

Managing Social Media Content During a Global Crisis: Interview With Ben Read, Social Media Manager at World in Motion

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In 2020, nations around the world quickly became engulfed in a crisis with the announcement that the COVID-19 virus had mushroomed to the point that it had become a pandemic. Subsequent to national government attempts to curtail the spread of the virus, there was an immediate impact on the sport industry. For sporting organizations, there was a cessation of competition and a lockdown for all those in the industry. In the absence of live sport, social media producers have been required to think outside of their normal content avenues to create posts that will engage their followers. Sport agency World in Motion—active in soccer, rugby, golf, boxing, and cricket—is an avid user of social media by way of engaging with clients and sports fans alike. As a result of the COVID-19 crisis, there have been significant changes to the focus of the company’s social media output.

Ben Read, the organization’s social media manager, is responsible for the design and dissemination of information through various platforms, notably, Twitter (8,715 followers) and Instagram (2,251 followers). Read has been employed at World in Motion since May 2019. Prior to this, Read was an account manager at Rockford Components and completed a psychology degree in 2017. From 2014 to 2017, while at university, Ben was also an event manager for the university student union, where he honed his social media skills. This interview provides background to the customary aspects of Read’s role, including content creation and connecting with clients and sports fans. The interview then focuses on how Read’s approach to social media has changed in light of the global crisis, based principally around the cessation of live sport and the company’s wish to provide relevant and useful social media content.

Mountifield and Sharpe: What is World in Motion? What is your role? What do you do on a day-to-day basis?

Read: We are a global sports management agency operating across football, rugby, golf, boxing, and cricket. Some of our clients include Premier League and international footballers, international rugby players, and champion boxers from

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Ben Read — Social media manager at World in Motion.

all over the world. As social media and database manager, I am solely responsible for the online presence of the company through our various social media channels as well as our website. My main goal is to make sure that our athletes are promoted in a professional and engaging manner through our social media channels, highlighting their personal achievements and displaying the vast array of client talent that we have as an agency. I do this by creating our own unique video and image content, running campaigns and competitions, recording podcasts, and reposting relevant content from other sources. Other day-to-day tasks include the general management and maintenance of the channels, such as replying to direct messages and creating Instagram story highlights.

Mountifield and Sharpe: What platforms do you use, and how do you focus the message you want to convey? Is the process strategically oriented? How do you ensure that the branding and message are consistent?

Read: Our two main social media channels are Instagram and Twitter; however, just recently we created a “World in Motion TV” YouTube channel, which we have very exciting plans for. Due to the nature of the platforms themselves, we use our Instagram and Twitter channels slightly differently. We think of our Instagram page as a “shop window,” where users can navigate to our page and instantly get an idea of who we are, what we do, and who we represent by means of short video clips, eye-catching graphics, and longer IGTV (Instagram TV) videos. On the other hand, our Twitter channel is used more as an update platform, especially on match/event days. This is where users can get a deeper insight into World in Motion and our clients, posting client updates that range from a penalty save in League Two or a goal in the Premier League to round-by-round updates in championship boxing matches and action from the first tee of a golf tournament.