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NADRA Provides Deck Safety Marketing Resources to Help the Industry Boost Business this Spring

In honor of Deck Safety Month®, the North American Decking and Railing Association reminds professionals to take advantage of exclusive safety resources along with press release templates, graphics, ads, social media content, flyers, and more.

Quakertown, PA (April 28th, 2017) - The United States is home to roughly 40 million residential decks, and of those it's estimated that half are more 25 years old. This means big business opportunities for deck builders, remodelers, inspectors and contractors to promote deck inspections, ensuring

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homeowner safety while simultaneously building their own brand. The North American Decking and Railing Association (NADRA) offers industry professionals and inspectors a breadth of resources, including a comprehensive toolkit, marketing materials, and inspection checklists.

"May is Deck Safety Month®-along with prime outdoor living season-and that presents a perfect chance for savvy pros to market their business," says NADRA executive vice president Michael Beaudry. "NADRA has created an array of tools to help you take advantage of this marketing opportunity. Whatever you do-even if it means simply rechecking your own deck-be sure to pay special attention to deck safety"

NADRA offers the following resources for building professionals to leverage during Deck Safety Month and throughout the year, including:

- Deck Safety Toolkit. This NADRA-member benefits include:
 - Deck Safety Month® Logo
 - Check Your Deck® Logo
 - 2017 Deck Safety Ambassador Logo (for official ambassadors only) [learn more here about the ambassador program](#)
 - [10-point consumer checklist](#)
 - Link to online deck inspection form
 - Social media content for your use
 - Customizable press release templates
 - Customizable flyer all about deck safety
 - Customizable social media, infographics, and web graphics
 - Tips and guidelines to make the most out of Deck Safety Month®

[Deck Evaluation Form](#): A step-by-step guide to evaluating the integrity of the deck structure, stairs, surface, and railings. A downloadable form and online form (BETA) are available to members and non-members.

Certified inspector program: NADRA has partnered with the American Society of Home Inspectors ([ASHI](#)) to create the NADRA Deck Inspection Certification Course, an ASHI-approved continuing education program. Having certification can not only improve a contractor's skill-set, but make them more marketable to consumers. (Next class is happening in Atlanta, GA - [check it out here](#))

Deck Safety Ambassadors: Help spread the word about deck safety by [becoming a Deck Safety Ambassador](#). Sponsors gain access to an exclusive Ambassador logo and marketing benefits to further promote their businesses.

Homeowner resources: Builders can download the [10-Point Deck Safety Consumer Checklist](#) to pass along to customers. Though not a replacement for a professional deck inspection, the checklist can assist homeowners and provide reference during other times of the year.

"Communicating safe decking standards remains a top priority for NADRA," Beaudry says. "We continue to focus our efforts on educating both pros and consumers on proper deck installation practices as well as on consistent deck inspections. At the same time, we know that deck safety offers professionals in the industry a great opportunity to market their business, so



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we've provided all of the tools to help them do just that."

Visit www.NADRA.org to access all of NDRA's Deck Safety Month resources for industry professionals. *You must be a current NADRA member to access the "toolkit". [Join NADRA today.](#)

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Dishwasher Air Gaps

by Reuben Saltzman

It's been just over a year since Minnesota adopted a new state plumbing code. One of the most conspicuous and annoying changes that was made to the plumbing code was the requirement for hideous dishwasher air gaps. A dishwasher air gap is an egg-sized device that gets mounted



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above the sink to help prevent contaminated water from draining back into the dishwasher.

These devices have been around for a long time, but they were never required in single family homes in Minnesota. Our old plumbing code used to say "Domestic use dishwashers may discharge into a sink, or discharge to a sink tailpiece or food-waste grinder if the discharge drain line is fastened as high as possible under the countertop." That's no longer good enough, however. The new code that was adopted on January 23rd, 2016 says the following under section 807.4:

No domestic dishwashing machine shall be directly connected to a drainage system or food waste disposer without the use of an approved dishwasher air gap fitting on the discharge side of the dishwashing machine. Listed air gaps shall be installed with the flood-level (FL) marking at or above the flood level of the sink or drainboard, whichever is higher.

The nitty-gritty details of exactly how this is being enforced throughout Minnesota is up to the professional judgment of the plumbing inspectors for each municipality. From what I've heard, air gaps are typically being required at the time that sinks or dishwashers are installed or replaced.

Installation Problems

Because these air gaps are a fairly new requirement, we've come across a lot of air gap devices that aren't installed properly. To understand these defects, it's helpful to understand how these devices function. The crudely marked-up photo below shows how they work.

Air gaps have an 'in' and an 'out'. The water coming in on the right side of my drawing above is being forced by the dishwasher pump, but the water going out is simply draining through gravity. Because of this, it's important for the 'out' hose to be larger than the 'in'...[READ MORE](#)

**The Character Count Guide
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What's going on with your chapter? Got an event coming up? Something



When it comes to writing text for your blog and social media posts, many marketers wonder, "But what's the character limit?" It's never a simple question -- sometimes, it's answered by parameters established by certain channels. And on other occasions, it's more a question of what's ideal.

For example, you probably know the character limit for a tweet is 140, but did you know that the ideal length is actually less than that? (Hold tight -- we'll explain why.) While we've written before about optimizing your actual content, we thought it would be helpful to gather the numbers of character limits -- both enforced and ideal -- for different online channels, all in one place.

