



Social Media Toolkit

2020



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Introduction to Social media



This toolkit is an overview of how individuals and groups from Macquarie University can look to use social media. There are many definitions and buzzwords that surround social media but remember, it's really about conversations and people.

Success in social media is achieved through research, planning, strategy and execution – with regular and measurable reports helping to form clear action plans. Integration with Macquarie University's existing social media strategy and marketing campaigns is paramount to maximise results and achieve business objectives.

Before creating an account in an official capacity for Macquarie University, you must first contact the Social Media team via email: socialmedia@mq.edu.au with a clear business case for your new channel/page (**see Page 12**). We can then discuss your broader needs and establishing setting up a new profile. You must also ensure you are familiar with the Social Media Policy and the Public Comment Policy, both of which can be accessed from the Macquarie University Policy Central site: <http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/>

STATE OF THE AUSTRALIAN SOCIAL LANDSCAPE

- Active social media users: 18 million (+1 million from 2018)
- Facebook users: 16 million
- LinkedIn users: 11 million
- Instagram users: 9.7 million
- Snapchat: 6.53 million
- Twitter: 2.56 million
- Time spent using social media: 1 hour 31 mins per day (on any device)
- Time spent consuming a post when scrolling through a news feed: 1.7 seconds

Your approach to every social media site should be different – your strategy for Facebook shouldn't be the same as your strategy for Twitter or LinkedIn, for example. Whether you are an administrator of a social media account or want to improve your personal social media profile, use this toolkit to better understand how social media can work for you.

Guidelines for staff

We want staff to feel confident using social media, so you can use your personal channels to amplify your research and expertise, celebrate your successes and build a network with likeminded members of your community. Staff can approach social media with the help of these five best practice guidelines.

BE RESPONSIBLE – Common sense should prevail. Remember that what you publish is ultimately your responsibility – don't write anything online that you wouldn't do in the course of your daily public duties. Familiarise yourself with the platform's code of conduct. Illegal, offensive or derogatory comments are prohibited. As a rule, if a mistake is made, admit to it. Remember that Macquarie University's confidential internal operations are not for public consumption and should not be disclosed online.

BE RESPECTFUL – When engaging in conversation with, or about, individuals, online communities and companies, be polite and respect the opinions of others. Try to avoid statements that could be perceived as critical. Present a balanced and careful argument for discussion and refrain from becoming inflammatory. Respect copyright and privacy laws when publishing content on social networks. Don't make negative or disparaging comments about competitor universities or programs.

BE TRANSPARENT – Be open and honest within the online environment and remember, comments are forever. If you're publishing content about your work at Macquarie University, identify yourself/your role. If you publish to a website external to Macquarie University (for example a blog about teaching at the University) follow the social media guidelines to ensure transparency.

BE SINCERE – If you're not, it will be spotted. Be yourself, highlight your personality and use common sense. Be a leader in your online community and always demonstrate best practices. Be meaningful and demonstrate your passion for a topic. Show expertise and follow social network members. Speak the same language, unless of course the language used is abusive, obscene or discriminatory. Personalise your message and check your spelling.

BE USEFUL AND RELEVANT – Be upfront and timely with content but don't just post for the sake of posting. Take time to understand the platform you're using and what content resonates on that channel. Provide expertise or entertaining content relevant to your target audience. Engage with feedback and comments from other users, if necessary, to begin a dialogue and generate positive conversation around your post.

Account administrators can approach social media with the help of these five best practice guidelines.

BE CONSISTENT– Create, monitor and moderate content in a timely and frequent manner. Posts should be clear and concise, with engaging imagery and a shortened website URL (if relevant). Ideally content should be posted once a day and scheduled at key times (peak traffic – 8am, midday, 4pm and 9pm.). If there has been no activity on a profile/page in more than six months, discussions should take place with the Social Media team in Group Marketing with regards to reactivating or deleting the account.

BE ORIGINAL – Generate original content which will inspire or spark conversation. Do not simply reshare or retweet others’ content as this will generate low engagement and reflects poorly on the page – differentiate yourself and think ‘why would my intended audience want to follow this page?’.

BE ON BRAND –Logo lockups, banners and other material should reflect the University’s brand identity.

BE CONVERSATIONAL – Encourage comments by actively engaging in positive conversations with your audience but ensure replies are professional and on brand. Deliver timely customer service and response to general enquiries or postings, i.e enquires from prospective students.

BE VIGILANT – Monitor and moderate a page regularly. Foul, abusive or derogatory language should be removed. Any concerning behaviour or emerging issues/crisis should be immediately referred to the Head of Social Media (**see page 10**).

Facebook



Facebook is a social networking site that makes it easy for you to connect and share with family and friends online through a variety of content, such as photos and status updates.

