Our guidelines are simple in that one intern and the Coordinator and one volunteer can post. The intern and volunteer are carefully selected and are not allowed to post any opinions, political support, but are allowed to post events, laws or legislation that might affect LGBTQ, support for groups that support our Center, university events for groups that are allies, things like that. We do not post names of people that have not given verbal permission to have their names posted.

-    University of Wisconsin, Green Bay


I train my staff and student staff to not post their own opinions on the LGBTQA Resource Office or Diversity Center office social media accounts. However, they can post articles or blogs on a topic they care about and then pose a question in the post to elicite feedback on the topic. Another item is to NOT delete any comments and to treat our social media pages as if it is a conversation occurring on campus. Do not censor anyone. They can however delete comments that are homophobic, racist, sexist but to get my approval first but that rarely happens. None of these guidelines are written down so I will appreciate what you put together.

-    University of Illinois Springfield



If you haven't already, I suggest you contact your university's Office of Marketing/Public Relations. Ours provided us with a handy and brief set of guidelines and also gave our student assistants a social media training. Hopefully yours prove to be as generous :).

-    University of North Florida


The following is the first draft of a manual being put together by a student intern for the LGBTQ Student Center at Kent State University.

# LGBTQ

## LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUEER STUDENT CENTER

# SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

## KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

# LGBTQ
## LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, AND QUEER STUDENT CENTER
# SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

## CONTENTS

# ABOUT

This policy governs the official use of social media for the Kent State University Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, and Queer (LGBTQ) Student Center.   In the last several years, the use of Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and other social media tools to disseminate information has been increasingly popular not only with students, but with students' families and staff and faculty. It has been found that using social media tools is an effective way to expand the reach, foster engagement, and increase access to information regarding offerings of the Center. This policy is applicable to all organizations within the LGBTQ Student Center as well as all Center employees, non-full-time employees, and interns. In the event of any conflict between this policy and any other LGBTQ Student Center policy, directive, or regulation, this policy will govern and supersede any previous issuance or directive.

# RESPOSIBILITY

As a Center that serves a student population that is inherently diverse, it is the responsibility to have a social media presence that is representative of the various cross sections of students' identities. This is an obligation to serve the myriad of students at Kent State University, and create an image that is reflective of the Center's dedication to celebrating what make the students we serve unique.  These areas of identity include, but are not limited to:

- Race
- Ethnicity/Culture
- Religion
- Ability
- Gender Identity/Expression
- Sexual Orientation
- Political Affiliation
- Physical Appearance (i.e. standards beauty)

# GUIDELINES

## 1. Consider your audience

When you're out in the blogosphere or Twitterverse or other social media channels, remember that your readers include current studentes, potential students, as well as their families and staff/faculty of Kent and other insisutions. Consider that before you publish and make sure you aren't alienating any of those groups.

## 2. Determine your voice and tone

Is your voice very professional or is it a bit more casual? What you're sharing says as much about us as it does our audience. Is your representation of our voice representative of our brand? If it is, then is that representative of the demographic we're trying to reach? If our tone and voice aren't appealing to our prospects, then it's time to change it up. Though it's important that our social media engagement be as unique as our brand, it's also important not to stray from our brand's image. Let our Center's culture be your guide.

## 3. Keep it Short

According to Strategies for Effective Tweeting: A Statistical Review, "Tweets containing less than 100 characters receive 17% higher engagement than longer Tweets." While Twitter limits your messages with its 140 character limit, Facebook, Google+ and other networks don't impose a character limit. Sometimes, the shorter, the better!

## 4. Create Brand Awareness

Social media platforms offer the potential to increase our public profile. You have the ability to create grassroots campaigns, engage with influencers in higher education, share content from them, and stay active in

conversations. If you create and share worthwhile content, we'll be ready for the time when industry influencers send a flood of new followers our way.

