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Dalton State has a presence on several social media platforms that reach thousands of people. Here you'll find where we are, what we do, and why we do it.

# Social Media Standards and Guidelines

Social media enables the College to share what is happening on campus with the world, but more importantly, lets us hear directly and immediately from students, faculty, staff, parents, alumni, fans, and friends about what is important to them. This “conversation” is what makes social media so different from traditional forms of institutional communication.

# Approval

All Dalton State social media channels need to be approved by the Office of Marketing and Communication. If you wish to create a social presence for your department or program, you will want to ensure that your communication and visual identity are in alignment with that of the institutional brand. Otherwise, you risk weakening the College's overall visual identity while simultaneously missing out on an opportunity to help strengthen brand. To seek approval, submit a [Marketing Project Request](#).

# Social Media Success Cycle

The social media success cycles can be summed up in four distinctly different phases: Those phases are Social Selling, Social Listening, Social Networking, and Social Influence.

## Social Selling

This phase of the social media success cycle is used to generate awareness about specific events, programs and offers within your organization. The target audience of this phase can include prospective students and also current students and other stakeholders.

# Social Listening

Being a consumer of social media is essential to your ability to be a successful producer of social media content. “Listen” to online conversations on your preferred tools – be they blogs, Twitter, Facebook or anything else – to maintain a clear and current understanding of what is relevant and of interest to the community.

## **Accept and monitor comments.**

A social media site without comments isn't very social. Be prepared to accept and respond to comments. To protect your site, **double check all comments before posting**. Understand that not all comments from your followers will be positive, and respond to negative comments professionally and by providing any additional information that may help resolve the issue. Post a disclaimer on your site stating you reserve the right to remove inappropriate comments. Do not remove a comment just because you don't like it. Consult with the Office of Marketing and Communications prior to removing any comments.

# Social Networking

The social networking phase of the Dalton State Social Media Success Cycle is geared toward finding and associating with other authoritative and influential organizations on campus. As a consumer as well as a producer of social media, offer comments on interesting posts and share the good work of others using your sites. Social media is not (only) about sharing your news and success; it's about sharing information that is of interest to your readers and viewers.

When commenting as part of your job, be sure to indicate who you are and your affiliation with Dalton State. If you see a post that you think requires or would benefit from an official Dalton State response, please contact the office of Marketing and Communication at (706) 272 - 4487.

### **Be respectful.**

Anything you post in your role as a Dalton State employee or contributor reflects on the entire institution. Be professional and respectful at all times on your social media site. Do not engage in divisive political discourse or extensive debates with naysayers on your site.

## **Social Influence**

### **Be active.**

Social media presences require diligent care and feeding of valuable content if you are going to establish authority. If you do not have the time or resources to check in on these sites at least a few minutes each day, and to post fresh content several times a week, reconsider jumping into social media at this time. Your channel is only as interesting as your last post – if that post is several months old, visitors will consider it a dud.

### **Be transparent.**

One of the great benefits of social media is that the individuals maintaining social media sites humanize institutions such as Dalton State. Use your own “voice.” Do not ghostwrite posts for supervisors.

## **Remember, everything you do online can and will live forever.**

Think before you post, remembering that anything you share within social media, even within a closed network, is not private. Your post can and will be shared, stored, and spread globally. Do not post anything online you would not feel comfortable seeing on the front page of the newspaper, or on the front page of a national news station website. With the latest trends in live streaming capabilities, your monitoring capabilities are limited in a live broadcast which is why we ask that you exercise caution if using this technology.

## **Separate personal from professional.**

Balancing your professional and personal social media presences can be tricky, particularly if you are an avid user in both arenas. Content that is appropriate and of interest to your personal friends may not be appropriate or of interest to the followers of your Dalton State page or feed. Keep these two presences separate by keeping content about your non-work life on your personal page.

## **Promote your accounts.**

If you publish a post, but have no one reads it, did you really post at all? Make it easy for people to find you on social media. Have links/icons on your website. Include your accounts on appropriate promotional materials where applicable (think: flyers, postcards, calendar entries, posters, email signatures). Make sure you are listed on the [official Dalton State social media directory](#). If not, submit a [Marketing Project Request](#).

# Goals and Strategies

**1. Clear Goal or No Go.** Before deciding to launch a new social media channel, have a clear plan in place to set your channel up for success. There's nothing worse than launching a new page or channel out of initial excitement, just to have it fail weeks or months later due to no clear plan or content strategy. If your page becomes stagnant or dormant, you will be asked to remove it or deactivate it.

**2. Share Dalton State's best content to raise brand awareness.** Our goal is to increase awareness of Dalton State among various audiences that include prospective students, current students, parents, faculty, staff, alumni, and the Dalton community. We leverage our social media platforms to introduce/reintroduce Dalton State to our audiences, in order to better engage with them via social media. The best way to get our audiences to engage with us is to time our content strategically. Whether it's sharing news about an upcoming event such as graduation or Week of Welcome, or giving a shout out to our Roadrunner Athletes with a pre- or post-game "Beep Beep," our best performing posts are timed carefully in conjunction with what's going on in our community, our country, and our world. In addition, all our efforts are designed to support the initiatives and vision of the Strategic Plan in helping Dalton State become a *first choice destination college*.

**3. Listen, engage, and learn.** Our goal is to be aware of the sentiment towards the Dalton State name and brand, and try to positively influence it. We constantly track conversations about Dalton State, listen, and respond as needed. We strive to provide customer service and also participate in these conversations by responding and sharing compelling stories that engage our audience.

**4. Tell the Dalton State Story.** Our goal is to promote what sets Dalton State apart, and to encourage fans to become brand ambassadors. That is why we share human interest stories about our students, faculty, staff, and alumni. We try to keep our tone light-hearted and post content that shows the Dalton State personality. Because we are located in Dalton, America's "Carpet Capital," we also share highlights from our wonderful hometown. Some of our best stories/posts come from watching what our students do on their own. That is why we encourage our community to use our branded hashtags such as #DaltonState #RoadrunnersRunBoldly #RoadrunnerNation #RunBoldly

**5. Act as one "Dalton State."** One of Dalton State's strengths is our ability to offer an incredible academic experience at one of the nation's most affordable tuition rates. The high quality education that we offer combined with the affordability is a unique selling proposition that few schools can claim the way we can. We have five outstanding schools all connected by a compact central campus. Our goal is to work together and give our social media content maximum effectiveness. That is why we often retweet and share content from our students, staff, alumni, and other institutional accounts.

[See a list of all affiliated Dalton State accounts.](#)