

QCGN SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Approved January 2018

QCGN Social Media Guidelines

Social media has changed the way we communicate. Increasingly, our community learns about the Quebec Community Groups Network on Facebook and Twitter. It's where our community and our critics leave their comments, applaud, and sometimes condemn our work. It's an important, interactive communications tool that we must learn to harness and use strategically.

Over the past five years, the QCGN and many of its members have established a solid and growing digital presence that has connected us with more and more members of our community. Social media provides an interactive space where we can proactively spread relevant news and views, share happenings from across our Network with members and partners, ask and answer questions, and connect with important community and political stakeholders. It is also a place where we can garner support and gather feedback.

Social media channels from Twitter to Facebook and Instagram to YouTube present a huge opportunity for employees, volunteer leaders, members, and stakeholders to help build recognition and support for the QCGN, our Network, and Quebec's English-speaking communities. However, there are inherent risks for individuals to inadvertently damage the QCGN's reputation and create an unforeseen backlash against our community. We have worked hard to establish QCGN's voice, but just one inappropriate social media post can put this in jeopardy.

WORKING TOGETHER

As we rely on the QCGN family to assist in the dissemination of news about our Network and our community, the intention of QCGN's Social Media Guidelines is to provide staff, volunteer leaders, members, and stakeholders with advice on how best to use social media to communicate our messages and engage with the wider community. These guidelines draw upon best practices from a variety of organizations and aim to help mitigate risks as we take full advantage of social media to expand knowledge of our community and strengthen the reputation of the QCGN network. We hope you can find a way that is appropriate for you and your organization to support our Network's advocacy work on behalf of our communities.

BROADENING THE CONVERSATION

While the responsibility for creating and maintaining social media sites lies with the Communications team, the real power of social media is engaging a large number of individuals, one by one, and inviting them to join a conversation about us. Think about social media as an opportunity to spark constructive conversations with our community of communities.

The more people actively participating in our conversations, the more effective social media will be at building an effective online community: you'll share information with two friends and they'll share it with two friends and so on and so on. The possibilities are exponential if we harness the power of the web. And remember, like most effective conversations, success is as much about listening as it is about sharing ideas.

ACCOUNTS

QCGN staff and volunteer leaders (Members of the Board and Committees) as well as QCGN members and close stakeholders are encouraged to create and maintain active accounts on social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn.

For volunteers just getting involved on Twitter and Linked In, we recommend having one account per network that you use both personally and professionally. You should be aware of the privacy implications of this decision. If you choose to use your personal account for QCGN-related posts, or if you “friend” community and political contacts on Facebook, you will have to manage your privacy setting carefully to avoid giving everyone access to everything you share, including pictures and postings about the lives of your friends and families. You may prefer to maintain a firewall between your personal and professional life and maintain dual accounts. You may also choose to keep your personal communications on Facebook and use Twitter and/or Linked-In to engage with network, community and political contacts.

If you are using any of your accounts for the QCGN or your organization in any way, you should identify yourself and your role in your profile. It is also a good idea to ensure that your Facebook, Twitter and other profiles are consistent with how you wish to present yourself with members, stakeholders and the public.

BLURRED LINES

Due to the nature of social media, it is nearly impossible to create a clear distinction between personal and professional profiles. If you have not identified yourself as an employee of the QCGN in your profile, we strongly encourage you to proactively disclose your affiliation to the QCGN when discussing matters relating to issues that impact the organization and the official language minority communities that we serve.

PRIVACY

You should be aware that any opinions or personal information you disclose may be linked to your position within the QCGN. This is true even if the viewing of your pages is restricted only to friends. We recommend customizing your privacy settings on Facebook to determine what you share and with whom. But remember, virtually nothing is truly private on the Internet. Every comment or link you share should be considered public, regardless of your privacy settings.

FRIENDING/FOLLOWING

It is acceptable, and even desirable, for the organization that you extend and accept Facebook friend requests from members, stakeholders, and to follow them on Twitter. It can also be useful to include counterparts from partner and stakeholder groups part of your professional circle on LinkedIn.

