
SOCIAL MEDIA PROGRAM GUIDE 2013



 DEPAUL UNIVERSITY

BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL PROGRAM AT DePAUL

Social media are useful tools for your communication strategy here at DePaul. In order to build a successful social program for your department, it's important to address your specific communications goals as well as the overall enrollment and retention objectives of the university. By following the five steps outlined in this document, you're sure to achieve an optimal social presence among the people who matter the most.

The five steps to developing a social media strategy at DePaul are:

- 01 Identify Your Target Audience
- 02 Determine Objectives and Strategy
- 03 Select Tactics
- 04 Create Content
- 05 Measure Response



IDENTIFY YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

**It's important to understand your target audiences' needs.
This assures that what you want to deliver is valuable to them.**

DePaul's primary audiences are current students, prospective students, faculty/staff, media and alumni/friends. If you are not sure which audience you should be communicating with, you can use surveys and other listening tools to find out who is most engaged. From there, you can test content to refine what you know about the audience and their expectations.

In addition to using surveys, polls and Facebook Insights to get information from your audience, there are some other free online tools and software:

- For tracking specific content, Twitter Search, TweetStats, Followerwonk, and YouTube Insights are great tools for keeping up with trends.
- To monitor social activities, you can set up Google Alerts to monitor brand discussions across the Internet.
- To analyze topics and help you identify and understand your influencers, services like Topsy and Klout are great to have on hand.
- For real-time social media discussions on key social properties, tools like Social Mention can be a great resource.
- To measure microblogging sites, such as Twitter, as well as identify users' levels of activity, Socialcast can help you manage this mountain of data.

All of these tools give you a better idea of exactly who your audiences are and what content they engage with most.

You may have several audiences for your social media interactions. We recommend that you test posts to determine which audiences are most involved in your page and determine which audience is your priority. After you have determined which ones are visiting your social media, you can call them out within posts or develop specific interactions for them.

EXAMPLE:

The DePaul Facebook page has many audiences and writes posts for a specific audience



When University Marketing (UM) first set up the DePaul Facebook page, the page's target audience was alumni. After launching the page and researching who was interacting with the posts, staff quickly realized there were several different audiences visiting the page. So they started to highlight the audiences within the posts so that the appropriate audience pays attention to different posts.



DETERMINE OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

Now that you've determined your audience, what are your objectives?

Determining your primary objective means understanding your audience's needs, then aligning your strategy with one or more of these common social media objectives.

PRIMARY SOCIAL OBJECTIVES

CONDUCT RESEARCH

INCREASE AWARENESS

DRIVE RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

BUILD ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION

IMPROVE "CUSTOMER" SERVICE

CONDUCT RESEARCH

Use social media to gain information about your audience. Learn more about who your audiences are, which topics they are interested in and how to communicate with them. This can include using online social listening tools, following discussions on social networks like Facebook, reading discussion boards, or sending out polls, surveys or questions to your audience.

INCREASE AWARENESS

Increase awareness of your online content, website or your online discussions by participating in the conversation or publicizing something relevant to your audience. You can either start your own community or participate in an existing community, such as Facebook or Twitter, by sharing photos, videos, content or comments. These types of activities foster sharing among your audiences, which can assist in spreading the word about your department or its activities.

DRIVE RECRUITMENT EFFORTS

Drive interest in your department or group, such as Vincentians in Action, by providing information to your audience that motivates them to participate. Most recruitment efforts are led by some sort of call to action, such as volunteering for an event, donating to a cause, signing up for an email list or visiting a website. This objective is about action and understanding what you want your audience to do.

BUILD ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION

Enable your audience to help or share with each other. Create a place or community where users will seek knowledge, entertainment, inspiration, or ways to support each other. Engagement provides value to the audience by improving the knowledge of a topic, supporting the community with information, or sparking thoughts or ideas that can be shared or provide entertainment.

IMPROVE "CUSTOMER" SERVICE

Use social properties to provide an additional channel for your audience members to contact you to solve a problem or ask questions. Research the many support sites that already exist, including websites, FAQs, and social channels for areas such as DePaul Central or the Career Center. They provide answers to common questions your audience has asked or provide solutions to challenges. They can be a great place to start when delving into your customer service objective.

Once you know your audience and primary objective, you are ready to develop a strategy. What do you want your audience to do? From there, you can identify how to get your message to your audience and the best way to create the appropriate calls to action.

COMMON CALLS TO ACTION AT DEPAUL

DISCUSSION/SHARING

LINK TO RELEVANT WEBSITE

FILL OUT FORM

CONTRIBUTE

CONTACT US

Your call to action may be one or any combination of these things depending on your primary objective.

Some examples include likes, comments, shares, viewing photos or videos, clicking through to more information, submitting forms, registering for an event, making donations, finding addresses and operating hours, etc.

Consider what you would like your audience to do with the content you provide. For instance, if your primary audience is prospective students, you may write a Facebook post and include a link for them to fill out the form for more information about DePaul University. For alumni, you may want to write a blog about how they can become more involved with the university and send them to the website to volunteer for an event.



SELECT TACTICS

Now that you've determined your primary audience, objectives and strategy, you can choose which social technologies will most effectively meet your needs.

Where do they interact online? Which social media sites do they frequent? How should what you're communicating best be presented?

There are many social properties out there and multiple ways to communicate and share. This is where focusing on one of the five DePaul social objectives can help you.

On the next page, you will find some suggestions of the types of social properties that are more appropriate in facilitating your social interaction. We've organized them in a chart for reference.

