Social Media Guide

A SUPPORT GUIDE FOR SLIGO COMMUNITY GROUPS

Supported by

SLIGO
COUNTY COUNCIL
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What is Social Media?

Social media, or new media, refers to the publication and dissemination of media content such as text, images and videos, through online social interactions.

Social Media is now so common it simply has to be part of how you operate, promote services and events, engage with and stay in touch with local businesses and other community groups.

This guide has been developed by Sligo PPN to help you understand the world of Social Media. However, this isn't an exhaustive list of all the options out there; it is here to help you generate ideas.

If you're not comfortable tweeting, hashtagging or vlogging, someone in your community will be – find them, ask for help and you may have just found a great resource for your community group. Alternatively why not go to Sligo Volunteer Centre or Sligo Leader Partnership who might be able to help members of your group access training.

Make a particular effort to link with schools, youth groups or Sligo IT to support you – this is their world, they are the experts.

Why Do I Need to Know About It?

Social media is the 21st century's version of "word of mouth" communications. It is a way of engaging & communicating with people, and can be particularly effective when trying to engage young people.

Social media can be used to share information, have conversations with individuals and groups, promote events, raise awareness of issues and prompt a call to action.

It can be used for listening and gauging opinion towards an issue, and gathering feedback to inform decision- making.

These statistics from Sept 2017 highlight how many people are using social media and this increases daily;

- **There are 2.51 billion social media users worldwide**
- **There are more than 317 million monthly active Twitter who make 400 million tweets per day!**
- **There are 1.79 billion active Facebook users and 1.18 billion log in daily**
- **There are over 225 million LinkedIn members with 1.5 million groups & over 1 billion endorsements**
- **Approximately 47% of all users of social media access it via their smart phones The most interactive age group across social media is the 35-44 year olds. Also teens don't use Twitter as much as this group as Twitter is used more for connecting to contacts and brands and not friends.**

Types of Social Media

Types of Social Media
The principal categories of social media include but are not limited to:

Social Networking Sites
An online environment in which you can connect, share and interact with other users who are typically known to you offline. Example: Facebook, Google+ , LinkedIn etc

Micro-blogs
A web application that allows microbursts of text that may also include images and links to other sites and content. Example: Twitter,snapchat

Blogs
The word "blog" is a composite of "web log"; a website or part of a website that is updated regularly and features commentary and updates on a topic. Example: WordPress, Blogger.

Media Aggregators
Websites that provide a media publishing platform, wherein images and video can be uploaded and stored. Content may be viewed, shared and commented on by others. Example: YouTube & vimeo (video) and Flickr (images).

Social Calendars and Events
This refers to the use of social calendaring networks that facilitate the real life (offline) meeting of online networks and communities. Examples: Facebook Events, Tweetups (a meet up of Twitter users).

Social Bookmarking Sites
A website that allows the user to bookmark content of interest and share it across the social graph. Example: Digg. StumbleUpon.

Forums
Internet forums are online discussion sites where people gather to post comments, discuss topics and swap information. Example: Boards.ie

Podcasts

Audio downloads of interviews, radio programs and independent created audio shows

Virtual Worlds

A virtual world is a 3D computer environment in which users participate and navigate using a 3D avatar of their own creation. These environments may be computerised recreations of real world locations or user generated fantasy realms. Example: Second Life

Wikis

Wikis are websites that can be created and edited collaboratively with others. Example: Wikipedia

Post

A submitted message/blog in the form of text, videos, photographs, graphics, links (hyperlinks), documents to a social media account

Comment

A user submitted response to a social media post.

Here are just some of the different types you may use as a community group:

- For social networking, eg Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+
- For blogging, eg Wordpress, Tumblr
- For photos, eg Flickr, Pinterest, Instagram
- For video, eg YouTube, Vimeo, Vine
- For audio, eg Audioboo
- For mapping, eg Foursquare
- For event bookings eg Eventbrite
- For collating content, eg Storify
- For newsletters, eg MailChimp
- For surveys, eg SurveyMonkey
- To share documents, eg Google Drive, Dropbox

Types of Social Media

How social media fits within the wider plan for your group

Social media is a marketing tool & should be treated like any other marketing activity. Understand how it fits into your wider PR and promotion strategy. Perhaps you could delegate using social media to a specific person or group to ensure your key messages are consistent?

Think of your objectives; what do you want from social media?