Following members, key stakeholders, like-minded advocacy groups, politicians and local media is an excellent way of tracking and sharing news that is of interest to the QCGN and official language minority communities. It is also an excellent way to engage with politicians as well as government institutions and organizations who are flocking to the web to share their own news and views with the public.

Because the QCGN is a non-partisan organization, you should not include political affiliations in your profile and avoid any postings that express partisan political views. Partisan opinions may damage the QCGN's reputation as an apolitical organization that works with all parties for the benefit of Quebec's English-speaking communities.

Following an individual or an organization does not constitute an endorsement. However, friending and "liking" political candidates from a single cause or party may create a perception that QCGN is linked to one party or another. You should, for example, follow politicians of all political stripes who represent or engage with the QCGN and our community.

Many politicians have verified Twitter accounts, identified by a white-on-blue check mark on the profile page - which means Twitter has determined that the account really does belong to that person. However, Twitter's verification process has been fooled, so proceed with caution.

INTERACTING WITH USERS

When individuals or organizations make newsworthy statements on social networks relevant to our community, you should consider retweeting or referencing them in a Tweet. Cite and link to your sources every chance you get. That's the best way to build your online community.

QCGN is strongly in favor of engaging with those who consume our content. Be conversational, ask questions, thank people, comment on their posts. Feel free to ask followers on social networks for their opinions on news stories. Staff is also encouraged to answer questions about their areas of expertise that are directed to them social media, as long as they answer in a way that's consistent with QCGN policies and past positions.

It is best to avoid exchanges with angry people that are not constructive. Abusive, bigoted, and/or racist comments should be flagged to the Director of Communications immediately.

Even with the best intentions, anything you put out there about the QCGN can potentially harm the organizations. This goes for internal communications, like newsletters. As soon as you distribute information on the QCGN's behalf, you are representing the organization and you must uphold the QCGN's image. When in doubt, please contact the Director of Communications before you hit the send button.

INTERACTING WITH QCGN ACCOUNTS

All QCGN staff and others are encouraged to share links to QCGN content from our website, Facebook, Twitter, etc. They can also link to content from the media reporting on the QCGN, our Network of members and our partners. You should link to content that has been published online, rather than directly uploading or copying and pasting the material. This will bring more traffic to our website and indicate to media that the public is interested in stories about our Network and community.

Staff and volunteers are welcome to retweet and share all the material posted by QCGN on social networking sites. Member organizations are also encouraged to share posts and information about the QCGN on their own website and blogs. The material should be clearly identified as QCGN content. Once again you are encouraged to link to content that has been published online, rather than directly uploading or copying and pasting the material.

TAGGING & HASHTAGS

Include @QCGN in your tweet while using the hashtag symbol (#) before a relevant keyword or phrase to categorize those Tweets and help them show more easily in Twitter search. Clicking or tapping on a hashtagged word in any message shows you other Tweets that include that hashtag. Hashtags, which can be included anywhere in a Tweet. Hashtagged words – for example #BonjourHi - that become popular are often Trending Topics.

LIVE-TWEETING

When representing the Network and the Community at various events, QCGN has live-tweeted on several occasions with great success at engaging new followers. We encourage everyone to tweet when they are representing the QCGN and other community groups at various government and community functions.

RETWEETING

Retweets **should not** be written in a way that looks like you're expressing a personal opinion. A retweet with no comment of your own, or reposting an editorial or opinion piece with the headline, can easily be seen as a sign that you approve of the content/opinions you are relaying. You can prudently retweet opinionated material if you make it clear that you are simply sharing it. These words of caution apply even if your Twitter profile indicates that retweets do not constitute endorsements since many of those who see your tweets and retweets may never look at your Twitter bio.

DELETING TWEETS

Twitter.com allows us to delete tweets after they have been posted. Deletion, however, removes the tweet only from Twitter.com and perhaps some other Twitter clients. Tweets that have been retweeted or reposted elsewhere may remain visible.

MISTAKES HAPPEN

Erroneous tweets or other social media posts need to be corrected quickly and transparently. You may consider a follow up tweet or post explaining that a mistake was made and detailing what happened.

