



## Volunteer Responsibilities Description

### District Communications Committee:

### District Communications and Media Chair

**Description:** Provides leadership to the District Communications and Media Committee

**Goal:** To communicate the District's Scouting story to the community; to communicate Scouting activities to units, Scouts, Scouters, parents, and non-Scouts looking to join Scouting in the district

**Reports to:** District Program Chair

#### Responsibilities:

- Serves as a member of the District Committee.
- Attends the following meetings:
  - Monthly District Committee meetings (or submits a written report on the progress as well as anticipated challenges and needs to the District Program Chair prior to each meeting)
  - Triannual Council Coordinated, when requested
  - Annual Key Leader's Conference
  - Monthly Roundtables
- Keeps the District Program Chair regularly informed of progress.
- Recruits (in consultation with the District Program Chair), provides staff development and leads top volunteers to serve on the Communications and Social Media Committee.
  - Members of the Communications and Media Committee can include:
    - District Webmaster, Social Media Coordinator
    - District Newsletter Editor, Scouting in the News Coordinator
    - District Photographer
  - Works to ensure that all positions are filled with capable, dedicated volunteers.
  - Acts immediately to replace volunteers that resign or become inactive and serves in empty position until it is filled.
- Supports local and national Scouting policy.
- Becomes acquainted with the editors and requirements of community newspapers, subdivision newsletters, church bulletins, and other local publications.
- Notifies the Council Marketing Director of district activities and events which are newsworthy and could be promoted to major media.
- Empowers units to tell the Scouting story to the community.
- Encourages units to earn the Scouting in the News Award: [www.samhoustonbsa.org/leader\\_resources/unit\\_resources/scouting\\_in\\_the\\_news](http://www.samhoustonbsa.org/leader_resources/unit_resources/scouting_in_the_news)
- Ensures that the district website is constantly updated and follows council and national guidelines.
- Ensures that district social media strategy is up to date and follows council and national guidelines.
- Ensures that each district activity or event is effectively promoted on a timely basis and works with the various District Committee members to promote District, Council, and National information, such as:
 

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Activities</li> <li>➤ Advancement, awards, and recognitions</li> <li>➤ Calendar</li> <li>➤ Camping</li> <li>➤ Conservation</li> <li>➤ District Committee and Commissioner meetings</li> <li>➤ Friends of Scouting</li> <li>➤ Good Turn for America</li> <li>➤ Guide to Safe Scouting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Order of the Arrow</li> <li>➤ Popcorn</li> <li>➤ Recharter and Journey to Excellence Awards</li> <li>➤ Recruiting and Membership</li> <li>➤ Roundtable</li> <li>➤ Scouting for Food</li> <li>➤ Scout Fair</li> <li>➤ Service opportunities</li> <li>➤ Training</li> <li>➤ Webelos to Scout Transition</li> </ul>
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**Length of Term:** One year (beginning from the Annual District Business meeting) with reappointed on an annual basis.

**How Selected:** Selected by District Program Chair and approved by the District Chair in consultation with the District Executive.

**Attributes:** Communicator, Writer, Enthusiastic, Creative, Recruiter, Marketer, Proactive, Story Teller, Understands Social Media, Embraces Technology, Organized, Listener, Sets and Follows deadlines, Passionate, Reliable, Web design background, Positive attitude towards District/Council/Scouting

# SHAC Privacy Policy

[www.samhoustonbsa.org/privacy\\_policy.php](http://www.samhoustonbsa.org/privacy_policy.php)

This website is operated by the Sam Houston Area Council of Boy Scouts. This site's main goal is to provide a communication medium for its member scouts, prospective scouts, parents troop leaders, volunteers and donors.

**What personal information we collect on this website:** This website will use interactive forms to collect personal information and BSA-oriented information. This information may be released to other local Scout councils and/or to the National Council. The information will also be used for verification purposes, registration, historical data purposes, and trend-analysis. This site will create cookies on a visitor's computer. In addition, some of the eCommerce applications will send information to third-party vendors or connect to third-party vendors for processing credit card transactions and other monetary transactions. Children 12 and under should not enter data via this site's interactive applications.

**What we do with personal information we gather online:** While we take reasonable precautions to protect the privacy of this information, its security is not guaranteed.

