MSU Alumni
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

MSUA Social Media Strategy
Updated 10/21/21

Brand Position
For Spartans whose lives have been forever impacted by Michigan State University, the Michigan State University Alumni Office creates, nurtures and sustains an active network of alumni who wish to band together to advance the university and celebrate its traditions and values. Our network of Spartans Helping Spartans provides professional, personal and service-related enrichment opportunities that add value to people's lives and help create traditions for the next generation of the Spartan Nation. We hope to use social media as and additional outlet to express these values.

The MSUAO Brand
Although the MSU Alumni Office social media accounts serve as a representative of Michigan State University, we embody our own brand. To capture and maintain this brand on social media, the following must be adhered to.

- Share original MSUA content, such as blog posts, articles, and resources
- Be representative of the MSU Alumni that make up the Spartan network
- Create a social media standard operating procedure template that allows employees to post autonomously with a deep understanding of brand messaging
- Maintain a consistent voice and tone among all channels
- Don't post images that are blurry, pixelated, low-quality, or contain off-brand messaging
- All videos should be in high-resolution and present information that audience will appreciate and enjoy
- Look professional and follow AP Style grammar and punctuation rules
- Make sure not to post too much or too little — there's a balance that needs to be found in frequency of posting
- Customize posting frequency by social media platform
- Create content that speaks to all MSUA audience personas and not just one
- Watermark original visual content
- Add variety to social media posting
- Include timely and topical posts that speak to current events which relate to MSUA
- Create conversations and interact with prospective social media accounts

Primary Objectives
- Use MSUA-branded social media to communicate the objectives of University Advancement to alumni, donors and friends.
- Increase Michigan State University Alumni Office brand awareness, relevance, and value within the target market.
- Build stronger relationships with the target markets via social media.
- Provide a forum for the target markets to interact with one another and build relationships.

- Encourage active participation and involvement on Michigan State University and MSU Alumni social media channels.
- Inform target markets about the Michigan State University Alumni Office, as well as campus news, events and information.
- Act as a channel to spread the philanthropic efforts of UA.
- Inform alumni of philanthropic events and information on how they can give back and support MSU (monetary and non-monetary).

BUSINESS OBJECTIVE	SOCIAL MEDIA GOAL	METRIC(S)
Brand Awareness	Awareness (current and potential audience)	Followers, shares
Build relationships, build an interactive forum	Engagement (how audiences interact with content)	Comments, likes, mentions, etc.
Drive leads to GivingTo, MSUA websites	Conversions (effectiveness of engagement)	Website clicks, donations

Tactics

- Adapt messaging to align with how members of each social community interact and utilize different platforms.
- Actively engage in conversations and create content designed to stimulate positive, relevant discussion within the community.
- Promote diversity and inclusion within community.
- Be personable and listen to the social media community.
- Be the authority on Spartan and alumni-related topics.
- Respond to all inquiries and handle adversity with reason and tact.
- Build relationships with top social influencers within Spartan communities for each platform.
- Connect with Spartan entities school-wide and cross-promote whenever possible.
- Promote relevant Michigan State University Alumni and MSU-related news, events, programs and information.
- Encourage social media users to join all Michigan State University Alumni online communities.

Target Market

The following segments make up our target markets. All members of the target audience are actively using technology and/or social media in their daily lives and adapt easily to social media platforms and norms:

- o Michigan State University Alumni
- o Donors
- o Spartan Friends
- o Faculty/Staff
- o Current Students
- o General Michigan State University Fans

Audience Persona

In a world where people crave customization – audience personas are key and help us create content tailored to our ideal audience.

Find these personas [here](#).

List of Primary Social Media Channels

- Facebook
  - Facebook.com/msualumni
- Twitter
  - Twitter.com/msualumni
- Instagram
  - Instagram.com/msualumni
- LinkedIn
  - [Michigan State University Alumni Group](#)
- YouTube
  - Youtube.com/MichiganStateAlumni
- Flickr
  - Flickr.com/msuadv
- Livestream
  - https://livestream.com/msualumni
- MSUA Blog
  - http://www.alumni.msu.edu/blog/
- MSUA Spartan Stories
  - https://alumni.msu.edu/stay-informed/stories.cfm

Secondary Social Media Channels

In addition to the social media channels listed above, a number of other social media efforts exist. No additional University Advancement accounts are to be created without proper approval.

