Club Media Toolkit

AUSCYCLING

Contents

Introduction
How to use this toolkit

Any BMX, MTB and cycling club wants more members, bigger sponsorships, and more people in love with what you're doing. You have a story to tell; a message of how life is better on two wheels.

But the world is a noisy place, and it's hard to get noticed. This guide will help your club cut through the noise and reach more of the people that matter.

This AusCycling Club Media Toolkit is designed to give clubs a foundation of knowledge from which to start achieving your marketing and communications goals.

Let' say you've just volunteered to be your club's communications officer and you're not sure where to begin. Let this guide be your starting point. From websites to Facebook, from telling a story to shooting better video, this toolkit will take you through the basics of communicating and promoting yourselves effectively as a club.

We recommend you try the 'do this' exercises as you go along, as this will help you create an effective communications plan for your club. Also, do use the templates and other resources.

How to make the most of this toolkit:

- **READ** this guide

- **DO** the 'try this' exercises

- **USE** the resources

Photo: Matt Rousu

Identity
Who are you?

Values

Good communication starts by knowing who you are and what you stand for. What gives your club a sense of identity? What do you value most? Here are some examples of values that some clubs might prioritise:

- Junior development
- Families
- Beginners
- Friendship
- Inclusion and diversity
- History and tradition
- High performance
- Personal achievement
- Excellence in coaching and officiating
- Environmental sustainability
- Advocating for safe infrastructure
- Engagement with local community

TRY THIS: Write down three core values that you want your club to be known for.

Corporate voice

Your identity and values will shape what you communicate about. That's obvious: if you value junior development, you'll talk about training for kids. If you value advocacy, you'll talk about bike paths, for example.

Your values also shape how you communicate; your 'corporate voice'.

For example, if you value history and tradition, you may choose a formal style of speech and writing. If you're a family club, you may choose a more casual tone. Some clubs have a tongue-in-cheek approach, heavy on satire and internet memes. Others take a conservative, neutral approach.

TRY THIS: Write down some words that describe how you want your club to sound in its communications (eg funny, authoritative, casual, formal, soft, firm, etc).

Example of a humorous tone of voice. (Source: Manly Warringah Cycling Club)

Goals
What do you want to achieve?

Why do goals matter?

Most clubs want their communications to support bigger goals, such as:

- growing your club membership;
- attracting sponsorships; or
- achieving a higher attendance at your events.

Good communication alone can't achieve those goals, but it's a key part of any successful plan.

It's important to have a clear idea of what you want to achieve with your communications efforts. Otherwise, you could be wasting your time and energy on fruitless activities.

What goals should you set?

With your club leadership, plan out some realistic goals that you hope to achieve with your communications activities – specific, measurable, actionable, relevant and time-bound (SMART) goals.

For example:
- Get 10,000 hits on your club's website in a calendar year;
- Double your Facebook reach by the end of the year;
- Get 5,000 signatures on your petition to upgrade the local trails;
- In your club's end-of-year member survey, achieve a satisfaction rating of 7 for communication.

You should set communications goals that will help achieve your club's broader objectives.

For example, if your club is focusing on member engagement, your communications goals might revolve around growing the member newsletter.

If your club wants to attract more beginner riders, your goals might focus on the amount of non-members you're reaching on social media.

TRY THIS:

Write down your club's major objectives for the year. Then, write down three SMART communications goals that will help your club achieve those objectives.

Photo: Get Snapt

Audience

Who are you trying to reach?

Next, think about your target audiences. What kind of people do you want to reach with your messaging? You'll want to ensure your communications are tailored to reaching those target audiences.

Here are a few examples:

- **Active members:** your most engaged, involved club members;
- **Fringe members:** they're members, but don't participate much in club activities. Some might be thinking of leaving;
- **New members:** people who've recently signed up and are keen to learn what you can offer;
- **Family:** especially parents of junior members, whose support is critical to their child's continued participation;
- **Other bike riders:** people in your local community who ride a bike, but haven't joined your club;
- **Non-riding locals:** your neighbours who don't ride bikes and have no interest in cycling;
- **Sports fans:** people who love to watch sport, but don't ride themselves.

You can break these categories down further by demographics: age, gender, geographic location etc.

TRY THIS:

Imagine the type of person that you are trying to reach. Write up an audience profile by describing that person in as much detail as possible. Do this for each of the different types of audiences you'd be targeting.

Example audience profiles:

1. Beginner female cyclist
- 25-50yo
- Employed full time with an average income
- May have young children
- Owns a basic bicycle but rarely rides
- Worried about car traffic and safety
- Enjoys coffee, food and drink
- Time-poor; has at most 1-2 hours free time per week
- Not a club member but interested in meeting people similar to herself

2. Young male racer
- 18-28yo
- Studying
- Owns one or more high-end bicycles
- Rides 5-7 days per week, follows a structured training plan
- Confident in traffic or on difficult trails and tracks
- Enjoys concerts, nightlife, gaming, watching sports
- Has own car, lives with parents or housemates
- Is a club member
- Has disposable income

3. Parent of junior member
- 30-50yo
- Has young children
- Most concerned about child's safety, learning, friendships, and fun
- Keeps a tight family budget
- Has a busy schedule catering to multiple children's activities
- Has no interest in cycling or riding personally

Platforms
Where should you be communicating?

Website

A website is your home base on the internet. Every club should have one.

Your website should have basic information, such as:

- About: who you are and what you do
- Contact details: how people can get in touch
- Events and programs: regular rides, training sessions, races, etc
- Photos and videos: a human face to your club
- How to join: a link for becoming a member

None of this requires frequent updating. You might only need to update your website twice a year.

If you have more time to invest, you can publish ongoing content like news stories, image galleries, videos, and event results.

To learn the basics of how to set up a website, read this *business.gov.au article*. There are many services you can use to create a website, such as *WordPress, Wix* and *Squarespace.*

TRY THIS:

Go to your club's website, if you have one. Check that all the basic information is up to date, such as contact details, events and programs, the 'About Us' section, and instructions for how people can join your club. Update the information if required.

If your club doesn't have a website, create one.

Email

Use email when you want to say something directly to your existing members. A regular email newsletter is a good way to keep members informed and engaged.

With email, you can be sure your audience has received your communication. In contrast, on social media, you can't guarantee that your audience will come across your post.

You can email your members within TidyHQ, or export member email addresses to a service like Mailchimp for sending customised email newsletters. For more information on how to do that, visit the *AusCycling Knowledge Base*.

WhatsApp and messaging services

Consider setting up private message chats, such as WhatsApp groups, for your club or for sub-sections of your club (eg beginners, women, racers).

WhatsApp groups can build community and help members feel like they're on the 'inside' of something exclusive.

You can post short announcements, organise events, share group photos, and celebrate achievements.

Groups encourage members to talk to each other, letting them create conversation and culture.

In person

Don't forget the old-fashioned way of communicating: talking in person. At training sessions, events, group rides, post-ride coffee and AGMs, you have the chance to speak to your most engaged members.

Google Business Profile and Google Maps

It's free to *set up a business profile on Google*.

