



NYIT Social Media Guidelines

Social media is changing the way we work and educate, offering a new communications model for you to engage with students, colleagues and the world at large. We believe this kind of interaction can provide educational opportunities and benefits. And it's a way for you to take part in global conversations related to education and other important matters that we care about at New York Institute of Technology (NYIT).

The Guidelines

These are the official guidelines for participating in social media as a representative of NYIT. If you're a staff or faculty member creating or contributing to blogs, wikis, social networks, virtual worlds, or any other kind of social media, these guidelines are for you. It is your sole individual responsibility to ensure ongoing compliance. Participation in social networking on behalf of NYIT is not a right but an opportunity, so please treat it seriously and with respect. Failure to do so could limit your ability to participate in NYIT's official social media accounts. These guidelines will continually evolve as new technologies and social networking tools emerge—so check back regularly to make sure you're up to date.

Virtually every day new educational and communication opportunities are sprouting up on existing and emerging social networking sites. While we want to encourage our NYIT community to participate responsibly, here are a few simple guidelines to keep in mind:

1. Participate

Let's start a conversation. Social networking is an effective way to share NYIT's stories with the community in order to develop relationships and collaborate. Keep in mind that you want to:

- **Have fun.** It's a conversation. Be yourself and encourage comments. Create some excitement. Let's share with the world the exciting things we're learning and doing—and open up the channels to learn from others.
- **Add value.** There are millions of words out there—make yours helpful and thought-provoking. Impart the research, ideas, innovations and creativity unique to NYIT. Remember, it's a conversation, so keep it real. Build community by posting content that invites responses—then stay engaged.
- **Tailor your message.** Make sure that you know your audience. The same post may not resonate across platforms.
- **Use the appropriate tone of voice.** It's all about telling your story. Social networking allows you to be playful, hip, communal, irreverent, fun, and sophisticated, among many other adjectives. Find your voice and stick to it.
- **Understand the platform:** Know your social networking site's rules. Know the terms of service for the site you're using. Also, understand that by using any site, you are implicitly agreeing to its own codes of conduct.
- **Check in with C+M.** If you or your department wants to get in on the social media action give C+M a call. As described below, C+M must approve any NYIT official or affiliated pages, and the team can help with the set-up and maintenance.

2. Disclose

Your honesty—or dishonesty—will be quickly noticed in the social media environment. Please represent NYIT ethically, accurately, and with integrity.

- **Be transparent.** Use your real name, identify that you work for NYIT, and be clear about your role.
- **Be truthful.** If you have a vested interest in something you are discussing, be the first to point it out and be specific about what it is and never post false, inflammatory or misleading statements.

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- **Be accurate.** Proofread and double-check your facts before posting. This is one way to maintain the integrity of the work and the trust of other users.
- **Be yourself.** Stick to your area of educational expertise; write what you know. If you publish to a website outside NYIT and identify yourself as affiliated with NYIT be clear that what you are sharing is your personal point of view.

3. Protect

While being transparent, make sure not to violate NYIT’s confidentiality or legal guidelines for students or colleagues—or your own privacy. Remember, if you’re online, you’re on the record—everything on the Internet is public and searchable. And what you write is ultimately your responsibility. NYIT reserves the right to delete or modify any questionable content from its sanctioned social media properties.

- **Don't discuss students.** Never discuss a specific student’s information. In the case of specific student achievements the Office of Strategic Communications and External Affairs will help you determine the appropriate channels for releasing the information.
- **Don't discuss NYIT confidential or proprietary information.** This includes, for example, NYIT financial information and personnel information. Please also never comment on NYIT legal matters.
- **Abide by the law.** Respect copyright, fair use, privacy, confidentiality, FERPA, HIPAA and defamation laws. For NYIT’s protection and your own, it is critical that you comply with the laws governing use of copyrighted material owned by others. The safest practice is to link to others' work. If you do quote from someone else's work, you must either have permission or determine that it is “fair use” under copyright laws. You should also be sure to include the appropriate credit, but remember that credit is not the same as permission. Keep in mind that laws vary in different areas of the world.
- **Avoid political partisanship.** In charged political races emotions can run high. NYIT is nonpartisan and all content posted to NYIT’s affiliated accounts should be as well.
- **Don't slam other schools (or NYIT).** Anything you publish must be true and not misleading, and all claims must be substantiated and approved. Academic achievements or changes must be approved for external posting by the Office of Strategic Communications and External Affairs.
- **Don't over share.** Be careful out there—once you hit “share,” you usually can’t get it back. Plus being judicious will help make your content more crisp and audience—relevant.
- **Play nice.** Don't engage in online bullying or fights. When disagreeing with others’ opinions, keep it appropriate and polite.
- **Be accessible.** If you are publishing on behalf of NYIT, make sure that your supervisor or colleagues can access your social networking account in case of an emergency.

