

Guidelines for the Use of Social Media in IOM

2014



IOM • OIM

Table of Contents

Purpose of Social Media: IOM’s Approach.....	3
Setting Up an Institutional Account.....	3
Managing a Social Media Account	4
Twitter.....	5
Facebook.....	5
YouTube.....	8
Instagram.....	8
Network Infrastructure	8
Basic Editorial Guidelines.....	9
Slander, Criticism, Inaccurate Information.....	10
Copyright.....	11
Branding and Visual Identity.....	11
Security and Privacy.....	13
Best Practices.....	14
Facebook.....	14
Twitter.....	14
Personal Use	15
Don’ts.....	15
Do’s	16
Fundamental Rules and Obligations as an IOM Employee	16
Appendix I: Future Development.....	17
Appendix II: Sources	17

Purpose of Social Media: IOM's Approach

IOM recognizes the valuable contribution social media can make to advance its objectives as a global, humanitarian non-profit organization working in the migration field.

IOM's communication and outreach strategy relies on engaging with stakeholders for their inclusion, empowerment and benefit. Specifically, IOM recognizes the rapidly growing use of social media for fundraising, awareness raising, advocacy, communications and knowledge sharing.

It is understood that a flexible approach is necessary, as this area continues to evolve, and it is impossible to anticipate all circumstances. These guidelines are thus a living document providing initial basic guidance.

Headquarters and IOM field missions play distinct yet complementary roles in engaging audiences through social media channels.

	Headquarters	Field Mission
Account	Principal IOM accounts	Local pages and accounts
Audiences	Audiences worldwide	Local audiences
Language	English, French and Spanish	Preferably local language
Content	Broader institutional messages and issues of global interest	Country-specific and programmatic issues and events complemented by key institutional messages translated into the local language
Responsibilities	Providing basic guidance including sharing best practices	Adherence to basic rules, reporting to HQ on results/impact

Setting Up an Institutional Account

IOM staff intending to use social media on behalf of the Organization shall create and use institutional accounts.

Setting up an institutional account is subject to the following requirements:

- Country profile on www.iom.int was updated within the last 3 months.
- A concise concept that defines the objectives, strategy and resources for the envisaged social media presence.
- Approval by the Chief of Mission.
- Notification of OCU.
- Adherence to the IOM naming convention for social media websites.
- Adherence to the IOM visual identity guidelines.
- Regular reporting on impact and results to OCU.

Managing a Social Media Account

Each regional institution should use a social media management website to not only produce daily posts, but also to track postings to ensure they are effective and sustainable. IOM recommends making a HootSuite account for your regional accounts and sending the login credentials to the OCU department as well. Users can also use the Buffer app if they prefer – the same rules apply regardless of the social media management site used.

HootSuite should be:

- Filled every day with new posts
- Checked every day to ensure no inaccuracies, typos, etc.
- Have a minimum of two daily tweets
- Minimum of one daily Facebook post,
- Minimum of one daily Instagram post
 - Ideally, there should be the following amount of posts daily:
 - Two to five Twitter posts
 - One to three Facebook posts
 - One to three Instagram posts

All social media accounts should be checked regularly by the same individual. Record statistics, engagement, comments, etc. In your local time, the following social media accounts should be checked at the following times:

- Facebook should be checked at 9h00 and 17h00.
- Twitter should be checked at 11h00 and 18h00.
- Instagram should be checked at 10h00 and 16h00.

Choosing a Social Media Manager

To streamline the message and provide accountability, one person should be the selected social media manager for each mission. The social media manager will be responsible for maintaining all social media accounts and ensuring that IOM's messages are correctly conveyed. The selected social media manager should be someone with previous personal social media use who can comfortably and appropriately use at least three social media accounts. Preference should also be given to individuals with customer service experience. The social media manager should also dedicate at least a half hour each day to social media.

Twitter

The following guidelines should be followed in accordance with Twitter.

Hashtags

- Official hashtags should be agreed upon by 11h00 Monday mornings if not previously discussed.
- At least five tweets per week should include the official hashtags.
- There should be no more than three hashtags per tweet limited to a maximum of three words per hashtag.