If your club has a physical location, such as a clubhouse or track, create a business profile so that your club can appear on Google Maps.

This will make you more visible in Google searches. You could reach new people who are searching for cycling groups near them.

TRY THIS:

Search for your club in Google. What are the first few search results that come up?

Now search in Google Maps. Does anything come up? You may need to *add or claim a business* to make sure the correct information shows up.

Make your club stand out when someone searches for it on Google.

Facebook

Most clubs will benefit from having a Facebook Page, even if that's your only social media presence. About two in three Australians are on Facebook, so it's a good idea for your club to be visible there. Facebook has many helpful features for connecting with your community.

At its most basic, it's an extension of your website: for people to find out that you exist, what you do, and how they can contact you. It's a good place for sharing photos, videos and announcements.

Facebook Events are a simple way to reach your audience.

Here are some tips for using Facebook:

- **Set up** your club as a Facebook Page, not a personal profile or Group;
- **Set** your club logo as the profile picture and your club name as the Page name;
- **Make sure** each post has a photo or video. Posts with bare text are less engaging;
- **Keep** text short and sweet. Longer announcements belong on your website;
- **Create** a Facebook Event to promote an event. When somebody clicks 'Attending', their Friends may see your Event in their timeline;
- **Be responsive** in the comments to show that your club listens and cares;
- **Set up** paid Facebook ads or promote your Facebook posts with a small amount of advertising spend to reach wider audiences.

TRY THIS:

Set up a Facebook Page for your club, if it doesn't yet have one.

Go to your club's Facebook Page and check the basic settings are up-to-date: profile picture, website link, contact info, Events section.

Photo: Lee Alexander/CX Ballarat

Instagram

Instagram is all about visual content: photos and videos.

One of the current strengths of Instagram is that you can use it to reach new audiences with video content, because the Instagram algorithm likes to show short, portrait-oriented videos (called 'Reels') to wider audiences, even to people who don't follow your account.

You can also use Instagram Stories to show your followers what your club is doing right now. The Stories disappear after 24 hours, giving them a sense of immediacy and authenticity.

Some Instagram tips:

- **Set up** your Instagram account as a business account, not a personal account. This gives you more features;
- **Choose** a logical and appropriate username (eg @SpringfieldBMX, @SpringfieldCC)
- **Link** your Instagram account to your Facebook Page to make it easier to cross-post between them;
- **Post** short videos that feature real people, eg:
  - Behind-the-scenes footage from an event;
  - A drill from a training session;
  - A club member teaching you how to do a trick;
- **Post** in a portrait aspect ratio (4×5 or 9×16), or square (1×1) so that it fills the phone screen;
- **Tag** other clubs and riders. This makes it easy for them to share your content on their own accounts;
- **Use** the 'Collab' feature, which will share your post on the collaborator's own Instagram account, increasing the reach of your post to wider audiences;
- **Know** that hyperlinks don't work in Instagram posts;
- **Don't** use Instagram for boring announcements. Think of it as a photo gallery, not a noticeboard.
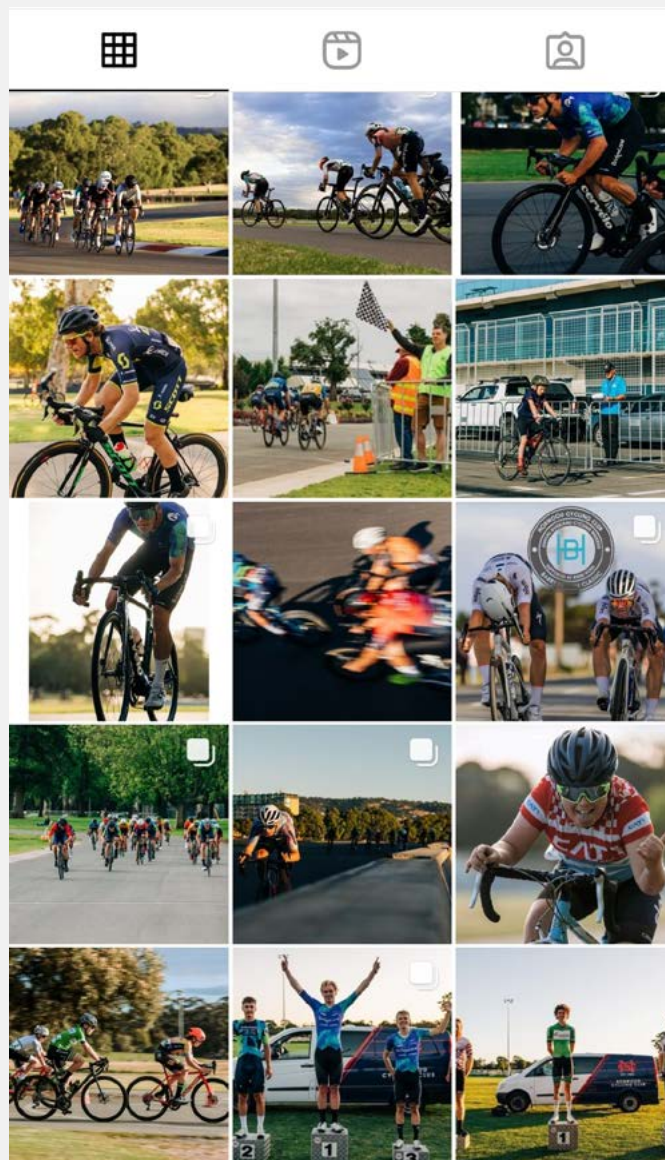
Think of Instagram as a photo and video gallery, not a noticeboard.

TikTok

TikTok is the fastest-growing social media app, particularly popular with young people under the age of 24.

Like Instagram Reels, it's a place for posting short videos of under a minute. Consider becoming active on TikTok if you want to create short-form video content like tutorials, action videos, or just funny, entertaining content – especially if you're aiming for a younger demographic.

YouTube

YouTube is a leading platform for video. Because it's powered by Google, YouTube's search functionality helps your club reach new, bigger audiences.

If you regularly live-stream or record your club's events, YouTube is a logical place to host those videos.

Nowadays, YouTube is a place for well-polished, well-produced and longer videos (say, 5 minutes or more). If you're only producing short behind-the-scenes content, it's probably better to focus your energy on Facebook, Instagram and your website.

Twitter

Twitter is primarily for participating in discussions about topics such as politics, major events or news and current affairs.

If your club is active in advocacy and political affairs, or wants to express opinions in conversations about major events, Twitter is tailored to that.

Twitter has a smaller user base than the other platforms mentioned here, so for most clubs, it's probably better to focus on the other platforms first. They are more likely to help you reach your audience.

In the community

Look for platforms where you can promote your club's activities to the broader local community.

For example:

- Community noticeboards in shopping centres and libraries;
- On your council's calendar or 'What's On' listing;
- In local Facebook Groups;
- In your local newspaper
  (see also: "External media: getting in the press").

Content Ideas
What to communicate

Tell a story

People love hearing a good story, and a good story will spread far and wide.

