



FEPA Report

Effective Social Media Strategies and Activities for Philatelic Federations and Societies

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Summary: Recommendations for Philatelic Societies

Across Europe, philatelic societies are facing the same challenge: how to stay visible, relevant, and accessible in a fast-changing digital landscape. During six FEPA-hosted Zoom meetings with FEPA member federations in March 2025, representatives from 26 philatelic federations shared experiences, challenges, and creative solutions for adapting to the world of social media.

This summary brings together the most practical and effective recommendations that emerged from those discussions. These are concrete steps that any society—large or small—can take to strengthen its online presence, attract new members, and build a more engaged digital community.

Both local town or city philatelic societies, specialized philatelic societies and national/international philatelic societies can benefit from discussing, deciding and implementing their approach to social media as a mean to attract new members.

1. Establish a Strong Facebook Presence

- Create both a Facebook Page and join/post in relevant Facebook Groups.
- Post regular updates: meeting announcements, event photos, new publications.
- Repost content from FEPA and other societies to keep the page lively.
- Show stamps and encourage engagement (e.g., “Show your favorite stamp”).

2. Engage with Facebook Groups

- Identify national, local, and specialized philatelic groups.
- Join as the society (not just as individuals).
- Answer questions, share trivia, post rare finds – become a helpful voice in the community.
- Local societies: Promote local society activities in city-specific Facebook groups.
- Develop fun and educational posts:
 - “On this day in philatelic history...”
 - “Did you know?” stamp facts.
 - “Trivia Tuesday” – weekly questions.

3. Simplify Membership Onboarding

- Address the “interest-to-membership” gap by:
 - Offering free trial memberships.
 - Providing one-click sign-up options.
 - Simplifying payments and communication.
- Consider offering *online-only* memberships or social media community memberships (e.g., free or sponsored).



4. Start a YouTube Channel

- Upload recordings of society talks, exhibitions, or collector tips.
- Keep videos short, engaging, and informative (e.g., 5–10 minutes).
- Use easy video-editing tools – smartphone video is good enough.
- Cross-post videos to Facebook for more reach.



Summary: Recommendations for Philatelic Federations

As this report has shown, social media offers enormous potential for philatelic federations and societies to reverse membership decline, engage new audiences, and strengthen their visibility in a digital world. However, making the most of this opportunity requires strategic, coordinated action—particularly at the federation level.

Here are five key recommendations for how federations can lead the way in modernizing philatelic outreach across Europe:

1. Support Local Societies with Professional Content

Not all local societies have the time, skills, or resources to create engaging digital content. Federations can play a critical role by producing professional videos, visuals, and social media posts that local societies can share on their own channels. This helps ensure consistent quality and messaging across the network, while saving time at the local level.

2. Create a Content Calendar and Templates

To help societies stay active and relevant online, federations should provide a content calendar with suggested post ideas (e.g., philatelic holidays, historical events, or collector tips). Simple template posts—ready to be adapted—can make it easier for local groups to maintain a regular social media presence.

This also helps amplify key messages across many channels at once.

3. Explore Collaboration with Influencers

Philately has a rich visual and storytelling potential that can resonate well on social platforms—especially when presented by the right voice. Federations should consider partnering with a philatelic influencer or content creator to promote the hobby in a more modern and visible way. This could include:

- Featuring philately on popular YouTube or TikTok channels
- Hosting live Q&As with collectors
- Promoting federation events or exhibitions

This kind of collaboration can bring philately into new digital spaces and reach broader audiences.



4. Provide Training in Social Media Strategy and Tools

Federations can help build long-term capacity by offering training workshops or webinars to national philatelic societies on topics such as:

- Creating engaging posts
- Managing Facebook Pages and Groups
- Using Instagram, YouTube, WhatsApp or TikTok
- Converting digital followers into members

Training empowers local societies to take ownership of their online presence and communicate more effectively.

5. Maintain a Central Facebook Presence

Federations should maintain an active, central Facebook Page that acts as a hub—linking to:

- Local societies
- Specialized collecting groups
- National events and exhibitions
- Educational resources

This central presence ensures greater visibility, encourages coordination, and helps reinforce a pan-European philatelic identity online.

By taking a leadership role in content creation, training, and digital strategy, federations can ensure that philately remains visible, vibrant, and accessible to new generations of collectors. The tools are available—and with the right approach, so is the opportunity.

