

TRENDS REPORT

INDIGENOUS RELATIONS EDITION

2023



2023 TRENDS REPORT

We've worked with numerous Indigenous communities at 50th Parallel Public Relations. During these collaborations, we've noted trends and best practices that support engagement, culture revitalization and growth for these communities. For 2023, what we've observed is ongoing in-person gatherings strengthening communities, the public support of Indigenous social issues, a continued push for purpose-driven business initiatives and ensuring all community members have the opportunity to connect and engage.

Our society is made up of a vibrant and diverse mix of cultures and lived experiences, but among this diversity is something that remains constant: the need for social interactions, community and a sense of belonging. This is especially so in Indigenous culture. Through community, these groups flourish and wisdom is shared, paving the way for a future rooted in cultural pride and empowerment. The overarching theme of the past year is strengthening community, fostering an engaging and welcoming environment.

Read these insights from the 50th Parallel Public Relations team for exclusive communications tips from our experience working with Indigenous communities. Please be aware that this report contains material that some individuals may find triggering or distressing.

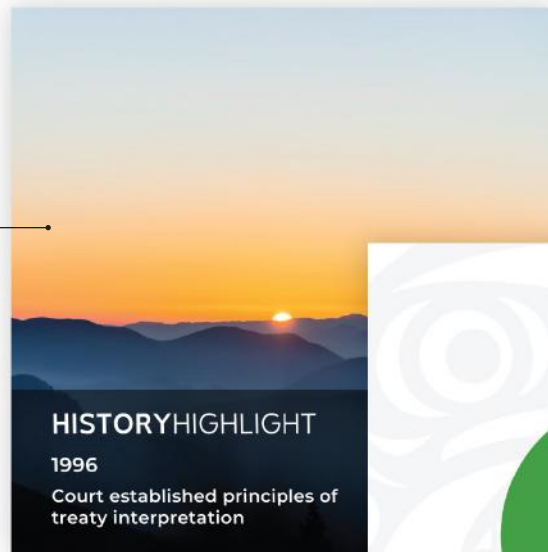
01

EDUCATIONAL CONTENT THAT PROMOTES FUN AND LEARNING

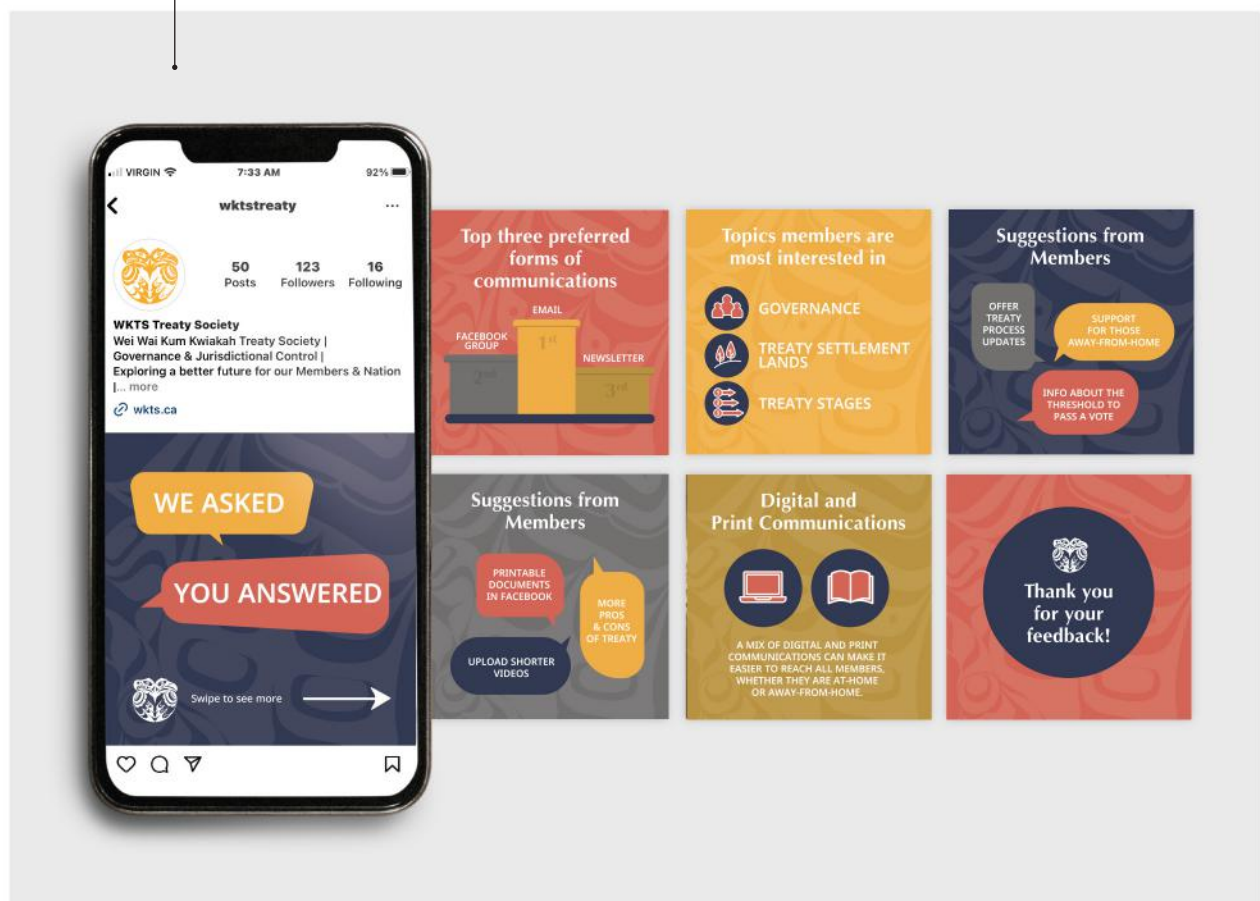
The focus of many of our clients is getting the big messages out and ensuring their members are educated and informed. Sounds simple enough, but the caveat here is making sure this information sticks. The goal is here to create content that is both engaging and memorable. Posts that are educational and entertaining utilize cohesive branding, consistent messaging, recognizable designs and interesting visuals to make the mundane feel fun.

