NORTHERN New Mexico College

NNMC Social Media Best Practices

1. General

Social media offers new ways for Northern New Mexico College (NNMC) to engage online with local, national and global communities. Northern recognizes the importance and benefits of communicating through social media and encourages the use of social media technology to enhance communication, collaboration, and information exchange in support of its mission, programs and initiatives.

Northern New Mexico College recognizes that social media sites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram have become popular and influential communication channels for our communities. It is important for Northern New Mexico College entities, faculty, staff, and students to be aware of how social technologies can help them share information, participate in important conversations, and collaborate on new ideas.

The purposes of Northern's social media pages include to:

- Promote development of social, professional and learning communities
- Support recruiting, retention and alumni relations
- Foster conversation and friendship within our communities
- Enhance the reputation of the college
- Build institutional loyalty and pride
- Stimulate community involvement by sharing news and events
- Draw friends of the college more closely into our community

Publishing and engaging with people on social media carries a similar obligation as communicating via traditional media. The following best practice guidelines complement our Social Media policy and will help Northern's community use social media in a professional capacity.

Official Northern social media accounts must be managed responsibly because of their impact on the reputation of the College as a whole as well as its faculty, staff, students and alumni. College systems administrators may perform activities necessary to ensure the integrity, functionality, and security of Northern's electronic resources and image.

These recommendations apply only as far as Northern employees identify themselves as employees of the College or are using Northern social media accounts.

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Official NNMC Social Media Accounts include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and youtube. Refer to NCAM on nnmc.edu for our active social media directory, including:

- NNMC Facebook: www.facebook.com/NorthernNewMexicoCollege
- NNMC Twitter: twitter.com/NorthernNNMC
- NNMC LinkedIn: linkedin.com/edu/school
- NNMC Instagram: .instagram.com/northern_newmexico_college/
- NNMC YouTube: youtube.com

NCAM also maintains a list of active college/department social media accounts

Questions to think about when considering creating a Social Media site

- Determine your audience(s). Current students? Prospective students? Alumni? Professional colleagues? Research associates?
- Does your audience regularly engage in social media?
- Does social media support the conversation you want to have with your audience?
- Does your organization/department/unit have enough content to keep users engaged on a regular basis?
- Does your organization have the resources to actively maintain a social media presence. If not, would a simple Northern webpage be sufficient?

Creating your Account and Identity

To set up an official Northern account on any social media platform, you will need to do the following:

Creating your Account and Identity

- To set up an official Northern account on any social media platform, you will need to do the following:
- Submit an application to NCAM. The application is available on the NCAM webpage. The application process will require you to select from your unit an account administrator responsible for managing page content.

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- Select a title. Official accounts must have "Northern New Mexico College," "NORTHERN" or "NNMC" as part of your page title.
- Choose a page category (Facebook). The "Company, Organization or Institution" page category and "Education" sub-category will best suit most college accounts. If your target audience is very specific (ex. 2014 ADN Graduates) a Group page may be the best choice. Please do not use a personal profile.
- Work with NCAM to develop branding in compliance with Northern's brand standards (available on the NCAM webpage) and appropriate for your program, unit or department.
- Provide basic information: All official NNMC social media properties should provide contact information and email addresses so that visitors may report problems, etc.
- Develop a plan for posting content and marketing your new social media account. All entities should have a social media strategy and plan that has been approved by their unit leader prior to the debut of any social media site. Those who already have a social media presence should periodically review and update the plan to ensure that it is still relevant.

Creating the Right Content

- Focus on your audience. Why do they like Northern? What kind of information would they find interesting, and how might they like to engage with your social media?
- Different audiences want different kinds of content – students want to know what is going on across campus, tips to improve their grades, stories about enjoying campus life; alumni want to hear stories and news about their alma mater that will boost their pride and encourage them to connect, serve and donate.
- Create content that your fans will want to share with their friends.
- If you don't have time or resources to create content your audience will find engaging, perhaps a page on Northern's website would be a better option.

Social Media Etiquette

- Be positive in your interactions with your fans or followers.
- Remember when you are posting on official Northern social media accounts, your content reflects on the College.
- Use sound judgment when creating your posts/images/tweets/etc. Once posted, your content can go anywhere.

Be Engaging and Helpful

- Remember that you are building a social community. Give your audience a chance to connect with Northern's brand, identity and pride.
- Be a valuable and engaging source of information for them.
- Meet your audiences where they are, interest-wise. What academic or cultural events are going on that you can leverage to keep your audience?
- In addition to Northern content, look for content from other sources that your audience will find interesting.
- Be Authentic. Listen and respond. Participate and share.

Questionable Content

At times your audience will post content or comments that you, or members of your department, will find questionable. Developing a plan to respond to these situations before they arise will enable you to make informed, strategic responses rather than rash ones.

