

PROMOTIONAL TOOLKIT

A starter kit for local community and sporting clubs



WHY IS PROMOTION IMPORTANT?

Community and sporting groups are a vital part of our social fabric. You play an important role in providing services, growing local pride, and keeping our community connected. However people need to know about you and what you do! We want to help your organisation not just survive, but thrive. The more people know about your group, the more people can get involved, donate, or join as members. More supporters means you can make more of an impact, which is good for everyone in our region.

WHAT TOOLS EXIST TO HELP?

There are hundreds of ways to get the word out about your group. In this guide you'll find information on building a [social media](#) presence, making a [website](#), getting into the [local media](#), and using [word of mouth](#). You'll also find a list of existing free [Council tools](#) you can use to promote your organisation.

THE FIRST STEP

Before you jump in to the information all about *how* you want to promote yourselves, you need to have a clear idea of *what* you are going to promote. How do you sum up what your group does in one or two sentences? Who are you? What activities do you do? Are you aimed at a particular age group or sex? Make sure you know exactly what you want people to know about you **before** you start stepping up your promotional activities.



WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORM SHOULD WE USE?

With 88% of Australians having a social media profile, it's definitely an important tool for your organisation. There are lots of different platforms and it can be overwhelming. Facebook is by far the most popular platform, so it's a good place to start: 94% of social media users in regional Australia have a Facebook profile, ahead of Instagram (29%), Pinterest (23%), Snapchat (21%) and Twitter (14%). The best way for your organisation to promote itself on Facebook is through a Facebook page. It's free, and it's a great way for you to tell people about who you are and what you do. Here's how you make one!


TIP: Make sure there is a dedicated committee member responsible for looking after your social media.

HOW TO SET UP A FACEBOOK PAGE

STEP 1. Go to www.facebook.com/pages/create and choose Community or public figure. You'll be asked to enter your group's information. Make sure you're happy to agree with the Pages, Groups and Events Policies, then click continue.

Create a Page


Connect your business, yourself or your cause to the worldwide community of people on Facebook. To get started, choose a Page category.



Business or brand

Showcase your products and services, spotlight your brand and reach more customers on Facebook.

[Get Started](#)



Community or public figure

Connect and share with people in your community, organisation, team, group or club.

[Get Started](#)

Community or public figure

Page name

Category

Address

Phone number (optional)

Don't show my address. Only show the town/city and region that this business is in.

When you create a Page on Facebook, the Pages, Groups and Events Policies apply.

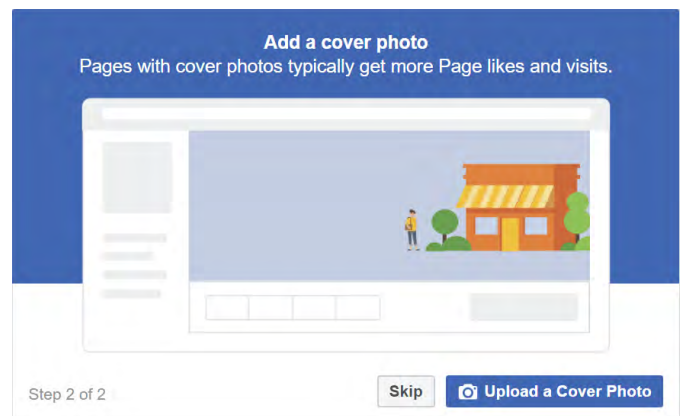
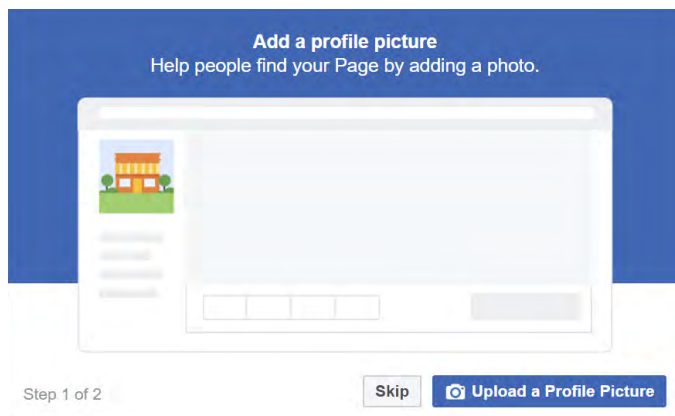
[Continue](#)