Furthermore, educational content increases motivation and stimulates curiosity. By breaking down seemingly complicated concepts into easy-to-understand pieces, the reader has the ability to read and learn at their own pace. Creating a recurring theme, such as topic terminology, “Did You Know?” segments or history fun facts establishes familiarity for readers. These “edutainment”-style posts, when done well, will be something they look forward to.

Te'mexw Treaty Association
Sample of education-based posts for social media



Wei Wai Kum Kwiakah Treaty Society
Sample of education-based posts for social media



02

IN-PERSON GATHERINGS TO FOSTER STORYTELLING AND LEARNING

The power of community holds a deep and profound significance in Indigenous culture; it is the heartbeat that sustains cultural identity, traditions and ancestral wisdom. It serves as a collective support system, nurturing and empowering individuals within a web of kinship and interconnectedness. Community is a vessel for passing down oral histories, sacred ceremonies and traditional knowledge from one generation to the next.

Community gatherings are commonplace and often used to disseminate information to members and the public and we've provided a number of different ways to increase engagement with members. Games and contests, such as a spin-and-win, encourages participation, while providing an opportunity for education and information sharing. We've also designed a number of print materials for our clients, which often are handed out or available to participants at these gatherings. Lastly, sharing a meal is a great way to engage with others, creating a relaxed and inclusive environment that fosters connection and bonding.

Many First Nations and Indigenous communities have also utilized modern technology to offer a hybrid format, allowing members to attend however they feel comfortable. Whether for an announcement, community meeting or celebration, First Nations and Indigenous communities utilize this format to reach their at-home and away-from-home members, as well as the wider community, creating a sense of belonging and establishing a collective identity.

Te'mexw Treaty Association
Nation BBQ handouts, prints and games





Te'mexw Treaty Association

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSES

FEBRUARY 2023

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

MARCH 2023

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

APRIL 2023

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

In-person (drop-in)

February 25 | 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Songhees Wellness Centre, Victoria

March 2 | 4:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Edward Milne Community School, Sooke

March 4 | 11:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
The Quarterdeck, Royal Roads University, Colwood

March 6 | 4:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Nanoose Bay Community Centre, Nanoose

March 7 | 4:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
George Jay Elementary School, Victoria

March 11 | 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Shawnigan Lake Community Hall, Shawnigan Lake

March 15 | 4:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Metchosin Community Hall, Victoria

Virtual (pre-registration required)

April 5 | 2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

April 13 | 6:00 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.

Register for the virtual events by emailing temexw.treaty@gov.bc.ca



Te'mexw Treaty Association
Public open houses event poster



03

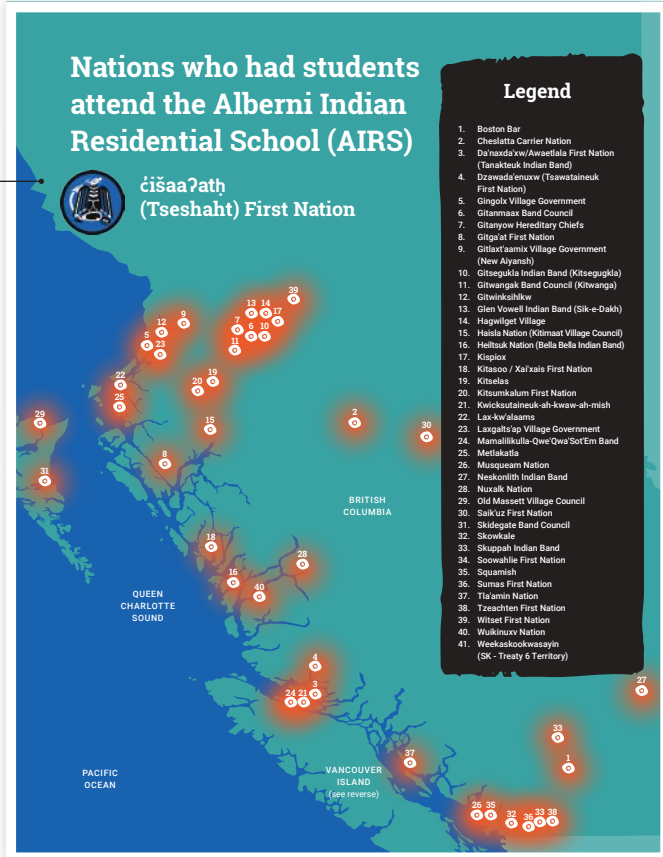
PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR SOCIAL ISSUES IS #TRENDING

