Social media roundup: First-quarter trends from the top-performing utility posts

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April 16, 2024

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Utilities should be tracking social media metrics to understand:

- How often people interact with their content
- How interested people are in their content
- How familiar their audience is with the utility's products, programs, and services

Give us feedback about this article

If you work in utility social media, corporate communications, marketing, or channel management, we want to hear from you. Tell it to us straight in the comments below.

We publish a monthly report for E Source members with certain subscriptions that tracks over 150 utility social media accounts across the US and Canada. We're highlighting the top trends in a quarterly blog post.

There are many different metrics you can track, but we use engagement metrics to determine the top-performing posts. This is a great way to tell if your audience cares about what your utility is posting on social media and what they want to see more of.

Here are some of the top trends and posts from the past three months.

Trends from January, February, and March

Who knew there were so many holidays in the first few months of the year? Several celebrations supported a focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and we saw many informative posts and alerts on weather and storm threats.

Focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion

Being bold and saying something authentic to your utility's brand can create high engagement and get a positive reaction from your audience. When sharing posts like this, consider going one step further and highlight how your utility practices DEI year-round.

Many utilities accomplished this by sharing information about how they celebrate major and minor holidays. In the first quarter of 2024, there were many with a DEI element to them: Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Black History Month, and International Women's Day to name a few. Utilities also thanked employees on Employee Appreciation Day.

Celebrating holidays focused on DEI showcases a company's commitment to all communities and individuals. It signals to employees, customers, and communities that their history and contributions are valued, promoting a sense of belonging and fostering inclusivity.

Share seasonal weather advice and updates

Utilities have been posting information about the reasons behind power outages. Sharing disaster and storm information through social media channels helps customers better understand how their power service can be affected.

We noticed utilities taking the time to explain the delicate and methodical process of bringing power back on, particularly in below-freezing temperatures. Doing so educates customers about the coordination required among crews, contractors, engineers, and dispatchers.

The top-performing social media posts from the first three months of 2024

Keep reading to see this quarter's top-performing utility post from each platform, including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and X, formerly known as Twitter.

Top-performing social media posts by platform

Facebook

Peoples Gas expresses appreciation for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, celebrating an exciting season and its pride in providing Raymond James Stadium with natural gas. The conversations in the comments section are customers' support for their team.

Instagram/TikTok

BC Hydro's trendy video took its customers on a humorous or surprising journey, depending on your opinion of the trend. The Instagram post appears to be a short educational video clip with the caption "Who knew?" where you would expect to hear fun facts. The video audio is static, confusing some viewers and fueling a lot of conversation in the comments sections.

View this post on Instagram

A post shared by BC Hydro (@bchydro)

X (formerly Twitter)

Cleco's X post demonstrated its dedication to supporting Louisiana communities through volunteer work and charitable donations.

> Cleco is committed to giving back to Louisiana communities through volunteerism and charitable giving. Organizations across Cleco's 24-parish service territory can apply for funds and register their cause through Cleco's online giving portal at https://t.co/j5IJJQfWpk. pic.twitter.com/ZEJ0obBoLP
>
> — Cleco (@ClecoPower) January 22, 2024

YouTube

Hydro Ottawa's post featured an episode of the *Think Energy* podcast that examines Canada's trajectory for EVs. The episode features discussions with several experts and covers a range of EV topics, including trends, announcements, projects, and policies.

Strategies that work for the top-performing posts

In general, posts perform well when they're joining a new trend on a platform. They also perform well when they:

- Are relevant to current news
- Pique curiosity and interest
- Emphasize storytelling

Below, we analyze what made the top posts of the first quarter successful. You can use this information to inform your content and repeat their success.

Explore more social media trends from the first quarter of 2024

Members of the E Source Business Marketing, Corporate Communications, or Residential Marketing Services can dive into all the metrics in our reports:

- Winter advisories and notable figures: The top-performing utility social media posts for January
- Black History Month, clean energy, and contests: The top-performing utility social media posts for February
- Women'ss History Month, contests, and wildlife: The top performing utility social media posts for March

We update the reports monthly with current insights into the kinds of messages utilities are sharing

with their customers.

Not a member but interested in learning more? Contact us to learn how to gain access.

Stay trendy

Using a trending hook or style was, ahem, *trending* in the first quarter. BC Hydro's dam fun facts went viral when viewers noticed and reported that its audio was full of static and they couldn't hear what the tour guide was saying. In reality, there were no technical difficulties. It was a new trend on TikTok and amplified engagement as viewers flooded comment sections to make the producer aware of the "problem." BC Hydro leaned into the trend with its replies to concerned viewers. Some of the utility's clever replies included yelling "WHAT?" over the noise or asking "Watt happened?"

Be visible in the community

What worked well for Cleco's post? It showed the utility in action, volunteering and donating to support the community. Seeing utilities' efforts to make a difference in communities helps humanize the people behind the utility name and brand. This makes them relatable and will often help gain respect and improve customers' opinions. The post also had a clear call to action so viewers could contribute to the cause.

Spotlight local talent and attractions

The Peoples Gas and Hydro Ottawa posts featured timely and intriguing topics focused on local personalities. Peoples Gas highlighted its appreciation for the Tampa Bay Buccaneers and the sustainable features of Raymond James Stadium. This reflected the community's love for the team.

Hydro Ottawa promoted its podcast episode, showcasing respected EV experts and providing links to their LinkedIn profiles and websites in the description. The post also included links to subscribe to the podcast via various platforms.

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