

agb



Social Media Audit for the **Art Gallery of Burlington**

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Introduction

Brand Biography

The Art Gallery of Burlington (AGB) is the city's primary public art gallery and one of its most vibrant and active community centres. With a staff of 30 employees, it serves as a hub for Burlington's diverse creative communities. One of Ontario's smaller regional galleries, its marketplace within the Greater Toronto Area consists of competitors ranging from the nearby Art Gallery of Hamilton and Art Gallery of Mississauga to slightly larger institutions like Toronto's Art Gallery of Ontario.

With an organizational mandate to serve a variety of local groups and individuals, the gallery hosts an extensive lineup of arts educational programming with classes in a wide range of art forms, for all ages and levels of ability. Since its foundation in 1974, the AGB has also acted as a home base for Burlington's 7 art and craft associations and guilds, including the Burlington Fine Arts Association, the Burlington Handweavers and Spinners Guild, the Latow Photographers Guild, the Burlington Potters' Guild, the Burlington Rug Hooking Craft Guild, the Burlington Guild of Sculptors and Woodcarvers, and the more recently founded Digital Arts Guild of Burlington.

In addition to housing and displaying its own extensive and important collection of ceramic works (a collection for which the gallery is known both nationally and internationally), the AGB hosts a rotating lineup of local and international exhibitions of work in a range of media, with a frequent focus on ceramics. Annual exhibitions also feature the work of guild members. The gallery's unique exhibition spaces include a Sculpture Garden, where exotic horticultural specimens grow alongside pieces from the gallery's permanent collection.

The AGB is an active member of the wider Burlington arts community and participates in many of the city's charitable initiatives. It holds fundraising events, like the "Soup Bowl To Go" event, which raises money to help support the gallery's programming. It also houses a shop that sells a unique and exclusive range of work by Canadian artists and artisans.

The gallery's facilities can also be rented by individuals or groups for private, catered functions like wedding receptions and conferences.

Audience Insight

The AGB's audiences are both variable and diverse. The gallery serves a wide spectrum of creatives (both professional and amateur) and members of the public. These audiences include children, teens, and adults attending the gallery's art education programs; curators, artists, and members of the Burlington art and craft associations and guilds who use the AGB and its spaces for workshops and exhibitions; and public visitors to the gallery's collection and exhibitions. The gallery's principal target audience consists of adults aged 25-65, diverse in gender, ethnicity, ability, and economic background. Most live in or near the city and are actively engaged in the gallery's activities. Some may be members of the guilds or art class students while others may be casual visitors to the gallery. The AGB's target audience has diverse social media needs and expectations. Here are three profiles of members of the brand's target audience, which offer some insight into that diversity:



David

- 26
- Korean Canadian
- lives in Burlington and works in a part-time administrative position at City Hall
- loves cooking and gaming; spends a lot of time online and is highly active on social media—especially Instagram and YouTube—as well as online gaming communities
- uses a wheelchair, so spaces that are physically accessible are very important to him
- regularly takes summer classes at the AGB and loves to paint in his spare time



Mark

- 65
- British Canadian
- lives in Milton; recently retired accountant; loves to travel and experiment with photography
- needs a place to practice and continue learning more about photography, his favourite pastime
- long-time member of the Latow Photographers Guild and regular participant in AGB exhibitions
- recently became more active on social media, especially Instagram (posting photos) and Facebook (he uses Messenger to keep in touch with other guild members and plan guild-related activities)
- occasionally teaches some of the photography classes at the gallery



Sarah

- 42
- Indigenous and Canadian
- lives in downtown Burlington, near the AGB, and has a 5-year-old and a new baby; works in PR and is currently on maternity leave
- needs a free, kid-friendly place to spend time during the day with easy access for a stroller
- loves to come to the gallery to browse the shop or have a coffee in the courtyard on a sunny day
- studied art in college and likes to support local artists; regularly attends AGB exhibitions and events
- highly active on social media; browses the AGB's Instagram and Facebook feeds, but prefers Instagram