A note from a follower that leads to a correction deserves an email or tweet of thanks. If someone offers fair criticism of a post or image but has their facts wrong, it's a good idea to reply to clarify the facts.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

When you encounter criticism, don't take it personally. Any response we make to a follower could go public. Email, Facebook messages and Twitter direct messages may feel like private communications, but may easily find their way to blogs, political pressure groups, and others.

WHAT TO POST, TWEET AND RETWEET

- Timely QCGN content such as press releases
- News coverage of QCGN, QCGN members and stakeholders
- News about Quebec's English-speaking community
- News about Official Language communities across Canada and elsewhere in the world

DOS & DON'TS

Do interact with users. Post content that encourages feedback and positive interaction. When possible and appropriate, include visual content — such as photos and videos — to increase engagement.

Do be valued. Share information with others that is useful, relevant and will be appreciated by your followers.

Do connect users with resources. Link back to posts and press releases on the QCGN website, to media outlets, and other useful sources.

Do be respectful. Make sure that you separate fact from opinion and maintain a polite and professional tone, particularly when disagreeing with others.

Do be careful. Information published online is largely permanent so avoid controversial topics and **when in doubt, do not post.**

Do not express personal opinions on controversial issues.

Do not use expletives or make disrespectful, defamatory, or dishonest comments.

Do not suppress disagreement. Use it as an opportunity to correct misinformation and turn a negative into a positive.

Do not make statements on behalf of the QCGN. Only official QCGN spokespeople may issue statements on behalf of the organization.

Do not create social media account for QCGN without prior consent from the Director of Communications who is charged with ensuring that all QCGN account are created and maintained according to best practices. Keep in mind that successful social media accounts take time to maintain and require staff resources to develop content that engages users.

- Stories about bilingualism and linguistic duality
- Stories about policies and programs that impact Quebec's Official Language Minority Communities

Facebook and Twitter Addresses of QCGN Members and Stakeholders

Name	Twitter	Facebook
Quebec Community Groups Network	@QCGN	@QCGNmtl
QCGN Staff		
Sylvia Martin-Laforge	@sylviamlaforge	N/A
Rita Legault	@RitaLegault	N/A
Stephen Thompson	@qcgnthompson	N/A
QCGN Projects		
Community Innovation Fund	@CIF_QC	@CIFQC
QCGN Members		
4 Korner Family Resource Center	@4Kornerstweets	@4KornersCenter
Association of English-language Publishers of Quebec (AELAQ)	@AELAQ	@AELAQ
Atwater Library and Computer Centre	-	Atwater Library and Computer Centre
Black Community Resource Center (BCRC)	-	BCRC
Canadian Parents for French CPF NATIONAL	@CPFNational	@CanadianParentsForFrench
Canadian Parents for French (Quebec) Poutine SVP	@CPF_PoutineSVP	-
CCS Montreal	@CCSMontreal	CCS-Montreal-554989771196562/
Chez Doris	-	@ChezDorisRefuge
Committee for Anglophone Social Action (CASA)	@CASAGaspe	CASA- Committee for Anglophone Social Action
Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN)	-	-
Contactivity Seniors Centre	-	-
Coasters Association	@CoastersLNS	Coasters Association Inc.
Council for Anglophone Magdalen Islanders (CAMI)	@CAMI_MEDIA	@DiscoverGrosselle
Donald Berman YALDEI Developmental Center	@yaldei	@Yaldei
English Community Organization of Lanaudière (ECOL)	@ECOLLanaudiere	English Community Organization of Lanaudière ECOL

