A Primer for Social Media

- **Engage**
  Use social media to engage clients and the general public. Determine who needs to hear from you. Remember that your messages on social media reflect on the organization just as your messages sent via traditional methods do. If you are new to social media, try mastering one tool at a time.

- **Share**
  Use the sharing tools on every ACES page and blog post to share content via multiple social networking sites and e-mail. The result: we drive viewers to our content, improve both of our search results, facilitate tracking and reporting, and increase public recognition of ACES.

- **Monitor**
  Monitor both traditional media and social media outlets to identify specific needs and emerging issues.

- **Converse**
  Respond to others and acknowledge others’ opinions and ideas. Social media is more effective if viewed as a conversation rather than simply as a means to broadcast information.

- **Listen**
  Listening helps you gain respect and followers. Rebroadcasting good content with appropriate attribution demonstrates to others that you are an active listener.

- **Identify**
  Let people know who you are, what your credentials are, and for whom you work. This is key to building strong relationships. But also be yourself. People want to talk with a real person.

- **Think**
  Consider your message before you post it via social media. Is it accurate? Are you being professional, nonjudgmental, and respectful of others?

- **Interact**
  Participate regularly. Visibility is a crucial element in expanding your network of contacts via social media.

- **Connect**
  Use social media to connect people with each other. Also use links to connect people to ACES resources as well as to other research-based information sources, including eXtension and other states’ Extension services.

- **Contribute**
  Be an active participant in the development of new knowledge resources either at ACES, eXtension, or other appropriate outlets. Share your resources in such a way that they can be used and enhanced by others.

- **Evaluate**
  Review your social media practices regularly. Are they working? Are you focused? Are you using your time wisely?

---

Margaret C. Lawrence, *Communications and Marketing Specialist*, Auburn University

Published by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System (Alabama A&M University and Auburn University), an equal opportunity educator and employer.

Revised May 2014, EX-0112

© 2014 by the Alabama Cooperative Extension System. All rights reserved