Images

- At least three original images should be posted a week.
- They should alternate between an infographic, photo (sans caption), and photo with caption (reference @IOM_Philippines, 7 May 14 tweet).
- If tweets are used from an external source (i.e. Getty), it should be copyrighted and correctly sourced.

Links

- External links should be properly sourced.
- Link to authoritative, reputable and credible websites (i.e. official UN websites, academic institutions, official company websites; in general, Wikipedia should not be used as the primary source).
- Links should only be addressed (@) to accounts necessary
 - For the most part, no more than three

Facebook

The following guidelines should be followed in accordance with Facebook.

Comments/ Reviews

Generally, we should not delete negative reviews as this promotes transparency, allows IOM to see what needs to be worked on, and reminds everyone that nothing is ever perfect. The following guidelines outline how to handle the typical types of comments you may receive on Facebook and how you should respond. If ever in need of assistance, contact the OCU team.

For negative reviews

- Respond quickly and ask them to send a private message.

- Response must be within 24 hours- the more time it takes to respond, the worse it looks for us.
- Template: “Hi _____, we apologize for this inconvenience. IOM strives to provide the best assistance it can in often difficult situations. Please send us a private message if you wish to discuss this issue further.”
 - Edit this message per review for your needs.
 - Be sure to avoid the phrase “we are sorry you feel this way.” It can come off as patronizing.
 - Be sure to tag the person by first name in the post to ensure they receive our reply.
 - Be sure to finish your message with a dash and the first letter of your first name capitalized (for example, if Leonard is the one to reply to a negative comment, he would finish with –L).
 - It lets reviewers/ commenters put a name to their complaint without sacrificing the specifics of the replier.
 - This also allows the IOM team figure out who has replied to the comment/ review.
 - Try to resolve negative issues in a private message so that we can control the message going out.

For positive reviews

- Provide praise and offer individuals a link that they can continue to follow.
- Template: “Hi _____, we are glad that you are happy with the services IOM is providing! If you want to learn more about our current projects and how we are assisting migrants worldwide, go to www.iom.int”.
 - As we do not have many reviews, reply to every positive review.
 - Reply to about one in three positive comments to begin with- we can adjust the frequency depending on our abilities and reception to our replies.

For nonsense reviews

- (i.e. reviews in three languages, reviews that make no sense, or spam)
 - If possible, delete
 - If deletion is not a possibility, mark as spam

For dangerous comments/ reviews (FOR ALL PLATFORMS)

- i.e. “I am planning to bomb IOM in the Philippines” or anything to this effect, it should be reported to Facebook and to the head security officer of the area the comment was directed.
- Be sure to take a screen shot and write down any relevant information (i.e. Name, Location, etc.)

For damaging reviews

- i.e. “IOM promised this to this refugee camp, and nothing ever happened.”
- Do not claim fault or speculate - it provides ammunition to the commenter who could be incorrect.
- Template: “Hi____, please send us your information via a private message so that we can connect you with someone who can address your concerns.”

Hours

- Make sure current HQ opening hours on website are hours for visitors, not employees.

Major Life Events

- All major events in IOMs history need to be updated onto Facebook.
- See the UN’s Facebook page for reference. <https://www.facebook.com/unitednations>.

Statistics

- Facebook should be checked for new comments/reviews every day at 9h00 and 17h00.
- Take note of demographics on the first of every month so that you can alter your message if needs be
 - i.e. age, gender, location, etc.

Links

- Link to authoritative, reputable and credible websites (i.e. official UN websites, academic institutions, official company websites; in general, Wikipedia should not be used as the primary source).

YouTube

The following guidelines should be followed in accordance with YouTube.

Comments/ Reviews

Comments should be disabled on all videos already posted and all videos in the future.

Instagram

The following guidelines should be followed in accordance with Instagram.

Hashtags

- Official hashtags should be agreed upon by 11h00 Monday mornings if not previously discussed.
- There should be no more than three hashtags per post limited to a maximum of three words per hashtag.
- Official hashtags should be incorporated into at least two posts a week.