There has been a remarkable rise in public support for Indigenous social issues. Increased awareness and education about the historical injustices and ongoing challenges faced by Indigenous peoples have played a significant role. Through the efforts of Indigenous activists, community leaders and cultural movements, the public has gained a deeper understanding of the need for justice, equality and reconciliation.

Furthermore, widespread social media use and digital activism have provided a platform for Indigenous voices to be heard and shared, mobilizing public opinion and inspiring action. Having a clear position on these social justice issues, from Truth and Reconciliation Commission's calls to action to the numerous announcements across the country of unmarked graves near residential schools, signals a growing recognition of the importance of reconciliation.

Talking about these issues through various communications channels keeps the conversation at the forefront, reminding the community of what happened, of current affairs and where we're headed. Furthermore, understanding Indigenous history and keeping these issues at the forefront of our everyday discussions makes organizations and individuals better equipped to not only address but help to dismantle the systemic barriers affecting Indigenous peoples.

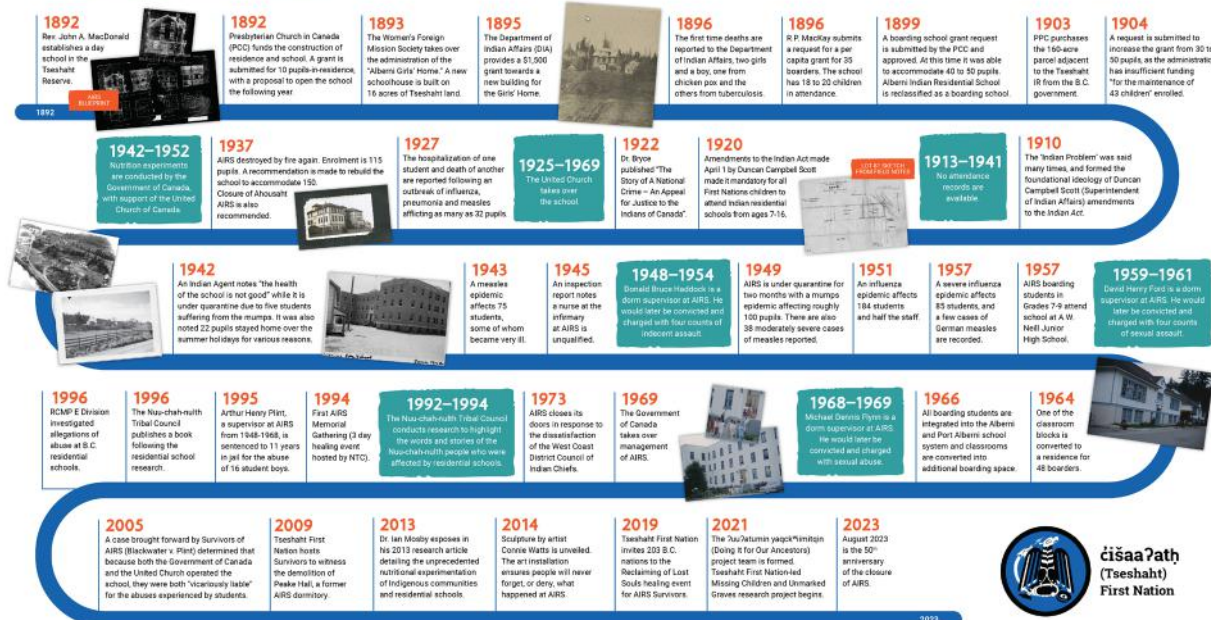
Tseshaht First Nation
AIRS map infographic



Tseshaht First Nation
AIRS timeline infographic

wikáʕin ḥasiik (We are not done)

Alberni Indian Residential School (AIRS) | 1892 – 2023



04

PURPOSE-DRIVEN ORGANIZATIONS ARE REFLECTING SOCIETAL VALUES

While not a new concept, more businesses have committed to being purpose-driven, meaning they have a purpose or statement that guides their strategy and decision-making. For many organizations, part of this purpose-driven strategy is supporting reconciliation. There are many ways businesses can effect change toward reconciling with First Nations and Indigenous communities:

- Advocating for the Indigenous revitalization of traditions and culture in your work, with the input of Indigenous people wherever possible.
- Reviewing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 10 Principles of Reconciliation and its 94 Calls to Action.
- Researching how residential schools have impacted local Indigenous communities.
- Learning about and listening to the stories of survivors and Indigenous peoples.
- Having equitable hiring practices.
- Creating opportunities and space for your organization to acknowledge and reflect on Indigenous issues.
- Partnering with Indigenous-owned or focused businesses.
- Crafting a territorial acknowledgement to use in email signatures and in the footer of a website.

