

# Quill Shift Literary Agency: Social Media Campaign Proposal

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## Introduction & Purpose

At the University of Cincinnati, in ENGL3074: Rhetoric of Social Media, I was tasked with recording and analyzing a company's social media activity for an entire semester. I chose Quill Shift Literary Agency, whom will be discussed further in the subsequent section, due to my interest in the publishing industry.

After monitoring Quill Shift's online accounts and posting my observations and comparisons through weekly reviews on [www.quillshiftliterarysmcampaign.weebly.com](http://www.quillshiftliterarysmcampaign.weebly.com) for eleven weeks, I was assigned to create a social media campaign proposal. This is said proposal.

## Company Background

Quill Shift Literary Agency is a boutique agency founded in 2013 by Ayanna Coleman. Coleman's academic background is rooted in marketing and English, and she also has a Master of Science in Library and Information Science. Through her work, she realized the lack of quality stories in children's and young adult literature. Specifically, she noticed the absence of diversity, which is an area their company now specializes.

Additionally, Coleman sought to put publishing in the hands of readers through her Shifter program. A shifter is a reader that is invited to participate in the book publishing process through reading proposed manuscripts and providing feedback. Coleman desired this because she recognized the evolution of the publishing industry, and thus, the writers' publishing.



Figure 1: Quill Shift Literary Agency banner, taken from their LinkedIn profile.

Quill loosely stands for pen, and Shift loosely stands for the digital shift the publishing industry is currently experiencing. Coleman seeks to merge the two with the help of shifters to bring the best books possible to bookstore shelves.

This interactive platform, combined with their pursuit of inclusion in two genres I hold close to my heart, are the reasons I chose to shadow Quill Shift.

## Analysis of Current Social Media Usage

In this section, data from all three of Quill Shift Literary Agency's current social media channels will be compiled from the time between January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017 and March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017. The accounts are as follows: Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google+. Afterwards, a conclusion will discuss the various insights made from such observations.

### Twitter

The first week of analysis revealed that Quill Shift Literary Agency had not posted on their Twitter account since December 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016. As my first review occurred on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017, this meant almost a month had passed since they had last published a tweet to their followers.



Figure 2: A screenshot from Quill Shift Literary Agency's Twitter account showcasing the last time they had posted.

While the consistency is a problem, the hashtags #writetip and #worldbuilding allowed their tweets to appear in channels frequented by writers, therefore placing their company in the eyes of potential clients and consumers. The final hashtag, #useyourquill, is unique to Quill Shift Literary Agency. No one else has utilized the clever saying, which is a shame. It is a tool with untapped potential, which I will expand upon in the Recommendations > Branding section.

Weeks, and months, passed before Quill Shift Literary Agency posted on their Twitter account again. In fact, it was within the last week of my observation that they finally broke their online dry spell.

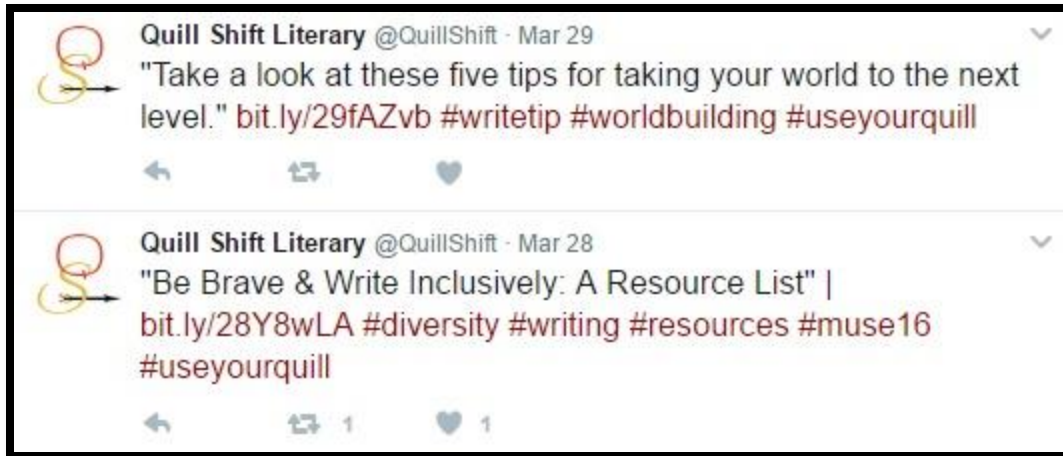


Figure 3: A screenshot of the only two tweets published during my project from Quill Shift Literary Agency's Twitter account.

By the end of the observation period, I considered any activity a miracle, so two tweets in one week was revolutionary.

The hashtags, once more, should be noted. #useyourquill appears again, along with #writetip and #worldbuilding. Additionally, #diversity, #writing, #resources, and #muse16 show up. Hashtags, used correctly, are an effective way to reach intended audiences.

## LinkedIn

The first week of analysis revealed that Quill Shift Literary Agency had not posted on their LinkedIn account since August 2016.

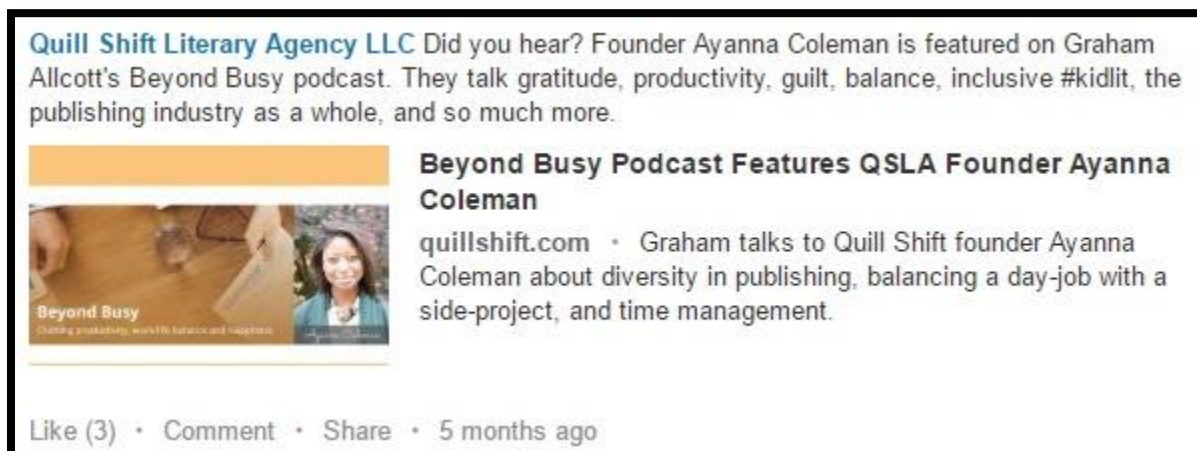


Figure 4: Original screenshot of Quill Shift Literary Agency's LinkedIn profile, taken for Week 1 Review (January 13<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>, 2017) for analysis.