Comments

- Reply to every comment as we are establishing our account. We can edit depending on reception

Maintenance

- Instagram should be checked at 10h00 and 16h00.
- There should be one to three posts daily to establish and maintain an online presence.

Network Infrastructure

Social media applications such as Facebook and YouTube are bandwidth “hungry” which can impact on the performance of corporate applications such as Email, Intranet, etc.

It is possible to have a network device called Packetshaper installed to manage their bandwidth usage. A Packetshaper allows for prioritizing usage for corporate applications. To avoid network congestion it is possible to limit bandwidth for Internet browsing/traffic which includes use of social media channels to 30 percent.

Prior to setting up an institutional IOM account, the account-managing staff member needs to coordinate with the local IT unit to ensure that Packethaper is in place and settings are appropriately adjusted to reflect the needs of the mission. Additional bandwidth requirements will be evaluated case by case.

Basic Editorial Guidelines

Although language and tone of social media websites is typically less formal than in traditional media, IOM staff managing institutional accounts should observe a few basic guidelines:

- Limit yourself to your area of expertise: limit conversation to your personal area of expertise and do not assume.
- Be credible by being accurate, fair, thorough and transparent.
- If you are not certain of the facts, do not post and decline to comment. Do not risk spreading misinformation. This includes subtle hints of denial or affirmation.
- Establish a writing style and approach that works most effectively with your target audience(s).
- Be passionate.
- Feel free to share and promote links to online information about IOM activities.
- Encourage constructive criticism and deliberation.
- Avoid endorsements and the appearance of marketing. Use caution when discussing a particular product, service, or brand in an official context as such promotion may be seen as a United Nations endorsement or may undermine your credibility.
- Assume that your posts are permanent.
- Use extra caution in times of crisis.
- Keep professional and private lives separate.
- Consider your audience (are you trying to reach the general public or just donors?)
- Consider your platform – i.e. your message on Twitter is much shorter than your message on Facebook.
- Consider posting times - there are certain peak times for every social network (i.e. Twitter has the most users online around 1 p.m.).
- Proofread.
- Create a strategy – consider your message, audience, and the potential reaction.
- Be mindful of the message you're sending- think "how am I representing IOM?"
- Update your account regularly to maintain a constant media presence
- Openly admit and correct inaccuracies to rectify any issues or claims of cover-ups
- Share and link to other reliable resources

- Respond quickly to comments, criticism, questions, etc. to control the message.
- Turn negative comments into positive discussion.
- Be mindful of copyright - credit and source everything you can.
- Listen before you speak.
- Humor is subjective – tread lightly.
- Always monitor your social media accounts.
- Always tell the truth.
- Only use widely known acronyms or define any used, i.e. IDP (Internally Displaced Person)
- Use the highest quality photos and videos possible.

Slander, Criticism, Inaccurate Information

The nature of social media is to engage audiences. While many will be supportive of what IOM is doing and saying, IOM should expect individuals and groups to post inaccurate information and make comments that are critical of IOM and its actions. In extreme cases, someone might post derogatory remarks or even slander.

Staff managing IOM accounts should:

- Monitor content added by others, if necessary by appointing a moderator and equipping him/her with the facts necessary to respond where appropriate.
- Respond to constructive criticism with facts while leaving opinion and excessive emotion out.
- Allow content that may not stick to the topic but is not offensive.
- If the content is accurate and in the context of the conversation, approve the content, regardless of whether it is favourable or unfavourable to IOM.
- Where possible, remove inappropriate material posted by others. Content should be deleted if it:
 - Uses expletives and unacceptable language. The person making the comment should also be reported (with a copy of the material) to the site administrator.
 - Degrades, defames or otherwise denigrates any individual, group or country (especially if the country is a Member State). Report the person, making the comment available to the site administrator.
- Avoid responding to, or if possible remove, direct attacks and blatant slander.
- Refrain from commenting on or perpetuating rumours that cannot be clearly affirmed or denied.
- Refrain from making unsubstantiated claims.
- Refrain from publishing anything that could be construed as objectionable.
- Correct misinformation politely.

Copyright

IOM staff should always respect copyright law. As a general rule, staff should assume that all materials (text, photos, videos, etc.) obtained from the Internet are copyright protected. Use of any such materials requires prior written authorization from the copyright owner.

