Social Media at the University at Buffalo School of Management

"Social media" refers to a wide variety of interactive media using text, pictures, video, and audio. Traditional mass media are produced in static form, and read or studied by recipients. Social media turns recipients into participants, enabling them to comment on, and contribute to, content almost instantaneously. Examples of social media: blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube.

You can use social media at the UB School of Management via one of the school's many existing social media sites, or you can create your own site. Sites can include:

- Program sites or pages (for a particular academic discipline, service program, or student organization).
- Class sites or pages (for a particular class section).
- Affinity site (for a particular group of faculty, staff, or students).

You may wish to consider a program, class or affinity presence if:

- You anticipate posting frequent information (e.g. every few days).
- You plan to provide ongoing conversation and dialoguing opportunities.
- You have a large number of potential "followers."

Creating your own program, class, or affinity presence carries special responsibilities. Doing so means:

- Being prepared to **monitor the page daily**, including weekends, holidays, and breaks.
- Posting new content and keep it fresh every few days.
- Responding to inquiries within 24 hours. The Web doesn't stop when you leave the office or classroom and neither should your commitment to monitor and respond via social networks. A social media page with little activity reflects poorly on your department and on the university as a whole.
- Responding to comments or moderate dialogue at least once every 24 hours.
- Recruiting a "backup manager" and well-defined "succession plan" for the point you leave the school or are unable to perform your social media duties.
- Ensuring model/consent release forms have been completed and signed by the subjects of any photos or videos from nonpublic events. In the case of minors, a parent or guardian signature must also be obtained in advance. Model consent/release forms are available from School of Management communications staff.

UB School of Management presences on social media sites are considered to be an extension of the website, and most guidelines that apply to the website (such as brand and identity guidelines) will also apply to your social media site.

Student Clubs/Organizations: The advisor(s) of any student club/organization must have administrative access to their club's social media account(s), with authority to review, monitor and, if necessary, change content.

To ensure continuity of the School of Management's online identity, if you are exploring the creation of your own office or administrative department presence on a social media site, please contact School of Management communications staff. They can help you:

- Discuss the social media process and requirements.
- Help you determine if you should develop your own social media account or utilize one of the school's primary sites; identify your site goals and content strategy; determine your anticipated audience; and designate one or more backup site managers.
- Address profile naming conventions, and graphics needs.
- Get your account added to the School of Management social media Web directory.

o Note: Blogs should be professional in nature with content of general interest to be included in the directory.

SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT TIPS

When you use social media on behalf of the UB School of Management, or in your role as a member of the UB community, keep these tips in mind.

Be Interesting

Some suggestions:

- Write about what you know.
- Be colloquial. Remember that social media communication has some of the characteristics of speech and some of the characteristics of writing.
- Respond quickly. The ability to publish your thoughts quickly is a great benefit of social media. Aim to publish posts or comment about breaking news or current happenings without delay. (However, at the same time, if you're in doubt about a post or something "just doesn't feel right," wait a while before posting it or ask someone else to look at it before posting).
- Seek dialogue.
- Engage your audience by posting questions, factoids, human interest material, surveys, informative tips, puzzles, and other content designed to create dialogue.
   o Answer questions, encourage feedback. Say thank you when posts a positive comment.
- Connect with other pages/accounts. Find, share and comment on content from other sources to help build awareness and a community around your social media efforts.

Devote the Right Amount of Time to Social Media

If you plan to use social media to convey information or commentary about your university activities:

- If you're a member of UB School of Management staff, be sure you have your supervisor's OK before you take on any ongoing social media responsibilities as part of your work duties.
- Check your social media page or site at **least once each day**, and respond or comment as appropriate.
- Arrange to maintain coverage over **weekends, holidays, and breaks**. Remember that questions, positive and negative comments, and requests don't take breaks.
- Plan to post **new content every few days**. Dynamic ever-changing social media keeps your audience intact. Static, neglected media reflects poorly on the school.
- Be sure that you have time to manage your social media page or site, and that you don't neglect other responsibilities while doing so.

Disclose Your Role

When posting or commenting online, be sure to:

- Use your real name.
- When using university computers, use your university e-mail address.
- Include your title or role.
- Provide contact information**.**

Be Honest

Nothing gains you notice in social media more than honesty - or dishonesty. So:

- Be accurate and complete in anything you publish.
- Do not say anything that is dishonest, untrue, or misleading.
- If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, point it out.
- Be cautious about disclosing personal details.
- If you make an error, be upfront about your mistake and correct it quickly.
- If you choose to modify an earlier post, make it clear that you have done so.

If someone accuses you of posting something improper (such as their copyrighted material, or a defamatory or inappropriate comment), be sure to notify School of Management communications staff immediately.

Respect Your Audience

The public in general, and UB School of Management faculty, staff, and students, reflect a diverse set of customs, values, and points of view. So:

- Be yourself, but maintain a tone of respect in all posts and comments.
- Remain consistent with content on the School of Management website.
- Take responsibility for your views and opinions, and make it clear to your audience that you are speaking for yourself, not for the entire school.
- Respond respectfully to anyone who posts comments you disagree with. Have a "thick skin," and be prepared for negative responses or comments.
- Always avoid personally offensive comments, ethnic slurs, potentially defamatory statements, insults, arguments, and obscenity. Be careful about objectionable or inflammatory topics, such as politics and religion.
- If you maintain staff/supervisor or faculty/student relationships online, these should function in the same manner as offline relationships.

Respect Copyright and Trademark Laws

Today's copyright laws were created with "old" media in mind. Copyright law as it relates to online media is still emerging. So follow some general rules of thumb:

- Never quote more than short excerpts of someone else's work, and always attribute these quotes to the original author/source.
- When paraphrasing or discussing material drawn from another source, always attribute the material to the original author/source.
- When possible, link to others' work, rather than reproduce it.
- Avoid reproducing any corporate logo or trademark.

Stay Safe

- Avoid disclosing personally identifiable details, such as home addresses, birth dates, or financial information.
- Report any actual or suspected hacking, impersonation, or online fraud for referral to law enforcement authorities.
- Maintain privacy settings appropriate to your program, class, or affinity group.

Adhere to spelling and grammatical rules

- Use a spell checker – and manually proofread anything you post before it goes up.
- When in doubt about usage, consult the Associated Press Stylebook.

Don't Commercialize

Don't:

- Promote or criticize any business organization.
- Endorse or criticize a product.
- Seek money or payments for any purpose.

Don't Engage in Controversy or Crisis Communication

Refer controversial inquiries or posts to School of Management communications staff.

Don't Make Comments to the News Media

Reporters, editors, commentators, and bloggers follow social media closely. If you're contacted by a member of the news media, refer the inquiry to School of Management communications staff. This includes any request for comment from a blog or website. Communications staff will advise you whether you should respond directly, or whether the school should issue a response or statement.

Don't Engage in Political Activity

The University at Buffalo is a public organization, and we are generally prohibited from engaging in political or partisan discourse. When posting content in connection with the university and/or using university hardware, software, or networks, avoid:

- Partisan positions
- Political endorsements
- Promotion of legislation

Don't Tell Secrets

It's perfectly acceptable to talk about your work or university activities, and have a dialog with others, but it's not okay to publish confidential information. Confidential information includes things such as private student, staff or faculty information, grades or records.

Be mindful of posting information that you would not want the public to see. Google has a long memory.