



Social Media 101

Social media platforms create a set of tools one can use to communicate, engage, and connect with others. It is important to know and understand the basics of each platform prior to running an account for your office.

General Terms

Hashtag: Used by most social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. These often help to categorize posts by various users. By clicking on a hashtagged word(s) in any message shows other tweets, posts, photos, etc. that include that hashtag. Hashtags should be clever, relevant, brief, & specific.

Direct Message (DM) or Personal Message (PM): Most social media platforms allow for users to contact each other directly and out of the public realm. This is useful for those that run pages. Followers can contact account managers directly with questions, comments or concerns.

Profile: All platforms require users to create a profile. This often includes a brief description and picture. Information should be current and relevant on the profile including links, contact information, dates, etc.

Facebook

Facebook is a popular social media platform that allows users to create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages, interact with "pages," and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues.

Terms

- *Pages* allow members to create and promote a public page built around a specific topic (example: MSU Billings Student Union & Events)
- *Events* are created by members or pages to publicize an event, invite guests, and track who plans to attend.

Tips & Tricks

- High quality content will give you higher engagement rates. People will want to click on your post.
- Using photos or videos in your posts will allow you to reach more users
- When running a page, paying for sponsored posts will increase the number of users your post reaches and may also generate more likes on your page.

Twitter

Twitter is a microblogging platform to share thoughts, ideas, news, jokes, etc. in 140 characters or less. Users "follow" each other to keep tabs on people.

Terms

- *Trends* occur when people tweet about the same topic or join in on a larger conversation using hashtags (see: Jimmy Fallon's weekly hashtag challenge)
- *Retweet* is what followers can do if they want to share your initial tweet.
- *Handle* is your user name for Twitter with the @ preceding it. Example: @msubillings

Tips & Tricks

- Keep tweets shorter than the maximum characters. This will allow for others to retweet.
- Avoid too many abbreviations and shorten links you share with a service like bit.ly
- Don't just push out information. Join in the conversation. See what hashtags are trending or use a hashtag the university recommends.

Instagram

Instagram is an online mobile photo-sharing, video-sharing and social networking service. Users can upload and edit their photos through the application.

Terms

- *Filters* are a combination of effects that can be used to enhance photos prior to being posted to the account.

Tips & Tricks

- Take advantage of the "Explore" button to discover new users and hashtags to follow
- Post 2-3 times a day if the post is relevant
- 3-15 second videos can also be posted to Instagram
- Instagram photos can also be posted to other social media platforms including Facebook & Twitter.

Pinterest

Pinterest is a place to discover ideas for all your projects and interests, handpicked by you. The platform covers a wide variety of topics from teambuilding ideas, how to dress for an interview, to recipes and projects.

Terms

- *Pins* are visual bookmarks for stuff you find anywhere on the web or within Pinterest.
- *Boards* are where you collect pins by theme or topic. Secret boards are also available.

Tips & Tricks

- Each post allows for a description utilize essential keywords to help people discover your pins and boards.
- Make sure to always click through a pin before sharing it. Check that the link is reliable and not full of advertisements. Often, there are "empty" pins that lead to the wrong website.
- Upload a pin, add it from a website, or use the "Pin It" button on an existing post to add it to your board.

Other Social Media

Snapchat

Allows you to send videos and pictures, both of which will self-destruct after a few seconds of a person viewing them. Captions, doodles, or graphics can be added over the top of the video and picture. Alternatively, you can add it to a "story," a 24 hour collection of the user's photo and videos that you can broadcast to the world or just your followers.

Linked In

Some refer to it as the business version of Facebook, minus the games. It focuses on the kind of networking that helps people get jobs. Your profile on LinkedIn is actually your resume.