



SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

College of San Mateo

The following pages are best practices for College of San Mateo social media implementation and content. The Community Relations and Marketing office at CSM is available to guide and promote college programs and services. Contact Beverley Madden at maddenb@smccd.edu or (650) 574-6538 if you have questions or need support.

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OFFICIAL CSM SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

- twitter.com/csmbulldogs
- facebook.com/collegeofsanmateo
- instagram.com/collegeofsanmateo
- youtube.com/user/collegeofsanmateo

OVERVIEW

The following is for use for organizations within the College of San Mateo community. Social media accounts on behalf of a club, department or other CSM organization are the “voice” of that organization and administrated by members of that organization. For CSM to market its programs and services, events must be listed on its Event Calendar. From there we promote your events not only through social media but on campus and to the greater San Mateo community.

HASHTAGS

Hashtags that CSM uses:

- #BulldogPride (for athletics)
- #CSMPride (for alums that are doing well)
- #CSMTips (for students, financial aid, tips to remember, refer back to)
- #SMCommunity (greater San Mateo community, also tagging @cityofsanmateo)

VOICE/NUMBER OF HASHTAGS/LINKS

Remember that every hashtag (#) and company link (@) are ways for your content to be found. At CSM we try not to go past 2-3 of those symbols in one post. Basically the more you have, the messier it gets. With longer form messages on Facebook you can use a bit more.

SOME THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- What is your goal? Who is your audience? What approaches can you use to reach them?
- Use good judgment in regards to content.
- Know your audience, be human, and integrate campaigns. Be real and have a real voice.
- Start with an event calendar and be able to adjust it on the fly. Not everything is planned!
- Communicate across campus and work with other departments to cross promote your events.
- Thrive on relationships, not on one-way communication.
- Always remember to tag College of San Mateo in your posts so we see them and re-post.
- Find a personal connection to a post.
- Tell your audience why the post is important.
- Avoid automation and automatic posts from one platform to another. It looks robotic!
- Don't go overboard on tagging/hashtags.
- Focus on building relationships and community as a way to further the school's reputation.
- Don't ignore negative comments. Don't simply delete them - respond appropriately.
- Social media is your eyes and ears.
- Try to post at consistent intervals - once a week, twice a week, or whatever frequency you've committed to.
- Use data and analytics to refine your audience.
- Remember that social media strengthens your connection to alumni and the community.
- Post frequently, and bring value to your posts. Don't post to just to post.
- Stand out from the crowd. Make your posts interesting and visually appealing.

HOW OFTEN TO POST

For our main social media channels we try to post as follows:

- Facebook 1-2 times per day;
- Twitter 6-8 times a day;
- Instagram twice a week;
- YouTube as needed.

The above numbers are based on a great deal of followers. Accounts with fewer followers should try to post 2-3 times per week. The goal is to be consistent.

GENERAL FORMATTING

Here are some general tips in regards to formatting.

- When referring to College of San Mateo, feel free to use CSM and tag us on social media posts (it's the only way we can see it!)
- When writing out dates, we use 2 pm instead of 2 p.m., and March 2, not March 2nd.
- With regards to links, we remove the "http://", "www" and the final "/". For example, www.collegeofsanmateo.edu/stuff/ would be "collegeofsanmateo.edu/stuff".
- When re-quoting tweets, we try to include the organization's @company address to make sure they see it.
- Please refer to our style guides at collegeofsanmateo.edu/marketing/logos.asp and collegeofsanmateo.edu/styleguide for other "best practices".

DOS AND DONT'S

Suggestions to make the posts look cleaner and more professional:

- When posting, try to post an image, rather than a link to an image.
- When posting very long links, use a service like tinyurl.com to make the link shorter.
- When possible, use a visual that is not very wordy. It's there to attract attention, not to tell the whole story.

LIST BUILDOUT

CSM has built out internal lists on its Twitter account in the categories shown below. The reason for this is to get ideas for content, and to like/retweet interesting content. Here are some of our internal lists.