**Notice to Parents: Policies Regarding Children** Portions of this site are directed to children ages 12 and under. Children 12 and under are not permitted to enter data through this Web site's interactive applications. Parents and guardians of children ages 12 and under should enter the data for such children. Such information is used only for the purposes of providing information for Scouting programs (events, unit registration, chartering, and rechartering, camp registration, merit badge registration, etc.) We will not solicit or collect detailed information, such as addresses and telephone numbers, without the consent of a parent or guardian. The Sam Houston Area Council of Boy Scouts does not and will not condone a child's participation in any online activity or the child's disclosure of more personal information than is necessary to participate in that activity.

This site does not use online chat or message board communication per recommended guidelines from National.

Written parental consent is required before youth members may be granted access to any editors-only area.

Children's full names with a photo of the child should not appear in this site. If you find a child's full name with a photo of the child is accidentally placed on a page in this site, please report the error to the content owner, listed at the bottom of the page, or to the Director, Marketing & Communications.

We would like to encourage you to speak with your child about using the Internet. Keeping their personal information private regardless of what site they are visiting is important and should be discussed with them directly.

Youth Protection Training is available on the National BSA Web site.

**Confirmation and Corrections:** You may confirm the information we have collected about you or your child at any time by contacting us at 713-865-9111      713-865-9111 . If any information we collect about you or your child is incorrect or inaccurate, you may have us correct that information by contacting us at writing to us at Sam Houston Area Council, BSA, Webmaster, 2225 N Loop W, Houston, TX 77008-1311. Please provide your contact information and details of the information that must be corrected.

**Links to Other Sites:** This website provides links to websites that are not under the control of the Sam Houston Area of Boy Scouts. If you visit one of these sites, you should review its privacy policy and terms of use. We are not responsible for the actions or policies of other companies' and organizations' websites.

**Changes to this Policy:** Changes to this privacy policy will be posted to this website at least ten (10) days prior to any change going into effect. Please check back periodically to ensure that you have the current information on our policies. Regardless of a change in our policies, those changes will not be made effective retroactively to effect your prior visits. However, any changes appearing here will effect any information collected from you after their effective date.

**Contacting us:** If you have any questions about this privacy policy or any practices used on this site, please feel free to contact us at: 2225 N Loop W Houston, Texas 77008-1311 Phone: (713) 865-9111      (713) 865-9111      Fax: (713) 659-6729

[Lynda.Sanders@shac.org](mailto:Lynda.Sanders@shac.org) (Director, Marketing & Communications)

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# Unit Web site Guidelines

[www.scouting.org/scoutsource/Marketing/Resources/UnitWeb.aspx](http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/Marketing/Resources/UnitWeb.aspx)

We've long recognized that unit sites created by individuals at the unit level of Scouting are essentially personal, and therefore beyond the National Council's control or liability. We do offer advisory guidelines to those who publish Scouting-related sites on their own responsibility, and we urge local councils to take the same approach. These guidelines are established to help avoid several common mistakes.

**Protection of personal information** pertaining to our youth members and volunteers should be our greatest concern. This organization has used COPPA, the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act, as its standard in this area. You can read the details on compliance at <http://www.coppa.org/comply.htm>. It would be a good practice to share them with unit-level publishers in your council.

A second concern about individual unit sites is **copyright infringement**. Sadly, photos, music, and video are commonly reused on the Web without permission. Plagiarism is also common. Such practices violate the ethics of Scouting. They are also violations of law, and could expose the publishers legally.

Our third concern is **commercialism**. We don't allow ads on council sites. We recognize that "free" Web services often used to create unit-level sites may contain advertising. This practice may reflect poorly on the Scouting brand, and should be avoided. A more serious concern would be sites that engage in any fund-raising activities not previously approved by their local council. Any independent sales, solicitation, OR collection of donations is prohibited by our bylaws and charter agreements.

1. The content of the unit site must be appropriate to the Scouting movement.
2. The unit site cannot link to any sites that contain material that is not appropriate to the Scouting movement.
3. The unit site should not contain any advertisements or commercial endorsements.
4. The unit site cannot engage in the electronic sale of BSA Supply Division merchandise or competing products.
5. The unit site cannot replicate any BSA publication currently for sale through the Supply Division.
6. Unit sites must abide by all laws regarding copyrights, trademarks, and other intellectual property, and by those pertaining to the Internet.
7. Unit sites must consider the safety and privacy of their members and participants by obtaining the necessary permissions to release information about or images of any individual.
8. Unit sites cannot engage in fund-raising except as directly approved by, and under the supervision of, the local council.