In doing so, an organization shows solidarity with First Nations and Indigenous communities, while also encouraging others to do the same.

50th Parallel

Social media posts for National Day
for Truth and Reconciliation



Sid Williams Theatre Society

Social media post for
Indigenous Peoples Day

05

MEDIA GETS STORIES TO THE MASSES

The media has played a very important role in effectively disseminating information about Indigenous issues and stories. From protecting old growth forests and protesting energy projects to the shocking discovery of unmarked graves on former residential school grounds across the country, media outlets were a key aspect in telling these stories on a national, and sometimes global, scale.

Many organizations see the benefits of effective media relations in elevating the voices of those that may not have previously been heard. At 50th, we've had many clients reach out and ask for assistance and training with their media relations endeavours over the past year. Effective media relations come in various forms and no one size fits all. Depending on the message, it may be as simple as a press release or as complex as a conference event. Support can also come in the form of a strategy or spokesperson training.

British Columbia

17 potential unmarked graves scanned at former Vancouver Island residential school, First Nation says



The Tseshaht Nation says it also found historical records showing 67 children died at the school

CBC News · Posted: Feb 21, 2023 1:00 AM PST | Last Updated: February 21



The Tseshaht First Nation says a preliminary scan of the former site of the Alberni Indian Residential School has revealed 17 potential unmarked graves. It also says its historical research found records of 67 children who died over the seven decades the school was open. (Claire Palmer/CBC)

WARNING: This story contains distressing details.

A First Nation on Vancouver Island has released the preliminary results of a scan of the site of the Alberni Indian Residential School, which it says has revealed 17 potential unmarked graves.

The Tseshaht First Nation also says its historical research found records showing 67 students died over the seven decades the school was open.

The nation made the announcement Tuesday in a community gym that was once part of the residential school complex on Tseshaht land near Port Alberni, B.C.

At a ceremony before the announcement, Tseshaht women carried blankets filled with teddy bears wearing orange shirts. Sixty-seven of the bears were placed on the floor, all on blankets.



