Best Practices for using Social Media

Have a plan

You wouldn’t launch a newsletter, ad campaign or speaker series without first having a plan – so why would you set up a Facebook page without taking some time to think about why you’re doing so? Consider questions such as: Who am I trying to reach/engage with? What do I want to accomplish? How will I know when I’ve had success? Who will manage my accounts? How will I deal with user-generated content?

Listen before you speak

You should be monitoring the social space long before you plunge into it. Consider using a tool such as Google Alerts to better understand where your audience is and what they’re talking about. The answers might surprise you.

Measure and review

Once you are in the social space, be sure to measure your activities. Things like follower counts, fans, likes, comments, views and retweets are important, but so are more qualitative measurements, such as comment sentiment and audience type. Review these measurements and be ready to tweak your social media usage accordingly.

Be engaging

Social media is a form of two-way communication, so don’t just push messages out into cyberspace. Engage in conversation with your audience by posting interesting and insightful content: questions, photos and videos can help spark conversations and keep you top-of-mind with those you want to reach.

You’re not alone

You don’t have to reinvent the wheel. Guidelines for social media use by University staff offer tips on a number of aspects of social communication, and assistance can be found by contacting the Office of Public Relations.