WEST BRANCH CONTENT PLAN

University of Iowa - Social Media Marketing

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Introduction

We are very thankful and excited to be working with you. We greatly appreciate the opportunity you have given us. We all have learned so much and in turn been able to create a social media marketing plan that is fit for the City of West Branch. Thank you for being here and we can't wait to show you what we have produced.
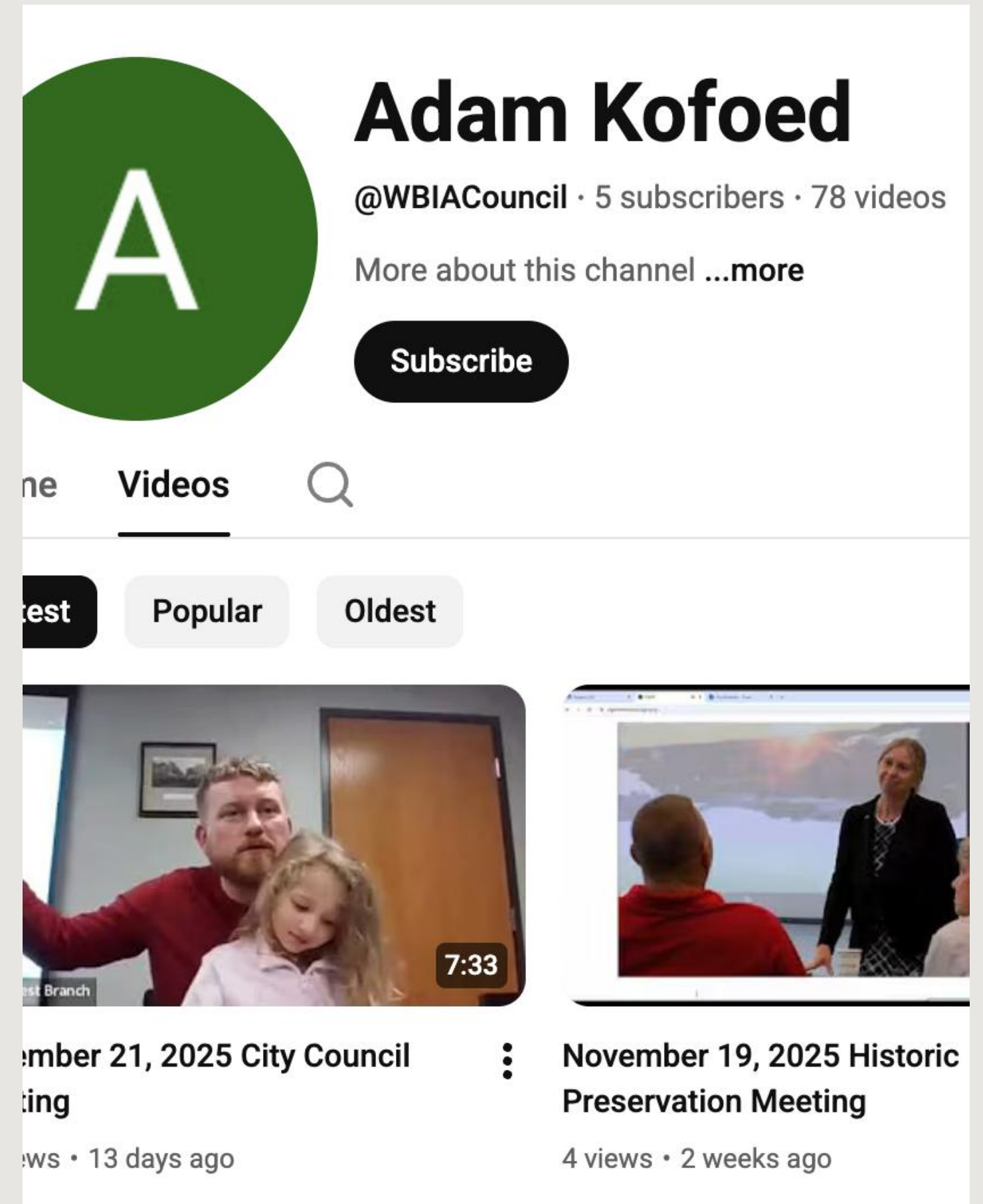
Client Audit