Tseshaht First Nation

AIRS digital and print media report samples



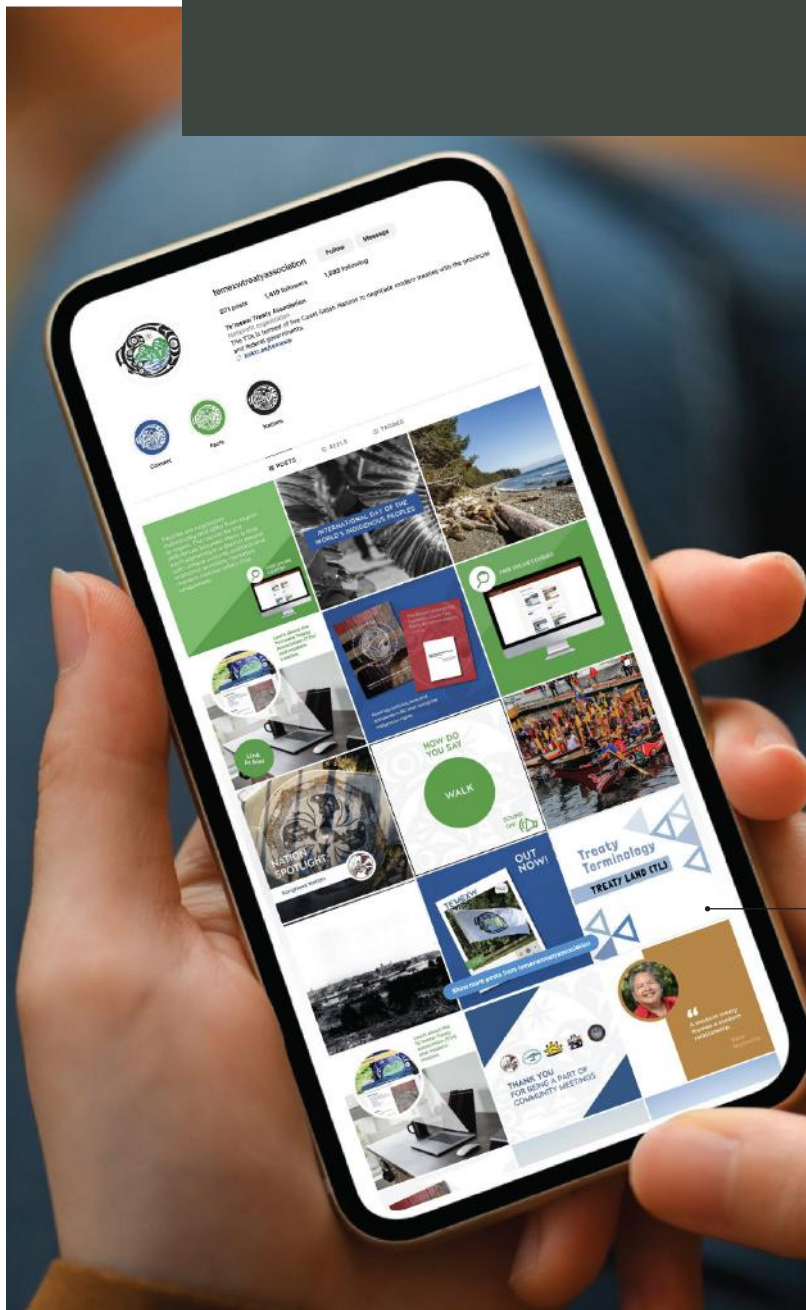


SOCIAL MEDIA IS THE KEY TO AN INFORMED YOUTH

Much work being done today negotiating treaties, initiating statements of claim and establishing new business partners to support First Nation economic development, is to support future generations. But, communicating with youth while keeping them engaged and informed is an important, but sometimes difficult, task. This is where utilizing social media is key. Reels are an easy way to grab the attention of today's youth as 69% of Canadian teens are on Instagram and 55% of them are on TikTok. Short videos with eye-catching visuals and catchy tunes are the goal here, ensuring the message is brief yet impactful. Adding closed captioning to these videos widens the audience, making these videos accessible to more people.

These videos are an effective tool for internal use, informing youth about upcoming events and meetings or learning more about their Nation, such as treaty negotiations. Furthermore, Gen Z has a desire to make a difference in the world. Appealing to this desire through reels with bold, purpose-driven calls to action means the content will receive higher and more meaningful engagement.

69% OF CANADIAN
TEENS ARE ON
INSTAGRAM AND **55%** OF
THEM ARE ON TIKTOK



Te'mexw Treaty Association
Sample of social media Instagram feed



A MIX OF ANALOG AND DIGITAL TO MAKE IT EASY TO CONNECT

Not all First Nations members live at-home (on reserve). Many live away-from-home, so making sure they have access to all of the same information and the ability to connect is important. Modern technology allows us to use a wide variety of mediums to reach out to audiences. Members want to be informed and stay informed, be it through email, social media, newsletters, e-blasts or hybrid format events, whether they are at-home or away-from-home.

QR codes are an effective way to bridge print and digital materials and communications. They're simple to make and can easily fit within the final design. We've seen success with QR codes in a number of our print materials. For example, an ad in a local newspaper can have a QR code that takes the user to the client's website or a specific web page. A QR code can be added to the bottom of paper copies of a survey for those who would rather fill out the questionnaire online and on-the-go.

Surveys collected in numerous First Nations communities have shown that members like to receive information in a variety of formats and age isn't always a factor. Sharing across a broad range of mediums is easily done by creating a streamlined process to tailor information to a variety of platforms and formats. Pieces of a newsletter can be sent out as an e-blast with a link to a website, posted to social media channels or printed and mailed to members. Establishing multi-channel systems ensures the information gets out into the community effectively.

Te'mexw Treaty Association
Newspaper print ads with QR
code link

DID YOU KNOW?

Te'mexw Treaty negotiations include land discussions.

The Te'mexw Treaty Association is negotiating treaties for each of the five member Nations. Upon ratification of these treaties, each Nation would gain ownership of its Treaty Lands.

Privately held lands are not considered in negotiations. Lands included in negotiations are provincial and federal crown lands.



Scan the QR code to see the proposed Treaty Lands for these five Nations.








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Wei Wai Kum Kwiakah Treaty Society
Printed survey with a QR code link to
the digital version

Communications Survey

Please share your insights to help Wei Wai Kum Kwiakah Treaty Society (WKTS) improve communications. This survey should take less than 5 minutes to complete.



**Wei Wai Kum Kwiakah
TREATY SOCIETY**

This survey is for members only. Please select which Nation you are from.

☐ Wei Wai Kum First Nation
 ☐ Kwiakah First Nation

Want to receive news and updates about treaty? Please leave your name & email address.

Name _____ Email _____

How do you currently receive communications from WKTS? (Select all that apply.)

☐ Mailout ☐ Email ☐ Talking to other members
☐ Newsletter ☐ Private Facebook Group ☐ Other (please specify) _____
☐ Phone ☐ Website
☐ Community Meetings ☐ Members Only Website Portal _____

How do you prefer to receive information from WKTS? (Select all that apply.)

☐ Mailout ☐ Private Facebook Group ☐ Talking to other members
☐ Newsletter ☐ Instagram ☐ Other (please specify) _____
☐ Phone ☐ YouTube Channel
☐ Community Meetings ☐ Website
☐ Email ☐ Members Only Website Portal _____

What topics would you like to receive more information about? (Select all that apply.)


☐ Governance ☐ Treaty Settlement Lands ☐ Other (please specify) _____
☐ Taxation ☐ Treaty Stages
☐ Eligibility & Enrollment ☐ Ethnohistory
☐ Fisheries & Oceans ☐ Open Houses

What would make community meetings more useful to you? (Select all that apply.)