STEP 2. Next you'll be asked to upload profile and cover images for your page. It's important to make a good first impression, so make sure you choose nice images! You can do this straight away or come back to it later.

Profile image: this accompanies your group name in search results and when you interact with users. It also appears in the top left of your Facebook page. Often people use their logo here.

Cover image: the most prominent image on your page. You could use a nice picture of your facility, or of people enjoying themselves at one of your events.

TIP: The size of your images matter. Your Facebook profile picture displays at 170 x 170 pixels on desktop computer, and 128 x 128 pixels on a mobile or tablet. It will be cropped to a circle, so don't put any critical details in the corners. The cover image will display at 820 x 312 pixels on desktop or 640 x 360 pixels on mobile. The image must be at least 400 pixels wide and 150 pixels tall, but the recommended size to upload is 720 x 315 pixels. Don't worry if this all sounds very confusing - just use the FREE website www.resizepixel.com to resize your image if you don't have photo editor software on your computer.

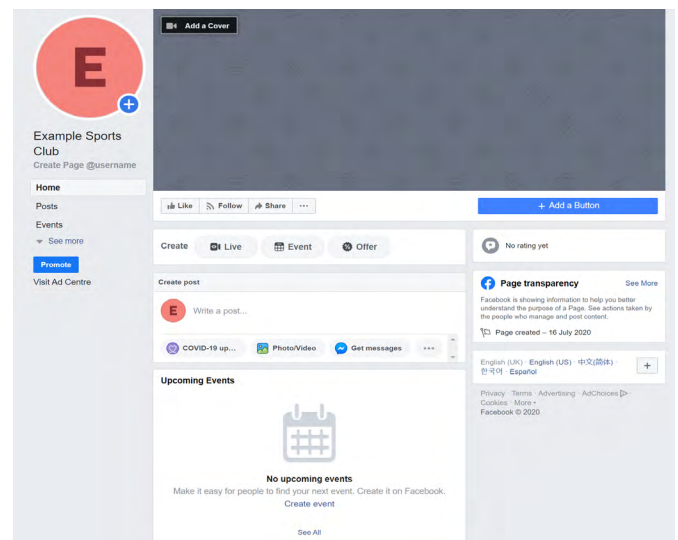


STEP 3. Congratulations, you now have a Facebook page! It is only a skeleton at the moment though - you now need to add more information before you publish and share it.

Create your username: Your username, also called your vanity URL, is how you tell people where to find you on Facebook. You want it to be easy to type and easy to remember. Your organisation name or some obvious variation of it is a safe bet. Click Create Page @Username in the left menu to set up your vanity URL.

Add your group details: Click Edit Page Info in the top menu. Here you can add a short description about your group, additional categories so Facebook can show your page to the right people, your contact details, your location, and your opening hours if relevant.

Your story: To access the 'Our Story' section, click See More in the left menu, then click About, then click Our Story on the right hand side. Use this space to tell people more about what you do, and what information and interaction they can expect from your Facebook page. Add a picture and a headline, and then click Publish.



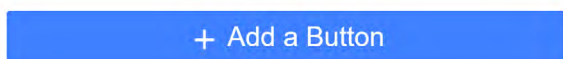
STEP 4. Create your first post. This could just be to let people know you've set up a page and want people to spread the word about it. Try and include a photograph rather than just having text.

