# SOCIAL MEDIA TOOLKIT

# SOCIAL MEDIA FAQS

### How many and which social media platform(s) should we be using?
For starters, this depends on your organizational capacity. If you only have time to invest in one social media platform, your best bet is probably Facebook. It is still the largest social media platform, particularly focused on information dissemination. After that, if you have the capacity to invest in additional platforms there are a couple of ways to decide which ones are right. If your organization/program is already making videos, then create a YouTube page and post them there. If you regularly have photos of your community, events, etc. it may make sense to set up an Instagram account. *Tip: If you are going to have a presence on more than one platform you can and should repurpose your content – there is no reason to duplicate work. Remember, the most important thing is to build and maintain a regular, active social media presence, so don't bite off more than you can chew.

### How often should we be posting?
The simple answer is whatever you can consistently manage that maintains a regular and reliable presence. You know your capacity. The more complicated answer is that the algorithms for the different social platforms change regularly, so it is difficult to give a definitive answer here. General best practice for Facebook is no more than daily, no less than two times per week. What you don't want is to go weeks without posting anything – then people will stop paying attention to your account. Creating a social media content calendar can help you manage this and take some of the stress out of social media.

### What type of content should we be posting?
To answer this, you have to first answer, what is my goal for social media? What do I want people to know? If you are trying to build public awareness around home visiting, your program, and/or your organization, then that is where you start. Post information related to events, articles about home visiting, graphs and statistics that break down why home visiting is important. In order to get more people invested and participating you will want to post stories and short videos of real people. One great way to know what type of content you should post is to listen. What kinds of questions, concerns, and pushback do you regularly receive? Putting approachable answers to those on social media may help alleviate misconceptions and clarify

what you do and for whom. Keep your posts short and try to include images and videos as often as possible.

## How do we reach more people or get more followers?
The first step is simply to start posting useful information on a consistent basis. The next is to tag people and other organizations in posts, this will help expose you to people that may be interested in what you are doing.  For example, if you are attending a community health fair, when you post that you are there be sure to tag the host organization and other community partners that are also there.

## What if people ask about services, information, or case specific information via social media?  How do we respond? How long do we have to respond?
If people reach out via social media, they expect someone to respond. Part of your social media plan should be to check your account(s) daily – this ensures that no messages or comments go longer than 24 hours without someone seeing them. If the request/question is generic and the answer may be helpful to your larger social media audience, feel free to respond while also providing contact information for further follow-up.  If it is private in nature, respond simply with contact information.

## What do we do if we get negative comments?
If the comments are actionable, respond with courtesy and concern and offer them a person's direct email and/or phone number they can reach out to in order to best meet their needs.  This takes the conversation offline and shows the public that you are attentive and taking action to resolve the situation, while putting the ball in their court to follow through on their issue.  Do not delete negative comments, ever.

## What about paying for ads or paying to boost posts? Do we have to do that? Should we be doing that?
Facebook regularly changes its algorithms.  What this means is, the rules of what posts get shown and to how many people changes. In the current state (June 2019) Facebook encourages organizations and businesses to pay for maximum exposure. If your organization has a budget for marketing and is able to devote money to boosting posts, it may be money well spent.  One particularly nice thing about paid ads on social media is you set the budget –$10, $100, or $1000 – spend what you can afford. (see resources) However, if you do not have the budget to do this, or are just trying to figure out how to use social media – you don't *have* to pay to create a viable social media presence.

## What if my program or department is part of a bigger agency?
The first step is to identify who is in charge of the agency's official accounts and determine whether or not there is an organizational social media policy in place. Most large entities, like hospitals, universities, etc. will have written guidelines that explain what you can or cannot do as a program or department.  Regardless of whether there is an existing social media policy or not, someone is in charge of social media – work with them to figure out how you can either set up your own

account(s) or, if they are willing and it makes sense, see how you can include your content on the primary organization accounts.