Facebook's algorithm has drastically changed in the past 18 months, prioritising "meaningful interactions" from family and friends over content from brands. This means it is even harder to serve your content to your intended audience - in fact, organic reach can be as low as 2-3% of your followers.

KEY POINTS:

- A basic content plan for Facebook includes five posts per week on average. Half of that content can be evergreen (can be posted at any time) and the other half is proactive/reactive based on current Office/Faculty news, events or responses from the community. Set up a content calendar to plan ahead and schedule your messaging.
- Keep your target audience at the forefront of your mind. The demographic on Facebook is extremely broad, from teens to over 65s, so you need to ensure your content is relevant in order to be effective.
- Post engaging, thought-provoking content rather than directly selling to your audience. Ask questions or prompt conversation.
- Copy should be concise and conversational; ideally no more than 40 words.
- Include rich media. Use eye-catching images (1200 x 627 pixels, avoid iStock images where possible) in every post. Facebook gives greater weight to video, with 5x more engagementⁱⁱ. Make sure video is optimised with a 1080 x 1080 square format, captions and between 30-45 seconds.
- Use Facebook insights to better understand what content is popular and how users are interacting with a page. Administrators of a page can view the insights when logged in. Insights gives details such as user demographics, follower growth, reach, engagement and more. This will help you identify your best-performing content which you can optimise and replicate.
- Implement a paid content strategy using Facebook Ads Manager, on-site integration (use a social plugin or Facebook link on your website) as well as exposure through other marketing efforts such as e-newsletters, print etc.

Discover more about digital marketing on Facebook with [Facebook Blueprint](#).

LinkedIn



LinkedIn is built around creating networks and connections but is a more professional social network. It is the number one platform when it comes to B2B marketing. Two professionals join LinkedIn every second and 45 per cent of users are in upper management.ⁱⁱⁱ

On LinkedIn there are employee profiles (personal profiles individuals can set up), company profiles that you can manage as an administrator, showcase pages which are an extension of a company page designed to highlight a brand or business unit, and groups that users can create about interesting topics and allow others to join.

KEY POINTS:

- Make sure your personal profile is 100 per cent complete and list 'Macquarie University' as your employer. This helps gain exposure for both you and the University, and can direct people through to the company profile when they click through on the company name.
- When writing on LinkedIn, be authoritative, informative and news-oriented.
- Position yourself as a thought leader by sharing academic work, offer perspectives on industry news and trends, and promote upcoming events and webinars.
- Proactively send connection invitations to build up your community.
- Include rich media. Branded imagery (1200 x 627 pixels) is better for brand recognition and consistency while video generates 5X more engagement than any other content^{iv}. Again, ensure this is optimised.
- Tag relevant people or companies in your posts using the @ symbol. Include two or three relevant hashtags at the end of every post. LinkedIn posts see 35 per cent more views when they include a hashtag^v.
- Page administrators can gain deeper insights into content performance through page analytics.
- LinkedIn Sponsored Content allows you to publish relevant content and reach a targeted audience beyond your page followers; but note – it is more costly than advertising on Facebook.

Gain more insight into building your LinkedIn community with the [LinkedIn Pages Playbook](#).

Twitter



Twitter is an online news and social networking site where people communicate in short, 280-character messages called tweets. The platform is very conversational and characterised by the use of emojis and hashtags.

KEY POINTS:

- The common purpose for a company's Twitter presence is to connect to people based on geo-location, interest or reach. It is also useful for events and conferences (using hashtags).
- Twitter is a network that moves quickly; it is appropriate to tweet three to five times per day.
- Complete your bio, add a location and include a link to your website or blog. This will allow new followers to learn more about you when viewing your profile. Add a profile picture (a professional headshot for personal profiles or the University's logo for company profiles) and banner image.
- Your Twitter feed should not just be a one-dimensional stream of updates about you; it should be an avenue for new conversations and discussions with your audience. Grow a following by updating regularly, engaging users, having conversations and following new people who might be interested in your brand or cause.
- When posting, include the relevant handles of other users related to your content (e.g @Macquarie_Uni) and hashtags (e.g #mymq).
- You can include up to four images (1024 x 512 pixels), a GIF or a video in each tweet.
- Understand how your content is performing via Twitter Analytics which provides a breakdown of your top tweets, impressions and engagement etc.
- Key Twitter terms explained:
 - Hashtag* = any word or phrase immediately preceded by the # symbol. When you click or tap on a hashtag, you'll see other Tweets containing the same keyword or topic.
 - The @ sign* = used to call out usernames in Tweets: "Hello @twitter!" People will use your @username to mention you in Tweets, send you a message or link to your profile.
 - RT (retweet)* = a tweet that you forward to your followers is known as a Retweet. Often used to pass along news on Twitter. Retweets always retain original attribution.
 - Direct Messages (DM)* = private messages sent from one Twitter account to another account(s).

