Social Media Basics

This document includes strategies for optimizing social media use in a university setting. Social media platforms are broken down with statistics relating to optimal posting days, times, and storytelling methods for most used social platforms by college-aged students. Find information regarding IU Social Media Guidelines here: http://www.iu.edu/~pagr/docs/social-media-guidelines.pdf

Strategy when posting content on social media:

• 50% curated content
  o sharing stories/linking to other sites & information
• 30% original content
  o original stories linking back to own website to generate conversation
• 20% promotional content
  o call to action on the audience

Storytelling with social media: Journalistic Digital Media Pyramid

Lead your posts and captions with the 5 basic W’s —

1. Who is this post about?

2. What are you/they trying to tell us?

3. When is it going to happen?

4. Where can I find it/where can I find more information about it?

5. How is it happening? How can I get involved? Why is it important to me?

Your caption should be an opener for what you are setting up to come next. Following the initial caption should be a link to further information (if you have one, such as a blog post of event, etc.).

Next is visualization. This is probably one of the most important parts of your storytelling process. This is what is going to capture the attention of your audience and lead them to read your caption. It needs to be visually appealing. If it is a design or graphic, it needs to be clean
and precise. If you’re creating an event or something that you want people to participate in, graphics are the way to go, as many people won’t take the time to read a caption. They will get all of their information from that graphic, so it needs to be straight to the point, including the 5W’s on graphic.

The last piece is links to your other social platforms. Social media is amazing in the sense that everything can be cross promoted. Utilize this ability to its full advantage. If it’s an Instagram photo, also link it to your Facebook and Twitter platforms, etc.

**Choosing Your Platform**

Most social media users are users of all three main platforms — Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. In choosing which platform will best suite your needs, there are two key components to consider. 1. What is the demographic of your audience? 2. What is the message you’re trying to portray?

- **Facebook** — Facebook is a great tool to utilize if you have a ton of different information to put out there, such as links, full stories or 200+ word posts, photos and photo galleries and videos. The Facebook demographic has the largest age range, from 18-65 and has almost equally male and female users. Facebook is also a great platform for generating discussion, as more comments and replies are seen on Facebook than on other platforms.

- **Twitter** — Twitter is a good platform for brief, attention-grabbing information. Posts must be creative and enticing. Twitter is a really good platform for posting links to further, in-depth stories. One of the better options with Twitter is the ability to retweet posts, expanding the network of publics viewing your content. The Twitter demographic is 18-49 and is almost equally male and female.

- **Instagram** — Instagram should always be your go-to method for visualized sharing. Photos and videos are trend right now, and though Facebook and Twitter both also allow photos and videos, the whole idea behind the Instagram platform is for just photos and videos. Instagram’s popularity is growing. Instagram targets a slightly younger demographic of 18-29 and is weighted slightly towards women users.

**Platforms** used most by college students:

- **Facebook** — 95%
- **Twitter** — 80%
- **Snapchat** — 77%
- **Instagram** — 73%

**Optimal Posting Days** by platform:

- **Facebook** — Sunday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday
- **Twitter** — Wednesday, Friday evening, Saturday, and Sunday
- **Instagram** — Monday and Thursday
- **YouTube** — Sunday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday
Optimal Posting Times by platform:

- **Facebook** — 9:00 am, 1:00 pm, 3:00 pm
- **Twitter** — 12:00 pm, 3:00 pm, 5:00-6:00 pm
- **Instagram** — 5:00-6:00 pm, 10:00 pm, 2:00 am
- **YouTube** — 9:00-11:00 am, 12:00-3:00 pm

Using Visuals

- **Facebook**
  - Photos and video increase views by **94%**
  - **Single photos** are received much better than galleries:
    - single photo = 39% more interaction, galleries = 4%
  - Best received **videos** are ~21 seconds in length and **NO MORE THAN 45 SECONDS** in length.
    - Three seconds count as one view on Facebook, so messages need to get across as quickly as possible, even in a 21 second video.

