

Social Media Best Practices – Wildfire Prevention (Smokey Bear)

Thanks for helping to leverage your local and state forester’s social media accounts to spread Smokey’s wildfire prevention message. Here are some tips that will help elevate the message

Strategy	Set Goals	Try to set realistic goals for your channels, whether it’s likes, follows, comments, retweets, etc. In some cases it’s good to rally your social channels to help reach those goals.
	Choose a Consistent Voice	Being human and having a sense of humor work best in social media. Be sensitive to current events and know that your tone may need to change during times of crisis or on reflective holidays.
	Staffing	Be realistic in terms of who will manage your channel(s). If you can only manage one channel, choose either Facebook or Twitter and have posts automatically syndicate to the other channel.
	Set a Policy	Determine a crisis policy ahead of time. Determine how you will handle inappropriate speech. State it publicly in your channel – see Smokey’s Facebook page for ideas.
Content	Post often	Facebook: 1-2/day unless it’s a special event Twitter: 2-3/day with some being retweets Instagram: 2-3/week
	Schedule Your Posts	Try to schedule your posts so your followers come to expect when to hear from you. It is best to target your audience first thing in the morning before work or during lunch. Don’t forget that weekends can get the greatest interaction, especially when highlighting fun posts and events.
	Rotate Types of Content	Mix it up with text, quotes, photos, illustrations, infographics, articles, polls, quizzes, open-ended questions and true or false questions. It’s good to offer your channel a variety of content.
	Target Different Audiences	Young or old, tree-huggers, hunters, outdoorspeople or families considering a weekend trip – rotate in messaging that calls out specifically to your most important communities
	Engage in Conversation	Reply to questions. Like and retweet positive messages. Thank people for contributions.
	Celebrate	Thank people for contributing. Celebrate national or local holidays or even weird ones with a twist that makes sense for your communities. Or even create new ones to rally the troops
Market	Outreach Regularly	Call other state foresters and see if you can coordinate a social media post exchange. Work with volunteers and partners to tag your account when they are mentioning you. Ask them for shoutouts to your account.
	Paid Ads	While these can definitely help to increase reach and engagement they can be quite costly with Facebook “likes” costing upwards of \$1 in some cases. Ask yourself if a “like” is worth paying for or should you focus on earning followers organically by creating better content and inspiring your existing followers to engage more frequently and rope in their friends.
Measure	Track Progress	Measure once a month how active your channels are. How often did you post? How did the channel respond to the posts? How did your followers react? Don’t focus on any one specific month but instead track the trends and try to determine what factors contributed to engagement.