KEY SOCIAL TACTICS BASED ON OBJECTIVE

SOCIAL TACTICS \ SOCIAL OBJECTIVES	CONDUCT RESEARCH	INCREASE AWARENESS	DRIVE RECRUITMENT EFFORTS	BUILD ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION	IMPROVE "CUSTOMER" SERVICE
Social Listening Software	●				
Social Networks Facebook // MySpace // LinkedIn	●	●	●		●
Blogs/Microblogs WordPress // Twitter		●	●	●	●
Discussion Boards/Forums BlueDemonZone // Topix	●	●		●	
Wikis Wikipedia // Wikia		●		●	
Communities DePaulQuad // Ning	●	●	●	●	●
Photo Sharing Instagram // Pinterest // Flickr		●	●	●	
Video Sharing YouTube // Vimeo		●	●	●	
Document Sharing SlideShare // Scribd		●			
Surveys/Polls SurveyMonkey // Facebook Polls // SurveyGizmo				●	●



CREATE CONTENT

Your social media presence will take monitoring and maintenance. When deciding on goals, strategies and tools, it's important to keep in mind the people available to help create and manage social media content and their availability to respond to the audience.

This is important when you consider how time-consuming it can be to create content for your social interactions.

You should repurpose content from other DePaul departments if it fits with your audiences' needs. You can do this by following specific content generators, such as Alumni Relations, Athletics, University Marketing and Public Relations and Communications, on their social networks and sharing their posts with your own social audience. You can also work with other departments to share and cross-link content, especially those departments that have similar objectives and audiences. You can also ask your users to be part of the discussion by asking for ideas and encouraging comments and content.

Here are some key points to keep in mind when developing content. Make sure the content is engaging enough so that the user sees it as valuable. Again, this goes back to understanding your audience's needs and providing them with value. Successful posts contain several elements—they provide information that is relevant to the user, speak with a human voice and engage the user by asking a question or requesting some sort of response. When referring to Facebook's News Feed, it is helpful to include an image of some sort to get attention from your audience.

EXAMPLE:

See how the DePaul Facebook Page shares content from other DePaul pages.



DePaul University shared a DePaul University Loop Campus photo

Envious about all those pictures people are posting of their Blue Demon gear? Now's your chance to score some on sale (or better yet, to get your Mom to score some for you).



Even though the weather is warm right now, 60° in December? It's bound to cool off soon, so be prepared when it hits with some warm fleece sweatshirts. [See more](#)

Like · Comment · Share · December 4 at 11:41 am

EXAMPLE:

Using a question as a post may engage users to find out an answer or answer the question themselves.



DePaul University

Why did a student get arrested in this history class?
<http://goo.gl/Ustrmh>



[Reacting to the Past](#) | [Featured Stories](#) | [DePaul University](#)
resources.depaul.edu

Like · Comment · Share · December 5 at 11:53 am



MEASURE RESPONSE

How are all of your social efforts performing?

Depending on the social tactics you've decided to use, there are different measurements you can review to determine how well you are doing. The way the user interacts with your content can tell you many different things. This is where your defined calls to action come in. Based on the call to action, you can measure the level of user engagement by the number of retweets, posts, views, likes, shares or comments. User engagement can also be measured by submission of or responses to user-generated content.

Website traffic statistics can illustrate how users got to your site. By understanding where your audience comes from, you can learn which social channels are most effective. You can also measure success by how many times your recruitment form was submitted, event RSVPs, and even the volume of customer service issues that have been handled through the social media channel.

SET YOUR EXPECTATIONS:

First, it is important to set your expectations for your social efforts. Not every social effort may result in increased event attendance or sweatshirt sales; you may want to build community or decrease complaints. This is why understanding your social objective is crucial when selecting your metrics. Here are key metrics to consider based on the social objective you have:

CONDUCT RESEARCH	Share of voice; how often is your program mentioned compared to competitors?	Audience	Content
INCREASE AWARENESS	Web traffic/ referrals	Number of fans	Number of subscribers
DRIVE RECRUITMENT	Tickets/ donations/ participants	Number of registrations or applications	Referral traffic
BUILD ENGAGEMENT AND RETENTION	Increase in participants, online and off	Shares/ comments	Ratings/ reviews
IMPROVE "CUSTOMER" SERVICE	Reduction in calls	Decrease in response time	Improved satisfaction ratings

DETERMINE YOUR BASELINE

Before you start measuring, you should know what type of response you are currently getting from your social efforts. Develop a baseline by looking at the number of fans or followers. How many are engaging with your efforts by liking, commenting on or sharing your posts? Are these interactions resulting in the behaviors you want from your audience?

UTILIZE CALLS TO ACTION

Remember that you want to tie many of your posts/content to some sort of call to action in order to measure response. Which call to action will support your social objective? Are you able to measure it? Which will be more engaging with your audience based on the social tactic/property you are using? Some calls to action may ask a question that your audience can answer within the comments of your post. Or maybe you ask them to share something with others—think about how you can drive action from what you are posting.

MEASURE YOUR SUCCESS

Once you have determined the best call to action and what your baseline numbers or percentages are, you are ready to start measuring the success of your social efforts. Look at the response you are receiving from your posts or activity and compare it with your baseline numbers or percentages to see if you have an increase or improvement. If you are doing better than before, great news! If you are doing worse than before, try to pinpoint the problem by testing. Either way, you want to optimize to continually improve your social interaction with your audience.

EXPLORE, TEST AND RE-MEASURE

Which content is working best and why? Is it the time you post it? Is it the way you are writing the post or what you are asking people to do? Which calls to action seem to convert people into engaging with you? Focus on revising your posts and content to see what is giving you the most engagement from your audience. Measuring your social efforts helps you improve your relationship with your audience.

RESOURCES

GENERAL QUESTIONS

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LEGAL QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

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NEGATIVE POSTS/POTENTIAL ISSUES

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UNIVERSITY LOGOS AND PHOTOS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

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