Audit

Channel Overview

The AGB maintains accounts on five social media platforms—Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and YouTube—but is most active on the first three. Facebook is the primary social media channel for the brand and its target audience. The sections below provide a snapshot of the current activity on each platform, recorded on 26 January 2022: the number of followers; the date of the most recent post; the nature and consistency of the feed; and the presence (or absence) of key brand features:

Instagram

Link: www.instagram.com/artgallburl/

Followers: 4,815

Date of most recent post: 22 January 2022

Nature and consistency of feed:

The feed is consistent overall with posts consisting mainly of static images (e.g., photos of works of art or objects in the collection, or images of artists or contributors). Video content is also posted, although not as frequently as static images.

Presence of key brand features:

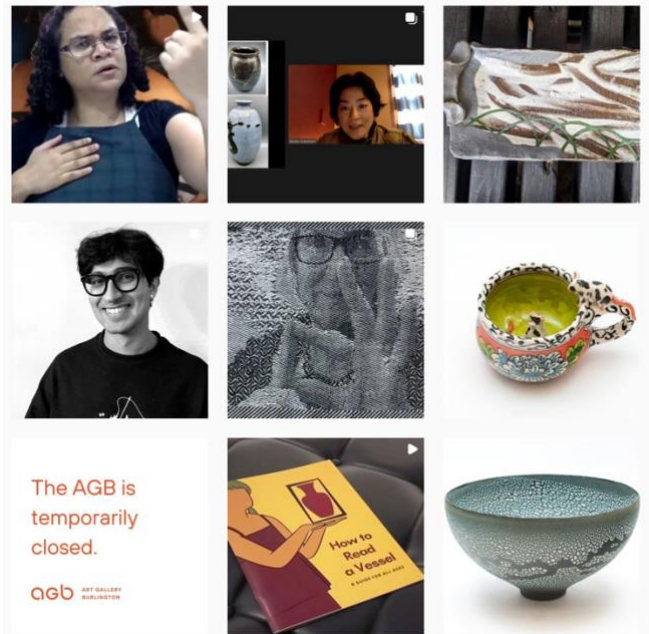
On-brand profile image (logo): The “AGB” logo appears at the top of each post, in the brand’s distinctive and recognizable orange red.

Relevant handle: The account handle “artgallburl” is suitable, given the long brand name, but perhaps not as easy to find for users searching for the gallery without knowledge of the specific name.

Effective/relevant bio: A brief and effective bio that sums up the gallery’s multiple identity as a collection, exhibition space, and arts education facility, with a linktr.ee feature and geographical address. The bio refers to “6” guilds, which may create confusion for users of other platforms where that number is stated as “7.”

Bio link: “Link in bio” feature is used occasionally, but not consistently.

Posting activity: Posts are uploaded on a regular basis (between once a week and almost daily). Posts mirror those on Facebook, with some minor variations.



facebook

Link: www.facebook.com/ArtGallBurl/

Followers: 4,900

Date of most recent post: 22 January 2022

Nature and consistency of feed:

The feed is consistent and matches closely with that of Instagram: content seems to have been posted to both platforms simultaneously, with some slight variations (the post at right, for example, which features video content, contains an embedded link to a video of the full performance; the Instagram version of the same post provides this link via the “Link in bio” feature).

