

# How to use Facebook

**These guidelines are to support our authors, editors and societies who wish to manage their own Facebook page. The document explains how to set up the page and best practices in using the page to communicate and engage with your target audience.**

## Setting up a Facebook account

Facebook offers users the option to set up a Facebook page or a Facebook group. Sage recommends setting up a page rather than a group as the page offers greater functionality. This document is written specifically for use with a page, but some of the guidelines can apply to both types of pages.

Learn more about [whether a page or group is right for you](#).

Authors who are simply looking for guidance on how to use Facebook to promote their own work can look at steps 1, 12-14, and our general guidelines on page 3. Steps 2-12 covers the details of running a journal Facebook page, and may be irrelevant for your purposes.

## Action Steps

### 1. Become a member

- a) If you have not already, become a member of [Facebook](#) and become familiar with the community.
- b) Update your profile – it should read like a simple resume with some personality. This is a very informal medium, so you can mention your favourite hobby alongside your recently published paper and your weekend trip alongside your favourite researchers.
- c) Your page will be more successful with the more personal contacts, or followers you have on Facebook. Start by looking up colleagues within your institution, expand to people you know within the professional societies you belong, and search their “friends” list for additional ideas.
- d) Update your personal status, write on your friend’s walls, and comment on posts/photos/articles when appropriate.

### 2. Research other pages to get a feel for them

Search for other pages, for example:

- a) [Sage](#)
- b) [American Sociological Association](#)

### 3. Create a Facebook page

Read Facebook’s instructions on [how to create a page](#) and follow the steps. Add photos, descriptions, and a few posts.

### 4. Add a cover photo

Facebook cover photos appear at the top of each page. The recommended image specifications are: a JPG file, 820 pixels wide by 360 tall, and less than 100 kilobytes in size. For images with a logo or text, you may get a better result uploading the image as a PNG file. Facebook terms state that cover photos cannot contain price or promotional information, contact info, calls to action or references to any Facebook features, such as ‘Like’ or ‘Share’.

### 5. Upload a profile photo

The profile photo is a 170 x 170 pixel image. Design is important as it overlaps the cover photo on the page. If creating the page for your society or journal, Facebook recommends using a logo – your society or journal logo for example.

### 6. Utilize the timeline functionality

Promote your own or your society/journal’s history by backdating your Facebook page to include any key dates in your history. Find can find [further info on how to backdate new posts](#) here.

Find out more at

[Sage Journals Information for Authors](#)

**Sage Journals**

## 7. Highlight key posts

Pinned posts keep important stories at the top of your Facebook page timeline. To pin a post, click the edit button, select the pencil icon on the right-hand side on the right-hand side and select "Pin to Top of Page".

## 8. Manage the workflow

If you are managing a Facebook page for your journal or society, it may be wise to assign multiple administrators to your page. Finding fresh content on your own can become very wearing. Set clear expectations of how often each administrator should update the page.

## 9. Provide fresh content

Keep your page up-to-date by posting a minimum of three times a week, and no more than once per day. Along with information about your work (articles, issue announcements, call for papers, honors and awards), consider posting general information about your field. This can include links to relevant blogs, photos, and thoughts/messages from your colleagues. The Facebook timeline layout is very visual so consider posting images and photos from conferences and events.

## 10. Create a follower base

Invite all your contacts to like your page. Let your members know about your page through existing media (newsletters, web site, etc.). Once you have some followers, it's easier to get more as news of your page spreads virally.

## 11. Promote your Facebook page

Speak to your Sage editor to promote the page as part of Sage marketing communications. We can promote your page or posts from our existing social media channels and relevant email campaigns. Facebook also has numerous widgets and banners to allow you to promote your content on other websites, such as your personal website or society homepage.

## 12. Maintaining and growing a follower base

Keep your followers happy, and heighten engagement with your posts by offering useful and relevant information, a place where colleagues can connect with other people in their academic community, advice or recommendations, and special updates about your work.

