

Digital communication guide for Extension Professionals

Social Media Management

By Laurie Murrah Hanson, 4-H Agent in Fulton County & Josh Paine, CAES marketing professional

- Different audiences generally use different platforms. If you don't already, consider different social media platforms to reach these various audiences. Parents are typically on Facebook, while kids are on Instagram or other platforms. Many government agencies and nonprofits are on Twitter. Tag community partners and collaborators in posts as appropriate.
- Master one platform before moving to another. It's better to have one well-run account than be stretched thin trying to manage multiple.
- You can still cross-promote your content between platforms, but you may want to change your tone or copy to match the platform.
- Use relevant hashtags on Instagram and Twitter.
- Use a calendar to plan social media posts. Schedule posts ahead of time weekly to work more efficiently. It is okay to schedule posts for the weekend. You may not be online, but your audience is.
- Split up posts between program areas. Not only will this spread out posts throughout the week, but it will also ensure that you are posting regularly. It also cuts down on individual workloads when it comes to managing social media and gives you better variety of content.
- Do a quick evaluation. Look back through your platform analytics and see which posts did well. Was it because of the content of the post? Type of post? Time of day/week that you posted? Try to figure out what successful posts have in common so that you can use those strategies to boost your reach.
- Facebook Events can be a helpful tool to promote Facebook Live videos (and in-person events). Followers can RSVP to your event and get a reminder of when you are going live or releasing information. You can add community partners as co-hosts to increase the reach of your event/post.
- Connect with other community groups and organizations so that you can promote each other's posts. Think local government, schools, libraries, nonprofits, etc. These organizations often have a larger following and when they share one of your posts, it helps you to reach new people. Reciprocate by liking or sharing their relevant content.
- Work smarter, not harder. If there is a great resource already created, then share it! Do be cautious about the source of the information or resource. Only share information from reputable organizations and cite the source or give credit.
- Create and encourage engagement by asking people to share their thoughts, a photo, reaction etc.
- Be responsive. If people post a question as a comment or direct message (DM), make sure you follow-up.
- Use humor! We all need a laugh right now. Don't be afraid to use humor during this time.
- Don't post sensitive information for minors such as Zoom links or specific meeting locations.
- Make sure you brand everything with appropriate logos.



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Video & Multimedia Production

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Video Tips

- Keep videos short, unless there is a reason for longer content (such as an instructional or follow-along video)
- Live vs. edited videos: Consider your content and whether or not it is advantageous to "go live." Live doesn't have any redoes or edits, but does notify your followers that you are currently live on the platform. The videos are also saved to the channel. If going live, try to incorporate your audience somehow and thank them for tuning in. You can also encourage questions and answer them live during the video.
- Use the camera on the back of your smartphone, rather than the front-facing camera for better quality if possible. Don't forget to wipe and clean the lens as needed.
- Think about composition, lighting and audio. Try a test if you can before recording the final version. Don't forget about your background – what can be seen behind you in the video?
- Use landscape video for most platforms. Vertical video is best for Instagram stories.
- Take time to plan in advance. Create an outline, storyboard or script. Even if it's a quick draft it will help you think through your content. Do any necessary research and have notes on hand if you need a quick reminder.
- Use a tripod — find one that fits your budget and needs.

Useful Tools and Apps

- Hootsuite: a free app that can be used to schedule across platforms to make scheduling easier. A free account will allow you to post to three social media accounts and you can schedule up to 30 posts.
- Linktree: a free app that allows you to include multiple links in your bio on Instagram.
- Canva: design program to create professional looking content.
- Content management: Asana, Airtable and Trello are great ways to manage ideas, posts and assets. You can also use a spreadsheet or Google doc.
- Free sound and music libraries: freesound.org freemusicarchive.org
- Mojo: Good for creating an Instagram story slideshow or explainer-style video out of photos. Free mobile app, paid version offers more templates/stock photography.
- InShot: Good for resizing photo/video for different social media platforms (makes a vertical video horizontal, etc.)
- WeVideo: a free online video editing software.
- WeTransfer: a file sharing service.

Types of video content

- *Webinar recording*: A great way to share content you've already produced. Can you pull out the most relevant parts or split it up into sections?
- *How-to*: Showing how is important for visual learners.
- *Explainer*: These can be made with text on the screen or a voiceover. They're great if you're camera shy (or don't feel like getting dressed).
- *Interview*: Is there an expert, volunteer or client you can talk to? This is a way to incorporate a good story.
- *Teaser*: Get followers attention with a short clip. Give them a call to action if possible.
- *Promotional*: Think commercial but engaging and authentic.