VT Social Media Best Practices

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THE PRIMARY VT ACCOUNTS

Virginia Tech
@virginia_tech

Virginia Tech News
@vtnews  Follows you

Virginia Tech Alumni
@VT_alumni  Follows you
Facebook groups are built for small group communication and for people to share their common interests and express their opinion. Groups allow people to come together around a common cause, issue or activity to organize, express objectives, discuss issues, post photos and share related content.

When you create a Facebook group, you can decide whether to make it publicly available for anyone to find/join, or keep it private. Like with Pages, new posts by a group are included in the News Feeds of its members and members can interact and share with one another from the group. Within the settings, you can choose to approve posts from members before they are shown to the entire group. **We recommend that chapters create groups, instead of pages.**
Facebook pages enable public figures, businesses, organizations and other entities to create an authentic and public presence on Facebook. Unlike your profile, Facebook Pages are visible to everyone on the internet by default. You, and every person on Facebook, can connect with these Pages by becoming a fan and then receive their updates in your News Feed and interact with them.

Cons: With Pages, there is more pressure to post a high volume of content and content is affected by the algorithm, so interested users might not see a post until days after it is shared if you have a small following. Users can review your page (or you can turn this feature off), but reviews often come after negative experiences.
We have a VT social media website! Why do we have this?

- To offer social media support and guidance and maintain consistent and aligned external, digital communications to a wide audience from Virginia Tech.

What’s included?

- Overview of best practices covered here, with relevant resources and step-by-step instructions and downloadable guides, and access to the campus-wide social media managers Google Group for on-going discussions and sharing of knowledge about social and emerging technologies.

- University master brand and style requirements, including downloadable visual asset templates.
If you are affiliated with Virginia Tech, or if you run an account for a VT chapter, you may be perceived as being a spokesperson for the university. It is essential that you do not speak for Virginia Tech, the institution, but that you represent your chapter. To mitigate any potential issues, be mindful of the following:

- Stick to your area of professional expertise.
- Confirm information before posting/sharing to ensure it is correct. When in doubt, don't post and/or ask for help.
- If you have questions or concerns, reach out to your chapter liaison.
- Be mindful of use of the chapter social media pages and be sure the content appropriately reflects the chapter's goals.
BEFORE YOU POST

- Get to know your audience and platforms.
  - Choose the right messages and responses accordingly.
- Review previous posts and interactions.
- Posting hours: Commuting and meal hours in general, but depends on audience and platform.
  - But know that it’s more about what you post now and less about when you post.
  - Don’t feel the pressure to post every day – just be consistent. (Set realistic expectations!)
- Be agile – schedule, but be ready for the unexpected.
CONTENT CREATION INVOLVES...

Copywriting & editing, storytelling, psychology, photography, videography, graphic design, & simply having “the eye” for good content.
CONTENT CREATION 101

- 3 second audition: Your content should be able to grab attention without sound within 3 seconds.
- It’s a visual, sound-off, mobile-first world.
- Most posts should have a clear call-to-action, **but not every post should have one.** Incorporate lifestyle content and show human side.
- Include creative almost always.
- Emotive and relatable content is best. Make it shareable.
- Balance evergreen, spontaneous, and planned content.
- Ask questions and avoid click-bait words.
- Pay attention: Social is everchanging.
CONTENT CREATION

DON’T

Don’t share content on social that looks just like the event’s pdf/poster. (Consider making a Facebook event or putting details in the post copy.)

DO

Use free tools (like Canva and Adobe Spark) to easily create high-quality content.
Ask yourself: Should you be setting up a Facebook event for this event or should it live on the main Alumni page?

Check to see if Alumni has already created an event. If so, share that event to your group/page or request for your page to be a “co-host,” if appropriate.

If this event should be owned by your group/page, then consider adding the Alumni page as a “co-host” so that the event is pushed out to a larger audience (the Alumni page followers).

Utilize the description and posting sections of your Facebook events to share details and updates.

Instead of re-posting many reminders, consider pinning posts to your group/page/event.
CONTENT: WHERE TO FIND IT & WHAT TO SHARE:

- Us! (Daily Email/VT News stories)
- Us again! (The central VT and VT Alumni social media channels... don’t reinvent the wheel!)
- Other university accounts
- Content and trend calendars. Don’t overdo (informal) national holidays though and know the history/meaning/correct copy to use.
- Make your own! (Share photos from past events to promote upcoming events and share photos from events in a timely manner afterward to engage attendees.)
CONTENT CREATION: EDITING

- You will make mistakes…and that’s okay.
- You can now edit posts on all platforms, except for Twitter.
  - Do not delete your tweets unless there is an error in the original post or if you have been hacked and then the information should be immediately posted again with the correction. In either case, screenshot and file.
CONTENT CREATION: USER-GENERATED CONTENT

Utilize your fans and crowdsource content.