1. Why Focus on Social Media?

Philately, like many other hobbies, is undergoing a rapid digital transformation. Across Europe, traditional philatelic societies are experiencing a significant decline in membership—by as much as 50% over the past decade in FEPA member countries. At the same time, online philatelic communities, especially those on platforms like Facebook, are thriving. This contrast reveals a compelling opportunity: by embracing social media, traditional philatelic societies can potentially reverse declining membership trends and engage with a new generation of collectors where they are already active—online.

A New Reality for Organised Philately

The future of organised philately in Europe depends on our ability to adapt to digital change. Many collectors today are no longer attending local stamp clubs in person as regularly as before. Instead, they are engaging in lively discussions, exchanging information, and showcasing their collections in online forums and social media groups. These platforms allow for immediate interaction, quick answers to questions, and vibrant sharing of content—benefits that traditional meetings often struggle to match.

This shift calls for a rethink: if collectors are increasingly active on social media, should philatelic societies not also strengthen their presence on these platforms? At FEPA, we believe the answer is a resounding **yes**.

What is Social Media—and Why Does It Matter?

Social media refers to digital platforms and applications that allow users to create and share content, and to participate in social networking online. Examples include:

- **Facebook**
- **YouTube**
- **Instagram**
- **WhatsApp**
- **TikTok**
- **X (formerly Twitter)**
- **Snapchat**

These platforms differ from a traditional society website. While a website may offer useful information, it typically does not facilitate interaction. Social media, by contrast, is interactive by nature. It empowers users to ask questions, share experiences, and form communities in real time. This is exactly the kind of engagement that can strengthen the visibility and vitality of organised philately.



FEPA's Role: Supporting Societies in the Digital Age

FEPA's strategic focus is to support its member federations in navigating this digital transformation. We aim to:

- Facilitate dialogue among European philatelic federations
- Share experiences, tools, and success stories
- Explore practical solutions to common digital challenges
- Encourage closer cooperation on building the future of philately

By working together, FEPA members can learn how to effectively use social media not just as a communication tool, but as a bridge—turning digital engagement into real-world membership growth.



2. Target Groups

An effective social media strategy starts with a clear understanding of the target audience. In philately, this is especially important because different age groups use different platforms. Choosing the right platform means speaking the right digital language to the right people.

Who Are We Trying to Reach?

This is the key question: Which age group are we aiming at?
The answer has a direct impact on where and how we engage online.

1. Youth (under 18 years old)

If the goal is to attract younger collectors, the focus should be on platforms that are popular with this generation. In recent years, TikTok has emerged as a favourite among teenagers. It is a short-form video platform where creativity and visual storytelling thrive—ideal for showing off eye-catching stamps, telling mini philatelic stories, or sparking curiosity in a fun, accessible way.

However, it is worth noting that attracting and retaining young collectors requires more than just being present on TikTok. It demands engaging content and a different tone—playful, informal, and fast-paced.

2. Mature Collectors (50+ years old)

In contrast, if the target audience is more experienced or returning collectors—typically men over 50—then Facebook is by far the most relevant platform. Many online philatelic communities on Facebook are already active and vibrant, with members regularly posting about their collections, asking questions, and offering advice.

This group tends to value in-depth discussions, access to knowledgeable peers, and a sense of community—features that Facebook groups support very well.

By aligning content and platform with the interests and habits of different audiences, philatelic societies can build meaningful digital relationships—and potentially grow membership both online and offline.



3. Membership Strategies

As philatelic habits shift toward digital platforms, traditional membership models are being challenged. European federations must now consider new approaches to what "membership" means—and how to maintain relevance, engagement, and sustainability in a more digital world.

Traditional Model: Society-Based Membership

Historically, membership in a philatelic federation has been indirect. Individuals would join a local philatelic society, which would then be affiliated with the national federation. This structure has served the community well for decades, building strong local networks and creating a sense of organised participation.

However, with declining physical attendance and a growing number of collectors active online but disconnected from formal societies, this model may no longer be sufficient on its own.

Evolving Models: Direct Federation Membership

In response to this shift, some national federations have already started to explore direct membership models, allowing individuals to join the federation without necessarily being part of a local society. This opens the door to more flexible engagement and can help reach collectors who are interested in national or international philately, but not necessarily involved in local meetings.

This approach can also be an important step toward digital inclusion, particularly when supported by online newsletters, digital exhibitions, or webinars.