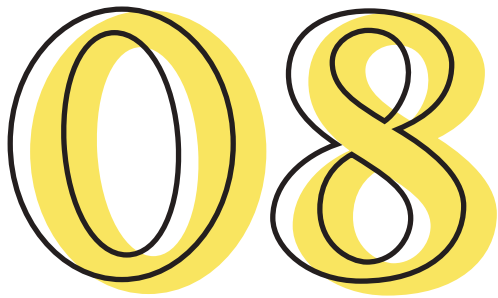
☐ Meeting packages ☐ Breakout groups (small working groups of community members)
☐ Access to information (agendas/topics for discussion) before the meetings ☐ Access to meeting materials after the meeting (recordings, meeting minutes)
☐ More time for questions
☐ More time with presenters

What would make the WKTS Private Facebook Group more useful to you? (Select all that apply.)

☐ Information about WKTS and treaty updates ☐ It is fine as it is
☐ Detailed information about meeting materials ☐ I don't use Facebook
☐ Facebook live (live stream events and meetings) ☐ Other (please specify) _____
☐ Videos of community meetings
☐ Photos from members
☐ Videos from members
☐ More photos/video overall
☐ Update the information more often



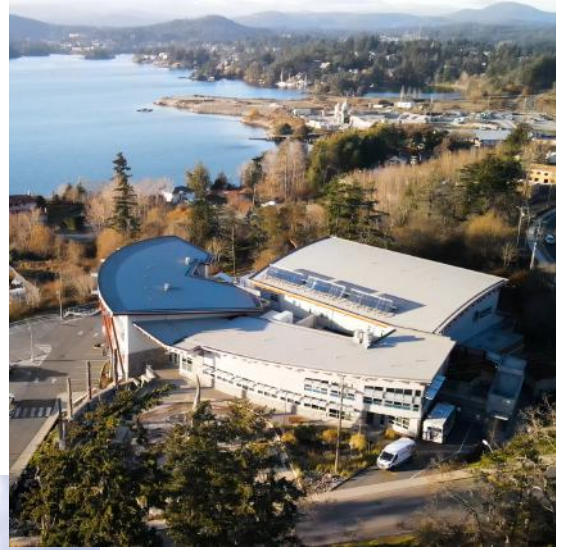
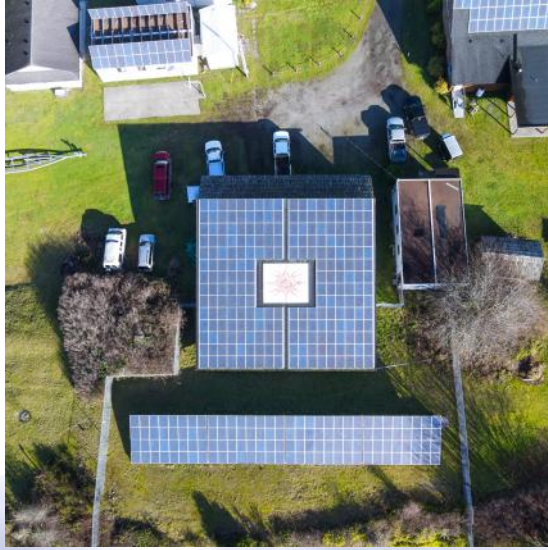
Find the digital version here!



USE HIGH-QUALITY CONTENT TO TURN HEADS

High-quality content is vital for meaningful and active engagement, whether it's a photo, drone footage or videos of a community event. Materials that are high-quality are not only eye-catching, but they help to create a sense of awe and wistfulness. Overhead drone footage of traditional territories and high-quality photography of Indigenous artwork, buildings, people and land showcase the rich history, vibrance and culture of these communities.

Regularly sharing professional and user-generated content on social media channels establishes a strong social media presence while also improving engagement with the community.



Te'mexw Treaty Association

Sample of drone photography taken at T'Sou-ke Nation, Songhees Nation and Malahat Nation.



