

Getting Started with Social Media

What is social media?

Social media is any place online where people can interact with each other.

Some examples include:



- Facebook
- Twitter
- Tumblr
- Instagram
- LinkedIn
- Google+



and many more! Remember: if you can interact with another person or group on it, it is Social Media!

Why use social media?

Social media can help your group in many ways.

- Help you find new members
- Help you keep members and supporters informed
- Help you look established
- Help you connect with other organizations and funders



What should I remember when setting up a social media account for my group?

Remember:

- Try to keep the same or similar names for all accounts. That way people can find you easily on new sites.
- Have a logo or group image. A logo or image for your group can help people recognize you on social media. Some people take longer to read than others. Having an image that they can recognize makes it easier for them too.
- Provide as much information as you safely can. This can help your group look established. It also helps your viewers feel safe and that they can come to you for help.
- If you don't have the information, you can come back to it later.
- If your group is using someone's house as an office, it's best to only give a P.O. Box for an address.
- It helps to have accounts on more than one website. For example, ASAN posts to Facebook, Tumblr AND Pinterest. This is because many of our viewers find one of them much more accessible than the others.
- Have more than one person who can access your accounts. Then, if something bad happens to the person who manages them, your group won't lose the accounts!





What should I know about Facebook?

There are some important things to know about Facebook when you are using it as a group.

There's a difference between a **profile**, a **page**, and a **group**.

Profiles

A **profile** is for individual people. You might have a Facebook profile, but your group shouldn't. Facebook has a policy where people can report profiles that aren't actual people. It would be horrible if your group's Facebook got taken down because you used a profile instead!

Pages

A **page** is for groups, ideas, and public figures. Individual profiles can access and manage a page. A page lets you post things as you group. It lets other people see and comment on things you post. You should make sure you make a page for your group.



Example Facebook page — the PADSAs page

Groups

A **group** is a place for people to interact. It can be helpful to have a group on Facebook if your members want to have a space on Facebook to plan or talk about things.

- A group can be **Public**, **Closed**, or **Secret**.
- **Closed** groups mean that people can find the group but can't see the posts unless they are a member.
- You can only join a **Secret** group if someone gives you the link. Keep that in mind when using groups to plan things!



Example Facebook group — Disability Community: Pride and Culture

Getting your posts seen

Facebook has a lot of tools you can use to promote your posts. If you have money in your budget, you can tell Facebook to **promote** a post. That post will then be visible to more people.

Facebook uses a fancy math problem called an algorithm to figure out what to show users. This algorithm only shows people stuff that it 'thinks' they want to see.

Because of this, **most people will not see all your posts.**



The more likes, comments, and shares (“engagement”) a post has, the more likely it is to be seen.

Ask your officers and board to individually like, comment, and share an important post. That way the algorithm knows it’s important. Then it will show it to more people.

Accessibility

Add descriptions to picture posts. This means that they will be accessible to people who can’t see. It also helps people who have trouble understanding pictures.

Don’t write a long description. Just describe the important parts of the image. If there is any writing in the image, you should include that, too.





What should I know about Twitter?

Here are some basic things to know about Twitter:

- Each tweet should be less than 140 characters.
- Consider a **link shortener**. Twitter has one built in. But, other link shorteners give you a better sense of how much space you have while you are writing your tweet.
- If you want your followers to see a response tweet, add a period in front of the @ symbol. So if I'm responding to @nicocoer, I would say ".@nicocoer that's true. Social Media is so helpful in reaching people!"
- **Twitter chats** are useful. Here's a sample twitterchat that @rsocialskills did to show you the format: <https://storify.com/RutiRegan/examplechat>

#Hashtags

A **hashtag** on Twitter is a way to let people group tweets into categories.

- To create a hashtag, type the number sign, which is usually shift + 3 on U.S. keyboards (#). Then, type a word or phrase. Hashtags are important. They let people connect over an issue.
- ASAN has an Award for Service to the Autistic Community. In 2015, it went to Morénike Onaiwu for her work on the **#JusticeforKayleb** hashtag. #JusticeForKayleb was about a student caught in the School-To-Prison pipeline. But your hashtag can be about anything!
- When you're using hashtags, remember not to add any spaces between words. Your tag should be less than 20 characters. This is so that people have space to add their comments.

What should I know about moderation?

What is moderation?

Moderation means watching over the kind of comments people make on your social media accounts. It could mean responding to comments, or deleting them.

Tips for moderating comments



- Keep in mind that **you are acting as the group, not as yourself**. Think about what kind of approach your group uses. If your group tends to sound professional, try to sound like a more casual professional.
- Don't use your personal opinions in responding to people, just the opinions of the group.
- Keep calm when responding as your group. You might feel upset. You might even feel like crying, but make sure that what you type is calm and polite.

Handling threatening messages

If you get a threat, take a **screenshot** and save it in a safe space before you delete the comment. You may want to report it to the police. It will help to keep a note of the time, location, and the home location of your group members.

A screenshot is a picture of your computer screen. Your computer can take screenshots for you.

Taking a screenshot can involve different steps on different types of computers. On some computer keyboards, there is a **"prt sc"** button that allows you to take a screenshot. Or, you might have a program like "Snipping Tool" built-in to your computer.