



Leveraging Social Media

Overview

Social media is a new tool in effective communication strategy. In the digital age, almost everyone uses Social Media in one way or another. There are three main social platforms our Arrowmen use, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter. Facebook is mainly used by older Arrowmen, this platform allows for easy and streamlined conversation between Arrowmen and currently has the widest reach among Arrowmen. Both Instagram and Twitter are growing fast and are very popular among youth Arrowmen. Harnessing the power of these two platforms over the next few years is imperative to the future success of OA communication. Instagram is a storytelling platform that highlights pictures and excels at sharing past events and interest stories. Twitter is unique due to its character constraint. The platform stays relevant through continued posting, Twitter is the place to take a more casual voice and have a great time interacting with members and even sharing what's happening live from events. Learning how to cater social media to your sections, lodges and chapters will help them, and the OA, stay relevant in our digital world.

Instagram

Instagram is a platform in which accounts can share pictures, comment on others posts, and post 24 hour stories. As a lodge or section, the goal should be to promote *your story*. You want to share the traditions and what makes your lodge unique. Remember, if a person follows your account they are likely already active and will plan to attend events. Including posts about upcoming events is important, but should not be the exclusive or primary use of the platform. Appealing photos and short videos from events, leadership, or other relevant subject matter is the most effective. When commenting from the account, it is very important to remember that you represent an organization, not an individual. Every comment, whether on personal or other's pictures, is politically and grammatically correct.

Instagram Stories & Snapchat

Snapchat and Instagram Stories are best for "live" content. The OA has been able to give Arrowmen an inside look at national and local events with these platforms. For use at any level, storytelling should be the primary focus; always post two or more images when crafting an Instagram or Snapchat story. For example, when promoting an event, consider beginning with a question (e.g. did you know about the upcoming conclave?), followed by relevant content (e.g. scheduled activities, dates, location),

and ending with a call-to-action (e.g. swipe up for the registration link). Another positive use case is posting stories during an event. Again, storytelling is key. Consider beginning by introducing the event, then including videos and photos from the various activities occurring there. Consider ending this type of story with a thank you message to key leaders, planning committee members, and attendees.

These platforms, like regular Instagram posts, are highly visual, so put thought and focus on how the image or video is relevant and engaging to the story being told. These type of posts do not need to be of “professional” quality; the goal is to help your audience engage with the story, so it can be of lower quality. Please keep youth protection policies in mind when utilizing these features. It is best to avoid exchanging direct Snapchat pictures and messages with individuals.

The NCC manages the @oa-bsa Snapchat, which is open to use by sections at approved events. If you are interested in a Snapchat takeover for your section, fill out the following form, and a member of the NCC social media team will be in touch: <http://bit.ly/oa-snap>

Twitter

Twitter is a platform that provides quick blasts of information, using short bursts of words and visual aids such as graphs, photos, and GIFs. Twitter is unique in that it only allows Tweets to be 280 characters in length (e.g., any letter in the alphabet, symbols such as (!), or Emoji), thus limiting yet emboldening the message for users. Twitter is also very different from other forms of social media as it allows for users to be more connected with pages, and vice versa. Commenting and liking may be the same across the board, but how the pages and users interact is key.

With Twitter, pages have more freedom to comment on other users and to “Retweet” (that is, reposting another Tweet to the page’s own Twitter page) other Tweets that they find are relevant to their followers, and thus creates a cycle of Retweets. It is encouraged to retweet other Tweets, and by doing this, a page opens themselves for Retweets of their own. Retweets can mean other groups can be met with this information, creating a wide spread of interactions and information.

Twitter content should be geared towards a younger audience, preferably between the ages of 14 and 30. Of course, this is a generalization for Twitter users, but content should nonetheless be any different. Please see the sample Twitter posts for a good idea of what Twitter content should look like.

Twitter also has some great functions with interacting with their followers, such as polls. Use these functions to the best of your ability, as it will cause for people to take

notice and continue to interact with your page. The more interactions and people reached, the further the message can go. Twitter is one of the best resources for your page, and can help bridge the gap between Facebook and Instagram demographics.

Facebook

Facebook is a platform that can be utilized for posting original content and sharing content that is relevant to members of your organization. Facebook is a great platform for content that is longer and larger than content that is posted on Instagram or Twitter. Because of how long it has been around, Facebook is a useful platform to reach a wide range of constituencies: members, alumni, non-members, families, and the community-at-large. Therefore, your content should be geared to reach all of these groups at the same time. Sometimes, this can be tricky, but will come naturally with practice.