- CSM Organizations (any CSM group with a Twitter account)
- California Community Colleges (all CA community colleges and like-minded organizations)
- Greater San Mateo Community (people and organizations in and around San Mateo County)
- Campus Specific Accounts (for example cosmetology or astronomy)

ANALYTICS/NOTIFICATIONS

On a daily and weekly basis we continue to monitor posts, in regards to number of impressions, shares, etc.

We can adjust our postings (either too much, or too little) based on the data. Once a month we put out an analytical summary to track long-term trends. We also reply to notifications both on Twitter and Facebook with responses.

IMAGE SIZES

Image sizes across social media platforms change often. You can search Google for the latest specs. As a general practice, we use images that are 650 x 300 pixels, i.e. narrow rather than long.

PHOTO ALBUMS

Be willing to post photo albums of events. For larger student gatherings, CSM uses more photos. For smaller events, we use the best half dozen or so photos. We also repurpose photo albums on Twitter, Instagram and/or Facebook. Make sure the photos are in focus!

WHAT IF AN ORGANIZATION WANTS TO CREATE A SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT?

- The first step is to determine what the end goal is – what do you want to achieve?
- Find out where you can find/get images for your posts. It might be as simple as using clip art, photos of speakers in class, or images featuring projects created by students/staff.
- Find out where your audience is.
- Build out a calendar of events. That is best first step in regards to creating content.
- What type of audience is it?
 - Is there a lot of rapid content? (Twitter)
 - Is it highly visual? (Instagram/Facebook)
 - Are there a lot of videos? (YouTube)
 - Is it highly informative? (Facebook/Twitter)
- Our naming conventions are simple, for example twitter.com/csmbaseball, or facebook.com/csmbaseball. Keep yours simple and easy to remember!
- When creating a social media account, make sure that CSM Community Relations & Marketing also has administrative access. We can help you get started.

WHAT IF AN ORGANIZATION RARELY USE THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT(S)?

- Again, determine what the end goal is – what do you want to achieve?
- Who currently has access to the account?
- What were some of the reasons the account went cold (for example lack of time, or one energetic person left)
- Posting is not a chore, it's just thinking differently about what you are already doing. Think socially: What are you reading? What are you talking about in class? Who is speaking? What are they thinking? Take a picture and post that.
- Only post when you have content – do not stress about not having something to post.
- Create a calendar to remember important events.
- The most important thing is to post consistently: once a week, twice a week, or whatever frequency you've committed to.
- Easy content for posting includes "throwbacks"- old photos from the CSM archives.
- Other easy content includes interesting feature stories or articles that you are already reading. Or a class discussion and an interesting comment from a student.
- As the official organization, give a little encouragement when they post something. Also feel free to send ideas that you see, which would work specifically for their feeds.

OTHER IDEAS ON POSTINGS

- Something interesting
- Classroom photos – photos taken during class, or the entire group of students.
- Tips and Tricks
- Accolades and Awards
- Job openings/internships
- Speakers to class/team
- Alumni/student happenings/jobs
- Student projects
- Historical posts: #TBT #FBF
- Products and services that you use
- Basic information/schedules
- Does it make you chuckle?

NEGATIVITY

- It is a social medium - some negativity exists.
- Trolls will post and comment to get attention. These types of posts/comments can be deleted.
- Negative posts with a “point” should be responded to quickly, and escalated to the Marketing office if needed. Responding to falsehoods actually helps your brand.
- Crisis Communications: If there is a serious problem, discuss it immediately with upper management ASAP. Social Media can also be your eyes on such things in advance.
- Be our eyes and ears on campus.

LEGAL ISSUES

- When discussing matters related to CSM, be honest about your affiliation with the university and clarify you are not an authorized representative of CSM.
- CSM social media accounts will self-monitor their pages.
- When discussing matters related to CSM on a non-institutional or personal social media site, the college encourages utilizing the following disclaimer:
“The views expressed on this ____ (blog, Facebook page, etc.) are mine alone. They are not endorsed by CSM and should not be considered to be official communication from CSM.”
- The use of the CSM logo on personal sites is prohibited. Do not use CSM or its logo to promote products, causes, or political candidates.
- Photo and video rights should be secured from the original artist before posting. This doesn’t not apply to “shared” content.