

Georgia State University Social Media Toolbox



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Social Media has changed the way we at Georgia State University communicate both internally and externally. Additionally, Social Media has changed the way others perceive our organization. The following Social Media Tool Kit is intended to serve as a guide for those on campus who use social media on behalf of Georgia State University.

Tool Box

- I. Laying your foundation and defining goals
- II. Develop a strategy
- III. Getting Started
- IV. Suggestions for daily operation
- V. Useful Tools

PANTHER Steps to laying a foundation and defining goals

Before you jump into social media sit down with your team and answer (in writing) the following questions:

1. **People:** Identify the person or persons who will have primary responsibility for populating, maintaining and monitoring your site. Ensure they have the time and enthusiasm to devote to this project. List the team members.
2. **Audiences:** Identifying your audiences will help you tailor your content and also choose the right tool (Facebook, Twitter, Wordpress, LinkedIn, etc...). List your primary audiences and conduct preliminary research to find what social networks they are on.
3. **Numbers:** Determine how you will measure the success of your efforts. Increased traffic to your Web site? Better communication with prospective students? A new network of colleagues? List how you plan to measure the site's success, and the tools you'll use to track that success (Facebook Insights, Hootsuite's reports, develop your own metrics, etc...).
4. **The Reason for Social Media:** Are you trying to communicate a campaign, generally promote your department, communicate with alumni? Define your goal for your social media presence. How will your social media presence be different than other communications with your audience?
5. **Hot Topics:** Identify the content you have to share. Is it primarily news updates, research developments, or networking information? Photographs? Video? List the content you will be sharing via social media. How does this content relate to your audience? How does the content relate to your goals?
6. **Ears:** Before you launch anything, start to listen to the current conversation. Survey the social media landscape for the "thought leaders" in your field. What are people already saying? What are people saying about you? Who is saying it? How does your audience like to be communicated with (cultural differences, industry specific vocabulary, etc...)? List the topics, people and sites that are leading the conversations that are relevant to your audience and goals.
7. **Right Looks** Identify a simple and descriptive name for your profile that clearly identifies your affiliation with Georgia State University. Do not identify yourself simply as "GSU," "Georgia State University," or "Panthers" as that implies you are speaking for the entire institution. Be sure that all design elements are in line with the University's [Identity Guide](#). Decide on a tone and voice you would like to communicate with.
8. **Success Evaluation:** Set a timeline for when you will conduct an evaluation of your site's success, using the goals and measures identified above. At that time, be prepared to realign your site's content. Ongoing evaluation should also be part of your strategy. Define your timeline.

Develop a Strategy

1. **Integrate Social Media Into Communications Plan.** Social Media should not be a separate entity from your current communication plan but rather compliment it. Develop a timeline or calendar of what content will be updated and when. How does this content work with your current marketing and communication efforts?
2. **Promote Your Network.** How will people know about your Social Media efforts? Simply having a social media presence is not enough; you have to build a following. Incorporate your social media links on webpage, printed material, e-mail signatures, newsletters, etc...What other creative ways can you build a following?
3. **Plan for the Unexpected.** When an unexpected or real time update has to go up (example: class canceled, watch one of our professors right now on CNN, comment responses, etc...) who is to do this and how? These updates may come outside of working hours so staff members who will be responsible for these updates need access to the appropriate tools and log in information to do so.
4. **Who's Got Your Back?** Have a backup system. Make sure you have a social media back up system in place. If the person who generally handles social media is out of the office, someone else on the team should have log in access and be trained on how to monitor and update the pages.
5. **Respond to Comments.** Have a comment response plan. Both positive and negative comments require a response from the organization in a timely manner. Who will respond to these comments? What is your unit's acceptable time frame?
6. **Learn To Let Go.** Social media is about conversation and interactions. You have to let your users express their opinions and you have to respect them. It is better to openly and professionally respond to a negative comment rather than delete it. Publicly responding to a comment can diffusing the situation leading to a gain in "social capital," a greater understanding of your organization for the users, avoid later potential negative comments on the same subject, and potentially rally the support of your biggest fans. Responses to negative comments should be considered carefully in light of how they will reflect on your organization and the University. Your team should develop a plan for negative comments before they happen. To protect your unit you may want to post the University's official comment policy on your Facebook page.

Getting Started

1. **Secure the approval of your department head or manager.**
If your most senior manager has not already been involved in your planning, now is the time to include them. Share with them your clear goals and strategies. Having buy-in from your superiors will aid in the overall success of your social media efforts.
2. **Create a profile.** Set up your social media accounts with the names your group agreed on during your planning phase.
3. **Inform University Relations** of your social media channels. E-mail Terry Coniglio (tconiglio@gsu.edu) the links to your channels/pages as well as the contact information of the staff members responsible for maintaining it.
4. **Experiment.** Build out your blog, Twitter stream, Flickr profile, Facebook page or whatever you choose and spend time populating it for several weeks, sharing it with a small group who can provide comments. Have the site up and running well before you plan to launch it, so you can become comfortable with maintaining it.
5. **Launch.** You're ready to communicate! Use traditional means, such as email lists and notices on your Web site, to notify your potential audiences that you have a social media presence. Also, notify others with social media presences and similar interests that your site is live – one of the best ways to do this is by linking to these sites from yours and mentioning them in your posts. Include easy-to-find links to your social media presence on your Web site. This would also be the time to implement any non-traditional campaigns to launch your site and create a buzz.
6. **Adjust.** Once your site is up and running, you will find some content is popular, some is ignored, and some is just plain cumbersome. Also, pay attention to the times of day you are posting and the feedback you get. Use an application such as Hootsuite to schedule posts so that your audience can be reached at the times they are active on Social Media. All social media tools come with easy-to-use tracking tools, so you can see which posts are viewed and shared most, which generate comments, etc. Be prepared to re-align your strategy in response to who is viewing your site and how they are doing so.

