

Social Media Policy

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Overview

Social media is redefining the way we communicate with various audiences. With tools such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and blogs, anyone now has the ability to create a Web presence and share content instantly with friends and followers around the world. Social media has given Cedarville University the opportunity to engage in ongoing "conversations" with various audiences and to communicate helpful information and resources, creating community that extends far beyond campus.

Cedarville University supports the use of social media by employees to connect with prospective and current students, parents, alumni, donors, colleagues, and other fans and friends. This policy provides insight on how to do so effectively and intentionally, maintaining care to protect and enhance the University's brand and reputation.

If, after reading this policy, you're hesitant to launch a specific social media initiative for your area and want ideas on other ways to promote, please contact us. We're willing to consult with you.

As social media and technology change, this handbook will evolve. We are very open to your feedback, suggestions, and best practices. Please email us, call us, or stop by. We're here to assist you in your marketing and communication needs.

Here to serve,

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Using Social Media on Behalf of Cedarville University

When using social media as an official representative of Cedarville University:

DO:

- Protect sensitive or personal information
- Monitor user comments (if enabled)
- Be accurate
- Correct mistakes (and acknowledge them openly)
- Be considerate
- Respect copyrights and trademarks
- Use Cedarville email addresses and set strong passwords
- Tell Cedarville's story from your perspective
- Identify who you are and the department you represent
- Post news and information that is already public
- Stay within your area of expertise

DON'T:

- Announce news that is not public or yours to share
- Comment on work-related legal matters, unless you are an official Cedarville spokesperson for the matter and have permission to do so
- Comment on political matters, as this could jeopardize Cedarville's tax-exempt status
- Criticize other groups, organizations, or people
- Endorse, advertise, or sponsor unless you have permission

Content Management

Content related to University programs, services, and alumni, student, or community ventures should be broadcast via Cedarville's social media channels. Examples include:

- Announcements of upcoming events (CU Friday, theatre productions, concerts, etc.)
- Media releases involving current students, faculty or staff, and alumni
- Links to videos about Cedarville programs and highlighting student activities
- Human interest items or unique campus happenings

Departments that choose to maintain a social media presence must consider their messages, audiences, and goals, as well as a strategy for keeping information on social media sites upto-date.

Best Practices

Branding: All Cedarville social media presences should have a consistent look and feel, including use of the Cedarville logo. Submit your proposed profile picture via email to marketing prior to publishing your site. If you need assistance creating a customized profile picture or identity, please submit a design services request.

Personal Use: Employees have the right to participate in social media using personal equipment on their own time. They are expected never to post or create anything that would be potentially embarrassing or considered offensive. Your personal posts and comments must be clearly identified as your own. If you are writing about your professional work for Cedarville University, identify yourself and your role.

Monitoring: Marketing will monitor official University social media channels regularly during office hours and periodically at other times.

Public Nature of Social Media: Social media users need to be aware that online communication is considered public. Privacy does not exist in the world of social media. Consider what could happen if a post becomes widely published and how that may reflect both on you and the University. Search engines can display content years after it is created, and comments can be forwarded or copied. Please use caution.

Accuracy: Get the facts straight before posting them online. Review content for grammatical and spelling errors. This is especially important if you are posting on behalf of the University in any capacity. For reference, please consult the *Cedarville University Style Guide*.

Facebook

Types of Accounts: There are three types of Facebook accounts.

- **Fan Pages:** These serve as the best way to represent your unit within the University. They generally represent an official body of the University.
- **Groups:** Groups should represent non-official Cedarville entities. They are typically used to organize a group of people joined by a common interest, cause, event, ministry, or program.
- **Personal Pages:** These are for individual use only and may not be used to as an official voice of the University.

Username: Facebook gives users the ability to create a custom URL for a page (e.g., facebook.com/cedarville). Create a logical, custom username to help users find your page. Visit <u>facebook.com/username</u> to set this up.

Changes: Facebook continues to adjust both the layout and promotion of pages and posts. We are always monitoring these changes and learning how they affect the relationship with those who like our pages. From our perspective, there are some good changes (e.g., cover photo and featured posts) as well as some bad changes (e.g., limiting the reach of your posts to your own fans). We are also monitoring Facebook's policies, such as what is and is not allowed on a cover photo. Please contact Amanda Tress if you have questions about the changes you see on Facebook's platform or need a tutorial.

Student Groups: Student groups wishing to promote Cedarville missions trips and other programs are encouraged to set up a Facebook group (or a blog).

Post Frequency: Do not "over post" on your page as this will flood your fans' Facebook News Feeds. Posting at most two or three times a day is considered appropriate.

Twitter

Twitter allows users to send 140-character text-based messages (known as "tweets") that are delivered to those who have "subscribed" to the updates (subscribers are known as "followers" on Twitter).

Username: Twitter limits each account name to 15 characters, so be concise when creating a username for your account.

