IT’S A WILD WORLD OUT THERE
Social media can be an effective way to communicate, promote, and brand Michigan Tech to multiple audiences. Social media also poses risks to University proprietary information, reputation, and communication standards. It should be integrated with larger University and department communications efforts.

This guide is produced by University Marketing and Communications (UMC) annually to help social media managers and supervisors use social media for official University communications. It is not intended to apply to personal social media.
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Before Setting Out

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY AT MICHIGAN TECH

Before you embark on social media on behalf of your University department, area, or group:

1. **Read this field guide.**
   It starts with social media basics, plus is handy to keep around for image sizing, hashtag use, and more.

2. **Contact University Marketing and Communications.**
   We’ll set up a brief meeting to explore your social media goals and needs, the best platforms to reach your audience, and a content mix and posting frequency.

3. **Submit account names for approval by University Marketing and Communications.**
   Account names will usually begin with ‘Michigan Tech’ followed by a specific department or organization name. Example: Michigan Tech School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science; NOT School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science at Michigan Tech or School of Forest Resources and Environmental Science–Michigan Tech.

4. **Download profile images provided by University Marketing and Communications here:** [mtu.edu/umc/resources/download](http://mtu.edu/umc/resources/download).

5. **Add your University-affiliated social media accounts to mtu.edu/social/#!/by emailing cmshelp@mtu.edu; please include specific URLs.**

6. **Include branded hashtags to our database by emailing social@mtu.edu; please be sure to test your hashtags first.**

7. **Ensure social media content follows University Brand and Editorial Guides.**

8. **Refrain from tagging students on Facebook, and be sure to get permission prior to sharing their content.**

9. **Assign two administrators to each social media account.**
   Login and password information should be securely documented and provided to at least two Michigan Tech colleagues and their supervisors. Update your login information regularly.
10. Be aware that vulgar, insensitive, or inflammatory content is not permitted on University-affiliated social media. If you see such content, please report it immediately to University Marketing and Communications.

11. Share/repost directly from Michigan Tech's social media channels to encourage brand visibility and retain credit and copyright of the original imagery.

12. Always ask a colleague to review and proofread your social media drafts.

13. Contact UMC if you are interested in executing paid social media ads or promoted posts.

14. Don’t allow an account to go stagnant—post consistently (minimally once per week) or consider deleting the account.

15. After you launch your page, stay in touch with UMC. We can help create and share content, answer questions, and offer tips to help you grow your social media presence.

Email social@mtu.edu to get started.
Social media often serves as the initial touchpoint people have with Michigan Tech. An active social media presence is a way to send brand messages to those researching and learning more about Michigan Tech.

Our primary goal for social activity should be to reach prospective students, engage and foster affinity with alumni, and to promote and enhance our undergraduate, graduate, and faculty research.

Social media managers are in many ways the voice of our institution. They should be integrated into all external-facing matters.

Here’s reasons your department, organization, or faculty should engage with social media:

1. **DIRECT MARKETING**
   Strategic social media helps Michigan Tech communicate brand messages and reach target audiences.

2. **REPUTATION MANAGEMENT**
   Leverage social media to actively listen and shape what’s being said about Michigan Tech.

3. **SHARE NEWS**
   The percentage of people turning to social media for news consumption is staggering. Seize this opportunity and break news via social media.

4. **CONVERSATION**
   This includes current and prospective students, alumni, industry and research partners, fans, and friends.

5. **FOSTER A COMMUNITY**
   An active community likes to participate and that means liking, sharing, and commenting on social media—amplifying Michigan Tech’s reach.
Social Media Strategy

KNOW WHERE YOU’RE GOING

Social media is not simply an outlet to shout messages like a megaphone. What you publish, and every engagement strategy, should be executed with the spirit of converting new fans and followers into students, advocates, and donors. Establish clear objectives, track metrics, and evaluate often.

Social media objectives might include a combination of:

- Follower growth
- Increased reach to parents and alumni
- Increased engagement
- Increased prospective students
- Awareness of research
- Highlighting faculty or alumni
- Creating awareness of campus events

GETTING INTO THE WEEDS—WHAT TO POST

Michigan Tech’s brand promises—people, experiences, and opportunities—are the foundation of our social media.