There are many ways in which social media can be used by a community group, but if you think of your objectives before you start using it, then it helps to steer what you write. Examples of the types of objectives your group may have are:

- to increase membership to your group
- to raise awareness of a particular event
- to raise awareness of what community interest groups are in your area
- to raise awareness of the group
- to encourage interaction with the local community
- to increase funding/sponsorship opportunities

Think of your target audience

Who are you trying to target? Is it local people who already know you exist? Is it new potential members who may need more information? Is it potential funders?

Once you know who you want to target, and it may well be all of the above, think about when the best time is for communicating with them. E.g. If you've got a fundraising event on selling delicious cakes in Ballymote over lunchtime– make sure that you are tweeting & letting local groups and businesses know what is on offer, how great it smells, what a buzz there is. Remember lots of people access their social media via their phones & many check it as soon as they have a break!

Be targeted – do you want separate sites for different events/themes?

If your group has some quite different objectives that you wish to promote through social media then you may consider having different sites to target different audiences. Whichever way you do it you need to be clear whom the sites are aiming at, so as not to cause confusion.

Who is responsible for updating your social media& when & how often are they going to do it?

Keep your social media up to date! This does not mean that someone has to work on it 24/7 but it does mean that it is worth having more than one person who has access to the sites to cover holidays and so on. Make sure that whoever is responsible for updating the social media knows what the objectives & key messages are. You do not have to update all the social media sites daily, just make sure your updates are worthwhile rather than posting just for the sake of it.

Have you got some good images/videos?

A picture is worth a thousand words...so investing in some good images & videos of your group and events can pay dividends. A lot of social media is visual (particularly the likes of Flickr, Instagram, Pinterest) and a great image or video is a great way to promote yourself. Don't forget under new GDPR legislation, you must get consent from individuals to use their image.

Stay positive & don't get into arguments

There may be times when you have someone who makes a negative comment about your group. Remember, you don't have to get involved! An argument on social media is seen by everyone so it's best to deal with it off line. E.g. if a resident in the town does not agree with an event you are having then you may say, sorry that they feel this way, please contact me on this phone number to discuss the matter further.

Recommend each other

The great thing about social media is it is interactive & is about engaging with people. Make sure that within your local area you are recommending other community groups and their activities. That's the power of 'likes' and 'follows'

Don't mix business & pleasure!

Remember that people will be interested in your group's social media sites to find out about your organisation. They do not want to know where you are going at the weekend or what you want for tea and do not use it for your own vested interests.

Social media is real time so think before you write anything!

It only takes a second to double check what you have written before you send anything out via social media. It is always worth doing before any embarrassment is caused by getting the wrong facts.

Using Social Media To Promote Your Group

Social media is a great way to promote your community group and events within it. Many will already be promoting themselves, so see what's out there already and link to them & share what they say. Here are just some ideas of ways to promote community groups generally through social media

Encourage organisations with a common interest to have their own social media sites & create an overarching Twitter/Pinterest/Facebook site. This way individual groups can promote themselves while you showcase everything happening around a specific theme. If there are many groups in the area that do not currently have social media sites, is there an opportunity for your group to organise a social media training evening? Talk to your PPN and SICAP provider.

- Ask people why they have joined a group in your area. Film activities of different groups and put these on your YouTube/Twitter/Pinterest/Vimeo site. Always remember to get consent first.

- Do make sure that you link with organisations and individuals locally, regionally and nationally who have similar interests to your group - they can help promote your group or specific event

- Use social media before, during & after events to promote the group in general, as well as just for the event

- Use Pinterest to showcase interesting events/happening in your area

Example

Promoting & Evaluating a Community Garden via Social Media

The following paragraphs show how you could use social media if your group was organising a community garden meeting with a view to setting up a project in your town. It is not exhaustive but aims to give you some ideas of how social media could be used and below can be a template for your own social media interactions.

Objectives For The Community

Objectives Prior to the event

- to engage all members of the community
- to get the buy in from key stakeholders

Objectives during the event

- people can get involved
- to outline the benefits of a community garden
- inform people of the project and how
- encourage those not there to come
- to ensure that all stakeholders have their say
- to create positive PR for the event & the group
- to raise awareness of the project
- to sign up members

Objective after the event

- to form a community garden committee
- to provide a showcase of the plan, to attract sponsorship and broad

Before the meeting

You could use Twitter & Facebook to tell people when the meeting is taking place. You could create a dedicated Facebook & Twitter site for the project or create the community garden meeting as an event

You may have a dedicated website with all the details of the project. You can use Facebook & Twitter & other sites to direct people to the website. For example you could put on Twitter/Facebook a request for members or experts if they are interested in taking a plot or mentoring the group. You can also get continuous community feedback via photographs and comments which will form part of your evaluation

On Twitter you can create a hashtag for the project (#SligoCommGarden) so that everyone who is talking about it can use the same hashtag. This is great for monitoring what people are saying about the project.

