

CAMPAIGN 2017

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE



CAMPAIGN HQ CONTACTS - TOPIC GOES HERE

Sean Topham - Digital Advisor
Digital & Social Media Advice
phone 0800 628 72789 (0800 NAT PARTY)
mobile
email _____

Ben Guerin - Digital Advisor
Digital & Social Media Advice

email _____

Stuart Mullin - Nationwide Campaign Coordinator
General Candidate Support
phone 0800 628 72789 (0800 NAT PARTY)

email _____

Clark Hennessy - Campaign Communications Manager
Media & Communications Issues
phone 0800 628 72789 (0800 NAT PARTY)

email _____

While there is no substitute for traditional, on-the-ground campaigning during an election, every candidate running for parliament needs to have a social media presence that is carefully managed, authentic, engaging and professional.

Choose a volunteer who is technically savvy and can handle the day to day, smaller tasks for you that would otherwise eat into your campaigning time.

THE RISKS

The front page test: if the content you are going to post would end up on the front page of the NZ Herald, don't post it. It can be damaging to you, other candidates and the party as a whole.



Deleted does not mean gone: anything posted on the internet that is deleted can be easily found again by tech-smart journalists and individuals, either through caches of tweets or screenshots of your Facebook. Remember the front page test. Digital brand = personal brand: Your online presence is an extension of yourself and contributes to your image and brand, so think carefully about what you post and how it reflects on you.

SHARING

Share content (where relevant and appropriate to your electorate) from National's or the Prime Minister's Facebook or Twitter to spread the party vote message e.g. it is not relevant to share a post about new funding for a school in Auckland Central if you are based in Dunedin. Sometimes Campaign HQ will email some posts to be shared.

MANAGING FACEBOOK

Find a volunteer who can and will help run your accounts. They will save you time and give you advice.

Remember to keep your content interesting and engaging. Posts with more likes, shares and comments are more likely to be shown to a larger audience. Likewise, if a post does not receive much engagement, fewer people will see it.

Once something is posted, even if it is deleted afterwards, it is never really gone. If your content ends up on a front page, or if it's low quality content, it reflects badly on you and your image.

Local and national journalists will be watching out for any missteps.



WHO ARE YOUR AUDIENCE?

The majority of your Facebook 'likes' will be your supporters / National supporters. When they engage with content it can appear in the news feeds of their friends and family, even if they are not connected to your page. So, your audience is your base with an end goal of advocacy for you and the party.

Most Facebook users tend to be younger, under 40, although there is a growing portion of 40-65+ year olds on the site as well.

HOW OFTEN TO POST

A smaller volume of quality posts is better than a large volume of low quality posts. Good posts stay in people's news feeds for longer and generate more discussion, the opposite is true for low quality posts.

Post at least four times a week, but no more than three times a day.

HOW TO MAKE GREAT, ENGAGING POSTS

Be social. Use sincere and relaxed language where appropriate. Don't swear. Keep it short and simple. Your updates should be no longer than what you would write in a bullet point. For lengthier communication, link to the source instead (i.e. press release or opinion piece)

Variety of content is important - a single strong image, an album of photos, a video, a link to an article or the national.org.nz web-site, a short text status or a long text status all contribute to an interesting social media presence.

Pictures make posts visually engaging. Aim to get good quality images - use a smart phone or digital camera. Show you are busy, hard working, accessible and approachable.

Don't post for the sake of it. As outlined previously, if your content is not engaging, less people would see it, and it is unhelpful.

Funny not nasty. Avoid attacking opposition MPs if you are a new candidate. If you are a sitting MP, be funny, factual and not nasty.

Never copy and paste press releases. These are really only use-ful for journalists - no one enjoys reading blocks of text. Link to it instead, and have a short caption which summarises the content of it in your own voice.

Have a mixture of personal and shared content. You should share content from the party page, but also have posts from you, and about you.



When posting videos, upload the file directly to your page when possible (rather than YouTube).

Avoid repetitive or "boring" language in both your captioning and when speaking in the video itself i.e. "it was great to see", "today I announced", "it was great to be", "today I visited" etc. Here are some examples of good, engaging video updates.

Chris Bishop tries the "Cool As Summer Refresher Drink Challenge" https://www.facebook.com/pg/ChrisBishopMP/videos/?ref=page_internal

Hon Judith Collins displays the kids toys made by prisoners at the Otago Corrections Facility https://www.facebook.com/pg/judithcollinsmp/videos/?ref=page_internal

See what works. Your public Facebook page will have an insights manager where you can see which posts were the most engaging. If you need to, get your volunteer to help.



19/10/2016 18:35	 Congratulations to Parmjeet Parmar MP on being selected to con			406	
19/10/2016 06:59	 It was an awesome night at Air New Zealand's annual parliamenta			151	
17/10/2016 17:30	 Check out this collaboration vide o from Le Va and The University			3.3K	

ENGAGING WITH COMMENTS

Most posts will get comments, some of which you may wish to reply to. Choose carefully what to reply to. Well-timed and well-thought out replies can lift engagement.

Do not delete comments just because they are negative. Facebook is a social medium where people are free to express their views. Usually, your supporters will counter their comments anyway. Don't take comments personally, and never be reactive.

All comments increase engagement which will increase the number of people who will see your posts. However, you should delete comments if they are grossly offensive, spam, or threaten others.

BUILDING PAGE LIKES

Page likes are equivalent to a subscription to your page content (although content is not always seen).

Build your likes by inviting friends to like your page, ask your campaign team to invite their friends, and continue to publish engaging content.

