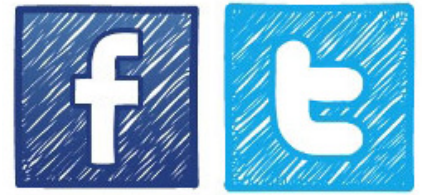


Social Media for Scouting

Prepared by the Scouts Canada
Social Media Team, September 2011



This guide provides you with all the information you need to leverage social media as a communications and/or marketing tool for your Section, Group, Area or Council. It will outline how to set up and maintain social media accounts from a beginner's perspective, focusing on the two most popular channels in use today: Facebook and Twitter. It will also provide valuable tips and best practices which are relevant to beginners and experienced users alike. Although it is intended as a guide for groups, the information in this guide would also be educational for individuals using personal social media accounts.

This guide has been developed by the Scouts Canada Social Media team; a group of volunteers comprised of dedicated Rover Scouts and experienced marketing professionals:

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Introduction

Only a few short years ago, the word "friend" meant nothing in a technology context and the word "tweet" meant a weak chirping sound. Now these terms are part of common language and an integral part of everyday communication. Social media has become the primary means of communication for hundreds of millions of youth and adults around the world. It joins texting, instant messaging and email in our ever changing digital world.

Don't be intimidated by social media. Yes it's new. Yes it's different. It also provides a great way to connect with friends, family, celebrities and even other members (and potential members) of Scouts Canada. Learn something new, have some fun and join the conversation!

Facebook for Scouting

This section will outline how Facebook can be useful to your Group, and how you can get started with a Facebook Page or Group.

Of all the social media channels in use, Facebook by far has the greatest market penetration. To put this into perspective, some research shows it has 750 million users globally, who spend about on average 30 minutes a day logged in. As of 2011, approximately 50% of Canadians are on Facebook and the number continues to grow. So naturally Facebook can be used as a great marketing and communications tool.

When considering the usefulness of Facebook to your Group, you'll need to consider the apps and features that you can harness to achieve your goals. You can create photo albums, share videos or start discussion threads. You can create event pages to use viral marketing to promote and manage your event, and you can use tons of other social applications to do more things than you can imagine.

Page or Group?

The first thing you need to decide is what do you want to accomplish by having a Facebook page. Do you want to provide updates and start discussions with members? Manage your events? Share videos and photos? Recruit new volunteers and youth?

Facebook offers two options for you to choose from: Groups and Pages.

A Facebook Group is ideal if you would like to use Facebook mostly as an internal communication and sharing tool within your organization. A group can be either public or private (open or closed) which means you can allow members to join freely or you can require that they are invited or be approved to join before they can see and participate in the group.

Groups allow all members to contribute content like pictures or videos, to post on the group's "wall", start discussion threads, or edit documents. Another advantage of Facebook Groups is that you may send messages to all the members of the group, which is great for sending out announcements. For example, a group is perfect for a Venturer Scout company to use for planning and sharing, or for leaders of a section to use for collaboration.

A Facebook Page is ideal if you would like to use Facebook for marketing, sharing and communicating with the community rather than just the members of your organization. Facebook Pages are public, as is all the information posted on them. Pages are more effective at engaging your followers, as your page's content will be visible on your followers' news feed. They can also be linked to Facebook advertisements, should your group choose to invest in advertising.

Pages are perfect for Areas or Councils that would like to engage with a broader audience, and even engage or recruit people outside of Scouting. Groups are ideal for individual Scouting sections or Groups that would like to use Facebook to collaborate and share.



Starting a Group

1. You will need to have a personal account in order to create a group. If you don't have one yet, you can sign up at www.facebook.com, otherwise log in to your account.
2. To create a new group, follow the instructions provided at www.facebook.com/groups.
3. As you create the group, you will have the option of making your group "open" or "closed". Note that in a closed group, any group member can add and approve new members. If you want to restrict it so that only Group Admins (you) can approve new members, select the appropriate setting in the edit group page.
4. Complete your group description and upload a group profile picture.
5. Once you have created the group, it's time to add members! Select "Add Friends to Group" on the main group page to add members.

