

Using Social Media Effectively
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LinkedIn - Best Practices for Personal Use

1. Go to Profile → Edit Profile.
2. On the right, there is a blue bar showing *profile completeness* that suggests how to reach 100%.
3. Upload a professional photo, ideally the same photo that you'll use for Twitter, Facebook (unless you prefer something more informal for that space), your blog and any other online communities you frequent. This helps establish recognition.
4. Your *Professional Headline* is by default your title in your current position, but you can change this to anything that better reflects what you do. Use keywords since this is searchable by LinkedIn.
5. Websites – List your company website and your blogs. You can customize the descriptor by selecting *Other*.
6. Twitter – Add your twitter profile page URL and username.
7. Public Profile – Click on *Customize Your URL* and create an address that displays your name. This more concise URL will be easier to use on business cards and other networking sites.
8. Add a *Summary* and *Specialties*. These are searchable areas so take full advantage of keywords.
9. Look over each editable area (especially *Education* and *Current/Past Positions*) to make sure you have completed all of them. Former colleagues will be able to find you easier if you include past positions.
10. Browse through the Applications and add any that interest you:
 - a. SlideShare – Share your PowerPoint presentations.
 - b. My Travel by TripIt – Share upcoming itineraries – great way to meet up with connections in other cities.
 - c. Events – Find and share events that you're attending.
 - d. Reading List by Amazon
 - e. Huddle Workspaces – Online collaboration tool
 - f. Box.net – Share files online
 - g. Blog import – WordPress, Typepad (Blog Link)
 - h. Tweets – Displays your Twitter stream on your profile. I display my Twitter feed on my LI homepage but not my profile. I don't want to create noise for my followers since many of my tweets are not about professional topics.
11. Ask for recommendations. Don't be shy. Do it when someone's memory is fresh.
12. *Interests* can give a glimpse of the whole person. It may differentiate you or help to create a tie to someone with similar interests.

13. Join groups. Go to Groups → Groups Directory to search for those that might interest you. ASAE and GSAE have groups. You can customize your settings for each Group (go to the Group → More... → My Settings).
 - a. You can choose to display (or not) the group's logo on your profile.
 - b. You can choose a daily or weekly (recommended) email summary of group activity, and specify an email address for each.
14. Add any credentials (CAE, CMP) and awards to *Honors and Awards*.
15. Go to *Settings* at the top of the page. Here are some critical ones, but review all your settings so you understand how you're using LinkedIn.
 - a. Where there is an option to be visible to *everyone*, select *everyone*. This is a networking site, don't hide.
 - b. Review *Receiving Messages* under *Email Notifications* to make sure it's customized the way you wish.
 - c. *Invitation Filtering* – Leave it on *All invitations*.
 - d. If you would like to subscribe to the RSS feed for your network updates so you can view them in Google Reader, you can get the feed address in *Your Private RSS Feeds*.
 - e. *Personal Settings – Name & Location* – Make sure your full name is checked and not the first name/last initial.
 - f. *Connections Browse* – Allow (select *Yes*) connections to see your other connections.
 - g. *Profile & Status Updates – For Publish profile updates, recommendations and companies you follow?*, select *Yes* because if you make significant changes to your Profile, for example, new title or position, new honor, etc., wouldn't you want your network to know? However, if you are editing your profile and it's not newsworthy (but rather housekeeping), change this option to *No* before you do all that editing so you don't keep sending out announcements on Profile changes.
 - h. *Profile & Status Updates – For Notify your connections of status updates?*, select *Yes* because this is a great way to stay visible and encourage engagement with your network.
16. Sending out Status Updates is a good way to let your network know what you're working on. Keep it professional; this isn't Facebook. Here are some prompts for update ideas: is writing ..., is reading ..., thinks that ..., is teaching ..., is looking forward to presenting.
17. Import your contacts (Yahoo, Gmail, Outlook, .csv file) every quarter so that you'll be notified of any of your contacts using LinkedIn.
18. Sending invitations to connect – Don't use the default message. Check on *Add a personal note with your invitation?* Show that you care about connecting enough to personalize the message.
19. Everyone has a different connection philosophy. Some only connect to those they know well; some to anyone they've met; some to those they only know online; and some to anyone in the same industry or city. When you receive an invitation to connect, select either *connect* or *ignore*. Avoid selecting *I don't know this person*. If someone gets that label too often, LinkedIn suspends their account.