Ads and bland announcements are boring. People switch off when they think you're trying to sell them something. But if you can tell a story about your club, you'll find it much easier to get your message out there.

Here's a good place to start: how would you answer if someone asked, "What's the most interesting thing happening at your club?"

In many cases, it can be distilled down to the story of a person, family, or a particular milestone. For example:

- Roger has been a member for 30 years and is about to compete against his grandson for the first time this weekend.
- The junior squad has decided to use Strava to collectively ride 40,075km, the circumference of the Earth, to raise money for charity.
- Margaret used cycling and the support of the club community in her rehabilitation from a car crash. Two years after being told she could never be physically active, she is aiming to ride a 100km fondo.
- The Cricklewood Criterium is being held for the 50th time next month, and Graham has ridden every one. He remembers when the main hazard was not car traffic, but kangaroos.
- George and Bella met at a club event three years ago and bonded over their love of cycling. Next month, they'll get married and go on a cycling honeymoon in New Zealand.

While these are fictional examples, every club has a unique history and community. Thinking about the human elements of your many activities is a great place to start.

Once you have your story idea, it's time to bring it to life. If the story is strong enough, you may be able to have it told by AusCycling or local media. If you're uncertain about the strength of a story, someone in the AusCycling media team or a journalist from your local newspaper, radio or TV station can give an assessment.

If you decide to create the story yourself, use the tips in the rest of this toolkit to ensure it has the best chance of engaging your audience.

TRY THIS:

Brainstorm some ideas that could make for a good story. Start by asking yourself, "what's the most interesting thing happening at your club right now?"
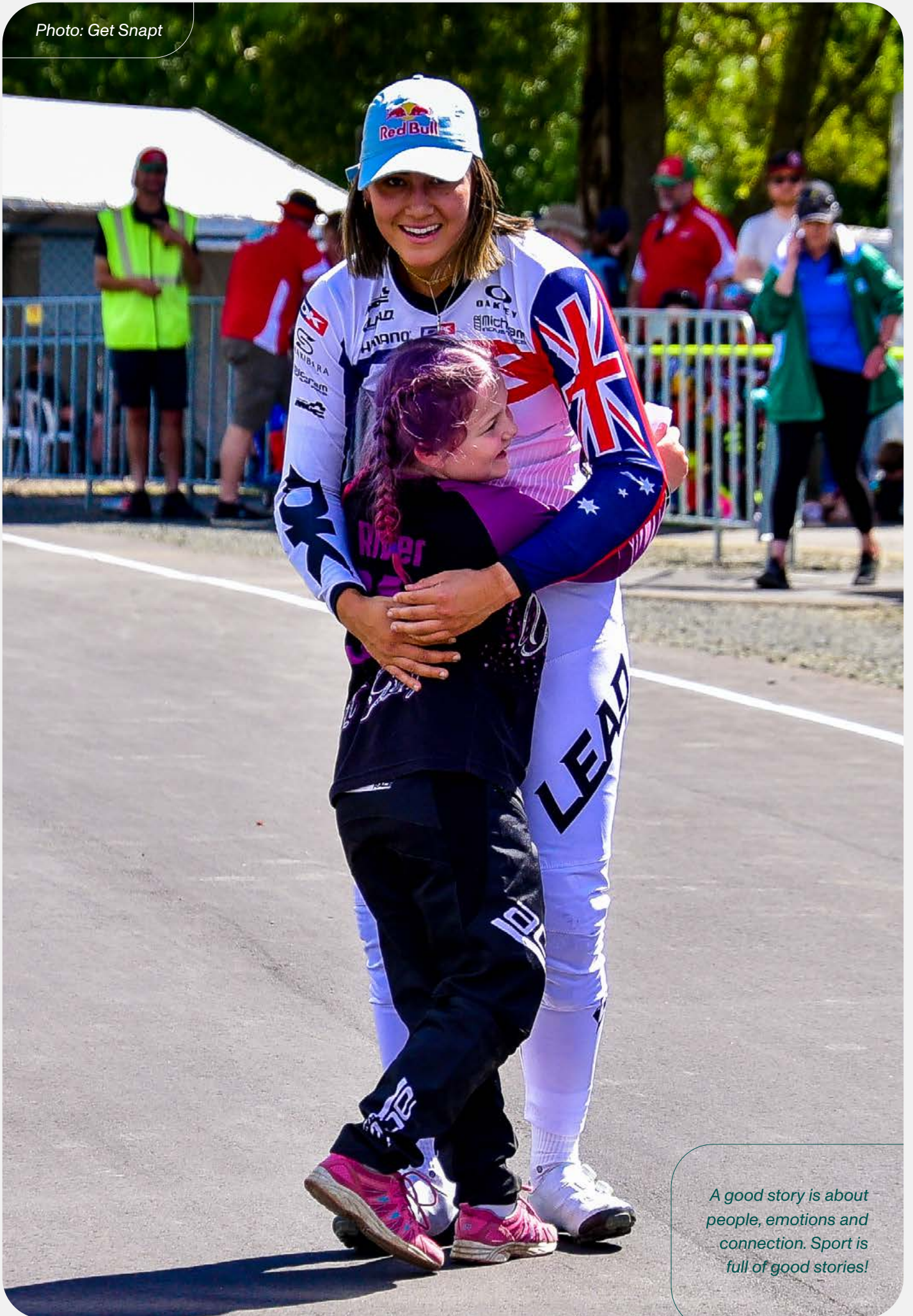
A good story is about people, emotions and connection. Sport is full of good stories!

Content Ideas *(Continued)*
What to communicate

Keep it brief

Time is precious, attention spans are short, so get to the heart of the story quickly.

Your first sentence should be engaging and reveal key information about what's to come. For example: "When Margaret injured her spine in a car crash, doctors said she'd be lucky to walk again, let alone ride a bike. On Saturday, two years after that devastating prognosis, she'll be riding 100km at the Springfield Cycling Festival."

Most stories can be told in 12–15 paragraphs.

Short videos of under 60 seconds are currently popular with the social media algorithms, and are more likely to reach wider audiences (eg TikTok, YouTube Shorts, Instagram Reels).

Make it visual

The brain processes images much faster than it does words. So, good visual content – photos, graphics and video – is a powerful tool.

Always try to include an image or video in your content. For example:

- A photo of the race or podium is more interesting than just listing the results;
- When advertising a future event, include a photo from a past event;
- After your AGM, a photo of the new club committee would be more engaging than a list of their names.