Establish clear expectations of community members, as well as NNMC social media account administrators and page managers. At a minimum, refer to our Social Media Policy (2570), Respectful Campus Policy (2240), and review the introduction to this Best Practices Guidelines document regarding the purposes of Northern Social Media.

Moderating posts

- Do not delete or ignore negative comments just because they are negative.
- Act quickly to address the criticism given, and contact the person involved to see how you can help resolve the issue, if possible.
- Feedback should only be deleted or removed if it is in violation of applicable College policies and standards of professional conduct; local, state, and national laws, or terms and conditions imposed by the applicable social media platform being used.
- Unless the post is a violation of these policies, you should attempt to resolve the issue without censoring your page. In many cases, pages that are well-utilized tend to develop loyal users who will support or respond to criticism on your behalf. In other cases, negative posts allow you to respond publicly, thus turning a negative situation into a positive one.

Example of a negative post worthy of a public response:

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Anna: "I just read a Northern Broadcast today and cannot believe that your department reduced your hours of service! Aren't you here to HELP students instead of making their lives more difficult?!"

Department Response: "Hi Anna! Thank you for your feedback. We appreciate that you care enough about our services to comment about the change in hours at our department. Budget cuts have indeed reduced our traditional service hours, however, we are now available to help you anywhere at anytime via Facebook or email…"

Example of a negative post worthy of a private response:

Tomas: "I just got my financial aid award letter and found out that I won't be able to afford Northern this semester! Thanks for being so expensive, NNMC!"

Department Response: "Hi Tomas. We're sorry to hear about your situation. Please contact the Financial Aid Office to see if there is anything we can do to help."

What types of posts should be outright deleted?

All official Northern social media accounts reserve the right to delete content that is off-topic, offensive or abusive, (including, but not limited to, racist, sexist, homophobic or anti-Semitic statements) or ad hominem attacks on individuals. Please contact social@nnmc.edu if you need help addressing questionable content.

If you delete a post by a user, you may consider sending him/her a private message detailing why the posting was removed and how they can appropriately address concerns (aka have an educational moment with him/her).

If you have additional questions about setting up social media accounts for your department, or addressing any other social media concerns, please contact NCAM at social@nnmc.edu.

Northern Policies and Other Resources

- Freedom of Expression and Dissent (2200)
- Respectful Campus Policy (2240)
- Acceptable Computer Use (2500)
- Social Media Policy (2570) (relink)
- NNMC Social Media Directory (edit and relink)
- Copyright and Fair Use Resources

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- NNMC Library Guide to Copyright
- FERPA and Students' Privacy
- Sexual Harassment/Title IX
- Workplace Harassment/Staff Handbook.
- Student Handbook

Social Network Tips for Facebook:

- Including photos and links in your posts will improve audience engagement with your site.
- Limit post text to 420 characters if possible, or viewers will have to click "read more."
- Photos in posts appear best in a square shape or landscape orientation (6 x 4). Make the picture at least 600 pixels wide to fill the post.
- The best time of day for posts to be seen is between noon and 2 pm and 6 and 9 pm. You can schedule posts to publish at a particular date and time.
- Plan posts at least four hours apart and try to post at least once per week.
- You can invite other Facebook users or email contacts to like your page using the "build audience" tab at the top of your page.

Tips for Twitter:

- Twitter is a microblogging social network. Unlike Facebook, which allows you to grow and reach out to your audience through "friend connections," Twitter is an outward-facing network. Twitter encourages you to interact with people who you aren't connected to or following, based on your interests, or a shared connection.
- Twitter limits tweets to 280 characters or less. Feel free to use abbreviations and shorthand or add a link to longer content.
- Take advantage of hashtags (# symbol with a keyword) to spread your message. For example, if an update has to do with veterans, you can use #Veterans. Also include #NNMC, #NorthernProud, or #IheartNorthern so people know the update is about the College.
- You can add photos and short video to twitter posts.
- You can "favorite" (click the star) and "retweet" (arrows symbol) updates that your page likes and wants others to see.
- Reply to tweets using the reply button or direct tweet them using their Twitter handle (@ and the page name).

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- Use a website like bitly.com or owly.com to shorten hyperlinks and save character space.
- Direct Messages: You can use direct messaging system (DM) to respond directly to those who are following you on Twitter. You can address criticisms or other negative comments directly, if necessary.

Tips for Instagram:

- Instagram is a mobile platform and can only be used on a phone or tablet.
- Instagram is an image-oriented platform. This is where you should share photos and short videos.
- All photos on Instagram must be square. A good dimension is 800 pixels x 800 pixels.
- Be careful using filters for your pictures. Some enhance photos, while others make them look less professional.
- Use hashtags that relate to your subject to help people find your content. For example, if the photo is of a dance recital, you can use #Dance or #Dancer. It's fine to use several hashtags. Remember to use #NNMC and/or tag @NorthernNewMexicoCollege in your posts.