MLML Social Media Overview & Policies

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Compiled by Lauren Cooley (08/2020). Some material from IT's social media meeting notes.

Social Media Overview & Goals

- Mission statement: “To collaborate and build a social media presence that showcases our research to inspire and motivate prospective students, the public and the MLML community to be actively engaged in the growth and success of MLML"
- Social media goals:
    - To attract and clearly provide information to prospective students
    - Promote the MLML Graduate Program and showcase student success
    - Communicate our research activities and achievements to marine science institutions and organizations, consortium campuses, SJSU, CSU, alumni, followers, and the general public
    - Generate public interest and provide a platform for donations
    - To efficiently and effectively provide information to the MLML community

MLML Social Media Assistant (SMA)

- The MLML Social Media Assistant (SMA) is a graduate student who manages all MLML social media platforms.
- The SMA helps implement and maintain online marketing strategies through social media. By using various forms of new media, they help represent our institution through online channels.
- The SMA works closely with with Ivano and the rest of the Social Media Team (including MLML admin, IT group, and the front desk staff)
- SMA job responsibilities:
    - Collect content from the MLML community and other online sources for posting on MLML social media platforms and the MLML homepage under news and events
    - Create engaging original posts for MLML social media platforms that summarize content submitted to and/or found by the social media team
        - Posts include photos, links, and tags to SJSU, CSU, COAST, CSUMB, California Sea Grant, and other relevant organizations/institutions

    - Maintain a strong connection with MLML students, faculty, researchers, and alumni to promote student successes such as thesis defenses, awards, scholarships, The Drop-In blog, and professional updates from our alumni

Audience

- MLML community
- General public
- SJSU president and administrative staff
    - SJSU President - Mary Papazian
    - SJSU College of Science Dean - Michael Kaufman
    - SJSU Vice President for Research and Innovation - Mohammed Abousalem
    - SJSU Provost - Vincent Cocino

- Alumni and donors
- Affiliated marine science institutions and researchers/colleagues

Post Content Collection

- Post content is collected from a variety of sources including direct submissions from the MLML community, by monitoring the social media platforms of related organizations, and by searching online. Content is reviewed by the SMA and posted at their discretion, with assistance from Ivano as needed.
    - MLML community
        - Jim, Ivano, MLML faculty, and occasionally students, staff, and alumni submit content suggestions to the SMA.
        - Most of these suggestions are submitted through email sent to the socialmedia@mlml account, but sometimes they are submitted through direct message on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, or LinkedIn.

    - Monitoring other social media sources
        - Collaborating/related organizations such as COAST, CSU, SJSU, CSUMB, California Sea Grant, specific MLML lab groups, and individual faculty/staff/students/alumni will post content related to MLML.
        - The SMA should monitor posts that MLML is tagged in and also look for relevant social media posts from other organizations and people that would be good to share on our platforms.

    - Searching online
        - New journal publications from MLML faculty, students, and staff can be easily found by setting up a Google Scholar alert for any publication with MLML listed as an author affiliation
        - Other news stories can be found by searching “Moss Landing Marine Laboratories” on Google every week or so to see if any new stories

related to the lab have been published.

Post Branding

- SJSU wants more branding at MLML. Social media is working to reference SJSU in MLML posts as much as possible
- When possible, social media posts should say “SJSU/MLML” instead of just “MLML”

MLML Social Media Platforms

- **Facebook**
  - Account name: Moss Landing Marine Laboratories
  - Link: https://www.facebook.com/mosslandingmarinelabs/
- **Twitter**
  - Handle: @MLMLmarinesci
  - Link: https://twitter.com/MLMLmarinesci
- **LinkedIn**
  - Account name: Moss Landing Marine Laboratories
  - Link: https://www.linkedin.com/company/1681175/
- **Instagram**
  - Handle: @mosslandingmarinelabs
  - Link: https://www.instagram.com/mosslandingmarinelabs/
- **MLML homepage** press coverage & occasional events
  - Link: https://mlml.sjsu.edu/
- **The Drop-In Blog**
  - Blog Name: The Drop-In @ Moss Landing Marine Laboratories
  - Link: https://mlml.sjsu.edu/student-life/mlmlblog/
  - Note: The Drop-In is run by MLML students on a volunteer basis. Coordinating the blog is NOT a part of the paid SMA position, but the SMA should promote new blog posts on MLML social media to help them reach wider audiences.

