



# 2018 Social Media Communications Plan





# Social Media Communications Plan

*Synopsis of technologies and methods used by Anderson County Sheriff's Office*

## Scope of plan

This document is intended to be a “living document” — it evolves and changes as the technologies and methods of social media do. [Anderson County Sheriff's Office](#) utilizes a variety of channels and platforms of social media and monitors new technologies, adopting those that fit our communications needs best. While there are numerous social media platforms available, this plan only addresses those actively in use by the Sheriff's Office.

## Overview

Social media continues to be a major focus and growing component of the Web, with more users signing up every day for websites and applications as new platforms are developed. Social media presents an opportunity for additional channels through which the Sheriff's Office can reach stakeholders with promotion of news, alerts, programs and other resources. In addition to disseminating information, social media offers the opportunity to engage with stakeholders and form online communities around Anderson County Sheriff's Office. However, social media is not all-inclusive and needs to be part of a larger communications effort.



The Sheriff's Office currently uses several social media channels to spread Anderson County Sheriff's Office news, as well as post unique content, to reinforce the “brand” and engage with stakeholders. Content is chosen based on audience and relevance, using each channel's unique strengths to best present relevant information.

## Guiding principles

To ensure that our stakeholders get the most out of their social media experience with our agency, Sheriff's Office staff is constantly monitoring best practices of social media use and experimenting with content types that work best with each channel.

In general, activity by Anderson County Sheriff's Office on all its social media platforms is focused on:

- being **authentic and positive**
- being used to **listen** to fans/followers
- **responding** to comments and questions
- **conversing** naturally with fans/followers
- providing content that is focused on **quality over quantity**

The Anderson County Sheriff's Office accounts already have a solid group of followers (more than 35,000 at present) and continue to increase in followers and gain new audiences with increases in activity and changes in tactics.

## **General tactics**

The Sheriff's Office posts content about all agency departments through its social media efforts; choosing news items, links, videos, photos and other resources on an as-needed basis.

The goal is not to post a large quantity of content, but to choose quality content that would be of interest to the audience, and that either strengthens the image or recognition of our agency or has some form of follow-up for readers, such as a program in which they can participate, information they can use in their daily lives, or information requests to assist investigators with solving crimes.

The Sheriff's Office staff constantly works to identify suitable content and topics for use on its social media accounts. The Sheriff's Office staff monitors agency sites for content and also accepts submissions of content for review and posting from various units and departments.

Anderson County Sheriff's Office pages have a consistent personality; it is excited and enthusiastic, helpful and friendly, personal and engaging, professional and reliable. These are all traits stakeholders should see in the online, social personality of Anderson County Sheriff's Office. One main content stream allows for a consistent Anderson County Sheriff's Office personality, strengthening the personal connection with our stakeholders.

*Note:* The Sheriff's Office social media accounts have at least one leadership team member set as an administrator in case of changes in staff. This also allows the Sheriff's staff to check page usage for analytics, as well as suggest features that may benefit the page.

# Twitter

<https://twitter.com/AndersonSheriff>

## Overview

Twitter is a micro-blogging platform where users can quickly and easily send 280-character updates; link to photos, videos or stories; and reply to other accounts. Twitter is ideal for engaging with users in real time and keeping a consistent stream of content flowing to interested parties. Due to the ease-of-use sharing capabilities, Twitter is also beneficial for spreading news to an audience. It boasts more than 300 million monthly users, and 24 percent of the entire U.S. population uses Twitter, per a [2016 Pew Research report](#).



## The Sheriff's Office usage

The Sheriff's Office currently uses a single, main Twitter account. The account uses both automatic and manual posts and is being used as an engagement tool. The Sheriff's Office also utilizes a separate account for Emergency Management communications and that account is also maintained by the digital communications coordinator.

## Audience

The audience of the [@AndersonSheriff](#) account includes followers mostly from Upstate communities. Additional followers include statewide media and other public safety agencies. The audience is continually monitored for changes and active followers. We are also continually looking to expand our audience and attract diverse followers with broad interests.

## Tactics

Through posts and tone, the account is given a personality, or "voice", so followers know a real person is behind the account and can be engaged.