Facebook Best Practices

1. Friending philosophy – Everyone has a different approach; do what feels right and know that you may change this approach over time. Think about whether you will “friend” members – which ones and why.
2. Very important! Go to Accounts → Privacy Settings. Facebook made changes to the default setting a few months ago. Your settings may have changed to a more public view without your knowing. Here are some areas to check:
 - a. Personal Information & Posts – Only Friends?
 - i. Photo Albums → Edit Settings – Only Friends?
 - b. Contact Information – Only Friends?
 - c. Friends, Tags & Connections – Only Friends?
 - d. Applications & Websites
 - i. What your friends can share about you → Edit Settings → Uncheck every box and save changes.
 - ii. Activity on Applications and Games Dashboards – Only Friends?
 - iii. Instant Personalization Pilot Program → Edit Setting → Uncheck the box and click Confirm in the pop-up box.
 - e. Search
 - i. Facebook Search Results – Only Friends or more?
 - ii. Public Search Results – Allow a preview of your profile to be seen by anyone on Google or not? You can preview what they’ll see.
 - f. Or, check out this tool - <http://www.reclaimprivacy.org/>
3. You can also customize your Notifications so that you don’t receive too many emails from Facebook about others’ activities. Go to Account → Account Settings → Notifications.
4. You have two options for receiving your News Feed -- *Top News* and *Most Recent*. Top News is based on a Facebook algorithm; they will select news for you based on that, so you won’t see everything. I use Most Recent.
5. You can hide applications (games, quizzes, snowball fights etc.) and/or friends. Place your cursor over the upper right corner of each news item and the *Hide* button will appear. Click on that and you’ll have the options of hiding the person or the application.
6. Check *Edit Options* at the bottom of the News Feed page. It shows whom you have hidden (in case you want to unhide them). It also shows the number of friends Facebook will display in your Feed. Increase this number if it’s too low – I believe the default is 200, if you have more friends, you’ll want to increase it.
7. Don’t spam other pages, i.e., don’t promote your assn’s page (“Hi, pls become a fan of our page”) on someone else’s page. That’s obnoxious and bad form.
8. You can select a username -- like LinkedIn, a more concise URL for your Facebook profile -- at <http://www.facebook.com/username>. If your association has a public/fan page, you must have 25 fans before you can create a customized URL.

Twitter Best Practices

1. Set up a Twitter profile if only to reserve a good username. Keep your name as short as possible so it won't take up too many characters.
2. You will only see the tweets of people you follow (click Follow on their page). If they choose to follow you back, they'll see your tweets too. You don't need to follow back those that follow you. Be selective. You will receive an email when someone decides to follow you.
3. RT = Retweet – A way to share someone's tweet with your followers --> Good twitter karma.
4. DM = Direct message – Private tweet to a person who follows you. You can't DM someone who does not follow you.
5. Complete your profile – photo, full name, web site (blog, web site, LI profile), location (city, state) and bio. Bio is limited to 160 characters. Because I use Twitter for professional and personal reasons, mine is a mix. People will not follow you back if you don't have a complete profile.
6. Key to Twitter success – A mix of tweets, @'s and RTs. Do not self-promote more than about 10% of the time. The ratio is up to you -- look at your stream. How does it look? Like broadcasting/advertising or like conversation. Mix it up. Give value. Sharing and giving credit is highly encouraged.
7. Keep your tweets under 120 characters so it's easy for others to RT them.
8. Whom to follow?
 - a. Blog authors – Check their blogroll and comments for other ideas.
 - b. Twitter lists
 - c. Hashtag users – People will add a hashtag (#gsae10) to their tweets about a conference and its content. Great way to find people and get sound bites from sessions. Use the Search function to find the twitterstream for a hashtagged conference. You can even subscribe to the search's RSS feed.
 - d. Check a Twitter directory like Twellow or do a Twitter Advanced Search.
9. Use a third party application like Tweetdeck or Hootsuite to better manage your time on Twitter. These apps make it easy to search for keywords or hashtags, and group those you follow by category. You can also schedule tweets for later and see Facebook and LinkedIn updates.
10. Use mobile applications if on site at a conference. I like UberTwitter for Blackberry. There are many apps for iPhones, including Twitter for iPhone and Tweetdeck.
11. Provide links to news, resources, blog posts and videos. Crowdfund questions, get feedback and take polls.
12. Create Twitter lists organized by topics, types of member (all members, by practice area/profession), leadership, partners, staff, conference speakers, conference attendees, other organizations in your industry and thought leaders.
13. Organize volunteers with #helpgsae to keep them informed of important updates, events, or ways to help out.