New Idea: Online Membership

A more radical idea is to define a new category of “online membership”—for instance, being a member of a federation’s social media group (such as a Facebook group). This type of membership might be:

- Free (to encourage broad participation), or
- Low-cost with access to exclusive digital content or events.

While this model might not generate immediate income, it could dramatically expand reach, especially among younger or more casual collectors. Over time, some of these online members might convert into full members of societies or federations.



Alternative Revenue: Sponsorship Memberships

To offset the potential loss of membership fees from online members, federations might also explore “sponsorship memberships”—offering visibility or recognition to individuals or companies who support the federation financially.

This model has the potential to attract new forms of support without relying solely on traditional membership fees.

Rethinking Membership for the Digital Age

Ultimately, the goal is not just to maintain numbers, but to build a vibrant, engaged, and sustainable philatelic community. This may mean offering multiple paths to involvement, including:

- Traditional society-based membership
- Direct federation membership
- Online social media engagement
- Sponsorship or supporter models

By rethinking membership in this flexible and inclusive way, federations can stay relevant and continue to support the growth of philately across Europe.



4. Which Social Media to Prioritize?

With many different social media platforms available, philatelic societies may wonder where to focus their limited time and resources. The answer depends on the audience—but for most federations aiming to reach collectors over the age of 50, Facebook is by far the most effective platform.

Why Facebook?

According to recent data, 71% of adults in Europe over the age of 50 use Facebook. This makes it the most widely adopted social media platform among the key target group for most philatelic societies: mature collectors.

Facebook offers two primary tools that societies can use to build visibility, foster engagement, and attract new members:

1. Facebook Pages – Your Digital Bulletin Board

A Facebook Page functions much like a traditional website. It allows societies to:

- Share news, announcements, and event information
- Post links to publications, exhibitions, and society resources
- Maintain a visible, public-facing digital presence

While Pages are primarily used for broadcasting information, they are an important starting point—especially for making a society more discoverable online.

2. Facebook Groups – Community and Conversation

More dynamic and interactive than Pages, Facebook Groups are where true engagement happens. In philatelic Facebook Groups, members:

- Ask questions and share knowledge
- Post pictures of their collections
- Discuss themes, issues, and news
- Buy, sell, or trade philatelic material

Groups offer a strong sense of community and immediate interaction—something many collectors value highly. For federations and societies, creating or participating in active Groups can be a powerful way to reach new audiences and build relationships with potential members.

A Practical Focus

Given the demographics of collectors and the tools Facebook offers, it is both practical and strategic for philatelic societies to prioritize this platform when aiming to grow their membership base. It allows societies to:

- Reach the right audience
- Share meaningful content
- Build a sense of belonging and dialogue

Other platforms (like TikTok, Instagram, or YouTube) may also have a role to play, especially when targeting younger audiences or showcasing visual content. But for most European societies and federations, Facebook should be the cornerstone of their social media strategy.

However, new platforms are constantly appearing, and old platforms diminishes. So, these 2025 recommendations will most certainly look different just a few years from now. This is why it will be important for federations and societies to follow the development of the digital World.



5. Facebook Pages

Facebook Pages are one of the most accessible and effective tools available to philatelic societies today. They serve as a digital shop window—visible to both casual browsers and committed collectors alike—and are a key part of any society’s public outreach and membership strategy.

Posting Frequency and Follower Growth

Across FEPA member federations, activity levels on Facebook Pages vary significantly. Some federations post updates daily, while others post only monthly. Unsurprisingly, the most active federations tend to see the highest engagement, with several boasting over 5,000 followers on their Facebook Page.

This correlation highlights a simple truth: the more consistent and engaging your activity, the more visible and attractive your federation becomes online.

The Value of the Facebook Page Manager

To keep a federation or society Facebook page dynamic and interesting, it takes someone who is engaged and willing to invest time regularly—at least weekly, but preferably more often. A good page manager ensures consistent content, responds to messages, grows the audience, and builds a sense of community that keeps members active and connected.

Cross-Platform Consistency

For federations that also maintain an Instagram account, the content often mirrors their Facebook Page. This is a practical strategy—ensuring consistency across platforms and saving time on content creation. Since Instagram is owned by Facebook, it’s easy to share posts between the two with minimal effort.

