SFS Social Media Strategy and Usage Guidelines

Social media provides an opportunity for SFS to tell our story, engage with members and interested audiences, and reach communication goals.

SFS Social Media accounts are part of our communication "toolbox", along with our print publications and website, etc. These tools should be integrated and aligned with the SFS Strategic Plan, including specific goals and objectives.

Social Media Goals:
1. Engage our members
    a. Provide information that will help them in their work (student or professional)
    b. Provide a forum for discussion of Society issues or topics of member interest (remember – social media was designed to be <u>social</u>)
    c. Promote membership renewal
2. Attract new members
3. Share freshwater science news and ideas with our members and followers interested in freshwater science. (We reach well beyond our membership via our Twitter account, for example.)
4. Generate awareness of SFS

Social Media Objectives:
These should connect directly to the goals. What metrics will indicate whether our social media efforts are successful? That we are meeting our goals? How will we collect these data (ex. Twitter analytics)
1. Facebook frequency: 1 post per week, on average
2. Twitter frequency: 3 posts per week
3. Demonstrable increase in number of followers on social media accounts
4. Number of science-based posts from our accounts
5. Rate of engagement (likes/shares/clicks) with our posts
    o What posts are getting the most engagement? Learn what works (type of content, when it was posted, etc.) and build upon it.
6. Assist with sharing Freshwater Science journal articles
7. All other new communications from the Society have been shared (e.g., newsletters, podcasts, elections…)
8. Number of users engaging with social media during the annual meeting
9. Number of substantive posts from our account during the annual meeting
10. Links/references to SFS Social Media accounts appear on all Society publications

11. Profile page for each SFS social media account is interesting and engaging (e.g., great graphics, easy to navigate) and includes accurate and up-to-date information

Content Guidelines

Examples of appropriate content:
1. Newly published articles in Freshwater Science
2. Other new publications (articles, books, videos – peer-reviewed or not) "of interest to Society members" – our website describes our membership as "interested in a wide range of various scientific endeavors including: environmental impact assessments; ecology and taxonomy of microbes, algae, invertebrates, and fish; carbon and nutrient dynamics; watershed dynamics; hydrology and geomorphology; conservation and restoration."
3. Society news and announcements (e.g., elections, newsletters, membership renewal reminders)
4. Annual conference updates leading up to the conference, and conference "happenings" during the conference (talk/poster highlights, conference events, logistical information)
5. Sharing posts by members or other organizations that meet the above criteria is encouraged; they are a good source of new content and sharing encourages cross-promotion
6. As a general rule, we avoid posting anything politically-related unless channeled through Policy Committee and/or ExComm/Leadership.

Structure and Frequency of Posts
1. Frequency/Timing: 3 posts/week on Twitter; 1 post/week on Facebook; be thoughtful about the times of day/week that posts appear
2. Facebook posts should be brief because they automatically post to Twitter; otherwise they will be cut off. Twitter currently limits posts to 140 characters. If your Facebook post is longer, Twitter will automatically link to the original Facebook post.
3. Include visual content (pictures, video) when possible and appropriate
4. Include a link when possible and appropriate
5. Check that what you post on Twitter hasn't been *recently* posted by another PIP member on Twitter or Facebook. You can see all of our posts and retweets here: https://twitter.com/#!/BenthosNews
6. Include hashtags when appropriate to help users find information. For example, posts relating to the Annual Conference should include the official hashtag (e.g., #2016SFS)

Responsibility Guidelines

1. While all posts from Society social media accounts must be kept professional, appropriate humor or emotion (e.g., expressing excitement about a new discovery; happily congratulating a member on a prestigious award) is acceptable and encouraged.
2. The Public Information and Publicity Committee will authorize select individuals to post on behalf of the Society. These guidelines will be provided to these individuals in advance. Individuals authorized to post must adhere to these guidelines when posting on behalf of the Society.
3. Responding to questions: First see if you can answer questions posted publicly to any of our social media accounts by directing poster to appropriate page on our website (or other site, if appropriate). If this is not the case, provide the poster with contact information for the appropriate committee member, editor, etc.
4. Dealing with potentially controversial posts/conversation topics: Approach appropriate committee chair (& cc PIP chairs) with the issue/content of post outside of social media. Wait for agreed-upon response before posting publically.
5. If your connection to SFS is apparent in public communication in social media, make it clear when you are speaking for yourself and not on behalf of the Society. If you like, you may add a disclaimer on personal posts such as, "views expressed on my personal account are my own and do not reflect the views of the Society of Freshwater Science".
6. Keep in mind that if you tag @BenthosNews in your personal account, we (PIP) will have to respond. This requires PIP members figuring out appropriate responses to potentially controversial or political posts. PIP may not have the authority to immediately respond on behalf of SFS.

References for more details and ideas:

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Social Samosa. 2013. Best practices in social media for NGOs [Report]. SlideShare. http://www.slideshare.net/SocialSamosa/best-practices-in-social-media-for-ngos-report

Society of Gynecologic Oncology. 2016. Social Media Policies and Procedures. https://www.sgo.org/social-media/social-media-policy-and-procedures/