- *Engage followers:* Effort is made to quickly answer questions and provide direction to resources, as well as actively "talk" with followers and provide feedback, comments or general conversation.
- *Brand cross-promotion:* Special attention is paid to retweet news and comments from other ACSO accounts, such as [@ACSCMD](#), to strengthen brand focus.
- *Highlight news/activities/events:* Share information and links for upcoming events and activities or news related to the audience, both statewide and regionally.
- *Retweeting/link sharing:* Links and updates of followers are retweeted and shared. This helps keep the account active, and builds relationships and brand recognition with followers.
- *Push media mentions:* As Anderson County Sheriff's Office staff and experts are used as media sources, links to stories are shared to promote the brand in third-party outlets. Anderson County Sheriff's Office also uses Google Alerts to find mentions of Sheriff's Office personnel and programs in state and regional outlets and then promotes them.
- *Follow trends:* Using Twitter is an excellent way to follow trends and topical conversations to help guide content and news resources. Use searches and hashtags to find relevant posts.
- *Be positive and smart:* Here is an excellent rule of thumb for using Twitter. Imagine your mother reading what you post online. Would she be proud of what you were saying in a public forum or embarrassed? If it's the latter, you probably shouldn't be posting it. Be smart.



# Facebook

[www.facebook.com/AndersonSheriff](http://www.facebook.com/AndersonSheriff)

## Overview

Facebook is a social networking website which allows users to become “fans” of pages and follow the page’s activity, share the page’s content and interact by commenting on the posts. Pages can be set up by businesses or organizations and used to post news, events, links, photos and video. Pages offer some custom usability as well. More than 2 billion people worldwide use Facebook daily, including 71 percent of U.S. adults with Internet access.



## The Sheriff's Office usage

The Sheriff's Office maintains a single Facebook page. Another agency-related page is maintained by the digital content coordinator, [Emergency Management](#). The Anderson County Sheriff's Office page has a single primary administrator who posts all the content and utilizes features, which can also include custom tabs. The page is used to share news, events, links, photos and videos that highlight past, current and future items, as well as a look at the Anderson County Sheriff's Office organization, such as the people and activities behind it.

## Audience

The audience on the Facebook page consists of Sheriff's Office and County staff, Anderson County residents and other related stakeholders (67 percent female, and 33 percent in the 25-to-34 year old age range).

## Tactics

One goal of The Sheriff's Office is to give the agency a “voice” or “personality” through the use of Facebook; offering a way for users to engage and talk back to Anderson County Sheriff's Office. The Facebook page is also used to showcase a “behind-the-scenes” look at the Sheriff's Office, including videos and photos of activities and events. Audience-relevant news and information is also posted and shared.

- *Engage followers:* Effort is made to quickly answer questions and provide direction to resources, as well as actively “talk” with fans and provide feedback, comments or general conversation.
- *Photo/video posting:* Facebook is a media-rich site, and as such, the Sheriff's Office makes use of the various video- and photo-sharing abilities on the Sheriff's Office page. Videos and photos shared are either uploaded and unique to the Facebook page or linked from other sites, such as the Sheriff's Office's YouTube channel.
- *Highlight news/activities/events:* Share information and links for upcoming events and activities or news related to the audience, both statewide and regional, as well as share information during or after events, like the Citizen Academy, Active Assailant training, and National Night Out just to name a few.
- *Push media mentions:* As Anderson County Sheriff's Office staff and experts are used as media sources, links to stories are shared to promote the brand in third party outlets.
- *Promote educational materials:* Relevant items are promoted and linked to, usually timed to tie in with an event, incident, news, etc.
- *Highlight trends/topics:* Portions of hot topics that are relevant to the audience are promoted and shared, linking to resources and news.

# Facebook

[www.facebook.com/AndersonSheriff](http://www.facebook.com/AndersonSheriff)

---

- *Brand cross-promotion:* Special attention is paid to share news and resources from Anderson County Sheriff's Office accounts to strengthen the focus on our office.
- *Community page interaction:* As community pages relevant to Anderson County Sheriff's Office are identified, attention is paid to using keywords that pushes the content out to those community pages as well.
- *Be positive and smart:* Here is an excellent rule of thumb for using Facebook. Imagine your mother reading what you post online. Would she be proud of what you were saying in a public forum or embarrassed? If it's the latter, you probably shouldn't be posting it. Be smart.

# YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCqfbdmBV80vdQtv9hyf3mpg>

---

## Overview

YouTube is one of the top video sharing websites. The site allows an organization to upload videos that can be viewed, commented on and rated on the site itself, or embedded to other websites.

## The Sheriff's Office Usage

The Sheriff's Office utilizes YouTube for video sharing. The Anderson County Sheriff's Office [YouTube](#) channel is used primarily as a video hosting site. Video is embedded as content on Anderson County Sheriff's Office webpages or shared through other means.

The Sheriff's Office uses YouTube as a convenient way to promote videos to Facebook or Twitter and spotlight new or key videos. Users can also subscribe to the channels and receive the latest agency videos.

It is designed for external communication and videos which advance Anderson County Sheriff's Office, not internal or training videos.

Sheriff's Office staff can submit content to media relations & digital communications coordinator who can determine whether the content is appropriate to share on the Sheriff's Office page.

## Audience

There is not a specific targeted audience on the video-hosting site. All Anderson County Sheriff's Office videos are housed here for all program areas and audiences. Interested users can also subscribe to the channels to receive alerts on the latest videos as they are posted.

## Tactics

*Note:* Not all videos are uploaded to the Anderson County Sheriff's Office YouTube accounts. Some videos, such as an event behind-the-scenes video, may be uploaded and promoted on just Facebook or Instagram, depending on the goals for the video.





## Overview

Instagram is an online, mobile, photo and video-sharing service that allows users to take pictures and videos and share them both publicly and privately through its network, while also giving them the ability to cross-post on other social media networks that include Facebook and Twitter. It is a fast-growing social media network which limits posting to a smartphone app, although its site is also accessible on the Web solely for viewing of pictures and videos.



Users can share photos and videos of 15 seconds to 60 minutes via live video streaming. Instagram is growing quickly in popularity among millennial and younger audiences, with over 800 million active users. Its user base grew by over 300 million since 2016 and is projected to continue increasing in coming years.

## The Sheriff's Office Usage

The Sheriff's Office has launched one Instagram account ([@AndersonSheriff](https://www.instagram.com/AndersonSheriff)). It is designed to push photos and video about promotional items and events to a different audience. Primarily, items posted to the Instagram account represent a strictly positive image of the Sheriff's Office and avoids crime-related issues that may be posted to other agency platforms.

The Sheriff's Office also launched an Instagram account for Emergency Management ([@ACSCEMD](https://www.instagram.com/ACSCEMD)) that is designed to push educational and promotional photos and videos related to community preparedness and recovery.

## Audience

The audience of the [@AndersonSheriff](https://www.instagram.com/AndersonSheriff) account includes followers mostly from the Upstate, media outlets and other stakeholders. The audience is continually monitored for changes and active followers, and we are working to expand and diversify our following.

## Tactics

Through posting and tone, the account is given a personality, or voice, so followers know a person is behind the account and can be engaged.

- *Engage followers:* Effort is made to quickly answer questions in the comment section below posts and provide direction to resources, as well as actively "talk" with followers and provide feedback, comments or general conversation.
- *Be unique:* There are multiple ways to promote photos online via social media, including Facebook and Twitter, but special effort is given to highlight photos through the Instagram account which are unique and highlight Anderson County Sheriff's Office's mission in an eye-catching fashion. These photos can be used exclusively for Instagram or shared with other networks easily.
- *Brand cross-promotion:* An effort is given to promote other ACSO social media accounts and engage with them actively, including Emergency Management, to promote that account and build a sense of community.
- *Highlight news/activities/events:* Share information and links for upcoming events and activities or news related to the audience, both statewide and regional, promoting with photos and videos.
- *Reposting/link sharing:* Photos of followers are shared, or "regrammed." This helps keep the account active, and builds relationships and brand recognition with followers.

# Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/andersonsheriff>

---

- *Be positive and smart:* Instagram can attract a younger audience which engages heavily with its content. This can lead to emotional responses in its comment sections. Be mindful of this and be watchful of the conversations that take place. Always be smart, positive and thoughtful with the photos and videos that are posted. If you think a piece of media might be objectionable, don't post it.

## Overview

LinkedIn is a business and employment-oriented social networking service. It is used for professional networking, with employers posting jobs and job seekers posting resumes.