Starting a Facebook Page

1. If you have a Facebook account, you must first log in before creating the page. If you don't have an account, Facebook will create an organizational account for your page.
2. To create the page, simply follow the step by step guide provided by Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/create.php. Try to select a meaningful name that clearly identifies your group, such as "Scouts Canada - New Brunswick Council" for a Council or "1st Riverton Rovers" for a Group. The preferred category for Scouting pages is "Non-Profit Organization".
3. Once you have created the page, complete your profile and upload a profile picture that represents your group (e.g. a group logo or photo of your group in action). Be sure to display a contact email address for your organization on the profile!
4. Now you need to build a following! Invite your friends to "Like" the page using the "Invite Friends" link on your page. If your organization has a mailing list, make sure to tell everyone to "Like" the page, and to invite their friends as well.
5. Let us know that you have a page! Go to www.facebook.com/pages/Scouts-Canada/27747198656 and post on our wall to let everyone know about your new page.
6. Once your page has 25 fans, you are now eligible to reserve a username at facebook.com/username or in your page's settings. This will change your page's URL to www.facebook.com/YourUsername, which makes it a lot easier for people to find and remember your page online!

Twitter for Scouting

Twitter is a micro-blogging service, which in effect is a way to share short messages with the world. The concept is quite simple: you publish a tweet — a message of 140 characters or less — and that tweet can then be viewed by all of your followers. You are also able to send direct messages to a follower, which are private messages that can only be viewed by the recipient.

Twitter is unique in that it lacks all of the features of social networks like Facebook, but in doing so it goes directly to the point: the content. Twitter requires brevity and simplicity, and as such it is a very effective medium for communication. There is a thriving community of Scouters on Twitter who discuss all matters related to Scouting on a daily basis. It's great for networking with Scouters from across the country, and to share ideas and information with groups and individuals that you would otherwise never communicate with. Although this guide focuses on how to involve your group in social media, Twitter is more frequently used by individual Scouters as opposed to Scouting groups.

Creating a New Twitter Account

1. Go to www.twitter.com/signup
2. Enter in your first and last name, email address, password and a unique username. Your username should be unique like you are, Twitter will check to make sure no one else has it before you can go ahead and create your account.
3. Twitter will also provide you with a bit of help on your first adventure with them.
4. You can now set up your profile, with a brief bio, a profile picture, and your location.

Twitter Glossary

- **Tweet:** A message published on twitter, of 140 characters or less.
- **Mention:** A mention is meant to bring a tweet to the attention of another Twitter user, it is done by writing @theirusername for example: @scoutscanada.
- **Retweet (RT):** A retweet is re-posting someone else's tweet verbatim. This can be done by selecting the Retweet button on a tweet.
- **Direct Message (DM):** A private message the same size as a normal tweet sent to another user.
- **Follow:** To have another user's messages appear in your timeline (news feed).
- **Hashtag:** A message preceded by the # sign such as #scoutsdostuff, used for aggregating tweets from various users, often on a specific topic or item.



Getting Started with Twitter

Congratulations, you now have a twitter account! Now what?

1. You will need to follow some other accounts! You can start by following the official Scouts Canada account. Navigate to <http://twitter.com/scoutscanada> and select the Follow button.
2. Looking for some more great Scouters on Twitter? The national Social Media team follows lots of great people using @scoutscanada. Go through the list of people we follow and start following them.
3. Now for your first tweet! Introduce your group to the world. **Mention** @scoutscanada in your tweet, so that we see your tweet and can follow you.
4. Now that you are established on Twitter, check back regularly to see what the rest of the Scouting community is saying, and don't forget to get involved in the conversation!
5. For a detailed guide to getting started with Twitter, check out the *Twitter 101 Guide* referenced in the Resources section of this document.

Best Practices

If you are used to communicating only through traditional media, it requires a bit of a paradigm shift to succeed with social media. The underpinnings of social media rely on two-way (or more) communication. Unlike with traditional media, social media is not meant just to push out information to followers, it is meant to foster conversation and build community — this is where social media really excels. As such, it is a good practice to use a conversational, open voice when using social media. Expect and encourage your followers to engage with you, and your success in social media will follow.

Below are listed some specific tips and best practices to being successful with the various social media platforms discussed.

Facebook Pages

- With Facebook pages it is key not to post too often, as to not overwhelm your followers. A good rule of thumb is about one post a day as a maximum.
- Your page's posts will engage more people at certain peak times during the day. This varies depending on your audience, but a good place to start is after most followers get home from work/school on weekdays (e.g. 5:30 pm local time) or in the morning before they leave home.
- It's important that your page is open and transparent. You should respond to people's comments as often as possible, and be prepared to respond respectfully to negative comments.