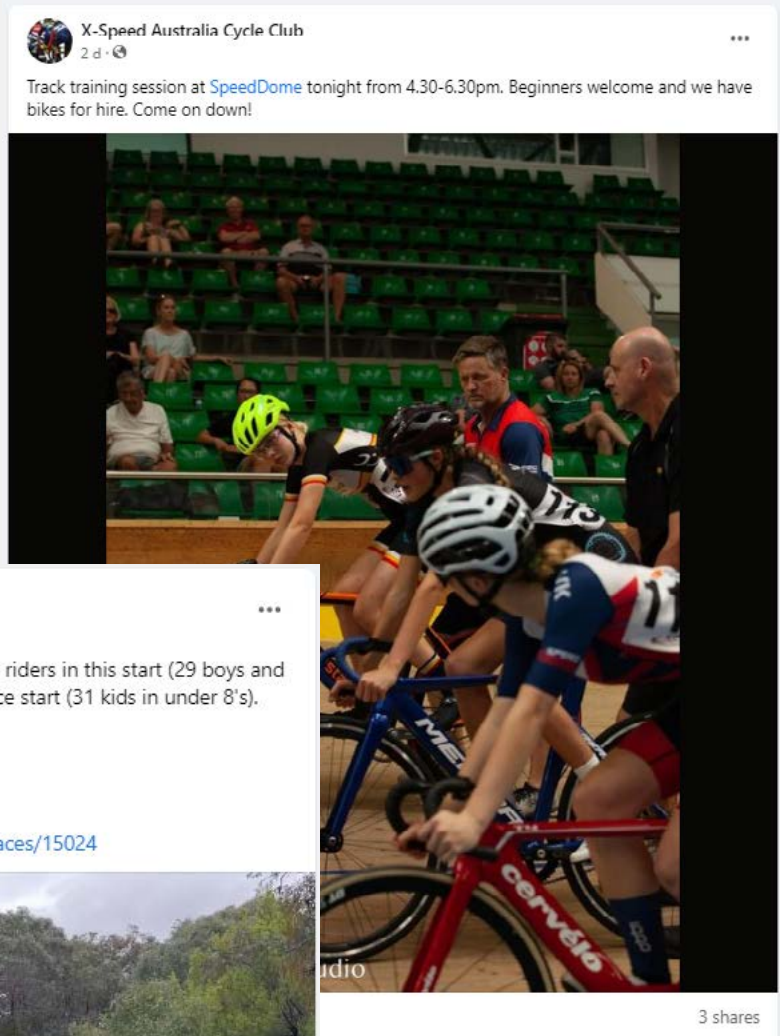Which photo grabs your attention first? Usually, photos with human faces are more eye-catching.

Include a call to action

After they hear your story, what do you want your audience to do?

Prompt them with a call to action, perhaps with a link to the relevant page of your website.

For example:

- 'Sign up here'
- 'Donate now'
- 'Find out more'
- 'Buy tickets here'

X-Speed Australia Cycle Club
2 d · 🌐

Track training session at SpeedDome tonight from 4.30-6.30pm. Beginners welcome and we have bikes for hire. Come on down!

3 shares

A strong image, a brief caption, and a clear call to action ('come on down').

Geelong Mountain Bike Club
23 March · 🌐

Awesome start to the Under 11s Dirt Squirts Race last Sunday. 38 riders in this start (29 boys and 9 girls). Off to the left are some of the under 8's awaiting their race start (31 kids in under 8's). We'd love to see this many at the skills day on April 30th.

Pencil these dates into your calendar:
Next Dirt Squirts Skills Event is on 30th of April
https://entryboss.cc/races/15030
Next No Frills Race (13+) is on 21st of April https://entryboss.cc/races/15024

👍 19   2 comments

Good posts include a call to action, such as a hyperlink for entering your next event.

Creation
How can you make content?

Photographers and videographers

Having a small library of recent images allows you to post more interesting social media content, keep your website looking fresh, and easily promote your next event.

Ask around your club to see if any hobby photographers are interested in volunteering to shoot your next event.

For major events, it's worth budgeting for a paid photographer. If you are able to give participants access to photos, they can post them to their own social media accounts to amplify the chatter about your club.

How to take better photos with your phone

If you don't have a professional camera, your smartphone is good enough to take photos for many of your club's needs, if you follow a few simple tips.

Tell a story

A good photo tells a story in a glance.

- **Include** at least one human face in your photo. This captures attention because viewers are naturally drawn to human faces;
- **Capture** emotion – happy people, devastated people, people who've given a lot of effort;
- **Include** a bicycle or equipment (eg helmet, wheels, handlebars, jersey). This puts the person in context, helping to tell a story about their connection to cycling.

Think beyond the action

With a phone camera, it's hard to zoom in and freeze the action like a professional photographer. One solution is, don't try! Instead, think of shooting *around* the action.

For example:

- **Don't** just photograph riders. **Do** take photos of spectators, officials, coaches, friends and family;
- **Don't** always shoot riders at full speed. **Do** take photos before and after riding, in warm-up, while celebrating – when riders are stopped;
- **Don't** just shoot close-ups. **Do** capture wider shots of the venue, with the riders just a small part of the overall image.

Photo: Matt Rousu

Use good lighting

Cameras perform better in well-lit conditions.

- Shoot with your back to the sun to avoid shadows on the person's face
- Organise podium presentations in daylight hours or in a well-lit area
- Generally, avoid using the built-in flash – it looks bad.

Keep steady

Adopt a solid, comfortable stance with feet shoulder-width apart and relaxed shoulders and arms. Don't stretch your arms out; hold your phone close.

Activate the shutter using the volume key or home key (depending on your phone) instead of pressing the on-screen button.

For a more advanced technique, follow a rider with your camera as they move across you from left to right or right to left. When you press the shutter, the rider will appear sharp while the background is blurred. This is called a panning shot.

Photos can tell a story by themselves, especially when they show human emotion.

Creation *(Continued)*
How can you make content?

Angles and composition

Shooting upwards from a lower angle makes athletes look more heroic and powerful.

Both portrait (vertical) and landscape (horizontal) orientation have their place. On social media, portrait is more versatile because the image fills the phone screen.

Think about the 'rule of thirds'. Instead of placing the main subject in the dead centre of frame, try putting them one-third of the way from left or right and top or bottom. This makes the image look more interesting.

How to shoot better video with your phone

You don't need an expensive camera to shoot video, either. Here's how to shoot better videos on your smartphone.

