



# University of Michigan Social Media Implementation Policy

## Purpose

Establish a university-wide standard for the use, creation, operation, and management of official branded social media communications accounts and communities. Regular review of this document is expected; failure to do so is not justification for noncompliance.

## Scope

Compliance with this standard is necessary for collaboration, justification, and recognition by the central university social communications unit ([socialmedia.umich.edu](https://socialmedia.umich.edu)), U-M social leadership, and gateway ([umich.edu](https://umich.edu)) inclusion. Its provisions apply to all authorized social media accounts, accounts utilizing the block M or an official university signature, representing a university unit, program or organizations, and any site created for the purpose of conducting official business.

## Standards

Proper Use of Information Resources, Information Technology, and Networks at the University of Michigan, SPG 601.07 ([spg.umich.edu/policy/601.07](https://spg.umich.edu/policy/601.07))

Policy and Guidelines Regarding Electronic Access to Potentially Offensive Material, SPG 601.16 ([spg.umich.edu/policy/601.16](https://spg.umich.edu/policy/601.16))

Information Security Incident Reporting, SPG 601.25 ([spg.umich.edu/policy/601.25](https://spg.umich.edu/policy/601.25))

Institutional Data Resource Management Policy, SPG 601.12 ([spg.umich.edu/policy/601.12](https://spg.umich.edu/policy/601.12))

**See also:** Safely Use Sensitive Data ([safecomputing.umich.edu/protect-the-u/safely-use-sensitive-data](https://safecomputing.umich.edu/protect-the-u/safely-use-sensitive-data))

Comply With Laws, Policies, and Regulations ([safecomputing.umich.edu/protect-the-u/compliance](https://safecomputing.umich.edu/protect-the-u/compliance))

## Creation

All proposals to create an official University of Michigan social media account must be presented to the corresponding social leadership representative for justification and assessment prior to being presented to UMSocial for strategic review and inclusion on the university-wide social media inventory. In addition to following the guidelines and best practices set forth by UMSocial and subsidiary unit leadership, all social media accounts both new and existing must follow university branding and accessibility standards. Social leadership and UMSocial reserve all rights to deny account creation that violates best practice guidelines, further fractures the brand voice, or presents an increased Opportunity for institutional risk.



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## Administration

Social communications and community management is a full-time job that frequently requires monitoring and maintenance outside of normal business hours. It is the expectation of UMSocial and social leadership that content will be updated daily and customer service will be provided on all requests or concerns within 24 hours. Interaction on university social media accounts must follow university engagement protocol and community guidelines.

- Each official social media account should have no less than two (2) exempt university staff members with full-time appointments as account administrators, including their corresponding social leadership team representative.
- Each official social media account should grant access for inclusion in their unit's overarching business manager platform (e.g. Facebook Business Manager, Hootsuite, Tweetdeck, etc..)
- Each official social media account must be registered to a shared or general email address accessible by more than one person; email addresses already established for customer service are preferred, e.g..."socialmedia@umich.edu."
- Each official social media account administrator is granted access to the official university branded URL shortener (myumi.ch). Links shared through U-M social media properties should be shortened and branded to assure users it is a trusted and secure resource.
- Passwords and logins should be known and maintained by account administrators as well as their direct leadership. For password security resources and guidance please visit [safecomputing.umich.edu](http://safecomputing.umich.edu).

## Expectations

### **SOCIAL LEADERSHIP REPRESENTATIVES ARE EXPECTED TO...**

- Maintain active dialogue between themselves and their leadership, faculty, and all subsidiary official social media account administrators within their respective organizations.
- Serve as first point of contact for any units, programs, or organizations that are interesting or have questions related to social media accounts, campaign, or content creation.
- Ensure all university communications best-practice resources and guidelines are communicated and adhered to.



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- Monitor main and subsidiary social media accounts to ensure tone and presentation of content reflects properly on the university and is in alignment with communication best practices.
- Notify and proactively communicating with UMSocial leadership and Public Affairs regarding emerging issues, concerns, or upcoming potential hot topics.
- Catalog and retain an official account inventory and contact information for corresponding administrators.
- Provide strategic guidance on social media strategy, account creation, collaboration, paid social media advertising, and campaign implementation.
- Act as a liaison between UMSocial, Public Affairs, and university leadership on matters of safety, security, and crisis communications to freeze social media activity and promote official resources or key messages.
- Participate in and potentially hosting social leadership team meetings, actively engaging in Workplace, and regular communication or meetings with UMSocial.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT ADMINISTRATORS ARE EXPECTED TO...**

- Regularly communicate and attend meetings with respective social leadership representatives.
- Create, maintain, and monitor strategic daily content on respective social media sites that is engaging, on-brand, and directly aligns with the unit's overarching goals and objectives.
- Actively engage with users, monitoring community conversation, and moderating content that violates hosting terms of service or U-M community guidelines.\* (Language filters, 'hide' functionality, and spam or abuse reporting features should be used where necessary. In the event that deleting account or community content is required, screenshots should be taken and recorded first.)
- Contact corresponding social leadership representatives and UMSocial in a timely manner to communicate pending or predicted crisis communications or emergency response needs.
- Ensure all content related to an emergency or event impacting the university at large is disseminated using established policy, procedure, and central or public affairs accounts.



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- Report and track account performance to ensure continued growth and active engagement that meets established university best practice standards or expectations.
- Respond to inquiries and posting content using official approved accounts; whenever possible do not use non-university (personal) accounts to respond to inquiries or postings.
- Deliver timely customer service in a professional and conversational tone that encourages comments, encourages follow-up conversation, and when necessary moves the discussion into traditional methods of communications (phone, email, in-person) in order to reduce the risk of language being misinterpreted or shared widely.
- Adhere to content strategies, goals, and objectives set forth by UMSocial, unit administrators, and corresponding social leadership.