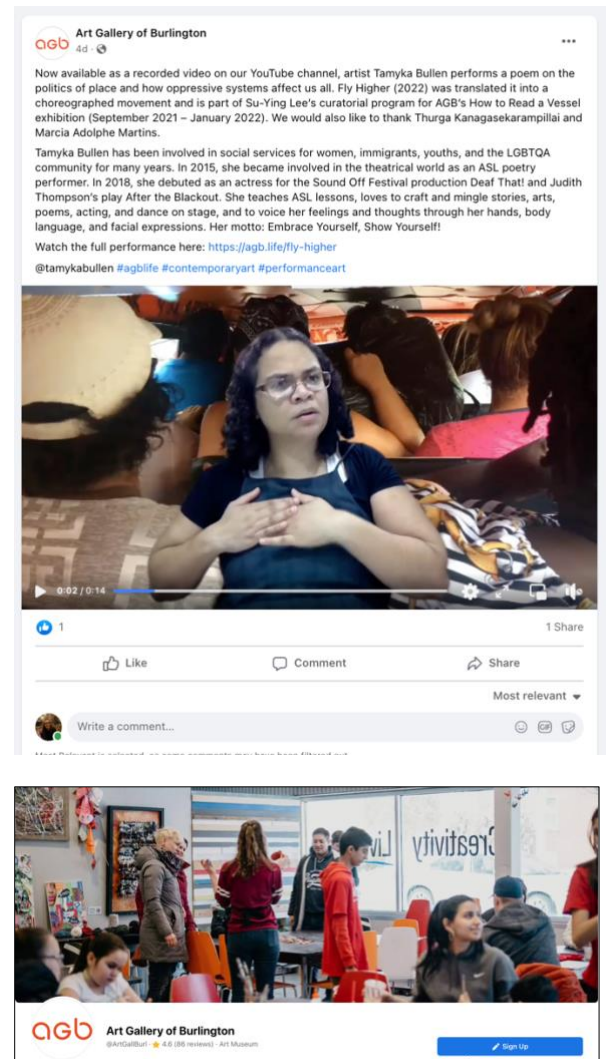
Presence of key brand features:

On-brand profile image: The profile image (right) features a group of people—diverse in age, gender, and ethnicity—engaged in a creative workshop at the gallery. It captures a good cross-section of the brand’s varied audiences. While it does not depict the target audience alone, it may appeal to members of that group interested in educational programming, either as teachers, students, or as parents with children who might participate in these programs.

Relevant handle: “Art Gallery of Burlington”. Highly relevant. The platform permits the use of the brand’s full name.

Effective/relevant bio: A detailed bio that makes full use of the available categories, with hours of operation, full contact information, and a brief description of the organization and its multi-faceted activities.

Posting activity: Posts are uploaded on a regular basis (between once a week and almost daily). Posts mirror those on Instagram, with some minor variations.





Link: <https://twitter.com/artgallburl>

Followers: 3,368

Date of most recent post: 30 November 2021

Nature and consistency of feed:

The feed is relatively consistent in terms of the type of content, with posts that focus primarily on events and activities (exhibitions, fundraising, employment opportunities) or invitations to support causes that are either directly or indirectly related to the brand's own initiatives.

Presence of key brand features:

On-brand profile image: The image (right) sends a generally brand-appropriate message (in the brand colour) but implies that the brand is more a charitable cause than an art gallery and community centre. It doesn't make particularly good use of the visual opportunity to capture the target audience. If the textual message on the shirt is the key, then—as text overlaid on an image—it's important to note that it may be problematic for accessibility (as illegible to screen readers).

Relevant handle: The handle ("Art Gallery of Burlington") is relevant and detailed. The platform allows for the full brand name.

Effective/relevant bio: The bio is a brief summary of the organization's role as home to a permanent collection and the art and craft guilds, with reference to the fact that admission is free. Not as effective as the Instagram bio.

Bio link: Includes a link to the brand's main website, which also appears in many of the posts (along with links to other relevant pages on the website). This bio identifies "7" guilds, while Instagram identifies "6."

Posting activity: Posting is frequent and occurs at regular intervals of about once a month, every few days, or daily (with heightened activity in November 2021). The feed has not received a new post since 30 November 2021.





Link: www.linkedin.com/company/artgallburl/

Followers: 825

Date of most recent post: late November 2021

Nature and consistency of feed:

The feed is limited to only a few posts, which makes sense given that this platform is intended primarily for professional development purposes and less so for marketing. Posts concern events and activities, including exhibitions, relevant seasonal/national holiday occasions, and recruitment ads. There could be some missed opportunities here in view of the potential significance of the platform to the target audience.

