

Social Media: Primary Channels, Pros and Cons

Primary Social Media Tools

Facebook

- For conversation (two-way communication)
- Most widely used social media tool

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad reach (many users, all ages) • Can 'push' info AND start discussions • Multiple kinds of content, including events • Can harness student enthusiasm to promote events • Educate and engage the community on a specific topic or issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes time to construct appropriate posts (tone and content should try to engage interaction) • Moderation needed (users expect ability to post) • News feed settings can hide posts that aren't heavily liked • People have to find the page before they can 'like' it (lack of awareness) • Potential resistance from students to be included in content (photos, videos) to be posted

Twitter

- Primarily for one-way, outbound communication
- Real-time information

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad reach (many users, all ages) • Can 'push' info AND start discussions • Multiple kinds of content, including events • Can harness student enthusiasm to promote events • Educate and engage the community on a specific topic or issue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes time to construct appropriate posts (tone and content should try to engage interaction) • Moderation needed (users expect ability to post) • News feed settings can hide posts that aren't heavily liked • People have to find the page before they can 'like' it (lack of awareness) • Potential resistance from students to be included in content (photos, videos) to be posted

LinkedIn

- Primarily for connection/communities
- Professional networking

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can ‘push’ info (via ‘updates’) • Easy to create niche, serious, substantive discussions • Ideal for private groups for student-alum mentoring, alum networking • Favored by alumni in sciences and business 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not a primary tool for undergrads • Not as popular with alums in humanities and arts • Must monitor and direct discussions

YouTube

- Primarily for one-way, outbound communication
- Video

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little monitoring required (except spam) • Video increasingly popular • Complements other channels (embed in Facebook) • Can create collection of favorite videos (don’t have to create them all) • Metrics more specific (number of views) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expectation of at least a few original videos • Not ideal for broadcasting critical information • Feedback rare

If You Decide to Move Forward

- Do a competitive analysis
 - Google search “facebook.com english department” (or other department/program of choice)
 - What do they post? How often? How many likes/comments?
 - Is there true engagement, or is the conversation one-sided?
- Set realistic goals
- Create a weekly planning calendar
 - Create two weeks of posts as a test
- Channel should be “owned” by department / program:
 - Staff and chair/director should have admin rights
 - Selectively enable students to help admin, to admin/promote events

Which tool is best suited for which content?

	Text	Links	Photos	Video
Facebook	X	X	X	X
Twitter	X	X		
LinkedIn	X	X		
YouTube				X

Examples of Posts/Tweets

Facebook

Prompt engagement with a question:



Northwestern University

As you can see in this before-and-after shot, it's been a wacky weather day on the Evanston campus, with sunshine followed by gray skies and heavy snow/sleet followed by more sunshine. Time to break out the winter coats! What's the weirdest weather you've experienced at Northwestern?

November 10, 2011



Photo of the Day

Like · Comment · Share · November 10 at 2:48pm ·

94 people like this.

View all 37 comments

31 shares

Write a comment...

Take a poll to gauge event success:



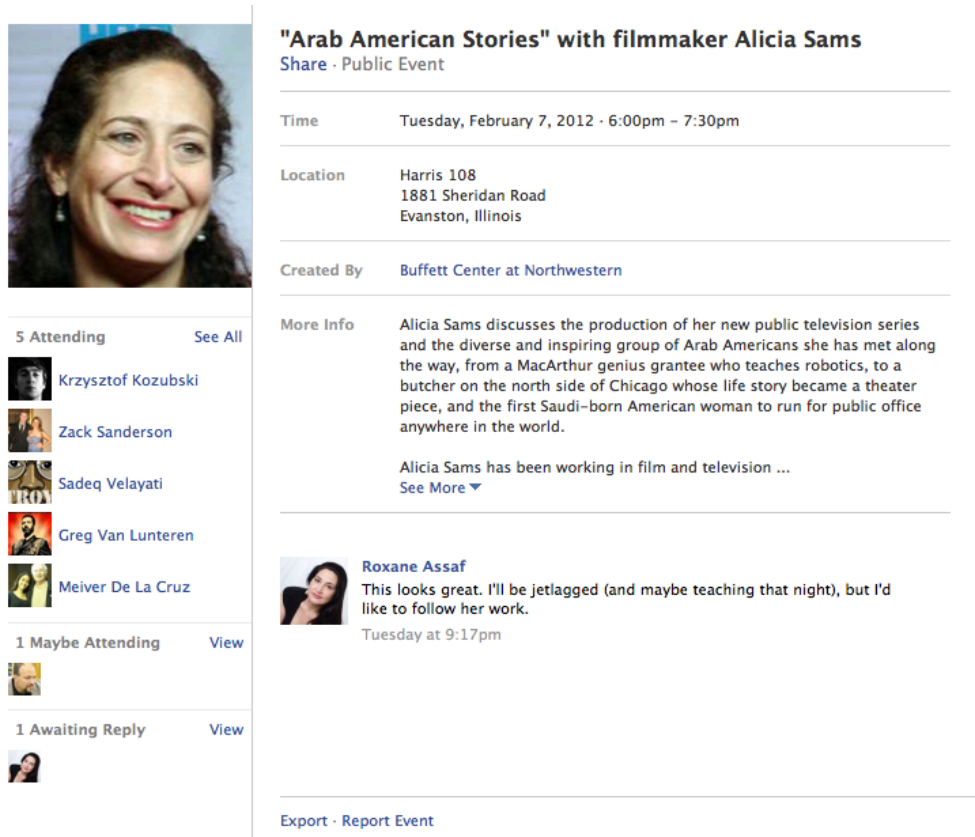
Buffett Center at Northwestern asked: Which talk was your favorite?

- Scott Carney on Organ Trafficking ...
- Richard Haass on the Arab Spring ...
- Doug Saunders on Arrival Cities ...

[3 More...](#)

Share · 29 · November 18 at 8:51am

Create an event that followers can RSVP for:



"Arab American Stories" with filmmaker Alicia Sams
Share · Public Event

Time Tuesday, February 7, 2012 · 6:00pm – 7:30pm

Location Harris 108
1881 Sheridan Road
Evanston, Illinois

Created By Buffett Center at Northwestern

More Info Alicia Sams discusses the production of her new public television series and the diverse and inspiring group of Arab Americans she has met along the way, from a MacArthur genius grantee who teaches robotics, to a butcher on the north side of Chicago whose life story became a theater piece, and the first Saudi-born American woman to run for public office anywhere in the world.

Alicia Sams has been working in film and television ...
[See More](#)

Roxane Assaf
This looks great. I'll be jetlagged (and maybe teaching that night), but I'd like to follow her work.
Tuesday at 9:17pm

Export · Report Event

(The Buffett Center Facebook page)

Create a photo album to share an event recap:

Akeel Bilgrami and Charles Taylor, moderated by Cristina Lafont

By Department of Philosophy, Northwestern University (Albums) · Updated about 3 weeks ago · Taken at Northwestern University



Discussion with Akeel Bilgrami and Charles Taylor, moderated by Cristina Lafont and Hosted by the School of Communication Studies, October 20, 2011.

Like · Share

Twitter

Basic (using shortened links):

nueecs EECS at NU
Aqualab (NU EECS) research in GigaOm story: Who pays for your P2P habit? ISPs or you? bit.ly/rbMwfm
17 Aug ☆ Favorite ↻ Retweet ↩ Reply

More advanced (hashtags and @ mentions)

Northwesternmag Northwestern mag
#Northwestern senior and @happinessclubnu prez Alex Wilson has one mission: make people smile bit.ly/v1U1iN
1 hour ago ☆ Favorite ↻ Retweet ↩ Reply

NU_MSLOC Northwestern MSLOC
5 yrs from now: What will have biggest impact on org learning & change thinking? Discuss on LinkedIn bit.ly/qNaN1Y #HR #orgdev
22 hours ago ☆ Favorite ↻ Retweet ↩ Reply

Social Media Programming Suggestions

- Tone and content should be:
 - Friendly
 - Engaging, posing questions and other conversation-starters
 - Professional
- What you (and your followers) post reflects on:
 - Department/program
 - Weinberg College
 - Northwestern University
- Build relationships:
 - 'Like' related pages (Facebook)
 - Retweet others' comments (Twitter)
 - Mark videos as 'Favorites' (YouTube)