

USING SOCIAL MEDIA TO PROMOTE YOUR PROJECT

As a teen, you probably know, use and love social media. But have you thought about how to use it as a marketing resource? What follows is an overview of how you can use popular social media platforms to connect with audiences and promote your project.

WHY USE SOCIAL MEDIA?

Your project deserves its own home on the web – a way of spreading the word and developing a community around your mission and goals. Just as bricks-and-mortar businesses use signs and other advertising to bring traffic through their doors, you will need a way to connect and communicate with your audience.

That's where social media sites come in. These platforms can be like mini-blogs, allowing you to share your project with others.

There are three key reasons to maintain a social media presence:

▶ **One: Establish Expertise**

Using social media can help your team establish itself as a group of experts who are plugged into what's happening with a particular topic, making you a valued and trusted resource within your wider community. When your community/Club/audience values and trusts you, they will go above and beyond to support your efforts.

▶ **Two: Connect with Community Partners**

Developing online connections with others who are dedicated to the social issue you're working on is one of the best ways to grow your audience and build your reputation among people who can support and promote your events.

▶ **Three: Build Your Community**

One of the best things about social media is the ability for people to "like" or "follow" you. When people do this, they are giving you greater access to their time and attention. For instance, when someone follows you on Twitter, new tweets from you are then featured in their Twitter feed. Essentially they've said that what you tweet or post about is important to them and they want to keep up with it. These are the people who are most likely to share your project details with others, which helps you build a supportive community.

WHICH SOCIAL MEDIA SHOULD YOU CHOOSE?

When choosing your social media platforms, it's better to aim for quality over quantity. Having Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest, Instagram and Google Plus accounts will not attract followers if they aren't regularly updated. It's also more effective to focus on driving your audience traffic to one or two sites instead of several. If you do use several forms of social media, spread the responsibility around: Assign different members to maintain different accounts so no single member is overwhelmed. You may also find that you have individual members who are especially fond of, or skilled at making connections on a particular platform.



TWITTER

This micro-blogging site has been around since 2006. On Twitter, you post messages to your network of followers using a maximum of 140 characters. Millennial users (18- to 34-year-olds) commonly use Twitter as a news-breaking platform when big events happen around the world. Its separate live video app Periscope encourages "seeing the world through someone else's eyes."

Twitter is used at work and at home, typically during down times like commutes and breaks.

Best Times to Post:

- ▶ 12:00-3:00 p.m. on Mondays-Fridays
- ▶ 5:00-6:00 p.m. on Wednesdays
- ▶ 10:00-11:00 a.m. on Tuesdays

Frequency:

- ▶ Three original tweets per day before engagement decreases slightly.
- ▶ Retweets (RTs) of other posts are encouraged. Be sure to follow and retweet other Clubs, BGCA (@BGCA_Clubs), and other organizations that tweet about youth issues and relevant pop culture trends.

Length of Posts:

- ▶ Ideal character count: 71-100.
- ▶ Tweets shorter than 100 characters have a 17 percent higher engagement rate than posts with more than 100 characters.
- ▶ Keeping a tweet shorter than the 140 character limit gives followers more room to RT your tweet.

Best Performing Content Type:

- ▶ Photo
- ▶ Video
- ▶ Meme
- ▶ GIF: to generate your own, try sites like Giphy.com
- ▶ Infographic: to generate your own, try the tools here: www.wikihow.com/Make-a-Meme



INSTAGRAM

This social media platform is known for its innovative photo filters that give a professional and fun look to ordinary images. Instagram's demographic tends to be young adults, ages 18-24, who like it for its ease of use, hilarious memes and the ability to post short videos to drive engagement.

Since Instagram is meant for use on mobile devices, users tend to use the network all the time, any time.

Best Times to Post:

- ▶ Anytime Monday-Thursday, except between 3:00-4:00 p.m.

Frequency:

- ▶ Most users post an average of 1-2 times per day, but there is no harm in posting more than that.
- ▶ If you do post more than once per day, space out the timing of the posts so you don't flood your followers' feeds.

Length of Posts:

- ▶ Instagram has a 2,000-character limit, which many brands use to tell a written story along with their image.
- ▶ Still, it's important to keep in mind that Instagram is a visual platform, so the real value comes from the image. Make sure the image tells a story by itself. The caption should just assist in the storytelling.
- ▶ Filters can add an element of style to the image, but it's important to make sure the image is good quality to begin with. Make sure your photos have adequate lighting and aren't blurry.

Best Performing Content Type:

- ▶ Photo
- ▶ Meme



FACEBOOK

With more than one billion subscribers, Facebook is the largest social media platform. Registered users create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. Last year, the company debuted its Facebook Live capability. This new video streaming functionality is embedded into users' profiles to let followers connect seamlessly through live broadcasts.

People tend to use Facebook at work and at home, on both mobile devices and desktops.

