

## **Guidelines for Social Media Content**

If you have recently launched a social media plan and started posting, you may be wondering what to share and how often to post. While you always want to remain professional, you can still have fun with social media. In fact, patients may feel more comfortable if they remember that you are all just people, too. Authenticity is the key to engagement online, so make every effort to post, respond and interact in social media settings the way you would in person in your office. You will have more success by speaking naturally, instead of solely trying to sell them on your offering. Consistency is also important, so be sure to refer to procedures and use terminology, in the same way all the time, in the office and online.

In most circumstances, we recommend that you post unique or local content at least once a week. We have found videos and photos to be the most viral type of content, but we recommend having release forms signed by any patients and staff members who may appear on your social media pages. It is courteous to let patients know when and how you'll be using their image, and permission should be granted before you tag a person, as they may be controlling the information that shows up about them online. Also, it is wise to check photos, including their backgrounds, carefully to ensure that everything is appropriate to share, paying specific attention to make sure there isn't any PHI visible. HIPAA concerns are just as relevant on social media as they are in your office.

Here are some suggestions for social media content that your practice may wish to share:

1. Industry announcements or stories related to eye care
2. Contests and marketing promotions that your practice is currently offering
3. Local news stories that affect your practice or employees
4. Being festive, decorating or dressing up on holidays make for fun photos
5. Game day, team spirit or homecoming week at a school in your area may provide the opportunity to post photos of employees participating in events or showing spirit
6. What your employees do in their free time, from coaching or participating in sports, to volunteering or community involvement, patients will enjoy seeing what your staff does after hours
7. Occasional reminders to schedule annual check ups

Determining how frequently you post can be tricky and a little subjective. We recommend that you post something at least once a week, if not more. Keep in mind that there is a fine line between sharing and sharing too much; you don't want your followers to think of you as spam. Your social media policy should outline your practice's position on who is responsible for posting and commenting. If you would like more information about establishing your online persona, please review our resource module: [Guidelines for Defining Social Media Policies](#).