Suggestions for Daily Operation

- Set aside time everyday to work on Social Media. From a user perspective, it is never good to show up to a social media page that has not been updated recently. Don't just use Social Media when you have an event or new story to push out. It is not a one-way conversation. Be sure that you are doing the following daily.
 - Listen to the current conversation that day.
 - Engage with other users.
 - If relevant, post and/or schedule posts for that day
 - Don't post for the sake of posting, but at minimum you should be posting twice a week. If you don't have enough information to do so, maybe that particular channel is not the best match for your needs.
 - Do not to overload your users with updates. By monitoring your feedback you will know when it is too much.
 - Keep your posts relevant to your audience and the time.
 - Your audience followed you expecting a certain kind of content and will get frustrated if overloaded with irrelevant information.
 - Social media moves in real time, posting an event or article that is weeks old will reflect poorly. Keep the information you are posting current within a day or two.
- Use a monitoring tool such as TweetDeck or HootSuite to help manage your efforts. This will give you the ability to manage your efforts from one location, schedule posts in advance, notify you when your profile needs your attention, and give statistical data.
- Don't spend too much time on Social Media. For most people social media is a component of their job, not their entire job. Set aside a time each day with a limit and work within those boundaries.
- Protect confidential and proprietary information. Do not post confidential or proprietary information about GSU or its students, employees, or alumni.
- Be as transparent as possible but think before you post. The user will view what you post as coming from the University. Make sure you have all of the facts and are prepared to answer questions on the post in an honest and responsible manner.
- Strive for accuracy and correct mistakes. Review content for grammatical and spelling errors. If a mistake is made, don't ignore it; correct it as soon as possible.
- In a crisis situation refrain from posting on Social Media channels until official statements have been released from University Relations. Refer all Social Media activity around the crisis to University Relations.

Useful Tools

I. Facebook

- a. How to set up
 - i. <http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php>
 - ii. http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=68842278095
- b. Facebook Ads
 - i. <http://www.facebook.com/FacebookAds>
- c. Facebook's policy
 - i. Terms of Use
<http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/terms.php>
 - ii. Copyright claims
http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/legal/copyright.php?howto_report
 - iii. Promotion Policy
http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/promotions_guidelines.php

II. Twitter

- a. <http://business.twitter.com/basics/best-practices>

III. Video

- a. YouTube
 - i. http://www.youtube.com/t/about_getting_started
- b. Vimeo
 - i. <http://vimeo.com/help/basics>

IV. Flickr

- a. <http://www.flickr.com/tools/>

V. Blogs

- a. Wordpress
 - i. <https://en.wordpress.com/signup/>
 - ii. <http://en.wordpress.com/features/>
- b. Blogger
 - i. <http://www.google.com/support/blogger/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=41345>
 - ii. <http://www.google.com/support/blogger/bin/answer.py?hl=en&answer=41354>

VI. Location Based Social

- a. FourSquare
 - i. www.foursquare.com
- b. Facebook Places
 - i. <http://www.facebook.com/facebookplaces?ref=ts&sk=wall>

VII. LinkedIn Groups

- a. https://help.linkedin.com/app/answers/detail/a_id/6/kw/create%20group

VIII. Resources

- a. GSU Social Media Task Force Group
 - i. <http://www.facebook.com/groups/GSUSocialMedia?ap=1>
- b. Best and Worst Times to Post
 - i. <http://www.thebrandmechanic.com/best-time-of-day-week-social-media-marketing/>
 - ii. <http://zenuity.com/blog/social-media-marketing-best-times-worst-times>
 - iii. <http://www.adverblog.com/2011/06/18/science-of-social-media-timing/>

PANTHER WORKSHEET

People –Name and e-mail of primary personnel responsible for Social Media

Audience

Who	What Social Networks

Numbers – list metrics tools you will use

The Reason for Social Media – list goals of social media presence

Hot Topics – what kind content will you post?

Ears – what are others already saying? Who? Who is your Social Media role model?

Right Looks – describe your communication tone and visual look

Success Evaluation – when will you evaluate success?

Strategy Checklist

- Create a social media calendar or add social media to current communication calendar.
 - Social media links on web page
 - Social media links in e-mail signature
 - Social media links on printed material
 - Creative ideas for spreading social media accounts
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Social media backup

Name & e-mail: _____

- Give backup admin privileges and password access to social media platforms

Comments

- Post GSU's comment disclaimer on Facebook
 - Talk with team and supervisor about comment response plan.
- Briefly describe your comment response plan for positive and negative comments.

Getting Started Checklist

- Share goals and strategies with senior manager.
 - Create profiles
 - Inform University Relations of social media accounts by sending Terry Coniglio an email.
tconiglio@gsu.edu
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Suggestions for Daily Operations Checklist

- Check your social media pages everyday
- Listen to the conversation
- Engage with other users
- Post or schedule a post