4. Use Common Sense

Perception is reality and in online social networks, the lines between public and private, personal and professional are blurred. Just by identifying yourself as an NYIT employee, you are creating perceptions about your expertise and about the school and its academic rigor. Do us all proud.

- **Learn from the conversation.** As a global institution of higher education, an ongoing exchange of ideas, experiences, and learning at our various campuses among faculty, staff, students, and alumni—and among all other partners and constituents—fosters individual and institutional growth.
- **Keep it cool.** There can be a fine line between healthy debate and confrontational or incendiary reaction. Always frame what you write to invite differing points of view without inflaming others. And you don’t need to respond to every criticism. Be careful and considerate as the content of your writings may be interpreted to represent school—promoted activism.
- **Respect the input of others.** NYIT values the input and opinions of others, without regard to their professed ideology, socio-economic status, race, political views, religion, culture, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, or any protected status. Be considerate and respectful to all.
- **Did you screw up?** If you make a mistake, admit it and be apologetic. Be upfront and be quick with your correction and any necessary apology. If you're posting to a blog, you may choose to modify an earlier post—just make it clear that you have done so.
- **Use good judgment.** If you're about to publish something that makes you even the slightest bit

uncomfortable, think about why that is. Always pause and think before posting. And reply to comments in a timely manner, if and when a response is appropriate. If you are unsure on how to respond to a negative or inflammatory comment, the best practice is to wait and seek advice from the Office of Strategic Communications and External Affairs rather than react in haste. Keep it cool if others are upset.

NYIT Official Pages or Affiliated Sites—Setting Up an Account

Social media may be just what your department needs to jump start the conversation. Before you click that create button there are a few things you need to do:

- **The setup.** If any school, department, office, or person wants to create an NYIT affiliated social media account, the Office of Strategic Communications and External Affairs will need to grant approval. Please contact NYIT's Social Media Strategist (social@nyit.edu or 516.686.7849) to begin the process.
- **Establish a contact person.** Notify the Office of Strategic Communications and External Affairs as to who the new social media contact person will be. And keep us updated on any changes.
- **Be secure.** All social media passwords should be kept in a secure location and follow IT best practices for passwords. These should also be updated when a social media administrator leaves or third party uses the accounts. Any employee with responsibility for and/or access to an NYIT social media account should be removed as an administrator upon leaving NYIT.
- **See something, say something.** Report any suspected “fake” social media account to the Social Media Strategist. If possible, users should refrain from replying to or engaging with any suspected “fake” accounts.

Personal/Non-Affiliated Pages

NYIT respects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to engage in free and open communication of their personal information through the individual use of blogs, Internet diaries, social websites like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, YouTube, WeChat, Tumblr, and other forms of online discourse. However, when these personal online activities contain content that could be detrimental to NYIT, its faculty, staff, or students, they may become an appropriate focus of the school's policies. Students, faculty, and staff are personally responsible for the content of their personal online activities, and in addition to the general guidelines above, the following additional guidelines should be followed:

- **Know your privacy settings.** Faculty and staff may have personal Facebook/Snapchat/Instagram/YouTube/Twitter accounts but should be mindful of privacy settings. Because each and every faculty, and staff member represents the school, content posted on personal pages should be in good taste. Personal photos, especially, should be filtered for appropriateness. Unless privacy settings are manually changed, each and every person should assume that his or her personal information could be accessed by anyone on the Internet.
- **Know your role.** Keep in mind NYIT is an institution of learning and our students often look to university faculty and staff for guidance and direction as they embark on their educational and professional careers. Be a good example for them to follow.
- **Getting personal.** Personal engagement with social media should not be on work time or using NYIT computers or networks.