SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE
FOR ALUMNI VOLUNTEERS

Social media is about conversations, community, and building relationships.
It is a tool to connect with fellow staff, students, alumni, and other stakeholders. The purpose of this guide is to share some strategies and highlight best practices for the use of social media.

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REPRESENTING THE UNIVERSITY

Please remember that you are representing the University of Waterloo and the Office of Advancement with each post. Consider the professionalism of your content, whether it meets Waterloo's ethical standards, and who you publicly endorse. Please avoid endorsing organizations that are unrelated to your volunteer role with Waterloo or Waterloo Alumni. If you have any questions, please refer to the [Volunteer Code of Conduct](#) and the [Advancement Volunteer Confidentiality and Ethics Agreement](#).

BEST PRACTICES

- **Be conversational:** Write as if you were speaking to a friend. Talk with them, not at them.
- **Focus on your reader:** Ask readers for opinions, feedback (positive and negative) and preferences; then use what they tell you.
- **Keep it short:** Write in bite-sized chunks.
- **Be transparent:** Be honest about your identity! Identify yourself as a Waterloo volunteer or ambassador.
- **Be accurate:** Make sure that you have all the facts before you post.
- **Be respectful:** You are more likely to achieve your goals if you are constructive and respectful while discussing a bad experience or when disagreeing.
- **Think before you post:** If you have any questions about the appropriateness of certain topics in your role representing the university, ask the Alumni Relations Volunteer Engagement team before posting.
- **Engage your readers:** Ask yourself why someone should care about your content before you post it. Focus on what you consider the most interesting aspect of the topic.
- **Maintain confidentiality:** Do not post confidential or proprietary information about Waterloo's students, alumni or employees. Use good ethical judgment and follow the [University policies](#).

WATERLOO ALUMNI

- **Regular posts:** It is important to post regularly! If you are unsure about the amount of content you have, the Alumni Relations team would be happy to help you out.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

As with any form of communication, please ensure you comply with relevant University policies. If you want to review these policies, here are the links:

- Policy 33: Ethical Behaviour
- Policy 46: Information Management
- Policy 66: Use of University Resources and Affiliation
- Policy 73: Intellectual Property Rights

WATERLOO PLATFORMS AND ACCOUNTS

For a full list of Waterloo's social media accounts visit the University's social media page.

Platform	Details
LinkedIn	LinkedIn is a professional online environment that prioritizes engagement over the number of followers. The objective of your content should be to spark conversations and develop meaningful, intriguing connections with your audience. Original content is valued over re-shared content and web links. Articles and opportunities are often well-received on LinkedIn. • Group members can post relevant content, send direct messages, and build their networks • There are 20,000+ LinkedIn members in the main Waterloo group. Having your group listed as a subgroup of the main group will develop traction
Facebook	Similar to LinkedIn, Facebook priorities engagement over the number of followers and content is shared with the goal of starting a conversation. It is important to post regularly on a Facebook page, at least once every week is a good goal. To generate more content, follow other University of Waterloo pages and re-share their posts. • Group members can send direct messages to each other • This is a great space to share photos from events by creating albums
Twitter	Twitter is a casual and fun social platform that is great for contests, announcements, and "real time" updates during events. The key to using Twitter is to be short and sweet. Hashtags are used to connect to larger initiatives, and photos increase views on your posts. The more you post, the better – tweeting regularly is essential to your account's success. If you are not sure that you have enough content: you can follow the main University accounts and retweet their relevant posts.

STARTING A NEW SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNT

Before starting a new account on behalf of the university, please reach out to the Alumni Relations Volunteer Engagement team! Our team is here to support you with your setup, and get you started with content development.

We encourage volunteers to connect with an Alumni Relations staff member. A staff member will be the owner or manager of the new account, group, subgroup, or page. This eliminates confusion between volunteer transitions. Alumni Relations will support the account as needed, staff will not post content without volunteer consent.

Some things to keep in mind:

- What are your goals?
- How can social media further enhance and compliment your existing content and initiatives?
- Volunteers can build from our main University accounts by creating regional accounts. Our main accounts will build traction towards your sub-accounts!

If you have suggestions for new platforms, including platforms specific to your region, please connect with the Alumni Relations team!

CONTENT MANAGEMENT

Create a social media schedule.

- LinkedIn and Facebook*:* aim to post a minimum of twice a month.
- Twitter: the more the better! Daily or even multiple daily posts make a successful account.

 Content ideas:

- Event information
- Professional development
- Regional information
- University information
- [Waterloo News](#)
- Share content from the main University accounts or the [Alumni website](#)
- Contribute to interesting discussions on social media that are local to the area you are representing, and encourage others in your group to do the same
- Review the [Campus Resources](#) links on the Volunteer Hub

Note: Before sharing posts with photos of people, ask for their permission (unless you already have previous permission from event plans, or the image is covered by Creative Commons). Refer to [Policy 73: Intellectual Property Rights](#) for more details.

IMAGES

Images include logos, avatars, profile photos, cover photos, etc. It is important that logos and profile photos on your social media accounts are consistent, to authenticate your platform as an official group of the University of Waterloo! Use images that align with and enhance your messaging.

WATERLOO ALUMNI

Looking for photos? Email alumnirelationscoop@uwaterloo.ca with a description of what you are looking for. The co-op student will respond with any resources available that match your request. Volunteers can also find great images on this website.

WHO TO FOLLOW AND ADD

Following key social media accounts online is important for receiving information you can use to build momentum in conversations about the University.

1. **Featured alumni:** Follow guest speakers, alumni that attend your events, council members, and others you see featured in the media or by the University.
2. **Partners and collaborators:** Keep an eye out for donors and sponsors who contribute to your events, companies affiliated with our (featured) alumni, and organizations and groups that are involved with us.
3. **UWaterloo alumni:** We have a variety of social media accounts on different platforms that are specifically for Waterloo alumni. Find a full listing here.

USEFUL RESOURCES

The University of Waterloo's brand websites contain many useful downloads and templates. Volunteers can create content that is professional and on-brand by using the downloads found here:

- Downloads and Resources
- Social Media Guidelines

Canva is a free platform that is easy to use. You can create fantastic content for social media using Canva. Consider creating a shared account for your volunteer team so that everyone can access the same files.

WATERLOO ALUMNI