Presence of key brand features:

On-brand profile image: The image (right) is a vibrant, eye-catching view of an exhibition in the AGB's main exhibition space. This is definitely on-brand, but perhaps not entirely relevant to the platform and its communicative purpose or potential.

Relevant handle: The platform permits use of the brand's full name ("Art Gallery of Burlington").

Effective/relevant bio: The bio is very short, which fits with the more typical approach taken by users of this platform but doesn't provide sufficient information for anyone unfamiliar with the brand.

Bio link: Links to relevant sites are occasionally included within the posts themselves, depending upon the content (for example, one of the posts concerning an exhibition contains a link to the relevant page on the brand's website).





Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCI9QVhEQ3nddbWrOwt3wGtQ>

Subscribers: 19

Date of most recent post: 19 January 2022

Nature and consistency of feed:

The feed is quite limited, with only a few posts. Most are short videos prepared by members of staff or brand-affiliated creatives, demonstrating art techniques or craft activities under the umbrella of an “Art is Everything” initiative and an “Art Snacks” series: short videos that help viewers learn—or learn about—various skills, techniques, and art practices at home. These posts make a great use of the video medium at the core of YouTube’s communicative potential. They also fit well with the current needs of the target audience, mid-pandemic. The brand appears to be new to this platform, but there is room here to further develop and build on the promising direction of existing content, focusing on education and storytelling.

Presence of key brand features:

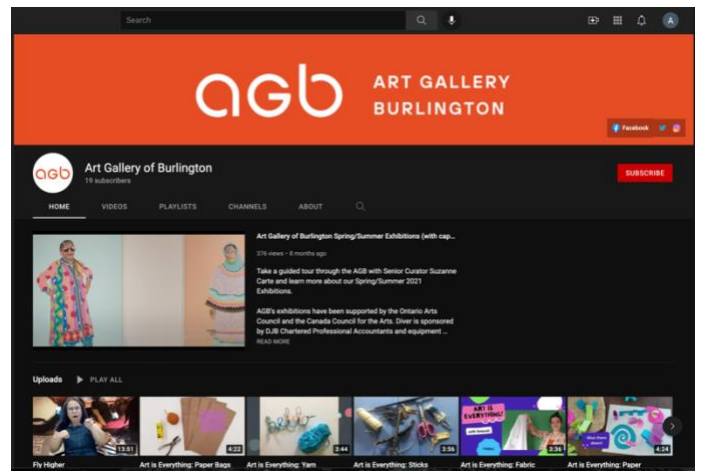
On-brand profile image: The profile image (above right) is certainly on-brand but lacks any visual appeal.

Relevant handle: The handle (“Art Gallery of Burlington”) is highly relevant. The platform permits use of the organization’s full name.

Effective/relevant bio: The bio is the same as the one produced for Instagram but identifies “7” guilds instead of “6.”

Bio link: Links are not habitually included within video descriptions.

Posting activity: Posts are few in number and sporadic in date, with a start date of 9 months ago, suggesting a limited and only very recent engagement with the platform.



Content Review

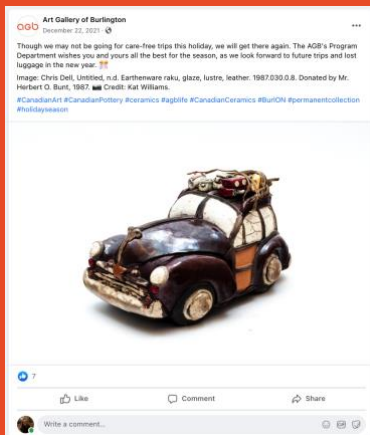
The following is an assessment of three of the most and least successful posts on the brand's primary social media channel, Facebook.

