SOUTHWEST INITIATIVE FOUNDATION

Maximize Fundraising Potential with Social Media
Guidelines for Social Media

✔ Do...

- **Make sure you have contact information listed;** your email at a minimum. (Consider a cell number, PO Box, etc.). Many foundations or organizations without a brick and mortar presence struggle with this. If I'm a donor and I don't know how to contact you, I might just give up.

- **Check private messages frequently on your Facebook page**, as many people are using PMs as a way to ask questions.

- **Be transparent on social media;** consistent with foundation culture, beliefs, values, goals.

- **Bring value;** be helpful, useful, timely, and interesting.

- **Be trustworthy;** follow through on what you promise and when.

- **Posting that Grant Applications will be available starting on a specific date?**

  - Make sure you post many notices months prior. Post frequently asked questions about the application. Post on the date you promised that applications would start. If there is a hiccup and it is delayed, post anyway and explain. Give plenty of notice of deadline. Continue to post reminders of upcoming deadline and helpful advice. Follow up by posting when a decision will be made. Follow up again with recipients so people know who received awards, for what reason/project. Use social media to update on progress throughout the year regarding grant recipients and their projects. It's important to donors to see the progress that is being made in the community.

- **Make things super easy for others;** easy to find, easy to understand, easy to navigate, easy to reply, easy to donate.

- **Reach out to others within the organization for ideas.** Also reach outside your organization to other community organizations/businesses to support each other's efforts.

- **Know the rules** of the social media platform you are using.

- **Locate and regularly attend a Social Media Breakfast** in your area to learn more and network.

- **Rearrange your Facebook page layout.** This is a newer feature and Facebook rearranged things into a default arrangement that isn't in your best interest. This will affect the order of the tabs on the left, what shows in the tabs, and the order of your page. Get rid of anything you aren't using.

- **Invite people not connected to you to like your page.** This is available after they like/interact with something you post.

- **Tell Facebook your "ideal" audience preference in the settings.** This is newer and most people have not done this. The functionality is very similar to audience functions in ads.

- **Add content to the description area of your cover image and profile picture.** Put in your contact information and website link (if you have one), at a minimum. This goes for pictures too. Put in some information of what people are looking at and why you posted the picture.

- **Check for unofficial pages that Facebook has auto-generated.** Go through the claim process to merge or unpublish them so it isn't confusing to people which one is the "official" Facebook page.

- **Tag other businesses, organizations, and people** in photos and post updates when appropriate.

- **Use video.** Add it to Facebook natively if possible to do better in the algorithm.

- **Consider using email drip campaigns, email blasts, and/or e-newsletters.** Never use your outlook to send emails to masses. Use Constant Contact, Mail Chimp, Sharp Spring or any other reputable email service.

- **If you utilize Give to the Max Day or any other day/event focused on fund raising,** plan far in advance to communicate your goals and how people can help.

- **If you have a website, do make sure your messaging and information posted there reflects what you share on social media.** Use a direct link to your donation page or grant application page to post on social media when appropriate.

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✗ Don't...

▸ **Assume everyone saw what you posted the first time.** Less than 10% of your Facebook fans see what you post in their newsfeed. If it's important, pay to boost the update to fans and/or friends of fans.

▸ **Wait until you're ready to fundraise to plan what you want to do.** Social media and online campaigns take lots of pre-planning and incremental steps to be really successful and insure donors understand what you are trying to do and get behind you with support.

▸ **Assume everyone reads the newspaper.**

▸ **Underestimate how many people search, read, recommend, share, and donate via mobile devices.**

▸ **Use any content you do not have rights to; photos, copy, graphics, etc.**

▸ **Pass along anything that you don't know to be the truth.**

▸ **Use social media only for a fundraising medium or news dissemination device;** share stories of donors and recipients, celebrate accomplishments, post pictures of funding projects and events, and engage people so they want to donate and be passionate about your cause.

▸ **Assume Facebook or any social media platform will be here in a year or more.** Create your own assets like websites, email lists, and mailing lists that you can build upon with social media.

▸ **Concentrate solely on Facebook.** People with LinkedIn profiles and connections can do great things for foundations on LinkedIn. A LinkedIn Company Page could be created for a foundation. Very active foundations could utilize Instagram to generate lots of interest and buzz around projects using pictures.