

Social Media for Organists

A workshop for the 2017 AGO Mid-Atlantic Regional Convention
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This document may be accessed online (where all the links are clickable), and may be updated after the workshop:

<http://bit.ly/SocMedOrgan>

Some guiding principles:

- There's no wrong way to do social media.
- Like anything else, the more you engage with it the more comfortable you will feel doing it and the better you'll be.
- Whether you're writing as yourself or as an organization be authentic.
- Don't be afraid to try new things or try new services - Social Media is always evolving, and this presentation may be woefully out of date by next year, next week, or even tomorrow.
- Share your knowledge and inspire passion for the organ

Channel of Choice:

For information to reach your targeted audience it is increasingly important to communicate over multiple channels. Communicate using email, website, and social media channels to reach the largest number of people.

Facebook:

- Timeline – individual account

Pages:

Used by businesses, individuals, and organizations to present themselves to the Facebook audience.

- Facebook Pages are visible to everyone on the internet by default.
- Fans can like the page
- Fans can follow the page
- Fans can share posts from the page
- Fans can comment on posts in timeline but not initiate
- Fans can post to the Visitor Post section which appears on the sidebar of the page

Facebook Help Pages for Pages:

https://www.facebook.com/help/282489752085908/?helpref=hc_fnav

Groups:

Groups are used to facilitate group communication and allow members to share amongst themselves and with others.

When you create a group, you choose from 3 privacy settings: **Public, Closed and Secret** for the group. These settings affect who can join the group and who can see posts.

Facebook Help Pages for Groups:

https://www.facebook.com/help/1686671141596230/?helpref=hc_fnav

Effective Facebook Posts

- A good call to action
- A funny relevant message that resonates with your audience
- Content that sparks emotion (or controversy)
- A picture is worth a thousand words.

What's old is new again: a philosophy for digital longevity

- Don't put all of your work in the ephemera of Social Media. It's here today, gone tomorrow. Have a basis in a website – this could be in the form of a blog.
- Neither Facebook nor Twitter is indexed by Google. Not even setting your Facebook post privacy setting to public will cause it to appear in Google searches.
- It's almost goes without saying: your website is always open, 24/7.
- Social media has a limited “shelf life.” If you share a great post on Facebook it will be lost in a few days. Make sure that writing, even photos have a more permanent home on the web.
- Your email and social media channels can drive people to your website
- On your website: embed social media content as much as you can, especially Twitter. This keeps a particular website a bit more “fresh” without you needing to edit the webpage itself.
 - Example: King's College, Cambridge
 - The Choir tweets the contents of their Music List at <https://twitter.com/KingsMusicList>
This twitter feed is embedded on their website at <http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/events/chapel-services.html>
 - The Choir Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/KingsCollegeChoir/> is embedded on the Choir page: <http://www.kings.cam.ac.uk/choir/index.html>

Blog

- The original “social media”
- You can start free, standalone blog in minutes
- You can also incorporate a blog into a larger, personal, or professional website (e.g. Squarespace, Wix.com, etc.)
- If you work for a congregation or other organization, they may be willing to host your blog on the organization's webpage.
 - Example: David Ouzts at Church of the Holy Communion, Memphis: Notes Blog <http://www.holycommunion.org/notes>
 - A previous iteration of this blog was hosted on Wordpress: <https://holycommunionsings.wordpress.com/>

Twitter

- Short text messages of 140 characters, plus images or video
- On Twitter: Break beyond the 140 character limit
 - DON'T link to other social media platforms like Facebook
 - Login/browser frustration: anyone who is unable to see your content on the first click will likely give up
 - DO link good old-fashioned web-pages that anyone can access. These pages can have more detail or develop your thoughts more fully
 - DO tweet pictures
 - DO tweet video

Instagram

- Photo-based
- much more “for entertainment only”.
- You get ONE link with Instagram, so it's important to get it right. It's the link in your profile. Set it to your homepage or your blog.
- Instagram User: Christopher Houlihan <https://www.instagram.com/houliorganist/>

