

Social Media Guide

Purpose of This Guide

This gives DAV leaders the confidence and resources needed to successfully manage a social media account for their department or chapter. Social media helps DAV chapters and departments reach veterans, families, caregivers, donors and volunteers where they already are—online. Social media supports DAV’s mission; it doesn’t replace in-person service. It helps chapters stay relevant, visible and connected to their local community.

Who This Guide Is For

- Chapter and department leaders
- Volunteers managing social media for their chapter
- DAV members who are new to social media or have a limited technical background

Remember:

- You don’t need to be tech-savvy to be successful.
- Your chapter or department doesn’t need to be on every platform.
- One well-managed social media account beats five neglected ones.

What Social Media Is (and What It's Not)

Social Media Is:

- A way to share updates quickly and publicly
- A free and powerful resource
- A reflection of your chapter or department
- A reflection of DAV as a national organization

Social Media Is NOT:

- A replacement for phone calls, meetings or newsletters
- A tool that you never use yet expect to deliver results
- A one-size-fits-all product

Social Media Glossary

ACCOUNT: Your personal access point—including your username, password, profile and personal settings—that make it possible for you to interact with and personalize how you experience a social media platform, app or website.

PROFILE: A digital representation of one real person. It shows a name, photo and their personal posts and updates. Profiles aren’t for official DAV business.

PAGE: Like a profile but for a business or organization, such as a DAV chapter or department. Anybody can “follow” a page to see its posts. Pages are public and meant for sharing news, events and other updates. This is what DAV chapters and departments should use.

GROUP: A shared space for members to talk with each other. Groups can be public or private. Posts shared in a private group are only visible to the profiles that are members of that group. They’re best used for internal communication, not public announcements.

POST: Any content you share on social media. Text, photos, videos or links to websites are considered posts. It’s the main way you communicate on social media.

COMMENT: A reply to a post. Whether you’re using a personal profile or a page for your chapter or department, you can comment on your own posts or other pages’ and profiles’ posts.

SHARE: A repost of someone else’s content so your followers can see it. This is an easy way to stay active without creating your own original content.

LIKE/REACTION: A quick way to respond to a post by indicating your emotional response (like, dislike, love, laugh, wow, etc.). It shows support or interest through emojis without writing a comment.

FOLLOW: An action that allows you to see posts from another page or profile in your feed. Following a page or profile makes it more likely you will receive updates. You don’t need permission to follow a page, but some personal profiles require approval before you can follow them.

TAG: A mention of another page or profile in a post. It helps ensure they see the post and lets others click their name to visit their page or profile. To tag in a post, type the @ symbol and then begin to type the name of the page or profile you wish to tag. When done successfully, their name will become clickable text and your post will appear to users who follow the account you tagged.

HASHTAG: A word or phrase with the # symbol in front of it. It helps group similar posts on a specific topic together. You can follow a hashtag, just like you follow a page or profile. Common hashtags you can use are #DAV, #veterans, #military and #KeepThePromise.

ALGORITHM: The rules and processes for a social media site that determine what posts you see. You don't control the algorithm, and it's constantly updated. Posting helpful, clear content gives your posts a better chance of appearing in the algorithm.

LIVESTREAM: A video that is broadcast live on social media. Livestreaming allows your followers to watch something as it happens, even if they aren't there. Most smartphones can livestream, so you don't need a fancy camera setup. Livestreams are great ways to allow people a glimpse at your chapter or department meetings or events when they can't attend.

Platform Overview

FACEBOOK



- It's the best starting point for most chapters.
- It's the most common platform for adults over age 55.
- You can share photos, videos, text and websites.
- Followers can send you direct messages (DMs) that are private conversations.
- It includes personal profiles, pages and groups.

Facebook Personal Profile

- Users create a personal account to interact as themselves online. To manage a DAV chapter or department page on Facebook, an individual first must have a personal profile for themselves.
- Your personal profile shouldn't be used for official DAV business. You're welcome and encouraged to share DAV's content on your own profile and discuss DAV online, but any official communications should come from official DAV chapter or department channels.
- You can secure your account by using a strong password and two-factor authentication. If your account is hacked, it can be very difficult to contact Facebook/Meta to recover it, and you could get locked out of your chapter or department page in the process.

Facebook Page (Recommended)

- A Facebook page is the recommended account type for your chapter or department. It's a public account that anybody can find and see.
- Anybody who chooses to follow your page will see your posts in their feed, but even if somebody doesn't follow

your page, they can see the posts if they directly visit your page.

