

# SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES TEMPLATE

At certain points in the life of a church, it's a good idea to solidify guidelines for social media. (See our blog post, "Your Church Might Need Social Media Guidelines If ...," for more details.)

This is a template to help you develop custom social media guidelines that fit the needs of your church. These are some of the main topics we've seen come up while working with churches on guidelines for social media. Feel free to use all or some of these questions as you put together your guidelines.

## Church Name

## Which social media platform(s) are these guidelines for?

## GOALS

### 1. What are your goals for social media?

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Goal 3:

**2. How does this social media support the mission and vision of our church?**

*(See Social Media Tips below)*

**THE TEAM**

**1. Who is part of your social media team?**

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.
- g.

**2. What is each person's role?**

**3. How many admins should each page have?**

**4. Who posts for each ministry?**

5. Does someone need to review content/give permission prior to posting?

6. Who is in charge of making goals and tracking analytics for each ministry?

**CONTENT**

1. What are some examples of great posts we've had in the past – what's received a higher number of likes/shares/comments and why?

Insert screenshots or examples

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

Add in the basics of a good post *(See Social Media Tips below)*

**2. Do you have any specific guidelines for images or visuals?**

**3. What are some examples of negative posts that we don't want to see on our social media? Why?**

*(Insert screenshots or a list of what not to post)*

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.

## PRIVACY

**1. Are there any specific privacy/copyright laws you should be aware of?**

**2. Are there any permissions or media releases needed?**

## FREQUENCY

**1. How many times a day or week should you be posting?**

*(See Social Media Tips below)*

**2. What time of day should you be posting?**

*(See Social Media Tips below)*

**3. Do you have any suggestions about what should be posted each day?**

a. Monday:

b. Tuesday:

c. Wednesday:

d. Thursday:

e. Friday:

f. Saturday:

g. Sunday:

# ADDING NEW SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

1. Are ministries allowed to add new social media accounts at will, or do they need to get permission? If the latter, who gives them permission?

2. When should ministries add a new Facebook page, and when should they be utilizing a group? Why?

3. How many social media accounts should each ministry have?

*Maintain Confidentiality: Do not purposefully or inadvertently disclose any information that is confidential or proprietary to our church.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

  

Ministry: \_\_\_\_\_

  

Role: \_\_\_\_\_

  

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# SOCIAL MEDIA TIPS

Feel free to add these into your social media guidelines or share them with your team.

## THE WHY

Social media accounts should lead people closer to God. Use it to share the heart and goals of your ministry. Make sure your social media use does no harm to the church or yourself. All posts have effects, negative or positive. What environment is your post creating?

**When adding new social media accounts, make sure to ask yourself:**

- Is our audience really using that social media platform?
- What is our goal for this account?
- Are we adding it to really engage and connect or just to be on the latest social platform?
- Do we have the manpower to keep up with it in a meaningful way?
- Who is in charge of posting?

## THE WHAT

Successful social media communication lives within the “post.” What you post dictates how engaged your audience is. If you are on Twitter, keep your posts around 120 characters. When posting on Facebook, keep it to under three sentences. A long post can hinder audience engagement. Adding photos or video to your posts will always boost engagement!

It’s okay to add some of your own personality into content, but make sure you maintain the voice of your ministry. Your ministry profile and related content should always be consistent with the church’s mission and values. Posts unrelated to your ministry or the overall church vision/mission are unnecessary and can confuse your audience.

To stimulate more online conversation, ask your leaders (staff/their spouses, etc.) to get involved through your social platforms by adding comments as they feel comfortable. Then diligently make posts that encourage comments/feedback.

Your posts should use very conversational language, regularly ask questions, post photos and ask people to give captions, invite people to share stories/memories, ask fun multiple choice/fill-in-the-blank questions or conduct surveys/contests. Social media is a great place to build connections and community.

## THE WHEN

There is no perfect time to post on social media, but there are optimal times. You want your posts to reach as many people as possible. We recommend posting between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Try to stay away from posting during lunch time, 12-1 p.m., as less people are usually on social media during that time.

*The schedule could look like this (and would link back to your website as much as possible for sermons, articles, event registration, etc.):*

- **Monday:** post a vision-related (Tier 1 message) update and/or something related to the sermon from Sunday
- **Tuesday:** post a Children/Youth update or share something discussed/celebrated with staff
- **Wednesday:** post an update from another ministry area (Adults, Outreach, etc.)
- **Thursday:** promote an outreach effort or ministry partner in the community
- **Friday:** tell a story from a class or small group or ask an open-ended question to generate conversation
- **Saturday:** promote something about Sunday worship (sermon topic, etc.)

## THE WHO

### **Audience:**

In order to connect with your audience through social media, you have to know who they are. Take some time to wrap your mind around who the audience is for your specific ministry. Then post and communicate in a way that will connect with them. Think about what they would want/need to hear about the topic you're writing on. As always, make sure your ministry accounts also show respect. Do not use ethnic slurs, personal insults or obscenities or engage in other unacceptable conduct.

### **Team:**

Our recommendation is that each ministry should have an editorial calendar, and the person in charge of social media for that ministry should be managing the posts. Then various admins can help carry out this editorial calendar. You could build a team of staff or volunteers who enjoy using these social media tools and can help you communicate through them on behalf of the church. They will need direction and guidelines on how to do this in a manner that is consistent with the mission and values of the church.