YouTube

- Current branding is for Adam rather than City of West Branch

- Can be changed in YouTube settings
  - Channel page → customization

- Aligns YouTube with other brands

- Makes city council meetings more accessible

Consistency and Meta

- Facebook already established

- Instagram seamless connection

- YouTube Alignment

Key Messages & Themes

Embrace the evolving community

- Position West Branch as a flexible community that is rooted in history but poised for growth.
- Reflect the town's unique blend: small-town charm, historical significance and suburban living.
- Emphasize balance, a peaceful hometown with room for opportunity.

Strengthen community connection

- Celebrate West Branch's tight-knit community, traditions and shared values.
- Showcase residents, local stories and hometown pride to reinforce belonging.
- Elevate the voices of residents of all ages to show West Branch as welcoming, supportive and community-driven.

Support Local Growth & Small Businesses

- Promote economic growth by highlighting small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- Highlight local news, development projects and local partnerships.
- Encourage residents and visitors to shop local and support their community.
- Add in career and affordability opportunities to foster growth.

Showcase rich historical heritage

- Celebrate West Branch's rich history in a way that attracts both residents and visitors.
- Share historical stories, landmarks and cultural highlights in visually compelling ways.
- Use history to enhance tourism while ensuring messaging feels nuanced, inclusive and connected to modern community values.

Welcoming future opportunity

- Present the city as a place where young people can build a future here: affordability, stability and growth.
- Highlight opportunities for involvement, leadership and community impact.
- Promote the city as a small-town with access to broad regional opportunities.
- Showcase the town ready to grow alongside residents.

Connected, engaged and accessible city

- Position City platforms as the hub for transparent communication and community engagement.
- Use digital storytelling to bring together history, community pride and local economic growth.
- Build a sense of belonging by spotlighting those who help shape the town's future.

Content Goals & Objectives

Content Goals and Objectives

- Specific Posting Schedule: ex, Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday
- Days-of-the-week Themed Posts
  - Throwback Thursday, Small Business Sunday

- More Frequent City-Based Updates (Informational)
  - Local government activity, Improvement to infrastructure, School/Education updates, Outreach opportunities, Community events, City improvements, etc.
- Increased Focus on Aesthetics and Uniformity
  - Graphic design worked into posts
  - Brighter, more aesthetically pleasing colors
  - Coherent, similarly designed posts
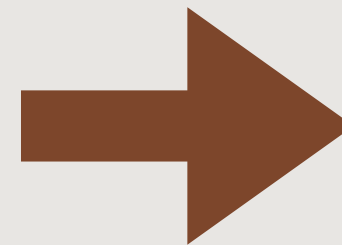
Content Improvement Example

Look into Canva Templates: easy to access, no-low cost and great brand designs.

City of West Branch Government
November 24 at 11:01 AM

Happy Thanksgiving!