Below, you'll find a more detailed guide to character limits and ideal character counts for posts on your blog, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, SnapChat, and YouTube.

The Length & Character Count for Everything on the Internet

1) Blog Posts

Quick reference:

Post length: 2100 words

Title: Under 60 characters

Meta Description: Under 155 characters

Post Body

When it comes to the length of blog posts, there are a few different items to consider. For example:

- According to Medium, posts with an average read time of seven minutes captured the most attention.
- The average reading speed of native English-speaking adults remains commonly cited as 300 words per minute, according to research conducted in 1990.
- At that reading rate, the ideal post length is 2100 words.

interesting happen at your last meeting? What did you learn about? We want to know and we'll post it here. Email your news to Dave at davek@ashi.org

Here's what's going on in a chapter near you...

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- That aligns with research previously conducted by serplQ, which indicated that, on average, the top 10 results for most Google searches are between 2,032 and 2,416 words.

That means that this ideal word count can address goals around both readability and SEO. But that's just the actual body of the post. Plus, when we looked at our own blog on organic traffic, we found that the sweet spot was 2,250-2,500 words.

But that's just the post body -- let's have a look at the other areas of text that comprise a full blog post.

Title

The length of your title depends on your goals, and where it will appear.

Let's start with SEO. Do you want this post to rank really well in search? It turns out, that often has to do with the dimensions of each entry on a search engine results page (SERP). For Google, titles of search results are usually contained at a length of 600 pixels -- which Moz measures as being able to display the first 50-60 characters of a title tag. So, if you don't want your title to get cut off in the search results, it might be best to keep it under 60 characters. But when in doubt, you can double-check the length of your meta description and title tags with this handy tool from SEOmofo, or you can use Moz's title tag preview tool...[READ MORE](#)



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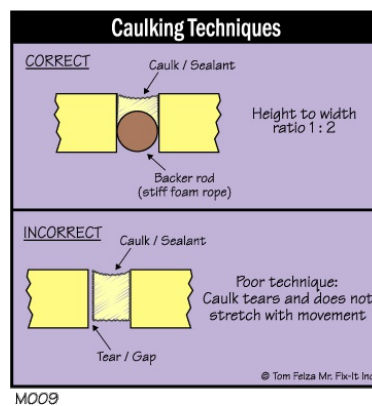
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Quick Tip #17: Caulking the Wide Open Spaces

So you filled that wide gap in the exterior trim with the best caulk you could buy, and the next year it had pulled away

from one surface, leaving a large gap. Or you tried to fill a wider gap, and the caulk just fell in the hole. What went wrong? No backer rod.

Before professionals fill a large gap with caulk, they bridge the wide opening with a stiff foam backer rod. The backer rod is wide enough so friction holds it just below the gap's surface. The rod supports the caulk applied in an hourglass shape with a height-to-width ratio of about 1:2. Why? Caulk needs to expand and contract as surfaces move. The hourglass shape allows the caulk to bond to only two surfaces; the narrower section easily expands and contracts with movement. Caulk should never completely fill a space. It should never be applied to three sides or an unbridgeably wide gap, or



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it will quickly fail. Caulk can't expand and contract when it is pulled in three directions or when the cross-section is too thick.

You will find backer rods in larger paint and hardware stores. It is sold in lengths like rope, and it comes in various diameters. Choose a diameter that is wider than the gap to be filled, and force the rod into place with a blunt tool or putty knife.

By Tom Feiza, Mr. Fix-It

(c) Copyright 2009 by Tom Feiza, Mr. Fix-It, Inc. | [misterfix-it.com](#) | [htoyh.com](#) Helping you operate and maintain your home



How to Create a Social Media Marketing Content Plan in 7 Steps

By [Warren Knight](#)

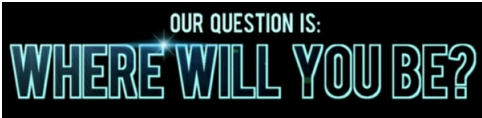
Want to connect more with your target audience?

Wondering how to deliver relevant social media content consistently?

Planning your social media content delivery keeps your marketing on-message, making it more likely that you'll reach your business goals.

In this article, **you'll discover how to create a social media marketing content plan for your business.**

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November 3-6, 2017
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#1: Understand How Your Ideal Customer Moves From Awareness to Conversion

Whether you’ve been in business for 24 hours or 10 years, [defining your target customer](#) is a crucial part of your journey. You may be thinking it’s easy to define your target customer based on the usual demographics, age, gender, etc.

However, you need to **go beyond simply identifying your target customer’s marital status, where they live, or what their hobbies are.** In the era of the “experience,” you have to give your customers an experience they’ll fall in love with. For example, Uber and Airbnb have grown to be successful companies because they provide a great customer experience while fulfilling a need.

Put yourself in your target customers’ shoes. What is their first thought when researching a product? How do they progress from there? Most importantly, what’s the final question they ask before making a purchase? To better understand this exercise, let’s analyze two hypothetical target customers: Rita and John.

Rita is a creative entrepreneur and visual in her approach to business and lifestyle. She’s passionate and inquisitive, always asking questions before making a decision to buy a product or service. She calls her friends on the phone, and searches with Google and through social media. Rita’s way of finding answers is through a Pinterest infographic or an Instagram post.

Here’s how you might identify Rita’s thought process when purchasing a product or service...[READ MORE](#)



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