

Social Media Policy

Summary

The Cocke County Library System participates and uses social media in different forms. The staff will maintain and edit the content of hosted sites to comply with all Library Policies.

Definition of Social Media

Social media is defined as any web application, site, or account created and maintained by the Cocke County Library System that supports the Library System social media purpose statement. These include, but are not limited to, a Library blog, and social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter.

Social Media Purpose Statement

The overarching purpose of social media employed by the Library is to deepen our connections with Library users and the wider Cocke County community. The Library considers information and interactions generated on social media channels to be equal to other information resources at the library, and is meant to encourage conversations with staff and other library users.

Primarily, the purpose of social media is to disseminate information about, and promote the Library's services and resources. This may include, and is not limited to, promotion on programs and events, readers' advisory initiatives, general library news, projects, volunteer opportunities, and ongoing activities to all members of the Cocke County community. Social media is also used to provide a forum for Library staff and Library users to share opinions and information about Library-related topics and issues.

Usage Rules

The Cocke County Library System welcomes the comments, posts, and messages of the community, and recognizes and respects differences in opinion. However, all comments, posts, and messages are subject to review, and the Library reserves the right to, but is not required to, remove any comment, post, or message that it deems inappropriate.

Content containing any of the following will be removed immediately from any Cocke County Library System social media forum:

- Obscene comments or hate speech
- Personal attacks, insults, or threatening language
- Private or personal information, including phone numbers and addresses, or requests for personal information
- Potentially libelous statements
- Falsification of identity
- Copyrighted, trademarked, or plagiarized material
- Posts in violation of laws or library policies
- Comments, links, or information unrelated to the purpose of the forum

- Duplicated posts by an individual user
- Spam, or other commercial, political, or proselytizing messages.

Any content that remains are the sole opinions of their owners and do not reflect the official views or policies of the Library System. The Library is not responsible for, or liable for, any content posted by any participant in a Library social media forum who is not a member of the Library's staff.

Social Media Guidelines

Purpose

These guidelines are meant to give any staff member the tools they need to manage a successful social media account, in keeping with the library's Social Media Policy.

Guidelines

Types of accounts:

Libraries can establish any social media accounts which they are able to maintain at a high, professional standard. Most libraries can meet their social media goals with only a Facebook and/or Twitter account; however, other platforms can be considered if staff believe it would better reach the community.

Social media accounts should be updated at least once a day. Staff are encouraged to make use of post-scheduling options, which allow multiple days' worth of posts to be planned at once. All social media accounts should be kept active with regular posts and quick responses. Accounts that cannot be regularly updated should be suspended.

Content of posts:

Language for social media posts should be conversational and light in tone (though still professional). Do not copy and paste the full text of a press release; instead, post a flyer, graphic, or link to a press release and briefly describe the material.

You may repost content from other sources if it seems of interest to our patrons. Please consider the source when doing so; social media users can be very quick to judge a repost/retweet as an endorsement of political or social positions, etc.

Add graphics or images to posts whenever possible, as these are much more likely to get users' attention.

Responding to users:

Managing social media is not just about publishing posts; it requires responsiveness and engagement. Make sure a staff member is assigned to check the account and respond to messages and/or posts in a timely manner. Patrons using social media expect quick responses -- especially during our operating hours.

As stated in the policy, negative comments or complaints should not be deleted. Instead, engage with the patron as we would with any other complaint, preferably by moving the discussion to a private venue. For example:

- *Thank you for telling us about your experience in the library. We want to address your concern -- please check your direct messages.*

Complaints and negative posts may be deleted if they are harassing, obscene, personally name staff members, or meet the other criteria in the policy. If you delete a post, still send a direct message to the poster explaining why. For example:

- *Thank you for telling us about your experience in the library. We removed your post because it contained language that violates our social media policy. However, we would like to address your concern.*