Best Times to Post:

- ▶ 12:00-1:00 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays
- ▶ 3:00-4:00 p.m. on Wednesdays
- ▶ 1:00-4:00 p.m. on Thursdays and Fridays

Frequency:

- ▶ 1-2 posts per day, before likes and comments begin to drop off

Length of Posts:

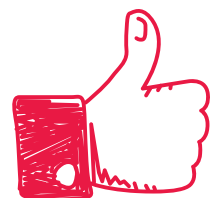
- ▶ Ideal character count: 40
- ▶ Posts with 40 characters receive 96 percent more engagement than posts with a higher character count
- ▶ Short and sweet is a good rule of thumb

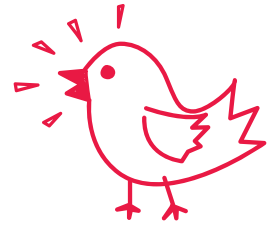
Best Performing Content Type:

- ▶ Photo (to create your own or resize graphics, try [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com) or [Pixlr.com](https://www.pixlr.com))
- ▶ Video
- ▶ Infographic
- ▶ Meme

FACEBOOK ADS

If you're trying to build Facebook followers, Facebook advertising is another way of doing so. For a small amount, you can create "sidebar" ads that will appear to specific Facebook users, allowing you to be seen by members of your target audience. Your target audience can be narrowed by gender, age, city, state, country, educational background and more. It can help you generate likes and followers for your project for as little as one dollar per day. Visit www.facebook.com/business for more info and start with "Create an Ad."





LINKEDIN

A professional networking site that lets users connect with professionals in various industries, find new positions, write thought leadership op-eds and network within interest groups.

LinkedIn is for professionals, and they tend to use it during working hours.

Best Times to Post:

- ▶ 7:30-8:30 a.m., 12:00 p.m. and 5:00-6:00 p.m. on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays
- ▶ 10:00-11:00 a.m. on Tuesdays

Frequency:

- ▶ Once per weekday
- ▶ Posting once per weekday during working hours allows you to reach 60 percent of your audience

Examples:

- ▶ Photo
- ▶ Infographic



SNAPCHAT

Snapchat is a great way to connect with younger audiences, especially teens, who like its temporary nature. Stories posted on Snapchat disappear after 24 hours, creating a sense of excitement and urgency, and there is less emphasis on likes and comments than Facebook or Instagram.

Best Practices:

- ▶ Post snaps to “My Story” so that all of your followers can view it
- ▶ Turn on Filters (Settings>Manage>Filters) to geo-tag your snaps and get featured on your city’s story

Examples:

- ▶ Photo
- ▶ Video

SAMPLE FACEBOOK PAGE, BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF NORTH SAN MATEO

The screenshot shows the Facebook profile for 'Safe Driving for Teens'. The page header includes the Facebook logo, a search bar, and the page name 'Safe Driving for Teens' with a 'Home' link. Below the header is a cover photo area with an 'Add a Cover' button. The profile picture is a colorful abstract graphic. The page has 6 likes and 4 people talking about it. The 'About' section states: 'In partnership with the Boys & Girls Clubs of North San Mateo, Boys & Girls Clubs of America and the Great Futures Challenge. Members from Boys & Girls Clubs are encouraged to drive safe.' Below this is a 'Highlights' dropdown menu. The main content area features a status update from May 16, 2013, sharing a link to the DriveSafe.ly app. The text of the post reads: 'You should try the DriveSafe.ly app because it's safer and it tells you what the person is texting you, so you don't have to look at your phone. Having this app will help you concentrate on the road and not your phone, so less people will get hurt or worse. With this app we can have safer streets to travel through.' To the right of the post is a 'Likes' section listing users like DriveSafe.ly, South San Francisco, California, 'It Can Wait' No Texting While Driving, Safe Driving, and California Highway Patrol. A sidebar on the right contains an advertisement for the DriveSafe.ly app, titled 'See Your Ad Here' and 'Free Mobile App Stops Texting While Driving - DriveSafe.ly'. At the bottom right, there is an 'Advertise Your Page' button.

SAMPLE FACEBOOK PAGE, BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF KING COUNTY

The screenshot shows the Facebook profile for 'Seattle Teens Against Trafficking'. The page header includes the text 'is on Facebook.' and a prompt to sign up for Facebook today, with 'Sign Up' and 'Log In' buttons. The profile picture is a black and white photo of a young woman with the text 'NOT FOR SALE' overlaid. The page name is 'Seattle Teens Against Trafficking' with 20 likes. The 'About' section states: 'We are a coalition of teens in the Seattle area on a mission to end slavery in our community.' Below this is a 'Highlights' dropdown menu. The main content area features a status update from 'Seattle Teens Against Trafficking' shared a link to an article titled 'Special report: Buyers of child sex are ordinary guys doing something illegal | Seattle Post Globe'. The text of the post reads: 'The vice squad runs several stings a month, arresting 360 men a year — one guy a day, on average — for soliciting sex with undercover female officers. They are given an opportunity to get the arrest off their records if they attend "John S... See More'. Below the post is a 'Likes' section listing users like YouthForce Interns and Safe Driving for Teens. A sidebar on the right contains an advertisement for the DriveSafe.ly app, titled 'See Your Ad Here' and 'Free Mobile App Stops Texting While Driving - DriveSafe.ly'. At the bottom right, there is an 'Advertise Your Page' button.