# 5 Ways Brands Can Deal with Negative Facebook Posts

<http://hightalk.net/2011/04/04/5-ways-brands-can-deal-with-negative-facebook-posts/>

Recently my team helped launch a consumer brand's Facebook page. We did it in conjunction with a new product announcement and a partnership with a major brand that already had several hundred thousand fans on their Facebook page.

Everything went terrific. But within two hours we got our first negative post on Facebook. It was rather scathing. And it was from an employee.

Now you can argue until the cows come home the wisdom of a worker lambasting their own employer on Facebook – *on the day of its launch no less*. But my client was well prepared because we had discussed negative posts and what to do with them many times.

We had a plan in place. Because negative Facebook posts aren't an **IF** they are a **WHEN**. Every brand – every person, in fact – has to deal with them sooner or later.

Here's are five ways to deal with negativity on your brand's Facebook page:

## 1. Ignore It.

Believe it or not, you don't have to respond to every negative comment, especially if you are a brand with thousands or millions of fans. If you get a lot of traffic then the negative post will likely drop off the front page rather quickly. Responding to a negative post can legitimize it or invite others to jump in and escalate it. So NOT responding is an option and one that should be considered, especially if it is one of those off-the-wall or bizarre negative comments.

## 2. Delete It.

If a negative post goes over the line or violates your brand's standards – then don't hesitate to delete it. There's no reason why a brand has to keep a profanity-laced tirade or a personal attack published on its pages. It is best to explain why you are deleting the post and subsequently remind fans that there is an engagement guideline for your page (and if you don't have a set of posting standards then you should rectify that immediately).

## 3. Let Your Fans Handle It.

In the example I gave above, my client actually didn't have to respond. Within minutes several other fans had posted comments defending my client's brand and criticizing the negative poster for unfair comments – and posting a comment about their own employer on the wrong venue. One of the best values of having a Facebook page is that this is the place where a brand's biggest advocates gather and they can be your best defenders when negativity erupts.

## 4. Redirect It.

Facebook is generally managed by communications and marketing people. They often can't answer specific questions about things like product specifications, billing disputes or late orders. Many times posters on Facebook aren't really trying to be negative at all, but have a problem that needs to be solved. So help them solve the problem by redirecting them to someone that can help them. Provide a name or a phone number with the assurance that you've forwarded their complaint to a person waiting for them to call or to email.

## 5. Deal With It.

If all else fails then you're going to have to deal with it. First make sure you have a crisis plan in place and have already considered what kinds of problems and negativity you might expect on Facebook. Think it through and actually write them out as a guide to use in the future.

When you get a negative post then address the concern head on. If the poster is wrong – tell them so and why they are. The key is to be polite and professional. Don't get sucked into the emotion. Don't be drawn into a flame war. Avoid sarcasm and attempts at humor. And above all be honest and transparent. It is amazing how the most volatile complainer can pull a 180 when addressed openly, honestly and respectfully.

# BSA Social Media Guidelines

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<http://www.scouting.org/scoutsource/marketing/resources/socialmedia.aspx>

**[Note: It is not the goal of this document to provide a step-by-step “how to” on creating and using the specific features of social media channels. Such guides already exist and can be found elsewhere. Additionally, social media changes regularly, so this document reflects the current guidelines as determined by the BSA and is subject to modifications and amendments from time to time as required.]**

## INTRODUCTION

It’s an exciting time to be part of the BSA for many reasons. One of those is that new communication vehicles now enable current and past Scouts and Scouters, as well those who are interested in participating or are just interested in Scouting in general, to communicate directly with each other about Scouting. Online social media tools such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube have made it possible for virtually anyone with an Internet connection to create and be part of online communities where people can discuss Scouting and share stories, photos, videos, and other types of media.

Although using social media is not a Scouting activity, their use to connect with others interested in Scouting can be a very positive experience. But the creation and maintenance of these channels requires forethought, care, and responsibility. For that reason, the Boy Scouts of America has developed the following guidelines to help you navigate the use of social media channels. These guidelines are a complement to the BSA’s existing Youth Protection policies and training.

## SOCIAL MEDIA AND YOUTH PROTECTION

First, everyone should review and strictly adhere to the terms of service and existing guidelines outlined by each individual social media channel (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.). As is true for participation in Scouting activities, all Scouts and adult leaders should abide by the guidelines outlined in the Scout Oath and Law when participating in social networking. As with a Scouting activity, safety and Youth Protection should be a key focus. Staying true to the commitment of the BSA to be an advocate for youth and to keep children and their privacy safe, both online and off, should always be at the forefront of any considerations where social media usage is concerned.

