

Social Media Playbook



Launching an engaged social media campaign offers numerous advantages. It enables the cultivation of a community spirit through interactive conversations and dialogues, facilitates the dissemination of relevant news and information tailored to your audience’s interests, allows for the monitoring and analysis of public sentiment toward your unit, and provides a vital channel for reaching a broad audience during times of crisis.

The objective of this playbook is to assist you in crafting a comprehensive strategy for enhancing your unit’s social media presence.

Survey the Landscape

As you begin your journey into the world of social media, it’s crucial to familiarize yourself with the terrain. A great starting point is to survey the various social networks at your disposal, paying close attention to their distinctive features, observing how they facilitate communication with different audiences, and contemplating how your unit could seamlessly integrate into these networks.

Popular Social Networks

Below are some of the most popular social networks units are using to communicate with their audiences. These are just a few of the social networks that exist, so do your own research to find the social network that makes the most sense for your unit.

■ Facebook: Build an Online Community Around Your Unit’s Activities

Facebook is perhaps the most well-known social network in the world, hosting 2.7 billion monthly active users and offering the most robust suite of features of the major social networks. Visit the [Facebook guide](#) to learn more about how you can use Facebook to interact with your audience.

■ LinkedIn: Take Your Professional Network to the Next Level

LinkedIn is a social network built around employment-oriented services and building professional relationships. This platform can be a great place to share news and information about your unit or connect with faculty, staff, or alumni. [Learn how you can create a LinkedIn page or a LinkedIn group for your unit.](#)

■ Instagram: Share Photos and Videos with Your Community

Instagram is a social network focused on sharing photos and videos. It is the perfect platform for sharing an engaging look at what your unit does and connecting with the community you are trying to reach. [Learn more about getting started on Instagram.](#)

■ Youtube: Publish Videos That Showcase What Your Unit Is All About

YouTube is a video-sharing platform that allows units to upload short- and long-form videos that your audience can view, comment on, and share. The platform is a great place to share video content that highlights your unit’s strengths and helps tell your story. [Learn about the YouTube creator basics.](#)

■ X (Formally Known as Twitter): Share Brief Messages of 280 Characters or Less

X, once a prominent microblogging platform allowing messages of 280 characters or less, is gradually diminishing in relevance. Despite its decline, posting on X remains a means to disseminate news from your unit and share engaging information with your audience. For guidance on utilizing the platform, refer to the [X Help Center](#) for comprehensive assistance on getting started.

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Know Your Audience

In addition to reviewing the social networks available to you and their capabilities, review the core audiences that you want to reach. In looking at your audiences, ask:

- Who are our primary audiences?
- What messaging are our audiences already receiving about our unit and through what channels?
- What social networks are our audiences most active on?
- How will our social media supplement our existing outreach strategy?

It is also important to build your awareness of entities you may be competing with, including other Rutgers accounts, to gain your audiences' attention.

Know Your Team and Their Skills

As you contemplate your target audience and the most suitable tools for engagement, it's equally vital to consider your team's strengths and how they can effectively contribute to the social media strategy under development.

Do you have a proficient photographer within your team who could enhance your presence on Instagram? Are there skilled writers capable of crafting compelling tweets or Facebook posts?

By leveraging the strengths of your team members and aligning them with suitable roles, you can optimize your social media endeavors and maximize their impact.

Know Your Content

Social media is largely about what you post, so it is important to know what content you can share with your audience. As with thinking about your team, you want to focus on elements that would be highlights for your unit.

- Does your unit create work that photographs well?
- Are there videos that help tell your unit's story?
- Is written news about the impact of your unit your strong suit?

Whatever the case, assess whether the elements you have—and can create in the future—allow you to develop a consistent posting schedule to keep your audiences engaged.

Develop Your Plan

What course of action will you pursue? Drawing upon your current insights, begin outlining how you and your team intend to utilize existing or forthcoming content for social media to effectively engage with your target audiences. When working on this plan, consider:

- What are we hoping to achieve on social media?
- How are we defining success?
- Who will be overseeing our unit's social media?
- What will our posting schedule look like and how will we remain consistent?
- How will content be vetted and approved for posting?

Tell Your Story

When you're managing your social media presence, it's not just about treating your channel as a bulletin board for information that's already being shared elsewhere. It's about unleashing the full potential of your platform to tell your unit's story in the most captivating and engaging ways possible! So, let's think beyond the ordinary, and let's get ready to showcase the heart and soul of your unit like never before!