At this point in time, this was the last time the company utilized LinkedIn.

Unlike the surprise, Twitter posts at the end of week eleven, Quill Shift Literary Agency did not post once on their LinkedIn profile during my entire observation.

## Google+

The first week of analysis revealed that Quill Shift Literary Agency had not posted on their Google+ account since July 2016. This is when I began sensing a pattern.

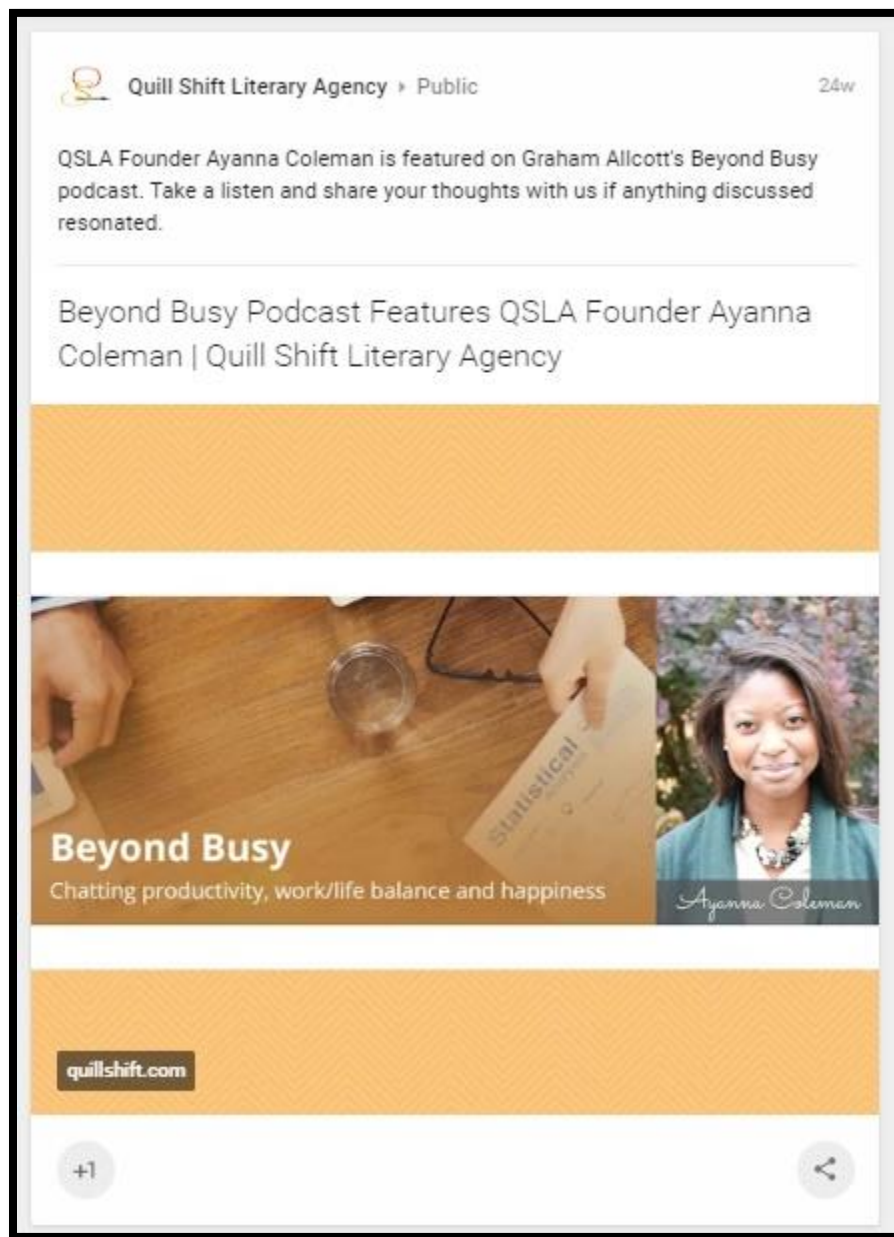


Figure 5: Original screenshot of Quill Shift Literary Agency's Google+ profile, taken for Week 1 Review (January 20<sup>th</sup>, 2017) for analysis.

## Analysis

To engage in any form of transaction with a company, one must have trust or confidence in said company or their products. It is the companies job to inspire this trust or confidence, and Quill Shift Literary Agency has failed. Thoroughly.

One of the services Quill Shift offers to their clients on their website is Social Media Assistance, but how could an aspiring author feel assured the associates at Quill Shift would boost their social media prowess and help sell their book when the company itself cannot even post on their own online accounts to begin with?

Faith is lost before it can ever be built.

Contact (bridging the gap from company to client/consumer) is limited. For the duration of my project, non-existent. Additionally, Quill Shift never responded to either of my emails. As my weekly blog reviews illustrate, for a time, I worried over the idea that Quill Shift was no longer in business. At one point, I questioned their practices.

With no social media activity across the board in a month and a half, I'm concerned. I'm starting to question if they're even a company anymore. What are they doing? Is there a new project taking up all their time? If so, why aren't they posting about it? Hyping people up? On the other end of the spectrum, is something personal going on? ...I love the mission of the company, but will having their name on my resume mean anything? Truly?

Furthermore, I cannot imagine how prospective clients must feel, especially if they know any better. But if they don't and pursue them, anyway? Are they going to receive the best service in this industry? I cannot confidently say yes because of my observations these last few weeks. (1)

Publishing, like restaurants and retail, is a customer and client-oriented business. In Quill Shift's case, the focus is on the writers and readers, whom they are failing to contact (ie. connect) with. However, content is as important (if not more) as contact, which will be further examined in this proposal later. For now, it appears their current attempts have not received a strong response, given the low numbers of retweets and favorites.

