

## University of California, San Diego Social Media Guide

*Prepared by University Communications and Public Affairs*

This guide was developed to empower UC San Diego schools, divisions, departments and programs to establish and manage their own social media networks. We recognize the value of social media as a vital resource to positively promote and communicate news, events and other information about your organization or area of interest to our campus community. Because many of you have been designated the social media spokesperson for your UC San Diego area, we would like to share some guidelines to make your job easier, and your efforts consistent with best practices.

### **Social Media Guidelines**

As university communicators, you already have an innate sense of what's appropriate to say (and what's not) to your various target audiences. Follow that intuition when you are on Facebook, Twitter and other social networks, and you will make fewer mistakes. A key rule for social networking, and life: use your best judgment.

Below are suggested UC San Diego social network usage best practices and content parameters to follow as you move forward with your unit's social networking efforts:

***Be smart.*** Everything you write or receive on a social media site is public. And it could live forever, and ever, and ever.

***Identify yourself.*** Be transparent. No matter when or where you jump into the conversation online, speak in your own voice and clearly identify yourself and your affiliation with UC San Diego. Remember you are your area's spokesperson. When setting up a social media account for your department or organization, use the following guidelines:

- ***Facebook:*** Include "UC San Diego" before your department or organization name. In the "about" section of your page, write a short description of what your department or organization does, including helpful links and contact information.
- ***Twitter:*** There is a 15-character limit for usernames. You should always add "UCSD" before your department or organization. In the "Bio" section, be as specific and descriptive as possible within the 160-character limit. Include a link to your official website.
- ***Blogs:*** Include "UC San Diego" before your department or organization name. Again, include a clear description of your organization and include a link to your official website.

*Try to establish a consistent naming convention—and avatar—across all of your social media channels.*

**Follow university branding.** We strongly encourage all schools, divisions, departments and programs that launch official social media presences to feature identifiable UC San Diego branding, including the [current logo](#). In order to leverage the full strength of the university's name, fame and reputation we recommend that your social media presence be consistent and complimentary to the UC San Diego brand. UC San Diego has strong name recognition; use it to your advantage!

**Be professional and ethical.** Respect your audience. Never use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable. Only post accurate and honest content, and if you offer your own opinion, it should be identified as such. Review the [UC San Diego Principles of Community](#) for guidance. Remember, social media is not an official means of communication and should not replace official university correspondences. However, it can help amplify your message.

**Add value.** Don't join the discussion unless you have something to say. Be part of the conversation; don't take it over. There are times when it is appropriate to push out content, but be strategic.

**Quality matters.** The speed of social media is a great feature, but it also means that time to edit or reflect must be self-imposed. Take time to check spelling and grammar before publishing your content. If you are uncertain about a post, you may want to have someone else review it for an outside perspective.

**Avoid duplicating efforts.** Could your content be funneled up to an umbrella organization's social media network instead of creating your own page? For example, if you are a program or office within a department, could you share your information on the department's page? If so, try working with the administrator of that page first, rather than creating a duplicate (or very similar) account that would compete for users' attention.

**No endorsements.** Do not endorse or promote any product, political party, candidate or cause.

**Obtain permissions.** Get permission from your supervisor before you set up your sites. Get appropriate permission before you refer to or post images, copyrighted material, intellectual property, etc.

**Keep it legal.** There are legal issues such as intellectual property, privacy and more that could not only get you in trouble, it could get the university in trouble. Do not disclose anything that contains confidential or proprietary information about UC San Diego, its employees, students, affiliates, vendors or suppliers.

## Who to Call

We hope that the suggestions and ideas outlined in this guide will inspire your involvement and be helpful as you move forward with your own social media strategy. If you have questions or need help, please contact:

### **Messaging, protocol, best practices**

University Communications and Public Affairs  
858-534-3120

[univcomm@ucsd.edu](mailto:univcomm@ucsd.edu)  
<http://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu>

***Branding, logos, creative***

Creative Services and Publications

858-534-4754

[publications@ucsd.edu](mailto:publications@ucsd.edu)

<http://publications.ucsd.edu>

***Legal***

Dan Park, Chief Campus Counsel and Associate General Counsel

858-822-1236

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<http://www-chancellor.ucsd.edu/stafflist/campuscounsel.html>

## Social Media 101

Since the first social network site “Friendster” debuted in 2002, there has been a huge surge of individuals connecting online. According to the [Pew Research Center](#), 65% of adults now use social networking sites—a nearly tenfold jump in the past decade. LinkedIn boasts an audience of 430 million and Twitter reports 310 million monthly active users, while a staggering 1.65 billion monthly active users flock to Facebook to connect. Every day, people watch hundreds of millions of hours of video on YouTube and upload more than 95 million photos and videos to Instagram.