STEP 5. Publish your page and invite people to like it! Click the green Publish Page button in the left hand menu. Start by inviting your existing Facebook friends to like your page. Use your other channels, like your website and Twitter, to promote it. Add "follow us" logos on your promotional materials and email signature.

I ALREADY HAVE A FACEBOOK PAGE. HOW DO I MAKE IT BETTER?

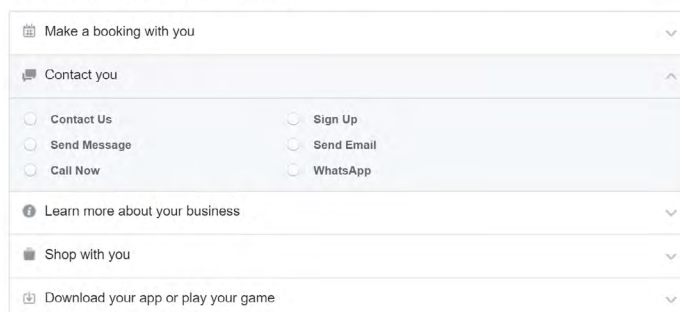
Here are some top tips to get the most out of your Facebook page.

Add a Button: Click the blue box that says Add a Button and make it easier for people visiting your page to learn more about you or contact you.

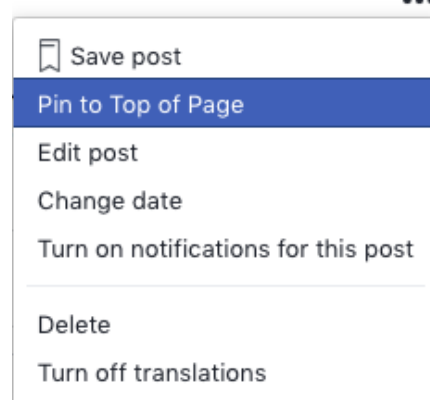
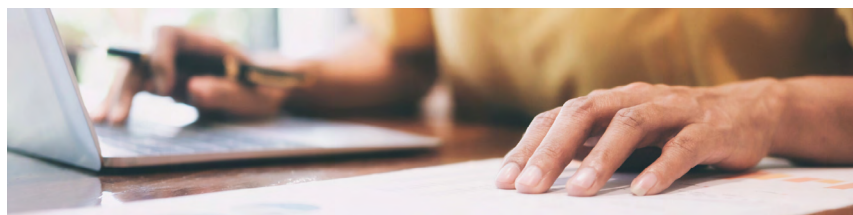


Step 1: Which button do you want people to see?

The button at the top of your Page helps people take an action. People see it on your Page and in search results when your Page appears. You can edit it at any time.



Add a pinned post: A pinned post sits at the top of your Facebook page, just under your cover image. It's a good place to put important information or your favourite content. Start by publishing a new post, or scrolling down your feed to find an existing post you want to pin to the top of your Page. Click the three dots on the top right of the post, then click Pin to Top of Page.



Check your settings: You can decide who sees your posts, if you want to ban swear words from the page, control your notifications, decide if you will allow reviews and much more. To access your settings, just click Settings at the top right of your Facebook page.

Learn from your insights: Insights gives you information about your page's overall performance, including some data on audience demographics and engagement. You can see metrics on your posts so you can understand how many people you're reaching, and when most of your followers are online. This will help you to know what times you should be posting to reach the most people. You'll also see how many comments and reactions are gained from specific posts. To access Page Insights, click Insights in the top menu of your Facebook page.

Use photos and videos: People are nearly three times as likely to engage with a video than a text post. Pictures with people in them, or eye catching landscapes, are usually the most popular. There is a useful image size guide available [here](#), to make sure the pictures appear as you want them to. Your videos don't need to be really professional or edited - just point and shoot from your phone! If you want them to look a bit fancier, there are some free easy to use programs such as iMovie.

