

How to use Facebook



These guidelines are to support our editors and societies who wish to manage their own Facebook fan page. The document explains how to set up the fan page and best practices in using the page to communicate and engage with your target audience.

Setting up a Facebook account

Facebook offers users the option to set up a Facebook fan page or a Facebook group. SAGE recommends setting up a fan page rather than a group as the fan page offers greater functionality. This document is written specifically for use with a fan page, but some of the guidelines can apply to both types of pages.

Learn more about whether a fan page or group is right for you.

Action Steps

1. Become a member

- If you have not already, become a member of Facebook (www.facebook.com) and become familiar with the community
- Update your profile – it should read like a simple resume with some personality. This is a very informal medium, so you can mention your favourite hobby alongside your recently published paper and your weekend trip alongside your favourite researchers.
- Your fan page will be more successful with the more personal contacts, or “fans” you have on Facebook. Start by looking up colleagues within your institution, expand to people you know within the professional societies you belong, and search their “friends” list for additional ideas.
- Update your personal status at least 3 times a week, write on your friend’s walls, and comment on posts/photos/articles.

2. Research other fan pages to get a feel for them

Search for other fan pages, for example **MagnoliaBakery**. For more scholarly examples, take a look at these pages:

- SAGE
- Socialsciencespace
- American Sociological Association

3. Create a Facebook fan page

Read Facebook’s instructions on **how to create a page** and follow the steps. Add photos, descriptions, and a few posts. You can find out more information about creating a fan page by downloading the Product Guide at [here](#).

4. Add a cover photo

Facebook cover photos appear at the top of each page. The recommended image specifications are: a JPG file, 851 pixels wide by 315 pixels tall, and less than 100 kilobytes in size. For images with a logo or text, you may get a better result uploading the image as a PNG file. Facebook terms state that cover photos cannot contain price or promotional information, contact info, calls to action or references to any Facebook features, such as ‘Like’ or ‘Share’.

5. Upload a profile photo

The profile photo is a 170 x 170 pixel image. Design is important as it overlaps the cover photo on the page. Facebook recommends using a logo - your society or journal logo for example.

6. Utilize the timeline functionality – promote your society/journal’s history

Backdate your Facebook page to include any key dates in your history. When updating your status (on your profile page rather than newsfeed), click the clock image on your status box and this will prompt you to add a date for the event.

7. Promote key dates using “milestones”

Any key dates can be highlighted as a “milestone”. Highlighting an update in this way also means the update is stretched across the whole width of the page giving it greater impact.

8. Engage users by promoting different content

Facebook have also introduced a selection of new options for posts:

- Pinned posts keep important stories at the top of the highlights feed for up to seven days (pinned post are marked by yellow tags on the page). To pin an item, select the pencil icon on the right-hand side of the image and select “pin to top”.
- Page posts can also be ‘starred’. Starring makes a post go full width across the highlights feed to feature the story prominently. Click the star icon on the top right-hand side of the post to enable this. Posts can be highlighted within the timeline.
- Page admins can also hide individual posts without deleting them. This allows pages to display only its most engaging posts without losing important data

9. Manage the workflow

It may be wise to assign multiple administrators to your page. Finding fresh content on your own can become very wearing. Set clear expectations of how often each administrator should update the page.

10. Provide fresh content

Keep your page up-to-date by posting a minimum of 3 times a week, and no more than once per day. Along with information about your journal (articles, issue announcements, call for papers, honors and awards), consider posting general information about your field. This can include links to relevant blogs, photos, and thoughts/ messages from your colleagues. The new Facebook timeline layout is very visual so consider posting images and photos from conferences and events.

11. Create a fan base

Invite all your contacts to become fans. Let your members know about your fan page through existing media (newsletters, web site, etc.). Once you have some fans, it’s easier to get more as news of your page spreads virally.

12. Promote your Facebook Page

Speak to your SAGE editor or marketing manager to promote the page as part of SAGE marketing communications. We can link to your page from our existing social media channels and relevant email campaigns. Facebook also has numerous widgets and banners to allow you to promote your content on other websites, such as your society homepage.

