

## Social Media Tips

Social media is a tool to help agencies engage and educate the community. It enables quick distribution of messages, and in many instances it's where the news media gets their breaking news. We recommend embracing social media as another arm of your agency's communication strategy.

Key things to remember when building a social media presence:

- **Share successes** - communicate your agency's successes directly with followers. Whether shared as an individual win or in aggregate form, sharing agency successes drives engagement, while also improving community sentiment and agency morale. Successes might include a key arrest made, evidence recovered, or a life saved. Shared individually or in aggregate, these wins serve as powerful proof points of your agency's effectiveness and commitment to serving and protecting the community.
- **Importance of storytelling** – by definition, a story infuses emotion into a fact-based narrative making it memorable. Interviews, quotes, and visuals can all help transform a simple news update into a story, improving opportunities for social engagement.
- **Respond** – Always respond to questions and comments posted on your feed. A simple “thank you” can go a long way with followers.
- **Like posts** – be cognizant of what the “like” button means. It implies that you agree with the sentiment of a post. If there is any question as to whether your agency agrees or supports that particular viewpoint or piece of content, it is best to play it safe and skip hitting “like.”
- **Conversational tone** – posts should be short, friendly and in a conversational tone, but remember to stay professional since you're representing the agency. Think of posts as a quick way to get the message out to a large group of followers.
- **Monitor feeds and news** – watch what others are posting and commenting on for ideas on what to post and like. Look for news stories, current events, holiday information, articles that could be interesting to the community and photos to share.
- **Different platforms have different audiences**
  - **Twitter** – 280 characters or less. These are fast ways to get the word out, ask for tips, link to relevant articles, re-tweet news articles, photos and send short updates. Use hashtags to tap into additional audiences and help posts trend popular.
  - **Facebook** – can send longer updates, more photos, engage followers in conversation, give updates and link to relevant agency sites and news articles
  - **YouTube** – ideal for posting videos, including success stories, press conferences, interviews, citizen testimonials and “How ShotSpotter Works” related content
  - **Instagram** – great way to reach a younger more plugged-in audience, especially with short updates and photo sharing. Use hashtags with posts to further reach.
- **Post regularly** – followers are more likely to visit and engage with accounts that post regularly. Posts can be breaking news on crimes, updates on crimes in progress, community education, request for tips, press conferences, updates from the chief, or general department information. Regular posting gives the agency a chance to build relationships with the community and engage them in a two-way dialogue.



### **Examples of Successful Social Content**

[Sacramento County Success Story on Facebook](#)

[Winston-Salem "How ShotSpotter Works" on YouTube](#)

[Oakland Police Reporting Results on Twitter](#)

[NYPD Success Story on Twitter](#)

[Harris County Success Story on Twitter](#)

[Virginia Beach Success Story on Facebook](#)

[VA Beach Chief Reporting Results on Twitter](#)

[Pasadena "How ShotSpotter Works" on YouTube](#)