- Real people—Our students, alumni, athletes, and faculty
- Real experiences—Fieldwork, events, classes, weather, and our location
- Real opportunities—Study Abroad, internships and co-ops, competitions, scholarships, research, and more

Our social media platforms are focused on the faces, fun, and facts behind our:

- Academics
- Research
- Alumni
- Athletics
- Campus life
- Diverse people and causes
- Honors, rankings, and placement
- K-12 outreach
- Weather
- Our location (Houghton/Keweenaw)
Let's Be Honest

TONE AND MESSAGING

Our social media presence impacts Michigan Tech's reputation—what story are we telling? The tone and messaging we use to tell Michigan Tech stories are always important, especially in social media when the words are few and the reach is big. Here are six steps to keep it real and strengthen our brand:

1. Lead with the outcome in mind—every post needs a result.

2. Dig deeper to be incredibly specific; avoid saying: “We do hands-on research.” Say exactly what kind of research and who does it.

   First-year student Jill Poliskey 3-D prints prosthetic hands for children in Nicaragua.

3. Use active voice (Blizzard skates vs. Blizzard has skated).

4. Avoid unnecessary adverbs, adjectives, and prepositions.

5. Lead with a specific, could-only-happen-at-Tech statement. Cute and clever is secondary.

   428 engineering students test concrete canoes in Lake Superior. Crazy smart!


   1,031 students play broomball. Grab a broom. A ball. Plus a whole lot of duct tape and tenacity.

Remember, it’s not how you the writer says it, it’s how our brand says it.
Social Media Platforms

Michigan Technological University is on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, and Snapchat. The combined presence allows us to reach the majority. Each platform has unique content, goals, and audiences. Content is strategically chosen based on communication directives, audience, and relevance, and should be published according to each channel’s unique purpose.

Like and follow us here:

/michigantech • @michigantech • #michigantech

In this guide, we outline best practices for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. These are the most used platforms across campus. If your department, area, or group has an interest in LinkedIn, Pinterest, YouTube, or Snapchat, please email social@mtu.edu.
Facebook Pages for brands are different than Profiles for individuals. Users become fans of pages to interact with content by liking, reacting, commenting, and sharing it.

**DOs**

- Tag relevant Pages mentioned in the post.
- Allow about three hours between posts.
- Include a call to action.
- Engage with your followers by asking questions.
- Share content from other University Facebook Pages.
- Drive traffic to Michigan Tech web pages.
- Promptly respond to questions and direct messages and sign with your name, title, and contact information.
- Use the scheduling feature to schedule posts in the evenings, on weekends, or during vacations.
- Launch Event Pages to promote special events.
- Keep text short—one to three sentences or phrases is plenty.

**EVENT PROMOTION ON FACEBOOK:**

Your Page can launch and share the event page and your Profile can help invite your target audience. Kick-start traffic by inviting relevant Facebook friends. Then ask your Page audience to do the same. As the event grows/nears, consider sharing content right in the event page. Your attendees will get a notification each time news is posted.

**WHEN TO POST:**

Weekdays around 6 a.m., 8 a.m., 1 p.m., 3 p.m., and 9 p.m.; weekends 8–9 a.m. and p.m.

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1.59 BILLION PEOPLE ON Facebook (via Social Times)
Twitter is a micro-blogging platform where users can quickly and easily send 140-character updates. Twitter allows students, researchers, news outlets, and industry partners to easily digest information and immediately move on.

**DOs**

- Use custom URL shorteners like bit.ly or goo.gl.
- Use relevant hashtags. Tweets with hashtags get double the engagement of tweets without.
- Tweet with one or more hashtags included because they are 55 percent more likely to be retweeted.
- Do your due diligence to ensure you are tagging the correct Twitter handle before you tweet. Make sure your hashtag means what you think it means by running a search before posting.
- Include hashtags so tweets can be searched.
- Leave enough room in your tweets for people to retweet. It is recommended to leave at least 10 characters free.
- Keep it short. Tweets with less than 100 characters receive 17 percent more engagement. The optimal length for a tweet is 71–100 characters.
- Tweet polls—they can be fun or more research-focused.
- Retweet content from other Michigan Tech Twitter accounts.
- Tag other Michigan Tech accounts.
- Drive traffic to Michigan Tech web pages.