Post Descriptions by Platform & Posting Frequency

- **Facebook/Twitter/LinkedIn**
  - Posting frequency: typically 3-5 posts/week (up to 1 post/day on weekdays with the occasional weekend post)

- Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn are MLML's three core social media platforms. While the language and format differs between (explained in detail below), the daily post content should be modified and then cross-posted across all three platforms

- **Facebook**
  - Facebook is our biggest platform and reaches the widest audience (currently ~5,000 followers)
  - Facebook is the most flexible platform and posts can include links, photos, videos, and events. Most posts should contain at least one of these things as plain text posts tend to perform poorly and have low engagement. There is no maximum length for Facebook posts, so there is space to be more descriptive and include more material.
  - The tone for Facebook posts can vary from extremely professional to more laid back depending on the content. Emojis and hashtags can be used, but are not essential.
  - The SMA is responsible for creating and promoting Facebook event pages for major MLML events that are open to the public (e.g. Open House, alumni reunions, etc). These Facebook events should be cross-posted and advertised on our other social media platforms, but the actual event pages are exclusively on Facebook.

- **LinkedIn**
  - LinkedIn has the most professional tone of our 4 platforms. These posts are similar to Facebook, but are always on the more formal side (for example, no emojis). Typically Facebook posts only need to be altered slightly for LinkedIn (and sometimes can be identical).

- **Twitter**
  - Tweets are short- 280 characters maximum. Several Tweets can be strung together into a thread when you have more content, but it's best to keep most posts to 1 Tweet when possible. This usually results in a highly condensed version of a Facebook/LinkedIn post.
  - Twitter is more casual than Facebook or LinkedIn and is a very hashtag focused platform. Gifs, emojis, links, photos, and videos are also important and should be used for most posts. Tweets with just plain text tend to perform very poorly and have low engagement.

- **Instagram**
  - Posting frequency: 1-3 posts/week

    - Instagram is a photo-centric platform and thus only content that includes strong photos that we have permission to share should be posted.
    - Instagram posts are often very different from posts on our other platforms (although they can be similar). The majority of content that is posted on Facebook/Twitter/LinkedIn will not be posted on Instagram.
        - Example: a photo of a beautiful sunset at the lab could be posted on Instagram on the same day that a journal publication link is posted on Facebook/Twitter/LinkedIn
    - The tone for Instagram posts is more casual and whimsical than the other platforms. Short photo captions containing emojis and hashtags are ideal

- **MLML homepage**
    - Homepage posts are split into two categories: News and Events
        - News: press coverage, SJSU announcements, new journal articles, MLML updates (new faculty/staff, scholarship recipients, etc.)
        - Events: thesis defenses, seminars, other misc. presentations by faculty/students/staff/alumni that may be of interest to the MLML community
    - Both front desk staff and the SMA create homepage posts
        - Front desk staff: thesis defense & seminar posts only
        - SMA: all news posts & misc. events
    - Most website news posts can have the similar wording to LinkedIn posts which are written in a more professional tone.
    - Before posting on the MLML homepage, the SMA needs to complete the introductory WordPress training from the IT department in addition to a secondary training specific to the homepage.

Social Media Documentation

- Social media policies and workflows are stored in the MLML Knowledge Base Social Media Shelf (which is accessible to the SMA, IT group, and Ivano)
- Social media passwords are stored in the MLML Social Media LastPass account
- Other social media documents including photos, logos, and post drafts are stored in the MLML Social Media Google Drive (that is accessible to the SMA)
    - Current and future posts are tracked in the MLML Social Media Posts spreadsheet located in the Google Drive