- Majority of your Instagram content should be user-generated.
- Create a stock of user-gen content in a Google Drive folder over time and pull from this if you’re low on content.
- Use sharing user-gen content as a way to improve/adjust posts to meet your brand voice and control the message.
- It’s great for engagement too!
- Credit users on the posts when you use their content.
CONTENT PERMISSIONS, SHARING & CREDITING

- Reposting is great, but always ask permission.
- Ask privately, not in the post comments.
- Ask for context and more details.
- Ask for original photos.
- Screenshot approval, since users can delete/retract messages on some platforms.
  - Try to keep the credit out of your main post copy, when possible or clearly separate from your copy.
  - Tag the photographer not those in the photo. They can tag themselves.
  - Be cautious of reposting professional photographers & appearing to endorse their business. Tag their personal account, when possible.
  - If you use the Repost app for Instagram, try to splurge for the paid version to lose the watermark.

March 22, 2018 at 2:15 PM

Hi! We love your VT snow photo! Mind if we share it and tag your account for credit? Thanks! - Fairen H.
USE GIFS

We have a verified VT Giphy channel, which means that VT GIFs are accessible in the GIF dashboards on all primary social media platforms, and 600+ other platforms.

[Image of a Twitter thread discussing a comment from Latane Rowland and Aleshia Farmer Salyers, with a Virginia Tech tweet about Giving Day and the impact of gifts.]

https://giphy.com/VirginiaTech
CONTENT CREATION: LINK USE

**DO**

- Remove the hyperlink from the post copy, after a preview is pulled in.
- If a link auto-previews without an image or is pulling in multiple images, unrelated to the story, remove the link preview, add your own photo, shorten the link, and add it in the post copy.
- Draw attention to the link by dropping it on its own line or introducing it with an emoji.
- Utilize free custom URL trackers such as Bitly or those available through your social media management platform.

**DON’T**

- It’s a good time to be a Roanoke Hokie! 🎉

Over the past 25 years, Roanoke transitioned from its roots as a railroad hub into a tech-savvy mecca. It’s difficult to overstate the effect of Virginia Tech’s involvement in this transformation. Read more in @VT_Mag http://ow.ly/vQmG30kRD28
HASHTAG USE AND TAGGING

Hashtags

- Fit within your post narrative when possible and tag at the end of a post, if you must.
- Use to amplify posts, tap into conversations and/or aggregate groups of posts to look back to later.
- Avoid excessive use & do your research.
- Capitalize each word to prevent confusion.

Tagging

- Fit within your post narrative when possible and tag at the end of a post in a “cc” manner, if you must.
- Use to amplify accounts, when applicable.
- Avoid excessive use.
- Verify & double-check the account you’re tagging in to see if it’s correct or if an account exists.
# Hashtags: Brand Hashtags

Know our main brand hashtags & their intended use. Don’t deviate too much or alter them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hashtag</th>
<th>Twitter</th>
<th>Instagram</th>
<th>When to use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#VirginiaTech</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>#UtProsim</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>#Hokies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#HokieLove</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Typically for Valentine’s Day and annual fundraising efforts</td>
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<tr>
<td>#HokieGrad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Commencement</td>
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<tr>
<td>#HokieFacts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>History, statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#WhyVT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Promotional marketing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#VT4L</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Alumni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#VTFirstDays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Beginning of freshman year</td>
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<tr>
<td>#HokiePets</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>#HokieBaby</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>#HokieNation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Athletics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#TravelingHokies</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Alumni travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#HokiesAbroad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Study abroad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HASHTAGS

DO

Virginia Tech
@virgiiniatech

Wow, so many #HokieBaby doctors 😊 heading out into the world after the 2018 @VTGradCommunity #HokieGrad ceremony.

😊👏

Virginia Tech
@virgiiniatech

No matter how you say "I love #VirginiaTech," just know that we ❤️ you right back! 😊 We welcome our #VT22 international students and can't wait to have you in #HokieNation!

