Social media: Getting started

This page offers social media assistance for creating social media sites for extension offices and programs. For assistance with social media strategy and planning, contact Laura Lindsey, marketing coordinator, at lindseylau@missouri.edu.

Developed to help MU Extension employees use social media in a way that complies with university and extension policy, these guidelines further and support extension's mission of providing reliable, research-based information to Missourians.

Social media communications tools are rapidly changing. The immediacy and participatory nature of the tools make them valuable ways to reach our customers. However, because of these same qualities, social media accounts demand regular attention. Be prepared to monitor and adjust to application changes as they come.

Before setting up a new social media for your county, region or program, make sure there isn't already an existing one. If there is an existing account, update the admin permissions to that account instead of creating a new account.

Learning the social medium

Once you have decided to use a particular social media service, learn about how it works. If you have used the service as an individual, make sure you understand the differences of using it as a business or organization and what options you have. Read the terms of service, and familiarize yourself with the application's help section. Explore how other organizations or extension offices have used that type of social media.

Start small, with one or two accounts, rather than trying to use every social media tool available. Only take on what you know you can maintain. You or someone else in your office must be able to interact on the account every day. The best plan would include multiple administrators on an account who can cover in the event of absences and busy work times.

Setting up your organizational account

Facebook is the most popular social media platform for MU Extension. Below are some specific guidelines for Facebook.

1. Use an approved, branded profile and cover photo. Designs can be found in a Box folder. Keeping our identity consistent across MU Extension will help users recognize our organization.

2. Name your account with this convention: for counties, MU Extension in Example County (e.g., MU Extension in Boone County), for regional offices, MU Extension in the Example Region (e.g., MU Extension in the Northwest Region) or for program offices MU Extension — Office Name (e.g., MU Extension — Human Environmental Sciences). Add your user name with this convention: @MUExtBooneCo.

Follow the instructions below to change your account or user name. You will need to be an admin to request a name change.

a. Click About on the left side of your page.

b. Click Edit next to your page's name.

c. Enter a new page name and click Continue.

d. Review your request and click Request Change.

e. To edit user name, click Edit next to user name and follow same instructions.

4. Add muextension@gmail.com as an administrator on your account so the communications team can help you with the account when you need it.
To add Admins:

a) On the blue menu bar at the top of the page, click on the icon and page name to go to the main page.

b) Directly below the blue Facebook menu bar, there is the page menu bar with options including Page, Inbox, Notifications, etc. On the right side of that bar, click Settings.

c) Click on Page Roles on the left menu.

d) Start typing muextension@gmail.com in the Assign a New Page Role bar. Once the "Mu Extension" account pops up, click on it.

e) Change the dropdown at the right of the box to Admin.

f) Click Add.

5. Complete the “about” section in your social media account to give people more information about MU Extension and your office. In the section, include a description of your office, and note that it is part of University of Missouri Extension. If you can add a street address, make sure you add “Missouri” to the address. The following text can be used to describe MU Extension:

Live. Learn. Grow. Through science-based information, we help Missourians solve problems and make informed decisions. Find out how we can improve your life at [extension.missouri.edu](http://extension.missouri.edu). University of Missouri Extension uses science-based knowledge to engage people in understanding change, solving problems and making informed decisions. More than a million Missourians each year turn to MU Extension for practical advice on competing in the global marketplace, balancing the responsibilities of work and family, protecting natural resources and adapting to new technologies.