ANDERSON UNIVERSITY SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media Guidelines

What is Social Media and Why Should I care?

- Social media includes websites and services that allow individuals to share information and interact with others through posts, comments, links, photos, videos, and more.

- Social media sites are currently among the most frequently visited websites. Popular sites include Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Flickr, Instagram, YouTube, Google+, Tumblr, Sound Cloud, and blogging sites such as WordPress and Blogger.

- Social media accounts can be set up for free on most services, and they provide a convenient way to connect with those who are interested in your products and services. In addition, your followers can re-share your content to their friends, which widens your reach even further.

Who Should Use This Guide?

The following guidelines apply to Anderson University offices, departments, and schools interested in establishing a social media presence to represent and promote their respective areas. If you have questions related to creating or maintaining social media sites for offices, departments, or schools, please contact Stefanie Leiter at ext. 4273 or skleiter@anderson.edu.

Anderson University students seeking to create social media pages for student organizations should contact the Department of Student Life. Student organizations are not permitted to use the Anderson University logo in profile or cover images on social media sites. The AU logo is restricted for use by university offices, departments, and schools only.

Legal Policy Considerations

Be familiar with legal requirements applicable to online communication.

- Personal privacy. Abide by FERPA, NCAA regulations, and other applicable privacy laws.

- Intellectual property. Post only content that is not protected under copyright, and give credit where credit is due. See Anderson University Copyright Information for more details.

- Terms of service. Each social media site requires individuals to agree to terms of service. Be familiar with the terms to which you are agreeing.

Do not endorse political candidates or parties on sites you manage for Anderson University.
Do not solicit donations for your department or program without prior approval from the Office of Development.
Respect university time and resources. Use good judgment in your use of social media during work hours and on university equipment.

Planning Guide

Before you begin, consider how often you intend to post information. If you expect to post infrequently (once or twice a month, for example), please consider whether AU institutional social media channels would serve your goals.

1. Identify your audience

- Are you seeking to reach prospective students, current students, alumni, parents, the general public, or all the above?

- Are you targeting a select on-campus audience or specific affinity group? Consider setting up a private or invitation-only group page.

- Are you interesting in promoting your department or program broadly to the general public? Set up a business/organization page on the social media sites of your choice.

2. Determine which social media sites are best suited for your goals
   - Twitter is designed for frequent, short updates (limited to 140 characters) that are often conversational in style. Twitter is arguably the best choice for instant communication with your followers.
   - Facebook and Google+ allow for greater detail in posts and a variety of content, including images, links, videos, photos, and more. These sites are well designed for engagement with your followers.
   - LinkedIn is designed for professional networking and is a good site for job seekers and alumni/student professional networking communities.
   - Pinterest offers a convenient way to share photos, videos, and links in a highly visual format. Pinterest currently skews heavily toward a female audience.
   - YouTube and Vimeo are popular video-sharing services. YouTube is free but heavily ad-driven, while a paid subscription to Vimeo offers a popular ad-free alternative.
   - Flickr and Instagram are photo-sharing services. Flickr features the ability to create and share photo albums, while Instagram can be easily integrated with other social networking sites.
   - WordPress and Blogger are blogging sites that are well-suited for posts of any length. Images and videos can be easily added to blog posts. Each post features a permalink (a permanent URL), which is useful for indexing by search engines, and thus increased traffic to your website.
   - Tumblr is a microblogging site that is popular with younger social media users. Posts generally contain a small amount of content as compared to a traditional blog.

3. Some sites (including Facebook, LinkedIn, and Google+) require you to set up a personal account before establishing a business or group page; other sites allow you to set up a business account independent of a personal account.

4. Content and Frequency: Consider the kind of information you plan to share, what media you will use (photos, videos, links to web pages, etc.) and how often you plan to post.

5. Create your site
   - Name your site using your organization/department name, preceded by Anderson University.
   - e.g.: Anderson University School of Theology
   - Customize your URL, if possible, with real words or recognized acronyms
   - e.g.: www.facebook.com/ausot
   - Use a profile image and cover photos (where applicable) that are consistent with university branding guidelines. Contact Stefanie Leiter at ext. 4273 or skleiter@anderson.edu to request university-branded images.
   - In your profile description, identify your department/program and your affiliation to Anderson University. Also include your location (City/State), to help visitors know they have reached the right Anderson University.
   - Include a link to your department's website or to the main Anderson University website, www.anderson.edu.
   - On sites that permit user commenting, consider adding a statement in your profile description encouraging open, respectful dialogue, while reserving your right to remove content that is offensive, obscene, or in poor taste.

6. Post some initial content before publicly announcing your site, and recruit a small group of your target audience to help generate some interaction.

7. Notify the Office of University Communications once your site has been created; we will review your site for possible directory listing in the AU Social Media web area. Any concerns with regard to university brand and identity standards can be discussed at this step, or at any stage in your planning.

Best Practices

For individuals using social media for personal accounts

- Be familiar with your privacy settings. Remember that nothing you share on social media is truly private. Privacy options can change, and those changes may affect the public visibility of content you have previously shared privately.

- Do not share personal information on social media sites that could make you vulnerable to identity theft.

- Consider adding a statement on your profile page that your personal views are your own and not those of your employer.

For administrators and managers of university and departmental social sites

- Monitor your sites daily.

- Respond in a timely manner to comments and inbox messages.

- Keep your audience in mind at all times as you choose content to share.

- Check for accuracy before you post. When corrections are needed, communicate updated information in a clear manner to your followers.

- Maintain a professional yet conversational tone.

- Encourage interaction.

- Allow disagreement within reason.

- Hide or remove content that could be damaging or offensive to others.

- If you are unsure how to respond to a comment or situation, please contact the Office of University Communications. We will be happy to assist.

- When possible, link your posts to relevant departmental or university web pages.

- Cross-promote social media sites within your department, within the university, and within your field of expertise; this will add value to your site and increase collaboration with others.

- When appropriate, encourage your followers to re-share posts from your page. This will expand your reach to potential new followers.

- Schedule periodic reviews of your site's performance. Are you generating the level of interaction you expect? Are you finding steady growth over time? Adjust your strategies as needed. Many sites offer built-in analytic tools that provide helpful information.

AU Social Media

Anderson University's listing of social media users can be found on the following site: www.anderson.edu/socialmedia