Some social media websites require users to agree to “hand over” the copyright of the materials they upload. For instance, Facebook’s states that *“For content that is covered by intellectual property rights, like photos and videos (“IP content”), you specifically give us the following permission, subject to your privacy and application settings: you grant us a non-exclusive, transferable, sub-licensable, royalty-free, worldwide license to use any IP content that you post on or in connection with Facebook (“IP License”). This IP License ends when you delete your IP content or your account unless your content has been shared with others, and they have not deleted it.”*

Therefore, uploading materials for which the copyright owner has not given his/her permission is a violation of copyright.

An IOM staff member managing an institutional account can use materials which are owned by IOM on social media channels. However, s/he shall do so sensibly taking into account IOM’s interest to preserve its intellectual property. In particular, a staff member shall

- Avoid posting highly publicized photographs, .e.g., those used in IOM posters or on covers of books and magazines.
- Instantly remove photos or other material if their use violates copyright law.

Photos and videos taken by IOM staff members related to the exercise of their duties are IOM’s copyright. IOM staff shall treat these materials as such and send copies to the IOM Image Library (imagelibrary@iom.int) so they can be properly catalogued, uploaded and shared with other colleagues and offices.

IOM staff members shall obtain releases of all subjects they take photos of or video and keep them on file.

Branding and Visual Identity

A strong visual presence is critical to the success of IOM’s brand and social impact online. It helps our audiences recognize IOM, builds credibility and fosters loyalty.

Core elements of IOM’s brand include:

1. Name and Abbreviation of the Organization

- IOM – International Organization for Migration
- OIM - Organisation internationale pour les migrations
- OIM - Organización Internacional para la Migraciones

In a local context abbreviation and name should be used in the local language and be consistent with the use in other local communications products, e.g., stationary, visibility materials, etc.

2. Logos

The consistent use of an official IOM logo is essential for a strong brand. For an online presence the use of the promotional or shortened logo is recommended.

Official IOM logos can be found on the IOM intranet:

<https://intranetportal/publications-and-resources/institutional-communication-and-promotional-tools/iom-logos>

3. URL, Domain Names and Social Media Registrations

International organizations established by a treaty have been granted the privilege of a dedicated top level domain name: .int. This protects IOM's online identity. Missions are strongly encouraged to use an iom.int subdomain for their online presence, most notably country websites.

Prior to registering a social media presence, the staff member who intends to set up an institutional account shall contact the **Online Communications Unit (OCU)** (ocu@iom.int).

Facebook

- Login credentials should be sent to OCU
 - These credentials will only be used to delete or respond to content when the regular poster is unable to, or in the event of crisis, take over the account to share one centralized message.
- URL proposals should contain IOM and the location name
 - i.e. www.facebook.com/IOMPhilippines

Twitter

- Login credentials should be sent to OCU
 - These credentials will only be used to delete or respond to content when the regular poster is unable to, or in the event of crisis, take over the account to share one centralized message.
- URL proposals should contain IOM and the location name
 - i.e. www.twitter.com/OIM_Colombia

YouTube

- Login credentials should be sent to OCU
 - These credentials will only be used to delete or respond to content when the regular poster is unable to, or in the event of crisis, take over the account to share one centralized message.
- URL proposals should contain IOM and the location name
 - i.e. <http://www.youtube.com/user/iomphilippines>

4. Colour

Colours are essential to help reinforce IOM's visual identity. Missions should look at www.iom.int for guidance regarding the use of colours. Missions should also use the official blue (Pantone 286 C) IOM logo at all times.

For additional guidance regarding branding and visual identity regularly visit:

- <https://www.facebook.com/iommigration>
- http://twitter.com/IOM_news
- <http://www.youtube.com/user/iommigration>

Security and Privacy

IOM staff should assume that all social media initiatives are potentially public and visible to everyone worldwide, even if one has created a personal account. It is possible to use privacy controls to limit access to sensitive information, but such controls are only a deterrent, and not an absolute insulator.

