



Cooperative Baptist  
Fellowship North Carolina

# **SOCIAL MEDIA PRACTICES AND TIPS FOR MINISTRY**

This resource is provided by the  
CBF College & Young Adult Ministry Network.



Social Media in Ministry

Network Meeting - March 21, 2024 at 2pm EST

### Ministry > Promotion

For businesses, social media is all about content, reach, and results. What does this mean for ministries and churches? For churches, social media has primarily been used for promotion.

When churches promote events in 5+ ways through communications, audiences grow blind to these promotions and methods of communications. Students and young adults don't want social media to be just another place they are receiving this. Challenge your colleagues and church to shift from using social media for PROMOTION to using social media for **MINISTRY**.

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### What are Your Goals?

This allows the goal of using social media to expand to reaching students, storytelling, sharing your ministry in action through photo and video, connecting personally, and providing spiritual development. With this new approach, **consider what your goal is within your ministry context**. Do you want to entertain, inspire, teach, or advocate?

Other questions to consider when using social media for ministry and creating content:

- Who is your target audience?
  - Is it a specific age range or demographic? Is it geared for a specific group, church, or community, or is it for anyone in the area?
- What is the purpose of this content?
- How am I wanting my audience to engage with this content?
- When is the best time to post?

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### Branding

Once you have these answers, start with branding. What **voice** (language in captions and focus in reels) and **style** (colors, fonts, design) do you want to use to express your ministry, students, and leadership?

Not all churches have the resources or personnel to create content, post regularly, or have cohesive branding and that's okay. Examples of churches who do this well on Instagram AND receive a lot of engagement (likes, shares, etc). are:

- [Church at the Oaks](#): Take note of the branded look, photography, variety in posts (photos, church in action, spiritual development, promotion, etc.). They use their captions for storytelling and invitation.
  - [VOUS Church](#) is a multi-campus megachurch with heavy resources and creative personnel. However, their Instagram shows a variety of posts, videos, and styles within their branding.
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## Content

When you are at a place where you are ready to start investing your time, create a content strategy and rhythms for your ministry's social media (monthly introductions, missions focus, etc). Be sure to utilize Meta Business Suite or another app to schedule posts in advance. This practice allows you to create most of your content in advance and schedule it for the month so you only have to worry about sharing photos or stories in real time.

### The Algorithm is affected by the following:

- Viewing History: how often a user has **viewed** an account's stories
- Engagement History: how often a user **engages** with that account's stories (sending a reaction or response), reels or posts (liking, saving, commenting, or sharing).
- Closeness: the user's relationships with the author overall and how likely they are to be friends or family (pastors accounts fair better than churches because of the personal nature)

What about **hashtags**...aren't we past that? No! Meta still encourages you to use 3-8 to increase the reach of your content. Hashtags are not only utilized by folks searching for something, but Meta also uses it as a distribution tool. For example, if I use #ministry, IG knows who to put my posts in front of.

### Here are a few apps to use when creating content:

Canva (content creation)	Metasuite (scheduling)
Capcut App (reels)	ChatGPT (captions)
Vixer App (videos/reels)	Remini.ai (resolution)

### Social Media Tips

- Post on a consistent basis
- Reels perform best - to see growth, post reels at least 3x a week.
- Space out your stories - people will ignore them if there are too many
- Use trending audio when possible.
- Be sure to interact with your audience - comment, share, ask for call to actions
- Use the language of invitation instead of FOMO (avoid "don't miss out")

- Do social media WITH your students - host a creative party where you invite students to help you create posts, reels, etc. for a season or special event. Bonus points if you include pizza!
- Use Linktr.ee to include links to website, articles, event registration, etc.
- Utilize your story highlights - save your stories to highlights for special events, promotion, teaching, etc.
- Be sure to follow colleagues, ministries, mission partners, community partners, local businesses, denominational leaders and organizations, and local churches on your ministry account. Interact with them by tagging them, collaborating with them for events or posts if the opportunities allow, mention them in stories, etc.

Follow [@BradyShearer](#) for more social media and ministry communications tips, statistics, and more!

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### Quality > quantity

*All of this information is based on the resources you have and the time and energy you can invest. The most important thing to remember is that you are already doing the ministry you are called to do. Social media is something that is more prominent in younger generations and is often considered “in addition to” your current responsibilities.*

*Take what you need from these tips that is helpful for YOU in your context and in what you are able to offer through social media. Choose what is most natural for you and lean into it because if you have to choose, quality is more important than quantity.*

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### Types of Posts, Stories, Styles and Call to Actions

#### Types of Posts:

- Photo dump: a collection of images that communicate an overall story or mood
- Photo Carousel: 10 photos from an event or ministry
- Text Only Carousels: high contrast text/background have great results
- Teaching/Educational
- Sermon, worship, or teaching clips
- Reels or Videos

#### Types of Stories:

- Resharing - reshare a post from your account, community or partner accounts, etc.
- Interaction - encourages interaction to help with engagement and the algorithm

- Promotion - this is a great place to promote events since it disappears in 24 hours; you can include registration links
- Links - use stories for links to articles, websites, registration, etc.

#### **Styles of Posts:**

- Storytelling
- Teaching/Educational
- Invitation

#### **Call to Action Options:**

- For Stories
  - Slide bar - you can choose the emoji and include a brief caption on it
  - Poll
  - Questions - question box for audience to submit questions for you to answer
  - Tag or mention local non-profits, churches, audience members, etc.
  - Links
  - Quiz
  - Countdown - use for events or news releases
- For Posts/Reels - ask your audience to...
  - Drop your favorite emoji
  - Reshare in their stories
  - Send to or tag a friend who needs to see this
  - Save this post for later
  - Double tap (like) if you agree

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#### **This document focuses on Instagram... Should I be pouring into other social media platforms?**

- Facebook - College students and young adults are not using Facebook in the same ways anymore. This would primarily be for the purpose of promoting to the community, alumni, donors, adults or volunteers, and outreach.
- TikTok - This is another platform to post reels and use templates or popular audio. You can share between TikTok and Instagram.
- Snapchat - There is a debate on using snapchat within ministry settings mostly due to monitoring safety in communicating with minors since much of the history disappears and can be erased.
- Threads - If you already have a Threads account attached to your ministry's Instagram account, actively posting and maintaining this account will help with more reach within Instagram. You can keep up by sharing your Instagram posts to threads.