For instance, both tweets (Figure 3) combined were not as noticed as their singular one (Figure 2) posted three months before. This could be a combination of content and consistency; without having a look at their Twitter analytics, along with the current activity through those separate hashtags, it is impossible to determine.

Nevertheless, it appears that Quill Shift, even with these appropriately implemented hashtags (“#writetip,” “#worldbuilding,” and “#writing”) struggle to bridge that gap. Furthermore, the untapped potential of #useyourquill should be reiterated. The saying is clever, relevant, and encapsulating; in the Recommendations section, I will provide several suggestions that, if followed, will enable Quill Shift to both build and grow a dedicated audience.

Returning to the topic of content, I discovered a crucial error: the podcast link – their only form of non-textual media or marketing from my research – no longer works. Additionally, the dates of the Google+ announcement do not match those from their LinkedIn profile. July and August, though only one month apart, reveal a glaring issue within their social media marketing capabilities, proving once more to prospective clients that if they cannot market their own company, how will they bolster authors’ online presences?

Because of Quill Shift Literary Agency’s lack of online activity, my weekly reviews were also spent comparing them to a similarly sized literary agency, 3 Seas Literary Agency, along with Penguin Random House. In the next two sections, Quill Shift Literary Agency’s usage and content will be compared to 3 Seas Literary Agency and Penguin Random House.

## Usage Comparison

Quill Shift Literary Agency posted little to nothing on all three of their accounts during my observation period. They were nowhere near achieving the recommended posting levels set by experts (see Table 4, page 21), and I assume this is because they did not have a plan set in place for posting to begin with. When it comes to businesses, half of them fail because they do not have a plan, and I feel this is the same case with social media.

### **3 Seas Literary Agency**

3 Seas Literary Agency is a full-service literary agency that began in 2000. Now, they represent more than fifty authors, whom have appeared on the New York Times, USA Today, and Publishers Weekly Best Sellers lists.

Below, a table illustrates how often 3 Seas posted on Twitter and Facebook – their two, online outlets – during this project.

| <b>Week</b>   | <b>Twitter</b> | <b>Facebook</b> |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| <b>1 (Jan. 13-20<sup>th</sup>)</b>                  | 8              | 2               |
| <b>2 (Jan. 21<sup>st</sup>-27<sup>th</sup>)</b>     | 5              | 5               |
| <b>3 (Jan. 28<sup>th</sup>-Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>)</b> | 11             | 3               |
| <b>4 (Feb. 4<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>)</b>      | 11             | 2               |

|   |    |   |
|---|----|---|
| <b>5 (Feb. 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>)</b>     | 15 | 3 |
| <b>6 (Feb 18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>)</b>      | 7  | 5 |
| <b>7 (Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>-Mar. 3<sup>rd</sup>)</b> | 8  | 4 |
| <b>8 (Mar.4<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>)</b>       | 8  | 4 |
| <b>9 (Mar. 11<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup>)</b>     | 6  | 2 |
| <b>10 (Mar. 18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>)</b>    | 1  | 0 |
| <b>11 (Mar. 25<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup>)</b>    | 2  | 1 |

**Table 1: 3 Seas Literary Agency’s social media activity on Twitter and Facebook between January 13<sup>th</sup>-March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017.**

On average, 3 Seas Literary Agency posts seven times on Twitter and four times on Facebook each week. While this number is still far below expert recommendation (see Table 4, page 21), they have nearly four times the amount of Twitter followers than Quill Shift does (4,222 to 1,089), so they must be doing something right.

### **Penguin Random House**

Penguin Random House is one of – if not the – most recognizable name(s) in publishing. Predictably, this is reflected through their large, online platform. Below, a table illustrates how often Penguin Random House posted on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Tumblr – four out of their six, online outlets – during this project.

| <b>Week</b> | <b>Twitter</b> | <b>Facebook</b> | <b>Instagram</b> | <b>Tumblr</b> |
|-------------|----------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|
| <b>1</b>    | N/A            | 17              | 3                | 6             |
| <b>2</b>    | 31             | 20              | 1                | 5             |
| <b>3</b>    | 78             | 24              | 5                | 6             |
| <b>4</b>    | 75             | 22              | 2                | 2             |
| <b>5</b>    | 75             | 24              | 2                | 0             |
| <b>6</b>    | 62             | 17              | 2                | 0             |
| <b>7</b>    | 86             | 24              | 3                | 3             |
| <b>8</b>    | 100            | 23              | 2                | 6             |
| <b>9</b>    | 73             | 19              | 3                | 1             |
| <b>10</b>   | 62             | 16              | 3                | 3             |
| <b>11</b>   | 72             | 19              | 4                | 1             |

**Table 2: Penguin Random House’s social media activity on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Tumblr between January 13<sup>th</sup>-March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017.**

Due to the larger numbers and numerous platforms, I have created another table below, displaying the amount Penguin posts on each platform per week and day.



| <b>Platform</b>  | <b>Posts Per Week</b> | <b>Posts Per Day</b> |
|------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Twitter</b>   | 71                    | 10                   |
| <b>Facebook</b>  | 20                    | 3                    |
| <b>Instagram</b> | 3                     | >1                   |
| <b>Tumblr</b>    | 3                     | >1                   |

**Table 3: Penguin Random House’s weekly and daily (rounded) social media activity on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, and Tumblr between January 13<sup>th</sup>-March 31st, 2017.**

Aside from Facebook, Penguin surprisingly posts below expert recommendation (see Table 4, page 21). However, with more than a million Twitter followers, 600,000 Facebook likes, and 147,000 Instagram followers, Penguin Random House has no need to continue to build their consumer base. The focus of their social media now is to promote their brand, market their products (authors), and sustain interest in both.

## **Conclusion**

Quill Shift Literary Agency is not posting enough to build and grow their audience base, nevertheless keep interest in their brand or products (authors). Having only posted twice in an eleven-week timespan, they are hurting themselves more than helping themselves, especially when small businesses need to work harder than “the big guys” to succeed. Quill Shift needs to put the effort in so they have their own chance in the spotlight. How they can, and should, do so is outlined in the Recommendations section further in this proposal. First, however...

3 Seas Literary Agency and Penguin Random House see success because they make contact with their clients and consumers on a regular basis, generating continued confidence and trust within them. Though, as I have stated before, content is just as important – if not more so – than making contact. In the next section of this proposal, content will be discussed.