Be consistent: Facebook favours pages that post regularly and consistently, as opposed to those that put up lots of posts one week and none the next. Have a look at Facebook's [scheduling tools](#) to help with this.

Use stories: When you create a story on Facebook, you can share photos, videos and posts that will only be visible for 24 hours. You need to be using the Facebook mobile app for iOS or Android. Facebook has full instructions [here](#).

Don't post too often: When it first started out, Facebook was a bit like a digital billboard service. You posted something, and people who were online saw it. Now there are lots of very complex algorithms that decide which content is put in front of people. Posts that lots of people comment on, or tag their friends about, will be pushed in front of more people. If you post three things in an hour, all of those posts will be competing against each other to get into people's feeds. Don't forget to check your insights to see which of your posts are doing the best, and then do more of those types of posts in future.

Take advantage of Facebook's free courses: Learn new skills with Facebook's [step by step tutorials](#).



HOW CAN WE MAKE A WEBSITE?

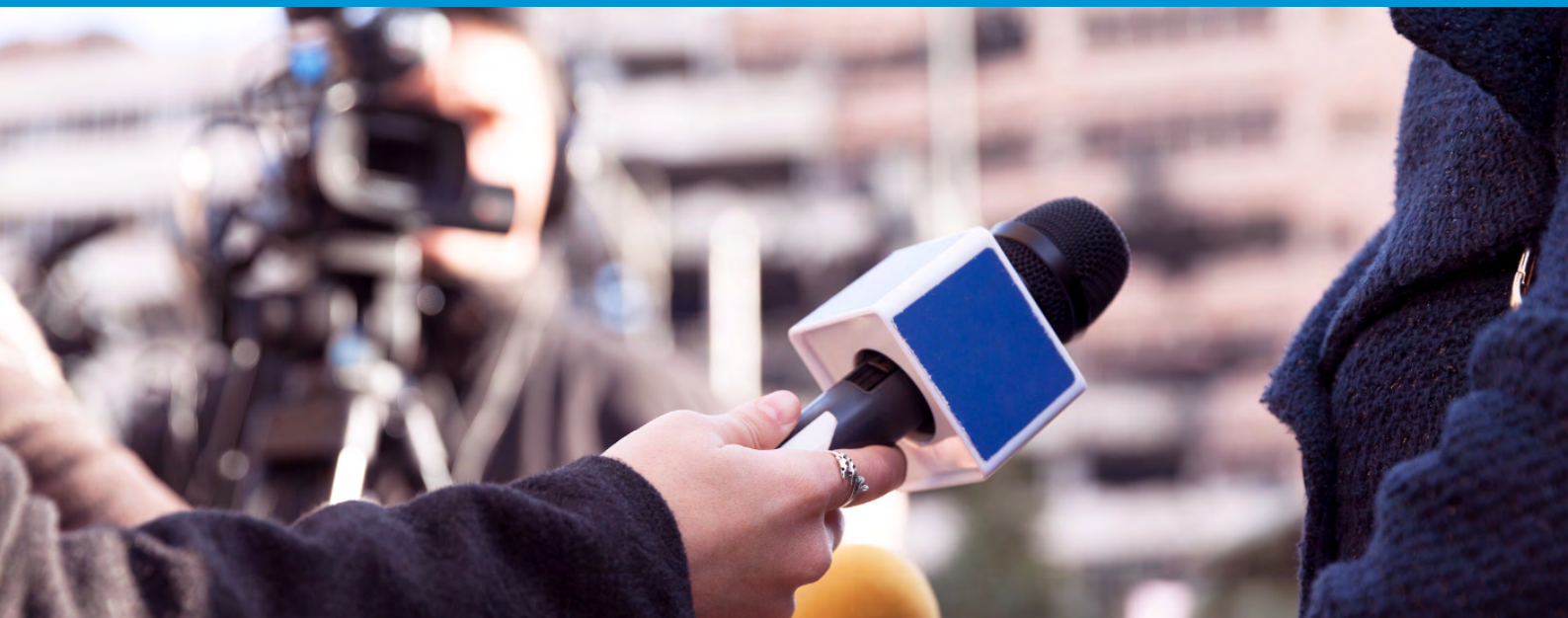
In the past you needed all sorts of coding and technical knowledge to make a website, but that isn't the case anymore. It might sound like a daunting task, but there are a number of affordable website builders that can make creating a website easy. Some of the most popular website builders are Wix, Weebly, Site123 and Squarespace. They all have free trials so you can try before you buy.

