

# BLOGGING TIPS

## One Voice Blog Requirements

- Must be 400-700 words
- 1 to 4 hi-res images & captions (preferably 640x480 pixels)
- Engaging title—no more than eight words
- Short bio of the author at the end of the post. If you are affiliated with a PTA, mention your role and PTA school, district or region. (1-2 brief sentences)

**Blogging** allows your local PTAs to have a consistent stream of fresh, timely, new content to tweet, share on Facebook, use in your e-newsletter and so on. Blogs allow PTAs to tell their stories and engage with their audiences on a deeper level than tweets or Facebook updates.

Source: [SproutSocial](#) (2012).



## Writing Style

- Understand your **audience**. Make sure your **story** is engaging and relevant.
- Use findings from **research reports** and **statistics** to strengthen the post. Don't forget to check and cite your facts.
- Try using a famous **quote**, or relate your story to a **trending topic** in the news.
- **Hyperlink** text to related articles and content useful to the leader.
- **Keep it short**; avoid jargon and use bullets or sub-headlines to breakdown content.
- Write the post in **first person** as the "blogger's voice."
- Use **images** or **videos** to enhance your visual story and give credit to the owner.
- Inform, inspire and interact! End your post with a "**call to action**."
- **Monitor** your comments at least 24-48 hours after your latest post. You should allow comments, but you have the right to remove them as well.

## Did You Know?

A [study from the Pew Research Center](#) revealed that three-quarters of online parents use Facebook, as do 70% of non-parents.



**Facebook** is a great way to do social media marketing for your PTA, especially parents. The platform allows you to promote your PTA, connect with people online and share what is important to your members.

### Post a Disclosure Statement

Set up rules of etiquette for your PTA's Facebook page so that everyone knows the rules and can help make it a safe place for sharing information. Check out [National PTA's Social Media Policy](#) for a sample policy disclosure.

### Facebook Page or Group Page

National PTA recommends every unit [create a page](#) because they are much easier to update and reinforces our brand.

Unlike pages, groups do not allow you to add applications for promotions or advertising. Groups are often created for personal discussion rather than representing your PTA's brand as a whole.

Don't have a Facebook for your PTA yet? [Learn how to create a page](#) and be sure to assign at least two admins for the platform.

### Promote Posts

With Facebook's [new algorithm](#), engagement on your Facebook page may be low. If you have budget to spare, try ["boosting" your posts](#), or create an ad campaign for special annual events or tools that you want to promote.

### Schedule Your Posts Strategically

Too many posts will cause people to hide or unlike your Facebook page. Ideally you should not post more than twice a day. However, your [Facebook's Insights](#) will show when your audience is most active during the time of the day. Use it to your advantage.

### Be Fun and Informative

Need inspirational ideas for posts? Try these different types of posts for your Facebook:

- PTA announcements
- Behind-the-scenes
- Question of the day
- Inspirational quotes
- Infographics
- Holidays/current events
- Discounts/freebies
- Blog posts & news articles

# TWITTER TIPS

**Twitter** is a multi-usage platform that organizations and businesses use to share information about a product, brand or program. Using only 140 characters, your tweets can include a link to any web content (blog post, webpage, PDF document, etc.) or a photograph or video.

Source: [Social Media Examiner](#) (2013).

## Write Clearly + Concisely

Stop the grammar errors. Many Tweeters automatically think it's OK to recreate the dictionary by shortening words with abbreviations. Tweet with clarity, proper punctuation and be succinct—you only have 140 characters!

## Post Frequently

Twitter is fast-paced, which can cut the lifespan of a tweet drastically. For some local units that may be too overwhelming. **Twitter is most active from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.** in any given time zone so focus your attention on tweeting during that time span and tweet or retweet 2-8 times daily.

## Be the Expert

Establish yourself as the expert in your industry and post/retweet helpful content and resources that are not your own. Tweet trending articles and share popular blog posts from your favorite newspapers, bloggers and partner organizations.

## Always Include a Link

Tweets with links have an **86% higher retweet rate**. Your link should have a “call to action” strategy. Take the user to your website. Ask the user to register for a webinar and link a tweet to the registration site.

## Use Hashtags Strategically

Hashtags (#) allow Tweeters to discuss issues and events on Twitter in real time. They also help to organize tweets, spread information and find new friends. Tweets should not have more than one or two hashtags.

## Quick Tips

- Shorten your links with Bit.ly or Ow.ly to track statistics
- Preschedule content ahead of time using HootSuite, Tweetdeck or Buffer
- Catch a user's attention with an image in your tweet. Photos should be at least **525 x 262** pixels wide.