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- What are ways in which you highlight your unit's impact?
- Are there ways to showcase behind-the-scenes aspects of the work your team does?
- Are there success stories from students or other organizations you can promote?
- Is there relevant user-generated content that can help speak to your unit's work?

Get ready to shine a spotlight on the incredible work your unit does and the profound impact it has on people's lives! Sharing these stories isn't just about showcasing your unit; it's about highlighting Rutgers University's broader influence. And what better way to captivate your audience than through the power of video? It's a dynamic tool that seamlessly integrates across various social networks, allowing you to tell your story in vivid detail and leave a lasting impression. Let's harness the power of storytelling and video to elevate your unit's presence like never before!

Do Your Unit Justice

No one wants to look bad, so do not take chances. Make sure that all posts are well written, grammatically correct, and free of spelling errors. These posts should also tell the right stories and entice your audience, so avoid underselling your unit.

If you are posting photos, they should be clear and well composed. Avoid sharing blurry, out of focus, grainy, and poorly composed images to ensure that your unit is represented in the best way possible.

[Learn more about photo resources available at Rutgers.](#)

When you can, share high-definition videos with clear audio. You want your audiences to be able to easily tell what is happening. Remember, you want your content to get people excited about what you have to offer, and high-quality pieces of content can help you do just that.

Do Not Spread Too Thin

Your unit does not need to be on every social network, and there is no imperative to post every hour of every day. Focus on creating channels where you can most effectively reach your audience. There is no magic number for the accounts you should have.

Think about what platforms your audience may use the most. As you develop your unit's social media presence, stay focused on your team, content, and audience, and only expand to more channels if you have the means to or find a need to do so.

Assess How You Are Doing

There are several ways to assess how your social media is performing. Three very simple ones to consider are tracking your followers, impressions, and engagement.

Followers are exactly what they sound like, the people who follow your page. If you are consistent, create compelling content, and engage with your audience, you will probably see the followers of your unit's page increase. As you increase your followers, you increase the likelihood of your content being seen by your audience.

Impressions are the number of times your content appears on social media users' feeds. Generally, impressions will rise if the content you have created is engaging, as most social networks promote your posts more if people are interacting with them.

Engagement is one of the most important metrics when judging the effectiveness of your content. The three most popular forms of engagement on social media channels are likes or reactions, comments, and shares.

Of these three types of engagement, comments and shares are the most beneficial in expanding the overall reach of your page, so think about ways to create content that people will want to talk about and share with their followers. Creating calls to action in your posts that ask for your audience to comment, share photos, etc. are another great way to promote engagement.

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Pay Attention to Your Audience, Even If They Are Not Following You

It may sound unconventional, but not everyone in your target audience is actively following your social media accounts. Some individuals who are interested in your content might not even be aware of your presence or simply choose not to add another account to their feed. However, these potential audience members still hold valuable perspectives and feedback.

Social listening is an invaluable process of monitoring social media platforms for mentions of your brand, competitors, and related topics. Utilizing social listening tools, hashtags, or Facebook searches allows you to tap into conversations about your unit or relevant subjects, even if they aren't directly addressing you. This approach not only provides insights from previously untapped sources but also offers a window into changes in audience behavior and emerging trends.

Have a Conversation

At its core, social media thrives on interaction. Your audience will engage with your posts through comments and messages, and it's essential to respond promptly. Failing to address messages or provide necessary information could deter followers from engaging with you in the future. Moreover, don't hesitate to post content that encourages audience participation. Social media serves as an invaluable platform for gathering feedback and insights that may be challenging to attain through traditional means.

Be Ready to Respond

Stay vigilant for any questions or concerns from your audience, demonstrating your commitment to support and assistance. Don't hesitate to redirect inquiries to another unit better equipped to address specific issues. Additionally, anticipate that followers may approach you with urgent matters via social media. Collaborate with your team to establish effective monitoring strategies and develop a response protocol to handle such situations efficiently.

Take It Offline

While social media holds immense potential, face-to-face interaction remains integral to our endeavors. It's crucial to complement your social media efforts with initiatives that foster real-life conversations and connections, enriching the channels you're cultivating. Offline engagements also serve as prime opportunities to promote your accounts, so seize every chance to extend your reach beyond the digital realm.