The site has over 467 million total users, who can connect with each other and build their networks and build relationships. Users can invite anyone to become a connection, but contact between users requires a connection. LinkedIn is an excellent site for professional development and ideas about careers.

## The Sheriff's Office Usage

The Sheriff's Office has created a LinkedIn business page:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/anderson-county-sheriff's-office/>

It connects and appeals to the professional sector, highlighting Anderson County Sheriff's Office and information relating to it, as well as job openings and agency highlights. Posting is typically less frequent and more targeted than outlets like Facebook and Twitter and is designed to attract business professionals and recruit possible candidates.

## Audience

The audience of this LinkedIn account includes followers from professional and law enforcement sectors, as well as Sheriff's Office personnel. Efforts are made to target business-minded followers through content and promotion of posts, and we continually monitor the page and its audience, seeking to attract a wide variety of followers with diverse interests.

## Tactics

Through posting and tone, the account is given a personality, or voice, so followers know a person is behind the account and can be engaged.

- Engage followers: Effort is made to quickly answer questions and provide direction to resources, as well as actively "talk" with followers and provide feedback, comments and general conversation about the topics discussed.
- Highlight news/activities/events: Share information and links on community development and professional opportunities with Anderson County Sheriff's Office.
- Push media mentions: When Anderson County Sheriff's Office stories are featured in third-party outlets, they are highlighted here. The digital communications coordinator also uses Google Alerts to find mentions of relevant agency personnel and programs in state and regional media outlets and then promotes them as appropriate.
- Be positive and smart: LinkedIn is a professional outlet, and a positive, business-like tone is used with postings, designed to promote and improve a professional image for Anderson County Sheriff's Office.

## Overview

Nextdoor is a private social network used in over 100,000 neighborhoods across the United States. It is a closed online environment where neighbors can “comfortably” talk about the issues that matter most in their local communities. Members of Nextdoor are verified residents of the neighborhood in which they subscribe and is designed to connect neighbors, not necessarily friends.



As a public agency, Anderson County Sheriff's Office joins hundreds of public safety organizations that utilize the application to connect with members on such things as crime prevention and emergency preparedness. Over 40% of all posts within the Nextdoor environment relate to community concerns and public safety issues making it an ideal tool to reach a very specific audience within the County.

Currently, there are just under 10,000 (9,952) subscribers to Nextdoor living in Anderson County representing 7,876 of the more than 100,000 households. This number has grown by more than 350 subscribers in just the last 30 days (December 2017 Metrics).

## The Sheriff's Office usage

The Sheriff's Office currently uses a single, Nextdoor agency account. The account uses manual posts and is being utilized as an engagement and educational tool. The Sheriff's Office also has access to a separate account for Emergency Management communications, but at this time it has not been activated.

## Audience

The audience of the Nextdoor account includes only citizens residing within a designated neighborhood zone in Anderson County. The audience is continually monitored for changes and active followers. Expansion of the audience base is relatively limited in that only those who live within specific neighborhoods are able to invite others neighbors. The Sheriff's Office can invite residents to participate, and has done so in the past,

## Tactics

Through posts and tone, the account is given a personality, or “voice”, so followers know a real person is behind the account and can be engaged.

- *Engage followers:* Effort is made to quickly answer questions and provide direction to resources, as well as actively “talk” with followers and provide feedback, comments or general conversation.
- *Brand cross-promotion:* Special attention is paid to news and comments from other ACSO accounts, such as Facebook and Instagram, to strengthen brand focus.
- *Highlight news/activities/events:* Share information and links for upcoming events and activities or news related to the audience, as well as critical protective measures and safety messages.
- *Push media mentions:* As Anderson County Sheriff's Office staff and experts are used as media sources, links to stories are shared to promote the brand in third-party outlets. Anderson County Sheriff's Office also uses Google Alerts to find mentions of Sheriff's Office personnel and programs in state and regional outlets and then promotes them as appropriate through the Nextdoor platform.
- *Be positive and smart:* Nextdoor is a unique medium, and a positive, business-like tone is used with postings. In general, posts will present the Sheriff's Office in a professional manner providing relevant messaging in a timely fashion. Care should be used to not overload messages or subscribers may not heed emergency messaging due to message fatigue.

---

PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

---

# 2018 Social Media Communications Plan



Anderson County Sheriff's Office  
Chad McBride, Sheriff