# INSTAGRAM TIPS



**Instagram** is a fun and quirky way to share your life through a series of pictures and short 15-second videos. Organizations use this platform to share their stories in a visually appealing way to the world. From behind-the-scenes photos, to beautifully designed infographics and branded content—Instagram brings that experience to life!

Source: [Instagram](#). (2015).

## Study Your Target Audience

It's important to know who your audience is and how active your followers are on the platform. There is no Instagram algorithm like Facebook, but post it when your audience is most active.

Check out [Iconsquare](#) to learn when your Instagram audience is most active. You will be able to view a graph displaying the best times to post.

## Ask Engaging Questions

Instead of writing a simple caption stating the obvious, switch it up a bit and ask a question. The best way to have an active presence is to engage with your Instagram community.

## Hashtags Are Your Best Friend

Hashtags (#) are being used on all social media platforms to label content on a specific topic. There actually is no real social media rule for this, but [study shows](#) that captions with 11+ hashtags get the highest interactions on their Instagram photos.

**Quick Tip:** Save a note on your phone with a list of relevant hashtags that you can easily copy and paste at once with your caption.

## Post Content that Sets Your Platform Apart

Try to not post the same content repeatedly across all platforms. National PTA's Instagram secret: we post PTA spotlights and behind-the-scene happenings at our office headquarters.

## Free Photo Editing Apps

Instagram's filters can get pretty boring. Yes, we said it. Believe it or not, Instagram was created off the idea that it can be transformed into a professional-looking photo right from your smartphone. Use these additional apps to jazz up your photos:

- VSCOCAM
- Snapseed
- Squareready

## Free Instagram Scheduling Apps

- HootSuite
- Latergramme
- ScheduGram



# PINTEREST TIPS

**Pinterest** is a platform that allows users to organize and share images, called “pins,” to a themed board. Boards can range from any topic from food recipes to wallpaper patterns to even books for teenagers. Did you know Pinterest is **one of the Internet’s top search engines** in the ranks with Google and Facebook?

PTAs can use this platform as an extension of their community to pin interests, tools and other visuals to support their message.

Source: [Mashable](#) (2013).

## Your Profile

On your Pinterest profile, make sure you fill out the information as it is geared towards your PTA.

- Upload your local unit’s official PTA logo for your **avatar**.
- Make sure your **username** and **headline name** are similar to each other.
- Your profile’s **description** serves as your PTA’s bio. You only have 160 characters so make it fun and quirky!
- Always add the **location** of your PTA local unit. Even if you’re a state PTA, include the city where your offices are located.
- Include a **link** of your PTA’s website. Don’t have one? Add your school’s website or Facebook page.

## Pin Your Content More than Once

In addition to pinning every day, if you’re looking to increase impressions and followers, then pin your pins over and over again. This means if you pin something on Monday, pin it again two weeks later. But make sure you are pinning things in between!

## Upload Original Content with a Tall, Vertical Picture

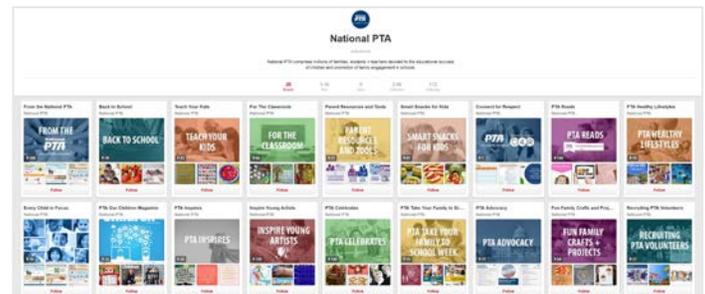
If you want your pins to be repinned and noticed, then you need to think twice about the look of your images.

**Fact: Pins that are vertical flow better with the Pinterest experience than horizontal ones,** making it more visible and popular to pin than other sized images. See our Social Media Graphics Tips for more info.

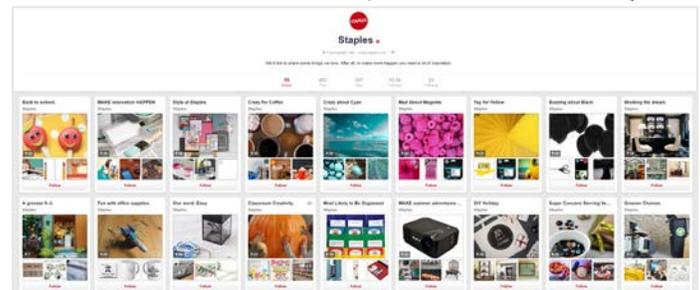
## Choose Board Covers with a Consistent Visual Theme

Pinterest in itself is organized. Create a consisted look & feel so your Pinterest profile has a strong brand.