Soundcloud

- Easy way to make your recordings available.
- First three hours of sound are free
- After that, you may want to buy a pro plan (or open another free account)
- Allows you (and others) to see how many people are listening to your sounds
- Embed these sound files on your website!
 - You can embed individual sound files
 - Or create lists to order your tracks and embed them as a group
 - Example at <http://stpetersepiscopal.org/music/>

Hashtags

- Use hashtags to help others who want to explore the topic, location, event, etc.
- You can use hashtags on almost every social media platform.
- Use hashtags to help expand your audience! Let others find what you are sharing.
- Sample tweet with hashtags:
“Really looking forward to Stefan Engels's recital at St. Paul's tonight. #RVA #Rosales #AGORVA #KargElert #Reger”
 - #RVA = the location, people who want to find out what’s going on in Richmond, Virginia
 - #Rosales = organ builder, people who are interested in Rosales organs
 - #AGORVA = hashtag for this convention! Might explored by convention attendees, or others who want to follow the convention from afar
 - #KargElert and #Reger = composers, might be explored by fans of their music
 - Note: “KargElert” is an intentional rendering of Karg-Elert in hashtag form. Hashtags must be only letters and numbers (no hyphens, apostrophes, or other special characters)

Other things you may find useful

- **Live video** - always an option with Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram
- **Adobe Spark** - creates images, videos combined with your text and specifically sized for Twitter, Facebook or Instagram
- **bit.ly** - Used to be necessary for Twitter, but now Twitter is doing a good job of automatically shortening long links. Now useful in other ways, like an easy-to-type link for the online version of this very document (<http://bit.ly/SocMedOrgan>)!

Put Social Media work for you.

- Maybe the idea of tweeting something every day, week, or even every month is overwhelming
- Fear not! Look for ways to automate and integrate.
- Many of these services already work well together. For example, uploading a new recording to Soundcloud? You will have an option to share this on Facebook and Twitter when you publish.

Buffer

- Buffer (buffer.com) is a powerful tool for scheduling content, and can be used for multiple accounts on different platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, Google+, Pinterest)

IFTTT (If this, then that)

- IFTTT (which stands for “If this, then that; ifttt.com) is an automation service for social media and other devices. Some highly recommended examples of ways to use IFTTT
 - When you publish a new blog post have it be automatically sent to Facebook & Twitter
 - If you upload a new photo to Instagram have IFTTT share the photo as a native twitter photo (the image itself will appear rather than just a link)

Make friends. It’s about being “social!”

- If you automate, don’t let your social media become robotic. Be sure to engage!
- Aim your content at those who you want to read it, but also befriend others who might be eager to amplify your content.
 - Work with your congregation/organization
 - Your denomination on local, regional, national levels
 - Arts organizations in your area (your AGO chapter, perhaps?)

Appendix 1 - Social Media Explained with Donuts



Source: <https://www.instagram.com/p/nm695/> (instagram user douglaswray, 3 February 2012)

Appendix 2 - Glossary

Adobe Spark (spark.adobe.com) - creates images, videos, specifically sized for Twitter, Facebook or Instagram

Blog - short for weblog, a website of posts arranged in reverse chronological order (the most recent post being at the top)

Blogger (blogger.com) - free blogging service

Bit.ly (bit.ly) - shortens links.

Buffer (buffer.com) - tool for scheduling content, and can be used for multiple accounts on different platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram)

Facebook (facebook.com) - social media and social networking service

Google+ (plus.google.com/) - don't use this unless you're a Google employee (see Appendix 1)

Hashtag - a word or phrase preceded by a hash or pound sign (#) and used to identify messages on a specific topic.

IFTTT (ifttt.com) - "If this, then that," an automation service for social media and other devices.

Instagram - photo sharing site, many users apply "filters" to edit their photos before sharing.

LinkedIn - professional social networking site, seems to be more suited to the corporate world than the organist world

Soundcloud (soundcloud.com) - sound-sharing website, great for musicians.