## **Content Comparison**

Quill Shift Literary Agency posted little on all three of their accounts during my observation period. Researching further back, however, I realized their posts were not as engaging as they could be. This became even more apparent while shadowing 3 Seas Literary Agency and Penguin Random House.

### **3 Seas Literary Agency**

As I followed 3 Seas Literary Agency, I realized, above all else, the love they have for their authors. Nearly every week, the founder – Michelle Grajkowski – made sure to spotlight the agency’s various authors, whether the book was sold, published, or received an award/outstanding review. Below, I have compiled several highlights with commentary.



Figure 6: Original screenshot of 3 Seas Literary Agency’s Twitter profile, taken for Week 3 Review (January 28<sup>th</sup>-Feb. 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2017) for comparison.

With these two tweets, Grajkowski effortlessly promotes both her authors and company.

First, through announcing that she will attend a writing conference. This allows her to further make connections with other attending, industry professionals, and for those who wish to connect with her – whether as a publisher, editor, or writer – they now have an idea of how to. In publishing, connections are everything, and Grajkowski recognizes that. This is not the only time during my observation that I witness her speaking of a conference or event she has been to / will attend again.

Second, Grajkowski supports one of her authors, Katie MacAlister. A quick glance at MacAlister’s Twitter suggests she is a New York Times bestselling author and has a serious love for writing about vampires.

It's a no-brainer that Grajkowski supports MacAlister, since she is one of her many chart-topping writers, but her promotion is not exclusive. As I stated above, I noticed how much love 3 Seas has for its authors, so it is no surprise when Grajkowski equally supports one of her newer clients, Kerrelyn Sparks:



**Figure 7: Original screenshot of 3 Seas Literary Agency's Facebook profile, taken for Week 4 Review (February 4<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 2017) for comparison.**

Promoting – rather, supporting – their authors is the quality that stands out most when it comes to 3 Seas' online activity. When this continually occurs throughout their online activity, as I have noted throughout my weekly reviews, this generates feelings of confidence and trust within the company, which was – is – sorely lacking with Quill Shift Literary Agency. An excerpt from one of my weekly reviews dives into such:

When comparing Quill's lack of activity (or lacktivity) to 3 Seas' Twitter feed, I noticed Quill's negligence even more. 3 Seas, within the last week and on their Twitter alone, posted five times. Two of those posts are directly related to one of their clients' success.

Michelle Grajkowski - the founder of 3 Seas Literary Agency - has put her best foot forward when it comes to her company. Moreover, consistency exists between her social media platforms where Quill experienced posting discrepancies. (2)

Further into my weekly reviews, I even admitted that if Quill Shift ran their social media the way 3 Seas did, then all of my concerns would not exist. This is because 3 Seas makes a point to show their support for their authors while promoting their brand. 3 Seas puts effort into their business, which makes prospective clients, consumers, or connections (myself included) feel confident and assured that they would put the same effort in their work.

Trust exists with 3 Seas, and because of it, the issues with Quill Shift’s social media are only more glaringly obvious.

In the next figure, however, Grajkowski goes beyond simple support.



Figure 8: Original screenshot of 3 Seas Literary Agency’s Twitter profile, taken for Week 4 Review (February 4<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 2017) for comparison.

This figure reveals that Grajkowski promotes Kerrelyn Sparks on both Facebook and Twitter – not a month apart, either – which increases views and follows on all platforms. Along with Sparks, another of their authors, Alexis Morgan, is spotlighted through a popular, marketing tactic: flash sales.

Flash sales are wonderful techniques to boost sales, and promoting them only increases those numbers even more. While this is remarkable, there are still two more, distinguishing tweets in the above figure.

The two middle tweets provide a description for a desired book followed by the MSWL hashtag. For those unfamiliar, it stands for Manuscript Wish List. The hashtag allows readers some insight on what the market is seeking, and more specifically, what their favorite agents are looking for. Participating in #MSWL guarantees a few submissions, which could mean acquiring the next best seller.