Using pictures showing fun activities is an example of content that all viewers will find attractive. Examples of effective content for lodges to post include: upcoming event reminders, photos that recap events after their completion, “fun” posts (Throwback Thursdays, Trivia Tuesdays, Meet the Officers, holiday posts, etc.), and posts celebrating lodge milestones. To see what posts work best for your lodge, experiment in the beginning, then follow the analytics (comments, reach, reactions) to see which posts perform better than others. Finally, and most importantly, if you’re unsure about OA Social Media Standards, always consult the National Branding Guidelines available at oa-bsa.org.

Storyboarding

Effective Storyboarding will ensure continued social success. Storyboarding is a fancy word for planning your content. At the beginning of each month, sit down with your team and discuss what relevant content you want to produce. Note any major US holidays you may want to highlight, section and lodge events, and promotional campaigns. Using a calendar, plot out when you want to post what. If you find this to be successful, look into some applications, such as Trello, which help make the storyboarding process easier. To make a storyboard successful, stick with it! Once a few months have gone by, you should be able to develop a cadence with your team. Over that time, try new approaches and explore the success of your work. No storyboarding strategy is right for every team, so trial and error is the best way to find out what works for yours.

Tips

- Understand your audience for each platform. Study your demographics and tailor your posts to them. This includes the content you post and the voice you employ. For example, your Facebook account probably has a large following of older users; you should use a professional writing voice while sharing important updates from your lodge or section.
- Post consistently. However, don't inundate your followers with too many posts. Keep it to 2-4 posts a week; anymore and you'll aggravate and eventually lose followers.
- Engage your followers! Like their comments and respond to comments and direct messages.
- Have fun and be creative! Think of what you'd like to see come up in your feed. Whether that's sharing a funny lodge- or section-related photo on Instagram, spotlighting follower's OA-related photos every week on Twitter, or doing an internet challenge with your section or lodge chief—just be sure to occasionally sure to have fun with it.
- On platforms like Instagram and Twitter, aim to strike a balance between 'fun' posts and 'information' posts, while holding a semi-professional/semi-casual-voice.
- Strive to tie the OA's motto or spirit into your posts. For example, on Halloween @oabsa shared a 'Trick or Trash' post to remind Arrowmen of their duty to cheerful service and suggested they pick up trash around their communities.
- Social Media is, in many cases, the face of your local OA. Arrowmen who have questions may send them in direct messages to your social accounts. Social Media management is a customer service job, be courteous when responding for messages, and when the content is inappropriate or against OA values, no need to respond at all. If you are ever unsure of how to respond to a DM, reach out to socialmedia@oa-bsa.org.

Sample Posts

Instagram

From @oabsa



The song of our brotherhood tells us to "weld tightly every link." Come together in the Order of the Arrow and truly feel what it means to be an Arrowman. Get in contact with your lodge about upcoming opportunities to seal your membership in the OA by obtaining your brotherhood. #OABSA

From @oanorth



For the first time at NOAC, we hosted Region gatherings as the Thursday of emphasis. It was a great success filled with fun and games, an address from the region chief, and a lip sync and talent competition! #NOAC2018

Twitter

From @oabsa



Spend 8 days this summer in West Virginia with the OA Summit Experience, where you can learn conservation skills through projects in the New River Gorge National River Area and discover all the Summit has to offer. Learn more and sign up today at <https://oa-bsa.org/high-adventure/our-adventures/oa-summit-experience> ...

From @oawest



3 weeks ago, section officers and advisers from all around the region gathered at Camp Josepho near LA to learn about how to improve the quality of the OA program in their sections and lodges.

Facebook

From Order of the Arrow – Boy Scouts of America



Last week nearly 7,000 Arrowmen gathered at Indiana University to Decide their Destinies at NOAC 2018! At the conference, lodge delegates engaged in a wide variety of trainings, activities, and fellowship gatherings. Attendees left empowered to make positive choices that will impact their future and the future of their home lodges. NOAC 2018 was also the first time 236 Arrowmen were able to experience NOAC from home through the remote delegate program! We hope to see even more Arrowmen at Michigan State University for NOAC 2020!

From Southern Region – Order of the Arrow



The deadline to sign up for the National Leadership Seminar is THIS FRIDAY! Talk to your lodge leaders about how you can [#TakeTheLead](#) this September.