

Make the most of your Membership with The Local Offer

January 2017

The importance of a good Provider Profile page

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Make the most of your membership package

The importance of a good Provider Profile page

Content is key. Making sure all sections of the registration form are completed is essential. The common failing is that specialist & targeted services offer too little information, assuming that other people know what they do, or that visitors to the site will leap-frog straight onto their own website.

Add detail of what services you offer, and address the audience directly, with a welcoming introduction and friendly yet professional style. If you have a series of separate services, detail these in priority order.

Make sure all your **social media links are functioning** and up to date and send over information about new social media links as you develop your SM platforms.

Remember to **add all relevant search categories**, as that helps visitors find your service. Also ensure that you regularly review what local authorities you are shown in, if you expand your reach or gain new clients.

Engage on Social Media

The Local Offer uses the following social media platforms:

Twitter	@hmstack & @thelocaloffer
LinkedIn	group page and company page
Facebook	The Local Offer page
Google+	HM Stack and The Local Offer

Active links to these can be found on the website or they can be found via a simple google search.

- How many of these are you currently engaged with?
- Do your RT comment on Twitter, or share on LinkedIn or Like on FB?
- Do you add comment, or content, or add visitor posts on FB?

The more you engage, the more opportunities there are to expand the reach of your key messages.

Sometimes that might be casual comment, and at others, active promotions for forthcoming events, training or other news you want to share.

Twitter offer lovely tweet analytics that show your best performing tweets including their engagement and reach and precisely who has engaged at what level. The Local Offer tweets daily about the services it interacts with, either face to face in a business context, or in the virtual world, with some tweets generating a huge engagement and reach. See each of these mentions as opportunities to expand your network and reach more potential customers as well as improving the lives of so many more children and young people with SEND.

Add content to the site

Site stats are checked regularly and often daily. Information is checked on the 1st of each month against the following categories, which include –

1. Unique visitors
2. Pages visited
3. Numbers of visits, pages, and hits on a daily basis
4. Top 10 downloads on the site
5. Top 25 most viewed pages on the site
6. Connect to site from – direct address and links from external pages
7. Top 10 search key phrases

There is a google analytics account for the site, but the stats I reference daily are those by the web host.

There are multiple ways of measuring engagement, but the areas of interest to The Local Offer are –

- Are visitors accessing the content on the site, and if so, what content appeals?
- Are visitors using the Provider Search features?
- What Provider Profile pages are being viewed?
- Who is making links to the site and what traffic does that drive to The Local Offer?

Appreciating there are far more sophisticated social media policies, nevertheless, these simple checks give information to show that -

1. Providers who engage with the site, add content, update their profiles at least termly, and have social media links on their page, gain the most views
2. Those Providers with content, case-studies of FAQs about pages, consistently feature in the top 25 pages on the site
3. Engagement on Twitter and Facebook alone, with good content (not advertorial) can reach thousands of views/impressions very quickly.

Do you have articles you have written for magazines, or for your own website, or a blog post? If these are free to share, pass them on to The Local Offer and they can be added to your Provider Profile page, or under Providers/Provider articles and case-studies.

Promote events

The News and Events page of the site is currently under-used and I am appealing to all Providers registered on the site to make use of this free advertising service, otherwise the page will be removed.

If you have a networking or training event you wish to promote, or news of any kind that's relevant to your audience and The Local Offer, send it over for inclusion under News and Events. To make life easier on this side, if you title your email – TLO Content – and then give your header, I will know that you wish this to be added to the site. No other request is needed, to make life as simple as possible.

Often, newsletters come through from many Providers to either the info@thelocaloffer.co.uk or my direct email address that clearly show new and exciting ventures afoot, but unless there is a request to add this to the site, as part of the membership package you have with TLO, it will not be used on the site.

Make the most of your membership package

Each subscription level has a set of fixed benefits, which are set out on the site under Membership/Membership Subscriptions.

For instance, Silver level membership @ £675 for the year offers the following –

Fixed Benefits:

1. Display box containing key information that pops up on the Road Map
2. Unique Provider Profile page
3. Local Authority coverage in up to 25 local authorities
4. Use of The Local Offer logo on your website and publicity material and social media platforms
5. Reciprocal web-site links to drive traffic to both sites and show your service is part of The Local Offer (specific to this social enterprise) but also part of the wider local offer
6. Allocation of 2 hours' consultancy support at a value of £220 for service development or as chosen
7. Social media promotions, including paid pro-active promotions as well as reciprocal exchanges to promote events on the site
8. Opportunities to submit content on the site, case-studies and articles

Ad hoc benefits

- Occasional offers of free or discounted places to national conferences and events
- Inclusion in specialist trade magazines, according to theme, by invite of H Stack
- Reference in key note lectures and presentations where appropriate, delivered by H Stack
- Up to date content, news articles, policy updates, added to the social media outlets
- Opportunities to meet in person, networking opportunities and utilise inclusive consultancy support
- Email contact as needed with response time typically within 48 hours or sooner
- Inclusion in a social enterprise that is supporting parents, carers, young people and schools to manage and respond to daily challenges, and all aspects of SEND provision, policy and practice

Final Comments

Check whether you are making the most of your membership package. How many of the benefits (a) are you aware of, and (b) are you actively making the most of?

It is always disheartening to promote via social media Provider Services only to find the service does not reply, or share, or show an awareness that their service is being shared via social media. That is not always necessary, but engagement leads to more natural links and interaction.

Your support and membership is crucial to the maintenance of the social enterprise and the service. However, if membership is not right for you, it is always possible to retain your service on the site under the Simple Free Registration scheme. This limits your coverage to one local authority, based on post-code and does not confer any membership benefits, but does give an additional web platform.

Heather Stack

Founder, The Local Offer

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