3 Seas celebrates it all, though, which adds to the genuine love and support viewers feel.

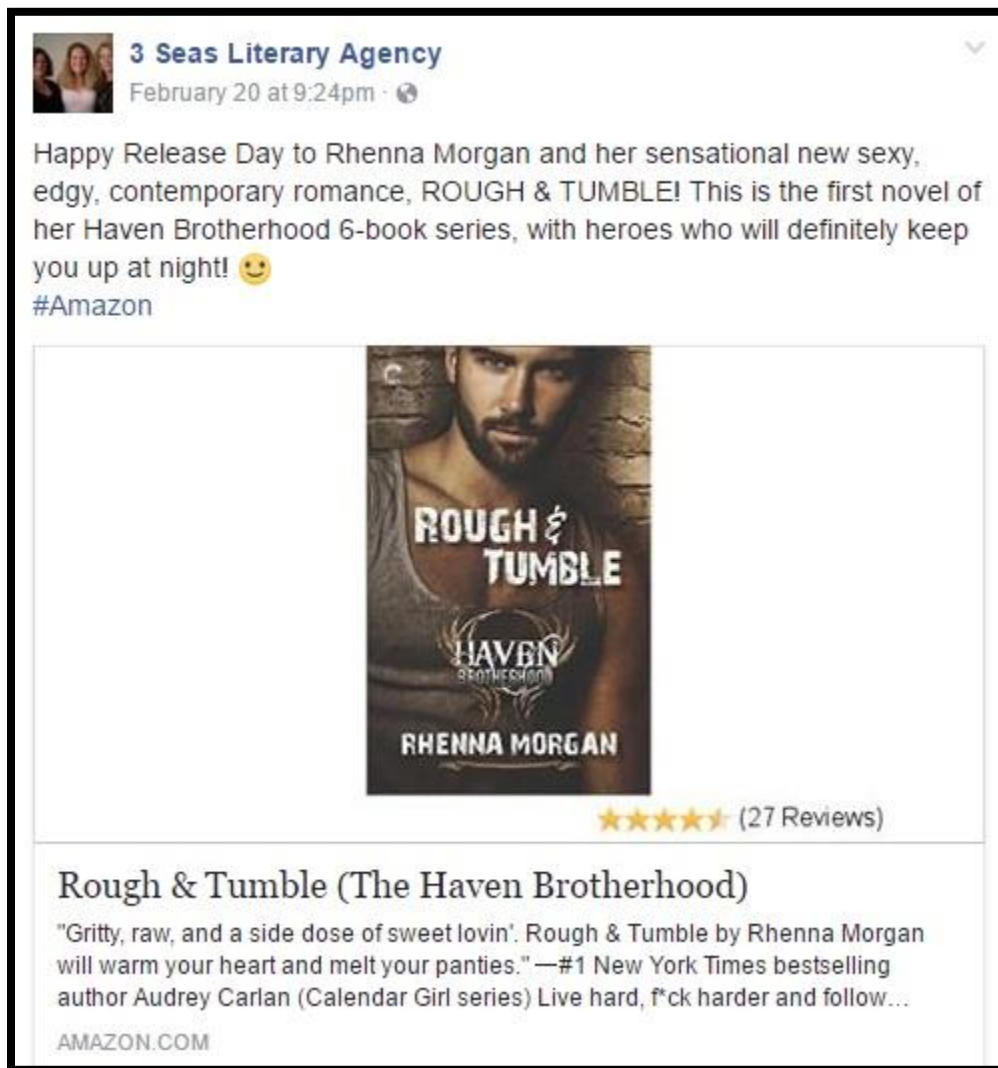
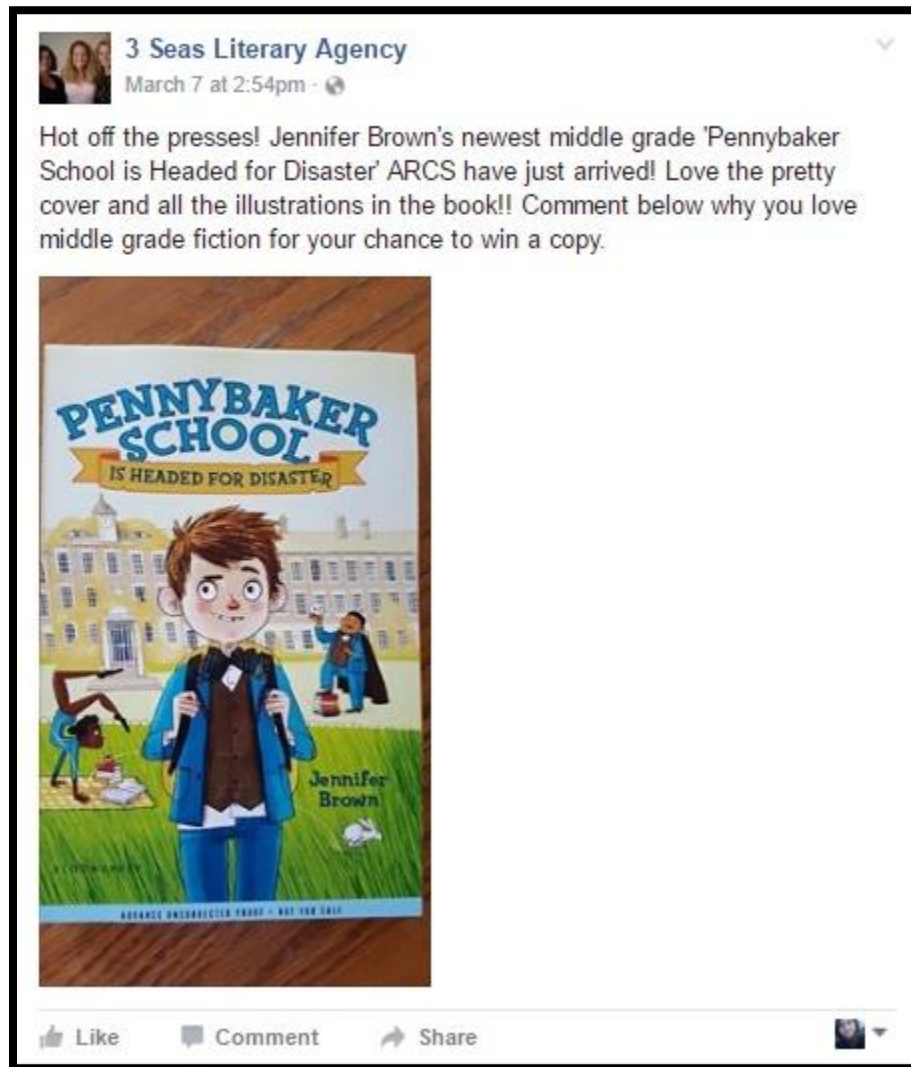


Figure 9: Original screenshot of 3 Seas Literary Agency’s Facebook profile, taken for Week 6 Review (February 18<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 2017) for comparison.

Happy Release Day, indeed. Throughout the duration of my shadowing of 3 Seas, there were several Release Days, all accompanied with congratulations and links. Some even included contests to generate excitement:



**Figure 10: Original screenshot of 3 Seas Literary Agency’s Facebook profile, taken for Week 8 Review (March 4<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 2017) for comparison.**

Another wonderful marketing tactic from 3 Seas, spreading writerly awareness and involving their audience. If I were a client, I know I could not ask for more support from an agency, which is why so many examples have been displayed in their content section.

Compared to the greats like Penguin Random House, 3 Seas Literary Agency is small but mighty. They have achieved so much because they have put both the effort and mind in, taking care with each social media post on each platform to ensure maximum impact. I even say in a

weekly review, “3 Seas Literary Agency has a phenomenal handle on what it means to be both active and effective online, and Quill Shift Literary Agency could learn quite a bit from them.”

If 3 Seas Literary Agency were a person, they should be Quill Shift Literary Agency’s role model, for which they strive to follow in every footstep. In this case, emulation breeds success, and the same could be said if they followed Penguin Random House.

## Penguin Random House

Penguin Random House has an endless supply of quality content given their vast repertoire of published pieces, whether through their title print or one of their nearly 250 child imprints, such as but not limited to: Viking Books, Putnam, Razorbill, and The Crown Publishing Group.

Like 3 Seas Literary Agency, Penguin Random House utilizes images, links, marketing tactics such as giveaways, and various release day or awards announcements to connect with their large audience.

A few examples with brief commentary have been inserted below.



Figure 11: Original screenshot of Penguin Random House’s Twitter profile for comparison.

