

ALBERTA LACROSSE ASSOCIATION SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

OVERVIEW

The Alberta Lacrosse Association (ALA) has begun to use social media networking accounts in a way to increase the reach of ALA news and information to all interested parties, which include but is not limited to: members, fans, sport enthusiasts, and supporters. There are two main social media outlets that will be used by the ALA, Facebook and Twitter. The ALA has created a Facebook account (Alberta Lacrosse). The ALA has the Twitter handle (name) of AlbertaLacrosse.

These guidelines were developed to sit under the framework for the Alberta Lacrosse Association (“the Association”, “we”, “us”, “our”) By-laws and/or Regulations, as well as be a complement to any additional policies and codes of conduct implemented by the Association.

We recognize the vital importance of participating in online conversations and are committed to ensuring that we participate in online social media the right way. **The Social Media Guidelines have been developed to help empower you to participate in this connected world and represent our Association by sharing the vision and mission of our organization and the story of our historic game.**

The vision that serves as the basis to all our initiatives is guided by certain shared values that we live by as an organization and as individuals:

- **HEALTH**
- **EXCELLENCE**
- **ACCOUNTABILITY**
- **RESPECT**
- **TEAMWORK**
- **+ Participation & Inclusion**

The Association encourages all Local Governing Bodies, Clubs, Teams, Players, Coaches, Trainers, other Team Personnel, Officials, volunteers, parents and/or guardians of ALA players (hereinafter referred to as “participants of the game”) to explore and engage in social media communities at a level at which they feel comfortable. **Have fun, but be smart.** The best advice is to approach online worlds in the same way we do the physical one -- by using **sound judgment** and **common sense**, by adhering to the Association's values, and by ensuring that all the Association's Bylaws and Regulations are not breached.

Social media enables people and organizations to share opinions, insights and experiences on the web using tools to connect, interact and maintain and develop relationships. Social media is about connecting and engaging with members, fans, followers and supporters. Both the Facebook and Twitter accounts are measurable, to which the user(s), in this case the ALA, can identify how many people follow the organization's accounts.

Both forms of social media that the ALA utilizes are used to engage the audience. Creating awareness, generating interest, and increasing the visibility of the ALA should absolutely be the primary objectives when using these accounts. Social media is an opportunity for an organization to connect and network with its fans and followers.

Facebook can provide the ALA with multiple channels for community outreach. Facebook can be used to highlight an organization's news and highlights, inform their followers or “fans” on Facebook with up to date information. The ALA can highlight the organization's recent activity, post links to related stories already posted on the ALA website or other related websites. It can also share photo albums and videos.

Facebook allows for the ALA to operate and manage "groups" as well - groups allow the ALA to post/share information to specific members

Twitter provides an opportunity to interact with individuals, groups and provide conversations and member interactions. Twitter can be used to highlight an organization's news and highlights informing the ALA's "followers". The user(s) can only post messages and links to the ALA website or any other lacrosse related story. Messages must be 140 characters or less. Photos and videos can be linked as well.

Using the ALA's social media accounts effectively will include but will not limit to

- Add value to consumers, the sport industry, and the organization
- Communicate with respect, professionalism, and courtesy
- Provide insight, expertise, and relevant conversation
- Communicate ethically and morally in support of the organization's professional goals

COMPLIANCE

Non-compliance with these guidelines may be considered as misconduct, harassment, discrimination, or in certain circumstances contravention of the law.

