



Marketing Case Study: Beeston Hockey Club



As England Hockey Cup winners, with thirteen adult teams and a large junior division, [Beeston Hockey Club](#) (based in Nottingham) is arguably one of the country's most successful hockey clubs on the pitch. But as all amateur clubs will know; for every goal scored, an incredible amount of hard-work and effort is put in behind-the-scenes, by the club's committee, coaches, volunteers and players alike, to keep the club running all year round.

This is certainly true for Beeston Hockey Club's marketing efforts. With over 4,000 followers on Twitter, over 2000 'likes' on Facebook, a regularly updated website, frequent visits from the local media and dozens of sponsors, the club displays a comprehensive, best-practice approach to marketing. David Griffiths, one of the club's directors, shares some top tips...

What does your role at the club entail? Which marketing channels are you responsible for?

"I'm one of the clubs directors and my role is both operational, running the day to day elements of the hockey club, and strategic, in both developing the facility and looking at ways to increase hockey participation in Nottinghamshire and the wider area. I'm also responsible for running the clubs website, Facebook and Twitter accounts."

For smaller amateur clubs trying to raise their profile, which marketing channel(s) or platform(s) would you recommend they focus on and why? (Social Media, Website, Posters & Flyers, Newsletters, Local Media, etc.)

"I would recommend other clubs to focus on having an easy to navigate and up to date website for a start. Then I would recommend they use Facebook and Twitter to promote the news stories they publish on their websites. This season we have introduced a newsletter which collates all the news stories we have published that week in to an email - this is a good way to engage people who are not on Facebook or Twitter. We have over 1000 people subscribed to our newsletter."

Your club has an impressive number of followers on Twitter. What group(s) are you targeting through this platform?

"We look to target everyone. It's not just the younger generation who are using social media nowadays."

What's your recipe for an interesting / eye-catching Tweet?

As they say, "a picture paints a thousand words", and that is the key to an eye catching post. A good story alongside a powerful image always creates good impact. We've also found that videos are even more powerful and we'll be starting to do more and more on that front. With so many sports competing for TV exposure why not create your own TV channel on YouTube? We're introducing our very own Beeston Broadcasting Channel (BeeBC) in the next couple of weeks!"

What are the main benefits to your club from being active on Facebook and Twitter?

"It's all about promoting the club in a good light and hopefully getting more people involved in the sport. Whether that's getting someone new in to hockey, getting someone back in to the sport who may not have played it for a while for whatever reason or building a fan base of people who can come and support our teams. England Hockey have a programme called 'Back2Hockey' but we use the hashtag #Back2Beeston!"

People often say that Social Media is risky as you cannot control what members of the public post. Has your club ever experienced any negative attention on Social Media? What would your approach be if this happens?

"People complain about things if they are not happy about something. We find the best way to deal with a 'rant' is to listen, find the cause of the issue and fix it."



What would your top piece of advice be to amateur sports clubs looking to promote their club using Social Media?

"Think outside the box and look at what other clubs are posting. We look at other sports for inspiration too - if Manchester United are doing something fun and engaging on Twitter or Facebook there's no reason you can't apply that to your sport and club too."

Looking at your club's website, we can see you frequently gain coverage from local television and radio shows. How do you attract the local media's attention? What benefits does the coverage bring to your club?

"I searched for all the local press contacts email addresses in the area - Regional TV, local TV, local radio, newspapers etc. and I email them our newsletter every week. If they see the teams doing well or an interesting news item they think their viewers, listeners or readers might be interested in they get in touch and we run a story. This gives us publicity on a much broader scale than our social media followers and usually increases our own following."

What has your proudest 'marketing achievement' been and why?

"It was only a few weeks ago actually, we ran a daft story about some new green sweatshirts which our coaches and managers are wearing this season and linked it to the famous green sweatshirt that local Nottingham Forest legend, Brian Clough, used to wear on the sidelines of the City Ground. The phone rang the next day and it was BBC Radio Nottingham who wanted to do an interview about the story! We sent Great Britain international, Ollie Willars, (a Forest fan) to the studio and he did a fantastic 6 minute interview on prime time breakfast radio!

For me, it was fascinating to understand that the majority of their listeners were actually not interested on how well Beeston were doing in the league this season but were more interested about a lighthearted and easy to listen to interview about some green sweatshirts."

Thank-you very much to David Griffiths from [Beeston Hockey Club](#) for taking the time to answer our questions!