- **Twitter**
  - Photos and video increase views by **63%**
  - **Hashtags** increase engagement by **16%**
  - **Photos** are received **7% better** than video
  - **One click** equals one view on a video — up to 30 seconds in length
  - **Quotes** increase engagement by **19%**

- **Instagram**
  - Instagram increases engagement by **94%** AND is the best platform for integrating other platforms (e.g. Instagram can be linked to share on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and Google+).
  - **38%** increase in likes & comments with faces in photos
  - **26%** increase in likes & comments for photo vs. video
  - **2%** increase with <5 hashtags. **Decrease** in engagement for 6+ hashtags on a post
  - **30 seconds** or less of video time — 3 seconds is equivalent to one view

Image/Graphic Sizing:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Platform</th>
<th>Size</th>
<th>Resolution</th>
<th>File Type</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook cover image</td>
<td>851px W by 351px H</td>
<td>300 ppi</td>
<td>JPG</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facebook news feed</td>
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Creating Your Page

One of the best things about these popular social media platforms is that they are very user friendly. You can easily set up your page and begin managing within minutes. The downside is that you can dedicate a significant amount of time to managing your pages after creation. Consistency and time management are key factors to succeeding on social media. You have now created an identity online, on multiple platforms and they each need to be consistent with one another. Most users are active on at least two platforms. You need to make sure you are keeping all of your information up to date and consistent so you don’t confuse your followers. Scheduling your posts at the beginning of each week is one the best to stay consistent and optimize your time on social media. It allows you plan out your key points for each week and make sure you’re not forgetting information as daily distractions arise. Keep in mind that you’ll also need to be prepared to act spontaneously and make additional posts/change content as opportunities (and issues) occur. If you are operating your social platforms from a mobile device, make sure your notifications are all turned on so you never miss a beat.

Follow these steps per platform to begin your online presence!

Facebook — If you’re not already signed up for Facebook, create an account with your basic personal information. From there, or if you do have an account, you will go in and click the drop down tab on the far right top corner of the site. Note that within Facebook, your “business” account will need to be linked to an individual’s own personal profile. Click on “create page” to get started. This will bring you to a category page. Choose whichever best suites your needs. Facebook will then give you the option to choose some of the basics regarding demographics of your page. Now, your page has been created. From here, everything is really plug and chug. First things first, though, you MUST issue a cover photo and profile picture. This is now your identity. These images are what will express you and your organization and is how people will associate your name with what you post. This is what is going to stick in people’s minds. Next, fill in your ‘About’ section. Tell people who you are and what your cause/mission is, along with further demographics. That’s it. Now you’re ready to start posting! Find friends and connect with people you know and being sharing information.

Twitter — Twitter is very straight forward. Simply go to the homepage and sign up for a new account. Pick a username that is easy to spell and remember and gives some sort of indication of who you are. Then, the same with Facebook, choose your profile picture and photo header. Your profile picture is a very key component on Twitter, as the usernames show up very small on tweets and the thumbnail image is how people are going to know who the
post is from. Create a small bio explaining, again, who you are and what your mission is and add any links to other sites. Start following others and tweeting! Aim to send out 35 tweets a week to being building your presence.

**Instagram** — Setting up your Instagram is basically the same as setting up your Twitter. Create an account and choose a good username. Pick your profile picture and write your bio, also including links to any other sites you have. Start posting! You should aim to post nearly every day. Commenting and liking other photos, along with hash tagging your images will generate the fastest followership and engagement.

**Increasing Social Media Followership**

- **Be a good social media citizen.**
  Social media is just as much about keeping followers as it is gaining new ones — follow back those who have relevance to you (students, alums, staff, partnering businesses/sponsors, Indianapolis residents, etc.)

- **Cross promote.**
  Integrate your social media sites within one another. For example, if you have 1k followers on Twitter, but only 200 on Instagram, begin linking your Instagram photos to Twitter via the link option on Instagram (instead of posting the same image on each platform separately).

- **Add social buttons to EVERYTHING.**
  Blog posts, every page of your website, email/newsletters, all promotional material, etc. Everything that has to do with your brand needs to have links or handles to your social media platforms.

- **SHARE. SHARE. SHARE.**
  When creating content, ask yourself, “Is this worth sharing?” You want to create content that will attract and encourage your current followers to pass it along to all of their followers. Also share content of others that you find would be valuable to your followers!

- **Interactions are key!**
  Be responsive and be timely! Answer questions as soon as you receive them. And remember to thank those who mention you or promote you on their own platforms. While it is always the hope that interactions are positive, this is not always the case. In dealing with negative comments and replies, follow these guidelines to remaining transparent and maintaining rapport:

  1. Never delete a negative comment (unless of course it is inappropriate or harmful to the rest of your publics who may see). This is still an interaction, and deleting the post or comment opens doors to further speculation and criticism.
Respond appropriately and accordingly. Remember, the way you respond is still openly viewed by the rest of your publics.

2. Be brief. If the issue is too grave to address publicly, respond to the account giving them an option contact you directly to resolve the issue. This can most effectively be done by then sending a direct message to the account with your direct contact information, such as an email address.