**Do we need to be concerned about HIPPA?**
In short, no. There doesn't seem to be a high likelihood that you would be posting any sensitive information (SSN, phone numbers, addresses, etc.) about clients in a social media post.  If you are posting photos or videos of clients, it wouldn't be a bad idea to have a basic photo waiver/release form just to cover your bases – though the easiest way to take care of that is to add it to an already existing application or waiver.  (Resources)

**Can we delete posts that are old, no longer relevant, or have received comments we would prefer not be there?**
Social media best practices say not to delete posts.  If you have posted something on Facebook that contains an error you can go in and edit the post.  On Twitter it is best to never delete anything – if there is an error, either leave it or post a second tweet that corrects the original. If there are negative comments on a post it is very important not to delete the comments or the post – this will usually make things worse.

*Special note concerning social media records retention for programs and agencies of the Federal Government.  There are robust guidelines around maintaining records as a Federal Agency (see resources)– this extends to social media.  As such, just be safe and keep all social media posts.

# SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

**Identify your audience.** This is the first and most important step that, in conjunction with your goals, will be the foundation of your social media strategy. Who are you talking to? Is it potential customers/clients, existing customers/clients, potential or existing donors, your local community, a national audience? Once you figure this out, you can work to outline goals and then begin to fully invest in social media.

**Define your goal(s).** What are you trying to accomplish? Do you desire to provide your audience with data and information? Do you want to get more clients? Maybe your goal is to answer questions so you get fewer phone calls.  Or maybe you want to increase your program's/organization's brand to increase funding and community support. It is important to identify and establish your goal(s) from the beginning, because it will determine the tone and content of your social media posts.

**Keep your message focused.** It's okay to post about different things, but keep it limited to just a few topics. Having a focused message makes it easier for you to create content and creates a cohesive account your audience will want to follow.

**Find your voice.** You may be familiar with popular social media accounts that have a particularly playful or sarcastic personality, like Wendy's or Burger King. While it works for them, that doesn't mean your business or organization should take the same approach. Keep your audience in mind as well as the type of work you do. Make sure your voice aligns with your organization's core values and what you set out to accomplish.

**Monitor your messages.** Today, people are just as likely to reach out on social media with questions and concerns as they are to send an email or make a call. You can expect to see an increase in the number of private and public messages after you begin to fully create a social media presence. Stay on top of your messages, mentions, comments, and reviews to answer any questions and provide customer service. The timing of your response is often just as important as how you respond.

**Engage with your audience.** Social media isn't a one-sided conversation. Don't just monitor messages and questions, take the time to engage with people who are posting photos, using your hashtag, liking, and commenting on your social posts. These are all excellent opportunities to build relationships with those people as well as with others who see your interactions.

**Don't delete or censor.** Attempting to censor users on your social media accounts has the potential to create a problematic situation. If someone leaves a negative comment or review on your social media, don't delete it. Not everyone will have a great experience with your organization, but this can be an opportunity to communicate with them and see how you can make it better.

**Include visuals.** Research shows that people are two-three times more likely to engage with Tweets and Facebook posts that contain photos and videos. That's a significant boost for nonprofits and other organizations with a limited marketing budget—especially if you're looking to raise awareness around your organization and your programs. So, be sure to use infographics, GIFs, and photos when posting content.

**Incorporate videos.** The only thing better than images are videos. Videos easily capture the attention of users scrolling through their newsfeed.  Videos are also an excellent way to tell a story about who you are and what you do. You don't need to make a huge investment with a professional videographer - with great cameras on smartphones now, you can make good quality videos quickly and inexpensively. Tip – keep them short!

**Tell stories.** Facts and figures are important metrics to collect, but people's brains (and hearts) tend to react more strongly to stories than statistics.  Telling stories about your work, your impact, your clients, your staff, your volunteers, etc. will go a long way toward connecting you with your community and potential funders.