City Offices will be closed
Thursday, Nov. 27th and Friday, Nov. 28th

We will reopen 8 a.m. Monday, December 1, 2025 ● Have a safe holiday

Happy Thanksgiving

City offices closed
Nov 27th & Nov 28th!
Reopening: Dec 1st,
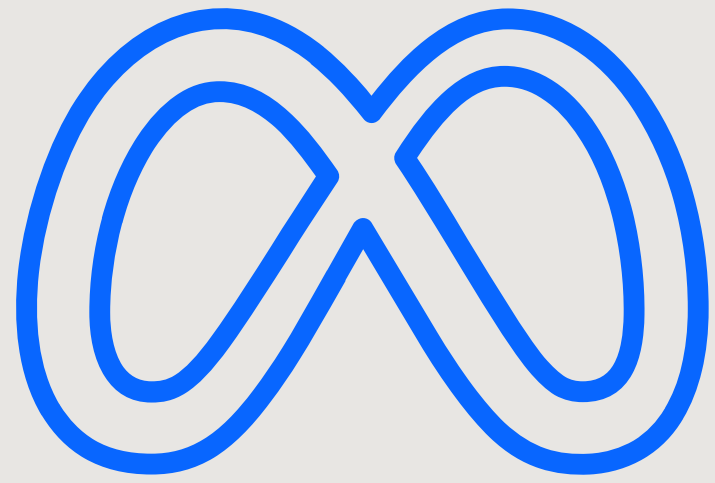8 a.m

City of West Branch, IA

CITY OF WEST BRANCH,
IOWA

WEST BRANCH

A city shaped by heritage and inspired by growth, offering a peaceful small-town feel with the space, connection, and opportunity for residents and visitors to build their futures.

Content Platforms

Facebook/Instagram

Owned by Meta, both social media platforms emphasize photo and video and posting with short captions. At the moment of writing, the apps have a combined 6 billion users.
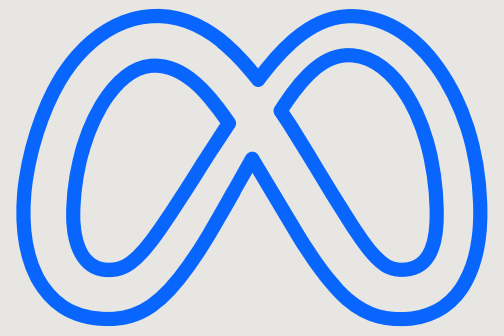

NextDoor

Designed to allow members of a specific geographic community to give tips/warnings, ask questions, and buy/sell items.

X/Twitter

Recently acquired by Elon Musk, the platform has shifted away from short-form captions towards longer, engagement-based posting.

FACEBOOK/INSTAGRAM

PROS

- Perhaps the most accessible social media apps today
- Users can budget with Meta to determine their promoted content
- Meta allows users to link Facebook and Instagram accounts for more cohesive posting

CONS

- "Shadow banning" can force users into a pay-to-play scheme, may be required to buy promotions to keep engagement high
- Businesses use Meta the most for promotion, risking fatigue for regular users
- The algorithm is dictated by Meta, not West Branch

NEXTDOOR

PROS

- The community controls the algorithm and what posts receive the most attention.
- By specifying a region, "wasteful" content is siphoned out.
- The app can be used to inform community members about immediate news

CONS

- Address verification can be a concern for some users
- While moderation policies are in place, there is still a risk of users "spamming" the forum with irrelevant posts.
- The City of West Branch will not "own" their page, giving less control over content.

X/TWITTER

PROS

- "Spaces" and new community features can help filter posts
- New updates are allowing longer captions to receive more algorithmic preference, doing away with the 140-charatcer limit
- Verifications can be bought, further boosting engagement

CONS

- Bots and troll accounts have driven many businesses from the app
- Inflammatory speech and posts have been given algorithmic preference
- Hate speech and user violations have been altered drastically, making moderation difficult

Big Ideas & Deliverables

Idea 1:

Fostering greater connectiveness by building a branding guideline that will outline logo usage, color palette, typography, photography standards, brand voice, key messages, and audience personas.

Branding Guidelines

COLOR GUIDELINES

#d98a50	
#af352f	
#c3a07a	
#3a3a3a	
#fff4e6	

The West Branch color palette reflects the community's heritage with warm, historic tones. Consistent use of these colors strengthens recognition and preserves the city's visual identity.

List of quick don'ts:
- Don't use unapproved reds or bright modern tones.
- Don't change the logo's colors.
- Don't use gradients or neon shades.

Idea 2:

Bringing all of our social media platforms together and using strategies to overall increase engagement and build a stronger community in West Branch.