The way people share information is changing the way we communicate with our target audiences. Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn are just the tip of the social media iceberg; there are more applications out there and more to come, which means more ways for you to personally connect and engage with your constituents. Whether you’re reaching out to the public in general or to alumni, parents, faculty, staff, donors or friends of UC San Diego, social networks should be brought into the mix.

### The Role of Social Networks

There was a time, not so long ago, when universities and colleges ignored the potential of social networks. Today, we now know that, if used correctly, social media can help us share information and build relationships with our various audiences. From recruiting new students and faculty, to raising money, to diffusing incidents and situations—leveraging Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and other networks are powerful tools in the hands of communicators.

A few social media statistics:

- Internet users have an average of 5.54 social media accounts ([Global Web Index](#))
- 1 million new active mobile social users are added every day ([Social Media Today](#))
- 66% percent of Facebook users get “news or news headlines” from the social network ([Pew Research Center](#))
- 67% of consumers tap networks like Twitter and Facebook for customer service ([JD Power](#))
- Facebook users spend an average of 50 minutes a day on its multiple platforms ([New York Times](#))

So, how is social media different from traditional approaches to marketing and communications? **It’s all about engagement. Instead of broadcasting information to an audience, social media enables us to connect and converse.** This is a medium in which traditional approaches to “telling” people won’t work or be accepted. Certainly, we can inform people about events, programs, and news, but that is just part of how these tools are used. The rest is about having a conversation. That’s the “social” in social media. However, social media cannot stand apart from your marketing and communications strategies, but should be incorporated as part of a holistic communications approach.

## Tools to Connect with the World

Universities *are* using social media—the only web tools that allow two-way discussions—to connect and collaborate with their target audiences, and as a way to supplement traditional news distribution. But before we get into strategy and best practices, a brief glossary of social media terms and networks will be helpful:

### Facebook – [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)

- *Description:* Founded in February 2004, Facebook is a social utility that helps people communicate more efficiently with their friends, family and coworkers. The company develops technologies that facilitate the sharing of information through the social graph, the digital mapping of people's real-world social connections. Anyone can sign up for Facebook and interact with the people they know in a trusted environment.
- *Use:* If you want to have an online conversation with students, connect with alumni or create a forum for discussion with the community, engage them through Facebook. You can also use this media to drive traffic to real events and activities.

### Twitter – [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)

- *Description:* Twitter is a real-time information network powered by people all around the world that lets them share and discover what's happening now. A rich source of instantly updated information, Twitter asks “what's happening” and makes the answer spread across the globe to millions, immediately.
- *Use:* With its 140-character format, Twitter is an immediate way to chat with and hear from those with similar interests. It's also a great way to “tweet” news and other announcements in addition to mainstream media sources.

### LinkedIn – [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)

- *Description:* LinkedIn exists to help make better use of an individual's or organization's professional network and help the people they trust in return. LinkedIn's mission is to connect the world's professionals to make them more productive and successful. This media offers faster access to insight and resources they can trust.
- *Use:* LinkedIn is an ideal alumni connection tool; it's also home to a myriad of discussion groups offering affinity for collaboration and connection. Start your own groups to create tailored networks of interest.

### YouTube – [www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)

- *Description:* YouTube is the world's most popular online video community, allowing millions of people to discover, watch and share originally-created videos. It provides a forum for people to connect, inform and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators and advertisers large and small.
- *Use:* YouTube can be instrumental in sharing your unit's research and other successes, capturing events and activities, and offering video contests.

### Instagram – [www.instagram.com](http://www.instagram.com)

- *Description:* Instagram is a mobile-based tool for sharing photos and videos. Users can apply digital filters to their photos and videos before sharing them with a variety of social networking services—such as Facebook, Twitter and Tumblr—in addition to Instagram itself.
- *Use:* Instagram is best for sharing compelling, authentic images. Since the service is mobile-based, it's a great way to capture “in-the-moment” images. With the majority of users ([90 percent](#)) under the age of 35, Instagram is particularly useful for engaging with prospective and current students, as well as young alumni.

### Google+ – [www.plus.google.com](http://www.plus.google.com)

- *Description:* Google+ is a platform where users create “Circles” of contacts in order to share posts selectively. Status updates can include text, photos, links, videos and events.
- *Use:* Google+ is great for sharing photos and video. It also allows users to host “Hangouts,” a form of video chat. Since the platform is integrated with Google Chats, YouTube and other Google tools, posting to Google+ can help elevate content in search.

