



These guidelines created by NACD are meant to assist districts and board members in best social media practices when it comes to posting content and engaging online.

## Questions to Consider

Establishing a social media policy for your conservation district's social media channels is important in maintaining a consistent brand and image. Below are some questions to consider when it comes to developing a social media policy for your district:

- What is the process for posting content on a district-sponsored social media account?
- Who has administrative responsibilities/roles in your district?
- What existing modes of communications does your district have? How do your social media channels engage/interact with these other modes of communication?
- Who are your main audiences right now, and who do you need to reach in the future?
- How do you want the content on your social media channels to reflect your district's work? What are the top messages/themes your district can/should communicate? How can you use social media to communicate those messages and reinforce your brand?
- How can local media supplement and/or support your communications? How do you interact with other accounts (for example: partners, other districts, state associations) affiliated with your district's work?

## Develop Ground Rules

It's important to determine what type of content will and will not be allowed on your social media accounts. Determine how each social media platform will be used and what the rules are in terms of content. For example, decide the process for allowing comments and audience-input, as well as guidelines that clarify how you want others using and sharing your content (for example: image credits and quotes).

You can include a formal statement on your social media account stating these rules to your audience (for example: "[District]'s mission is to [mission]. The purpose of this account is to promote and share our mission and work. We do not allow advertising, personal attacks or offensive material on our page. Any posts or images shared must be credited @[District].)

It's also important to develop ground rules internally for those who have administrative access. Inform district staff, as well as leaders and supervisors who may need to approve content/posts. Below are some tips to remember when posting content:

- Avoid sharing or posting personal information, including opinions that do not reflect your district as a whole.
- Post content that only helps further your district's mission in engaging and informing audiences. Determine your district's main messaging goals in order to ensure content follows and adheres to them.
- Maintain a consistent style/brand for posting content. As a district, determine and follow agreed-upon brand standards and guidelines. This should be considered when using logos, designing graphics or banners, and original posts relating to a specific event or theme.



## Tips on Engagement

Consider the purpose of your district’s social media accounts and how you want to use them to inform and engage your audience. For each channel (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram), consider the purpose for each one, how they support your district’s message, and how you will interact with specific audiences you want to target. Below are tips on how to engage your audiences across different social media platforms:

- Keep it short when possible. Similar to press releases, address the “who, what, where, when, why,” while avoiding too much background summary and information.
- Use popular hashtags when possible, such as #Conservation, #DistrictsAtWork. Using hashtags help categorize posts, as well as help others find your district.
- Tag accounts and pages whenever possible (including @NACDConserve). This notifies them that your district has mentioned them in a post, increasing engagement and awareness of your district’s work.
- Similarly, follow and “like” accounts and pages that your district regularly interacts with and engages with.
- Monitor trending topics and issues relevant to your region or district. Record upcoming holidays and national days you want your district to observe (for example World Soil Day).
- Establishing and maintaining a posting schedule can help maintain consistency, as well as act as a record for past posts.
- Use photos whenever possible. Posts that contain pictures [often perform better](#) than those without. NACD shares graphics through our [Flickr page](#) free of use for our districts to utilize when creating posts.
- Link to your district’s website and external resources as often as possible.

## NACD Resources

NACD’s goal is to represent conservation districts across the nation, which includes highlighting the work of districts and keeping members informed on their activities. NACD encourages districts to share our social media posts, blogs and website content whenever possible. You can also check out NACD’s [Flickr page](#) for available photos and graphics to download and use on your social media accounts. Be sure to take photos at events or out in the field to send to NACD for us to share with our members.

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