



## Social media: tips & tricks

### General Do's and Don'ts for Social Media

#### Start small and build up your networks

- Choose two main social media where you would like to be visible. Don't be too active on too many platforms or through too many channels. It is useless to set up a social media account and then not post anything, in fact, it might look worse than not having an account at all!

#### To start with: the website

- The central focus for social media engagement is your website. Having a well organised and up to date website is a key priority.
- For the campaign you can refer to the campaign page on the [Wetlands International website](#). You can tweet and share the blogs we have available on these pages. Just choose the ones that suit you!

#### Investigate the media used by your audience

- Different social media are popular in different parts of the world. You should explore which channels are popular in your own region, while also linking to the global channels.
- Besides the geographic and linguistic differences in popularity of different social media, there are social differences. Some social media are very common in the scientific community; others are used by politicians to keep in touch with their voters.

#### Don't overload people with content

- During the campaign season use the 3 x 3 rule: at least three posts a week, but not more than three posts a day.

#### Make choices about what you aim for, who you aim to reach and how

- Decide who you want to reach, and who the influencers of these groups are.
- Per group decide:
  - Which social media they use;
  - What you want people to do (forwarding to networks, taking part in a solution, signing a petition, joining a discussion or just consuming);
  - What the main message is (connection, fun, uniqueness, importance, etc.);
  - How to include visuals (pictures, infographics, etc.).



## Make time to respond

- You have to be able to deal with the expectations that come with word of mouth marketing; for instance real-time responses. Try to respond to questions or comments within 24 hours.

## Style rules

On social media, communication is more than just posting messages. Some tips:

- Be personal and informal, trigger people, listen to feedback and give opinions on this.
- Never speak anonymously, be a person, and make it clear where you work and what you do.
- Focus on one aspect of the story, don't communicate the complete A-Z picture of an issue.
- Be able to give up some control, let others pick up your message.
- Contribute to content from others.
- Don't simply censor critical comments, but where possible respond in a calm and reasoned way to criticism on your blogs and elsewhere.

Remember: *Everything you post will stay online.*

## Twitter

Twitter is sometimes described as the "SMS of the Internet". The idea is that everyone can share and discover what's happening right now, anywhere in the world. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the author's profile page and delivered to the author's subscribers, known as followers.

Twitter can be used for many purposes, such as:

- Generating buzz, e.g. by spreading news, promoting videos, reading/commenting on a blog article, promoting a publication.
- Inviting people to participate, e.g. in a survey, a petition, a protest etc.
- Keeping people up to date on developments at events.
- Reacting to news or positions by others, welcoming it, adding to it, or criticising it.

For effectively tweeting, follow the following guidelines:

1. Avoid using SMS-style abbreviations e.g. l8r, 2nite
2. Stick to 120 characters. Tweets can be up to 140 characters but only using 120 of those characters will make it easier for others to retweet (share) your message.
3. During events or news releases on issues people are specifically following you for, bring the frequency up a bit and tweet several messages on the same issue – people are following you for your expertise.



4. The style of writing on Twitter is very informal, personal and should be easy to understand and entertaining – avoid robot-like language.
5. Give credit for retweets: One of the things that makes Twitter such a powerful tool is the fact that information placed on the site can quickly go viral. When one person spots a good tweet, they can pass that message on to their own followers, and soon it's spreading right across the Twittersphere and beyond.
6. Make sure the balance between your own tweets and retweets is about 50/50
7. Don't spam: spammers don't survive long on Twitter. They don't build followers either – at least not followers who will actively engage with and spread your message.
8. Follow people who follow you, but be a bit selective so that you are also able to follow others. As your follower list grows, you'll have to start being a little bit choosier about who you follow in return.
9. Don't have Twitter conversations with one person over Twitter – ask if you can take the conversation elsewhere e.g. Twitter allows you to send private messages if you are both following each other.
10. Place a # before a topic word; e.g. #IWC50 #WaterbirdsCount so people can find your tweets.

## Facebook

Facebook is probably the social network with the broadest audience and the most community functionality. Facebook is an excellent way to get the word out to target audiences.

The starting point for a presence on Facebook is creating an organisation page, like the [IWC50 Facebook page](#), which allows other Facebook users to “Like” and follow the information we post about our organisation, including photos, videos, events, and news.

### Some of the features of a Facebook page:

- With Facebook status updates, you can share current activities, along with images and links, with people who have liked your page. You can post about:
  - Birds, flyways, wetlands.
  - Activities you are organising to promote the campaign.
  - Waterbird count activities.
  - Results of your waterbird count activities.
- Facebook Events can be used to promote events, such as a waterbird count. This feature includes a wall for posting discussions, photos, videos, and links. The host can invite their Facebook friends and non-Facebook users to the event.
- Share, Like and Comment: people who have liked your page can participate by sharing, liking or commenting on your posts.
- Photos: upload albums to your page e.g. photos from events.
- Video: you can upload video files and create a YouTube tab.



- Links: share content by posting links to websites, blogs, videos, photos, groups and events on your page.

### **Facebook Do's and don'ts:**

Finding out about all the technical tricks and tools is a matter of doing, some key guidelines include:

- Content is the lifeblood of your page. Messages and other content need to be entertaining and engaging. It is not a replication of your website or newsletter, although elements of these can be used. Facebook is much more interactive.
- Bring personality into your conversations, make it interesting, and provide behind the scenes content.
- Ask questions to spark conversation and activity on your page.
- Limit status updates to one per day.
- When posting news and publications, post a short message with a link to the website.
- Add a Twitter tab to your page.
- Add a YouTube tab to your page.