I selected these two back-to-back tweets for one simple reason: Quill Shift Literary Agency prides itself on its diversity. In fact, it is one of the first words I associate them with. So these two are both wonderful resources and goals for them.

By resources, I mean that Quill Shift can utilize these lists as an example of what they are seeking from possible submissions. Diversity is usually cut-and-dry, but to some, small plugs of color or situational conflicts not intrinsic to the plot or main characters constitutes such a label. With this, Quill Shift could further define what they want to represent.

By goals, I mean that Quill Shift should strive to be a number on one of Penguin’s lists someday. As a proponent of diverse publishing, if they would cultivate their authors in the same manner as either 3 Seas Literary Agency or Penguin Random House themselves, then this feat is possible.

Additionally, Quill Shift should strive to post similar content, a.k.a. content that represents their brand and engages the audience they want to connect with. Speaking of engagement:

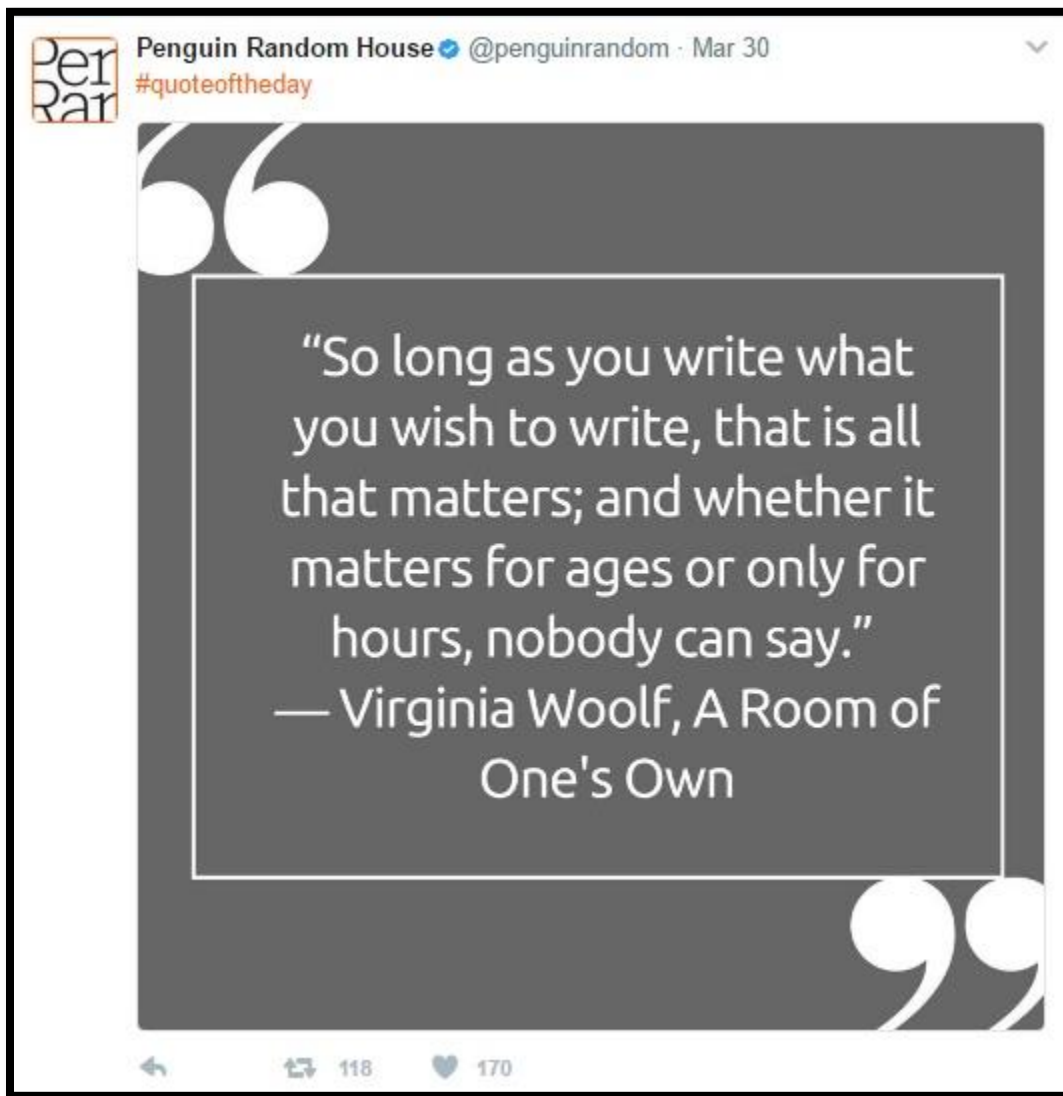


Figure 12: Original screenshot of Penguin Random House’s Twitter profile for comparison.



Hashtags are vital when one wishes to connect with various groups of people on the internet, Twitter especially. Posting a quote of the day enables Penguin to reach their audience with relevant content, possibly even inspiring them afterwards. This results in endless generation, boosting how the brand is received that much more. Though it is a tactic to its core, its useful all the same.



**Figure 13: Original screenshot of Penguin Random House’s Twitter profile for comparison.**

Another marketing tactic that frequents Penguin’s page is the above post. Scrolling through their Twitter feed, one sees quite a few of them as the blue tones catch the eye. But is the price and constant availability an effective sales technique?

A fellow writer friend of mine, the award-winning Katie Cross, conducted a study which proved that offering books at \$0.99 was phenomenal for sales, far outweighing other promotions (3). Where 3 Seas only had one flash sale occurring the entire time of my observation, Penguin has them often with multiple titles, increasing their sales tenfold.

These marked-down titles are also given a certain spotlight. If they do well enough, they can return to the best-selling charts, as they are counted by total volume rather than price sums. So while the love is not as clearly there as it is with 3 Seas, Penguin is effective in its promotion, which is a concept Quill Shift sorely lacks.



**Figure 14: Original screenshot of Penguin Random House’s Twitter profile for comparison.**

Lastly, Penguin, again, engages their audience on a regular basis through connecting readers to librarians via the #askalibrarian hook. This hashtag is unique to them, and Penguin maximizes on its potential through the fact that most books recommended are published by Penguin or through an imprint of Penguin.

Furthermore, Penguin strengthens relations with the professional men and women on the front line: librarians. Librarians manage libraries from stocking the shelves, doling out recommendations, organizing various events, and so forth. Having librarians as an ally is a magnificent opportunity to promote one’s brand.