Content: Twitter can be used to deliver news and links "broadcast" style to promote something or foster conversations. The @ symbol is used to "tag" another user in a post (e.g., "Just saw @DrBrown231 in Chuck's!") This creates a link between your account and the user you've tagged.

Blogs

Blogs provide a way to post extended comments or thoughts that are beyond the scope of a Facebook status update or a tweet. They allow for an in-depth analysis of an event or idea.

Platforms: While there are several blogging platforms, we've chosen to use the blogging feature that is part of Sitecore, our web content management system. Several groups on campus are using this platform and find it to be effective. Sitecore's blog feature is powerful and can integrate with a Facebook page.

Content and Frequency: Posts must be relevant to the audience and focused on two-way conversation. Encourage comments through open-ended posts and invite readers to respond. To maintain interest in your blog, post one or two times each week.

Photos

It is recommended that photos be posted to the photo album feature within your Facebook fan page or group. This provides your fans another reason to interact with your page and adds "look-back" value to your page. Flickr is another means to share photos but does not provide as many benefits as Facebook.

Video

In a media-rich society, videos provide another means of communication and sharing a story. It is recommended that videos be posted to your Facebook fan page or group. This provides your fans another reason to interact with your page and adds "look-back" value to your page.

If you do not use Facebook, it is recommended that you use YouTube to share your videos.

Official Cedarville videos will be posted on the <u>Cedarville YouTube channel</u>. To request a video be uploaded to this channel, please <u>contact marketing</u>.

Comments Policy

The University reserves the right to edit or delete comments that target or disparage any ethnic, racial, or religious group. Further, the University also reserves the right to edit or delete comments that:

- Include spam or include controversial links to other sites
- Are clearly off topic
- Advocate illegal activity
- Promote particular services, products, or political organizations
- Infringe on copyrights or trademarks
- Contain other confidential information

Getting Started

- **Manager Approval:** Discuss with your manager how you plan to use social media to further your department's work for the University.
- **Apply:** Fill out the Social Media Application to notify marketing of your desire to use social media. Look through the Social Media Strategy Worksheet to help identify your goals and track success. Submit the application for approval.
- **Discuss:** If and after marketing has approved your use of social media, complete the Social Media Strategy Worksheet to refine the goals of your strategy.
- **Sign up:** After defining your goals, create your page and begin communicating. Please provide marketing with the username and password and provide notification of any changes. Marketing along with computer services can provide assistance with setting up your account.
- **Support:** Marketing will provide answers for any questions related to social media best practices and planning.

Special note: Notify marketing of any existing University social media accounts to evaluate strategy, goals, and overall brand image of the University.

Social Media Application

Name		
Title		
Department		
Manager/Supervisor		
Objective: What do you wan	nt to accomplish for Cedarville University through s	ocial media?
Strategy: What plan do you	have in place to accomplish your objective(s)?	
Target Audience: Who are y	ou trying to reach?	
Social Media Outlet: What s them to meet your objective:	ocial media outlets do you plan to use, and how w s?	ill you use
Please submit this application	to marketing.	mit

Social Media Strategy Worksheet

Team: Identify who will have primary responsibility for populating, maintaining, and monitoring your social media presence. Ensure they have the time and enthusiasm needed for success. List the team members.

Primary Goals: Are you trying to communicate a campaign, promote general information about your department or program, communicate with alumni, etc.? Define goals for your social media presence.

Measuring Success: How you will measure the success — or lack of success — of your social media strategy? Consider some ideas: increased traffic to your website; more frequent or intentional communication with prospective students; networking with colleagues; etc. List how you plan to measure success and the tools you'll use to track that success.

Audiences: Identifying your audiences will help you to tailor your content, choose the right tools, and provide what they want or need. List your primary audiences.

Current Conversation: This is when the listening begins. Survey the social media landscape for the "thought leaders" in your field. What are people already saying? What are people saying about you? Who is saying it? List the topics, people, and sites that are leading the conversations that are relevant to you and note what they are doing — both correctly and incorrectly.

Content: Identify the content you have to share. Is it primarily news updates, research developments, or networking information? Photographs? Video? List the content you will be sharing via social media channels.

Name and Design: Identify a simple and descriptive name for your profile that clearly identifies your affiliation with Cedarville. Remember: <u>submit your profile and cover photos</u> to marketing or <u>request assistance</u> in designing this.

Evaluation: Set a timeline for when you will conduct an evaluation of your site's success, using the goals and measures identified above. At that time, be prepared to realign your site's content. Ongoing evaluation should also be part of your strategy. Define your timeline.

Social Media Examples

Facebook: facebook.com/cedarville

Twitter: <u>twitter.com/cedarville</u>

twitter.com/cuyellowjackets

Blogs: <u>cedarville.edu/parentprep</u>

Videos: youtube.com/CedarvilleVideos

Photos: <u>flickr.com/photos/54387830@N05/</u>