Your site can be very simple, or you can add more features like an online booking system or a way to let people make donations, but it's really important to have something people can find when they google you (this can be your Facebook page). You can build it yourself or hire someone to do it for you.

There is an article [here](#) from Website Builder Expert that has some more helpful information.

This is a [list of free website options](#), specifically for not-for-profit groups in Australia.

The Our Community Group, which is a social enterprise that provides advice, connections, training and easy-to-use tech tools for people and organisations working to build stronger communities, also has [some useful resources](#).



WHAT LOCAL MEDIA IS THERE IN THE ROCKHAMPTON REGION?

Getting a positive story about your club or organisation in the local news is a brilliant (and free) way to promote your group, let more people know about what you do, and share how they can get involved. It's also a great way to celebrate your members' wins and efforts. These are the current media outlets in the Rockhampton Region, and how to get in touch.

Newspapers:

The Morning Bulletin
tblully@capnews.com.au

Mount Morgan Argus
mmpad@bigpond.com

CQ Today
editorial@cqtoday.com.au

Longreach Leader
editor@longreachleader.com.au

News Leader
aarongoodwin@newsleader.com.au

CQ Reporter
cqfrenews@gmail.com

TV Stations:

9 News CQ
ninenewscentralqueensland@nine.com.au

7 News CQ
newscq@seven.com.au

WIN News CQ
rocknews@winqld.com.au

Radio Stations:

ABC Capricornia
[www.abc.net.au/radio/capricornia/
contact-us](http://www.abc.net.au/radio/capricornia/contact-us)

4RO
studio@4ro.com.au

Hit 107.9
[www.hit.com.au/centralqld/
contact-us](http://www.hit.com.au/centralqld/contact-us)

Triple M
[www.triplem.com.au/centralqld/
contact-us](http://www.triplem.com.au/centralqld/contact-us)

It's also worth looking at specialised media outlets that may have a specific interest in your type of club.

WHAT KIND OF STORIES WILL THE MEDIA BE INTERESTED IN?

As much as you and your members might find every aspect of your group really interesting, the media will be looking for something that will have wider appeal. You will have ticked the first thing local journalists are looking for by being based locally, but here are some questions to ask yourself when trying to work out whether or not the media will be interested in your story idea.

Is it relevant and newsworthy?

It might sound obvious, but is what you have to say new? If it's about an event that happened three months ago that there's nothing new to say about, then that's not news. The media are looking for things that just happened or are just about to happen. Good examples of this include one of your members winning an award, an upcoming event you'd like people to attend, or a fundraising record being broken.

Can you quickly and clearly outline what the story is?

Journalists work in busy and fast paced environments. You will need to be able to quickly and concisely communicate the who, what, when, where, why and how otherwise they will move on to something else.

Is it visually interesting?

This is very important for printed, TV, and online news. If you can provide a good photo to them, or something for them to photograph and film themselves, they are much more likely to cover your story.

Who can you quote/who can they speak to?

Most outlets, especially TV, will want more than one person to feature in their story. You can make their job easier by providing two people (for example the President of the club and a member) for interview.

Is there a positive angle?

Often journalists are dealing with lots of negative stories - things like natural disasters, political divisions, and crime. Local community and sporting groups can be great sources of nicer and more positive stories. An animal group that does a fancy dressed dog walk, a craft group that is making a patchwork quilt to raise money for a good cause, a children's sporting club that has qualified for the next stage in a competition - all of these are positive stories that journalists will actually really enjoy covering.

