



Social media

1. What can you use social media for?

Social media – blogs, Twitter, Facebook, YouTube etc – have opened up an important new communications channel. However, different media are best for different aspects of communication. The best uses of social media are to share news immediately (Twitter), build networks (Facebook) and in all cases encourage social conversations with, and between, your audiences.

2. Why might you choose social media?

A first point to consider before you start to use social media is whether the audiences you want to reach are actually using it themselves. If they are, ask yourself whether they will take part in any conversations with you that are relevant to your aims and objectives. Do what works for your target audience.

Are people interested in and discussing topics relevant to what you do in their social media conversations? Is your work, in the widest sense, being discussed? If so, is the comment negative, positive or neutral? Listening in will help you to decide whether you should engage or not.

3. How might you use social media?

You might to be mainly proactive or mainly reactive in your use of social media, or to be a bit of both. As with any conversation you will have to judge when and how to join in. However, you may decide not to join in a conversation which has already started but to lead a new one.

Having some measurable goals is probably a good idea in order to assess whether your social media project is having the desired results.

4. Important points to note

As with all apparently casual, private conversations that are in fact permanent, public and on the record, there are points to bear in mind when engaging in social media. You need to take care not to defame character, breach confidentiality, intrude on privacy, and disrespect intellectual property rights.

You will be just as careful to avoid making any inappropriate remarks that damage relationships, whether inside or outside the Church. These are serious matters in their own right and can be picked up by others.

Don't exchange private messages with children and young people but use (eg) an accessible Facebook page (not a personal account) or a publicly accessible Twitter account. Follow the advice of your social media provider and our Safeguarding guidelines at www.chelmsford.anglican.org/uploads/2014_PRACTICE_GUIDANCE-RESOURCES.pdf (organisers of activities must complete an activity plan and risk assessment).

Maintain separate personal and public accounts. Be wary about sharing your personal details online unless you are certain that they will be secure. Use privacy settings.

5. Learning by doing

You will learn how to use social media by experimenting with it. You will find a brief overview of social media below. If there is a good fit between social media and what you need to do, by all means try it out.

Do not be afraid to set a budget for spending modest amounts on Facebook advertising to reach new audiences using the powerful demographic tools Facebook provides.

Social media channels are open and democratic. Entry to the market is easy. In fact many people in the diocese are already using them.

If you would like to see whether social media is for you, here a few of the most popular methods to get you started...

Overview of social media

Some examples of popular social media tools are shown below. Each service is different and the advantages and disadvantages of each will vary depending on your purpose and the interests of your audience.

Twitter

Twitter is a free social networking service that enables users to send messages or 'tweets' of up to 280 characters. Tweets are seen by a user's 'followers' - people signed up to receive your tweets. You can also send private messages to those who follow you by choosing the 'Direct Message' option on your profile page.



Advantages

- Quick and simple way of promoting campaigns or projects.
- Provides direct contact with your target audience if they choose to follow you.
- Network and keep up to date with key individuals, eg MPs, journalists.
- Helps drive traffic to your website.

Disadvantages

- Posts are limited to 280 characters.
- Messages can be retweeted by anyone.
- Regular tweets are needed to keep audience engaged – between three or four times daily.

Facebook

Facebook is another free social networking site that allows users to create profiles, upload videos and pictures and send messages to connect with family, friends and colleagues. It is a popular choice amongst social networkers as it enables them to connect with people they know on a more personal level.



Advantages

- Ability to search for users who have common interests i.e. 'groups' and interact with them.
- Can post several photos at one time.

- No word limit for status updates unlike Twitter.
- Ability to send a direct message to all of your friends at once.
- Able to add videos to your page.
- Facility to create and publicise an event, send out invites and monitor who plans to attend.

Disadvantages

- Much more difficult to attract new followers. Contact must be initiated by the individual.
- Unable to search posts from Facebook users. Unless the individual is a 'friend' you are unable to view their status updates.
- Statuses can be shared by 'friends', however it doesn't happen as freely as Twitter.
- Connections that are made via Facebook are usually with people that you already know rather than reaching wider audiences.

YouTube

A powerful public video hosting website that uses modern technology to enable users to share their videos with anyone visiting the site. The majority of videos on YouTube have been uploaded by individuals and can vary from the professionally produced to videos made by beginners. YouTube also enables individuals to embed videos onto their social media sites / other websites



Advantages

- Can drive a high volume of traffic to your website in a short space of time.
- Videos are re-useable and can be shared on Facebook or even with the press.
- Great way of showing the human side to your church / organisation.

Disadvantages

- Once the content is publicly available you cannot control what happens to it.
- In order to film high quality videos you will need to buy equipment, including editing software.
- Although it is relatively cheap to make videos it can be time consuming and requires a certain degree of knowledge to edit the videos once completed.

Other popular social media platforms

Flickr

Flickr is a free online photo management and sharing web application. Users are able to upload photos from their home computers, mobile devices, other websites or any other software they may use. Once uploaded, photos can then be sent out to family and friends through methods including RSS feeds, by posting to blogs, email and the Flickr website itself. Users can also give family and friends permission to view



LinkedIn

LinkedIn is the leading online professional network with millions of members signing up from across the world. Mostly used for professional networking and job searching, many companies are using LinkedIn to provide information about their company for potential employees and can contact them directly for recruitment purposes. Users are also able to search for jobs, research companies, join groups and network with people in a similar field to themselves.



SoundCloud

SoundCloud is an iPhone and website application that enables users to transmit their voice to the world in the form of audio recordings. Users are able to post their recordings on the SoundCloud website and also share through other social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter on which the sound files can be embedded.



The Diocese and Social Media

Chelmsford Diocese is active in social media. Follow us on Twitter and Like us on Facebook.

The following social media accounts are among those in use:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/chelmsdio>
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/askanarchdeacon>
- Twitter: @chelmsdio <https://twitter.com/chelmsdio>
- Twitter: @cottrellstephen <https://twitter.com/CottrellStephen>
- Twitter: @peterhill92 <https://twitter.com/peterhill92>
- Twitter: @bishcolchester <https://twitter.com/bishcolchester>
- Twitter: @adstansted <https://twitter.com/adstansted>
- Twitter: @Annetteacooper <https://twitter.com/annetteacooper>
- Twitter: @ChelmsDiocEd <https://twitter.com/ChelmsDiocEd>
- Pinterest: @chelmsdio <https://uk.pinterest.com/chelmsdio/>
- Flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/chelmsford-diocese>
- Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/chelmsdio> - See separate Guidance Note
- SoundCloud: <https://soundcloud.com/chelmsdio>
- Periscope: get the free app from the App Store and follow us @chelmsdio
- YouTube: www.youtube.com/ChelmsfordDiocese

Contact

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