

# **Case Study: 4Ocean**

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The company 4Ocean focuses on cleaning trash from the oceans and beaches. They fund the clean up projects that they sponsor by selling a bracelet that is made from post-consumer recycled glass and recycled plastic water bottles. The bracelets are not made from the recyclable materials that are collected during the clean up projects. They have a presence on Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, and Facebook. Although they do a great job marketing their bracelet and the concept of the clean up projects, they have a sparse amount of education on marine pollution. There was even confusion from some followers on Facebook about whether or not the bracelets were made from the collected trash. So, they could definitely make improvements to their online educational materials.

It is important to provide information and documentation for the general public so that they will truly understand the problem. Many people do not completely understand the problem, so it would be wise to begin with basic knowledge. I was born and raised in Florida, living there until I was almost 30. I regularly participated in conservation efforts and attended conservation summer camps as a child. I still did not understand that so much garbage travels through the ocean and is collected in gyres or “garbage patches” around the world. Many people look at their beaches and assume that their local beach and ocean area is unaffected if they don’t see trash. The real scope of the problem within the oceans is not always understood.

### **Instagram:**

This would be an ideal platform to educate people about ocean pollution through photos and videos. A short video to start with may be [this one](#) that shows photos of the North Pacific Gyre to allow people to understand what the pollution actually looks like. [This video from NASA](#) demonstrates how the gyres develop with the assistance of ocean currents. This could be followed up with photos or videos from divers during one of their clean-up projects to give people a clear visual of what the problem really looks like. It would also be beneficial to use infographics to explain the concept of microplastics and that those microplastics can (and do) make it back into the bodies of humans, affecting our long-term health. People need to understand how it impacts human beings to encourage them to take the problem seriously.

These educational postings could continue to create “episodes” that focus on various areas throughout the world that border the gyres and could discuss those local challenges and conservation efforts. In addition, 4Ocean should create posts that show *what* the bracelet purchases fund and *how* the money is used specifically. I noticed several followers on Facebook questioning how the clean-up efforts were funded and what the money was being used for. By answering those questions, they would further the philanthropic efforts.

Since a good portion of the population does not really understand the scope of ocean pollution, it is important to explain to the world not only what it happening, but how it affects the human population. Our societies have become so busy and so self-involved that most people do not look outside of their immediate world to understand the big picture of any issue. By utilizing Instagram in the ways explained above, the learners would be able to view short, daily lessons on what ocean pollution is, how it affects their lives, how they can help with the clean-up efforts,

and how they can lessen their impact on the environment. The learner needs to be able to understand the issue in its' entirety.

**Twitter:**

This would be an ideal platform for 4Ocean to use to announce clean-up events. In addition, they could leverage Twitter to send out short links to information on ocean pollution. For example, they could provide a link to information about [microplastics](#) to continue the conversation from the Instagram postings on microplastics. The links on each platform would be to different sites or articles; however, they would all be on the same topic.

By releasing different links about the same topic over various social media accounts, it allows the learner to continue their journey of discovery about a specific topic. There are many people who are on all of the major social media sites. If they saw the same information over and over, they would lose interest and may begin ignoring the posts from 4Ocean entirely. However, if they see that 4Ocean is releasing different information on the same topic, it may keep their attention and allow them to learn about the entire issue throughout the day. It would be a valuable use of their time.

**Snapchat:**

In my opinion, the most valuable part of Snapchat is the Story feature. 4Ocean does have a handbook on their website that explains the broad strokes of how to run a clean-up day. This could be improved by walking organizations through the details of the event. They could run “live” trainings on how to run clean-up days at the events that they sponsor. The event could be announced both on Snapchat and Twitter. They would create a story where they could compile snaps throughout the day showing an organization how to run a clean-up day. For example, they may snap the registration table process, then snap about the materials that are needed, how to clean-up the beach or water properly, where to dispose of the collected trash, etc.

This would benefit organizations that may want to run a clean-up, but who may be intimidated by the process. Having 4Ocean model the process for them in short segments throughout the day may make it seem less intimidating. They may then be more likely to agree to sponsor a clean-up event.