

Report to Strategy and Policy Committee

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| Date: | 8 February 2019 |
| Author: | Nicola Chrisp, Manager Communications and Engagement |
| Authoriser: | Neville Williams, Director Community and Services |
| Subject: | Digital communications report for 27 November 2018 to 4 February 2019 |
| Section: | A (Committee has delegated authority to make decision) |

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide information to the Strategy and Policy Committee on our digital communications activity for the period 27 November 2018 to 4 February 2019. Website activity is measured from 1 November 2018 to 31 January 2019.

Executive Summary

2. Our Facebook audience continues to grow. We have now have 9,184 followers. Waikato Unwrapped and our summer campaigns have contributed to this growth.
3. Waikato Unwrapped was an exciting campaign that was shared on Facebook, Instagram, TVNZ on Demand and Neighbourly. Along with a range of other digital channels. We made 364,000 impressions over two weeks.
4. Popular social media posts include behind-the-scenes glimpses of what we do, Hukanui Primary school 20 year EnviroSchools celebration, media releases about convictions and fines, and a wood-stacking competition.
5. The #wearewater campaign has received a great online response, with many people sharing photos and memories of their interactions with water.
6. Our experiment with Facebook and Instagram stories' is going well, and we'll look to build on this in the new social media feature over the coming months.
7. Around 4,500 people visit our website every day.

Staff Recommendations:

1. That the report 'Digital Communications Report for November 2018 to February 2019' (Doc #13767164) be received.

Background

8. As previously advised the Communications and Engagement Section has a focus on increasing our digital presence, as part of a multi-channel strategy to enable meaningful communication with our communities. This report updates councillors on progress made.

How we measure social media

9. As a reminder, social media impact can be measured in a few different ways:
 - Page likes: An easy way to describe this is the number of 'fans' you have in your fan-club.

- Reach: The number of unique people a specific post reaches. This is not limited to people who like your page.
- Impressions: The amount of times a post is seen by the people it has reached.
- Engagement: Reactions a person has put on a post (like, dislike, love, sad, etc.).
- Comments: The conversation occurring on a post.

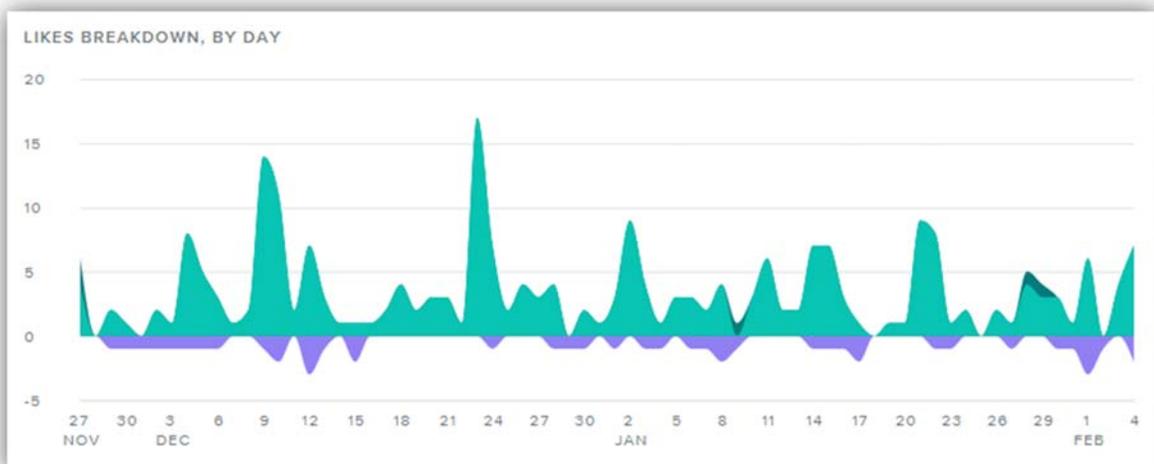
Facebook results

Page likes

10. We currently have 9,184 followers. This table shows how we place against 9 other popular pages that we aspire to be on a similar level with:

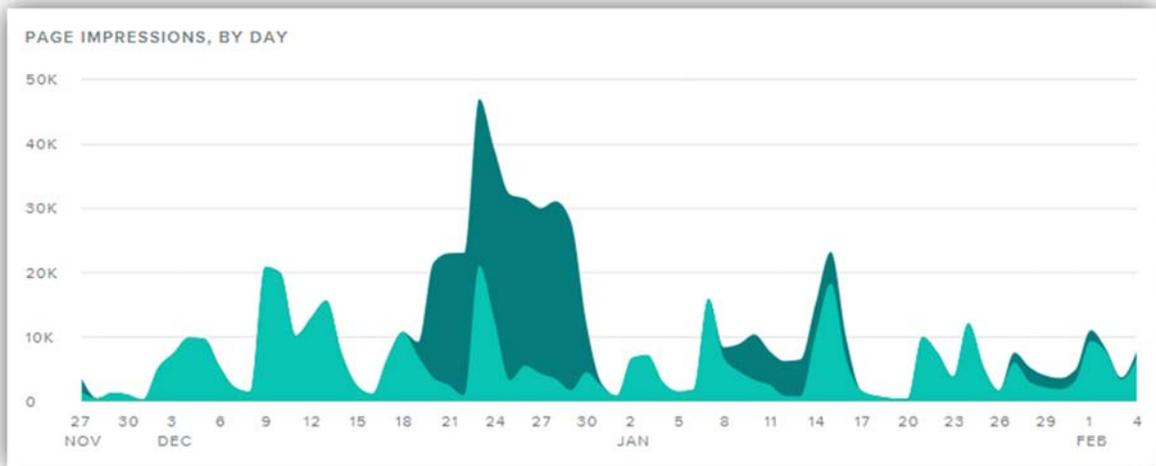
| Page | Total Page Likes |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1 University of Waikato | 79.3K |
| 2 Waikato Police | 77.9K |
| 3 Waikato Times | 51.7K |
| 4 Civil Defence Waikato | 26.2K |
| 5 DairyNZ | 19.1K |
| 6 Hamilton City Council | 17.7K |
| 7 Waikato District Council | 9.5K |
| YOU 8 Waikato Regional Council | 9.2K |
| Keep up with the Pages you watch | |
| 9 Waikato District Health ... | 9K |
| 10 Busit | 3.8K |

11. The following graph shows that we gained the greatest number of followers on Sunday, 23 December 2019. Once again, we shared a very popular post and followed up on that success by inviting those who reacted with it to follow our page.



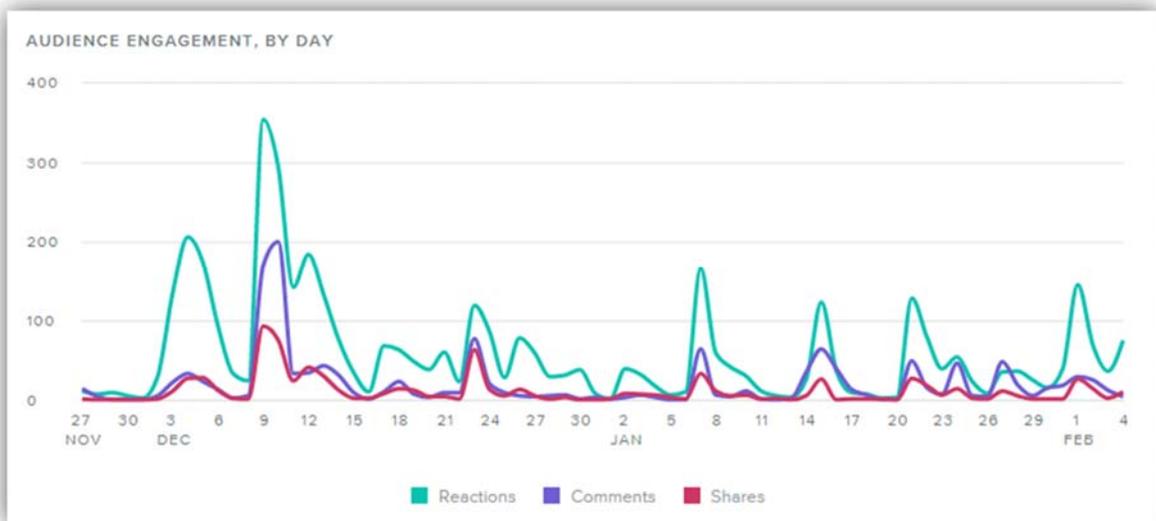
Reach and impressions

12. Total impressions were 715,890; reaching an average of 7,446 Facebook users a day. This was up 132.7%. This also corresponds with the content we shared on Sunday, 23 December 2019.



Engagement

13. Engagement with our Facebook content increased by 98.5%. Peak engagement happened on Sunday, 9 December 2019.



What got them talking?