\*For detailed information on platform posting best practices, case studies, the university social leadership directory, official account inventory, and additional resources, visit [socialmedia.umich.edu](https://socialmedia.umich.edu).

### **OFFICIAL U-M SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS AND ADMINISTRATORS ARE PROHIBITED FROM...**

- Posting content that violates, city, state, or federal laws and regulations.
- Commenting on or posting anything related to existing or potential legal matters or litigation without appropriate approval.
- Using the university brand or name to endorse any view, product, private business, cause, or political candidate.
- Representing personal opinions as university-endorsed views or policies.
- Sharing content that is profane, off-topic, violates copyright, or does not properly credit the original content source.
- Deleting or moderating content beyond the best practices and policy outlined in university guidelines.

### **Guidelines**

- Social media platforms provide unprecedented opportunities for collaboration and communications; outline goals and objectives to properly track the return on your investment.



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- The University of Michigan advocates for units and programs to minimize fracturing of the brand presence, reputation, and voice. It is okay and advised that not everyone has a social media account on every social media platform.
- Even in social, we remain an educational institution. Leverage social media platforms to tell stories of impact, student success, and historical milestones. Have a dialogue and build a community of advocates.
- Social media is a tool, not a solution. It is important to know that not everyone lives online, or on a single platform, and that platforms and communities evolve quickly. For these reasons, regular re-evaluation of strategy is vital.
- Content frequency thresholds establish an expectation for community members that you are active, responsive, and engaging. Posting at optimal and varied times also helps to increase visibility and combat platform algorithms. \*Units who feel they do not have content to sustain a presence but desire an outlet should work with their social leadership representative and UMSocial to explore options and best practices.

**Facebook:** Main university social media pages and subsidiary accounts adhere to a 1-2 posts daily standard. This schedule is maintained year-round, including holidays and university breaks.

**Twitter:** Main university social media accounts tweet between 5-7 times daily and subsidiary channels adhere to a 3-5 tweets minimum daily standard. This schedule is maintained year-round, including holidays and university breaks.

**Instagram:** Main university social media profiles and subsidiary accounts adhere to a 1-2 posts daily standard within the Instagram news feed. The introduction of and subsequent success of Instagram stories has now provided an additional content venue within the same platform. Main university social media profiles partner with campus units, schools, colleges, and students to produce 5-7 Instagram stories each week. Smaller profiles are advised to aim for 3-5 stories a week. This schedule is maintained year-round, including holidays and university breaks.

**YouTube:** The university recommends streamlining YouTube channels when possible in order to increase content opportunities, maximize platform functionality, and ensure accessibility standards are met. All YouTube videos stored and produced by the university or subsidiary units must be closed-captioned for ADA compliance. Video descriptions should provide context, production information, and attribution as necessary.

**Pinterest:** The university is no longer recommending Pinterest account creation. Efforts have been made to consolidate all legacy accounts into one. Units interested in populating content within the Pinterest platform should contact UMSocial [socialmedia@umich](mailto:socialmedia@umich).



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**Snapchat:** The university maintains one central Snapchat presence for lens and filter creation and paid advertising placement despite no longer promoting and actively producing content for the platform. New account creation is not recommended. If you are interested in leveraging the platform for student engagement please contact UMSocial [socialmedia.umich.edu](mailto:socialmedia.umich.edu).

### Responsibilities

When developing content for official university social media properties, providing customer service, and maintaining an active, inclusive community, it is imperative to uphold the brand pillars and key focus areas of the university. Content must reflect and respect the diversity of our community, encourage positive online dialogue, and advocate for responsible digital citizenship. Visuals that feature students, staff, faculty, or community members should be reviewed thoroughly to protect individual privacy and university reputation. For more information visit [socialintegrity.umich.edu](http://socialintegrity.umich.edu).

### Impact

The addition of the President's Public Engagement and Impact initiative to central communications scope of work enabled the expansion of UMSocial's efforts to communicate the global impact of our institutional research efforts by advocating for enhanced faculty outreach. Working in the university environment provides endless opportunities to leverage leading experts and researchers in a wide array of fields to create engaging content on timely and relevant topics. In doing so, we are able to provide fact-based information to the general public that can help in informing them on critical issues. For more information on U-M Public Engagement efforts, encouraging faculty to engage through social media, training opportunities, and resources visit [publicengagement.umich.edu](http://publicengagement.umich.edu).

### Questions Or Inquiries

[socialmedia@umich.edu](mailto:socialmedia@umich.edu)

### Tools

University of Michigan Social Media website ([socialmedia.umich.edu](http://socialmedia.umich.edu))  
Official Social Media Account inventory ([socialmedia.umich.edu/directory](http://socialmedia.umich.edu/directory))  
Social Media Leadership directory ([socialmedia.umich.edu/leadership](http://socialmedia.umich.edu/leadership))  
UMSocial Strategy and Best Practices ([socialmedia.umich.edu/strategy](http://socialmedia.umich.edu/strategy))  
U-M Social Integrity and Digital Citizen website ([socialintegrity.umich.edu](http://socialintegrity.umich.edu))  
Public Engagement and Impact website ([publicengagement.umich.edu](http://publicengagement.umich.edu))  
U-M Brand website ([vpcomm.umich.edu/brand](http://vpcomm.umich.edu/brand))  
URL Shortener ([vpcomm.umich.edu/resources/url-shortener](http://vpcomm.umich.edu/resources/url-shortener))

### Approval and Review

Nikki Sunstrum, Director of Social Media and Public Engagement  
Office of the Vice President of Communications