



Social Media Strategy

Policies

Centralized Social Media Accounts

Primary social media responsibility for University of Kentucky College of Engineering accounts resides within the college's marketing and communications office. The senior director of marketing and communications assigns responsibility to particular personnel within the marketing and communications office at his or her discretion.

Decentralized Social Media Accounts

We support units (departments, student organizations, offices within the college, etc.) that wish to use social media accounts on behalf of their entity. However, to ensure unit-level social media does not negatively impact the college's brand, we require the following:

- The unit wishing to begin a social media channel will first contact the College of Engineering's marketing and communications office.
- The unit will submit a plan detailing who will be responsible for the channel, and how the unit intends to use that channel.
- The unit will agree to adhere to the University of Kentucky's social media policy.
- The unit will avoid going long stretches without posting.
- The unit will recognize that college-level social media is not required to share their content.
- The unit will take care to ensure their posts are free of typos, inaccuracies, or anything that reflects poorly on the unit, the college and the university.

Hiding and Deleting Posts

In general, we will not hide or delete posts made by visitors to our channels or our own staff. However, we will hide or delete posts in the following circumstances:

- Posts we consider offensive will be hidden.
- Posts critical of individuals, even those outside UK, will be hidden.
- Posts we make that contain inaccuracies will be edited if possible, deleted if not.
- Threatening posts will be reported to specifically designated personnel in the Office of Public Relations and Marketing.

GOAL 1:

Serve as a powerful tool for recruiting prospective students

Strategy #1:

Enable prospective students to see themselves fulfilling their aspirations for success in the UK College of Engineering

Tactic: Communicate the Wildly Possible brand as it relates to the college through appealing photography and video

- Primary channels: Instagram, YouTube, Facebook
- Photos of attractive Engineering facilities, labs, student organizations in the midst of activity, Engineering Living Learning Program, technology, career fairs, classrooms, students conducting research, student teams, group study, attractive spaces, tutoring, etc.
- Visual narratives of students forging their own path in the college
- Videos of “satisfied customers”— current students and alumni
- Only use excellent photography that supports the Wildly Possible brand

Tactic: Use informal language

- Use first person plural “we” in posts
- Use contractions
- Emojis can be used when appropriate

Tactic: Show, don’t tell

- Don’t explain details about academic programs, extracurricular activities, etc. Show students enjoying campus life and provide links to the website
- Let the photos/video carry the load

Strategy #2:

Emphasize outreach activities organized by the college to build relationship with early high school and middle school students

Tactic: Make posts that highlight outreach activities at all levels

- Make sure posts include photography of participants engaged in visually interesting activities
- Describe what is going on in the post to demonstrate how younger students are learning engineering principles and doing hands-on activities
- Use hashtags and tags that connect to schools, teachers and organizations connected to the outreach program

GOAL 2:

Motivate alumni to take pride in the college and move toward increasing levels of philanthropy and involvement

Strategy #1:

Inform alumni of recent achievements within the college

Tactic: Post stories on Facebook and Twitter that highlight student and faculty achievements

- Tout rankings that reflect the college well
- Spotlight faces of the college—beloved faculty members and staff with a history of helping students (college folklore)
- Recognize students whose awards, achievements and stories elevate the college's reputation

Strategy #2:

Post inspirational stories on Facebook and Twitter in advance of giving events such as One Day for UK, and create new content specifically for such events

Tactic: Repurpose student profiles that emphasize scholarship help

- Use One Day for UK branding with a graphic overlaid atop the students' photos
- Make sure the series of profiles account for diversity within the college

Tactic: Create new content specifically for release on giving days

- Identify three or four students whose story fits well with the goal of the giving event
- Create profiles and take photography of each
- Post profiles throughout the day
- Ensure diversity, and vary style of each profile so as to not be redundant
- Mix written articles with video for profiles

Strategy #3:

Post photos and stories about cultural artifacts such as faculty, facilities and traditions that evoke feelings of nostalgia

Tactic: Post historic photos of the college for #ThrowbackThursday or #FlashbackFriday

- Use digitized archives or have physical copies of photos scanned
- Focus on a sense of place and how the college has changed over the decades
- Focus on student experience in the past as a juxtaposition to what student experience is like today – emphasize contrasts, but also similarities

Tactic: Share news and photos of longtime faculty members and staff who are fondly remembered by alumni

- If possible, juxtapose current photos with older photos
- Invite alumni to congratulate that faculty member on a recent achievement

Tactic: Post photos of current students engaged in activities that would be familiar to alumni

- Activities might include student organization involvements, studying, working in a lab, etc.
- Offer a sense of connection between past and present

Facebook suggestions

Content that performs well:

- Short videos; student profiles; faces of the College

Content that doesn't perform well:

- On-campus happenings; events

Posting frequency:

- 1-2 postings daily
- Articles/stories are not reposted
- Virtually no weekend content
- Promoted posts can help drive traffic to outreach events

Future issues:

- Video content captioning is an opportunity/possible requirement
- Potential algorithm changes can disrupt results

According to Ruffalo Noel Levitz' 2019 E-Expectations Trend Report, "teen social media use is moving away from Facebook and toward visually dominant platforms such as Instagram, Snapchat, and YouTube." Further, "Facebook has also fallen to the fourth most-used social media platform on a daily basis. However, it remains the second highest-rated social media tool for college search."

With less than one percent of our audience falling in the 13-17 age range, and only 16 percent within the 18-24 age range, we consider Facebook to better fit our goals for alumni engagement than prospective student recruitment. Instagram and YouTube are better channels for meeting our prospective student goals.

However, because 41 percent of our audience fall within the 35-54 age range (29 percent of our overall female audience; those women also make up 53 percent of our engagement)—a range most likely to include parents of prospective students, we will not completely abandon making posts that point toward brand awareness.

Instagram suggestions

Content that performs well:

- Video
- Instagram stories
- E-Day
- Campus photos
- Faces of the College

Content that doesn't perform well:

- Announcements
- PR/promotion

Posting frequency:

- 1-2 times per day
- Post later in the day

With video and photography, we have seen improved response to our Instagram posts. Video typically outperforms photos. Main opportunities lie in presenting what the College looks like and student experiences available in the College.

RNL recommends posting 2-5 times per day, but our resources don't quite allow for that. We will post at least once daily, using a mix of photography and video.

We will continue exploring Instagram Stories, but not set a goal for how frequently to create new Instagram Stories.

Twitter suggestions

Content that performs well:

- Faces of the College, especially well-known students

Content that doesn't perform well:

- Announcements
- News

Posting frequency:

- 1-3 times daily
- Some major stories are posted more than once

Based on a presentation given by MIT's Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence Lab's social media director, we are experimenting with tweeting about topics, news, milestones, tips, tools, humor, etc., specifically not related to our College. The upside is that our account will be seen less a PR machine and more as a thought leader/authority for the tech-savvy follower.

Apart from the above tweets, we will continue to use Twitter to post photos and occasionally announce news.