

Online Social Networking: Make Work for Your Association!

Online social networks such as Facebook and Twitter are great outlets that can be used to connect your local Association to members, non-members and others interested in your organization. They also can be considered tools that will help share information, promote events, post pictures, congratulate members, recognize successes, share links and more.

In order to ensure that you become a master of the social networks for your Association, just follow the tips below and you will be on your way to connecting with people in no time!

Create a Twitter Page:

- Go to: www.twitter.com and click the “Sign Up Now” Button
- Choose a user (twitter) name. Choose carefully; you can change your user name later, but you can lose followers if you do. Choose a short, memorable name. SamJones is better than Samantha_Jones.
- Click on settings in the upper right hand corner of the screen.
 - * Replace the default graphic with the local’s logo that brands your account.
 - * Add a short bio or description.
 - * You can also customize the appearance of your page by changing the background or the colors of different elements on the page.
- Send your first tweet from your “Home” page. You can type up to 140 characters in the box; use them wisely! Make sure to add a web address for further info if needed, but it will deduct from the allotted 140 characters.

Tips about Tweeting:

- During set up, Twitter will suggest some popular or celebrity tweeters you might wish to follow, or ask you to import your e-mail lists - **DON’T DO THIS**. As an organization, it is best not to have your organization follow anyone because their tweets will show up on your page and you will not have enough time to keep up with them to ensure that they are newsworthy and not vulgar. (*You can be held responsible for posts to your local’s site.*)
- In the settings menu under “Devices”, you are able to set up the ability to send tweets to your account via e-mail or text message. This makes Tweeting on the go possible.
- Use your tweets to keep your members up to date with information. Also, you can use information from your tweets to post on your Facebook account, rather than re-creating the message - thus saving time!
- You can also “retweet” important information from other Twitter sites that you may choose to “follow.”