**REMEMBER:**

- The 4-10-1 rule; for every 15 posts, 10 should be retweets, four should come from Michigan Tech accounts, and one should be promotional.
- Tweets with imagery perform best.
- Perform hashtags queries. Listen to conversations using these hashtags in an effort to join conversations.
- Starting a tweet with ‘@username’ means only people who follow both you and that Twitter account will be able to see the tweet’. Instead, add a period before a tweet like ‘.@username’.
- Don’t be afraid to tweet multiple times per day or even to tweet the same content multiple times.
- Don’t use too many hashtags. Engagement drops an average of 17 percent when more than two are used.
- Users will reply to Michigan Tech profiles publicly. There is a Twitter setting that allows people to send direct messages to our Twitter profiles; this setting should be enabled.

**WHEN TO POST:**

Twitter engagement is 30 percent higher on weekends.
Visual content is king and Instagram is taking full advantage of this phenomenon. It is one of the fastest-growing social media platforms in the current marketplace. Today, 20 percent of all internet users use Instagram. It is a platform that can stand on its own, but should also be used to enhance Facebook and Twitter feeds.

**DOs**

- Be less formal. Let the visuals do most of the talking.
- Use hashtags (up to 11).
- Own a hashtag to tell a branded story.
- Get permission to share student/alumni content.
- Regularly look for content to interact with.
- Share short-form videos.
- Use high-quality, eye-catching photos.
- Encourage students, faculty, staff, and alumni to post photo using a specific hashtag.
- Geotag each post.

**WHEN TO POST:**

10 p.m. is a high-engagement time for instagram.com/michigantech, but do your own research (trial and error) and post when your audience is engaged.
Set Your Sights

YOUR GUIDE TO SOCIAL MEDIA IMAGERY

Your social media represents Michigan Tech, so the imagery you choose should be current, exhibit best safety practices*, and be optimally formatted for each platform. Keep photos fresh with every season, event, and news development. The University’s Cumulus and Flickr accounts are helpful photo-asset resources.

Download our official social media profile image icons at: mtu.edu/umc/resources/download

Visit this link to review Michigan Tech’s photo safety requirements: admin.mtu.edu/admin/policy/gen/1012_1.htm

Use and share images or graphics you own or give proper source credit.
Profile Picture: 180 x 180

This is going to be the photo representing the Michigan Tech brand and your department or area.

- Will appear 160 x 160 pixels on desktop, 140 x 140 on smartphones, and 50 x 50 on most feature phones.
- Profile pictures are located 16 pixels from the left and 176 pixels from the top of your cover photo on desktop.
- Profile pictures are located 24 pixels from the left, 24 pixels from the bottom, and 196 pixels from the top of your cover photo on smartphones.
- Photo thumbnail will appear throughout Facebook at 32 x 32 pixels.
- PNG format works best.

Cover Photo: 851 x 315

The cover photo will only appear on the Facebook Timeline, but provides the opportunity to be creative. Feel free to update this image monthly, seasonally, or in conjunction with department news and events.

- Appear on page at 851 x 315 pixels. Anything less will be stretched.
- Minimum size of 399 x 150 pixels.
- Displays at 851 x 315 pixels on desktop and 640 x 360 pixels on smartphones.
- Doesn’t display on feature phones.
- For best results, upload an sRGB JPG file less than 100 KB.
- Images with a logo or text may be best as a PNG file.

Event Page: 784 x 295

Advertise your event on Facebook with a dynamic image.

- Will appear on your page at 784 x 295 pixels.
- Choose a higher resolution at that scale for better quality.
- PNG format works best.
Shared image/link: 1,200 x 630

A shared image is one of the most common forms of sharing on Facebook. These images will always appear on our timeline, and ideally they will show up in most of our followers’ News Feeds. A shared link allows you to embed an image along with a link pointing off of Facebook.

