social media GUIDE

National 4-H Council • Spring 2011

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Questions? Email the 4-H Marketing Team at 4Hmarketing@4-H.org

Creating a Successful Social Media Presence

Find your digital audience

Find the people. Begin by surveying your audience to determine their interest in using social media and what platforms they may already be using. You want to go where your audiences already are rather than asking them to come to you. Once you have determined several sites that they actively use, ask yourself whether these sites also meet your needs of communication, fair access for everyone, and online safety.

Create a strategy

Connect programs to business goals. Consider how you can use social media to interact in ways that meet your goals—for National 4-H Council that has been a focus on participation, advocacy and contribution. Each of our social media updates, posts and campaigns work towards one or more of these strategic goals.

Define clear measures for success and track them. Set goals. What do you want from this effort? New visitors? A donor deliverable? Brand awareness? Define clear goals and measurable means to meet them; choose one or two online platforms that help you meet these goals.

Develop community guidelines

Set the rules. Community guidelines provide a strong foundation for what your audience can expect when they visit your online spaces. It also provides a clear explanation for why you would potentially remove any content from your pages. These boundaries ensure that the space is safe for all to use.

Be Transparent. Users in the social space know when an organization is being inauthentic. Post your guidelines publicly. Be open and honest in all communication.

Build an editorial calendar and team

Protect your brand. Although we would all love if 4-H Staff remained indefinitely, make sure to protect your brand by creating a general account for your network, versus attaching it to one person's personal email information.

Protect your privacy and organization. Make sure that any employee blogging or posting comments online is aware that disclosing financial, operational, legal or personal information is prohibited. Publically articulate that comments posted in your space are not necessarily the opinion of the organization.

Plan a publication schedule. Determine how often content will be refreshed, new posts will be posted or comments will be made. Set up an editorial calendar for postings and plan ahead around holidays, special events, etc. Work to formulate who internally is responsible for updating and maintaining content. With programs like Hootsuite, you can schedule a whole month of posts and updates ahead of time.

Connect, listen, monitor, measure

Understand user wants and needs. Before engaging in the social space, do some research around what your audience likes, what they want to know more about, and what they can use in their communities. Be prepared to have conversations with them and answer questions. Understand that some of your role will be as a customer service representative for your organization.

Accept, and prepare for, negativity. There is a fine line in social media regarding negativity. Some organizations are stricter than others when it comes to allowing negative dialogue to occur in their space. Always try to engage the conversation publicly – be responsive, offer help to ease the situation. Trying to control the dialogue through aggressive screening and selective posts is generally not effective or recommended.

Get permission. If you plan on using any content from other sources; site them, link to the article or reference the contact. You are not only protecting yourself from plagiarism and other legal charges, you are encouraging users to click back and forth from various websites at their leisure – the true essence of social media.

Prepare, prepare, prepare. Ensure that you also have an escalation plan in place should information or conversation on your page illicit an unexpected response. Determine who will have the final say in responding to a crisis on your page.

4-H Social Media Strategy

The mission of 4-H Social Media

The primary purpose of 4-H Social Media is to cultivate an active community of current and future 4-H'ers in a safe online environment. Through these channels we hope to foster engagement through three primary types of measurable activity:

PARTICIPATION:
Provide a place for 4-H'ers to connect with Council and the community at large through likes, commentary, or feedback

ADVOCACY:
 Engage the 4-H community as independent advocates for 4-H-related causes, partnerships and brand.

CONTRIBUTION:
Encourage 4-H'ers to actively contribute their time, dollars and resources to supporting the 4-H movement at-large

4-H Social Media Content Standards

Content Standards

All content must be appropriate for fans. Irrelevant or poorly selected content can result in fans removing themselves or unsubscribing from the page (meaning removing 4-H from their newsfeed and preventing us from interacting with them in the future). Therefore, we carefully choose and re-write our content for 4-H social communities based on these criteria:

APPROPRIATE:
- Appeals to a majority of our fans/followers
- Call to Action
- Community Service based
- Success stories of relatable 4-H programs
- National program updates

NOT APPROPRIATE:
- Spam
- Content relevant to only a few
- Content not relevant to 4-H'ers

4-H Social Media Community Guidelines

The 4-H Online Community, which includes the 4-H web page, Facebook page, Twitter feed and YouTube channel, is managed and monitored by National 4-H Council. The purpose of these 4-H pages is to build a community of 4-H users who engage in positive and productive conversation.

