



ECS SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Overview

Social media is one of the many communication methods used by Evangelical Christian School to share information, engage with our audiences and create a sense of community among our community. This channel, unlike most others, provides the opportunity for instantaneous, two-way communication with prospective students, current students, faculty, staff, alumni, parents of prospective and current students, media and other audiences. Social media allows ECS not only to share information, but also to raise awareness of our mission and values and to build support within our local and national communities.

These social media guidelines include best practices and recommendations intended to provide helpful direction to ECS groups using social media as a tool for marketing, public relations, crisis communication and student relation purposes. If your group wants to use social media, we encourage you to do so responsibly.

Managing Accounts

There are a number of social media tools and various ways to work with them to maximize your digital presence. Before creating an account for your group, you should do the following:

- Evaluate your goals and objectives
- Determine the needs of your audience
- Decide if content creation and maintenance will be feasible
- Have a clear plan that establishes objectives and desired outcomes.

Once the above guidelines have been met, you must receive approval to create the new group from the Director of Marketing.

Remember: every social media account needs a coordinator to manage the content and monitor engagement.

Previously established social media accounts may need to be reviewed and evaluated. Accounts that have been inactive for three or more months and/or accounts with very few followers and little engagement should be closed.

The ECS Brand

Visual identity

Social media account coordinators should follow ECS brand standards manual to ensure the school maintains a strong, unified visual identity online. This includes logos and/or text for avatars, thumbnails and other photos. Images for backgrounds, avatars and covers should be in good taste and representative of the school.

Official ECS Accounts

ECS-driven social media accounts should be easily identifiable as an official channel of the school. Including this identification in the “About” section, using the appropriate ECS logo when applicable, and including a link to the ECS website will help convey this image. Please contact the Director of Marketing for appropriate logos and links.

Best Practices

Listen, assess, adjust

A strength of social media is that you receive feedback from your audience, providing insight on how to improve your approach. Listen to that feedback, and use it to make adjustments as necessary.

Publish content via social media on a regular basis

While it's not necessary to publish every day, your audience should see that someone is consistently engaging and attending the information on the social channel. Provide accurate information, keeping in mind that content should always be relevant to your audience. Active accounts should have a minimum of 1 post per week.

Be prepared to respond to questions or feedback shared through your social channel

When you answer in a public setting, many people may read that answer. If the information you are providing is sensitive or valid only for the individual being addressed, you may need to make that clear in your response or provide them with a more direct way to contact you (email or phone).

Assume everything you share is public

The privacy policies of third party websites are outside of ECS's control and subject to change. In addition, you are interacting with other people whose notions of privacy may differ from yours - possibly resulting in something you thought was a private communication becoming public.

Recognize that social media is not about control

You can only control what you say through your social channels – but you cannot control how people interpret your message, how they will react, or what they will communicate to others through these channels about your organization. Focus on telling your story honestly and providing accurate, timely information that is relevant to your audience.

Please know that we realize we cannot legally or physically bar anyone from creating ECS accounts, but we ask for your cooperation in this endeavor. Our ECS name represents our Lord, our mission, our values, our community and our reputation. We desire to protect it whenever it is possible to do so. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact our Director of Marketing.

This policy was adapted from the University of Alabama's Division of Strategic Communications' Social Media Guidelines.