To help ensure that all communication on social media channels remains positive and safe, these channels must be public, and all communication on or through them must be public. This enables administrators to monitor all communication and help ensure there is no inappropriate communication between adult leaders and Scouts or between Scouts themselves. Therefore, no private channels (e.g., private Facebook groups or invite-only YouTube channels) are acceptable in helping to administer the Scouting program. Private channels and private communication put both the youth and you at risk. If you feel the information you seek to share via social media channels should not be shared in public, you should not share that information via social media.

Abiding by the “two deep” leadership policy that governs all Scouting activities also applies to use of social media. Two-deep leadership means two registered adult leaders, or one registered leader and a parent of a participating Scout or other adult, one of whom must be 21 years of age or older, are required for all trips and outings.

As it relates to social media, two-deep leadership means there should be no private messages and no one-on-one direct contact through email, Facebook messages, Twitter direct messaging, chats, instant messaging (Google Messenger, AIM, etc.), or other similar messaging features provided through social media sites. All communication between adults and youth should take place in a public forum (e.g. the Facebook wall), or at a bare minimum, electronic communication between adults and youth should always include one or more authorized adults openly “copied” (included) on the message or message thread.

While all communication should be public and leaders should follow the two-deep rule while communicating via social media channels, it is recommended that as you and members of your group create personal social media profiles, the personal information on these profiles should be kept private (e.g., do not display your phone number, address, or personal email address on these profiles). It is recommended that any Scouts with personal profiles for social media make those profiles private so the Scout’s personal information is not accessible by the public. In creating personal profiles, everyone should familiarize themselves with and abide by the terms of service of the sites where they create and maintain personal profiles.

## INTERNET SAFETY GUIDELINES

Any Scout units that plan to use social media should share the following Internet safety guidelines with Scouts, parents, and leaders, and all Scouts should abide by the following Internet safety guidelines and personal protection rules:

- ▶ Keep online conversations with everyone in public places, not in email.
- ▶ Do not give anyone online your real last name, phone numbers at home or school, your parents’ workplaces, or the name or location of your school or home address unless you have your parents’ permission first. Never give your password to anyone but a parent or other adult in your family.
- ▶ If someone sends or shows you email or any type of direct message/wall post with sayings that make you feel uncomfortable, trust your instincts. You are probably right to be wary. Do not respond. Tell a parent or trusted adult what happened.
- ▶ If somebody tells you to keep what’s going on between the two of you secret, tell a parent or guardian.

- ▶ Be careful to whom you talk. Anyone who starts talking about subjects that make you feel uncomfortable is probably an adult posing as a kid.
- ▶ Pay attention if someone tells you things that don't fit together. If one time an online "friend" says he or she is 12, and another time says he or she is 14. That is a warning that this person is lying and may be an adult posing as a kid.
- ▶ Unless you talk to a parent about it first, never talk to anybody by phone if you know that person only online. If someone asks you to call—even if it's collect or a toll-free, 800 number—that's a warning. That person can get your phone number this way, either from a phone bill or from caller ID.
- ▶ Never agree to meet someone you have met only online at any place off-line, in the real world.
- ▶ Watch out if someone online starts talking about hacking, or breaking into other people's or companies' computer systems; phreaking (the "ph" sounds like an "f"), the illegal use of long-distance services or cellular phones; or viruses (online programs that destroy or damage data when other people download these onto their computers).
- ▶ Promise your parent or an adult family member and yourself that you will honor any rules about how much time you are allowed to spend online and what you do and where you go while you are online.

## **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR SOCIAL MEDIA USE**

For practical considerations, the BSA expects adults intending to use social media on behalf of Scouting to follow the following:

Social media must be monitored. A qualified staff member or volunteer should have the responsibility of monitoring social media channels daily, and backup administrators/monitors should be designated so there is no gap in the monitoring.

Integrate your communications. Create a strategy to surround your intended audience with your key message(s) through print, the Web, email, radio, TV, word of mouth, and social media.

Talk to your audiences and let them talk to and about you. By posting content on a consistent schedule, you can tell your story and encourage conversations in the community.

Social media takes a thick skin. Negative conversations are happening already, but now you have a voice in the conversation. Don't delete negative comments unless they violate the terms laid out in the BSA Social Media Digital Contract.

Be prepared to respond to negative or inaccurate posts if response is warranted. Some negative comments do not require a response, while others should be taken seriously and addressed. Factors such as the number of followers and the severity of the conversations should temper if and how you respond.

