



Instagram for Animals as Natural Therapy

Animals as Natural Therapy can reach our target demographic by using Instagram. While most of our current donors are predominantly elderly and white, we are hoping to reach the younger more diverse demographic. Young adults are the most likely group to say they use Instagram, which is why it would be effective for us to use Instagram in order to draw a younger audience (Pew Research Center 2021).

Communication Function

For Animals as Natural Therapy, Instagram allows us to highlight our animals and people who are taking therapy sessions with us. We show the interactions with our community and our animals. With Instagram we try to highlight not only our farm and animals but also our community. We also post supportive comments so people can feel supported through whatever they might be going through. Instagram is our way to show the community what we are all about through pictures. Our goal is to bring more people to our farm who need or could use the therapy which we offer.

Branding Elements

Instagram is a strong platform. One minor issue I have with our current Instagram is that our logo is a different color than that of our website's as of right now. We must be consistent in our branding. Our voice as a brand is directly represented through our Instagram page. We approach our posts in a friendly tone that is like one of your regular friends on Instagram. We aren't overusing our logos, brand titles and phrases but rather posting pictures we hope others will find happiness in. For example, most of our posts are of our cute animals in action on the farm. Currently we have 3 main styles of post themes. We are either posting promotions for an event, an animal picture with a story behind it, or a post regarding our team making everything happen here at Animals as Natural Therapy. We do use hashtags but not consistently in all our posts which we should be taking advantage of.

Post Guidelines

When to post

The best times for nonprofits to post are Tuesdays at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., Wednesdays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Fridays from 10 a.m. to noon (Sprout Social 2023).

Frequency of posts

74% of consumers agree that 1-2 posts per day is ideal (Sprout Social 2023).

Length of posts

The ideal caption length is 1-50 characters (Quintly 2019). When it comes to using Instagram reels, the ideal length is 7-15 seconds (Visualmodo 2023).

What types of posts are most engaging?

“Carousel posts” are the most engaging types of posts on Instagram. These are singular posts that include multiple photos in it which you can see by swiping left. They often surface in a user's feed more than once, increasing the opportunity for engagement (Later 2022). They outperform singular posts and even reels.

The types of posts and features there are on Instagram are

Live, stories, highlights, reels, single posts& carousel posts, locations, filters, music, stickers.

Post Themes

Day in the Life Series, photos from a session, event photos, promotional graphics, volunteer requests, donation reminders, friendly updates.

Post Calendar (examples)

Monday

- #MotivationMonday
- Posting animals and motivational posts every Monday to keep our community going.

Tuesday

- #TherapyTuesday
- A motivational post on Instagram that people can see and get a positive message from.

Wednesday

- #WackyWednesday
- Showing animals or workers doing funny wacky things gives a comedic element to it.

Thursday

- #ThankfulThursday
- Highlighting volunteers and workers who help at the farm.

Friday

- #FunFriday
- Showing Animals and workers having fun and interacting with each other.

Post Example

Why choose animal therapy?



ANIMALS AS NATURAL THERAPY

Benefits of animal therapy include...

- Increasing relaxation and decreasing stress.
- Developing social and behavioral skills.
- Increasing comfort and reducing pain.
- Providing motivation, stimulation and focus.
- Increased interest in activities, such as exercise.

ANIMALS AS NATURAL THERAPY

Interested in therapy or volunteering?

To sign up for one of our programs, request a farm tour, or apply to volunteer, visit our website. Link in bio.



ANIMALS AS NATURAL THERAPY

Example Caption

Animals as Natural Therapy takes a new approach to battling mental health struggles. With our Hand on Healing experience you can experience one of our many benefits. To learn how to sign up for a visit or to volunteer visit the link in our bio. #mentalhealth #animaltherapy #animalsasnaturaltherapy #nonprofit #bellingshamwa



Why Choose Us

We are Improving mental and behavioral health through animal-guided programs and mentorship with special attention to youth and veterans in Northwest Washington.



Our Programs

Youth

- Safety Net After School Program
 - 8-10 week quarters

Adult

- Young Adult Workshop
 - October 13, 20, 27, November 3, 10, 17

Veterans

- Horsemanship for Women Veterans
 - Friday, April 14th ~ Friday, May 19th
- Private/Group Sessions
 - By reservation

program@animalsasnaturaltherapy
360-671-350

Example Caption

We offer Youth, Adult, and Veteran programs to provide our mental health services in Northwest Washington. You can sign up for any of these by contacting program@animalsasnaturaltherapy or visit the link in our bio to sign up today. #youthmentalhealth #veteranmentalhealth #animalsasnaturaltherapy

Who to follow

Local Nonprofits

- Wild Whatcom @wildwhatcom
- Northwest Youth Services @nwyouthservices
- Interfaith Coalition @interfaithcoalition
- Make. Shift Art Space @make.shiftartspace
- Bellingham Food Bank @bellinghamfoodbank

School Districts

- Ferndale School District @ferndaleschooldistrict
- Bellingham High School @bellinghamhighschool
- Bellingham Public Schools @bellinghamschools
- Squalicum High School @squalicumstorm
- WWU @westernwashingtonuniversity

Local Businesses

- Pickford Film Center @pickfordfilm
- Boundary Bay Brewery @bbaybrewery
- Bellingham Parks and Recreation @bellinghamparks
- WWU Campus Rec @wwucampusrec
- Bellingham Exit @bellinghamexit

Local News/Media

- Bellingham Herald @bellinghamherald
- The Front @thefrontonline
- KMRE @kmre883
- KUGS @kugs.fm
- Cascadia Daily @cascadiadaily

Suggested Hashtags

#animaltherapy #therapyanimals #animalsasnaturaltherapy #seniorhealth #bellingham
#bellinghamwa #whatcomcounty #therapy #youthmentalhealth #veteranmentalhealth
#volunteering #nonprofit #instagram

Best Practices

Do

- Include animals in nearly every post.
- Following posting time guidelines and be consistent.
- Include testimonials
- Have 1-2 posts a day.
- Use a variety of post types (Reel, Story, Slides).
- Keep captions from 1-50 words.
- Uphold the brand image and tone of ANT.
- Interact with comments.
- Interact and like posts from our partners and sponsors.
- Uphold the privacy of others and participants.

Don't

- Post insensitive content following a local tragedy or issue.
- Be overbearing in your attempt to get sponsorship/donations.
- Deviate from the brand colors.
- Include other logos or brand colors that are not associated with ANT.
- Respond to negative comments in a negative way.
- Post images that are not related to the rest of the page or ANT.
- Put too many hashtags in a post 3-5 is best (Sprout Social 2023).

Sources

Schaeffer, Katherine. "7 Facts about Americans and Instagram." *Pew Research Center*, Pew Research Center, 7 Oct. 2021, www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2021/10/07/7-facts-about-americans-and-instagram/.

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Thomas, Monique. "The Best Types of Instagram Posts Ranked: Carousel, Image, or Video?: Later." *Later Social Media Marketing*, Later Blog, 8 Apr. 2022, later.com/blog/best-types-of-instagram-posts/.