

SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

The following best practices are provided to help you create and maintain an effective presence on social media while preserving the University's reputation and institutional identity.

Identify yourself

When participating in or maintaining a social media site on behalf of the University, clearly state your role and goals. Keep these in mind as you determine the most effective use of social media to deliver your message. Never hide your identity for the purpose of promoting Scranton through social media.

Be accurate

Make sure that you have all the facts before you post. It's better to verify information with a source first than to have to post a correction or retraction later. Cite and link to your sources whenever possible; after all, that's how you build community. If you make an error, correct it quickly and visibly. This will earn you respect in the online community.

Be respectful

As a member of the Scranton Community, you understand the University's commitment to the freedom of inquiry, respect for others and the civil and thoughtful discussion of ideas. Understand that content contributed to a social media site could encourage comments or discussion of opposing ideas. Responses should be considered carefully in light of how they would reflect on the poster and/or the University and its institutional voice.

Be mindful of copyright laws

Show proper respect for the laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material owned by others. Do not use images retrieved from the web without permission from the author or artist.

Target content to your audience

Post news, events and items that are relevant to your targeted audience. Keep your audience engaged with meaningful and relevant information about the University. Also, make sure to consider the wide range of audience potentially following your site. Before making a post ensure that it will not alienate, harm, or provoke any groups.

Choose appropriate online names and images

When choosing a name for your account, choose something obvious and relevant. When selecting a page image or avatar, stick to simple graphics that represent the Scranton brand and complies with the University's Identity Standards.

Be conversational

Remember to talk to your readers like you would talk to real people in professional situations. Avoid overly pedantic or "composed" language. Consider content that is open ended and invites response. Encourage members of the online community to comment and contribute their thoughts.

Monitoring and upkeep

Assign an administrator who can regularly monitor postings and content. Aim for frequent postings and updates – the recommended frequency is at least once a week. If you invite questions and comments through your blog, Facebook profile, or Twitter account, make sure to respond in a timely fashion

Measure for results

To evaluate post activity and interaction with a community, make use of analytics and tracking tools. Facebook, YouTube and Flickr have built-in analytics for pages. When posting links on any social media site, we recommend using a link tracking service such as bit.ly. Some Twitter applications have this feature built into their software interface for convenience. These tools can help to refine your strategy and better understand you audience’s preferences and behaviors.

Remember

When you create a social media site and list your affiliation to The University, understand that you are representing The University as a whole and that any poor behavior you exhibit reflects poorly on The University.