Put all your social media addresses on all your marketing literature (posters, flyers, brochures, email signatures, booking forms, press releases).

Ensure that you are connected to all the local & regional press via social media, including TV, radio stations, newspapers & trade groups – journalists are always looking for stories. These often come via social media.

Set up Google Alerts to send you emails every time your project/organisation is mentioned anywhere on the internet. This is particularly useful if you've sent a press release out or had journalists attend your event & there has been a really good article in the newspaper. You can cut & paste these links to the article (before, during & after the event) onto your social media sites for everyone to read.

During the Meeting and the Garden Development

Encourage people to blog about the meeting and the bigger project. You may want to meet with bloggers (there are many who write blogs about food, sustainable living etc) beforehand & encourage them to write about different aspects of the project.

Take photos & videos during the meeting and over the development of the garden & put them up (immediately) onto your Facebook, Twitter sites. Tell people what is happening right now via Twitter & Facebook. Tell them when the committee is formed, whose growing what, when demonstrations are on, what they can help themselves to from the garden etc.

Encourage those who attend the meeting and those who simply enjoy seeing the garden take shape to share their photos, videos, comments about the project via social media. Let others help you spread the word. If you place your Twitter, Facebook, Youtube, Pinterest addresses up on posters around the garden & on all forms of promotional materials then people will engage & interact. Make sure that you put your Twitter hashtag for the garden all over so people

Once the Garden is in place

Encourage plot holders, occasional visitors and community groups toput photos & videos of the garden on social media. You could encourage this through running a competition or giving an incentive. Also encourage feedback about the project, asking for ideas around improvement.

Use some of the social media monitoring sites such as Twitonomy, Topsy or Netvibes to measure the level of interaction through social media.

This kind of information is always useful to provide to stakeholders, potential sponsors & funders to highlight the success of the project and as an evidence base for project expansion or replication.

Connecting with organisations and individuals

Most national & regional organisations promoting groups and events use social media to do so and normally they are keen to link and promote relevant work that you are doing. Many of them will be on Twitter, Facebook, Pinterest and have LinkedIn groups. Also many of the national organisations have thousands of followers on Twitter & if they retweet what you say (or share the information on Facebook) this helps to raise your profile to a wider audience.

Here are just a few of the organisations & individuals that you may want to link with:

- Western Development Commission / WRA
- Sligo PPN
- National & Local Government e.g SCC, Elected Members, Heads of Departments,
- Local Community organisations
- Sligo Volunteer Centre
- National, Regional & Local Media
- The Wheel https://www.**wheel**.ie
- Local and national tourism providers
- Sligo Volunteer Centre
- Sligo Leader Partnership
- Your local LCDC

Conclusion

This document is not exhaustive but we have hopefully given you some ideas on how you could use social media to strengthen the profile of your town team and planned events.

Remember to think what you want to achieve through using social media & ensure that it is incorporated into the wider work of your community group.

Online should just be one part of your wider marketing plan. Make sure that you link all your social media sites together and use one to promote the other.

Social media is by its very nature interactive & the more people you can get positively engaging with it, the better.

Social Media in the time of Covid-19

These are unique and challenging times and never have we had to rely on technology more for basic human interaction. Here we just give a basic outline of some of the key tools being used to communicate across this crisis and how you can try and stay connected until that important day when you can again shake someone's hand again.

Content:

> **Zoom**: How to Download; How to Join a meeting; How to Schedule a meeting
> **Facebook**: How to use Facebook Messenger
> **Twitter**: How to use Twitter
> **WhatsApp**: How to use WhatsApp and set up a group
> **Email**: How to create an email address/account

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Zoom

1. Zoom needs to be downloaded onto your computer first:

> Zoom is a free app (app is short for application).
> Ok, you have to download it onto your computer, here is the link for that: https://zoom.us/download
> Click Download, it will start downloading.
> You should see **Zoominstaller.exe** at the bottom left hand corner, after a few seconds, right click on it and click open, give it a minute to open.
> Then a bar across the screen should read 'Installing' and the %...it takes a few minutes.
> Once that is done, the Zoom meeting page should open up or you might have to look on your desktop for it, just click to open.
> Once you have that done, right click it and 'pin to taskbar'. Then it will be easily available for you when you want to use it.