Additionally, one aspect of Penguin’s content rises above the rest: their use of video.

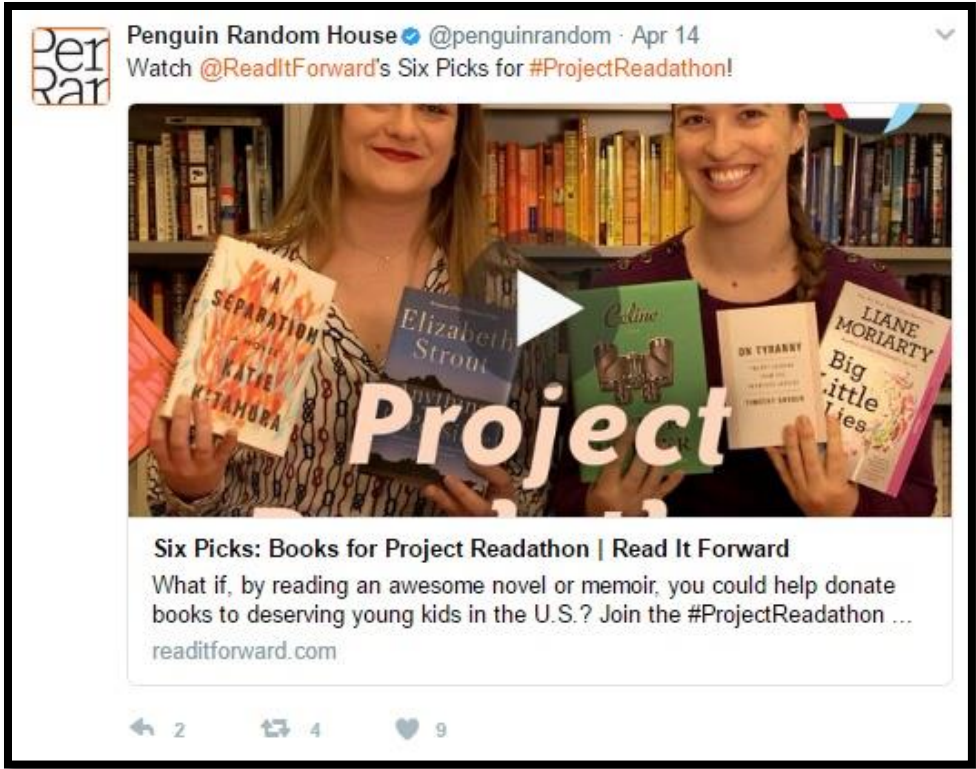


Figure 15: Original screenshot of Penguin Random House’s Twitter profile for comparison.

Read It Forward is a venture created and supported by Penguin Random House. This is not the only time Penguin has utilized video, though.



Figure 16: Original screenshot of Penguin Random House’s Happy Holidays video for comparison.

Figure 16 is a screenshot from Penguin's 2015 Happy Holidays video. Videos, just like movies, can say more with less when compared with books and articles. In just under a minute, the video illustrates what the Penguin Random House legacy is through its careful use of branding, persuasion, and creativity.

In the first frame, books border the video, and in the seconds after, the audience is introduced to a penguin. Not just any penguin, though. The very same penguin in Penguin Random House's logo. Within seconds, this is a successful stab at establishing branding. Halfway through the video — as the penguin wobbles down the hallway — the audience glimpses popular titles and publications from that previous year, further promoting the brand. Then, at the end, books are gifted for the holidays and every animal in the room, whether penguin or dog, is reading by the fireplace.

Penguin Random House's logo or identity is front and center in every frame of the holiday video. So, while the recording is meant for well wishes, they have incorporated their brand so well into it that it doubles as an advertisement.

In terms of persuasion, it is a successful advertisement because of the rhetorical technique pathos, which hones into the emotions of the audience. There's something nostalgic about watching animated animals on a screen; it takes you back to the childhood days of Saturday cartoons. Therefore, the audience can identify with the on-screen penguin despite the fact we are not penguins ourselves.

Additionally, the penguin represents a family member, further showcased by the scene inside the home with the living room, gift-giver, baby penguin playing blocks, and pet dog. Furthermore, this moment in particular warms the heart because of the scene itself; the image of sitting by the fireplace with family is endlessly relatable, whether the audience member experiences this themselves each year or is familiar with it through television and film. This act of storytelling draws the audience in, as it has always done.

To combine penguins and books — the staples of Penguin Random House's brand — is no easy feat. However, in this video, they seem to pull it off flawlessly. It is hard to imagine this holiday recording as anything else despite the fact that it is so uniquely Penguin Random House. Or perhaps, that is why.

Penguin Random House was able to reach this label of creativity — of perfecting this video for their brand — because of how well they know themselves. Because of this, their legacy reached through the screen to everyone that viewed it. This video represents content at its finest.

## Conclusion

Quill Shift Literary Agency disappoints in not only consistency but content as well. The agency is neither connecting with their audience enough nor representing their brand through all the facets that make it unique and desirable for potential clients.

3 Seas Literary Agency and Penguin Random House succeed because of their content even if their numbers do not match expert recommendation for social media marketing. Quality over quantity, as the saying goes.

However, with this final section, if followed, Quill Shift Literary Agency could have it both.

## Recommendations

In this section, recommendations have been suggested in various areas based on my eleven-week observation and subsequent usage and content comparisons. Afterwards, all figures, tables, and textual references will be sourced separately.

## Schedule

Nathan Ellring from CoSchedule Blog drew from ten social media studies to compile the ultimate infographic for people wondering how often to post on various social media platforms (4). Rather than import the long and narrow infographic here, below is a table summarizing the relevant information. The infographic even cites *when* to post each day if a stricter schedule is desired, but I left that out due to readability purposes.

| How Often to Post on Social Media |     |      |             |                     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|------|-------------|---------------------|
| Platform                          | Low | High | Recommended | Curate (Reshare)    |
| Facebook                          | 1   | 2    | 1           | 1 every other day   |
| Twitter                           | 1   | 51   | 17          | 7 per day           |
| Pinterest                         | 3   | 30   | 11          | At least 5 per day  |
| LinkedIn                          | 0   | 1    | 1           | 1 every other day   |
| Google+                           | 0   | 3    | 2           | 1 every other day   |
| Instagram                         | 1   | 3    | 1-2         | Only when necessary |

Table 4: “How Often to Post on Social Media” infographic turned into a table for legibility and brevity.