Encourage interaction with your posts: ask questions or set up surveys to encourage your community to engage. If there are questions that your Facebook page cannot answer, provide contact information for where your followers can get this information.

Remember, the more users interact with your posts, the more News Feed stories for users' friends are created, magnifying awareness of your work.

Here is a helpful list of content ideas to help you get started and stay on track. Please note that not all of these may be relevant for authors:

- Promotion of new OnlineFirst articles and/or new issues published online
- Trending news that relates to your research, or the journal's aims and scope or specific articles
- Key industry news
- Feature on journal editor, or relevant colleagues or mentors
- Call for papers
- Journal special issues
- Journal/editor/author awards
- Feedback and photos from conferences/seminars you have attended – this could include a small write-up and recap of panel discussions, receptions, conversations with notable professionals in the industry, etc.
- New features on your journal webpage that you want to promote for your journal
- Media hits that feature your articles, or articles from your journal or the editor/board
- Press release content that Sage/the society has released on your behalf
- Interviews with authors, editors or society members

## 13. Using hashtags

When posting updates to Facebook, add hashtags to key words or phrases. Any word or phrase that is added as a hashtag automatically becomes clickable. When a hashtag is included in a post, clicking on it will pop out a feed that aggregates others posts that have been tagged with the same phrase. This will make it easier to find what other people are saying about specific topics and events, something that people have typically gone to X to do over Facebook.

## 14. Track and analyze your page activity

On your page, locate the "Insights" link in your left navigation. Insights gives you access to the administrative and reporting areas of your page. You can see recent page activity, how many likes you have, how many people clicked on each link, where your followers are located, and more.

Find out more at

**Sage Journals Information for Authors**

**Sage Journals**

## Guidelines for those adding and engaging with content

### Be transparent at all times

If you are communicating about the society or your institution, you should identify yourself and your role (if this isn't clear) when you are commenting on posts or adding content. Be aware of your association with your society or institution in online social networks. If you identify yourself as a society member, ensure your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself with others in academia or research.

### Understand the risk

Individuals are personally responsible for the content they publish on Facebook, blogs, wikis or any other form of user-generated media. In essence, you comment (or post on the sites of others) at your own risk. Outside parties actually can pursue legal action against you (not your organization) for postings. Be mindful that what you publish will be public for a long time.

## Engaging with your audience and/or members

### Dialogue must be real – not just rehashed PR/marketing speak

When you are writing for social media, don't drop in copy from your brochure, press release or similar: write something meaningful; respond to the dialogue that is on the site; post information that will be of genuine interest to others.

### Engage in dialogue

Social media is reciprocal. Don't just broadcast a message: participate in genuine dialogue with others online.

### Represent your work or society

Respect these online channels and take the same care that you would with any other communication, e.g. an email, newsletter or other society communication.

### Working with the media

Social media comments may generate media coverage. If you are working as a group, agree with your society or PR Manager, prior to launching your Facebook page, how you will deal with media enquiries about a related blog posting or requests information of any kind.

### Regular communication

A site/page which looks redundant or where you are not responding to online questions/comments will cause frustration within the community it has built. By the very nature of social media, this can result in the frustrations being aired in the public domain, leading to negative publicity. Before a site is launched it is imperative that all involved understand the level of commitment they will need to make to develop and grow the community.

## Responding to comments on social media sites

Prior to setting up a Facebook page for your society, the editorial team should determine who will reply to comments on your social media site. In most circumstances the person who owns or posts comments to your Facebook account will be the person who replies.

However, should you come across negative comments it is important to know how to respond.

If you decide to delete a post, explain why. Your members will understand that healthy discussion needs some moderation; provide a short list of reasons why comments may be deleted from the page. General language is fine, something like, "comments that are off-topic, offensive or inappropriate".

Learn more about [responding to negative comments](#).



Find out more at

[Sage Journals Information for Authors](#)

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