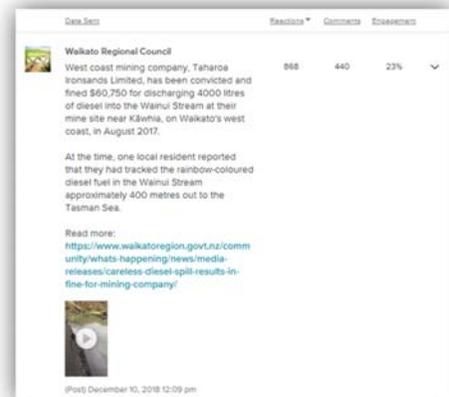
14. Waikato Unwrapped: Public campaign supported by a stakeholder campaign sharing our vision for the Waikato and the work we do.
15. This was a digital public campaign made up of purposefully placed social media advertising for two weeks over Christmas.

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LDuiVlaDKmk>

The video was split into bite sized chunks and shared on Facebook, Instagram, TVNZ on Demand and Neighbourly. Along with a range of other digital channels. Total video views over 55,000. Total impressions on social media and Hamilton News was close to 364,000.

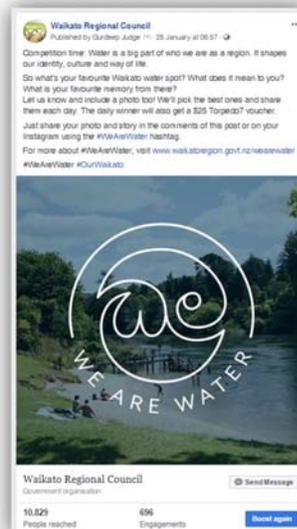


16. The most popular content outside the Waikato Unwrapped campaign was:
 - West coast mining company Taharoa Ironsands Limited conviction and fine. This resulted in the engagement peak seen in early December
 - Free buses for people with impairment
 - Stack to win competition – Air Quality.
 - Hukanui Primary School 20 years Enviroschools anniversary.



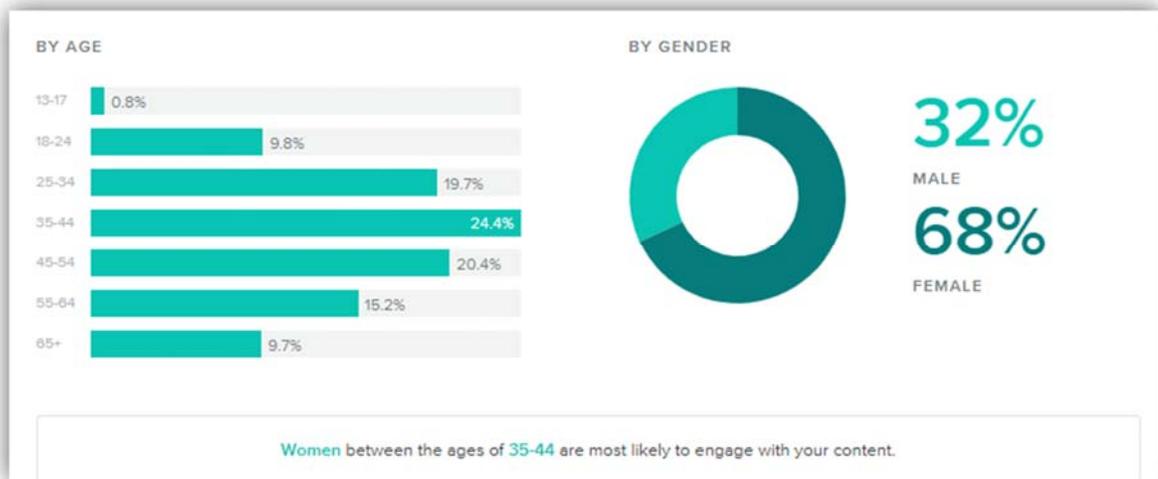
Exciting campaigns showing great interest:

- #WeAreWater – Encourage the public to share stories of their favourite water spots and their connection to it. In phase 1, we picked a daily winner and shared their image and memories on social media. In phase 2, we gave a behind-the-scenes look at the work our harbourmasters and coastal/fresh water monitoring students do.
- Wood stacking competition for Tokoroa residents. Get people to share photos of their stacks in preparation for winter.



Demographics

17. While our content reached a balance of males and females, it continues to be females that interact with the content more.