From Interest to Membership: Turning Followers into Members

Having followers is a great start—but the real goal is to convert online interest into actual membership. Here are some actionable strategies to bridge that gap using Facebook:

A. Offer a Free Membership Trial

A limited-time, no-commitment trial can encourage curious followers to explore the benefits of membership—whether that’s receiving a newsletter, accessing exclusive content, or attending a virtual event.



B. Promote Limited-Time Offers

Create a sense of urgency by offering discounts or special bonuses for those who sign up within a specific time frame (e.g., “Join this month and get a free collector’s guide”).

C. Simplify the Signup Process

Reduce friction by making it easy to join. Where possible, use one-click sign-up forms linked directly from Facebook. Clear, simple calls to action work best.

D. Streamline the Payment Process

Avoid lengthy or complicated payment procedures. Offer digital payment methods (PayPal, credit card, or mobile payment) and make the process intuitive and fast.

By combining regular, engaging Facebook activity with clear conversion strategies, philatelic societies can turn social media visibility into real-world results—new members, renewed interest, and a stronger, more connected community.

And remember: Don’t wait to launch your federation or society’s presence on Facebook. It’s better to start small today and grow over time than to delay and miss out on valuable engagement.



6. Facebook Groups

Facebook Groups have become one of the most powerful online spaces for philatelic engagement. Unlike Facebook Pages, which are more suited for broadcasting news, Groups create dynamic, community-driven conversations among collectors. These groups often serve as informal “meeting places” for buying, selling, sharing, and discussing stamps—with reach and activity levels that far exceed those of many traditional societies.

A Growing Online Community

Based on FEPA statistics, there are an estimated 100,000 members of philatelic societies across FEPA countries—a figure that represents a 50% decrease compared to ten years ago. But while traditional membership is declining, activity in online groups is expanding rapidly.

Some examples of large international Facebook Groups include:

Facebook Group Name	Members (approx.)
Stamp Collectors	66,900
Stamp Collecting	46,200
Sell Your Stamps	52,800
British Colonies Stamp Collectors Group	9,900

These numbers suggest that many collectors are active online, but not necessarily members of official philatelic organizations.

Case Example

In one of the FEPA countries, this shift is clearly visible:

- 3,500 are members of traditional philatelic societies.
- The local language Facebook group “Stamp auction – buying and selling” has 5,600 members.
- Other local language philatelic Facebook groups collectively include over 32,000 members (though many are members of multiple groups).
- The Federation’s official Facebook Page has just 900 followers by comparison.

These figures indicate that the online collector community in the country is already larger and more active than the traditional, organized one.

The Power of Specialization

Specialized Facebook Groups—focused on specific areas like Postal History, Perfins, Postal Stationery, or individual stamp editions—are particularly successful at attracting and



engaging dedicated collectors. In many cases, these specialized groups are helping drive new interest and membership in the corresponding specialized societies.

Non-philatelic Facebook Groups

Several federations have successfully posted in non-philatelic Facebook groups where there's a natural connection between the group's theme and philately. These groups might focus on history—such as a specific war—or on topics like geography, nature, or culture, where stamps can serve as a meaningful link to the subject.

Engaging with these communities helps promote stamp collecting more broadly, while also showcasing the enjoyment and fascination philately can bring.

Local Promotion Through City Groups

Even general, non-philatelic Facebook groups can support promotion efforts. Most towns and cities have their own Facebook community groups, often with very high engagement.

For example:

- In a town with a population of 21,000, the local town Facebook group has 11,000 members.
- The local philatelic society (with only 35 members) can regularly post information about its activities in this group—a free and effective way to raise awareness and attract visitors – in the target group of residents of the town (there must be more than 35 collectors in a town of 21,000!).

A New Membership Frontier

These trends suggest that Facebook Groups are not just places to observe philatelic activity—they are vital tools for societies seeking to connect with collectors. Societies can:

- Join and participate in existing groups
- Create their own focused groups around regions or specialties
- Share society events, resources, and sign-up links
- Offer value (knowledge, events, community) to encourage membership conversion

Facebook Groups are where collectors are already gathering. Societies that meet them there—openly and actively—stand a much better chance of building stronger digital connections and reversing membership decline.



7. YouTube Channels

YouTube is the world's largest video-sharing platform, where users can watch, like, share, comment on, and upload videos. It is easily accessible on all devices—PCs, laptops, tablets, and mobile phones—making it a powerful tool for reaching collectors across age groups and geographies.

