

How ISTEP uses Social Media

ISTEP uses three social media platforms regularly: youtube, facebook and twitter. Social media use allows us to create our campaigns and get our voices out in the open. This is how we brand ourselves and how the people of Iowa hear about ISTEP. Sharing our message involves the cooperation of community partnerships and youth statewide. With their support, community members and other youth in their part of the state hear about our organization.

We create videos for youtube which allow us to get our message out. These videos are then able to be shared with others through email, facebook and other social media platforms.

Twitter is relatively new to us this year, as we have learned more about how to navigate and use twitter as appropriate for the ISTEP organization. We worked on tone and voice exercises that defined the new image of ISTEP, and what we wanted our message to be.

The ISTEP Executive Council members and staff stay in contact through facebook, email, mailing address, phone calls/texts and conference calls/webinars. Below is our Executive Council private facebook group where youth/IDPH staff can communicate with each other as a group.



Council members and ISTEP staff stay in contact with youth across the state through the use of facebook. We ask that community partnerships working with youth chapters, share photos of their events so that it can be shared on our facebook page.



Lava Row Social Media Findings & Strategy

We received a 55 page document from Lava Row. In this document Lava Row offered recommendations for short-term improvements and strategic long-term tactics for our social media platforms. The ISTEP executive council and IDPH staff met with ZLR and Lava Row early in the fall of 2013 to assess our communication goals, objectives and needs; essentially re-branding our youth tobacco prevention program, and branding ISTEP for the very first time.

Goals for 2014

1. Raise awareness about tobacco health risks and new products through engaging, educational content distributed on social networks.
2. Utilize social networks to increase I-STEP membership (currently around 300) to 1,000 in 12 months.
3. Increase I-STEP's digital footprint. Boost Facebook Likes from 240~ to 1,000 and Twitter followers from 40~ to 300.
4. Evolve the I-STEP website beyond the single page on idph.state.ia.us.

Lava Row Recommendations

These are the condensed recommendations from Lava Row's 55 page ISTEP social media audit.

- ▽ Build an ISTEP social media team.
- ▽ Establish standards around the responsibilities for the ISTEP social media team, since members will be changing year to year.
- ▽ Develop a content strategy and guide for ISTEP social media team.
- ▽ Design new artwork for ALL social media platforms.
- ▽ Get rid of any duplicate pages on social media platforms.
- ▽ Keep your logo/brand consistent across all platforms.
- ▽ Increase social media advertising
- ▽ Create an ISTEP website with a domain name that is consistent with all other branding and communication efforts.

Lava Row Recommendations for Specific Platforms

- ▽ Improve Facebook content – think visual first, copy second.
- ▽ Research and develop plan for Facebook retargeting ad campaign.
- ▽ Research and develop plan for Facebook custom audience ad campaign.
- ▽ Improve Twitter content - Create unique hashtags & intelligently designed tweets
- ▽ Creation of 20 YouTube videos, video education series, and begin implementation of Google+video hangouts.
- ▽ Develop scavenger hunt kits and begin rollout to chapters across the state for execution.
- ▽ Begin development of #SixSecondFacts content on Vine

Youth Involvement with Social Media

Facebook has 345 likes – up from 205 likes in August 2013 before the audit.

Twitter has 42 followers – up from 40 followers in August

We have spent more time on Facebook than Twitter, and will be developing content and selecting content managers for both platforms for the upcoming year.

As of July 1, 2013 youth are now able to access Quitline Iowa coaches to help them in their quit attempt, we explore the world of social media to promote this new service to Iowa youth who are between the ages of 13-18.

How do we get young people involved?

ISTEP Executive Council members plan activities for chapters across the state and are asked to answer a few questions while planning activities for other youth/schools in state:

- What can smaller high schools/groups in Iowa do?
- What are some ideas for the local level?
- A lot of schools/chapters don't have much funding is there something cost-effective that we could send out to them?
- How will we use social media?

Youth in all parts of Iowa, then share what they have done locally on Facebook, and other youth chapters can share ideas and see what's being done across the state.

How many young people are involved in ISTEP statewide?

We have a total membership of 688 registered ISTEP members in grades 7-12, statewide. Not all members have access to Facebook, and we reach out to them through other social media platforms such as videos on YouTube, and local marketing events held at schools or other venues in their communities.

Social Media Strategy Breakdown

ZLRIGNITION partnered with social media consultants, Lava Row, to develop a four-part program to enhance and expand on I-STEP brand communications through digital platforms like Facebook, Twitter and the I-STEP webpage.

Part One: Lava Row audit and strategic plan

Project overview

This is an outline of the social media audit and strategic communications plan for the Iowa Department of Public Health's ISTEP youth tobacco program.

