

SOCIAL MEDIA CONVERSATIONS



Listen

listen to what people are saying before joining the conversation

Facebook

Login to [facebook.com](https://www.facebook.com) (enter your username and password) and go to the facebook page.

Check your facebook page 1-2 times per day and, if possible, arrange for some monitoring during sponsored/promoted events or on weekends. Replies should occur within 1 day or sooner if possible.

Periodically search for related pages and look for cross-promotional opportunities. Consult Corporate Communications for assistance with sponsorships and cross-promotion.

Twitter

Login to [Twitter.com](https://www.twitter.com) (enter your username and password)

Monitor 2-3 times per day and, if possible, monitor during sponsored/promoted events or on weekends. Replies should occur within 12 hours or sooner if possible.

Follow other accounts related to your activities e.g. [@visitguelph](https://twitter.com/visitguelph), [@Storm_City](https://twitter.com/Storm_City) you can also follow other people who participate in sponsored events

Perform searches based on key phrases and hash tags e.g.

- Guelph #guelph
- @guelphtransit #transit #bus
- #hockey hockey
- OHL #OHL

SOCIAL MEDIA CONVERSATIONS

Engage, Enable and Share

consider your audience: be clear, concise and compelling

Before you start using social media tools ensure that your primary web/mobile site is current and accurate. Use your social media tools to drive people to more detailed information on your web/mobile site.

Here are a few tips to help you grab attention, gain fans, find followers and deliver excellent service:

- Be honest, friendly and professional *"the road is closed, but in a few weeks you'll see new bike lanes. For now, use the detour here (link)"*
- Get to the point - use simple, straightforward language
 - Posts under 80 characters have a 27% higher engagement rate
- Include a call to action - a link, photos, videos etc.
- Be enthusiastic, not annoying.
 - Avoid sales pitches – offer real value
 - Don't spam your fans and followers - be considerate
 - If you want people to participate in more than one medium, offer different content for different users e.g. don't use hash tags on facebook
- Ask questions *"Are you coming to the game tonight? Great seats still available (link to ticket sales)"* Start questions with 'where', 'would', 'when' and 'should', avoid asking 'why'
- Use simple keywords to improve interaction. The left column shows keywords that generate the most likes, while the right column shows keywords to generate comments:



SOCIAL MEDIA CONVERSATIONS



- On Twitter, use hash tags to emphasize key words (see search terms above) and develop your own hash tag ie #stormfans, #transit, and encourage patrons to use it
- Comply with City's policies, guidelines and Corporate Values.

Participate

If you are going to engage and invite comments then you should accept the good with the bad. At all times measure your actions against the City's Corporate Values: Integrity, Excellence and Wellness.

If you think an online conversation could compromise your professional integrity or that of the City, ask for support from Corporate Communications.

If/when to reply to comments/questions:

The City's social media spokespeople must determine IF a response from the City of Guelph is needed. Check out the City's existing facebook and Twitter feeds to get an idea of when we chose to participate in an online conversation.

As a rule, the City DOES REPLY to online questions and comments if:

- the post is respectful and asks a direct question about a City program or policy
- the post includes factually inaccurate information – the City can provide factually correct information to the user

As a rule, the City DOES NOT reply to online questions and comments if:

- the post includes respectful statements of opinion – people are welcome to respectfully disagree
- the post is directed at other participants in the conversation
- the post does not comply with the City's social media guidelines

The City may remove any post that does not comply with the social media guidelines and may block/ban users for repeated violations of its social media guidelines.

How to reply to comments/questions:

permanent and public conversations

- Be honest, friendly and professional
- Get to the point - use simple, straightforward language
- Answer direct questions
 - whenever possible, answer questions using the platform in which they are asked

SOCIAL MEDIA CONVERSATIONS



- **avoid** directing social media users to another communications channel such as a phone number or email "call 519-822-1260 for more information"
- if you don't know the answer, say so, and then go find it "good question. I'll check with our event team and get back to you OK?"

SOCIAL MEDIA CONVERSATIONS

Dealing with negative comments

The City invites all community members to share and discuss their opinions provided that those discussions remain respectful. The City DOES NOT reply to questions and comments if they do not comply with the City's social media guidelines. The City expects some level of criticism, which presents an opportunity to correct misinformation and deliver excellent service.

- Be honest, friendly and professional
- Be sympathetic and responsive "Thanks for letting us know. We'll have security check it out."
- Get to the point – be direct - don't give users the run-around
- Answer questions
 - whenever possible, answer questions using the platform in which they are asked
 - avoid directing social media users to another communications channel such as a phone number or email "call 519-822-1260 for more information"
 - if you don't know the answer, say so, and then go find it "good question. I'll check with our event team and get back to you OK?"

Tips for timing

- Posts outside of business hours have 20% higher engagement rates
- Friday through Sunday have the highest response rates for entertainment events
- Sports related posts have the highest engagement on Sundays
- Thursday and Friday are the best days for promoting weekend events

Measurement

Whenever possible, count the number of interactions you have, and whether they are positive or negative. Here are a few ways you can measure social media activity in order to determine the benefit to the department or organization:

- number of fans, followers, check ins (track growth)
- number of interactions on each social networking platform (positive vs. negative)
- number of questions answered via social media tools

Other tips – non communications issues

Be sure all contests and special offers comply with terms of use for social media platforms and Ontario's lottery rules. Check with Corporate communications for assistance developing promotional programs. Ensure all participating clerks/sales people are aware and trained to execute all social media promotions.

SOCIAL MEDIA CONVERSATIONS



City of Guelph social media commenting guidelines

When the City of Guelph uses a social media site which allows public comments and posts from its users, the following content will not be permitted:

- Comments/posts not related to a posted article/topic/information;
- Business solicitation;
- Profane or inappropriate language;
- Content considered to be defamatory, disrespectful or insulting to City staff or representatives
- Content that promotes, fosters, or perpetuates discrimination on the basis of race, creed, color, age, religion, gender, marital status, status with regard to public assistance, national origin, physical or mental disability or sexual orientation;
- Sexual content or links to sexual content;
- Conduct or encouragement of illegal activity;
- Any content deemed inappropriate by the City of Guelph

The City of Guelph may post events where the City is involved as a participant, host or sponsor. If you have an event that meets these criteria you can send all relevant information to webmaster@guelph.ca.

Posts by the public promoting events will not be permitted.