To maintain security in a social media campaign, staff should:

- Never post personal details, such as home addresses, date of birth or other sensitive personal information.
- Be careful if you post photos of yourself or your colleagues. Bear in mind that personal details of local staff members can be very sensitive in many operational areas.
- Be aware of offline security concerns. Never post information about routes or times of convoys, for example. Check with security officials when in doubt.
- Promote strong authentication and access-control.
- Implement countermeasures against spam and hacking, where appropriate.
- Give consideration to applications that offer convenient means to delete data completely. Simple tools should be provided for removing accounts completely, as well as allowing users to edit their own posts.
- Where applicable, consider restricting bulk downloads.

- Review current techniques addressing phishing [identity theft] and spam. An e-mail anti-spam system should be incorporated to eliminate spam comments and traffic.
- Make sure to read and follow office-specific security requirements.

Best Practices

Facebook

- Official IOM accounts should use Facebook Pages instead of profiles.
- Accounts should include relevant photos and videos where possible.
- Administrators have access to analytics of their fans called insights and should take advantage of these or any future built-in tools.
- Facebook should not be viewed as merely a place to stream content, but rather staff should find creative ways to encourage discussion and interaction, including asking questions.
- Facebook provides simple ways to control incoming user-generated content. Such material can and sometimes should be removed. See “Slander, Criticism and Incorrect Information” above for further information.
- The length of posts on Facebook is more flexible than on microblogging platforms like Twitter. Full sentences and formal grammar are not necessarily required, but encouraged.
- When creating a Page for a programme you should have a simple and common sense vanity url. A vanity url is a custom url address meant to replace the messy default string of characters. A good, descriptive vanity url can make it easier for stakeholders to locate and remember one's account.
- Facebook enables Page administrators to send targeted updates based on demographic information. Geographically targeted announcements may prove particularly useful.
- Facebook's "Favourite Pages" feature allows administrators to highlight Pages of affiliated or other relevant organizations.

Twitter

- Accounts that duplicate content should be avoided. Using at least some original content emphasizes one's commitment to the platform.
- To maximize engagement, tweets should be helpful, useful, informative, relevant, practical, actionable and entertaining.
- Though IOM Twitter accounts will most likely be monitored by multiple individuals, it is best to maintain a consistent tone in the language used. Content on Twitter generally should be more informal and conversational than it would be elsewhere, though one should not get too carried away with abbreviations and Internet slang.
- To the furthest extent possible, messages received should be replied to respectfully and promptly. Accounts should encourage engagement.

- A re-tweet is a quote of a tweet originally sent by a different author, generally meant to imply support of the original tweet while exposing the message to a wider audience. When a post is re-tweeted, it is seen not only by the original author's followers, but by the followers of the individual doing the re-tweeting as well. In some cases, this can hugely increase one's audience.
- Staff operating IOM accounts should re-tweet messages from other authors as well, assuming that the tweet is in line with the message of IOM. Government agencies and non-governmental organizations are particularly good candidates. While Twitter's maximum post length is 140 characters, tweets should ideally be kept under 132 characters, or preferably 120 characters, to allow for more convenient re-tweeting and commenting by others, as re-tweets add a prefix before the quoted message.
- Another important Twitter convention is the use of hashtags (#). Hashtags appear in front of keywords included within the text of a tweet that help distinguish content and make it more easily searched for. IOM can both establish its own hashtags and use those that have already been popularized. Hashtags are perhaps most important when providing live coverage of an unfolding event, and particularly in times of crisis, but try to limit yourself to two or three per tweet.
- IOM should initiate contact by following influential individuals - not your average Twitter user.

Personal Use

While IOM staff may communicate through social media channels for their own personal use, they need to be mindful that personal is not the same as private. Staff should always be aware that their actions and opinions reflect on their family, friends and IOM. Staff should also know that their social media use can become a negative reflection on his or her career if used inappropriately.