Those who fail to comply with these guidelines may be disciplined under the Association By-laws and/or Regulations as a participant of the game

DEFINITIONS

Social Media is defined as "content created by people using highly accessible and scalable publishing technologies. Social media is distinct from traditional media, such as newspapers, television, and film. Social media comprises relatively inexpensive and accessible tools that enable anyone (even private individuals) to publish or access information". (Source: Wikipedia)

Social Media may include (but is not limited to):

- Social networking sites (ex. Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, Bebo, Yammer)
- Video and photo sharing websites (ex. Flickr, YouTube)
- Blogs, including corporate and personal blogs
- Blogs hosted by media outlets (ex. comments posted to news stories)
- Micro-blogging (ex. Twitter)
- Wikis and online collaborations (ex. Wikipedia)
- Forums, discussion boards and groups (ex. Google Groups, Canadian Soccer News Forum)
- Video or podcasting
- Online multiplayer gaming platforms (ex. World of Warcraft, Second Life)
- Instant messaging (including text messaging)
- Geo-spatial tagging (ex. Foursquare, Facebook Places)

ASSOCIATION GENERAL GUIDELINES

Transparency in every social media engagement. The Association does not condone manipulating the social media flow by creating "fake" destinations and posts designed to mislead followers and control a

conversation. Every Website, "fan page", or other online destination that is ultimately managed by the Association must make that fact known.

Respect of copyrights, trademarks, rights of publicity, and other third-party rights in the online social media space, including with regard to user-generated content (UGC). How exactly you do this may depend on your particular situation, so work with the Association's Executive Director to make informed, appropriate decisions. When in doubt, please contact lisa@albertalacrosse.com

Utilization of best practices, listening to the online community, and compliance with applicable regulations to ensure that this Social Media Guidelines remains current and reflect the most up-to-date and appropriate standards of behaviour.

Guidance for navigating legal issues. The following is offered as general guidance to assist you in complying with the obligations set out in these guidelines. When in doubt, seek further guidance from the organization's Bylaws and Regulations.

Privacy, confidentiality and information security. You should **not** publish or report on conversations or information that is deemed confidential or classified or deals with matters that are internal in nature. The ALA's *Privacy Policy* applies.

Copyright. You should respect copyright laws and fair use of copyrighted material and attribute work to the original author/source wherever possible.

Harassment and bullying. The ALA's *Harassment Policy* applies online and in the physical workplace. Workplace bullying and harassment includes any bullying or harassing comments employees make online, even on their own private social networks or out of office hours.

Abusive, harassing, threatening or defaming postings are in breach of the ALA's *Harassment Policy* in the *ALA Bylaws and Regulations*, and may result in disciplinary action being taken.

All participants of the game are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity and must ensure their behaviour does not constitute bullying and/or harassment.

Defamation. You should refrain from publishing material that may cause injury to another person, organization, association or company's reputation, and should seek further guidance if publication of such material is thought to be necessary.

Offensive or obscene material. Material may be offensive or obscene and may infringe relevant online classification laws if it pornographic, sexually suggestive, harassing, hateful, racist, sexist, abusive or discriminatory.

SOCIAL MEDIA ACTIVITIES

The Association respects the rights of its participants of the game and its authorized contractors to use blogs and other social media tools not only as a form of self-expression, but also as a means to further the Association's awareness. It is important that all participants of the game are aware of the implications of engaging in forms of social media and online conversations that reference the Association and/or the representative's relationship with the Association and its brand, and that they recognize when the Association might be held responsible for their behavior.

PERSONAL USE

Our Expectations for Personal Behavior in Social Media

There's a big difference in speaking "on behalf of the Association" and speaking "about" the Association. This set of **5 principles** refers to those **personal or unofficial online activities** where you might refer to the Alberta Lacrosse Association or any associated activities.

Adhere to all applicable policies. All participants of the game are subject to the Association's Code of Conduct in every public setting. In addition, in certain circumstances, other policies, including the Confidentiality Agreement or National Teams Policies and Guidelines, govern participants of the game's behavior with respect to the disclosure of information; these policies are applicable to your personal activities online.