13. Maintaining and growing a fan base

Keep your members happy by offering them useful and relevant information, a place where they can connect with other members, applications they can use, and special updates just for them.

Encourage interaction with your posts: ask questions or set up surveys to encourage your community to engage. If there are questions that your Facebook page cannot answer, provide contact information for where your members can get this information.

Remember, the more users interact with your page, the more News Feed stories for users’ friends are created, magnifying awareness of the page.

Here is a helpful list of content ideas to help you get started and stay on track:

- Promotion of new Online first articles and/or new issues published online
- Trending news that relates to the journal’s aims and scope or a specific article
- Key industry news
- Feature on journal editor
- Call for papers
- Journal special issues
- Journal/editor/ author awards
- Feedback and photos from conferences / seminars you have attended – this could include a small write-up and recap of panel discussions, receptions, conversations with notable professionals in the industry, etc.
- New features on SJO that you want to promote for your journal (for example: Journal of _____ is now mobile! Check out your favorite articles or view table of contents from your mobile device.)
- Media hits that feature articles from your journal or the editor/board
- Press release content that SAGE/the society has released on behalf of your journal
- Interviews with authors, editors or society members

14. Using hashags to increase the discoverability of your posts

When posting updates to Facebook, add hashtags to key word or phrases. Any word or phrase that is added as a hashtag automatically becomes clickable. When a hashtag is included in a post, clicking on it will pop out a feed that aggregates others posts that have been tagged with the same phrase. This will make it easier to find what other people are saying about specific topics and events, something that people have typically gone to Twitter to do over Facebook.

15. Track and Analyze Your Page Activity

On your page, locate the “Insights” link in your left navigation. Insights gives you access to the admin and stats areas of your page. You can see recent page activity, how many fans you have, how many people clicked on each link, where your fans are located, and more.



Guidelines for those adding and engaging with content

1. Be transparent at all times.

If you are communicating about the society or your institution, you should identify yourself and your role (if this isn't clear) when you are commenting on posts or adding content. Be aware of your association with your society or institution in online social networks. If you identify yourself as a society member, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with others in academia or research.

2. Understand the risk.

Individuals are personally responsible for the content they publish on Facebook, blogs, wikis or any other form of user-generated media. In essence, you comment (or post on the sites of others) at your own risk. Outside parties actually can pursue legal action against you (not your organization) for postings. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time.

Engaging with your audience and/or members

1. Dialogue must be real – not just rehashed PR/marketing speak

When you are writing for social media, don't drop in copy from your brochure, press release or similar: write something meaningful; respond to the dialogue that is on the site; post information that will be of genuine interest to others.

2. Engage in dialogue

Social media is reciprocal. Don't just broadcast a message: participate in genuine dialogue with others online.

3. Represent your society.

Respect these online channels and take the same care that you would with any other communication, e.g. an email, newsletter or other society communication.

4. Working with the media.

Social media comments may generate media coverage. Agree with your society or PR Manager, prior to beginning posts, how you will deal with media enquiries about a related blog posting or requests information of any kind.

5. Regular communication

A site/page which looks redundant or where you are not responding to online questions/comments will cause frustration within the community it has built. By the very nature of social media, this can result in the frustrations being aired in the public domain, leading to negative publicity. Before a site is launched it is imperative that all involved understand the level of commitment they will need to make to develop and grow the community.

Responding to comments about your society on social media sites

Prior to setting up a Facebook page the society or editorial team should determine who will reply to comments on your social media site. In most circumstances the person who owns or posts comments to your Facebook account will be the person who replies.

However, should you come across negative comments about your society, it is important to know how to respond.

If you decide to delete a post or a fan, explain why.

Your members will understand that healthy discussion needs some moderation; provide a short list of reasons why comments may be deleted from the page. General language is fine, something like, "comments that are off-topic, offensive or inappropriate".

Learn more about responding to negative comments.

GOOD LUCK!