- Understand that your followers will very rarely view your actual page. Most of the time they are engaged when they view your posts on their news feed. Facebook doesn't display all posts on the news feed, but instead displays posts based on an algorithm that takes into account the number of likes and comments on that post. The more likes and comments your posts have, the more people that will view and be engaged by your post. Such is the viral nature of social media.
- To increase the engagement of your posts, include a call to action at the end of the post. For example, this could be a question for them to answer, or a request that they click a link: "Tell us..", "Comment to let us know", "Click here to see". A call to action is always most effective when it is the last sentence in the post.
- Use Facebook Insights (available on your page) to analyze how effective your posts have been at engaging your audience, and try to determine what your audience responds to favourably.

Facebook Groups

- Be advised that by default group members will receive an email every time someone posts to the group. If they find that they are receiving too many emails, instruct them to edit their individual notification settings by selecting "Edit Settings" in the group.
- Upload photos and videos — encourage members to post these to their profile so that their friends can easily join the group.
- Stay active. Check in and post content. Provide users with discussion topics to get the conversation started.

Twitter

- Don't be afraid to follow people, there are a lot of Scouters out there offering great resource items and program to use. It's a great way to find out what is going on out there in real time.
- Follow anyone who follows you (and unfollow spammers/jerks).
- Build goodwill! The more you follow, retweet, and reply to other people, the more they will do the same to you.
- Retweet the good stuff from others. Sharing is caring.
- A lot of @replies shows a lot of humanity/engagement.
- Set an egg timer. Twitter is addictive.
- Remember that everyone does Twitter their own way.
- Share links, share ideas, ask questions, answer questions
- Respect the people you follow. Be interesting. Listen first, tweet second.

Remember in any social media engagement, once you say something it is out there and you cannot take it back. Think before you post, be open and honest and have fun!



Risk Management

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: *May I post pictures of members on social media sites?*

A: Absolutely, provided the parent or volunteer has given us permission on the registration form to use their image or likeness for Scouting promotional purposes. Please confirm with your registrar that all your members have signed the photo release. It is generally a good idea to use first names only when naming minors in photographs/videos.

Q: *Is it appropriate for a Scouter to "friend" youth members on Facebook?*

A: Youth will sometimes add you as a friend on their social media accounts as they wish to feel engaged and connected. If a youth member adds you, feel free to accept the invitation but be reminded that you are looked to as a role model, so please ensure that all the content on your profile is appropriate for youth.

Please be aware of the implications of adding youth members on your accounts. We do not want to put youth in the position where they feel pressured to accept your invite when they may not be comfortable with it. To avoid making a youth member feel uncomfortable, we recommend that you only add the youth if they add you first.

Q: *Is it appropriate for Scouters to communicate with youth online?*

A: Scouts Canada's "two deep" policy applies in all situations, including online. Adults should avoid engaging in private conversations with youth online. When communicating with youth using social media, include other Scouters in the message, or post publicly on the youth's profile.

Educating Youth

Whether your group is now making the jump to social media, or you just have a lot of members using social media, it's a good idea to have a conversation with your youth about safety online. Included below are a few talking points you might mention when discussing online safety with youth:

- Encourage youth to abide by age restrictions set by social media services. For example, Facebook and Twitter do not allow members under the age of 13.
- Be aware of the privacy settings of your online profiles. Some information is by default publicly visible. What are the ramifications of this? What is appropriate to post publicly, and what isn't?
 - By default everything on Twitter is public. Youth can protect their information online by setting their profile to protected (only people they accept can see their profile and their tweets), and only accepting people they know.
 - Certain information on Facebook is public by default. These settings can be easily changed, but the user should always be aware of what information is public and private.

- "Friend" people they know, not just everyone who tries to "friend" them online.

Refer to Scouts Canada BP&P for further information on privacy policies and best practices: <http://www2.scouts.ca/dnn/scouters/BPPAdmin/BylawPoliciesandProcedures/ElectronicVersionBPandP/tabid/232/Default.aspx>

Troubleshooting

Facebook: Most questions that you may have about Facebook can be answered by searching the Facebook Help Center: <https://www.facebook.com/help/>

Twitter: For detailed help and guidance on using Twitter please refer to the official help center: <https://support.twitter.com/>

For questions specific to Scouts Canada social media policy, or best practices in applying social media to Scouting please feel free to contact the Scouts Canada Social Media Team by email at social@scouts.ca.

Resources

Building Your Business with Facebook Pages

http://ads.ak.facebook.com/ads/FacebookAds/FB_PagesGuide_MediaKit_051611.pdf

Social Media in Scouts Canada, by Craig Kielburger

<http://blog.scouts.ca/2011/04/social-media.html>

Twitter 101: How should I get started using Twitter?

<https://support.twitter.com/groups/31-twitter-basics/topics/104-welcome-to-twitter-support/articles/215585-twitter-101-how-should-i-get-started-using-twitter>

