SOCIAL MEDIA CONTRIBUTOR SPOTLIGHTS

Top-Takeaways

1. As a contributor to the campaign, you gain access to a variety of materials, including an exclusive Facebook Group that acts as a forum for all contributors across the US to connect.

2. The Open Your Eyes to a Credit Union campaign was created to be nimble, as seen with the COVID-19 messaging and graphics.

3. The Credit Union Awareness Messaging Guide, available to all credit unions, offers pointers on the tone of messages as well as some “Do’s and Don’ts” of effective communication.

When the COVID-19 pandemic burst onto the American landscape, upending lives and livelihoods, credit unions faced the same challenges as many other businesses in serving and reassuring their members, especially those in financial distress. Social media managers are on the front lines communicating under dramatically different – and rapidly changing – circumstances.

The Open Your Eyes to a Credit Union® campaign has their backs.

Here are the stories of three social media managers in different parts of the country who were able to use the campaign to adjust quickly to a new reality.
MCWV, as the credit union brands itself, has participated in the Open Your Eyes (OYE) campaign since September 2019. Marketing Director Gabrielle Wright is a fan of the Credit Union Awareness Messaging Guide, a comprehensive, research-based compendium that provides all credit unions with market-tested messages. The guide offers talking points, slogans, images and “Do’s and Don’ts” of communicating to potential members.

“The Messaging Guide is my favorite part of Credit Union Awareness,” Gabrielle says. “I was able to take that language and integrate it into all the communications we were going to do.” Calling herself a “traditional media girl,” Gabrielle says she uses the language in radio ads and newspaper advertising, as well as on social media.

The Messaging Guide enabled MCWV to adjust its communications to the uncertainties of the crisis.

The credit union also turned to the special campaign materials prepared in response to COVID-19, including a video ad titled “We’ve Got Your Back”, which Gabrielle posted on social media. “That language was exactly what we wanted to say,” she adds. “It doesn’t have to be a scary world when your credit union has your back.”
“None of us were prepared for this pandemic. How could we be?” says Chiannon Pauley, marketing strategist with Carolina Foothills Federal Credit Union in Spartanburg, SC.

“Credit unions across the country were probably scrambling to undo their marketing plans and retool their messaging, so when Credit Union Awareness came out with pre-made social media posts about COVID-19, it was awesome,” she says. “I knew these messages were thought through, and they coincided with the messaging we were doing about COVID-19, so I downloaded them quickly and posted them on social media.”

Up to that point Carolina Foothills’ COVID messaging featured information about branch closings and how members could access their money. The materials provided by Credit Union Awareness were “confidence builders,” Chiannon says. They blended well with the credit union’s informational campaign and helped reassure members during a challenging time. “It was a nice copy-and-paste way to keep in touch with our membership.”

Chiannon employs OYE tools beyond the COVID-19 messaging, especially the social media videos and images available on the Your Money Further Facebook page. “Whenever YourMoneyFurther shares a post, I look for a common link with a message that Carolina Foothills wants to make,” she says. “For example, I love the clever video, You Can Break Free.” Chiannon combined the video with a Carolina Foothills-branded message, “It’s time to break up with your bank,” and reposted on social media.

“Carolina Foothills has its own brand and its own way of speaking, so I try to blend the OYE messages with our messages,” she says.

“A lot of time we overthink things,” she adds. “Sometimes it is best to keep things simple. If I’m short on time, it’s as simple as downloading messages from Contributor HQ, adding our brand, and reposting.”

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**FAST FACTS**

- **Credit Union:** Carolina Foothills Federal Credit Union
- **Location:** Spartanburg, SC
- **Members:** 17,000
- **Asset Size:** $143,671,537
- **South Carolina Launched the Campaign:** February 2019

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—Chiannon Pauley, Marketing Strategist
Social media specialist Gilberto “Gil” Vaquero usually plans his social media campaigns one or two months in advance, but when the pandemic erupted in the United States he knew he had to change his messaging quickly.

“Your money is safe and insured – that’s what people need to hear today,” Gil says.

Andigo Credit Union prefers to create original content, but the pandemic suddenly put social media messaging in a new light, where the credit union’s content needed to be retooled. “You can’t post things that appear insensitive to what’s happening,” he says.

Gil says the material provided on the Contributor HQ site provided what he needed to pivot quickly to a new message. “It resonated with me as a consumer, and seeing that even helped me feel good. The messages are broad enough that they don’t conflict with individual credit union brands,” he adds. “We were able to use our logo, add a website address and a tagline, and post it.”

The best description of Your Money Further content, Gil says, is “ease of use.” He checks the Facebook group at least once a week for ideas and inspiration. “I’m really happy that Facebook group exists,” he says.

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—Gil Vaquero, Social Media Specialist