With Quill Shift Literary Agency having Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google+, the majority of their efforts should be focused on Twitter. Twitter seems to be the hub for the literary industry, anyway, given this is where the majority of followers accumulate for both 3 Seas Literary Agency and Penguin Random House. If I were running Quill Shifts social media, I would focus my time on Twitter while still maintaining a presence on LinkedIn and Google+. As for adding

new online outlets, I would consider either Pinterest and Instagram due to their large, young, and diverse user base. Twitter should always be the focus, though.

## **Blog**

Become the proponent of diversity mentioned all over Twitter, and become the voice of diversity with a blog. This is another avenue for engagement without the length limitations. The blog format allows one to dive deeper into touchy topics, which diversity in literature is full of, especially with how diversity is portrayed.

Additionally, a blog would provide linkable content for the Twitter, LinkedIn, and Google+ platforms above, promoting the company further. Moreover, if the blog allowed guest submissions from diverse writers, this would give those writers another space to share their voice and explain why diversity is so important in modern literature.

The possibilities are endless with a blog, especially once it's up, rolling, and gaining attention from key figures in the industry.

## **Diverse Media**

Content that varies catches the eye of the consumer best (5). Text, static images, moving images like .GIFs, interviews and podcasts in the form of videos, and more. Currently, Penguin Random House exemplifies this, and Quill Shift Literary Agency should strive to. Relevant images should accompany most posts – as those tend to gain the most traction – but I suggest Quill Shift also spends some time creating videos as well.

Video in social media is a trend only expected to climb. By 2019, 80% of all internet traffic is estimated to be video (6). That being said, these video productions do not need to be elaborate affairs. BuzzFeed, INSIDER, Tasty, and other media outlets excel in this sector of social media because of their simple, straightforward approach.

For Quill Shift, this could mean introducing books, new authors, diverse writing prompts, or creating a “Call to Action” type video in which they open their submissions for diverse books. I would suggest at least one video a week, but it seems Quill Shift does not have that sort of business yet. However, if Quill Shift seeks to create videos on various platforms, they need to know the video length allotments to post within.

| Platform  | Maximum Video Length    |
|-----------|-------------------------|
| Facebook  | 120 minutes             |
| Twitter   | (Recommends) 60 seconds |
| Instagram | 60 seconds              |

**Table 5: Excerpt from “26 Ways to Use Videos for Social Media Marketing” article turned into a table.**

While I would never recommend a video longer than three minutes on Facebook (allowing for longer videos to be posted on YouTube), sixty seconds on Twitter or Instagram is the perfect amount of time to give snapshots into new releases, new authors, or promote what it means to be a shifter (reader that gives feedback on manuscripts) or an author under Quill Shift Literary Agency.

### **Interaction, Promotion, and Outreach**

The key to effective social media platforms is interacting with the userbase. To do so, one must engage them, form connections, and continually strengthen them through holding their interest with quality content and consistent posting.

With Twitter, this means hashtags and mentions. With them, one can weave themselves into an industry tweet by tweet. And with these connections, with this slow branching out, the followers will come. When they come, one should continue to interact with them.

In terms of Quill Shift Literary Agency, they should emulate Penguin Random House. Penguin weekly engages their audience through #askalibrarian and #quoteoftheday, and Quill Shift should strive to do the same in a way that best represents their company, or rather, their brand.

When I think of Quill Shift, I think of diverse writing in the modern age, as publishing moves from strictly print to also online. Digital media – digital literature – is a trend that Quill Shift intends to hone in on while also representing a minority group. This is the audience Quill Shift needs to focus on for promotion and outreach, but promotion and outreach can only stem from interaction.

Attaching hashtags such as #diversty, #diversityinwriting, #diverselit, #diverseya, #diversebooks, and so on, to any and all promotional images, articles, or announcements will help boost follows and future views. Capitalizing on #useyourquill, however, is one way to create engagement through weekly writing prompts, further defining the brand.

### **Branding**

Branding is key to standing out from the crowd, and Quill Shift Literary Agency — from first glance at their logo and about section — has uniqueness in spades. By honing in on their brand

and exploiting their various, attractive traits, they could potentially create both meaningful and marketable content just as 3 Seas Literary Agency and Penguin Random House have done.

Content, as stated before, is how one forms connections. This content needs to represent their brand in every way, shape, and form, though. Where Penguin Random House exceeded in this with their Happy Holidays video from 2015, this is because Penguin knows who they are; Quill Shift needs to learn the same.

If I were Quill Shift, I would start with #useyourquill, as it is a tool with untapped potential. Using your quill, as they say, is a way to encourage writers to write in a whole, new way. Quill Shift is the only person or entity to utilize this saying, which is a great shame, given the platform is could create to showcase diverse voices.

As stated in the previous subsection, tagging this saying alongside weekly prompts or tips and asking all followers to use the hashtag after creating work based on said prompts or tips would increase engagement and outreach, further promoting the brand under a guise of encouraging those to write (which all writers could always use a bit more of).

Though they have been a company since 2013, I know their brand only from the word “diverse” and the explanation of their name, which is found scarcely throughout their platforms. If this is their brand, it is not apparent, and it is only to me due to digging deeper for this project. However, the scope of the brand can build as Quill Shift Literary Agency learns who they are, what they stand for, and what their goals are in the literary world. Then, they must create a plan that aligns with those ideals and stick with it.

## Conclusion

Quill Shift Literary Agency is a newborn baby: still finding its place in the world, wondering who they are, and struggling to communicate that. They may be on their fourth year of business, but as far as I am concerned, they are starting from scratch.

I firmly believe Quill Shift has failed with social media marketing because they do not have a plan, and like many that try to navigate the waters of these online platforms, simply do not know what they are doing or how they should be doing it because it seems as easy as one-two-three.

If that were the case, though, I would be writing about another company.

Quill Shift Literary Agency is sorely lacking in their online presence. So much so, it seems more of an absence. To be successful – to even compete with comparable companies – they need to post more, post with thought, and connect to their intended audience through those posts.



With this proposal, I hope their eyes are opened and that they can become the company I imagine they could be, the one I would be proud to work or write for.

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