



## Engaging Social Media for Advocacy

Social networks, like Twitter and Facebook, are great platforms for getting your message out into the world, cultivating a like-minded community, staying on top of breaking news and issues, and building a name for yourself.

### Who should be doing social media for your organization?

Early on, you may need to decide whether you have a single person in charge of maintaining social media accounts. While it may be tempting to give just one person this responsibility, ideally this task will be shared by a number of different members of your team. This ensures that you do not lose all of your social media expertise if your designated media person leaves. In addition, it allows for more consistent coverage of your organization's work and of related current issues if that person is busy with other tasks.

If multiple people are able to post content on the organization's social media accounts, it is important to establish some rules concerning style, "Dos and Don'ts," and other policies, in order to maintain a consistent voice for the organization.

### What Social Networks Should You Be on?

Twitter and Facebook are two obvious choices because they have the most users, and in turn, the most influence. Google+ is also an option, although it is less popular. If you're producing videos, consider YouTube and Vimeo. And if you speak to a niche audience, look for social networks that appeal to that group.

### 6 Tips for Better Tweeting

- Take on an easily recognizable Twitter handle (username) — It can be issue-specific, or it can be named after your organization. It's easy to change your Twitter handle in the future, but very difficult to change your name on Facebook. Shorter is generally better because, given the character limit, it makes it easier for people to re-tweet or direct messages to you.
- Be timely — When possible, try to be the first account to tweet breaking news.
- Be passionate — Good tweets will reflect an opinion so that the audience not only understands an issue, but also understands your opinion on the topic.
- Use "@" to direct tweets at a particular user — This can be useful to get the attention of a particular company or elected official. If they're on Twitter, tweet to "@name" to be sure that person/company sees your tweet.

- IMPORTANT: if you begin a tweet with "@" then only individuals who follow both your account and the other account will be able to see it. So put a period or other character at the start of the tweet if you wish all of your followers to see the tweet.
  - Example: Only viewable to followers of your account and the account of the person you are tweeting to.
    - "@EFF on the new Indian digital locks legislation [link]"
  - Example: Viewable to all of your followers.
    - ".@EFF on the new Indian digital locks legislation [link]"
- Use hash tags — Using the right hash tags can attract the attention of people who follow the certain issue or topic. It can be powerful, but using too many can be messy and unhelpful.
- Be eloquent — Tweets should not just look like a jumble of acronyms. It is fine to say less if you can say it with eloquence. Similarly, while you only have 140 characters, it's best not to use too many abbreviations or the message may get lost in the reader trying to understand it. Just as in long-form writing simplicity and clarity are desired.

## 5 tips for Better Facebook and Google+ Engagement

- Be Timely — Like Twitter, the best way to have your Facebook or Google+ post spread is to be the first to break the news to the public.
- Choose a name that is most likely to be searched for in Facebook or Google+ search.
  - Example: if most people know your organization by the name "ACLU" then having your name be "American Civil Liberties Union" is not ideal. Consider "American Civil Liberties Union/ACLU" instead.
- Post pictures and graphs — Followers are more drawn to posts if there is media attached to it, so the more images you use, the more people will be interested and willing to share it.
- Try to put a positive spin on a post to make them more easily "Liked" — If you had a major loss in your campaign, explain your loss and then your commitment to continuing to fight or how your followers can take action.

Facebook is a great place for conversation, so ending the message in your post with a question is an effective way to spark engagement.