Breakdown of additional channels:
- Sparty [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) & [Instagram](#)
  - Lead: Aimee Klevorn
  - Responsible for posting: Sparty students
- [MSUA Club Leaders Facebook Group](#)
  - Lead: MSUA Engagement Team
- [MSUA Service Project Coordinators Facebook Group](#)
  - Lead: Aimee Klevorn
- Odyssey to Oxford Facebook Group
  - Lead: Elizabeth Wheeler, Aimee Klevorn

- Coffee with the Profs Facebook Group
    - o Lead: Elizabeth Wheeler, Aimee Klevorn
- Helping Spartans Twitter
    - o Lead: Dave Isbell, Lisa Parker
- Future Alumni Twitter
    - o Lead: Dan DiMaggio, Kim Spalding
    - o Responsible for posting: MSUA Student Engagement students
- UA Human Resources Twitter
    - o Handled by UA Development

Administrators

In an effort to implement our social media goals, it will be necessary to limit the number of administrators that have access to some social media channels. This is in no way intended to discourage contributions from other team members, but as a method to stay on track with our goals and objectives and remain consistent across channels.

- Secondary social media channels will remain as they currently are unless it is decided otherwise.
- Additional administrators will be decided on upon a case-by-case basis for all social media channels by the MSUA marketing and communications team.

Platform Tactics

Facebook

- Post Michigan State University and alumni-related news and information, event announcements, relevant links, photos and videos – both internal and user- generated.
- Events or programs posted to Facebook will promote national events (sports pep rallies, Alumni University, Alumni Grand Awards, etc.) and will not be used to promote regional club activities. Instead, Facebook may be used to highlight or recap events that have previously taken place.
- Start conversations and encourage response and continuous interaction.
- Listen and respond to questions and concerns from Facebook followers.
- Acknowledge any and all comments and messages (use discretion with negative sentiment)
- Create Facebook events to encourage attendance to events.
- Link to alumni.msu.edu at every opportunity.
- Additional access by volunteers and advocates will be determined on a case-by-case basis as needed for time-specific posts (at events, etc).
- Videos less than 240 minutes in length. Recommend 1-3 min. video length.
- **Post goal: Three times per week, five times per week maximum.**

Twitter

- Post "quick hit" news, events, information and updates.
- Events and programs posted to Twitter will promote national events (sporting pep rallies, Alumni University, Alumni Grand Awards, etc.) and will not be used to promote regional club

activities. Instead, Twitter may be used to highlight or recap events that have previously taken place.

- Spontaneously interact with followers and ask questions to encourage feedback often.
- Make MSUA a part of the conversation whenever possible and relevant.
- Tweet major events in real-time at every opportunity.
- Use #hashtags in a clever way that drives Twitter users to @msualumni without overdoing it.
- Videos less than two minutes and 20 seconds in length. Recommend 30 second video length.
- Rely heavily on re-sharing content from the Spartan community. Retweet to promote constituents and other university Twitter accounts.
- Link to alumni.msu.edu at every opportunity.
- **Post goal: Minimum twice per day, four times per day is the goal.**

Instagram

- Events and programs posted to Instagram will promote national events (sporting pep rallies, Alumni University, Alumni Grand Awards, etc.) and will not be used to promote regional club activities. Instead, Instagram may be used to highlight or recap events that have previously taken place.
- Feel-good, user-generated content for the purpose of entertainment or promotion of programs and events.
- Post content that is aesthetically pleasing. When users look at our feed, we hope they instantly think "Michigan State." When creating new content and looking to re-share content, prioritize the following:
  - Green and white
  - "MSU" and "MSU Alumni"
  - Spartan helmet
  - Campus, Sparty
  - Spartan Pride
  - Alumni Clubs
  - Spartan gear and memorabilia
- User-Generated Content (UGC)
  - Rely heavily on sharing images and videos from others. Ask permission to share users' photos via comments or direct messages. When permission is granted, credit the user by including their handle on the platform you found it, and their first name and last initial on other platforms.
  - Use a website to download images from an Instagram post.
- Due to the nature of the platform, graphics with text are not recommended. Rather than using graphics to promote a program or event, use photos from past events or of campus and rely on the caption for additional details.
- As Instagram does not yet allow clickable links in captions, use Linktree

- A [Linktree](#) link is placed in our bio and upon clicking, directs users to a curated page with relevant links associated with recent Instagram posts.
- Video length must be less than 60 seconds. Recommend 30 second video length.
- Additional access by volunteers and advocates will be determined on a case-by-case basis as needed for time-specific posts (at events, Instagram takeovers, etc).
- Post goal: Once a week minimum, three times per week goal