Setting up

- **Solid base:** if you can't use a tripod, keep your phone still by resting your elbows on an object
- **Hold steady:** if shooting handheld, hold the phone with two hands and close to your chest with bent, relaxed arms. Adopt a wide, stable stance and use your knees and elbows to absorb vibrations
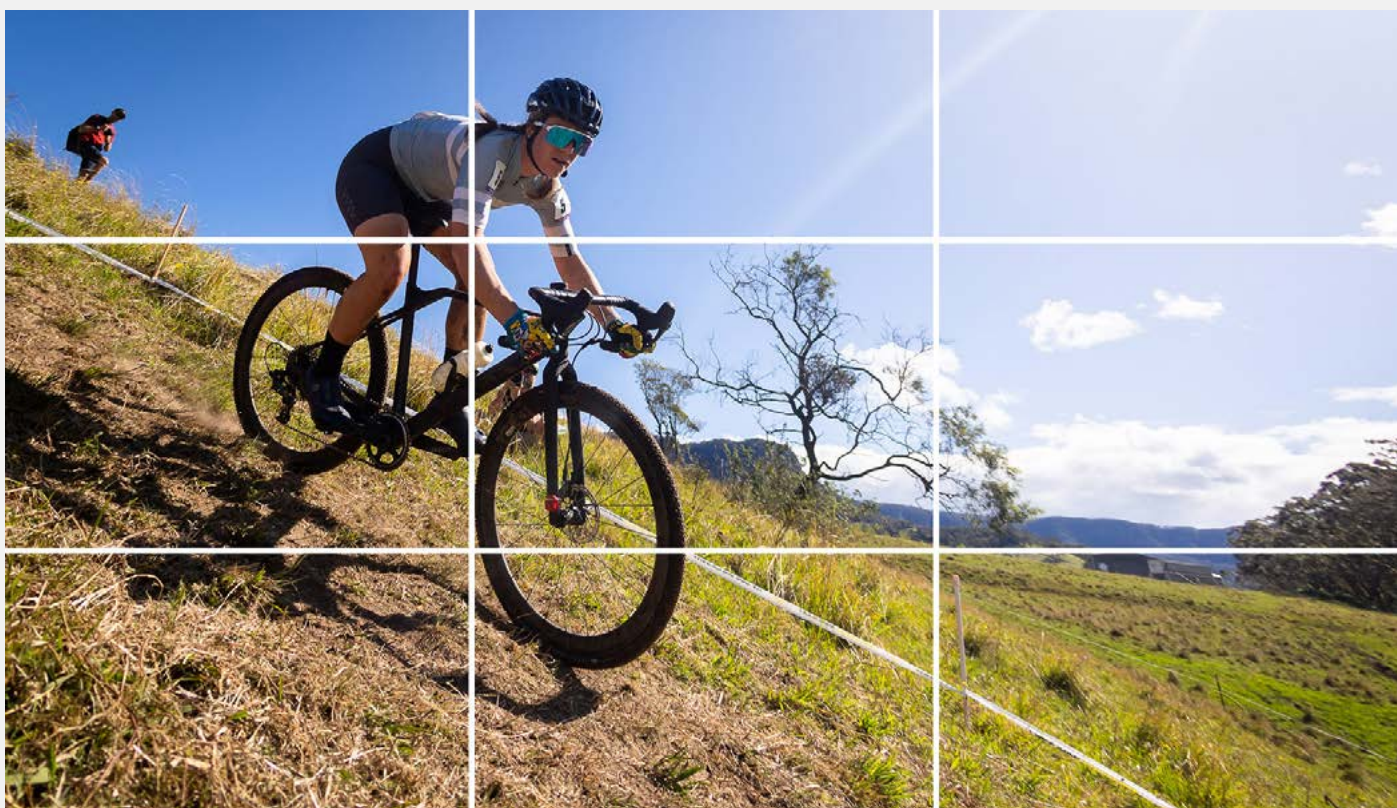
As a general guide, place your subject along the lines of an imaginary 3×3 grid, not right in the centre.

- **Portrait or landscape?** It depends on what you're filming for. For Instagram Reels and Stories, or TikTok hold your phone vertically (portrait orientation). For YouTube and broadcast news and most other purposes, hold your phone horizontally (landscape).
- **Which camera?** Use the back camera where possible. It's better quality than the front-facing camera.

Lighting

- **Soft light:** Have your subject clearly and evenly lit: the soft, natural light from an overcast day, around sunrise or sunset, or coming in from a window, is ideal;
- **Avoid shadows:** For interviews, try to avoid shadows across half your subject's face or body. This usually means avoiding direct sunlight on bright sunny days;
- **Don't shoot into the sun:** Normally, don't shoot straight into a bright light source (eg the sun), as this will cause flaring and make it unable to see your subject;
- **Exposure lock:** Once you've set up your shot, use the 'Exposure Lock' function on your phone camera to keep the camera changing the exposure midway through recording.

Video interviewing

- **Positioning:** typically, position your interview subject a little off-centre in the frame, with their shoulders facing straight towards the camera. Typical style is to have your subject look over your opposite shoulder, not look straight down the lens. You can adjust these based on the look and feel you're going for;
- **Stay quiet:** When your interviewee is answering a question, don't add your own comments (don't say "yeah", "mmm", "OK", etc);
- **Pause:** Leave a couple of seconds after an answer before asking your next question. This gives you flexibility to trim the footage in post-production.

Shooting action

- **Leave breathing room:** start recording a few seconds before the action starts and keep recording a few seconds after it finishes. You can always trim down the video in editing, but you can't add more footage. Even for brief action shots, try to record at least 4 seconds of footage;
- **Variety:** try filming different shots from different angles. High angle (standing on an object); low angle (crouching or lying on the ground). Static shots (don't move the camera), panning shots (follow the rider as they move across the frame).
- **Panning:** track a rider as they move across the screen, then stop panning and let the rider move out of shot.

Audio

- **Noise:** Record interviews out of the wind and away from noisy areas (like the PA system, a generator, or noisy crowds). Find a sheltered spot, or block the wind with your body or hand;
- **Get close:** Whatever microphone you use – a lavalier mic, shotgun mic, or your phone's built-in mic – get it as close as possible to your subject's mouth.

Photo: Matt Rousu

Creation *(Continued)*
How can you make content?

GoPros and action cameras

Action cameras (such as GoPros) can capture exciting moments from your events and races. Sprints, jumps, close calls and even crashes can make for interesting and engaging video content.

Consider investing in an action camera and camera mounts for your club, and encouraging members to use them in your events. Or, ask if your members can lend a camera for club use.

Here are some ideas for using action camera footage:

- Upload exciting moments to social media as short, standalone clips
- Add a voiceover/commentary to explain the tactics and moments in the video
- Combine with other footage and music to make a highlights reel or promo video for your club

Relax and be authentic

Your videos don't have to be polished and slick. People love watching authentic videos that reflect reality, not highly refined content. Videos that work well on social media are often raw and rough around the edges.

How to design graphics

You can use graphics on social media, to create printed posters and banners, and in many other aspects of your communications.

A free and easy way to design visual graphics is using *Canva*. To learn how to use Canva, visit their *tutorials page*.

Tips for creating good graphics:

- **Keep it visual:** use large, attention-grabbing images of humans, especially showing faces;
- **Keep text short:** avoid full sentences. Only include essential information. Bullet points are your friend;
- For printed graphics, **include** a website or QR code where people can get more information;
- **Avoid** using too many different fonts and colours. It looks mess;
- **Ensure** any sponsor logos are displayed in accordance with their brand requirements;
- **Pick** the right aspect ratio: social media platforms prefer different image dimensions. For example, an Instagram post works best as a square or a 4×5 tall rectangle, while a Facebook Event cover image should a longer rectangle;
- **Ask:** do you need a graphic at all? On social media, sometimes an attention-grabbing image is enough – you can write any information in the caption.

> **TRY THIS:**
>
> To help you get started, we've provided some editable templates in the *'Further Resources'* section. Head over there and start designing custom graphics for your club.

