SOCIAL MEDIA FOR LEADERS

OPPORTUNITY: As younger generations consume more information online, Navy leaders have an opportunity to inform and engage U.S. and international audiences through the effective use of social media. There are more than 5 billion daily social media platform users globally. Social media is a great tool for disseminating compelling content and factual information in a timely manner to showcase America's unique role in defending freedom and protecting prosperity from seabed to space.

WHERE TO START:

Step 1: Talk to your PAO.

- Key considerations include purpose, audience, account type, and platform options. Before creating a new official social media presence, evaluate its necessity against existing accounts, as more is not always better.
- If your organization lacks a full-time PAO, consult one in the nearest fleet concentration area or contact CHINFO at NavySM@us.navy.mil.

Step 2: Build a content development plan.

- Coordinate with your PAO to establish a process for creating timely, compelling content that aligns with Navy communication priorities and social media policy.
- Consider your audience (when, how, and where stakeholders get information) and plan for monitoring and responding to feedback.

Step 3: Build your social media presence.

- Carefully weigh who has access to admin permissions and passwords. Protect your social media pages from individuals seeking to diminish Navy credibility.
- Build your social media presence with frequent personnel turnover in mind.

TYPES OF OFFICIAL ACCOUNTS

Organizational – Represents the entire command or organization (e.g., @USNavy).
- **Pro:** Broad representation.
- **Con:** Limited personal connection.
- Recommended for unit leaders.

Institutional – Represents the role atop the organization (e.g., @SECNAV).
- **Pro:** Personalized representation.
- **Con:** Requires consistent content in the leader's voice.
- Recommended for top leaders.

Individual – Represents the leaders themselves (e.g., @RDMLRyanPerry).
- **Pro:** Strong personal connection.
- **Con:** Content must be tailored and account transitioned upon departure per DoDI 5400.17.
- Generally not recommended.

OFFICIAL PRESENCE DO'S + DON'T'S

DO:
- Tell the Navy story by sharing positive experiences and highlighting key achievements
- Retain posts as records under the Federal Records Act (44 U.S.C Chapters 31 and 33).
- Publicly clarify any content removal.
- Always uphold Navy values and protect OPSEC.

DON'T:
- Delete content. Only consider deleting for factual/typographical errors, legal/policy violations, security concerns, or terms of service breaches.
- Use official pages to endorse products, show favoritism, or support non-federal entities without an authorized agreement; consult the PAO if unsure.
- Interact with political content (e.g., sharing, liking, commenting).

FOREIGN MALIGN INFLUENCE

WHAT is it?
Refers to efforts by foreign actors to influence public opinion and erode trust through disinformation.

HOW to counter:
- **Be vigilant**
Remain vigilant in the management of all official social media accounts.

- **Align**
Ensure the content development plan created by the PAO aligns with Navy communication priorities, adheres to social media policy and protects OPSEC.

- **Avoid delay**
Disseminate compelling content and factual information in a timely manner.

FAKE PAGES

WHO creates them?
Typically, actors aiming to undermine Navy credibility impersonate official organizational pages on social media.

WHAT to do:
- **Verify official pages:** Get your pages verified to establish credibility with your followers. Contact CHINFO at NavySM@us.navy.mil to have official pages verified; CHINFO will assist with the process.
- **Report fake pages:**
  - **Platform:** Use the social media platform's reporting tool.
  - **CHINFO:** Email links of fake pages to NavySM@us.navy.mil.

RESOURCES

All resources are available at Navy.mil/SocialMedia.

Social Media DoD Instruction 5400.17 – Covers DoD requirements for managing official social media.

Navy Social Media Handbook – A Navy guide on social media to support commands, Sailors and families.

Navy Social Media Instructional Videos – Videos covering social media best practices, identity management, and DoD policy.

KEY PLATFORM OPTIONS

Facebook
Social networking site founded in 2004, allowing users to post comments, share images, link content, chat live, and watch short videos or live streams.
- Monthly Users: 2.9 billion
- Gender: 54% female; 46% male
- Core Age Group: 25-34
- Key Audiences: Families and veterans
- Content Type: Video, imagery and text

Instagram
Photo and video-sharing app launched in 2010, featuring easy content sharing and hashtagging to reach broader audiences.
- Monthly Users: 1 billion
- Gender: 51% female; 49% male
- Core Age Group: 18-24
- Key Audiences: Younger generations
- Content Type: Vertical video and compelling imagery

LinkedIn
Social media platform launched in 2003, popular among professionals, entrepeneurs and academia for sharing job opportunities and expanding networks.
- Monthly Users: 90 million
- Gender: 57% male; 43% female
- Core Age Group: 25-35
- Key Audiences: Business professionals and college grads
- Content Type: Thought pieces, white papers, video and imagery

YouTube
Free video-sharing website established in 2005 and popular across all demographics.
- Monthly Users: 2.6 billion
- Gender: 54% male; 46% female
- Core Age Group: All
- Key Audiences: All
- Content Type: Engaging video content, including how-to's

X
Founded in 2006 and formerly known as Twitter, this news and social networking site allows users to share and follow trending information.
- Monthly Users: 436 million
- Gender: 73% male; 27% female
- Core Age Group: 25-34
- Key Audiences: Media, Congress, industry and key influencers
- Content Type: Imagery, short video, text and links