2. How to set up a meeting or join a meeting:

➢ When you open Zoom, you will see a page that has 4 options: **New Meeting; Join; Schedule; Share Screen**

➢ New Meeting is for when you want to start a meeting immediately; Join is for when someone else has scheduled a meeting and has sent you details to join in; Schedule a Meeting is for when you would like to schedule a meeting; Share Screen is when you want to share your screen with another application.

➢ For the now we are going to be concentrating on **Schedule a Meeting** and **Joining a Meeting** and some options you can use while in a meeting.

3. Schedule a meeting

➢ Open Zoom and click 'Schedule'.

➢ A new page opens which allows you to start scheduling the meeting.

➢ **Topic**: Give the meeting a name, a start date and a time here; **Meeting ID**: Generate Automatically to keep it simple or you can also chose to have a Personal Meeting ID, this will be included in the email when you invite others to join, they will need to enter this ID to join your meeting; **Password**: You have an option to create a password or not, once again this will be needed for participants to enter to join the meeting; **Video**: On for both; **Audio**: Telephone and Computer Audio. This allows one to access the meeting through a telephone or a computer; **Calendar**: Others.

➢ Click **Schedule**

➢ This will bring up another page, check all the information is correct on this and click 'Copy to Clipboard'

➢ You have now copied this, which can now be pasted into an email (this can be done by right-clicking the mouse and clicking 'Paste').

➢ Paste the information into the email body. Under the part'Join the Meeting', go to the end of the long link and press return on your keyboard (the link will be highlighted). This will give direct access to the person you are inviting to the meeting.

➢ Last thing to do is just put the email addresses of the people you are inviting to the meeting into the email address section and click 'Send'.

➢ When it is time to start the meeting, open Zoom and click start. Just wait for those you have invited to join.

4. Joining a meeting

➢ Open Zoom, click 'Join'.

➢ You will be prompted to 'Enter meeting ID or personal link name'. For this, click the dropdown menu and chose your own personal link, usually the first. This has been automatically generated by Zoom for you.

➢ Then click 'Join'.

➢ This will open the meeting screen, where other members will be.

➢ During the meeting there are different options at the bottom of the screen: **Manage Participants**, this brings up the list of participants of the meeting, where you can invite, mute or unmute participants; **Chat** allows you to text a message to the group

or upload a file; **Share Screen,** is when you want to share your screen with another application; **Record** is to record the meeting; **Reactions** is for when you want to add an emoji picture to the meeting, it will appear on the screen when chosen; **End Meeting** will allow you to end the meeting or leave the meeting.

Facebook

Facebook Messenger

➢ Facebook Messenger (FM) is a free app and can be used on a phone, laptop or computer.

➢ To download this app will depend on what phone you have. So, mostly there are 2 types of phones, Android (most phones) and Apple iPhone.

➢ If you have an Android, you must got to Google Play Store, put Facebook Messenger into the search bar, once found, click download (you must have enough space on your phone for this to work, a message will pop up if you don't have the space).

➢ If you have any of the Apple iPhones, then you must go to the App Store on the phone, and again, put FM into the search bar, once it pops up, click 'Get'.

➢ Ok, so once you have the download complete, the FM icon will appear on your phone screen. Open FM.

➢ It will ask you to sync your contacts, agree.

➢ So, a list will appear of all of your contacts.

➢ Click into one of the names and you will be given the option to send a message, allowing you to attach images/pictures if you like (bottom of the screen), make a call (top right) or make a video call (top right also).

Twitter

➢ Follow the same instructions to download Twitter as was for Facebook Messenger.

➢ Once downloaded, open.

➢ Type your phone number or email address in the first box provided on that page.

➢ Create a password and type into second box.

➢ Click or tap the 'Get Started' button.

➢ Twitter is mainly used for Tweeting but can also be used for messaging. Click 'Message' (4th down on the option list on the left-hand-side).

