

Case Study: Hello Whangārei



Building an Engaged Local Audience from Zero

The Idea

When I came back to Whangārei after almost 12 years away, I noticed something.

The city had plenty of online community spaces, but most of them were dominated by complaints, lost cats, and speed bump debates. The good stuff, the interesting people, the hidden gems, the stories worth telling — weren't getting much airtime.

So I built a place for it.

Hello Whangārei launched on 31 March 2026 as an editorial Facebook page celebrating local people, businesses, food, and culture. The voice was warm and deliberate: *think of it as running into a friend who always knows what's good.*

What it wasn't, from day one, was accidental. I wanted to grow a community.

The Strategy Behind It

Hello Whangārei grew out of a genuine desire to do something positive for my home town. But with a content strategist behind it, every decision had a purpose.

Content worth coming back for every day of the week. Five content pillars, one per day, Monday to Friday — with room to become daily as capacity allows.

- Monday: creative and arts
- Tuesday: local business spotlight
- Wednesday: café and food reviews
- Thursday: Faces of Whangārei (community profiles)
- Friday: community prize draw (from the local business spotlight)



Each pillar serves a different reader's need. Together, they create a reason to come back every day of the week. Whether they actively search for this page or not, the algorithm does that work for me — because content with high engagement reaches non-followers too.

Editorial standards, not social media standards. Every post was written in a consistent style — warm, person-first, single topic, no links in captions. Profiles ran to approximately 350 words. The writing was given the same care as a published feature.

A giveaway mechanic that actually worked. The giveaway prize draw used a tag-a-friend mechanic — designed to grow reach organically without forced page follows or paid promotion. Every single follower came in through genuine interest or a personal recommendation.

This was a deliberate call. Forcing a page follow as a condition of entry can artificially inflate numbers, and it works against you. Disinterested followers don't engage, signalling to the algorithm that your audience isn't genuinely interested.

A smaller, highly engaged following outperforms a larger, disengaged one every time.

No ad spend. Ever. Every view, every follower, every comment was earned through content alone.

The Results

In 2 months — from 31 March to 31 May 2026:

- **780,100** content views
- **113,000** unique viewers
- **15,100** content interactions
- **1200** link clicks
- **1700** followers
- **14,500** Facebook page visits

All organic. All earned.

The Human Proof

Numbers tell part of the story. The comments tell the rest.

A profile I wrote of local artist Mike Paora — part of the Faces of Whangārei series — moved him to tears. He reached out to say so. He wasn't the only one.

I drive engagement by committing to reply to every comment. But when a single post generated over 45,000 views, more than 750 comments, and over 850 interactions, I had to physically draw the line.

That's what purposeful content does. It doesn't just reach people; it lands.



What This Demonstrates

Hello Whangārei is a live case study in what happens when content strategy is applied with consistency, authenticity and genuine intent.

The same thinking that built this audience is what I bring to client work — understanding who you're talking to, what they need to feel, and how to build trust one post at a time.

That's the opportunity. Not to go viral, but to create a content strategy that keeps your customers engaged and informed, in all the right ways.

If you're wondering what that could look like for your business, let's talk.

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<https://www.facebook.com/hellowhangarei/>