**Pay for ads and boosts.** Social media, and advertising in general, has shifted over the past few years.  Even the biggest brands in the world are spending money on social media ads. Invest in posts that are already doing well with organic reach, and don't spend money to promote posts that don't have a significant call to action.

**Add calls to action to your posts.** Calls to action are an essential element in marketing, and social media is no different.  Including a call to action encourages investment and relationship building between your organization and your audience. Examples of popular calls to action include visiting your website, watching a video, reading an article, attending an event, donating, or calling/emailing for more information.

**Include hashtags and tags to increase your reach.** Creating a hashtag for your nonprofit and using existing relevant hashtags can increase your organic reach because it allows the content to be found in native searches. Using tags to link other organizations and individuals to your posts can also help expand your reach to new audiences.

**Prioritize your audience.** Pay attention to which of your posts receive the most engagement to learn what your audience is most interested in, it may not be the same as what you think they want to see. This goes for content (what information) and style (videos, articles, events). It will take a bit of trial and error to figure it out.

**Measure the effectiveness of your strategy. How do you know if you are meeting the goals you set at the beginning?** You don't know if/what posts are working if you aren't monitoring and measuring effectiveness. You can do this by using data from native platforms, such as:

- **Facebook Insights**
- **Instagram Insights**
- **Twitter Analytics**

## Sample Photo Release Waiver

Individuals over the age of 18 may sign for themselves; individuals under 18 must have this release signed by their parent or guardian.

I authorize _____ (name of organization) to use photographs or videos of my child/dependent/self. I understand my photograph may be used in a variety of promotional materials including social media, newsletters, advertisements, websites, annual reports, and/or other print and digital communications.

I understand that signing this release does not guarantee publication of photos or videos.

**Name of individual in the photos or videos**

_____

**Name (Adult or Parent/Guardian)**

_____

**Signature (Adult or Parent/Guardian)**

_____

**Date:** _____

Questions? For more information about the organization's use of photographs and videos in communication materials, please contact:

_____

_____

# SAMPLE SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT CALENDARS

| SOCIAL MEDIA ACTION PLAN & MILESTONES | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Daily | Weekly | Monthly | Quarterly |
| Facebook | ▲ | | | |
| Facebook Campaigns (paid) | | | ▲ | |
| Twitter | ▲ | | | |
| Instagram | ▲ | | | |
| Stories | | | ▲ | |
| Videos – Short Form | | | ▲ | |
| Longer form videos | | | | ▲ |
| Infographics and Collateral | | | | ▲ |
| Blog Posts | | ▲ | | |
| E-Newsletter | | | ▲ | |
| | | | | |

| MONTHLY SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT CALENDAR | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|

**WEEK OF:**

|  | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FACEBOOK |  |  |  |  |  |
| TWITTER |  |  |  |  |  |
| INSTAGRAM |  |  |  |  |  |
| EMAIL |  |  |  |  |  |
| BLOG |  |  |  |  |  |

**WEEK OF:**

|  | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FACEBOOK |  |  |  |  |  |
| TWITTER |  |  |  |  |  |
| INSTAGRAM |  |  |  |  |  |
| EMAIL |  |  |  |  |  |
| BLOG |  |  |  |  |  |

**WEEK OF:**

|  | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FACEBOOK |  |  |  |  |  |
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| EMAIL |  |  |  |  |  |
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**WEEK OF:**

|  | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
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| FACEBOOK |  |  |  |  |  |
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| INSTAGRAM |  |  |  |  |  |
| EMAIL |  |  |  |  |  |
| BLOG |  |  |  |  |  |

# RESOURCES

Federal Guidelines for Records Management
https://www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/bulletins/2014/2014-02.html

Facebook Paid Ads and Boosting Posts
https://www.callrail.com/blog/facebook-marketing-facebook-ads-boosted-posts/

Social Media Policy Best Practices
http://www.bethkanter.org/trust-control/