How to write a blog post
or news article
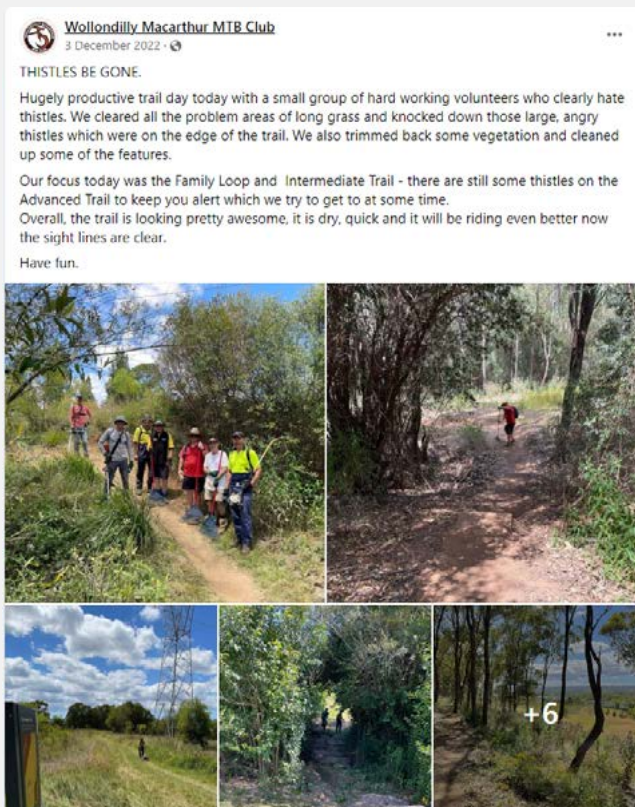
See *"How to write a media release"*.

Social media graphics don't need to be complex. This simple Facebook Event cover image has the right dimensions, includes human faces, a prominent logo, and the bare minimum of text. (Source: Dwellingup 100).

Content Examples

Wollondilly Macarthur MTB Club
– trail maintenance gallery (click here to view)

Why it's good:

- The sequence of photos and captions tell a story
- First, most prominent photo has human faces
- The captions are short and sweet
- It makes volunteering look fun and rewarding

Improve this by: filming a video version of this at your next trail maintenance day

Terrigal BMX Club – call for volunteers

Why it's good:

- Colours match the club's branding and is consistent across their Facebook page
- Graphic is simple and can be made in Canva
- Photo contains faces and bikes – you can instantly see it's about BMX racing
- Text is minimal with very large, clear font
- Clear call to action in the caption

Improve this by: trimming the caption down to four lines of text, and using a photo with more prominent faces.

Content Examples

Balmoral Cycling Club – 'entries closing'

Why it's good:

- Photo has a human face, club branding, and is easy to make with no graphic design needed
- Short and succinct caption text
- Clear calls to action with links to the entry portals

Improve this by: using a photo that also has cyclists in it, to make the context more obvious.

Click to watch

Cairns Mountain Bike Club – junior enduro Reel

Why it's good:

- Gives a behind-the-scenes insight into your club's event
- Shows kids having fun. This is appealing to parents
- Filmed on a phone – easy to execute
- Posted on the club's Instagram and Facebook page for more reach
- Good, short length

Improve this by: replacing the text ("Junior Enduro #2") with something that gives context and stays relevant long after the event, such as: "Fun day out on the Cairns trails".

Content Examples

Canberra Cycling Club – volunteer shoutout

Why it's good:

- Simple graphic template with minimal text
- Easy phone selfie showing human faces in the context of riding a bike

Improve this by: in the caption, adding line spaces between the text to improve readability. Better yet, post the text as an article on your website instead. Add a call to action where the reader can sign up to volunteer.
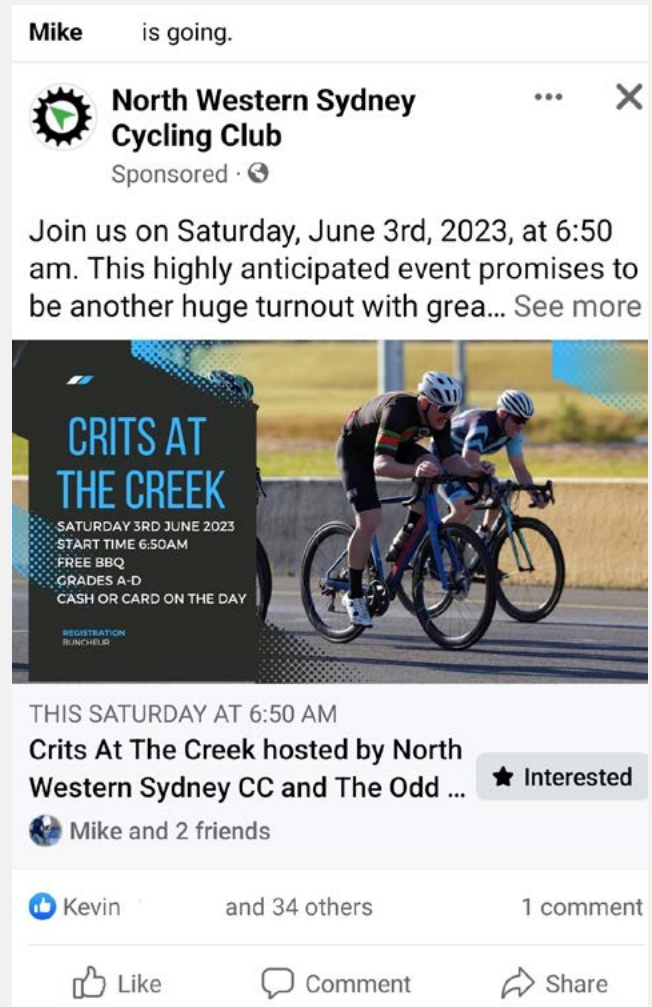
North Western Sydney Cycling Club – boosted Facebook Event

Why it's good:

- By spending some money to boost the post as a Facebook ad, it gets shown to more users
- Facebook shows your post to friends of people who click 'going'
- Simple graphic with an action shot of cyclists that catches the eye

Improve this by: trimming down some of the text in the graphic and caption

How to pitch a story to media

External media can give your communications a huge boost. If you can get your club featured in the newspaper, on radio or television, or on mainstream news websites, suddenly, lots more people are hearing about you – without costing you a cent.

Story ideas

Broadly, media will be interested in two types of content from clubs:

- **Uplifting emotional stories:** like a rider who's come back from serious injury, a volunteer who's served for 50 years, a family of three generations who are riding together, or the first member of the club to be selected to represent Australia.
- **Conflict:** sometimes a clash of interests is unavoidable, and one way to get local authorities to listen is to present your narrative to media. For example, let's say a popular MTB trail is being threatened by plans for a new housing development. Having unsuccessfully lobbied local government, your club decides to go to local media with a story about the hundreds of local families who have ridden the trail and what they say about its potential loss.

Warning: taking a dispute to local media is a significant step, so consider the ramifications before doing so. AusCycling's media team and government advocacy team are available to discuss the potential risks and benefits of this approach.

Who to contact

Try to build a good relationship with the sports editor or sports journalist from your local newspaper, radio station and TV station.

Find out what kind of stories they're looking for, and at what times of the year they'd want them. Sports journalists are always looking for local sports stories to publish, especially during quiet times of the sporting calendar, so if you have great stories to give them, it's win-win.