A team at Council monitors each of the online environments daily to make sure postings and discussions are appropriate in nature. Council responds occasionally, and directs a participant's questions or concerns to the appropriate party. For example, if a member of the page posts something that should be dealt with by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture at USDA, or at the State or County level, Council will notify the member and provide the contact information of the appropriate resource.

Users in these communities should comply with age requirements regulated by the sites. Most sites require parental permission if under age 13.

We reserve the right to remove content if deemed inappropriate due to inclusion of any of the following:

1. Language, images or video that is determined to be profane, obscene, vulgar or lewd

2. Derogatory or discriminatory language (including comments about sex, age, race, sexual orientation or religious affiliation)

3. Spam posted regarding the same content matter, links, video, or any other media

4. Use of specific names of individuals, clubs or identifiable names with language that defames, abuses, or threatens

5. Any advertisement for products or services or solicitation of funds exceeding more than one post per week

Posts or discussions by community members in no way reflect the views of National 4-H Council.

Facebook Overview

General Landscape

- Facebook is a social utility that connects people in various network and geographic groups.

- Currently 79% of Facebook's audience is comprised of users 18-54 years of age.

4-H Opportunity:

- Continue to grow online community and build engagement by:
    - Starting, setting the tone for the conversation or joining it – but not trying to control it (unless it does not meet the Community Guidelines)
    - Listening to what the community members are saying and responding to as necessary
    - Connecting users with information, resources and other members of the community

- Communicate News and Content – add tabs to provide in-depth information, more detailed information on specific topics, such as:
    - Online & Mobile Giving
    - Brand
    - National (National Youth Science Day or 4-H Week) and local events
    - New Curriculum

- Generate Revenue
    - Supply/E-commerce
    - Online Giving

Available Facebook Real Estate:

Status /Wall

- Used daily to update, ask questions and to elicit immediate response from community
- Link to other Facebook pages or relevant website

Facebook Overview Cont.

Notes

- Posted like status but used for topic with more content and details that needs to be available for reference
- First two sentences need to be conversational because they will be present on fans' newsfeed

Discussion Board

- A centralized location for specific topics, offering continued discussion focused

Photo Album/Video

- Sharing a series of photos/videos from 4-H events

Favorite Pages

- Serves as link/promotion to other 4-H pages

Tab

- Provides more in-depth, static information for reference or promotion.

Maintenance:

- Monitor conversations
- Gather and follow up on any useful content posted
- Allow fans to respond and defend negative feedback; only remove content that violates community guidelines

Twitter Overview

General Landscape

- Currently 69% of Twitter's audience is comprised of users aged 18-44.

- While Twitter is a social network like Facebook, it is designed to be a mirco-blog, or a short, impactful burst of information.

- Due to the 140 character limit per post/tweet, special emphasis needs to be placed on writing Tweets that are:
    - Short
    - Clear
    - Real-Time
    - Re-Tweetable by other users

- It is advisable to tweet multiple times each day; however, the exact number of tweets depends on content, audience needs, and staff capacity, ranging from 5 to 22 tweets per day.

- Content needs to be relevant to the organization's mission and strategic goals.

- Twitter is best used for ongoing dialogue, not for one-off promotional or campaign opportunities. The focus is not on "broadcasting" but on "conversing."

- Ongoing Twitter monitoring is necessary because of the real-time nature of the platform.

4-H Opportunity

- Adequate staffing and a constant stream of content are necessary to launch and maintain a Twitter presence.

- Engage in conversations by proactively and immediately responding to followers.

- Follow some of your followers and other important users/influencers, such as, corporate funders, partners, state and county profiles, as well as other non-profits and news outlets or journalists.

Twitter Overview Cont.