Direct media inquiries to the appropriate person. Media inquiries coming through social media should be referred to the Scout executive or a designee for an official response.

Be Scout-like. When disagreeing with others' opinions, remain appropriate and polite. If you find yourself in a situation online that looks as if it's becoming antagonistic, do not get overly defensive and do not disengage from the conversation abruptly. Ask your Scout executive or the designee for advice on how to disengage from the dialogue in a polite manner that reflects well on the BSA.

Build trust by being open and transparent. Share information and what the challenges and opportunities are for Scouting in your community.

## **KEY SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR USE**

There are many social media channels available to users, and new channels are being introduced frequently. As such, it would be impossible to provide information on all of them. We will focus on three of the most popular and most applicable to Scouting. Those channels are Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

### **Facebook**

Facebook is a wonderful way to form online communities where groups of people can gather to have conversations and share information. Indeed, the BSA National Council as well as many local councils and even some units are already using Facebook to communicate about Scouting. Of course, creating and maintaining a Facebook page for your council or unit is a big responsibility and should not be entered into lightly.

It may be valuable to think of a Facebook page as a little like a troop meeting that is always open, always going on, and where members of the public may drop by and watch or participate at any time of day or night. That means Scouts and Scouters can be even more involved in sharing the fun and excitement of Scouting and be a more active part of the group discussion—even when they're at home. But it's also easy to see how, if left unstructured or unattended by Scout leaders, this never-ending meeting could easily become a problem.

When considering whether or not Facebook might be a good option for your council or unit, it is important to remember that Facebook requires all users to be at least 13 years of age. Before creating a Facebook page, you should educate yourself about what Facebook is and how it is used, and familiarize yourself with its terms of service. This will help you navigate carefully in your development of a fan page.

When creating a Facebook page, you should make it a public fan page. In addition, you should designate at least two administrators who have access to the login, password, and page management/monitoring information. This conforms to the two-deep leadership policies of the BSA. At least one of these page administrators should be a BSA employee, a local council employee, or registered volunteer who has taken Youth Protection training. All Youth Protection policies that govern the use of email are applicable to the use of the messaging capabilities of Facebook.

Perhaps the biggest strength of Facebook is also its biggest weakness: Facebook fan pages are open to the public, which means any information shared on that fan page can be viewed by essentially anyone. As such, you should make sure that any information shared on that page by you or by your fans is information that is appropriate to share with the public. This is especially true regarding the level of detail you provide regarding Scouts and their activities.

For the Info Tab of your Facebook page, you should use the guidelines set forth on the BSA National Council Facebook Info Tab in its Digital Contract, found here: <http://www.facebook.com/BoyScoutsOfAmerica#!/BoyScoutsOfAmerica?sk=info> Once you have created a Facebook fan page, invited people to “like” your page and started gathering “fans,” it is important for you to post good and appropriate content and monitor the content that is posted to your wall. Unfortunately, not all the content posted to the wall by your fans may be appropriate. All content posted by you or by fans on the Facebook wall should conform to the precepts of the Scout Oath and Law. Content that does not meet that standard should be removed immediately.

If a user posts highly offensive content, the content should be removed immediately, and you may need to block or ban the user who posted it. Such an action should not be used liberally but only when content is truly objectionable.

This type of careful monitoring requires vigilance. Before creating a Facebook page, you should consider whether you or someone else who will administer the page will be able to monitor that page and post content consistently to help ensure that only appropriate content is posted. Pages with inconsistent and infrequent updates can cause your fans to become disinterested, and your page can become a target for spammers or other predatory parties who recognize that you appear not to be actively involved on your page.

As with any online site, it is highly important that you do not give out personal information about Scouts or Scouters to anyone on Facebook. Every effort should be made to help ensure that your fans and those Scouts and Scouters that use the Facebook page are protected. Keeping Scouts safe and keeping their private information safe should be the primary concern in any endeavor involving them—whether that’s keeping them safe on a camping trip or keeping them safe on the unit Facebook fan page.

### **Twitter**

Because of its 140-character-per-post limit and relative lack of multimedia capabilities, Twitter is designed for quick, simple updates and also can be used like instant messaging or email to have conversations with one or more people in a mostly public forum.

Twitter can be a great place to share quick observations, provide updates about programs, share training deadlines, link to other websites with event details, share great Scouting stories, and have an informal conversation with followers. In general, Twitter has a more personal voice, meaning posts on Twitter are expected to be relatively informal and friendly. It is also important to remember that Twitter is a public forum and is viewable by virtually anyone. That means content placed on Twitter should be acceptable to your specific intended audience of followers as well as a wider audience.