When people share your content it is a great way to gain new likes, as your posts and page are shared with new people. Encourage your campaign team to share your best posts.

You can advertise for page likes however remember that:

Facebook ads must be authorised.
They are election expenses if used in the last three months.
They must be approved by Campaign HQ

Do not link your Twitter and Facebook accounts. They are different mediums with different purposes and audiences.

MANAGING TWITTER

Twitter is a popular social media platform with a much smaller, less mainstream audience than Facebook. Do not expect to get your content in front of swing voters.

Twitter is a real time medium, content is published (usually chronologically) so subsequent tweets by yourself or others will push your posts further down in the newsfeed, so each tweet has a short lifespan. However, it can be useful to get your message out to local journalists.

Twitter is a high risk medium. Only create a Twitter profile if you are a confident social media user. Since it is so easy for journalists and opponents to follow you, a lapse in judgement or even a typo can land you in trouble.

Unlike Facebook, it is appropriate to tweet multiple times a day. Tweet when you have something you want to get out to your audience. Do not tweet for tweeting's sake.

Keep your tweets brief. You only have 140 characters to work with.

Do not:

Express personal opinions about policy. Policy tweets should be on message, when they are not, it is a risk to the party and your personal brand. Many journalists would love a scoop about a candidate disagreeing with their party.

Click on links if you are unsure of their source. There are many spammers on Twitter, and clicking on the wrong link could lead to your account getting compromised.

The only time you should ever type in your Twitter password is to log in.

Do not link your Facebook and Twitter accounts.

BUILDING FOLLOWERS

Good content is often rewarded with higher engagement. Like any social media platform, good content is more likely to be shared. When someone retweets you, they place your content in their own feed and in front of people who don't already follow you.

Follow and retweet others – they will get a notification that you have followed them and they will be more likely to follow back. Likewise, engaging with others content (where that adheres to the front page rule) is also a way to keep fresh content in your own feed and get your name into the news feeds of other Twitter users.

Someone's Twitter is still a personal thing, so you need to be discerning about following or engaging with someone, but if you know the person or they are a stakeholder in your community, engaging with them is completely appropriate.

MANAGING INSTAGRAM

Instagram, with over 640,000 users in New Zealand alone, is a unique social media platform to that can be used to promote your personal brand and can be used as an advocacy campaign tool for the party vote as well. Users post either pictures or videos from their phones or tablets to their followers (as with Facebook and Twitter, a follow = a subscription) that can also be viewed by other people, dependent on privacy settings, even if they do not follow that person.

An Instagram account is easy to manage and is something that a volunteer could help keep running.

One drawback: Instagram is a great social media platform to use as a campaign tool, but there is only so much it can do. While the pictures you upload will do most of the talking, it can be difficult to explain policy measures in more detail in the captions. However, you can also switch your Instagram account to "business" mode, which means you can have a hot link to your contact information – e.g. e-mail or phone number. Another useful aspect is access to insights, similar to Facebook, where you can see which posts were popular.

Apart from users liking photos, engagement is generally lower and more passive on Instagram posts.

WHEN AND WHAT TO POST

A smaller volume of quality posts is better than a large volume of low quality posts. Post at least three times per week, but avoid posting more than twice a day. Keep captions brief, creative, interesting, and engaging. Social media is a more informal environment and you can consider using emoji icons where appropriate e.g. a tick at the end of a sentence talking about voting or a smiley face.

Use it to post photos of your day to day activities and campaigning - e.g. "Checking out _____ school in _____ today with @billenglishpm - great to meet with some of our incredible local teachers and their students!" or "I really enjoyed catching up with _____ with at the public meeting this evening in _____, talking about what matters to voters. One big of the big issues that came up was around crime, and our plan to tackle it was well received. You can read more about it here [LINK]"

Stay away from generic opening lines to captions e.g. "It was great to see...", "Good to be here with...." "Today I announced....".

In terms of engaging with comments, refer to the guidelines for Facebook.

SNAPCHAT

At this time, it is recommended that MPs and candidates avoid using the Snapchat app as a public social media platform.

SETTING UP YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

How to create a public Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/help/104002523024878>

To REPLY to a comment: click onto the comment and enter text into the "write a reply" box and press Enter on your keyboard when finished.

To SHARE a post to your public Facebook page: click on the arrow at the bottom of the post that says "Share". Select "Share..." and then "Share on a page you manage". You can then proceed to caption the post if you wish.

To hide or delete comments, click on the arrow to the right and select the option you wish.

How to create a Twitter profile: <https://twitter.com/signup?lang=en>

To COMPOSE a Tweet, click on the "Tweet" button in the top righthand corner of the screen. You can add pictures, polls and .GIFs to your tweet as well.

To LIKE a Tweet, click or tap on the heart icon underneath it.

To RETWEET a Tweet, click or tap on the clockwise arrows underneath it.

To REPLY to a Tweet, click or tap on the arrow underneath it, and compose your tweet.

You can follow users by going to their accounts and selecting "follow".

Download Instagram for your phone:

<https://itunes.apple.com/nz/app/instagram/id389801252?mt=8> (iOS/ Apple)

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.instagram.android&hl=en> (Android)

To POST a picture, tap on the " + " icon at the bottom of the screen, and choose to either take a picture or video from your phone from with-in the app, or choose from your existing photos and videos. You can then add a caption to your post, and select a location to include if you wish.

To reply to people's comments on your posts, tap "view X comment(s)" and select "reply" to the comment you wish to reply to.