

Guidelines

Posts should adhere to the [University of Missouri Social Media Guidelines](#) and the policies of the website on which they are posted. **Remember that social media is permanent and public.** Anything you say or do there can be seen by millions of people and is archived forever.

- Set goals. What do we want our marketing to do for us? How will we tell if it's working? Proceed from there.
- Assess frequently. Look at statistics. What is working? What isn't? Adjust as needed.

Write for the Web.

- Social media is first and foremost about building relationships with users (our students, faculty and community) – it's not a broadcast medium.
 - **Social media is about listening, not just telling or selling.** It is two-way communication.
 - **Social media is about them, not us.** We build our collections and services based on what our university community wants and needs.
 - **Social media is about people, not stuff.** We can't just reel off a list of our impressive collections and expect anyone to care.
- The tone for our posts should be friendly, conversational, humorous (if applicable) and positive. Strive to talk to people the way you would in the reading room, but don't oversimplify. Be a friendly neighborhood expert!
- For every post, emphasize the payoff for the reader, not what the library wants to promote. Look at it from their point of view. What's in it for them?
- According to *Contagious: Why Things Catch On* by Jonah Berger, good posts fit these criteria. Try to hit at least two or three with each of your posts:
 - Social Currency. Would you want to share this with your friends?
 - Triggers. Is it easy to remember?
 - Emotion. Does it pull at your heartstrings? Does it make you laugh?
 - Public. Is it something people can wear, adapt, or adopt as part of their public identity?
 - Practical Value. Is this news you can use?
 - Stories. Does it have a strong story? Build a narrative that people will want to re-tell.
- Posting regularly and frequently is important to keep up a following. Establish a posting schedule that takes into account when users are online and likely to respond.

Be a good citizen.

- Protect patron and student privacy. Avoid violating FERPA laws. These are examples of things we should NOT do:
 - Do not post photos of readers without a signed photo release.
 - Do not release patron names without consent.
 - Do not post or talk about what specific patrons are researching.
 - Do not post about prospective students or athletic recruits.

- Especially in the case of students, FERPA laws and MU Libraries policy require that we have a signed photo release and/or a signed FERPA release for any information we put online by or about a student. That includes student assistants and GLAs, so if you haven't signed a release form yet, see the coordinator.
- Be aware of copyright restrictions. Posting on social media is an argument **against** fair use, even if we are a public educational institution. If in doubt, talk with a member of the social media team **before** you write your post.
- Our social media use sets an example for students, faculty, and people at other universities. Model responsible use, and show them how fantastic we really are here at MU Libraries. Responsible use includes:
 - Only using the library's accounts for work purposes during your scheduled work hours.
 - Not re-blogging or promoting your own personal accounts.
 - Maintaining a professional presence on any other social media accounts you use for work or research purposes.
- All materials posted or featured should be properly cited so that patrons can figure out what it is and how to get it, if they're interested.