Most successful posts



Link: www.facebook.com

What works: The post makes productive use of the platform's provision for dynamic content by including a video clip that engages the viewer and draws them in. The content aligns well with the brand and the diverse nature of the target audience, with a topic about diversity that's aimed at a mature rather than a juvenile audience and is written in an engaging but straightforward prose. The post's introductory paragraph strikes a good balance between detail and concision, summing up the most important content, and fits at the top of the post, prior to the "See more" link. The longer paragraph accessed via the link includes additional relevant information. The post also includes a useful link to the complete video and relevant hashtags (a link to the website for the exhibition mentioned in the post could also perhaps have been added here). With only 1 Like, 1 Share, and no comments, its KPI rating is low, but it is also a very recent post.



Link: www.facebook.com

What works: This post makes effective use of the visual component of a Facebook post, with an eye-catching image of a fascinating ceramic object—the medium at the centre of the brand's permanent collection. The short text at the top of the post fits entirely within the space available without the need for a "See more" link. The content is highly topical and makes good use of humour to engage viewers. With a reference to the pandemic, it appeals specifically to the age groups of the target audience (old enough to drive and likely able to relate to the scenario described). Hashtags are not excessive in number and are directly relevant to the post's subject. The post also sends a positive message that links a seasonal greeting to one of the organization's key roles (as host to a permanent collection of ceramic objects). The KPI rating is low but seems to be in line with this brand's Facebook performance level more generally.



Link: www.facebook.com

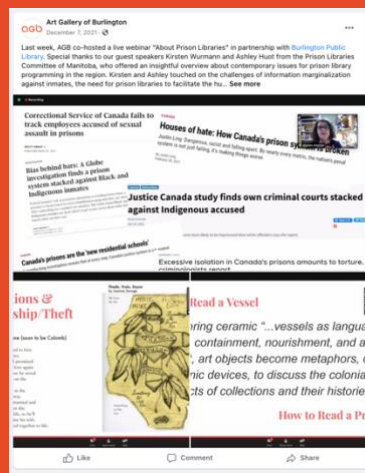
What works: With an enticing photo of interesting items for sale in the gallery's shop and a short and to-the-point text with a catchy subject line—without any need for a "See more" link—this post is right on brand and speaks directly to members of the target audience. No additional links or hashtags are necessary, and haven't been added here simply for the sake of filling the post with tangentially related content. The post focuses on the most important information: a warm invitation; the savings on offer; and the date, time, location, and opening hours. The post is topical and well-timed, posted exactly a month before Christmas when members of the target audience will be looking for seasonal gift ideas. KPIs suggest a higher than usual level of engagement with the post: 5 Likes and 2 Shares.

Least successful posts



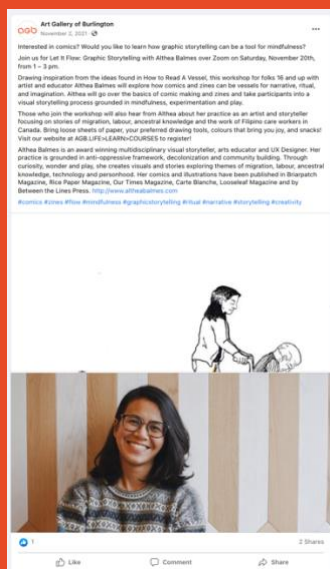
Link: www.facebook.com

What doesn't work: This had the potential to be a more successful post, with a catchy subject line and short, to-the-point invitation followed by a relevant and useful link. 6 Shares and 1 Like suggest some interest on followers' part. But the post doesn't really make any specific effort to address a particular audience, and the lack of response to the important question asked by a follower suggests the brand doesn't monitor the feed or check the comments for questions. This is a missed opportunity for the brand to engage with their audiences (including the target audience) and further establish brand trust. The commenter may have been frustrated enough by a lack of response to take their business elsewhere. The post's timing is also not the best: two weeks prior to the new year, many followers will be thinking more about the holidays than art classes.