Don'ts

- Don't say anything online that you wouldn't be comfortable seeing quoted on CNN, being asked about by your mother or having to justify to your boss.
- Don't discuss internal matters such as sourcing, reporting of unpublished stories, personnel matters, and untoward personal or professional matters involving colleagues.
- Don't criticize others or those who take issue with IOM but feel free to correct others by sticking to the facts.
- Don't use IOM emblems as any part of your personal blog or social media profile.
- Don't accept or place tokens, badges or virtual gifts from political or partisan causes on pages or sites.
- Don't transmit information from or knowingly connect/link to sites enabling or promoting unlawful or prohibited activities, including, but not limited to:

- Discrimination on the basis of sex, race, creed, colour, gender, religion, age, marital status, national origin, sensory, mental, or physical disability, sexual orientation or veteran status.
- Sexual harassment or sites containing prurient sexual content.
- Transmission of obscene materials.

Do's

- If you talk about work-related issues, use a disclaimer stating that the views posted are yours alone and do not necessarily represent those of IOM. Be aware that this disclaimer doesn't free you from the fundamental obligations you have under IOM's Staff Regulations and Rules.
 - Example: *"The postings on this site are my own and don't necessarily represent positions, strategies or opinions of my employer."*
 - Example: *"Retweets do not equal endorsements."*
- Be passionate - passion is contagious.
- Add value. If IOM staff are perceived to be knowledgeable and helpful this will reflect positively on you and on the organization. Use your best judgement where information that is internal and/or confidential is concerned.
- Protect your own privacy. A lot of web sites allow you some form of control over who can see your material. Use these features. Example: On Facebook you can control your privacy settings under "Settings → Privacy Settings → Profile". We recommend that you set all settings except for "Profile" and "Basic info" to "Only friends".
- Keep security in mind. Never post personal details such the home addresses of yourself or colleagues. Bear in mind that personal details of local staff members can be very security sensitive in many operational areas – this includes their names and pictures. To guard against burglaries, do not post information on when you are travelling or away from your duty post. See also "Security and Privacy" above.
- Abide by the policies of the particular website you are using, and apply them in conjunction with the IOM's rules.
- Respect copyright and trademark laws.
- Monitor information posted for appropriateness.

Fundamental Rules and Obligations as an IOM Employee

The basic responsibilities of an IOM employee are set forth in IOM's Staff Regulations and Rules and also apply to the personal use of social media websites and tools. A staff member's duties and obligations relate to the conduct as an international civil servant, the communication of unpublished information, the acceptance of honours and gifts, and the observance of law, among others.

In addition, IOM staff is guided by IN/15: Standards of Conduct which defines the core values and requirements of international civil servants. Among others, IOM employees should be

guided in all of their actions by a commitment to fundamental human rights, social justice and the dignity and worth of all persons; take pride in sharing the broad vision of IOM; do their utmost to promote and practice tolerance, understanding and respect for all, without distinction as to race, gender, religion, colour, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, age, physical disability or political conviction. The fundamental requirements to be met by international civil servants are: Integrity, loyalty, independence, impartiality and an international outlook.

The use of social media at the workplace is subject to [IN/30: Internet Usage Guidelines](#) which requires staff members to respect restrictions related to domestic law, use during office hours, the use of IOM resources, copyright law, viruses and malware, network traffic, the use for practices that might discredit IOM, the pursuit of private commercial activities or profit-making ventures, and obtaining or viewing sexually explicit material, among others.

Appendix I: Future Development

These guidelines are a "living" document that will be revised regularly in order to be an effective institutional guide on the use of social media tools. These guidelines are to be reviewed once a year every June to ensure that the guidelines are up to date. At present, the following steps are envisaged:

- Formalizing these guidelines and issuing them as an e-Compendium document.
- Including additional social media channels such as blogs, wikis, photo sharing applications.
- Providing guidance on the link between social media and mobile phones.
- Exploring possibilities of prominently featuring links to IOM social media pages on the main IOM website and publishing URLs and links in IOM publications.
- Starting to "mainstream" the concept of social media in the IOM.
- Exploring opportunities for training to staff members undertaking efforts in social media.
- Considering establishing a system of review, as social media practices are rapidly and constantly changing.

Appendix II: Sources

These guidelines built have been built on similar documents produced by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the United Nations New Media Task Force.

- United Nations Guidelines for Social Media (Draft of May 2010)
- Social media guidelines for IFRC staff – 2009
- Wikipedia: Social media