Social Media Policy

UCP of the North Bay supports and encourages the use of social media. This best practices guide provides instruction for using social media in an official UCP of the North Bay capacity as well as guidelines for personal use. This guide will continue to evolve as social media practices and channels change.

What is social media?

Social media is media (text, images, video, etc.) that encourages two-way and multiple member conversations as opposed to traditional one-way media. It allows for the easy sharing of existing content, expands the reach of our work, and builds communities and networks to encourage participation and engagement.

What are UCP of the North Bay's social media goals?

Through the utilization of social media, UCP of the North Bay seeks to:

1. Encourage engagement and two-way conversations with stakeholders
   a. Help clients and donors stay in touch and feel connected
   b. Accelerate the sense of belonging for incoming clients and families
   c. Take advantage of feedback that is unbiased, authentic, and immediate
2. Brand awareness
   a. Give people a sense of the "who" – the story of our work and impact and the people behind it
   b. Gain public trust and raise awareness of issues affecting the population that we work with
   c. Publish accurate UCP of the North Bay information in real-time for clients, staff, and donors
3. Translate awareness to action
   a. Drive traffic to website to facilitate program registrations and donations

Roles and Responsibilities

The Development Department manages and directs all of UCP of the North Bay' social media accounts and strategy, and serves as the unofficial "voice of UCP of the North Bay" on all online accounts. The department is responsible for creating and approving content and posting on the organization's behalf and has the authority to approve all messaging on online channels to ensure that it adheres to the organizational policy and accurately reflects the tone of the organization.

Management Team Members and other specifically assigned staff are expected to contribute to online conversations by finding and sharing new relevant information with the Development Department. In addition, members may be asked to create content as assigned by the Development Department. Management Team Members and other specifically assigned staff are encouraged to engage in conversations and build relationships with their own professional/personal social media accounts.

Staff members are encouraged to use their personal social media accounts to engage with and promote UCP of the North Bay's advocacy and work. Make sure to identify yourself and your role at UCP of the North Bay when you discuss UCP of the North Bay or UCP of the North Bay-related matters. Make it clear that the views expressed are yours and do not necessarily represent the views of the organization. Use a disclaimer to disclose your affiliation in your profile. (*Example: All opinions expressed here are my own and do not necessarily represent those of my employer.*) All staff members may also use social media for work-related socializing and organizing in an effort to build relationships and expand our organizational reach as it adheres to organizational policy.

All uses of social media must follow the same ethical standards that UCP of the North Bay employees must otherwise follow.

Only designated staff may represent themselves as official UCP of the North Bay spokespeople who speak on behalf of the organization online. This includes using the company name in any social media identity.

Content Guidelines

Use the following questions to determine whether or not original or shared content is appropriate for social media:

1. Is the content relevant to the UCP of the North Bay community of families, staff, and/or donors?
2. Does the content make the reader DO, THINK, or FEEL?
   a. DO is content that enlists a call to action (ex. *Donate, register, tell a friend*)
   b. THINK is the reaction elicited from sharing content that is helpful, educational, instructional, etc.
   c. FEEL builds human rapport with readers by sharing content that makes them laugh, cry, smile, feel included, etc.
3. Is the content factual?
   a. For original content, has the information been vetted by a program director?
   b. For shared content, can you validate the source?
      i. Is the content from a personal page?
      ii. What type of domain is the URL of the site?
      iii. Who published the page?
      iv. Who wrote the page? What are that person's credentials?
      v. Is the page dated?
      vi. Are sources documented with footnotes or links?
      vii. Are there links to other resources?
      viii. Who else links to the page online? What kind of sites link to it?
      ix. Is the page listed in one or more reputable directories or pages?
      x. Why was the page put on the web? What is the tone of the page?

Social Media Guidelines

Multi-media and social networking websites, such as Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, Twitter, personal blogs, Wikis and Yahoo! Groups make sharing information with the online community much faster and easier than ever before. These and other social media websites, file sharing, and other data postings will be referred to collectively as "social media;" user-generated content submitted to social media will be referred to as "Internet Postings."

Be professional – in and out of work. In online networks, the lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred. UCP of the North Bay respects the free speech of all employees, but remember that others may have access to the online content you post. Keep this in mind when you publish information online and know that information intended for a small group can be forwarded on. Maintain professionalism at all times and be conscious about mixing your personal and professional lives.

