



Fulshear Area Chamber of Commerce

<http://www.fulshearareachamber.com/>

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FACC Social Media Guidelines & Policy

The Fulshear Area Chamber of Commerce (FACC) Board and staff recognize the evolving role of social media and other online tools for marketing purposes and to promote the organization's brand messages. Such online platforms are useful in engaging stakeholders such as members, customers and community residents in efforts supporting the FACC's mission, values, priorities and in accordance with its by-laws and policies.

The use of social media can present certain risks and carries with it certain responsibilities. To assist FACC Board, members and staff in making responsible decisions on the use of social media on behalf of the FACC, this Guidelines & Policy document was developed and adopted on September 19, 2017. The document applies to FACC Board, members, staff, contractors and volunteers, particularly those who contribute personally or professionally to social media platforms (i.e. Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn) and other online platforms.

Guidelines

Social media includes all means of communicating or posting information/content of any sort electronically and online, that can then be accessed via computer and/or a mobile device. This includes blogs, online journals, personal websites, social networking or affinity websites, web bulletin boards or a chat room, whether or not associated/affiliated with the FACC, as well as any other form of electronic communication.

Use common sense, courtesy and good judgment when posting information online, just as would be done in face-to-face communications. Ultimately, you are solely responsible for what you post. Before creating online content, consider some of the risks and rewards that are involved. Keep in mind that any conduct that adversely affects job performance, the performance of fellow associates or otherwise adversely affects members, customers, suppliers, people who work on behalf of the FACC or its business interests may result in disciplinary action including dismissal and/or legal action.

Carefully read this Guidelines & Policy document, and ensure online postings are consistent with its guidance. Inappropriate postings that may include discriminatory remarks, harassment, and threats of violence or similar inappropriate or unlawful conduct will not be tolerated and may subject you to disciplinary action.

Social media in support of FACC mission, values and priorities

The Fulshear Area Chamber of Commerce (FACC) is dedicated to serving the business community in North Fort Bend County, including Fulshear and Simonton. The following bullets offer guidance on ways the organization's values influence its social media policy.

- **Be professional & respectful** – Always be fair and courteous to fellow associates, customers, members, suppliers or people who work on behalf of the FACC. Demonstrate that members and other stakeholders are valued by responding to comments and requests in a timely manner. Social media content language should not appear to harass others based on their race, ethnicity, sexuality, religion, physical ability or other status protected by law or organizational policy. Avoid using statements, photographs, video or audio that reasonably could be viewed as malicious or intimidating and may constitute harassment or bullying towards certain individuals/groups. Keep in mind that most concerns can be resolved by speaking directly with an individual or by fostering fair and open direct communication vs. posting complaints on a social media outlet. Avoid making negative comments about other individuals, organizations or companies, as they may be members, future members or partners in some capacity. Show proper consideration for others' privacy and for topics that may be considered objectionable or inflammatory such as politics or religion.
- **Be honest & accurate** – Aim to speak with authority on matters that are associated with the FACC mission and its priorities. If an expert(s) is required, engage them or get them to provide advice, then give them credit for their contribution. Clearly disclose who you are and your FACC relationship to avoid the appearance of conflicted interests. Be accurate when posting information or news, and if a mistake is made, correct it quickly. Be open about previous posts that may have been altered/updated. Never post information or rumors known to be false. As in any written form of communication, please double check spelling, grammar and punctuation.
- **Post only appropriate content** – If you're online, you're on the record—everything on the Internet is public and searchable. There's no such thing as a "private" social media site. Comments or posts can still be forwarded or copied. Archival systems save information even if you delete a post. In addition, search engines can turn up posts and pictures years after publication – and even deletion. Maintain the confidentiality of the FACC's private and/or confidential information, as well as trade secrets. This may include information regarding the development of systems, processes, products, know-how and technology specific to the FACC. Do not post internal reports, policies, procedures or other internal business-related confidential communications. Confirm whether the FACC has the right to use content with or without attribution before publishing. Proper credit for work created by others should be given.

Social media content

The best approach to managing social media on behalf of an organization is when it's conducted in a planned manner, with identified content posted on a predetermined schedule. Doing so ensures the organization stays on message, and reduces the risk of mistakes or unintended impacts from spontaneous postings. For the most part, "real-time"/spontaneous postings should be limited to those associated with a specific FACC event, and be designed to promote and market FACC activities.