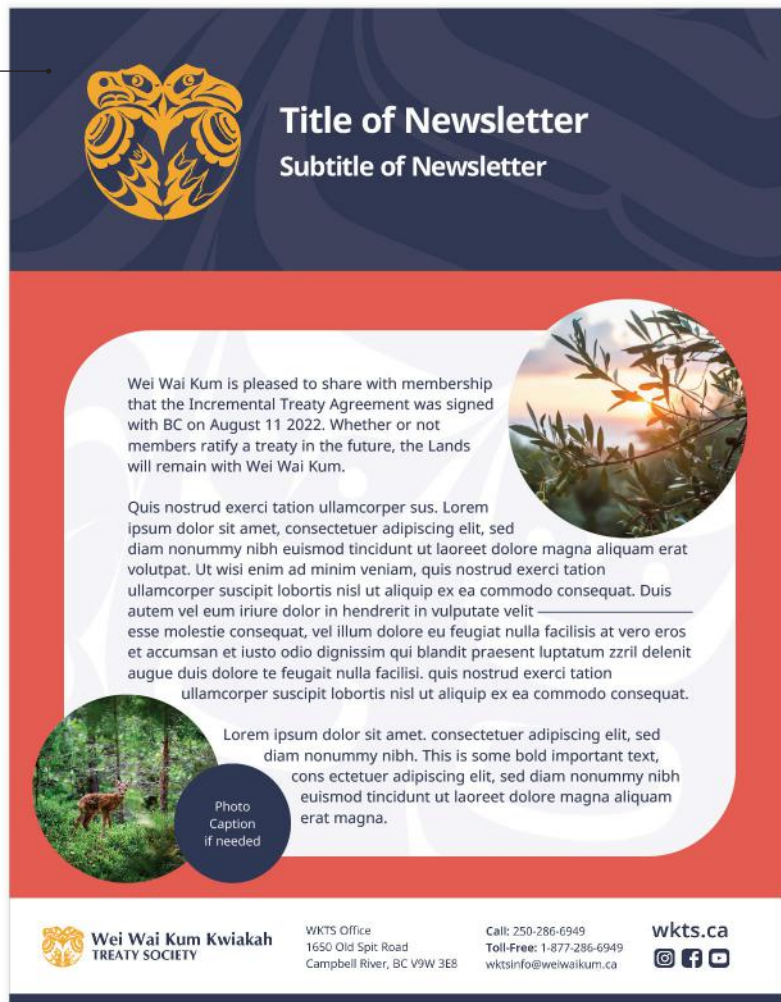
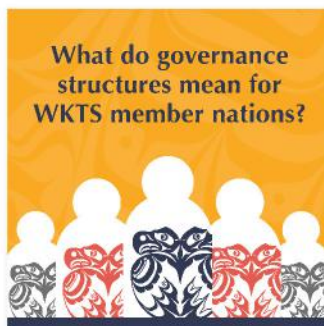
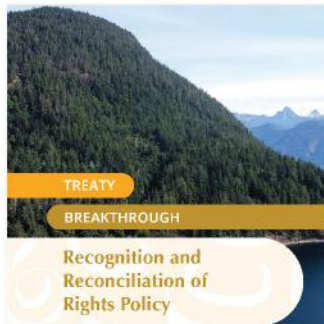
UNIQUE AND MEMORABLE BRANDING TO STAND OUT IN THE CROWD

Many Indigenous communities have incorporated traditional artwork into their branding, highlighting history and culture through vibrant colours, shapes and designs. Furthermore, branding tells a story and storytelling is a powerful aspect of Indigenous culture. Utilizing traditional artwork in logos, across social media and on websites showcases the heritage and values, reinforcing a sense of pride and connection within the community.

Moreover, memorable branding can raise awareness about First Nations cultures, histories and issues. It can also share important messages, stories and teachings with a wider audience. It serves as a platform to educate people about their traditions, challenges and contributions, fostering understanding, respect and dialogue.

Indigenous symbols and shapes can be used in inventive ways to establish a unique branding style that showcases the artwork and culture while offering modern and interesting visuals. This can be done by cropping these images so pieces fit into various shapes or by using them as overlays in website banners, social media posts and presentations.