### Blogs

- *Description:* A blog or “web log” is a type of website or part of a website. Blogs are usually maintained by an individual with regular entries filled with commentary, descriptions of events or other material such as graphics, audio (podcasts) or video. Below is information about popular blogging software used by higher education institutions:
  - Tumblr– [www.tumblr.com](http://www.tumblr.com)  
Tumblr is a microblogging platform and social networking website that allows users to post multimedia and other content to a short-form blog. Users create original content as well as curate, or re-blog, posts by others.
  - Wordpress – [www.wordpress.org/about](http://www.wordpress.org/about)  
WordPress started with a single bit of code to enhance the typography of everyday writing and with just a few users. Since then it has grown to be the largest self-hosted blogging tool in the world, used on millions of sites and seen by tens of millions of people every day.
- *Use:* **Blogs offer an excellent format for brief articles, observations or references; this media’s “comments” section also** welcomes feedback from and interaction with readers. You can create links between your blog and the other social media networks to cross-promote your blog.

### Pinterest – [www.pinterest.com](http://www.pinterest.com)

- *Description:* Pinterest taps into the trend for visual content. It's a source for aspirational and inspirational images, and subscribers use it to collect and organize things they love.
- *Use:* Pinterest is a great way to visually tell your organization's story and communicate values. As with all social media channels, be sure to pin images that add value for your audience. Avoid being overtly self-promoting.

For more information or questions, please contact University Communications and Public Affairs at 858-534-3120.

## 10 Tips of Effective Engagement

The following are ten tips adapted from [Meritus Media](#) that should help you sort out the where, when and why:

1. Listen to Conversations  
Tap into the online conversations to find out who is talking about you, what they're interested in and where they're saying it. Tap into conversations that are related to your field but not about you to develop a persona that others can relate to and engage with.
2. Establish Share of Voice  
There are millions of conversations online every day. When you tap into the ones about your area, what share of voice (**the total percentage that you possess in the conversation about the particular niche or market you're active in**) do you have? Are you listening and responding or trying to dominate and broadcast?
3. Set Goal/Benchmarks  
Use the information and insights you get to set the goals you should pursue in social media.
4. Find Bloggers and Communities  
You have to know where the conversations and discussions are taking place so you can allocate your resources for best ROI.
5. Identify Influencers  
What/who influences people has changed dramatically in the last few years. Who does your audience trust? Can you interact with them to develop relationships with others and achieve a credible reputation and voice?
6. Develop a Content Strategy  
Success in social media depends on the quality of your content. It's about engaging people with useful information and interesting dialogue.
7. Pick Tools  
Should you have a Facebook page? Should you be on Twitter? Do they achieve the same goals for you?
8. Create and Deliver the Content  
Once you have a content strategy, bright ideas will naturally flow about what to create and how to deliver this content. Be sure your delivery is as engaging as the content.
9. Engage and Facilitate Conversations  
Social media is about a two-way flow of conversation. People are no longer willing to be passive bystanders—they want to be part of the conversation. Act as though you're participating in a great cocktail party. It's not always—or even most of the time—about you.
10. Measure Results  
Having mountains of data is all very well ... but “what does this mean?” is the crucial question. Social media can be measured. What are your priorities?

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## Social Media Communication Strategy Worksheet - The Where, When and Why

Eric Qualman, author of [Socialnomics](#), asks, "The question is no longer should we be doing social media, it's are we doing it right?"

Before jumping into the social media pool, your objectives need to be crystal clear. Why are you using it, who will be doing the work and how can you tell if your effects equal success? The following is a worksheet adapted from one that Tufts University created. Use these questions to help brainstorm whether you and your unit should pursue (or continue) social networking efforts and, if so, to start you strategizing your approach:

- **Purpose**

Why are you participating in social media?

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- **Objectives/Goals**

What do you plan to achieve with this social medium? Inform? Encourage dialogue? Share information? What kind of information do you want to share or receive?

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How will you measure success? What statistics will be meaningful to you? (Number of hits, event attendance, brand recognition, inbound links, "likes," comments, something else?)

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What tools will you use for research and analysis (examples: [Hootsuite](#), [Twitalyzer](#), [Bit.ly](#), [Facebook Insights](#), [Twitter Counter](#))?

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- **Marketing Plan**

How will this differ from your primary website and marketing communications? How do you envision incorporating it with your traditional marketing plans?

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- **Target Audience**

Who will be reading and commenting on your social media? Who are you trying to engage? How will you identify them and attract them to your networks? Who will be your evangelists?

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- **Execution and Maintenance**

What social media networks will you be using and how many accounts will you have for each network?

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Who will establish your account/s?

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Who will be the administrator/s?

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Who will maintain it?

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How often will it be updated? Will you create an editorial calendar?

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What tools will you be incorporating (photography, video, polls, surveys, geo-location prizes, contests, etc.)? Do you have a budget for this?

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How will you connect with other campus social media outposts and official websites? Will you contribute content to their networks and ask that they reciprocate?

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How will you promote it? How will you nurture evangelists?

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Do your proposed account managers already understand how social media works or do they need basic training? How will you guide them in best practices for your group?

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Will you collect profile data to populate CRM or ecommerce systems?

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Do you have a budget for the project? What assets do you need? What do you already have?

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