If you don't have an existing contact, it's still worth sending a media release or story pitch to the sports editor.

Either way, try to find out the editor's name and contact details. it's better to speak to an actual human being rather than sending your story to a generic email address.

Some more tips

- **Exclusives:** Reporting is highly competitive, so promising to provide a story to a reporter as an 'exclusive' can make it more attractive to them;
- **Availability:** Almost every reporter wants a human element, so make sure relevant club members are available to speak to a reporter, or appear in a photograph or video;
- **Get to the point:** Newsrooms are shrinking, so editors are busier than ever. Get to the heart of your story early. For example, your opening sentence might be: "One of our members was in a car accident and was told she may never walk again. On Saturday, she'll be riding in a 50km race."

TRY THIS:

Find out who are the sports reporters for your local newspapers, radio and television stations. Find their contact details and send them an email introducing yourself, asking what kind of cycling, MTB and BMX stories they may be interested in. Offer to meet for a coffee or have a phone call.

How to write a media release

A media release is a document that you send to a media outlet with the aim of getting your story in the news.

It should be written in news style, making it quick and easy for the journalist to publish it. Sometimes, they'll simply copy and paste your release as their own – an ideal outcome!

For a template media release you can use, check out the "further resources" section.

Headline

Your headline (and email subject line) should get to the heart of the story and capture the journalist's attention immediately.

Body paragraphs

Write in an 'inverted pyramid' structure. The most important details are at the top, and each successive paragraph continues the story with less and less important details.

Try to keep it brief. Most stories can be told within 12–15 paragraphs.

Quotes

Direct quotes give a human voice and perspective. It gives 'life' to the story and makes it real and emotive.

If the core of your story is about a certain person or people from your club, it's almost essential to include a quote from them, sharing their personal feelings or opinion on the subject matter.

It may also be appropriate to include a quote from the club president someone similar.

Images

Attach one or two images that the reporter could potentially run with their story.

News outlets often don't have the resources to send a photographer out to your club capture their own images.

Ideally, the photos you choose should depict any key people mentioned in the story.

Background information ('boilerplate')

Beneath your media release, include some background information that may assist your reporter with their story.

Typically, it might be some information about your club: when it was founded, what activities it conducts, and any famous riders who have come from the club.

Contact details

Include the contact details (email and phone number) of someone from the club who could provide further details or arrange an interview with the reporter.

TRY THIS:

Using the template on page 32, write a media release about one of the story ideas you brainstormed earlier in the 'Content' section. You will probably need to reach out to club members for quotes and photos. Send the media release to one or all of the sports reporters of your local newspaper, radio and/or television station.

Pitch your story to AusCycling

AusCycling is always interested in publishing great stories from clubs on our website and social media channels. We're looking for stories that:

- are relevant to a national audience;
- promote cycling's profile and popularity; and
- celebrate our heroes, history and heritage.

For example, we've recently published stories on:

- _a brain cancer survivor who rode 1,000km for charity_;
- _an outstanding BMX club president;_ and
- _a heart transplant recipient who's competing at an international level_.

If you think your story fits the bill, send your media release to us at media@auscycling.org.au. If we're interested in running your story, we'll be in touch.

Media Release Template

MEDIA RELEASE

1 May 2023

Local children to cycle 40,075km, the circumference of Earth

Next month, children from Springfield Cycling Club plan to ride a collective distance of 40,075 kilometres – equivalent to cycling around the Earth's equator.

The fifteen young riders, who are aged between 11 and 17, will need to average nearly 100km per day if they are to complete their goal in the name of combating homelessness.

Through their efforts, they aim to raise $40,075 for the Australian Homelessness Society.

One of the riders, Jackson Brown, aged 16, said he came up with the idea after learning about homelessness at school.

"I wanted to do something these school holidays to help the homeless people I see on the streets all the time," Brown said.

"My mates and I ride four or five days a week, but 40,000 kilometres will be the furthest we've ever ridden, so it's very daunting.

"I think if we ride together as a group and keep encouraging each other, we'll be able to do it."

President of Springfield Cycling Club, Catrina Clark, said, "Everyone from the club is right behind our juniors as they try to tackle this huge challenge. We're so proud that they've chosen to get behind such an important cause."

You can follow the riders' progress and donate to their fundraiser by clicking here.

Springfield Cycling Club was founded in 1985 to provide road, track and mountain bike riding opportunities in the greater Springfield region. The club runs weekly social rides and junior training from the clubhouse at 13 North Street. The club has produced professional riders such as Anthony Anderton and Bethany Black.

Contact: Catrina Clark, President, president@springfieldcyclingclub.org.au, 9876-5432

Event Communication Checklist

A checklist for marketing a club event or club program. Not all of these will be relevant to every club, but hopefully this will assist with your communications planning.

Planning

- ◯ Establish basic details such as time and date, venue, cost, how to enter
- ◯ Set goals for the event (number of participants, number of ticket sales, etc)
- ◯ Identify the target audiences for your communications
- ◯ Consider what aspects of your event will appeal to those audiences
- ◯ Plan out a timeline of social media posts (eg entries opening, 2 weeks to go, entries closing)

Marketing & Communications

- ◯ Publish event details to your website's "events" section
- ◯ Create social media graphics for the event
- ◯ Create a Facebook Event
- ◯ Publish social media posts as planned
- ◯ Send an email to club members
- ◯ Include the event in your club newsletter
- ◯ Message members about the event via WhatsApp
- ◯ Tell people in person
- ◯ Publish social media posts about different aspects of your event
- ◯ Consider creating paid Facebook ads
- ◯ Consider printing and distributing hard-copy flyers or posters

External media

- ◯ Submit your event to community noticeboards, 'What's On' listings, tourism databases, etc
- ◯ Send sponsors, members, neighbouring clubs social media graphics to share on their own platforms
- ◯ Write a media release and pitch it to local news outlets or to the AusCycling media team

Event operations

- ◯ Engage a photographer for the event
- ◯ Identify someone to capture social media content at the event (eg Instagram Stories)
- ◯ Install club and sponsor banners

Post-event

- ◯ Publish photos and other content from the event
- ◯ Collect any media clippings about your event
- ◯ View analytics from your website and social media accounts
- ◯ Compare how your event performed against your goals
- ◯ Analyse what worked and what didn't

Graphic Templates

How to use:

1. Click the template you want to use;
2. Sign in to Canva using an email address or social media account;
3. Customise the design. For example:
    a. Insert your club logo and name;
    b. Change the colours;
    c. Insert an image of your members or event;
    d. Add text;
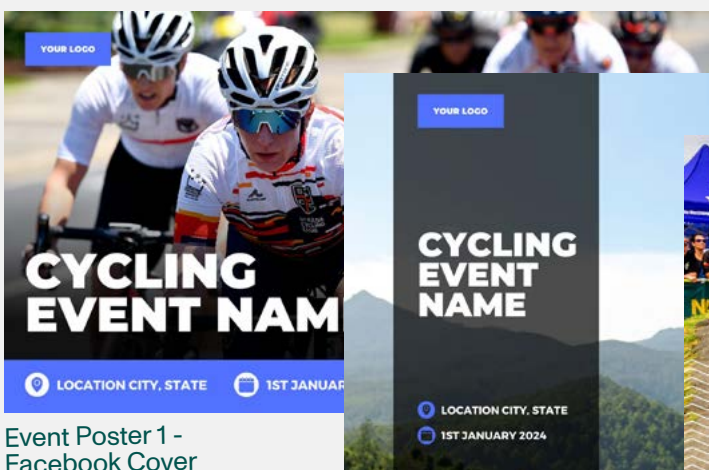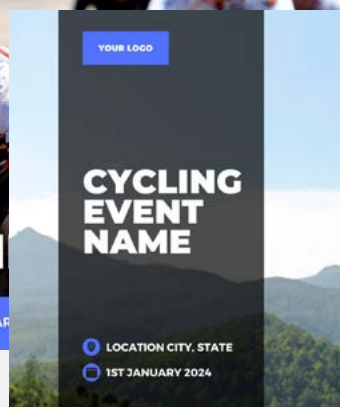4. Click 'Share' to download, share or print your design.
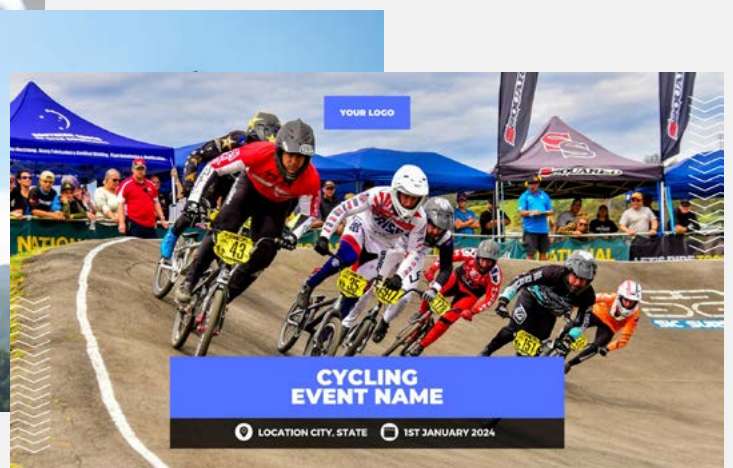

Event Poster 1 - Square
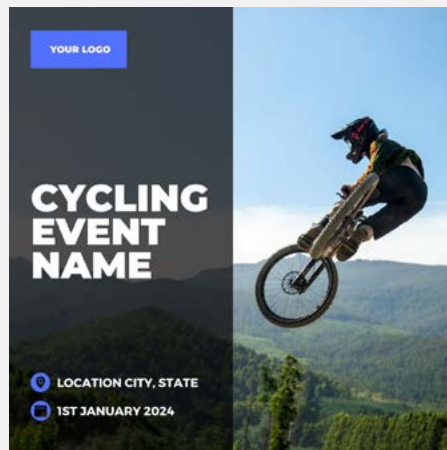
Event Poster 2 - Square
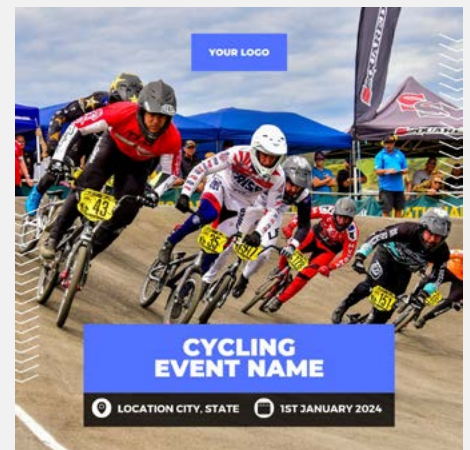
Event Poster 3 - Square

Event Poster 1 -
Facebook Cover

Event Poster 2 -
Facebook Cover

Event Poster 3 -
Facebook Cover

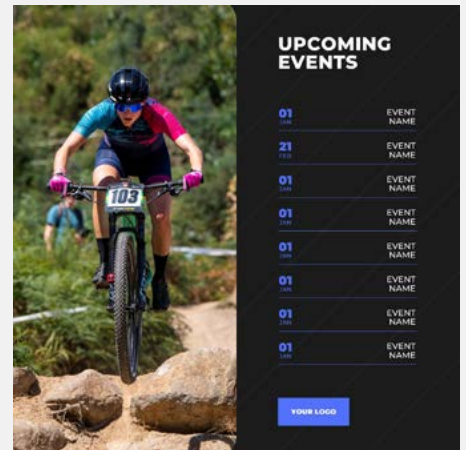Event Poster 1 - A4

Event Poster 2 - A4

Event Poster 3 - A4

Event Schedule 1

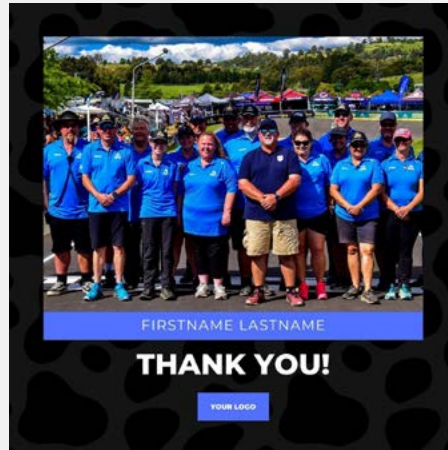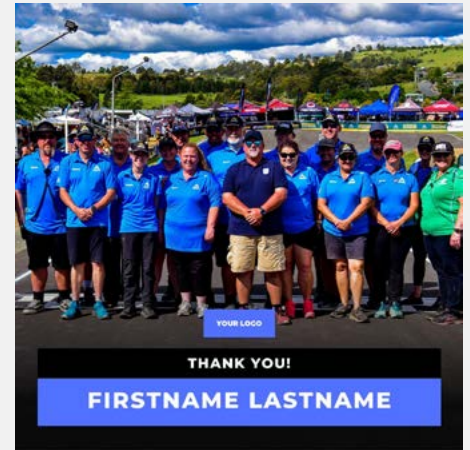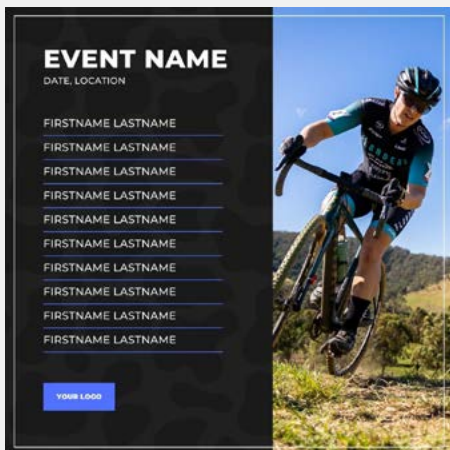Event Schedule 2

Event Schedule 3

Thank You 1

Thank You 2

Thank You 3

Rider List 1

Rider List 2

Congratulations