WhatsApp

- WhatsApp allows users to send text messages and voice messages, make voice and video calls, and share images.
- Follow the same download instructions as FM and Twitter.
- Tap 'Allow' on both boxes to grant WhatsApp access to your files and contacts; this will sync all your contacts on your phone.
- Enter your phone number.
- Click OK to confirm the number you entered.
- Open WhatsApp, across the bottom of the screen you are given a number of options of what you would like to do: Calls; Camera; Chats.
- When you click into 'Chats', search who you would like to chat to, select that person and start texting, click the arrow to send message.
- Once you have started a few texts with that person their name will automatically appear on the list, when you open chats, going forward.
- When you have selected the person you are chatting to, at the bottom of the screen you have the option of sending a voice recording also.
- To do this hold down the microphone and speak your message, when you have finished let go of the microphone. **'Hold to record and release to send'.**

To create a group on WhatsApp

- Open WhatsApp, top right-hand corner 'New Group', click this.
- This brings you to the list of your contacts. You can then select the people you would like to add to the group.
- After you select the people, you can then name the group.
- The person who makes the group is usually the Admin of the group, this means they are the ones to add people.

How to set up an Email Account

- There are many email service providers out there, for example Gmail; Outlook; Yahoo! Mail, to name but a few!
- I am going to set up an email with Yahoo! Mail only, however it is much the same set up with all email accounts.
- First you must go to your browser and type in www.yahoo.com, this will open up the Yahoo homepage.
- Go to the top of the page and click 'Sign up'. This will bring you to the Yahoo email sign up form.
- This will be where you will create the email account that you will use to access your email.
- Fill in all the details required. When it comes to selecting your ID and Password. For the ID, pick a name that is your own creation and the @yahoo.com will automatically

appear. There is a 'check' box here, click this to see your email address is already in use, if it is, you may have to choose another.

- For the password you will need to pick something that you will remember and others will not guess.
- Most passwords need to be a mix of (at least 8) letters (large and small), numbers and/or symbols, follow these instructions and create your password. My advice here is to write it down somewhere private.
- The section after this is for in case you forget your password, so go ahead and fill that in, it's not difficult. Don't worry if you don't have a second email address here, just leave blank.
- Then finally, click 'Create my Account'.
- Click 'continue' and it will take you back to the Yahoo page.
- You will see Mail on the left-hand side of the page. This is where you will receive your emails and create/compose emails to send.
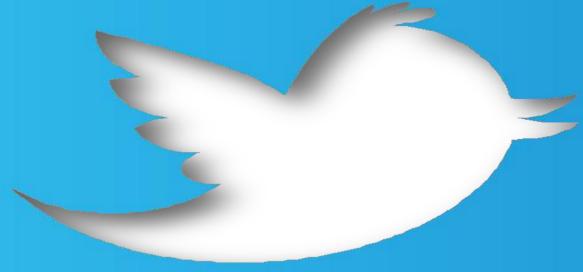- On this page you can go to settings also and have fun with colours and themes for your page.

Appendix 1

Some Useful Steps:

Setting Up Key Social Media Sites

Twitter

Step 1 – Go to www.twitter.com and create a user name and password

Step 2 – Create a profile & picture – including designing your own site

Step 3 – Choose people to follow (use the search or find someone you know & look at who they follow)

Step 4 – Compose your first tweet – decide what you are going to say & why!

Step 5 – Start to reply, retweet, favourite relevant tweets that you've received. When writing a tweet use www.bitly.com to shorten web addresses

Step 6 – You can create lists to streamline people in your timeline. This shows a stream of tweets from only the users on that list

Facebook

Step 1 – Go to www.facebook.com and create a personal account first (do not create a profile for an organisation)

Step 2 – Create a page for your business / organisation / event

Step 3 - Update your profile – this is as useful as a website and probably more read!

Step 4 – Add a picture or logo

Step 5 – Add a status (message) update

Step 6 – Like other pages (organisations you work alongside) – you can use Facebook as your page so as to achieve maximum publicity on other people's walls

Step 7 – Make it interesting – update your status regularly, add photos, link to websites/ articles/ youtube, promote events etc. When writing about other people use @..

Use articles that you find using Google Alerts

Step 8 – Create a domain extension / username so that you can use your Facebook address on your marketing materials
e.g. www.facebook.com/sligocommgarden

LinkedIn

Step 1 – Go to www.linkedin.com and create a profile (this can be as detailed as you so wish)

Step 2 – Search for & make connections

Step 3 – Ask & make recommendations

 Step 4 - Join groups & participate in them

Step 5 – Create a group for your organisation/event/ destination

Pinterest

Step 1 – Create a profile & add picture

Step 2 – Install "Pin It" button

Step 3 - Create & manage pin boards

Step 4 – Add images to your pin boards

Step 5 – Follow & like others' boards/pictures

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