DON'T

We #HokieLove graduation. Congratulations and #bestofluck. #Gonna #Be #A #Great #Day at #Virginia #Tech. #Blessed

Eats Natural Foods
July 26 at 10:50 PM · 😊

If you're looking for a new bar, consider this one, new at EATS! Coconut cashew. Certified vegan, gluten-free, and non-gmo. #eatsnaturalfoods #blacksburg #virgiiniatech #welcometoblacksburg #eatsnaturalfoods #mrv #swva #swvafood

purely elizabeth.
TAGGING OTHER ACCOUNTS

**DO**

Virginia Tech
@virginia_tech

After 45 years of service to #VirginiaTech and working in almost every area within @vtdsa, @VT_CCC executive assistant, Rhonda Rogers, is retiring. Thank you for your work, Rhonda! 🎉👏

Virginia Tech
@virginia_tech

@VTCRI is teaming up with @UVA scientists to determine how to accurately diagnose a mild traumatic brain injury that may have subtle or no physical signs, but still leads to long-term damage. 🧠

**DON’T**

Check out our alum! @VTMattWins @MPC0407 @VTBlackCaucus @bburglat @inclusiveVT @deseriacb @AKAHokie @VT_BGSO @TyrodTaylor @Vtblackalumni @NikkiGiovannii
SOCIAL MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY

Always consider users who are visually impaired and/or hard-of-hearing

- Photo: Alternative text is supported on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn
- Video: Automatic Captioning and .SRT file upload options supported on Facebook and YouTube.
- Video: If closed captioning isn’t supported, incorporate embedded text or graphics that suffice (Instagram and Twitter).
- Video: Consider sound-off majority.
SOCIAL MONITORING & INTERACTING
COMMENT MODERATING

Comments that are inappropriate, offensive, insult or attack, contain illegal suggestions, or use foul language should be removed as allowed by that particular social media platform, as should those that are intentionally repetitive (spam).

- Hide comments where you can, and keep a log of any comments removed.
- Try to avoid blocking users, so that you can continue to monitor their behavior, but if they are spamming, you may block them.
- Be consistent with the treatment of all commenters.
- Use Google Translate to determine if comments need to be moderated.
- Add commenting guidelines to your Facebook group/page “About” section.
Responding: Social Media Decision Tree

Show personality while maintaining an appropriate voice and tone
- When appropriate, use GIFs, memes, and emojis
RESPONDING: DMs/INBOXES

- Nothing is private: Expect anything and everything to be screenshotted and shared.
- The response should come from the account where the content is posted.
- Set boundaries and utilize away messages.
- Respond in a timely fashion: Business-hour responses, unless there is an emergency.
- For messages that require research and follow-up, reply within three business days.
- Sign off/personalize DMs.
- Respond in a tone that positively reflects the VT brand.
- Confirm information before posting/sharing to ensure it is correct. When in doubt, don’t post and/or ask for help.
- Direct users to relevant portions of vt.edu.
CUSTOMER SERVICE

Know your audience → Remember them → Follow-up

Hi Cristian – You can contact our Cranwell International Center at international@vt.edu or 540-231-6527. They will be able to help you! - Fairen H.

Hello Kenna - We are not glad that you are having trouble with AC. You can contact @VTFacilities by calling 540-231-4300 to report this!

4:08 PM - 22 Feb 2018

4 Likes

Virginia Tech 🌀 @virginia_tech · Feb 27
Hi Kenna - Just following up on this! Were you able to contact @VTFacilities?
THE EXPECTATIONS ARE REAL...AND WEIRD.

Quick responses are expected & requests come in at odd hours/may be odd in general

Hello

I have a question about housing

2 Aug 2017

Ok thx ur no help

2 Aug 2017

Bridget Cathana
Unassigned

send me a movie

Is VT a college

Hi Kharisma - Yes, this is a college. See www.vt.edu to learn more. Thanks! - Fairen H.
ISSUES MANAGEMENT/CRISIS COMM

- Ask for help: Seek the chapter liaison.
- Know that all primary VT posts = statement/breaking news.
- Look to share our updates instead of creating your own.

VT Alerts: Weather Advisory: Blacksburg campus now closed today. All classes and activities canceled. For information visit vt.edu.

Joan Towers @JoanTowerz · Feb 13
Anyways my dorms flooded and everything is ruined when can I expect my reimbursement check ? Thx u know that expensive computer I bought ;) it's ruined ;) everything is ruined @virginia_tech

Virginia Tech @virginia_tech
Repeating to @JoanTowerz
Yikes! Did you (or your RA) call emergency facilities? 540-382-4343

virginia.tech Cap decorating 🎩
2d

itsobviousimright NOPE STFU AND BURN IN GOD DAMN HELL NON EXISTENT LYING SHITS! BULLSHIT LIKE THAT CLEARLY CAN'T EXIST AND NO ONE WANTS IT TO UGLY FUCKS! GUYS CAN ONLY LIKE GIRLS DIPSHTS THAT'S SO GOD DAMN OBVIOUS! BURN IN HELL LYING LITTLE SHITS!
Make Data-Driven Decisions

Measuring success through analytics is vital

FACEBOOK PAGE ANALYTICS:

FACEBOOK EVENT ANALYTICS:
Make Data-Driven Decisions

FACEBOOK GROUP ANALYTICS:
Questions?

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