Some direct-messaging capabilities exist with Twitter; however, adults should not use these direct-messaging capabilities when dealing with Scouts. All Youth Protection policies that govern the use of email are applicable to the messaging capabilities of Twitter. Before starting a Twitter account for your council or unit, familiarize yourself with Twitter’s terms of service and adhere to those guidelines.

When creating a Twitter account for your unit or council, you should designate at least two administrators who have access to the login, password, and page management/monitoring information. This conforms to the two-deep leadership policies of the BSA. At least one of these page administrators should be a BSA employee, a local council employee, or registered volunteer who has taken Youth Protection training.

In addition, all content posted on your Twitter account should be in line with the Scout Oath and Law. That includes never “tweeting” (posting) content that is un-Scout-like or responding to a tweet in an un-Scout-like manner to anyone interacting with you through your Twitter account.

Twitter should be updated regularly and watched closely so responses can be provided to people requesting information or trying to start a conversation.

### **YouTube**

YouTube is primarily a video-hosting and -viewing platform. It lets you upload videos to a channel you manage. Once on your YouTube channel, each video has an individual URL and can be viewed on YouTube or shared as a link or embedded (by you, your fans, and members of the public) via other social media outlets and on websites. Before starting a YouTube channel for your council or unit, familiarize yourself with the site’s terms of service and adhere to those guidelines.

When creating a YouTube channel, your channel must be public. There should be no private groups. In addition, you should designate at least two administrators who have access to the login, password, and page management/monitoring information. This conforms to the two-deep leadership policies of the BSA. At least one of these page administrators should be a BSA employee, a local council employee, or registered volunteer who has taken Youth Protection training.

Like the other social media channels, the public at large has access to your videos and may view and comment on them unless you set viewing restrictions in your settings. If you enable comments, you should monitor those comments regularly to be sure they are appropriate. YouTube also has messaging features (similar to email). All Youth Protection policies that govern the use of email are applicable to the messaging capabilities of YouTube.

Having a YouTube channel is a great way to share videos of events, how-to videos, awards ceremony videos, and other videos that would be good to share with members of the group as well as the public.



An important consideration for YouTube or any similar site that features videos and/or images of Scouts is that all videos/images should adhere to recommended Youth Protection policies and should protect the privacy of individual Scouts. Additionally, all videos should show Scouts and leaders following designated appropriate guidelines and wearing proper attire for whatever activity is being undertaken in the video. All safety and Youth Protection policies must be followed for any Scouting activities, including those being captured on video.

### **Final Thoughts**

It is important to remember that all social media channels are, by nature, designed to be social, that is, shared with members of the public. As such, whatever social media activities you engage in should be completed with the understanding that the public will see them and may engage in an online dialogue with you as a result. You should not do anything on a social media channel that reflects poorly on you, other individuals in your council or unit, the Boy Scouts of America, or anyone else. Before posting any content on any social media channel, you should first ask yourself if that content is in keeping with the precepts of the Scout Oath and Law.

As an additional consideration, once created, social media channels and the content on them “live forever” on the Internet, sometimes even if the accounts have been deleted. That means social media channels created today may still exist five, 10, or 15 years from now, in some cases long after those who started them are no longer involved directly with Scouting. As such, considerations should be made regarding the transitioning of administration rights and duties if and when the initial administrators end their direct involvement in Scouting.

Also, organizations wishing to use social media must accept the fact that listening is just as important as speaking in these channels, and those wishing to participate in this space should be prepared to listen if they are to reap any value.

Social media can be a powerful tool for sharing the joys and triumphs of Scouting, but if not executed properly, it can be a detriment to everything Scouting represents. As such, engage in social media activities wisely. Also realize that social media is a new and evolving form of communication that requires flexibility, patience, and commitment, but the rewards of increased connection with, and understanding of, your target audience can be great.

In your social media communications, you should be clear that it is not an official BSA social media channel but is instead your own personal channel. You can use the following template as an example:

*“This site is the personal [reference your specific social media channel] of [your name or organization] and is reflective only of my personal views, thoughts, and opinions. This site does not have the endorsement of the Boy Scouts of America, and it is not an official communication channel of the Boy Scouts of America.”*

Should you have questions regarding any of the guidelines and/or recommendations or concerning the use of a specific social media channel not covered here, please feel free to contact the BSA National Council social media team at [social.media@scouting.org](mailto:social.media@scouting.org) for further guidance.