- Recommended upload size of 1,200 x 630 pixels.
- Will appear in feed at a max width of 470 pixels (will scale to a max of 1:1).
- Will appear on page at a max width of 504 pixels (will scale to a max of 1:1).
- PNG format works best.

Milestones: 1,200 x 717

A significant event might justify creating a Facebook Milestone posting. This image will be housed on the timeline, but will take up more real estate.

- Will appear on your page at 843 x 504 pixels.
- Choose a higher resolution at that scale for better quality.
- PNG format works best.

Group Cover Image: 801 x 250

Update the cover image of your Facebook Group to keep the page looking fresh.

- Will appear on your page at 801 x 250 pixels.
- Choose a higher resolution at that scale for better quality.
- PNG format works best.
Profile photo: 400 x 400
The profile photo is the main image that represents your area across the network.

Header Photo: 1,500 x 500
The header photo is the image that spans the top of the Twitter profile page. Since it is quite large, save it with the highest resolution possible.
- Recommended 1,500 x 500 pixels.
- Maximum file size of 5 MB.
- JPG, GIF, or PNG.

In-Stream Photo: Minimum 440 x 220
Twitter gives users the ability to attach photos to tweets. Twitter says tweets with photos get 313 percent more engagement.
- Recommended upload size of 1,024 x 512 pixels.
- Will appear in feed at a max width of 470 pixels (will scale to a max of 1:1).
- Will appear on page at a max width of 504 pixels (will scale to a max of 1:1).
- PNG format works best.
Standard Logo: 110 x 110
This is the main image that represents Michigan Tech on LinkedIn.
- Maximum 2 MB.
- JPG files only.

Banner Image: 646 x 220
This image appears when a user visits the Michigan Tech LinkedIn home page.
- Minimum 646 x 220 pixels.
- Maximum 2 MB.
- Landscape layout.
- JPG files only.

Square Logo: 50 x 50
This is the brand image that shows up when Michigan Tech is searched.
- 50 x 50 pixels (resized to fit).
- Maximum 2 MB.
- JPG files only.
Profile Picture: 165 x 165
This is the image associated with the Michigan Tech Pinterest profile.
• Appears at 165 x 165 pixels on home page.
• Appears at 32 x 32 pixels on the rest of Pinterest.
• Maximum 10 MB.
• Supports JPG and PNG for profile pictures.

Pin Sizes
When adding a pin to your board it’s important to remember Pinterest puts a limit on the width of the image, but not the length.
• Pins on main page appear as 236 pixels (height is scaled).
• It’s recommended to use an image aspect ratio of 2:3 to 1:3.5.
• Pins on a board appear as 236 pixels (height is scaled).
• Expanded pins have a minimum width of 600 pixels (height is scaled).

Board Display: 222 x 150
The header image associated with each board we publish.
• 222 x 150 pixels (large thumbnail).
• 55 x 55 pixels (smaller thumbnail).
Profile Picture: 110 x 110

Instagram is a platform based on photographs, so it is important to select a quality image.

- Appears on our home page at 110 x 110 pixels.
- Square photo—make sure to maintain an aspect ratio of 1:1.

Photo Size: 640 x 640

These are the pictures that appear in the feeds of everyone who follows Michigan Tech.

- The size of Instagram images has been increased to 640 x 640 pixels.
- Instagram still scales these photos down to 612 x 612 pixels.
- Appears in feed at 510 x 510 pixels.
- Smaller featured header images appear as 204 x 204 pixels, and larger featured header images appear as 409 x 409 pixels.

More Social Media Photo Tips, Tricks, and Hacks Here:
mtu.edu/phototips
YOUR GUIDE TO MICHIGAN TECH HASHTAGS—WHY USE ‘EM?

1. To be discovered.
This is where general, non-branded hashtags come into play. For example, if a prospective student is searching for information on colleges on Twitter, the hashtags #collegesearch or #admissionshelp may help them find information to start a series of social engagements and site visits.