For a complete list of terms, see [Twitter's Glossary](#). Want to know more about Twitter? Visit the [Twitter Help Centre](#).

Instagram



Instagram is a photo and video-sharing social networking site owned by Facebook. You can take a picture or video on your mobile, choose a filter and edit your post before sharing it with your followers.

Teenagers and adults between the ages 18-29 make up the largest demographic on Instagram. It is the ideal platform for sharing your brand and personality, as engagement is high and followers are brand-loyal.

KEY POINTS:

- Instagram is a visually-driven social platform, so it's extremely important that your pictures are visually appealing and high-quality. Avoid blurry images in poor lighting with bad composition.
- You can post square (1080 x 1080 pixels) or landscape (1200 x 628 pixels) images, up to 10 in one single post, as well as videos no longer than one minute.
- Temporarily share images or videos up to 15 seconds long via the Instagram Stories feature (the horizontal feed at the top of your main display). Users can swipe right to view your Story and it will last for 24 hours. You should try to feature between five to nine images on each Story. This format is ideal for 'behind-the-scenes' coverage of an event, Instagram Story Takeover collaborations with influencers, polls and quizzes.
- Tag other users in your posts using the @ symbol and include hashtags to help followers find your content. Instagram allows up to 30 hashtags per post but the average number is nine. Make sure they're relevant to your brand (i.e #mymq) and not too broad.
- The only URL link you can include is the one in your bio. You can't currently click through a link, so if you include one in your post it looks like spam and results in poor engagement. Try to strike a balance between promotional and inspirational content.
- If you're setting up a business profile, make sure the privacy settings are public so anyone can find and view your profile, photos and videos. However, if you're using a personal profile, you have the option of changing your settings to private so only your approved followers can see your posts.
- If you have a business profile, Instagram Insights will let you see more detailed information about your followers and interactions with your content.

Understand more about Instagram and keep up-to-date with new features via [Instagram Help Centre](#).

Issues management



Social media audiences both consume content and participate in its creation, meaning a negative issue can evolve and develop based on the contributions of others which may or may not have any factual basis. As with traditional media, ill-considered comments and poor responses to particular issues and circumstances can also rapidly develop into negative issues. This can have a damaging effect on our reputation.

A particular nuance of social media is that both negative and positive stories can spread at a rapid pace and require an organisation to respond at a speed that is difficult within traditional organisational structures.

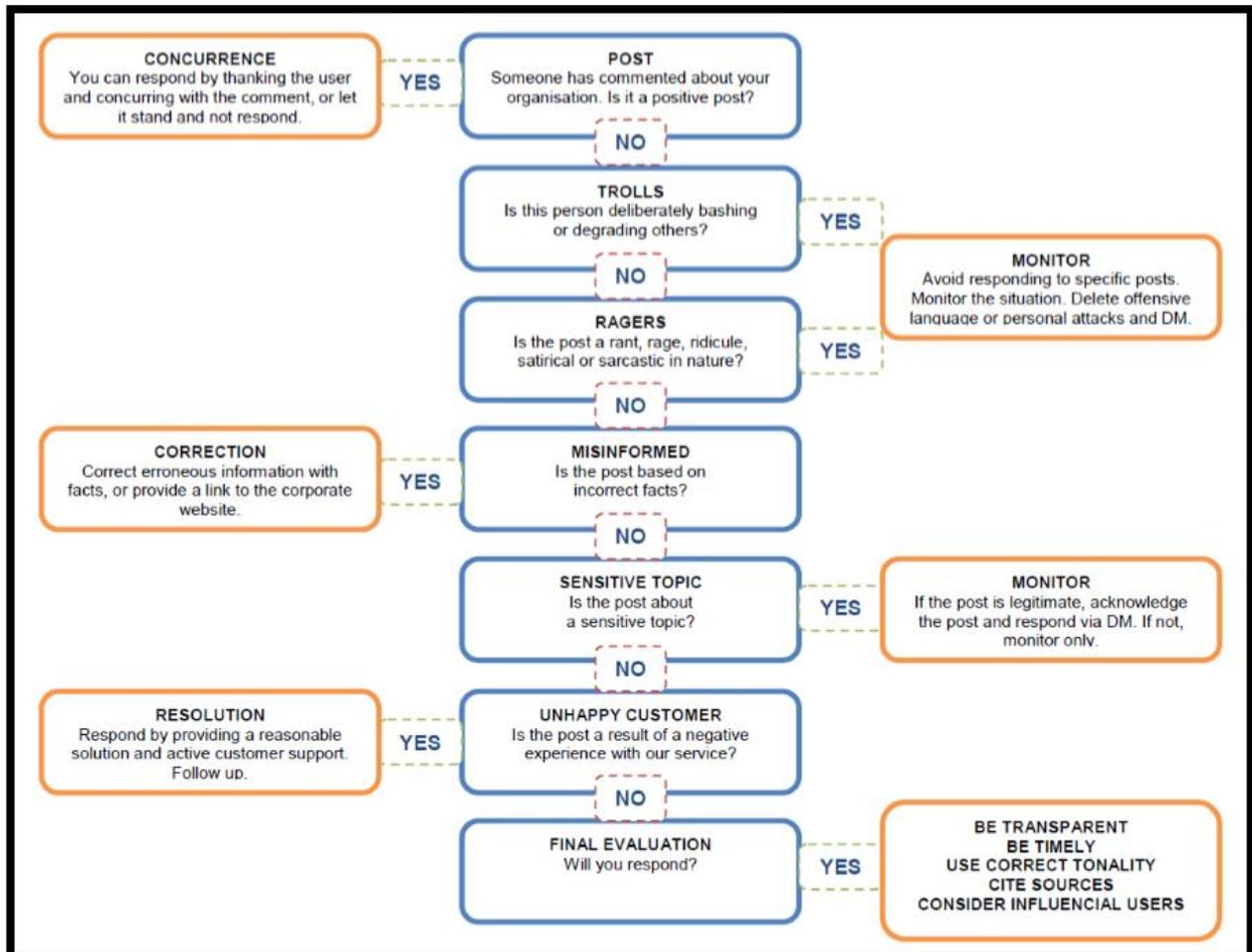
Perhaps the most difficult area of social media engagement is knowing how to respond to negative opinion or criticism. There are instances where a page admin will have to respond. You should follow these principles:

- As a general rule, genuine negative feedback should not be deleted. It is far better to respond positively and constructively.
- Respond in a timely manner. Negative issues can become worse if they are left with no response. This can be a challenge depending on your organisational structure. It is worth considering whether the appropriate measures are in place to allow a quick response before an issue arises.
- If the issue relates to a real problem, let the commenter know what is being done to resolve the matter in a friendly manner. If there is something you can do to assist them, get the ball rolling and let them know what is being done.
- If a comment is spam or trolling (an inflammatory comment designed to start a negative argument) the comment may be ignored or deleted.
- If a comment uses profanity or is highly offensive it may be deleted – it is useful to publish terms of use when you create a social media property.

Remember the rules around transparency, respect and sincerity to ensure the best response and outcome from the interaction.

The chart below takes you through the process of how to evaluate a negative post. Not every comment needs to be responded to. Flag any major issues you may encounter to the Head of Social Media in Group Marketing.

Comment moderation chart:



Creating a new social media account



We encourage the University's various Offices and Faculties to utilise the University's official social media channels, not only to ensure consistency in messaging, tone and brand but primarily because these platforms already have a huge number of followers (more than 900,000 in total) meaning we can amplify key messages to an existing broad audience. There have been many instances where areas of the University have set up a page, which they've maintained for a couple of months but then neglected, which reflects poorly on them and the image of the University.

In instances where Group Marketing has authorised new social media pages, we first require a detailed business case – emailed to socialmedia@mq.edu.au – outlining the below:

- The rationale for adopting your requested social media channel
- Thorough understanding of your target audience and their interests
- A detailed description of who will manage and moderate the channel
- The types of content and messaging you will be publish, proving you are able to sustain scheduling a minimum of 2-3 posts per week
- A social media calendar outlining the planned content for the first three months of operation
- The protocols in place to ensure content adheres to the University's social media guidelines and best practice

This business case will be considered by the Head of Social Media and, if there is strong justification for creating a new channel, signed off by the Director, Communications.



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- i Digital 2019 Australia report, We Are Social/Hootsuite <https://wearesocial.com/au/blog/2019/02/digital-report-australia>
- ii Facebook, 3rd Social Media for Higher Education Forum 2019.
- iii 16 LinkedIn Statistics That Matter to Marketers in 2019, Hootsuite <https://blog.hootsuite.com/linkedin-statistics-business/>
- iv The LinkedIn Pages Playbook, LinkedIn, <https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/linkedin-pages/linkedin-pages-playbook>
- v Education benchmarks and product updates, LinkedIn, [https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/blog/linkedin-company-pages/2019/what s-new-with-linkedin-pages--engage-your-community-](https://business.linkedin.com/marketing-solutions/blog/linkedin-company-pages/2019/what-s-new-with-linkedin-pages--engage-your-community-)

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