

Your Guide to Social Media from the ASA

We know that the internet can be a daunting place, so we've prepared some handy hints and tips which we hope will help you ensure that your members and volunteers feel included and well-informed.

Social Media

The main aim of social networks is to build relationships with 'friends' and 'followers' through fresh and engaging content. Used effectively Facebook and Twitter can be springboards to promoting your club and the hard work of your volunteers.

Social media is a great tool to help you engage with the wider volunteering community to not only signpost but inspire people to get involved. Used correctly, it can have a real and positive impact on what we do.

The ASA offers comprehensive advice for clubs using social media on our website:

bit.ly/ank6IB

Hints and Tips!

- Content above all else! Make sure that the content you post is helpful, thought-provoking and inspiring. Add value to what you are posting by linking to relevant articles, photos and other user's content. Give your audience something that they did not already know.
- Be conversational. Talk to your audience like you would talk to real people, keep it simple and flowing. Be open-ended to encourage interaction and then respond.
- Remember, it's a conversation, so keep it real. Transparency and openness are key.
- Post frequently but aim for quality not quantity. Give your audience a reason to follow you by posting information relevant to them and always try to include imagery and links where possible.
- Keep your tone of voice friendly and supportive.
- Don't be 100% internally focused. Link to external content, for example, videos and news articles. Retweet what others have to say if relevant. Cross promote 'likers' and 'followers' on Facebook and Twitter. Don't withhold information because it's on another website – your club should be seen to be part of a larger community.

Linking to external information establishes you as a member of the wider audience of people who are interested in the same topic.

- Don't overshare: Ensure your content is crisp and audience-relevant.
- Treat information carefully. Always pause before posting, don't forget that when you 'post' to Facebook or Twitter what you're really doing is 'publishing'. So ask yourself all the time – do I want to publish this? Steer clear of sensitive information or mentioning anything before it has been formally released.
- If you do make a mistake, admit it and be upfront and quick with your correction.
- If you can, try and measure your social media activity. Once a fortnight or so make a note of the number of social media followers/likes for your Facebook and Twitter accounts. It's also a good idea to record the key tweets/posts/topics that have been most talked about.

Ideas for social media content

- News and announcements
- Events
- ASA news relevant to your club
- ASA products and services relevant to your club
- 'Thank you' to a person or organisation that has gone the extra mile
- Competition results
- Newsletter sign-ups
- Competitions
- Seasonal tweets and posts related to Pancake Day, Valentines, Easter, Christmas, New Year etc.
- Retweet athletes and articles when relevant
- Link to articles on the swimming.org website

ASA Twitter account: <https://twitter.com/ASAAquatics>

ASA Facebook account: <https://www.facebook.com/ASAswimming>

Blogs and Newsletters

The purpose of blogging and creating newsletters is to inform members and other interested parties of your activities. Blogs and newsletters will generally contain news, upcoming events and contact information for general inquiries to enhance communication.

Hints and Tips!

- As with social media, content is king! Know your audience and make sure the content you include is relevant to them.
- Short and sweet! You will usually have a leading feature of 90-110 words (max 120) followed by remaining features with a word limit of approximately 70-90 (max 100.)
- Titles should be catchy and snappy.
- As with social media, be external. Link to other content, for example, videos and news articles. Try to include key words in links.

Ideas for blog and newsletter content

- News and announcements
- Events
- ASA products and services relevant to your club
- ASA News relevant to your club
- Volunteer Corner – ‘Volunteer of the Month’
- Competitions
- Discounts on swimwear and merchandise

If the thought of tweeting still makes you sweat the ASA Volunteering Team are happy to answer your queries. Send your questions to volunteering@swimming.org