1. **You are responsible for your actions.** Anything you post that can potentially tarnish the Association's image will ultimately be your responsibility. We do encourage you to participate in the online social media space, but urge you to do so properly, exercising sound judgment and common sense. Please make sure to include the following disclaimer to each profile or platform you use where you can be identified as related to the Association: "The views expressed on this website/blog are the views of the author alone and do not reflect the views of the Alberta Lacrosse Association".
2. **Be a "scout" for compliments and criticism.** Even if you are not an official online spokesperson for the Association, you are one of our most vital assets for monitoring the social media landscape. If you come across positive or negative remarks about the Association or its brands online that you believe are important, consider sharing them by forwarding them to lisa@albertalacrosse.com
3. **Let the subject matter experts respond to negative posts.** You may come across negative or disparaging posts about the Association or its brands, or see third parties trying to spark negative conversations. Unless you are an authorized online spokesperson, avoid the temptation to react yourself. Pass the post(s) along to the ALA staff who are trained to address such comments, at lisa@albertalacrosse.com
4. **Be conscious when mixing your business and personal lives.** Online, your personal and business personas are likely to intersect. The Association respects the free speech rights of all of its participants of the game, but you must remember that anyone has access to the online content you post. Keep this in mind when publishing information online that can be seen by more than friends and family, and know that information originally intended just for friends and family can be forwarded on.

REMEMBER: Do not represent yourself as an Official Spokesperson of the Association (unless authorized to do so - see "Professional Use of Social Media) in any social media forum and never disclose non-public information of the Association (including confidential information). Be aware that taking public positions online that are counter to the Association's interests may be harmful and could be considered a breach of compliance.

Specific applications and situations

1. **Timing.** Some situations require that participants of the game in official functions for the Association refrain from uploading content or participating to social media. These situations include (but are not limited to):
 - a. Inside a competition stadium during the competition period (ex. Playoff competition, Provincial competition or National competition)
 - b. During a non-public event or meeting organized by the Association (ex. the Annual General Meeting)
 - c. Before, during or after a meeting where non-public information is discussed (ex. Local competitions committee planning meeting)
 - d. Before, during or after a game or training session when strategic, tactical or medical information is discussed. We ask that you please refer to the team's coaching or medical staff before making any comments pertaining to these.

2. **Use of official marks.** We recognize that Provincial Team players and staff members may see value in using pictures or videos where we see them in official apparel. The intent is not to forbid this usage, but simply to remind you that using such photos, for example as your profile picture, automatically link you to the Association and we therefore ask that you stay conscious of the comments and contents you post. The use of any other official marks should follow copyrights and trademarks regulations.
3. **Links.** In order to facilitate access to relevant information regarding the Association, all groups of participants of the game are encouraged to link their blogs and other social media interactions, when in accordance to the above guidelines, to the www.albertalacrosse.com website and its services.

For any other questions, please refer to the Alberta Lacrosse Association Bylaws and Regulations, or contact lisa@albertalacrosse.com

PROFESSIONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Our Expectations for Professional Behavior in Social Media

Becoming Authorized To Use, Post And Comment

- Before using the ALA's social media accounts you must be a representative of the organization.
- You may not use, post or comment as a representative of the organization unless you are **authorized** to do so.

Rules Of Engagement

Once authorized to use, post and comment as an organization's representative, you must:

- disclose you are an employee/contractor of the organization, and use only the ALA's designated social media accounts
- disclose and comment only on information classified as public domain information
- ensure that all content published is accurate and not misleading
- ensure you are not the first to make an announcement (unless specifically given permission to do so)
- comment only on your area of expertise and authority
- ensure comments are respectful of the community in which you are interacting online
- adhere to the Terms of Use of the relevant social media platform/website, as well as copyright, privacy, defamation, contempt of court, discrimination, harassment and other applicable laws, and the association's *Privacy Policy*.
- if applicable, remove material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a Court suppression order, or is otherwise unlawful

If you are authorized to comment as an organization's representative, you must not:

- post or respond to material that is offensive, obscene, defamatory, threatening, harassing, bullying, discriminatory, hateful, racist, sexist, infringes copyright, constitutes a contempt of court, breaches a Court suppression order, or is otherwise unlawful
- use or disclose any confidential or secure information
- make any comment or post any material that might otherwise cause damage to the ALA's reputation or bring it into disrepute.