Basic Website Checklist

- Emphasizes your marketing message – what problems you solve for the member or prospect.
- Organized the way a visitor (member, prospect, policymaker, conference attendee, consumer) thinks, not by department.
- Think like a search engine – if they can't find you, you don't exist. Use keywords for good search engine optimization. Not sure about keywords, check your site analytic for search terms visitors are using to get to you.
- Dynamic - fresh content
- Kill useless features – it's the customer's point of view and what they care about that matters.
- Mobile phone friendly
- No flash – not mobile or search friendly
- Have good analytics, like Google Analytics at the least – traffic patterns, where visitors come from, where they go after they leave you, search terms used.
- Provide RSS feed for dynamic pages.
- Add a sharing button/widget – AddThis or ShareThis.
- Inexpensive (\$39) usability review – <http://www.usertesting.com>

Social Media Policy & Training

- Easy tool to create the beginnings of a policy – <http://socialmedia.policytool.net/>
- Samples - <http://www.compliancebuilding.com/about/publications/social-media-policies/>
- Some questions to ask when creating a policy:
 - Who can add content to the association's official profiles?
 - What level of accountability do your employees have for behavior on their personal social networking sites? How do you feel about them connecting to members? Do you have any advice for them on that topic?
 - How will your association respond to negative criticism? Who will make the call on how you respond – staff or members?
 - Who speaks for the organization in person, if someone questions your social media activity?
 - Who assesses the appropriateness of content? Again, staff or members?
- Staff training topics:
 - Best practices for social networking – culture, behavior
 - Privacy settings on personal social networking sites
 - Copyright, confidentiality and related issues

Ideas for Metrics

- Have a baseline before you begin – what are you measuring now?
- Have a method to determine how new relationships (members, attendees, exhibitors, customers, journalists/bloggers) came to be.
- Awareness/reach
 - Growth in followers, subscribers, views, fans, group members
 - Growth in retweets, use of hashtags, mentions of username, URL or other search terms.
 - Google placement, ownership of front page
 - Growth in media placement – traditional and new media.
- Traffic to website
 - Track your site analytics.
 - Which social media outposts is traffic coming from?
 - Increase in site visits, page views, incoming links, clicks.
- Community engagement and interest – bit.ly clicks, Facebook comments and Likes, Twitter RTs and @ mentions
- Questions answered/issues resolved via social outposts
- New member applications, registration forms – how did you learn about us, suggest sources to cue their memory, promo codes to track

Social Media Glossary - Go to <http://deidrereid.com/resources>

RSS Feeds & Google Reader

Subscribe to social media and association management blogs – great professional development resources. To learn how RSS feeds work, watch these Commoncraft videos

- http://www.commoncraft.com/rss_plain_english
- <http://www.commoncraft.com/custom-video-google-reader-plain-english>.

Some of my favorite association management blogs are listed in the right sidebar of my blog under Association/Non-Profit Folks. I've also created a Twitter list of association professionals who are worth following -- the link to that is on my [Resources](#) page.

Social Media Basics

- Chris Brogan - <http://www.chrisbrogan.com>
- Amber Naslund - <http://altitudebranding.com> - Check out her e-books too.
- John Haydon - <http://johnhaydon.com>
- Mashable - <http://mashable.com> - Social media news/tips, including basic How To posts

Twitter - For lots of good guidance and tips on Twitter, both basic and advanced, you can't beat <http://www.twitip.com>, an excellent resource created by Darren Rowse.

Facebook – The Facebook Help Center (<http://www.facebook.com/help>) and <http://mashable.com/guidebook/facebook> are great resources.

LinkedIn - The LinkedIn Learning Center (<http://learn.linkedin.com>) and Blog (<http://blog.linkedin.com>) are good places to start.

Listening Tools

- Google Alerts - <http://www.google.com/alerts>
- Social Mention - <http://www.socialmention.com/>
- Backtype - <http://www.backtype.com/>
- Twitter Advanced Search - <http://search.twitter.com/>

Books - These books will teach you and/or your organization how to be successful in the social media space.

- *Trust Agents* by Chris Brogan & Julien Smith
- *Crush It* by Gary Vaynerchuk
- *The New Rules of Marketing & PR* by David Meerman Scott

Twitter Chats

- Twitter chat for association professionals (#assnchat) – Tues 2pm – Use TweetChat, search column in Tweetdeck/Hootsuite or search on Twitter web page to follow/participate in chat.
- Twitter chat for event professionals (#eventprofs) - Tues 9-10pm and Thurs 12-1pm.

Online Communities

- Engage365 – online community focusing on using social media for events – <http://engage365.org>
- Young Association Professionals (YAP) – online community - <http://yapstar.org>

Consultant, speaker and trainer on social media and member/volunteer engagement

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