

# How to use online events to attract and engage young people during COVID-19

*An Information Cheat Sheet from Members of the  
Canada Historic Places Day's Millennial Advisory Board*

## 1. What do young people want from heritage organizations?

- They want to enjoy images, content, and stories about historic places
- Experiences - find something to do
- They want “behind the scenes” authenticity – a look inside both places and organizations
- They want to be recognized for involvement and knowledge
- They want to teach their families and young children (outside of textbook learning)
- Millennials may be looking to find like-minded community members through heritage organizations
  - Creating connections with like-minded individuals is a priority for many
- Some may also want to create professional connections that may lead to volunteer opportunities or career development
- Millennials may seek out heritage organizations for opportunities to both learn and unlearn

## 2. Building a relationship through social media

- Young people mostly use Instagram for sharing personal interests, LinkedIn for professional development, and Facebook for event planning
- Understanding what platforms can best suit your needs is important
  - Facebook is great for event planning and, as it is the most used platform in the world, it can allow for content to reach more individuals
  - Instagram offers creative tools that can help cultivate a relationship with one's audience (i.e. using Stories for “Behind the Scenes” content)
  - Twitter is a great platform for public discussion and spreading news quickly
  - LinkedIn is a wonderful spot for reaching individuals interested in career development (i.e. potential volunteers)
- Regularly post “authentic” content – meaning, connect with your audience
- Build regular trends into your content – i.e. “Mansard Monday” or “Throwback Thursday” or even “Artifact of the Week”
- Use Instagram's analytics to further understand your demographic and the times they are most active
  - It may be worth noting that places must create an Instagram business account to gain access to these important insights
- Engage with followers by asking questions, polls, resharing/ reposting posts, and responding to comments and messages in a timely manner
- Creating a social media posting schedule can be an easy way to ensure your posts are consistent, created with care, and check off all the boxes for an effective social media post (i.e. grammatically correct, using photos or videos if appropriate)

- Having a schedule can create trust with your audience, as they know what to expect from you online
- There are many free tools online that can be used to boost one's social media presence
  - For example, Canva is a user-friendly graphic design platform that allows you to create social media graphics, posters, and other visual content

### 3. Hosting a webinar or online event with young people in mind

- If you are planning a "live" event, host on Facebook or Instagram, depending on your audience
- If you are planning a webinar, host on a mobile/ desktop platform – Zoom has been popular as of late
- Ideal timing and webinar length – after lunchtime (1:00) or end-of day, 30 minutes
  - Wednesday and Thursday are best, followed by Tuesday
- Interact with your audience through a comment/chat function
- Use lots of visuals if creating a webinar
- Offer them an "add to calendar" option so that they remember and can easily access the link
  - Send two reminder emails: a day before and an hour before
- Ensure that you take time in the days before the webinar or live event to prepare as best you can: double-check your equipment (webcam, a platform of choice) and internet connection
- If planning a webinar, you want to find a well-lit and appropriate background to speak in front of

### 4. Choosing a webinar or Live event topic

- Make sure you understand the young person's reasons for attending
  - For enjoyment? For learning? For career growth or opportunity?
- What is your ideal outcome?
  - More site visitation, donations, memberships, etc?
- Show them something they couldn't otherwise see – something "behind the scenes" and exclusive
  - Perhaps an interview with leadership, or secrets of a historic property
- Choose a relatively niche topic so that content will be focused and relevant
- If you have a **\*solid\*** plan for the next years of your place (as in a plan that has been put down on paper and perhaps posted to your website), hosting a webinar where you share/discuss those plans could be an option
- If **\*not\*** able to create a live event, online trivia may be a good option
  - For those who may not be super comfortable with technology, you can record two videos: one of you reading the trivia questions out and one of you reading the correlating trivia answers out
  - The questions video could be posted in the AM and the answers video could be posted in the PM

- Encourage people to share their own answers in the comments

## 5. Promoting your event

- Use social media marketing across all platforms
  - Creating an event page on Facebook is crucial!
- Combine with email marketing
- Have a clear “events” signup page on your website
- Give attendees some benefits
  - A discount, a secret code, something to make them feel “special”
- Give individuals a clear understanding of what exactly your event or webinar is going to consist of
  - If you’re talking about the secrets of your property you might want to allude to a specific secret while marketing as a way of enticing an audience or if you’re hosting trivia you can explain how the process will work the day of