See National PTA’s Pinterest profile for example:



Now, let’s look at another branded Pinterest page, but see how the covers are presented differently.



The key is to keep it clean, consistent and cohesive.

**YouTube** is the social website that lets people upload online videos and participate in free video sharing, commenting, liking, and reposting. YouTube allows registered users to upload videos and share video clips online and share with others.

Source: Mansfield, Heather (2011) A How to Guide for NonProfits: Social Media for Social Good.

### **Create Your Story**

The main goal of YouTube is to tell a story with video, music & pictures. You can share this content with your PTA members, parents, teachers, school administrators and your community.

### **Make Your Videos Searchable**

Be sure to tag your videos so they are searchable by PTA members, parents, teachers and anyone searching on YouTube.

### **Enable Comments**

Social media is about engaging and creating a conversation, so be sure to enable comments on your videos.

### **Create Playlists**

YouTube playlists are very effective tool that video content creators should take advantage of. This feature helps you organize videos in themed playlists and categories. Have a webisode series? News clips? Recorded webinars? You can create playlists for them all!

### **Always Have a Description**

The description you give your channel should be short and simple. No one wants to read on YouTube—they want to see a story.



# LINKEDIN TIPS

**LinkedIn** is a professional networking site designed to connect with professionals in your career industry, classmates, colleagues and other contacts in the business community.

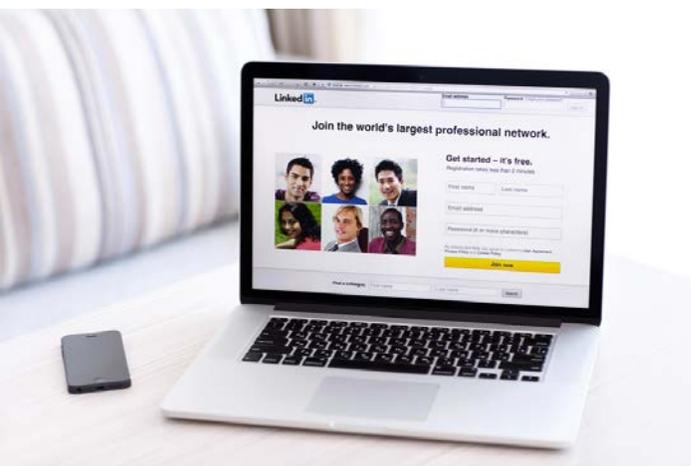
LinkedIn groups are an effective way for like-minded professionals in the PTA community to engage, share expert content and find information about the topics they are interested in.

## About Groups

- Anyone can create a LinkedIn group by clicking the “Interests” tab in their main navigation, then “Groups” subpage.
- If you create the group, you’re automatically the group owner unless you’ve **transferred ownership** of the group to someone else.
- As a group owner, you have the authority and control to assign admin roles to be a **manager** or **moderator**. **See details** about admin roles.
- As a group owner or manager, you have several options for approving members for your group:
  - Send an invite
  - Pre-approve by individual email address
  - Manually approve requests
  - Member to member invites

## How to Moderate

- As a group owner or manager, you have the right to control the conversations in your community.
- Your group’s admins can delete conversations and/or comments. Users who comment also have the right to delete their own comments, but not anybody else.
- When the conversation or comment is removed, it is no longer visible to anyone.
- You create the rules. Here are general rules to follow:
  - Members of this group may not always agree but are expected to treat each other in a professional manner with kindness and respect.
  - Do not use defamatory, abusive, profane or threatening language.
  - Do not post advertisement or promotion of products or services such as internal documents and/or fliers.
  - No personal attacks on anyone inside or outside the group
  - No spamming, which includes sending multiple unsolicited messages to group members.



# SOCIAL MEDIA GRAPHICS TIPS

## Facebook

Facebook Post: 800 x 800 pixels  
Facebook Ad: 1200 x 627 pixels  
Facebook Cover: 851 x 315 pixels

## Pinterest

Pinterest Graphic: 735 x 1102 pixels

## Twitter

Twitter Post: 1024 x 512 pixels  
Twitter Cover: 1500 x 500 pixels

## Instagram

Instagram Post: 800 x 800 pixels

## YouTube

YouTube Channel Header: 2560 x 1440 pixels  
YouTube Video Thumbnail: 1280 x 720 pixels

# Canva

Need to jazz up your visual branding? Create custom photos for various social media platforms, print collateral and more using Canva.

It's easy-to-use and fun! Be your own DIY graphic designer! Visit [Canva.com](https://www.canva.com) for more info.