Wei Wai Kum Kwiakah Treaty Society
Print and digital design samples

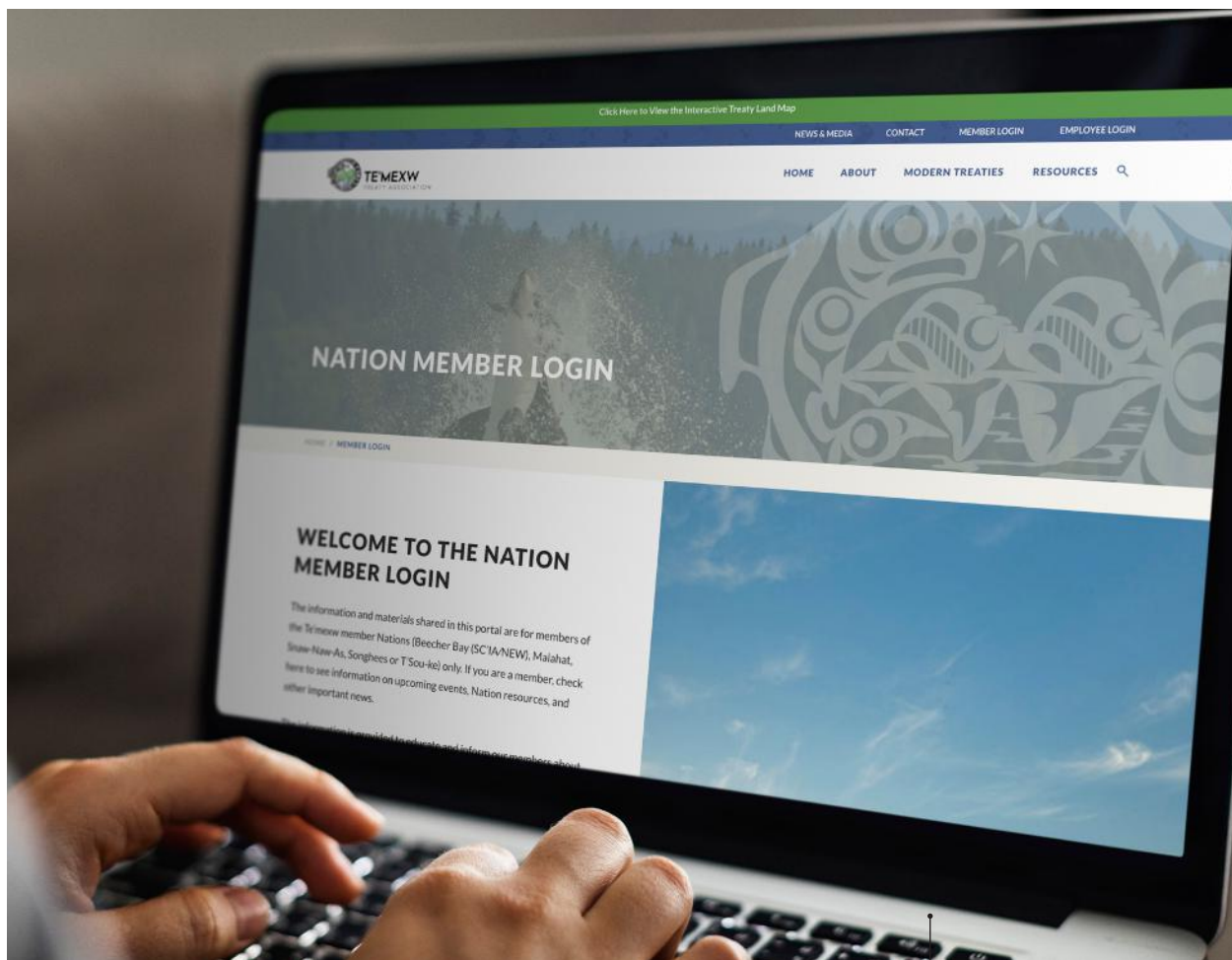




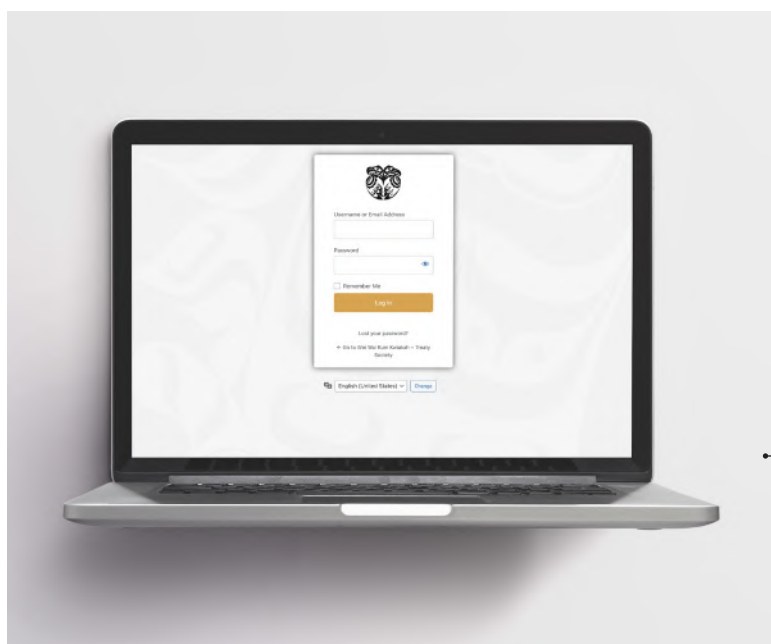
MEMBERS-ONLY ACCESS TO BUILD COMMUNITY

An easy-to-use and inviting website is important in engaging and connecting with Nation members. Whether negotiating a treaty or providing community updates, many First Nations and Indigenous communities have utilized a members-only portal. This section of a website contains resources and information for Nation members that aren't for public use. Negotiation updates, recorded community meetings and educational sessions are a few examples of resources that would be posted to a members-only portal. The members-only style can be utilized in private Facebook and Instagram groups as well.

Furthermore, a strong brand identity throughout the website (and all communications channels), expressive elements such as colour, design, logo, messaging and tone, create a unified image that members can recognize and identify



Te'mexw Treaty Association
Members-only login portal



Wei Wai Kum Kwikwaka Treaty Society
Members-only login portal



WHAT'S NEXT?

The need for community and belonging may never change, but how that need is fulfilled will adapt as communities grow and evolve. We witnessed Indigenous communities return to in-person gatherings for ceremonies, social functions and important announcements. But the systems put in place during the pandemic didn't disappear, as many communities continue to hold events in a hybrid format, ensuring to reach and engage with their members no matter where they are. While trends are ever-changing, we believe these tips help you stay ahead of the curve and grow your engagement and connections.