- Connect Facebook and Twitter:
    - Twitter tab on Facebook pulls in Tweets http://www.involver.com/pages/gallery.html#
    - Automatically share updates published on Facebook to Twitter http://www.facebook.com/twitter/

Twitter Communication methods:

Original tweet

- This is a post by a 4-H Twitter administrator. Include links as much as possible, using bit ly, ow.ly (hoot suite) or another URL shortening tool.

Retweet

- 4-H Twitter administrators can retweet (RT), or re-post another user's tweet. This is a great way to engage the Twitter community, our followers, and other 4-H influencers who use Twitter. It also is an easy way to share additional information.

Twitter Shorthand:

- Hashtag (#)

- Mention (@)

- Retweet (RT)

- Direct Message (DM)

4-H Social Media Metrics

To gauge social media 'success' or ROI, it is critical to monitor, collect, and analyze data.

Social Mention is a useful aggregator site that allows you to search for keywords in various social media and digital channels. Use it to get an overview of your digital presence.

Facebook

Facebook Insights, available to pages with 100 or more community members, is a useful tool to easily aggregate, collect, and save data from your Facebook page. To learn more, visit
www.facebook.com/insights

Engagement:

- Number of users (page 'likes')
- Number of active users (daily, weekly, monthly)

Interaction:

- Number of daily likes and daily comments
- Most popular posts: number of impressions and percentage of feedback per post

Twitter

Twitter has yet to develop a robust system, like Facebook Insights, for metrics collection. However, here are a few tools:

Hoot suite:

- Social media channel aggregation platform
- Use to monitor Twitter streams (sent tweets, retweets, mentions, direct messages)
- Provides limited data (number of clicks, clicks by region, top referrers by click, most popular tweets, influencers)

Klout:

- Amplification (retweets, mentions)
- Network: (followers, @ senders, retweeters)
- True reach (size of engaged audience)

Online Safety

Get Educated. It's important to get educated about social media platforms when determining which will best meet the needs of your audience and your organization. Mashable, Social Media Today and Social Media Examiner provide invaluable insight regarding news on social media platforms, updated information on regulation, and online safety.

For news specifically regarding safety and privacy issues on the web and social media, we recommend the following sites:

- Getnetwise.org GetNetWise is a public service brought to you by Internet industry corporations and public interest organizations to help ensure that Internet users have safe, constructive, and educational or entertaining online experiences.
- Onguardonline.gov This site provides practical tips from the federal government to insure online safety and personal identity protection.
- Netsmartz.org NetSmartz Workshop is an interactive, educational program that provides age-appropriate resources to help teach children how to be safer on- and offline.
- Netfamilynews.org This frequently updated site is geared towards parents and educators and zeroes in on kids' safety using the web.

Read the Privacy Policy of each platform you choose to use.

Must-haves within the policy:

- Type of personally identifiable information collected
- Site's use of the *personally identifiable* information
- Measures to ensure protection of *personally identifiable* information
- How to opt-out of the sharing of this collected information
- Abuse reporting capabilities
- The site's policy towards the collection of youth information, and COPPA compliance

Facebook Online Safety Measures

- **Registration**: Youth must be at least 13 years of age to join, however many falsify their birth date to gain entry.
- **Privacy Settings:** Fully customizable and allow users to share as little or as much as they wish.
- Many Privacy Settings default to allow "*everyone*" to view your page.
- Make sure your session is secure.
- Adjust your Privacy Settings under '*Account'* dropdown.
- **Reporting Inappropriate Material**: You can report offensive or inappropriate photos via a link located underneath the photo.
- **Blocking a User**: Ability to block a user via a link on their profile page.

Twitter Online Safety Measures

- **Registration**: The site is not targeted at anyone under age 13, however no robust processes are in place for preventing users from falsifying their age.
- **Report Offensive Content, Bullying and Other Violations**:
  - **User Blocking**: Go to User's profile page, click on Gear icon, and select *"Block"* from options listed.
  - **Protected Account**: Users have the option to protect their tweets from being visible to everyone on Twitter. Go to *'Settings'* under your username; find *'Tweet Privacy'* and check the box to protect your future tweets.