18. The following table shows the top 10 areas that our followers are from. Places like Ngaruawahia and Matamata are featuring on this list for the first time. This is likely due to the Waikato Unwrapped campaign.

| Top Cities | |
|---|-------|
| Hamilton, Waikato, New Zealand | 3,377 |
| Auckland, Auckland Region, New Zealand | 1,079 |
| Teupo, Waikato, New Zealand | 351 |
| Cambridge, Waikato, New Zealand | 272 |
| Tauranga, Bay of Plenty Region, New Zealand | 225 |
| Te Awamutu, Waikato, New Zealand | 211 |
| Rotorua, Bay of Plenty Region, New Zealand | 141 |
| Wellington, Wellington Region, New Zealand | 141 |
| Matamata, Waikato, New Zealand | 120 |
| Ngaruawahia, Waikato, New Zealand | 109 |

Website analysis

19. The Waikato Regional Council web team currently administers 12 external websites and the internal staff intranet. This report provides analysis for two of our public websites: Waikato Regional Council (www.waikatoregion.govt.nz) and BUSIT (www.busit.co.nz).

Please note, that our statistics include council staff.

Waikato Regional Council website: 1 November 2018 to 31 January 2019

20. We had over 319,000 unique page views, with an average of around 4,500 views per day. The largest proportion of users continue to be in the 18-35 year age bracket.

On the last day of business, on 24 December, views spiked at 6,600 recorded hits. We then had significant website traffic increases from 7 January and again from 14 January. These dates are when most people started back at work after the holiday break. In general, this indicates that a large proportion of our users are in the working sector.

There was an increase in people looking for information on jet skis, water temperature, algal blooms, and privet and plant pests. These all directly correlate to the summer period and the holiday, hay fever and algal bloom seasons.

Over 3,000 users visited the site after clicking on a link from Facebook.

The Healthy Rivers Wai Ora pages continue to attract significant public interest. The hearings are coming up, and there were some pre-hearing meetings at the end of last year. The new hearing information pages were also the most popular HRWO area, with over 1500 views logged.

BUSIT website: 1 November 2018 to 31 January 2019

21. Overall site traffic was counted at 452,253 unique page views. There was a large increase in the traffic due to further strike action in November and the holiday period, with people using the buses for Christmas shopping and holiday activities.

22. Our average daily view rate is around 4,000 views, but the strike day on 19 November recorded over 13,000 unique views, with extra heavy traffic on the preceding and subsequent days. The service update about strike action on 19 November also made it into the 'popular pages' top ten, with over 9,000 views.

23. There was a noticeable increase in traffic between Christmas and New Year days. It's also interesting to note 'Raglan' as the top search phrase, which is a likely indication of the summer period and people wanting to visit the beach.

The BUSIT website continues to be the site that is most heavily used by mobile users.

The web team also hope to go live very soon with a refreshed BUSIT site that has an exciting new and modern look, and some improved functionality. It will be interesting to see what effect this has on traffic.

Videos

24. In the last half of 2018, we saw a greater influx of photos and video from across the council.

We shared around 18 videos on Facebook in those six months. What's exciting is that half of the videos were recorded by our staff out in the field, building storytelling capability throughout the organization.

This is something we've been pushing for a while and it's good to see this shift in multimedia creation.



Mobile apps

25. Below is a breakdown of the three official council mobile apps:

| App | Description | Active installs | | |
|-------------|---|-----------------|---------|------------------------|
| | | Apple | Android | Total |
| MarineMate | Safety information for boaties and other water users | 3,015 | 5,920 | 8,935 |
| My Waikato | Access swimmability details, info about projects supported by the Waikato River Authority, the work being done by EnviroSchools, and lets users report an incident. | - | - | 616 (registered users) |
| Kawe Kōrero | A resource for Māori language and protocol | 4,029 | 3,752 | 7,781 |

Up next

26. Our experiment with Facebook and Instagram stories is going well. Images shared by our water monitoring summer students are already getting around 500 views each. We'll build on this by getting other council staff to share the work they do.
27. Work is underway for the flood protection public campaign. This will stretch over social media, radio, newspaper and in-person open days.
28. Work is underway with UX/UI specialists to make some significant changes to our website, focused on user testing and customer experience. This work is expected to occur in the first half of this calendar year, but will be ongoing as we continue to make improvements in a structured way.
29. Water on the web is a project currently underway that will transform the way we tell our water story online. This piece of work is expected to be completed prior to the end of financial year.

Conclusion

30. It has been another strong period on social media and there have been exciting campaigns that our audience has shown good interest in.