2. To curate and develop branded streams of content.
We want to tell the real story of Michigan Tech, so choose a few key branded hashtags and use them on relevant content consistently. This will help brand social campaigns and give users the ability to see a collection of content surrounding a particular hashtag.

**DOs**
- Leverage hashtags consistently. All Michigan Tech social media managers should collaborate; add your branded hashtag to our collection by emailing social@mtu.edu.
- Regularly look for and interact with social content that uses Michigan Tech-adopted hashtags.
- Test your hashtags. Perform a search to see if it is already in use and relevant to your subject matter.
- Be consistent. Consistency is key when it comes to encouraging others to engage with and use hashtags.

**DON’Ts**
- Overuse hashtags. Two to three per tweet is appropriate and up to 11 on Instagram.
- Go too long or too clever. Keep it short and sweet and understandable.
- Use punctuation of any kind. Adding punctuation marks will render your hashtag ineffective.
- Use spaces. 
  This doesn’t work: #mtu alumni
  This works: #mtualumni
Show Husky Pride

#MICHIGANTECH
HASHTAGS

ANNUAL GIVING
#huskybucketlist
#mtutag

ATHLETICS
#FillTheHill
#FollowTheHuskies
#gritandgold
#mtufb
#mtuhky
#mtuwsoc
#mtuwvb

EVENTS
#changeforchange
#GivingTuesday
#MTUCareerFair
#MTUCareerFEST
#mtuhomecoming
#mtureunion
#owk16
#theparadeofnations

HUSKIES
#futurehusky
#futurehuskies
#huskies
#huskiesboard
#HuskiesHelpingHuskies
#huskynation
#huskypride

REGIONAL/SEASONAL
#huskysummer
#michiganskeweenaw
#puremichigan

CAMPAIGNS
#mtuhumans
#whatsnext

RESEARCH
#mturesearch
#3Dprinting
#BasicResearch
#biology
#createthefuture
#FieldworkFriday
#invasivespecies
#MTUlive
#nsf
#NSFfunded
#UnscriptedScience

MORE BRANDED HASHTAGS
#huskyheart
#huskysummer
#mtualumni
#mtubroomball
#mtucareerfair
#mtucareerfest
#mtugrad
#mtukday
#mtureunion
#mtutag
#mtuwc

RECRUITMENT/ADMISSIONS/ENROLLMENT
#applymtu
#beawesome
#crazysmart
#mtubound
CAMPUS COMMUNICATORS
Want to up your social media game? Faculty, staff, and graduate students are invited to join Campus Communicators. Campus Comm meets the third Thursday of each month to discuss obstacles, strategies, and best practices for sharing University information and stories with our many unique audiences.
blogs.mtu.edu/campuscomm

DIGITAL MUSINGS
Web and social media theories and tactics from University Marketing and Communications:
blogs.mtu.edu/digital

BRAND BLOG
Brand updates, evolutions, and ideas from University Marketing and Communications:
blogs.mtu.edu/brand
KEY ELEMENTS

• Create and maintain an updated list of contact information for leadership, social media managers, PR team and local media, as well as current logins for quick access to all profiles.

• Have search and listening tools ready to monitor social media conversations.

• Develop a list of people who proactively monitor social conversations and be available to respond to a higher volume of social media inquiries in the time of a crisis.

• Create a list of generalized social media posts and key messaging points as well as user responses that can be catered to specific issues.

• One staff member should be responsible for keeping tools and documentation up-to-date.

• Evaluate pre-scheduled posts and either re-schedule them for a different date, or change messaging according to their relation to the crisis.

• Have a communication response and stick to it. Educate any personnel interacting with the community with key talking points, tone, and any links/contact info that will provide further details.

• Always be transparent, but on message. Sometimes less is more.
The Ingredients

OF A MICHIGAN TECH POST

Simple statement, cool facts, scenic photo, branded hashtag, a branded link shortener, and a call to action

Simple statement, cool fact, active voice, scenic photo, relevant hashtag, and a complementary header and subhead
Active voice, simple statement, a photo in the tweet, tagged handle(s), branded hashtag, and a branded link shortener

Scenic photo, cool fact, active voice, branded and non-branded hashtags, tagged source, and user content