Weekly Content Calendar

West Branch Sample Content Calendar

WEST BRANCH

Date	Channel	Format	Theme	Idea
Sunday	Website	Entry	Community Connection and Q&A Highlight	Every Sunday, the city should upload a summary of the week's Instagram Q&A, highlighting the top questions and clear, concise answers, for residents who may have missed the stories. This creates a permanent, easy-to-find archive on the website and supports transparency and accessibility.
	Facebook	Photo	Celebrating West Branch's History	*History Highligh* featuring an artifact, landmark, or notable local figure with a informational caption
Monday	Instagram	Story	Community Connection and Q&A Highlight	Post an interactive Q&A sticker on Instagram Stories. Residents can type questions directly into the sticker, and the city can respond either through additional story slides or in a weekly roundup. Posting at 5 PM aligns with peak engagement hours, increasing visibility among younger residents and working adults.
	Facebook	Carousel	Supporting Local Growth & Small Businesses	Monday Business/City Project Update: Short update on construction projects, streetscape improvements, new permits, or business development news.
Tuesday	Website	Entry	Celebrating West Branch's History	Monthly: 1 longer *History Feature* added to the "Community" or "Local History" page
	Facebook, Instagram	Reel	Supporting Local Growth & Small Businesses	Tuesday Small Business Spotlight: reel or carousel showcasing the featured business.
Wednesday	Instagram	Story	Community Connection and Q&A Highlight	Post an interactive Q&A sticker on Instagram Stories. Residents can type questions directly into the sticker, and the city can respond either through additional story slides or in a weekly roundup. Posting at 5 PM aligns with peak engagement hours, increasing visibility among younger residents and working adults.
	Facebook, Instagram	Reel	Experiencing West Branch: Events and Community Life	Midweek Event Reminder: Share a short, visual post highlighting events happening that upcoming weekend. This helps residents plan ahead and encourages surrounding communities to visit.
Thursday	Facebook, Instagram	Photo	Celebrating West Branch's History	*Throwback Thursday* (TBT) historic photo post
Friday	Instagram	Story	Community Connection and Q&A Highlight	Post an interactive Q&A sticker on Instagram Stories. Residents can type questions directly into the sticker, and the city can respond either through additional story slides or in a weekly roundup. Posting at 5 PM aligns with peak engagement hours, increasing visibility among younger residents and working adults.
	Facebook, Instagram	Photo	Experiencing West Branch: Events and Community Life	Staff Spotlight (Last Friday of Every Month): Feature a "Staff Member of the Month" across both platforms to humanize the city, celebrate employees, and strengthen community connection.
	Website	Entry	Supporting Local Growth & Small Businesses	Weekly Small Business Feature: Updated every Friday under a "Local Business" or "Community Spotlight" section
Saturday	Instagram	Story	Supporting Local Growth & Small Businesses	Saturday Weekend Highlight Post: Visual content showing local shops, seasonal decorations, downtown foot traffic, or products.

Idea 3:

We want to be able to grow the outreach and engagement of the content the City of West Branch shares. We also want to be able to provide residents and members of the community with social media pages that offer important information and showcase West Branch's historical aspects.