English Language Arts Network (ELAN)	@ELANQuebec	@QCELAN
Executive Director Guy Rodgers	@GRR2009	N/A
President Bettina Forget	@BettinaForget	N/A
Quebec English-language Production Council	-	-
Executive Director Kirwan Cox	@kirwancox	N/A
English Parents' Committee Association (EPCA)	@epcaquebec	@EPCAQuebec
English-speaking Catholic Council (ESCC)	-	@CatholicCouncil
Executive Director Anna Farrow	@AsfDomini	N/A
Family Resource Center / Centre Famille & Ressource A.D.D.	@FRCMontreal	FRCMTL
Family Ties New Carlisle	-	familyties.newcarlisle
Gaspesian British Heritage Village	-	Gaspesian British Heritage Village
Heritage Lower Saint Lawrence	-	@heritagelsl
Ireland-Canada Chamber of Commerce	@ICCC_MTL	-
LEARN Quebec	@LEARNQuebec	@learnquebec
Project Director, Debbie Horrocks	@DebbieHorrocks	N/A
English Language Arts Consultant, Ben Loomer	@ELA_LEARN	N/A
Literacy Quebec	@LiteracyQuebec	Literacy Quebec
Loyola High School	@loyolamontreal	@LoyolaMontreal
Megantic English-speaking Community Development Corp. (MCDC)	-	@mc.dc.96
President Ann Marie Powell	@annmari07617265	N/A
Monteregie West Community Network	-	@THECECN
Morrin Centre	@MorrinCentre	@morrin.centre
Executive Director Barry McCullough	@bwmccull	N/A
Elizabeth Perreault (Dir. Programming & comms)	@ElizPerreault	N/A

Neighbours Association of Rouyn-Noranda Executive Director Sharleen Sullivan	@NeighboursRouyn @talk2sully	Neighbours Rouyn-Noranda N/A
North Shore Community Association	-	North Shore Community Association
Parkinson Canada - NATIONAL Quebec Anglophone Heritage Network (QAHN) President Simon Jacobs	@ParkinsonCanada @QAHN2 @Simjacobs	Quebec Heritage News (Quebec's English-language History Magazine) N/A
Quebec Association of Independent Schools (QAIS) Executive Director Holly Hampson	@QAIStweets @hhampson	@independentschoolsqc N/A
Quebec 4-H Association	@4HQuebec	4.H.Quebec
Quebec Community Newspaper Association (QCNA) Executive Director Richard Tardif	@QCNA @RichTardif	Quebec Community Newspapers Association N/A
Quebec Counseling Association (QCA)	-	Quebeccounselling
Quebec Drama Federation (QDF)	@QuebecDramaFed	Quebec Drama Federation
Quebec Federation of Home and School Associations (QFHSA) Executive Director Carol Meindl	@qfhsa @Ccmeindl	QFHSA N/A
Quebec Music Educators Association (QMEA)	-	-
Quebec Writers' Federation (QWF)	@OfficialQWF	Quebec Writers' Federation
Queen Elizabeth Health Complex (QEHC)	@QEHCCSRE	CSREQEHC
Regional Association of West Quebecers (RAWQ)	@WestQuebecers	Regional Association of West Quebecers
Repercussion Theatre President Corinne Smith	@RepercussionMtl @corinnemtl	Repercussion Theatre N/A
Seniors Action Quebec	-	Seniors Action Quebec
South Shore Community Partners Network	-	South Shore Community Partners Network
Tyndale St-Georges Executive Director Chris Lockhart	@TyndaleStGeorge @lockmtl	Tyndale St-Georges Community N/A

Townshippers' Association	@Townshippers	Townshippers' Association
Vision Gaspé-Percé Now (VGPN)	-	Vision Gaspé Percé Now
Voice of English-Speaking Quebec (VEQ)	@VEQ_QC	Voice of English-speaking Quebec
Youth Employment Services (YES Montreal)	@YESMontreal	YES Montreal
Mario Clarke	@Mr_Marioclarke	N/A

1. SOCIAL MEDIA AT A GLANCE

<https://pbs.twimg.com/media/CXzdCzkWsAAcouC.png>

FACEBOOK

TWITTER

Unlike Facebook, Twitter is public

<https://www.wired.com/2016/05/twitter-onboarding-tips-for-new-users/>

YOUTUBE

INSTAGRAM

LINKED IN

2. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND A FEW USEFUL SOURCES

Hire Rabbit: 5 Terrific Examples of Company Social Media Policies

<http://blog.hirerabbit.com/5-terrific-examples-of-company-social-media-policies/>

Shift Communications: Top 10 Guidelines for Social Media Participation at (Company)

<http://www.shiftcomm.com/downloads/socialmediaguidelines.pdf>

Inc.com: How to Write a Social Media Policy

<https://www.inc.com/guides/2010/05/writing-a-social-media-policy.html>

HootSuite: Being Social: Building and Engaging Online Communities

<https://blog.hootsuite.com/social-media-policy-for-employees/>