In recent years, video content has become one of the most engaging formats for digital outreach, and philately is no exception. For philatelic societies and federations, YouTube offers a valuable opportunity to present collecting in a fresh, visual, and accessible way.

Successful Philatelic YouTube Channels

Several YouTube channels dedicated to philately have built strong audiences. Notable examples include:

@exploringstamps

@thedigitalphilatelist

These channels produce a mix of educational, entertaining, and accessible content that appeals to both beginners and experienced collectors. Some of their most popular videos include:

"Inherited stamp collection – What to do?" – over **443,000 views**

"How to value and sell a stamp collection" – over **425,000 views**

These numbers highlight the real interest in philatelic content on YouTube, especially when videos address common questions or practical topics.

Creating Philatelic Videos: Anyone Can Do It

While professional video production can be expensive, modern smartphones make it easy and affordable to start. Most new phones are capable of recording high-quality video, and with some basic editing skills, anyone can create compelling content.

- Editing, adding text, and uploading takes practice, but these are skills anyone can learn.
- Video length matters—attention spans are short, so aim to keep videos concise and engaging.
- Long, unedited recordings of meetings may not capture a wider audience unless the topic is especially compelling.



What Kind of Content Works?

Philatelic videos can cover a wide range of topics. Some common and successful formats include:

- Collecting guides for specific themes (e.g., airmail, postal history, topical stamps)
- Practical tips and tricks for collectors
- How-to videos (e.g., mounting stamps, using stamp albums, soaking stamps)
- Explainers such as “*What is a stamp exhibition?*”
- Interviews with collectors or dealers
- Behind-the-scenes at society events or exhibitions

Many societies and federations have already begun posting such videos—some with over 100 uploads on their channels.

Making the Most of YouTube Content

It’s not enough to simply upload a video—promotion is key. To maximize reach:

- Share videos across multiple philatelic Facebook groups
- Post in local and regional online communities
- Link videos from your federation’s website and newsletters

Also consider user feedback:

- Are the videos too long or too technical?
- Could they be made more entertaining or visual?
- Is there a clear call to action (e.g., “Join our society,” “Visit our website,” “Subscribe for more”)?

Getting Started

For federations and societies ready to explore YouTube, a helpful resource is available on the FEPA website:

fepanews.com/youtube-channels

This page lists active philatelic channels, offers examples, and can serve as inspiration for developing your own video content.

Appendix: The Participants in the FEPA Sessions

This report is based on six meetings with federation representatives from FEPA countries.

The meetings were facilitated by FEPA Director Lars Engelbrecht together with FEPA President Bill Hedley, FEPA Director Thomas Höpfner and FEPA Treasurer Lars Jørgensen. The technical set-up for the meetings was prepared by FEPA Director Costas Chazapis and the invitations to the participants sent out by FEPA Secretary Igor Pirc.

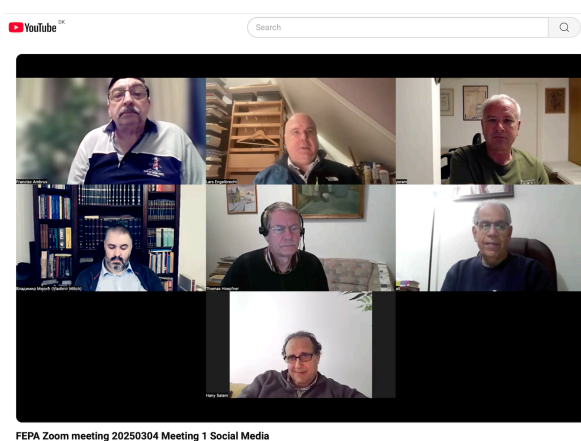
The participating FEPA countries were:

4 March: Israel, Egypt, Romania, Serbia
 10 March: Armenia, Lebanon, Turkey, Moldova
 18 March: Finland, Denmark, Norway, Czech Republic, Monaco
 24 March: Liechtenstein, Poland
 26 March: France, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Ireland
 31 March: Greece, Italy, United Kingdom, Austria, Slovenia, Belgium

FEPA countries not participating were:

Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Slovakia, Ukraine, Estonia, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden, Luxembourg, Hungary, Netherlands, Switzerland.

FEPA would like to thank all participants for their active participation and for sharing their experiences and ideas.



Screenshots from one of the FEPA Zoom meetings.