Tagging & Hashtags

Tagging and hashtags can be a funny game. Tagging is a way to associate your comments/post with particular people, organizations, and/or concepts. All social platforms accept hashtags, but they fluctuate in effectiveness between platforms. When using hashtags (see Wikipedia to learn more about these handy little tools), stick to one word hashtags. No one likes to decipher #whatyouretryingtosaywithallthoseletters. See. Not fun. Keep them short and sweet. Hashtags are a method that allows others to search for a specific hashtags and then generate all of the posts relating to that topic. For example, if I were to search #summer, I would see posts from all public accounts that have used that hashtag. It is smart to research the most popular hashtags for the subject you are posting about.

For hashtags:

**Facebook** — Hashtags are newer to Facebook, and they haven’t quite caught on as well as other platforms. They can be useful in trending topics, but that’s about it. Limit yourself to 0-2 hashtags on Facebook.

**Twitter** — Twitter created the hashtag, but it is only effective in moderation, especially considering the fact that a single tweet alone only allows up to 140 characters. Limit yourself to 0-3 hashtags per tweet.

**Instagram** — Instagram utilizes hashtags the most out of all major social media platforms. A photo with 10-30 hashtags has much higher chances of being seen and generating interaction than those without. BUT, no one wants to read an Instagram caption with that many hashtags, so write your caption and then add your hashtags in a comment below. This allows for others who are not following you to find your images through a hashtag search, but doesn’t annoy your current followers with gibberish they don’t really care about.

**For tagging:** Tagging is successful on all platforms. You should always tag those whom you borrow or repost information from, and can even tag those whom you think your information would be relevant to.

**Facebook** — Facebook is fantastic in the sense that it automatically generates the link to an account for you upon entering the account into your post. Once you see the list of
names pop up as you typing a name, simply just click on it and it will automatically link to that person’s profile.

**Twitter** — The @ sign. That’s all it takes. Simply just @ followed directly by the username. For example, @libartsiupui. Be careful, though. All tagging on Twitter counts towards your 140-character limit.

**Instagram** — Instagram gives you two options to tag people in your photos. It is a combination of both methods from Facebook and Twitter. You can simply click on the “tag people” option during your photo posting process and Instagram will automatically generate the account associated with that name. You can also comment @username on any photo to tag another user.

**Analytics**

**Facebook** — Facebook is great in the sense that you can track the majority of your analytics from the platform directly, for free. Check out the ‘Insights’ tab on your page and you’ll be provided with categories on the left hand side of the page, such as overview, reach, page views, actions on page, etc. These tabs make it very easy to keep track of all of the data associated with your page.

**Twitter** — Twitter also allows free analytics directly from the platform under [www.analytics.twitter.com/YOURACCOUNTUSERNAME](http://www.analytics.twitter.com/YOURACCOUNTUSERNAME). This will give you access to the number of tweets you’ve posted, tweet impressions, profile visits, mentions and followers, as well as your top tweets, top mentions, and top followers. This is a great way to see how your interactions are really working and who is engaging with you the most.

**Instagram** — Instagram analytics unfortunately are not as easily accessible. For a generic profile, your options are somewhat limited in tracking your analytics. There are different websites available that will allow you to link your profile to them, and they will then generate some data for you, but often want some type of compensation in turn. With the ability to see how many followers you have and how many likes and comments that are automatically calculated for you per post, paying for outside analytics is not really necessary. However, if you have a business Instagram account, then insights much like Facebook are available to you.
How you can help us demonstrate that #LiberalArtsWorks

In the School of Liberal Arts, we are working on promoting our #LiberalArtsWorks campaign to demonstrate all of the possibilities that come along with a liberal arts education. As you expand your social media network, we encourage you to join us in these efforts. Here are some ideas:

**Follow us** on digital/social media on the channels below. **Share** our posts.

Facebook [Liberal.Arts.IUPUI](http://Facebook/Liberal.Arts.IUPUI)
Twitter [@libartsiupui](https://Twitter/@libartsiupui)
Flickr [liberalarts_iupui](http://Flickr/liberalarts_iupui)
YouTube [LiberalArtsIUPUI](http://YouTube/LiberalArtsIUPUI)

**Post your own** videos, photos, graphics/charts and word stories on social media. **Showcase** student success, alumni success, employer interest in liberal arts, IUPUI expertise, research on the value of liberal arts, etc. We’re also eager to showcase stories showing the value of liberal arts as a complement to other disciplines: business, science, medicine, engineering and more. Tag us!

**Use hashtag #LiberalArtsWorks** on social media on items that demonstrate that liberal arts works.

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*This document was prepared by Kasandra Zimmerman, journalism and public relations major, student intern for the Liberal Arts Office of Development and External Affairs.*