Instagram Stories
- As with all social platforms, size correctly for stories or risk abysmal engagement
  - Create content *made* for IG Stories
- Share relevant posts from other MSU accounts to our stories and/or share others' stories that we are tagged in
  - It is not possible to share another account's story to MSUA IG Stories without being tagged in it
  - If their privacy settings allow it, another account's newsfeed post can be shared to MSUA IG Stories, even without a tag
- Graphics can be utilized within stories to promote programs and events
- Check direct messages frequently, as any tagged story posts will show up here.
- Consider Instagram takeovers using IG stories

LinkedIn
- Monitor Michigan State University Alumni group membership to ensure exclusivity for alumni and constituents.
- Focus the group on career-related discussion, job postings and inquiries while facilitating opportunities for group members looking to network with other Spartan alumni in a given field.
- Provide subgroups for schools and colleges to help segment group member interests.
- Highlight the importance of the MSU Alumni Office in creating networking opportunities for members.
- Repurpose content posted to main MSUA social channels
- Post sparingly, monitor constantly to eliminate spam and respond appropriately to questions.
- Post goal: Handled by MSUA Engagement Staff

YouTube
- Utilize platform as a tool rather than a social channel
- Create feature videos to connect alumni to campus
  - Flagship programs
  - Service
  - Alumni clubs
  - Podcasts
- Integrate content with Facebook and Twitter by utilizing links.
- Post goal: As needed

Flickr

- Organize photos of MSUA and UA events
- Share link to album for event/program photos

Livestream

- Provide alumni from around the world the chance to virtually come back to campus to view events that are taking place.
- Provide alumni from around the world the opportunity to take part in MSUA's professional and personal enrichment programming by viewing the sessions virtually.
- Post livestream links to social media

MSUA Blog

- Provide alumni from around the world the opportunity to read stories on a wide range of topics related to Michigan State. Potential story topics could include campus developments, Spartans giving back, program and event re-caps, and the importance of connecting with alumni as seen through the eyes of students.
- Provide alumni, employees and students the opportunity to publish blog posts.
- Post goal: Twice a month

MSUA Spartan Stories

- Provide alumni from around the world the opportunity to read stories about MSU alumni doing great things in the world.
- Provide MSU Alumni Office the tools to suggest alumni to feature
- Post goal: Once a month

Advertising

- Advertising on social media will be dependent on the unique needs of each campaign, event or promotion.
- Funding will come from the department responsible for the campaign, event or promotion.
- Anyone in need of advertising is encouraged to speak to the appropriate marketing team (either MSUA or OE) and their assigned communications manager regarding their goals and needs.
- Advanced Facebook and Instagram advertising is hosted within the Facebooks Ads Manager platform.
  - Boosted Facebook posts can be created within Facebook's native Ad Center.
- Twitter advertising is separate from Facebook and Instagram and can be found in the Twitter Ads tab of Twitter.

Monitoring and Listening

There are two types of conversations on social media: conversations *with* the brand, and conversations *about* the brand. In order to fully understand what our audience thinks about the brand, we need to be aware of both conversations. This is possible through monitoring and listening. View cheat sheet for more details.

Monitoring

Conversations with our brand include comments on posts, posts to our page, replies to messages, private or direct messages, and posts that tag our account. We monitor these conversations by enabling notifications on all accounts and regularly checking platforms for activity.

Listening

Monitoring only goes so far. In order to be aware of the conversations about our brand - those that may not tag our account - we need to be proactively listening. Listening involves using tools to search for keywords and phrases relevant to your brand as they appear on social media, websites, blogs, and more. Sprinklr listening works great as well as searching for keywords and phrases within the native platform.

Content Calendar

A content calendar exists to assist in strategically scheduling our social media posts. The calendar is a shared calendar that can be viewed by anyone, but only the Marketing and Communications team will have access to make calendar adjustments.
- You can find the Google Sheets calendar here.
- In addition to content that is complete and scheduled, this calendar includes content placeholders for future purposes.

Sprinklr

- The MSUAO Marketing and Communications and UA Online Engagement teams use Sprinklr as their social media management tool. This tool allows us to manage social media in terms of scheduling content, analyzing data and audiences, and listening to and monitoring what our followers and target markets are talking about.

ROI Measurement

Tracking social media ROI isn't an exact science and not all benefits can be measured.

Using the following metrics we can begin to gauge the effect and reach of our online engagement efforts by examining growth, visibility and engagement over time.
- Total Fans/Followers
- Total Growth
- Growth Rate

- Total Impressions
- Average Daily Reach
- Average Daily Engaged Users
- Traffic to website via social media (tracked in Google Analytics)

Measurement is intended to be fluid and the above metrics may change with the capabilities of the tools as well as the goals.

Additionally, all links on social media that lead back to any MSU web pages should be tracked via go.msu.edu UTM tracking and GA (Google Analytics) whenever possible.