■ Examples of good use include:

- Event announcements
- Meeting reminders
- Community photos
- DAV national content

Facebook Group (Optional)

- A DAV chapter or department can use a Facebook group but only if you have the time to manage it. If you can only manage one, prioritize managing a page, not a group.
- Groups can be public or private. In public groups, all of the posts and comments are visible to any user, and depending on the group settings, anybody can comment on the posts without being a member. Private groups are only visible to those who are members. Nonmembers can see that the group exists and request to join it, but they can't see any of the posts or comments within the group.
- **Best uses include:**
 - Internal member communication
 - Event coordination

INSTAGRAM



Instagram, or Insta as it's often nicknamed, is best used for visual storytelling. Most of the content on Instagram is photos, graphics or short videos. It's great for showing visual aspects of your chapter events but not good for sharing information or website links.

- Instagram is optional for chapters and departments.
- Instagram and Facebook are both owned by Meta, so content can easily be cross-posted between accounts.
- **Best uses include:**
 - Event photos
 - Volunteer spotlights
 - Community impact moments

X



- The social platform X is used for fast-moving, news-oriented updates focused on what's happening "right now." Users with free standard accounts have a 280-character limit per post and can only upload short videos.
- X is optional for most chapters and better suited for departments and advocacy-focused groups.

YOUTUBE



- YouTube is more like a video library than a place to engage in social conversation. If you have a video that you want to easily share via email, social media or any other digital format, you can



upload it to YouTube so it has a permanent link that can be shared.

- **Best uses include:**
 - Recorded events or meetings
 - Training content
- YouTube is optional for chapters and departments.

LINKEDIN



LinkedIn has a professional audience—a lot of business-to-business communication takes place here. Most DAV content has to do with legislative updates, the DAV employment program, DAV Patriot Boot Camp and *DAV Magazine* stories.

- LinkedIn is optional for chapters and departments.

What to Post

ORIGINAL CONTENT TYPES

- Event announcements
- Meeting reminders
- Community service highlights
- Veteran success stories
- Volunteer recognition
- Emergency updates (weather, cancellations)

CONTENT YOU CAN SHARE

(You Don't Have to Create Everything)

- DAV national posts
- Department of Veterans Affairs announcements
- Partner organization updates
- Local veteran resources
- Each other's chapter and department posts

What NOT to Post

- Political endorsements
- Arguments or personal disputes
- Misinformation
- Private member information
- Anything you wouldn't want on the front page of the newspaper
- Personal disagreements with DAV leadership or negative comments about the organization on other posts

Tone and Voice Guidelines

Always be respectful, supportive, nonpartisan and focused on the mission. If you're posting anything from a chapter or department account, you're speaking as the organization. Use plain language and avoid acronyms when possible.

How Often to Post

- Post at least once a week. No more than 5 times a week.
- Consistency matters more than volume.
- It's OK to go quiet occasionally.
- **Tip:** You can use tools to schedule multiple social media posts ahead of time, allowing you to schedule a month's worth of posts in just one to two hours. These tools include Meta Business Suite (for Facebook and Instagram), HootSuite, Brandwatch and CoSchedule.

Who Should Manage the Page

- Every chapter and department must have, at minimum, two admins who have access to the page.
- Use a generic email address for your social media pages. Whoever set up a page may leave Facebook, die or become unreliable. When that happens, it can be very difficult to reclaim ownership of your page.
- If you don't have a generic email account, set one up. Chapter members who manage the page can be given access to the email address.
- Once a page has been created, assign individual profiles to be its admins. You can add and remove admins as your chapter or department roles change. A person must have a personal Facebook or LinkedIn account to be made an admin for a chapter or department page. For X and Instagram, the chapter or department account is tied to a username and password.

Handling Comments and Messages

- Regularly check your page for any comments on posts that you've made.
- Respond to as many comments as you can. This helps your posts show up on the algorithm.
- Don't engage with negative comments, trolls or other comments that could potentially lead to a negative conversation in the comments.
- Hide or delete comments as a way to moderate your account. When you hide a comment, it's no longer visible to anybody except the person who made the comment, your chapter or department page, and anybody who may have been tagged in the comment. If you delete the comment, it's permanently removed and no longer visible to anybody.
- If you have continued problems with an individual profile, block it to stop the user from seeing any of your content or engaging with anything you share.

Getting Started Checklist

- Choose a platform to get started.
- Create an official page.
- Add a profile photo and description.
- Assign admins.
- Make your first post.
- Inform your chapter or department members that you've created the page so they can follow you and begin to grow your social media presence.
- Have fun with it.

Where to Get Help

The DAV National Communications team is available to provide guidance, assistance, artwork or other forms of support to help your social media page succeed. Contact social@dav.org.

In the digital world we live in, somebody online has already answered most questions. YouTube tutorials and Google can be extremely helpful in troubleshooting issues, providing best practices, and explaining language or terminology.

Final Encouragement

- Reinforce the mission.
- Use social media as a tool to serve veterans better.
- Remember that progress matters more than perfection.
- Show up—it suggests that DAV is active, welcoming and relevant.

Get inspired by following DAV on all of our social channels.





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