Audit process and deliverables

The social media audit process took place over a 30-40 day period and included the following:

- In-depth, 3-hour "discovery" meeting with ZLR Ignition and client to review existing marketing and branding initiatives, team member roles and long-term communication objectives.
- Identify opportunities and best practices for client to connect with its audience organically in the social media space.
- Assess client's current participation in the social media space, platform by platform, and recommend how to augment/improve these efforts – developing a consistent "voice," focus on adding utility to each post, boosting the potential reach of content, measuring success/ROI, tactics for boosting the fan base, etc.
- Recommend new social media platforms to align with client's communication goals.
- If needed, identify opportunities and digital platforms for client to invest paid media dollars into, including social network advertising, re-targeting, search engine marketing and behavioral targeting.
- Identify potential obstacles (staff resources, industry-specific challenges) and develop process to work through them.
- Perform competitive analysis, perception analysis and audience assessment. (What are similar state organizations doing in the space? How is the audience seeking information online?)

Development of strategic plan

After the audit process and delivery, Lava Row assisted ZLR ignition and client with the development of a strategic communications plan, including the following deliverables:

- Recommend tangible, actionable takeaways for integrating organic social media activity and paid media into client's overall communications and marketing efforts. Conceptualize new campaign ideas with ZLR Ignition or amplify existing ones.
- Assist with the development of a 12-month content calendar.
- Assist with building an internal and external content team.
- Lead hands-on training sessions with internal team members around content creation best practices, analytics, and paid amplification (if requested).
- Lead a session at the youth summit to educate team members on how they can support I-STEP efforts on digital platforms as individuals and ultimately spread the message more effectively.

Part Two: ZLRIGNITION design/graphic support and content development

Following the development of the social media strategic plan, ZLR will redesign the I-STEP look/feel as needed to create consistency across all digital properties. This will include, at a minimum, developing brand standards for how the organization is represented, but will also include graphics as

needed/requested by TUPAC. ZLR will also present a series of concepts for content that fits with the social media editorial that will be in place, and develop items as budget allows. This may include writing themed posts for Facebook to developing Vine videos.

The following initiatives were not completed by the December 31, 2013 deadline, and are to be contracted to another entity to complete the work on the ISTEP webpage.

Part Three: ZLRIGNITION redesign & content development for I-STEP web page

The I-STEP web page serves as an informational hub for the organization, as well as an administrative tool used for signing up for the Summit. While social media platforms are the main communication initiatives, the web page must be enhanced to maintain the credibility of the organization. ZLR will review content and organization needs and redo site content and design to give the site a clean, consistent look. Programming for the site will be determined by TUPAC desires, and is up for future discussion. Initially, we discussed having two budget options (Gold and Silver site options), but after further review, the site is very limited in what it needs to accomplish at this time so the recommended amount reflects a level to do strong site with very little content.

Part Four: Social/Digital Miscellaneous

Following the completed social media audit and development of a strategic plan, ZLRIGNITION will present an expanded plan based on insight from the audit. This could include expanded I-STEP website development (potentially using responsive design for the site to be mobile friendly), launch of additional social media platforms not in use (ie. a Google+ presence) and/or planning of strategic digital advertising to drive traffic I-STEP web properties.

Youth Prevention: Across the United States

How does Iowa measure up to the states around us when it comes to youth tobacco prevention?

Of the six states that surround Iowa our youth tobacco prevention program is in the top three.

Iowa adopted a youth-led approach to tobacco prevention when the Division was created. Youth-led is the simple idea that messages created with youth input and delivered by youth will be more effective at reaching youth than would a message created solely by adults and 'taught' to students. For at least the last 14 years Iowa's youth tobacco prevention program has strived to give important tobacco prevention messages to the youth of Iowa in a way that will be most effective.

Of our neighboring states only Nebraska and Wisconsin use a youth-led approach on a statewide level. They support a branded program that runs all over the state. They use professional media firms to create the messages that their youth help to develop. Iowa was once a leader in this area but has fallen back since 2011.

Our other neighbors are doing good work but at the county level. South Dakota, for example, has their youth working on tobacco free parks and homes. In Southwest Minnesota a group is working on point-of-sale policies with local convenience stores. Missouri is currently gathering signatures in support of the state capitol building becoming smoke-free.

All the states around us, except for Missouri, have a statewide smoke free law. Missouri has many communities with smoke free ordinances. Interestingly, Jefferson City has a smoke free ordinance but it does not apply to the capitol building.

Youth smoking rates are pretty even for most of our neighbors. Wisconsin and Nebraska have the most comprehensive youth tobacco prevention programs and their youth smoking rates are also the lowest. Everyone else is around the 18% range (3%-5% above the leaders) except for South Dakota which is around 23%.

How does Iowa get into the top three? If you judge solely on the youth smoking rates we would be tied for 4th but we have a history of a statewide, youth-led movement that can allow us to once again join Wisconsin and Nebraska with the proper support. That history and potential places us above the our other similar neighbors.

Youth rates from Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids:

<http://www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/pdf/0176.pdf>

Wis: 13.1%

Neb: 15%

Ill: 17.5%

Iowa: 18.1%

Mo: 18.1%

Minn: 18.1

South: 23.1%