## 5. Don't Over Share

"Sometimes being able to publish every whim that scans across your brain is the best thing in the world. Sometimes, it can become a real problem. The killer is this: when it is a problem, you're usually the last to know and the damage is done." - Mitch Joel

While it's important to stay in the loop and maintain social relationships, posting too often -- whether it's photos, status updates, or frequent Tweets -- can turn our audience off. Focus on sharing items that are of value to our community and reflect our brand. Creating a content calendar can help us with this.

## 6. Don't Always Feel Compelled to Jump In

Much like oversharing, you don't have to be a part of every conversation mentioning the LGBTQ community. In fact, sometimes it's better to let employees, influencers, and other members of our community interject before (or instead of) us. Determine what types of posts we should respond to and which ones we want to sit out. Having a social media playbook will help to define when and where we should be a part of the conversation.

## 7. Be as Transparent as Possible

Openness goes a long way in social media. It's a big part of building trust with our community. Give our customers behind the scenes access to our business by creating videos, posts, and pictures, and introducing our team through Google Hangouts or creative employee profiles with links to

connect. In turn, prospects will take more of an interest in our brand, and stay in touch when it comes to updates.

## 8. Bring value

Social media will more likely pay dividends for us if we add value to our followers, readers, fan, and users. For example, use posts as a means to frame the conversation around specific issues and make sure that our position is heard and commented on, or as a way to build buzz for upcoming products or services.

Joe Homs, the CEO of Headset Bros., shared where social media has provided an opportunity to bring customer value. On Twitter, they ran across a person who was looking for a recommendation for a product they sell. A simple message to her that was quick and relevant allowed them to make a fast sale.

Another time, on Facebook, a customer complaint about not receiving an order led to the realization that their shipping company had lost the package. Sending the customer a new package overnight fixed the problem and they eventually worked out the problem with the shipping company as well.

## 9. Be Proactive, Versus Reactive

Monitor general feeds in our industry to pick up a variety of posts that don't mention our brand but are still valuable. This strategy reveals new conversations we may wish to take part in and enables us to establish new relationships. It's also a great way to catch any issues before they become a potential crisis.

## 10. Exercise good judgment

Refrain from comments that can be interpreted as slurs, demeaning, inflammatory, etc. The Internet is full of varied opinions, and it's okay to share ours, but we never, never, never want to be branded a racist or narrow-minded or an unstoppable hot-head.

Youn and youre coworkers should understand that companies can and will monitor employee use of social media and social networking web sites, even if they are engaging in social networking or social media use away from the office. Eric B. Meyer, an associate at the labor and employment group of Dilworth Paxson LLP, reminds us that, "employees should always think twice before hitting 'send'; consider what could happen if your organization sees what the employee publishes on the Internet and how that may reflect not just on the employee, but also the company."

Bottom line: good judgment is paramount regardless of whether an employee's online comments relate directly to their job.


## 11. Understand the concept of community

The essence of community is the idea that it exists so that we can support others and they, in turn, can support us. We need to learn how to balance personal and professional information, and the important role that transparency plays in building a community. Our community shouldn't be an environment where competition is encouraged or emphasized, but rather a platform where our students or users feel comfortable sharing, connecting, and receiving help.


## 12. Respond to Negative and Positive Feedback

Though it may be tempting to respond to positive feedback and delete the negative, don't. Instead, respond to positive feedback, thank our community for sharing our content or recommending our services, and

invite members to share their stories through interviews or as guest bloggers on our site.

If we receive negative feedback, consider looking at it as constructive criticism and an opportunity to improve. If someone is complaining, it's more than likely they're looking for a resolution from us. Very rarely do people merely want to complain. Therefore, respond as quickly as possible and avoid the urge to purge.

## 13. Respect copyrights and fair use

This should be a no-brainer, but just in case: always give people proper credit for their work, and make sure we have the right to use something with attribution before it is published.

Forant, Trish. "10 Social Media Best Practices for Brand Engagement - The ExactTarget Blog." *The ExactTarget Blog*. 10 Dec. 2013. Web. 5 Aug. 2015.

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# EXAMPLES

SDAVADV

# ACCOUNTS