbers that show the remarkable impact that SOAR has had on your community. Be sure to include your SOAR outcomes data, as well as pictures and stories that show how individual people have benefited from SOAR.

Actions

Make it easy for the viewer to navigate and connect with the right people, so they can access the services they are looking for. People may visit your site for a number of reasons (e.g., looking to volunteer, donating money, accessing SOAR services); it should be very simple and clear how to get around.

Make sure your website always connects and works in collaboration with the content on your various social media platforms.

Developing a Social Media Presence

To connect with funders and to engage stakeholders (e.g., people looking for services and other service providers), it is imperative that your SOAR program has a social media plan that includes the use of at least one social media platform. While this may seem like a daunting task, there are some simple and easy things that you can do to make sure your organization is active.

Remember, the majority of people looking for services learn about them online; in 2016, non-profit organizations raised over $20 billion dollars online. This section includes tips and information you should consider as you work to increase your organization's reach with social media.

Determine Your Goals

The first thing you need to consider are the goals you are trying to accomplish. This will determine the platform(s) you choose to use and the content you choose to provide. The answer t o this question will vary depending on your specific situation, but some traditional options are as follows:

- Sharing news about your accomplishments
- Building your SOAR brand
- Providing education about SOAR
- Fundraising
- Informing potential clients about your services
- Recruiting volunteers
- Recruiting employees

Determine Your Target Audience and Platform(s)

Once you have determined your overarching goals, you need to also consider the audience you are trying to reach. Is it service providers, so they can refer people to your program? Are you looking for people to donate to your organization? Are you looking to engage people who work and are involved with foundations to fund your SOAR activities? The answer to this question will then determine the answer to your next question – the platforms you should use. To do this, you should take a look at the demographics of the users for the different platforms, along with the goals you have and the content you want to share.

Create a Conversation

Social media differs from more controlled traditional forms of marketing in that you are actually trying to start and keep a conversation going with your stakeholders. Post questions and polls to encourage conversations and remember to respond to the responses you receive! Include pictures, stories, and videos that highlight the way SOAR has been effective in supporting peoples' recovery.

Create a Content Schedule (and Stick to It!)

Not having full-time staff dedicated to marketing and managing social media doesn't mean that you cannot still be effective. Have a calendar to schedule out your updates to keep your posts consistent and the conversation moving forward. Instead of building a social media calendar from scratch, try using tools like Outlook or Google calendars.

Track Results and Frequently Review Goals, Results, and Marketing Plan

As with all parts of our work, it is important to track outcomes and see if we are meeting the goals we set out to achieve. Make a regular schedule for when you will check your analytics and potentially after your practices.

View Buffer's "Know What's Working on Social Media" page

You're ready to start marketing your SOAR program!