Information posted on FACC social media platforms by approved administrators should consist of the following types of information:

- FACC events, activities, programs, and news
- Community events, activities, programs, and news from FACC member organizations and tax-supported bodies (i.e. cities, counties)
- Local events, activities, programs, and news conducted by FACC member organizations to benefit non-profit organizations
- Public policies and updates on important local, county, state, and national news, including proposed legislation, law changes, or other related news determined relevant and in accordance with FACC Board guidance
- Member success stories (recognitions earned, awards received, professional promotions, major accomplishments, grand openings, relocations, major expansions, or other news)
- Emergency and or urgent public safety information (occasional exception to the spontaneous postings guidance)
- Members are encouraged to forward social media posts about their own events, promotions, and news for FACC staff to review and re-post on the FACC's social media platforms. The FACC reserves the right to monitor and decline member posts that do not fall within the guidelines and principles of this policy. Staff, contractors and volunteers posting on FACC social media platforms will take proper care when posting member information intended solely to promote or generate traffic/sales for that business, especially in situations involving multiple members who may be competing in the same market segment(s).

- Contributors to the FACC's social media platforms should not suggest, either explicitly or implicitly, that postings represent endorsements by the FACC, its affiliates, Board, members or employees.

Social media policy

The FACC reserves the right to monitor and control, at its discretion, its brand identity online as well as offline. The FACC will take corrective measures it deems necessary, up to and including termination if, at its sole discretion, it feels an employee, contractor or volunteer has harmed the FACC brand through his or her social media activities.

The FACC Board Chairperson is authorized to approve as well as terminate access of staff, contractors and volunteers posting on behalf of the FACC on its social media platforms. Once approved, such individuals should continually work with the Board Chairperson and/or President to ensure consistency in messages and strategy. Staff, contractors and volunteers also need to keep in mind that they and/or the FACC can be held legally liable for anything written or presented online.

When posting to social media on behalf of the FACC, know that you're shaping the organization's brand and reputation as a trusted and positive influence in the community. If you are unclear or uncomfortable about an issue, be sure to discuss specifics with the FACC President and/or Board Chair before posting such content.

FACC staff, contractors and volunteers with social media posting access should plan postings and engage in the activity primarily during business hours.

Additional considerations under this policy include:

- Employees should not use their FACC email address to register on any social media website for personal use. Limit use of work email addresses to work-related accounts.
- FACC requires employees who are communicating on its behalf to always disclose their name and their affiliation. It is never acceptable to use aliases or otherwise deceive people.
- Do not discuss or disclose employees, members, suppliers or other stakeholders by name without their permission.
- Employees should not represent themselves or the FACC in a false or misleading way. All statements must be true and not misleading; all claims must be substantiated.

- If an employee publishes a personal blog or posts work related information online, they should make it clear when they are not speaking on behalf of the organization. In such cases, it is best to include a disclaimer such as “The postings on this site are my own and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Fulshear Area Chamber of Commerce.”
- Since FACC staff, contractors and volunteers, particularly Board members, are well known in the community, using maximum security and privacy controls on personal social media accounts is highly recommended.
- The FACC prohibits taking negative action against any stakeholder for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation. Any FACC staff who retaliates against someone for reporting a possible deviation from this policy or for cooperating in an investigation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.
- Following the end of an employment relationship with FACC, take prompt steps to ensure that social media access and representation is removed to avoid confusion.

Media inquiries & contacts

Contributions to social media platforms and online exchanges, particularly those that go viral, may attract media attention. All media inquiries, whether from social or mainstream news media, should be referred to the FACC Board Chairperson. Staff and Board members should only communicate with such media contacts on the FACC’s behalf with authorization from the Board Chairperson.

Policy Violations

FACC staff, contractors, members, volunteers and Board officers can be disciplined for commentary, content, or images that are defamatory, pornographic, proprietary, harassing, libelous, that can create a hostile environment, or that do not further the objectives and mission of the FACC. Breaches of the FACC’s Social Media Guidelines & Policy will be reviewed by the Board, and may result in disciplinary action. Such actions include, but are not limited to: issuance of a warning, demotion, suspension or termination of employment and/or membership; FACC contractors may face termination/non-renewal of contract for services.

For more information

If you have questions or need further guidance, please contact the FACC Board Chairperson. The FACC Board also reserves the right to review and update, replace or terminate this policy as necessary.