

Facebook Report 2018

Since volunteering in October 2016, I have listened and learned a great deal about Facebook. We have tried some things that have failed, and others which are really starting to work and pay dividends for your members.

Here is a summary of the performance of our pages so far.

Canal Traders News

Facebook RCTA Magazine Page - - - > [CLICK HERE TO VISIT](#)

1030 Followers @ Jan 2017 **1198** Followers @Sept 2017 **1376** Followers @ Sept 2018

We have seen steady growth in followers of this page since we started using it as a centre for information for members and non-members. We intend to add scheduled posts that direct you to specific areas in our website, e.g. the Traders Directory (with reminders of how to update your details), links to our membership page (to encourage traders to join) and to our Blog, which 2019 will be featuring a lot of new content. We will also use it as a platform to highlight individual traders chosen at random and to advertise any upcoming events.

Canal Traders

RCTA Facebook Group - - - > [CLICK HERE TO VISIT](#)

885 Members @ Sept 2017 **1009** @ Sept 2018

Open to all canal traders and canal side businesses. Openly promoted and administered by RCTA Volunteers as the place to find canal related businesses. The group is a welcoming, friendly and informative place for all. It is also a good way to encourage other traders to join RCTA. We have built a really good foundation for further use of this group to promote the benefits of RCTA whilst benefiting all traders in the process.

We also have @canaltraders & @buyitoffaboat Twitter & Instagram accounts. We have claimed the following #tags: #buyitoffaboat , #canaltraders & #tagatrader , as well as purchasing the domains www.buyitoffaboat.co.uk & www.buyitoffaboat.com, which are currently redirected to our Facebook Shopping Group [RCTA #buyitoffaboat Shop](#). This will ultimately help to drive traffic to the website and groups & pages.

HELPFUL NOTE – When posting on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram, **ALWAYS** use the #canaltraders & #buyitoffaboat. That way if anyone does a search for either tag anywhere, your posts will appear in the list of results. You will also be helping other traders by indirectly aiding traffic to RCTA.

RCTA Members Group

Member only RCTA Facebook Group - - - > [CLICK HERE TO VISIT](#)

Current Members **112** @ Sept 2018

The group is a private group for RCTA members to discuss RCTA policy, raise ideas and concerns in a safe and private place. Summaries of important issues are emailed to all members to make sure everyone is included as not all members are on Facebook.

RCTA #Buyitoffaboat Shop

Selling Platform for Members - - - > [CLICK HERE TO VISIT](#)

Current Members **529** @ Sept 2018

Anyone can join this group but **ONLY** RCTA members may advertise items for sale here. It is still in the growing stages, but the potential to be the place to purchase from canal traders is **HUGE**.

We are active on Twitter and Instagram with both @buyitoffaboat & @canaltraders. Always using the **#buyitoffaboat** & **#canaltraders** #tags which will ultimately help to drive traffic to one of the RCTA communication platforms.

We tend to work on promoting this group through the winter months when a lot of us are not trading or attending festivals and markets.

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Local Audience Facebook Pages

Each 'Local' page works the same way. When they are first created, they are named after the local area county/s e.g.: [Hertfordshire Canal Traders](#) or [Birmingham, Black Country & Midlands Canal Traders](#).

We encourage all traders work together posting on and sharing the pages all around Facebook/twitter & Instagram. The aim is to build a LOCAL following for the page.

As you will see from the steady growth of followers on these local pages (listed below), they are starting to become established as a good page for local folk to find events happening on the canal near them.

All RCTA markets are advertised on their local county page, e.g.: [Birmingham Christmas Floating Market](#) is advertised on [Birmingham, Black Country & Midlands Canal Traders Page](#) .

HELPFUL NOTE – When posting on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram about where you ARE or WILL BE trading always give the COUNTY you are in. That way, if you haven't already, RCTA volunteers can share your post to the relevant Local Page. And ALWAYS use the **#canaltraders** & **#buyitoffaboat**. That way if anyone does a search for either tag anywhere, your posts will appear in the list of results. You will also be helping other traders by indirectly aiding traffic to RCTA.

Local Pages and Followers

[Cheshire Canal Traders](#) @cheshirecanaltraders

Followers: 222 Sept 17 **254** Sept 18

[Oxfordshire, Warwickshire & Worcestershire Canal Traders](#) @oxfordshirecanaltraders

Followers: 63 Sept 18

[Staffordshire Canal Traders](#) @staffordshirecanaltraders

Followers: 95 Sept 17 **290** Sept 18

[Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire & Buckinghamshire Canal Traders](#) @northamptoncanaltraders

Followers: 54 Sept 17 **74** Sept 18

[Hertfordshire Canal Traders](#) @herfordshirecanaltraders

Followers: 116 Sept17 **736** Sept 18

[London Canal Traders](#) @londoncanaltraders

Followers: 346 Sept18

[Lancashire & Yorkshire Canal Traders](#) @LancashireYorkshirecanaltraders

Followers: 74 Sept17 **87** Sept 18

[Birmingham, Black Country & Midlands Canal Traders](#) @birminghamcanaltraders

Followers: 867 Sept17 **1139** Sept 18

[Shropshire Canal Traders](#) @shropshirecanaltraders

Followers: 218 Sept 18

Summary

I am very happy with the way that we have progressed with our Facebook presence and feel I have done all I can with regard to building a solid platform for RCTA to build upon. I have also run out of ideas on how to progress, so will be stepping down as Facebook Admin Volunteer at the 2018 AGM to allow someone else to take over the reins and add their own ideas and enthusiasm into the mix.

In 2019 I will be working on a 'Facebook Idiots Guide'. This will be available for members to access on www.rcta.org.uk with hints and tips to help improve members their skills when using Facebook for business.