Be responsible. Remember that you are personally responsible for the content you publish. Again, be mindful that what you publish can be public forever – so protect your privacy, as well as UCP of the North Bay's. Use common sense and take some caution with social media as you would with other forms of communication. The Development Department will not review all content prior to publication but reserves the right to remove any content that is considered to violate content policies. If you have any questions or doubts about the appropriateness of content, contact the Development Department.

Do not share confidential or proprietary information about the company and/or its clients or any other information that is not already available on the public domain. Additionally, do not speak outside of your expertise and do not use the UCP of the North Bay name to promote or endorse any cause, candidate, or political party, unless it is the official position of the organization.

Think before you post. Do not say anything online that you would not want the public to see. Mind the global audience and be aware that information you post can be accessed globally. Be careful when you talk about UCP of the North Bay, only share publicly available information, and ensure that your content is factual.

Be respectful and civil. No spam, untruthful, defamatory, or discriminatory comments or expletives. Be strong, but remain polite and appropriate at all times. Refrain from engaging in unnecessary arguments or extensive debates with naysayers. Always be aware that your behavior may reflect on the organization.

Email/Internal/Social Media Policy

UCP of the North Bay employees are expected to use email and the Internet as tools to assist them with their work at UCP of the North Bay. These applications are to be used for business purposes. Employees who send or receive inappropriate materials including, but not limited to sexually oriented materials are subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
UCP of the North Bay respects the individual privacy of its employees, however, employee privacy does not extend to the employees' work-related conduct or to the use of UCP of the North Bay's provided equipment and supplies.

Disclaimer

A prominent and appropriate disclaimer is included on Internet Postings, such as: "The views expressed in this blog are my personal views and they do not necessarily represent the views or opinions of my employer."

Personal Responsibility and Liability

You may not post any photograph of UCP of the North Bay students or clients without a photo release signed by the parents or conservators of students or adult participants or individual clients and permission from the Program Director. Any such posting is a violation of UCP of the North Bay policy and may result in immediate termination.

Creating and Accessing Internet Posting At Work

UCP of the North Bay provides an e-mail system, access to the Internet, and other technology systems to assist employees in conducting UCPNB business. All information, data, and messages created, received, or stored in these systems are at all times the property of UCP of the North Bay. The systems provided are intended to be used for business-related purposes. Therefore, any Internet Posting created or modified using UCP of the North Bay equipment is subject to monitoring and recording. UCP of the North Bay reserves the right to access, review, copy, and delete any of the information accessed through these systems, including Internet Postings, with or without any notice to the employee.

In the event an employee chooses to access, modify, or create an Internet Posting from a UCP of the North Bay system, such use should not interfere with the employee's performance of his or her job duties or the job duties of others. Additionally, UCP of the North Bay does not allow its systems to be used in creating, receiving, sending or storing data that may be considered to be offensive, defamatory, obscene or harassing, or which would violate any UCP of the North Bay policy or the employee's duty of loyalty to UCP of the North Bay.

Employees who are aware of the misuse of UCP of the North Bay's systems by other employees should report the misuse to a manager or the Development Department immediately.

Guidelines for Handling Negative Feedback

Constructive criticism and respectful disagreement are healthy. They indicate that people are listening and engaged and can be opportunities to educate, inform, and explain. However, there are messages online intended to insult and provoke rather than promote dialogue. We want to develop conversations that forward constructive solutions rather than continue pointless arguments.

Can we turn a complaint into an opportunity? If yes, there should be a response. The Development Department will determine who should respond and what will be said. The response should be respectful, courteous, and solution-oriented. Acknowledge frustrations. Individuals complain because they have a problem to resolve. To handle simply respond, "I hear you're frustrated. How can I help?" Work to resolve. Let the individual know the situation will be handled privately to avoid any security or privacy issues are not breached. Sensitive information should NEVER be shared on a social media forum.

Does the post have misinformation in it? If yes, there should be a response. The Development Department will determine who should respond and what will be said. Misleading information will be cleared up.

Will the post damage our community? If yes, the Development Department will consider removing the post.

Does the post include vulgarity or purposefully inflammatory language? If yes, The Development Department will consider removing the post.

Is the user more likely to keep posting objectionable things simply because we are responding? If yes, the Development Department may decide that all responses will stop after a certain point.

If you are unsure, ask. If you are ever in doubt about whether something is appropriate, the best thing you can do is ask for any help or clarifications.