Link: www.facebook.com

What doesn't work: This post features a cluttered and confusing still image that does little to engage the viewer or provide them with real value. The content's relationship to the brand is also not immediately clear. The text of the post continues into the "See more" link and has a lengthy and somewhat disjointed structure. It seems to have been written in haste, without much thought being given to how best to order the information or make it easy for the reader to parse. Relevant hashtags have been included, along with a link to the website related to the post's central topic. KPIs suggest no engagement with the post on followers' part, perhaps on account of the lack of any clear brand connection and/or the use of a visually bewildering image.



Link: www.facebook.com

What doesn't work: This post includes a very long text and a confusing image that seems to have been incorrectly uploaded: a combination of a photo and drawing, the drawn portion has been awkwardly cut off at the bottom edge. This is a shame, since the post opens with an enticing subject line and puts the most important information (topic, presenter, date, location) up front, and the content of the post makes some effort to speak to the target audience. The post is generally on-brand, but more could be done with the visual component to engage the viewer and reflect the textual content—and perhaps remove some of the burden placed on the lengthy text to carry the full communicative load. Hashtags are generally relevant but perhaps too many in number ("#creativity" is a little vague and probably unnecessary). KPIs are limited (1 Like and 2 Shares) but are in line with the brand's performance on this platform.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Overall Social Media Performance

The brand is making a generally effective use of its social media channels, but there is still lots of room for improvement. On Facebook—the brand’s primary social media platform (with Instagram as a close second)—posts follow a consistent pattern of topics and (in many cases) formats, which helps to generate and reinforce brand identity on the site (for example, posts featuring objects from the collection are interspersed with promotions for events in the shop, exhibition announcements and invitations, workshops and special talks, art class registration announcements, and seasonal promotions and charitable tie-ins). But there are some inconsistencies that do a disservice to the brand, both in regard to expressing a clear brand identity and adopting the best possible strategy to engage the target audience.

3 Steps to Take

To improve their social media accounts and better connect with their target audience, the brand should consider taking the following three steps:

- **Revisit the specific communicative potential of each platform, and consider what it can do for the brand:** Approach each platform as a unique tool that provides different kinds of communication opportunities. Instead of treating Facebook and Instagram as duplicate locations for the same content, consider dividing and conquering: Facebook is the more useful and logical platform for video content, which plays automatically as the viewer scrolls down the page; Instagram (although it can now host videos) does not play videos within the mosaic grid, meaning that this content loses some of its immediate impact. Instagram can act as the main portal for glamour shots of unique, eye-catching objects from the permanent collection, and presents a great opportunity to build a cohesive visual brand identity on the page. Harness the storytelling and educational power of YouTube: relatively new to the platform, the brand can expand upon its engaging video series, “Art is Everything” and “Art Snacks,” and introduce additional content that captures their target audience and encourages subscription (e.g., add a series devoted to media-specific tips and tricks from guild members). LinkedIn presents additional opportunities to engage with the target audience: consider focusing posts on content that makes sense for this platform, including employment and education.
- **Take the initiative to engage with audiences directly and continually:** The very low KPIs on Facebook (and higher ones on Instagram) suggest that the brand’s primary social media platform is not being optimized. Comments are few, perhaps partly because responses from the brand are not forthcoming. Engage with audiences by responding to Likes and Shares, to initiate a dialogue. Add social media links to the brand’s website footer, to provide audiences with a seamless connection to these channels. Maintain a regular and consistent presence on each of the brand’s platforms: the most recent post on LinkedIn dates to two months ago. Make a more active and consistent use of the “link in bio” feature, when it’s an option, and include links to relevant websites when helpful.
- **Pay attention to the details:** Check for inconsistencies of messaging across platforms (such as the number of guilds, or other differences in the bio descriptions of the brand). Create a word limit and textual template for Facebook posts, with a short introductory paragraph that fits at the top of the post and includes the most important information. Ensure that all posts incorporate accessibility features, such as Alt Text, and consider including longer Image Descriptions for posts featuring works of art. Steer clear of images or videos with text overlays that can’t be read by screen readers. Check that images are formatted correctly before posting.

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