

Using Complementary Content to build your audience



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Why Create Complementary Content?

Complementary Content refers to promotional assets that are produced in addition to programming (feature-length film, web series) that help grow audiences and deepen the viewer's connection with a project.

Trailers, behind-the-scenes clips, and images for social media are common examples. Complementary Content could also help educate the audience, inform their choices, and stimulate positive change. For example, basic teaching and learning tools, basic games, screening and discussion guides, webisodes, podcasts, blogs, eBooks, and newsletters.

Complementary Content should be supported by the Health Organization or underlying research in the subject area and be easily accessible for viewers of the programming.

Why create Complementary Content for your screen media project?

All applications to TELUS Fund's Development, Production, and Post-Launch streams must include both Programming and Complementary Content. For more information, see our Program Guidelines at telusfund.ca.

Complementary Content often requires careful planning and investment. You might be thinking, why bother? These assets can be a powerful way to drive awareness for a project and deepen audience engagement.

What Works?

Short-form, platform-native content (e.g., TikToks, Reels, YouTube Shorts) often outperforms traditional trailers and static posts. Testimonials, behind-the-scenes clips, and expert interviews resonate with audiences seeking connection and context. Interactive content like polls, quizzes, and challenges is underused but can significantly boost engagement.

Using Data to Guide Your Strategy: Monitor engagement rates, sentiment, and viewership patterns across platforms. Use these insights to adapt your posting schedule, format choices, and messaging for maximum reach and impact.

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Optional Tools: AI tools like ChatGPT, Jasper, or Descript can assist with captions, scheduling, and repurposing content efficiently while maintaining your project's voice.

Remember: Complementary Content is not an add-on but a strategic tool to help your health and wellness project reach and connect with the audiences who need it most.

Examples

Transplant Stories began posting on TikTok to reach new audiences and went viral within the first week, with 41K views on a single post. They followed up with more behind-the-scenes clips and patient stories, leading to another viral video with 20K views, demonstrating the value of testing and iterating content based on early results

Stories for Caregivers found that their audience primarily engages on Facebook and Instagram. By leveraging collaborative posts with aligned partners, they boosted reach and visibility, building an audience of over 67K Facebook followers and 3.6K Instagram followers

Best Practices

- Think Strategically: Treat Complementary Content as part of your audience development strategy, not just promotion
- Tailor to Platforms: Use vertical, short-form videos for TikTok and Reels, longer explainers for YouTube, and shareable content for Facebook
- Be Consistent: Maintain a regular posting schedule to build audience trust and keep algorithms working in your favour
- Use Clear Call-to-Action: Encourage viewers to watch, follow, share, or comment
- Mix Formats: Use a variety of content types (e.g., Behind the scenes clips, Q&As, testimonial reels) to reach different audience segments
- Prioritize Authenticity: Clear, emotionally resonant storytelling often outperforms overly polished visuals
- Test Interactivity: Add polls, quizzes, or challenges to deepen engagement and spark conversation