HOW DO I GET THE STORIES INTO THE MEDIA?

There are two main ways to get your story in the media: pitching an idea directly to a journalist, or writing and sending out a media release. Sometimes media outlets will approach you because of something you have put on your Facebook page for example, but if you think you have something newsworthy it can help to contact the media before you put it on Facebook. Some outlets won't want to cover something if it has already been published on your page, and it adds a time pressure as the news will become old soon.

If you pitch an idea directly to a journalist or a newsroom, choose one to try first as they may want to have exclusive access to the story. Remember to be clear and concise about why you think it could be of interest to them. Make sure that you have all the relevant things ready to go if they are interested - it's no use saying how exciting it is that a member of your club has received a national award if they are on holiday and not able to be interviewed.

The second option is to send out a media release. Only do this if you have someone on your group who is a good writer and can put together something that looks more professional. You can read more about writing a good media release [here](#).

If you have received Council funding for an event we may also be able to help with media.

ANY OTHER TIPS?

Be reliable and professional

If you organise to meet a journalist and you're really late or don't turn up, they are very unlikely to work with you again even if you have an amazing story in the future. On the other hand, if you are reliable and professional they will be comfortable working with you again and may even approach you.

Think about media early

If you tell journalists about an event on the day it may not be possible for them to cover it. If possible, let them know in advance so they can plan. This may also mean you could get more media exposure as they may run more than one story e.g. before an event encouraging people to come and afterwards to see how it went.

Link to other news or awareness days

If there is a national news story or awareness day, it is likely journalists would be looking for a local angle to go with it. This can also sometimes be enough to be the 'hook', without you needing something newsworthy. For example if it is National Chess Day they may do a profile on a local chess club if you can give them some interesting vision and people to talk to.

Avoid calling journalists after 3pm

This is when they will be rushing to file their stories - they definitely do not want to talk about an idea you have for the following week!

Practice makes perfect

If your plan works and you're invited to do an interview, you might feel nervous. Get a friend to film you first (just use a phone) so you can watch it back. Look out for things that won't look good on camera like moving around a lot, pulling odd facial expressions, or speaking too quickly.

Letters to the Editor

The Letters to the Editor pages can often be one of the most well-read and most talked-about sections of the paper, and may prompt journalists to cover the issues raised in more detail.



WORD OF MOUTH

Promotional Toolkit



Don't underestimate the power of using your existing members or your friends and family to promote your group. Here are some things you could do to spread information about what you do and how people can get involved.

Bring a friend for free

Allow members to bring a friend for free to a particular meeting and prepare activities that will encourage them to join.

Use community noticeboards

Is there a noticeboard at your local supermarket or corner shop that you could advertise on?

Internal staff communication

Do any of your members or supporters work for an organisation with an internal email list or messageboard? They could send around some promotion for your group.

COUNCIL TOOLS

Promotional Toolkit



Rockhampton Regional Council has a number of free tools you can use to promote your group.

Local Directory

Load your details to our Local Community and Sporting Group directory so people can find you. Just head to our [website to create an account](#) and add your information.

Put your event on our website

You can also add events and activities to our website [here](#).

Sunday Shoutout Socials

Every Sunday the Council's Facebook page will highlight the work of one community organisation in the region, whether it's to plug an upcoming event or just to tell people about how to get involved. Send us your details if you'd like us to give your group a shout out!

My Rockhampton Facebook page

The My Rockhampton Facebook page may be able to help promote a major event or milestone at your club. Message the page directly to see if it's something they can share with their followers.

Grants and Sponsorships

Rockhampton Regional Council offers support for community organisations through our grants and sponsorship programs. Click [here](#) for more information and to find out how to apply.

For further information or if you have any questions, email us at engagement@rrc.qld.gov.au