



# University of Mobile Social Media Guidelines

Updated July 2020

Adapted from New York University's Social Media Style Guide and Samford University's Social Media Standards

**Purpose:**

In our strategic approach to social media management, we seek to feature content from across the university on our flagship social media accounts. This is beneficial for many reasons. First, it provides the largest audience for quality content. A fragmented approach yields less engagement and a narrow reach. University of Mobile has a flagship presence on four social media platforms with over 26,000 followers.

This streamlined approach to social media is not only more impactful, but it is more efficient. Social media management is 24/7 job and limiting this responsibility to a designated group of colleagues allows for a more concentrated use of resources in this important area of marketing and communication.

The Office for Marketing and Public Relations has developed these account requirements to assist the university community in the safe, legal and effective use of social media and to protect users' personal and professional reputations and the reputation of the university.

All content posted should be consistent with the university's mission and Christ-centered values. Any social media accounts featuring the name of University of Mobile or any of our schools, teams or programs are subject to the requirements outlined here. Existing accounts will be periodically reviewed to ensure that they adhere to these requirements. Inactive accounts, or accounts that do not adhere to the guidelines will be closed.

Because social media evolves constantly, these guidelines are subject to ongoing review and updates.

## Account Requirements:

1. All official social media accounts featuring the name University of Mobile, a university mark or any of our schools, teams or programs must submit all login information to the Office for Marketing and Public Relations.
2. Employees or those requesting new accounts that will feature the university's name or official logo must demonstrate a significant need to communicate outside of the primary accounts. Request for new accounts can be submitted to the Social Media Specialist, Andrew Felts at [afelts@umobile.edu](mailto:afelts@umobile.edu).
3. Accounts must be managed by a university employee. Administrative access will be terminated upon the employee's termination, voluntary leave or assignment to another job.
4. A strategy meeting with the social media manager is required prior to creating a new account or transitioning the management of an existing account to a new account manager.
5. All accounts must be linked to a university email account, rather than a personal account. (ex: [jdoe@umobile.edu](mailto:jdoe@umobile.edu) rather than [jdoe@gmail.com](mailto:jdoe@gmail.com))
6. The Office for Marketing & PR must have administrative access to ALL accounts associated with the University of Mobile. The Sports Information Director must have administrative access to ALL accounts associated with University of Mobile athletics.
7. All university of Mobile affiliated social media accounts must follow the approved account naming structure:
  - a. On Facebook, *University of Mobile* must be at the beginning of the page name. (ex: University of Mobile - Alabama School of the Arts)
  - b. On Instagram and Twitter, your handles should match. (ie: @umobilerams) The display name should include *University of Mobile* if the character limit allows. If the character limit restricts you, please use UMobile. (ie: UMobile College of Health Professions)
  - c. When creating an account handle, *do not* use "UofM[Department]."
  - d. The "about" or "bio" section of your account *must* include "The official account of University of Mobile's..."
8. Content on all owned social media accounts must follow the University of Mobile Brand Standards.

## Important Information

- Accounts should be regularly monitored, and engagement should be addressed in a timely manner, which includes oversight throughout the weekend and after business hours. Please respond to any engagement within 24 hours.
- If there are any negative or controversial comments made on an account, **PLEASE** contact your Vice President and the Office for Marketing & PR [afelts@umobile.edu] prior to responding.
- Under **NO** circumstance should you delete or hide a comment until you have notified the Office for Marketing and Public Relations
  - Comment Removal Disclaimer: *For the safety and well-being of our online UM community, we monitor all comments and responses. We will remove anything—across all channels—that does not adhere to our community values. Learn more: umobile.edu/mission*

### Crisis Management

- In the event of a crisis or campus emergency, account managers **must** adhere to the university communication protocol. Messaging during a crisis will first be communicated from the university flagship accounts. If necessary, you may reshare or repost the original message from the flagship accounts.
- In the event of a crisis, **ALL** pre-scheduled messages **MUST** halt.
- Do not craft your own response or message relating to a crisis or campus emergency. **ONLY** use approved messages from the Office for Marketing & PR.

### Style Guide

- Social Media Voice:
  - Who we are: We are higher education for a higher purpose. We are Christ-centered, academically-focused, student-devoted and distinctively-driven.
  - Ownership of Post: All messages posted on all central media platforms are posted in the character of the university and its departments. We do not attach names or initials to post, only private messages.
  - Positivity and Transparency: We present our messages with a positive attitude but are honest and transparent in the information we share.
- For times, use am and pm (lowercase, no periods).
- Write out full words for days of the week (Monday, Tuesday)
- Words we do not use:
  - Dorms (instead use “residence halls”)
  - Major (instead use “course of study”)

### Network Specific Guidelines:

### *Twitter*

- Replace “and” with ampersand (&)
- Include any relevant mentions (@Fox10News)
- Retweet or quote tweets
- Include the university hashtag #BeKnownUM

### *Facebook*

- Use line breaks to format post to be more readable
- Include any relevant mentions (**Fox10News:**)
- When linking an article, delete the text URL from your post and display the link as a preview

### *Instagram*

- Avoid posting links in post. If needed, include link in bio.
- To create space between paragraphs in Instagram captions, hit enter after the final character on the line, without hitting space. For example: Complete the line of text.[Enter]
- Use #BeKnownUM with each post
- Video can be no longer than 1 minute unless posting to IGTV
- No more than 4 photos per post
- **NO GRAPHICS!!!**

## **Best Practices**

**Fill out your profile completely.** Users may visit your Facebook page or Twitter profile before visiting your website. Make sure all the information in your profile is accurate and up to date. Include as much information as you can fit, the most important being your website, telephone number, and a concise description of your department.

**Build your fan base.** As you start to engage with the right individuals and organizations, you naturally begin to build your fan base — it's the organic way of doing things on the social Web. In addition to that, once you've developed a solid presence, part of your fan-, friend-, and follower-growth strategy should include promoting your presence on Social media sites to your current supporter base. You can do this by putting social-media links on your main website and sending e-mail communications to your house file, letting all your supporters know where to find you on the various social-networking sites you participate on.

**Listen to your fans.** Social media provides a great way to listen to what people are saying about your brand. Monitor your Facebook page and Twitter mentions constantly but spend some time searching for what people are saying outside of your pages. Your department may not have the budget to invest in a robust Social media monitoring tool, but there are plenty of free monitoring and listening tools available to you: HootSuite or Buffer

**Create meaningful relationships.** Although it's extremely important to listen to your fans, don't just listen - talk back and engage with them. If a person is asking a question, provide them with an answer in a timely manner. If they are complimenting you, thank them. If they are complaining about you, find ways to resolve the situation for them. Social media allows you to build a relationship with your fans, but you must be willing to engage with them.

**Share useful information and content.** Think of participating on Social media like you think about your website. Would people come back if you failed to update your website with useful information on a regular basis? Doubtful. The same holds true on Social media, so make sure to consistently share great content that's relevant and useful to your fan base. The key is that you become valuable by sharing useful content.

**Be timely.** Social media operates on an immediate schedule. Resolving issues in a timely, reliable manner is a fundamental part of excellent customer support. Don't wait days before answering or responding to posts on your wall or tweets. If you're unsure of the answer or have to work some things out before posting an accurate answer, tell the user that you will get back to them as soon as you have an answer.

**Stay current.** Social media is constantly changing, evolving, and growing. Dedicate some time each week to look over websites and blogs to discover what new practices can be adopted in your accounts.