Sample Monthly Content Calendar

A broad social media content calendar that can help keep the team organized and on track. Made to be edited easily where adjustments can be made through a shared custom calendar.
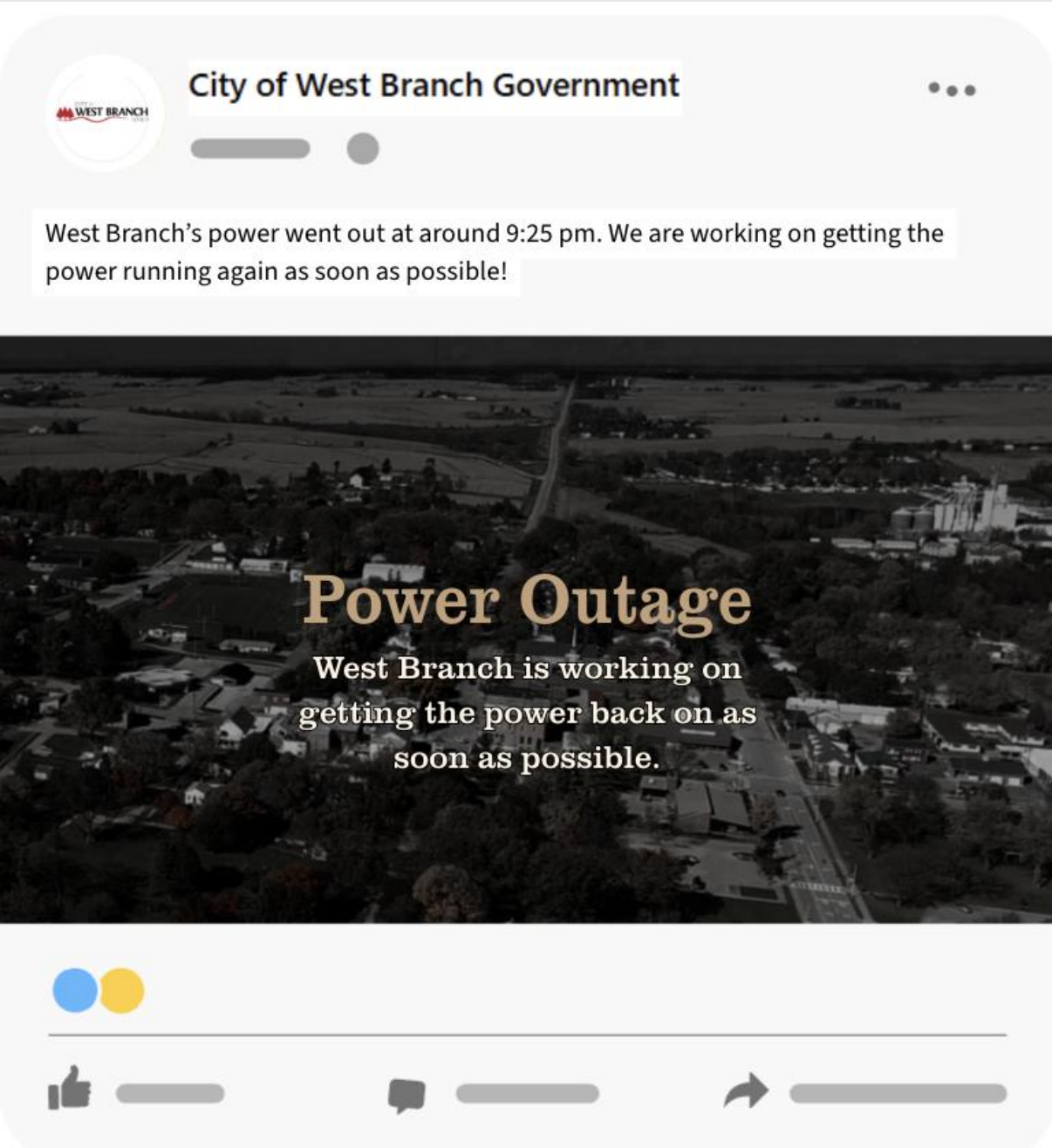
Idea 4:

Prioritize connection in both physical and virtual settings, positioning West Branch as an ideal city for families with children, while increasing social media engagement through cohesive Canva posts and reducing the need for informational phone calls.

Post Examples

(Group 5)

Facebook Post: City update

Instagram Post: Business spotlight for Birdie's Eats & Drinks

Idea 5:

Utilizing visual storytelling across platforms and creating a consistent branding through their social media. Using new platforms and introducing Canva to create cohesive branding throughout.

THANK YOU !

Questions?