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**STRATEGIES FROM LEADING
RETIREMENT PLAN ADVISORS**

**Amplifying
advisor voices
on social media**

Strategies from leading retirement plan advisors

next

Issue no. 2

advisor

Amplifying advisor voices with social media

Love it or hate it, social media has become an inescapable part of everyday life for millions across the globe. However, using social media for professional purposes comes with a complex set of dos and don'ts. With shifting technologies, best practices, legal environments and terminology, managing social media can be challenging for advisors. But social media, and LinkedIn specifically, are growing in importance for advisors to use, as according to a study, some 35% of financial advisors use LinkedIn in their professional lives at least once a day, higher than many traditional media outlets and newspapers.

To help advisors effectively navigate this environment and use social media to genuinely grow their practices, we spoke to two leading advisors, Delphine Hunt, Senior Retirement Plan Consultant at OneDigital, and Alex Assaley, Managing Director, Retirement & Private Wealth at HUB International | AFS 401(k).



KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Advisors should seek to tailor their social media content to address both educational needs and the individual's personal finance concerns of their distinct audiences.
2. Social media content should be versatile, allowing for seamless integration across multiple platforms, while also balancing the innovative efforts of marketing teams with compliance requirements.
3. Balancing professional and personal content on social media is essential for building trust and relatability, with a focus on consistent and authentic engagement.

The role of social media

Alex sees social media as one of the more important cross sections between advisors and participants. He explains, “Advisors and the individuals that we serve are active in different aspects of social media, and on different platforms. Therefore, our content creation must cover both education and guidance. We see two aspects to it: the areas that are important to our audience and the areas where we can offer our knowledge and expertise.”

Delphine specifically leverages social media to research what other advisors are putting out into the market and what resonates. She emphasizes that LinkedIn is her primary platform, saying, “LinkedIn is the go-to for sharing and receiving information. I use it to research what thought leaders are writing across the country, particularly about lifetime income. We can use social media to effectively gauge the market’s temperature when it comes to lifetime income. Right now I think that everyone is a little afraid to be the first one out of the gate.”



Platform and approach

Alex highlights the importance of distinguishing between different audiences on social media. “We target retirement plan decision-makers and committees on one hand and individual investors and savers on the other. We divide our audience into these two cohorts to ensure we’re addressing both big-picture issues and personal finance concerns.”

Delphine takes a slightly different approach, focusing on the outcomes of social media use. “You want to be valuable, understandable, and digestible. These are the goals of producing content as a thought leader.” She underscores the significance of clarity, asking, “Can we distill our key messaging into something clear and explain why our content is beneficial?”



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— Alex Assaley
Managing Director, HUB International | AFS 401(k)

“When we make a statement, we can’t cover all aspects of the particular fact or theory, and someone can come at you on that. There is a level of scrutiny that can be unhelpful. You have to be really careful between giving meaty content but not leaving yourself open, and it is difficult to balance that.”

— **Delphine Hunt**

Senior Retirement Plan Consultant, OneDigital Retirement + Wealth, *OneDigital*

Content reuse and integration

Alex wants to make sure that content is versatile and can be used across multiple platforms: “For lifetime income, we aim to build education and knowledge through social media. LinkedIn is our primary platform for plan sponsors, while Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter (X) are our other primary social platforms. We create content in a way that can be used across each of those platforms with minor adjustments as appropriate.”

That integration of viewpoints and education is a key theme. As attention spans and content length recommendations continue to shrink, identifying the key message and getting that to be the focus of each post is crucial. Delphine sees this as a strategic matter, saying that the key is asking, “Who is going to read this content and what do you want them to extrapolate? Would participants read an entire article, or do they just want the takeaway?” We often forget to step back and see what the rest of the world sees.”



Integrating marketing and data

The integration of the expert advisors and the marketing teams at their firms can be challenging. There is a natural friction of trying to push the limits of interesting social media activity while staying within the boundaries set by compliance teams. Alex sees this as a natural relationship with the potential to drive expanding and innovative content, saying, “We have experts within the marketing team focused on building and deploying content. My role is to challenge that team to evolve how we deliver information that is meaningful and digestible. When we started doing more social media, we set rules; is it accurate, aligned with our values, and compliant? If a piece meets those criteria, it’s a green light.”

Delphine acknowledges the challenge in being both holistic and concise on social media. She sees a problem with the lack of control over distribution of materials once they are on social. She says, “When we make a statement, we can’t cover all aspects of the particular fact or theory, and someone can come at you on that. There is a level of scrutiny that can be unhelpful. You have to be really careful between giving meaty content but not leaving yourself open, and it is difficult to balance that.”

Alex also sees the integration with the marketing team as a driver of improving performance, and integrating the data that a marketing team provides can elevate social use. He adds, “We use analytics, on both publicly available and backend, monthly and quarterly. It is a long process.”



Adding personalization

Balancing the professional and personal sides of social media is different for every advisor. Alex believes in blending both, saying, “Professional and personal lives do blur. It can be a good thing, but you have to be careful. Vacation time is important, but letting people see you as an individual and what drives you every day is a good thing too.”

There are also considerations of how personal to make social media when you are representing a corporate account and speaking in a professional capacity. Delphine sees the need to be careful but believes that balance can be found. “It doesn’t always balance out. When you’re representing a firm, they get to control the strings to a certain extent but having your own presence outside of the firm doesn’t distract. It isn’t a competition between the firm and the advisor. If you’re drawing attention to relevant things that promote your brand and your company’s brand, then you’re in a really good spot.”

She also advocates for tying financial and personal together. “We all want to know who is on the other side of the screen. COVID took away a lot of that personal connection, and social media is a way to bring that back, making you relatable and enhancing how we educate and consult. A part of your content should be who you are and what you do every day outside of the office.”



Advice to other advisors

Alex’s advice to advisors starting with social media is simple: “Authenticity. Find the medium where you are comfortable and keep at it. If I look back at our earlier content, I can see how much it has evolved. But it took a long time, five years or more, to get good at it. It’s a long-term investment, just like a lot of other things we work on.”

Delphine echoes this sentiment and cautions against striving for perfection. “It’s too easy to get lost searching for the perfect post. Find your voice, post on topics you think are relevant, find ways to engage, let people get to know you, post often and post personal. Figure out how you want to be seen and taken seriously.”



ABOUT THE ADVISORS



Alex Assaley

Managing Director
HUB International | AFS 401(k)

18 YRS EXP.

- Leads the Mid-Atlantic Region for HUB International
- Served as president of NAPA and a member of its Leadership Council in 2021 – 2022
- NAPA 2024 Top Social Media Influencer

NAPA Top Social Media Influencer is based on NAPA members nominating influencers for their use of video, infographics, text or live platforms in the following categories: plan advisors; DCIOs; recordkeepers/TPAs; and other retirement plan industry professionals.



Delphine Hunt

Senior Retirement Plan Consultant
OneDigital Retirement + Wealth,
OneDigital

12+ YRS EXP.

- Develops team’s strategy for plan health/retirement readiness, consulting, investment analysis, and fiduciary governance
- Committed to creating the most effective ways to manage organizations’ fiduciary policies while maximizing the benefits to employees

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