# Facebook Training: Best Practices

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# Establishing Consistency

## NAMING PROTOCOL

- **Name of Facebook page:** Ice Age Trail Alliance – Name of Chapter
  i.e. Ice Age Trail Alliance – Rock County Chapter

- **Name of Facebook group:** Name of Chapter Ice Age Trail
  i.e. Rock County Chapter Ice Age Trail

  **Why:** When people search for the Alliance and its chapters, we are easily found as Facebook generates a list.

## LOGO USE

- **Facebook Page – Round profile image:** Please use Ice Age Trail Alliance logo

  **Why:** This usage helps people quickly identify which pages and groups belong under the Ice Age Trail Alliance umbrella. There are a number of Ice Age Trail fans who have created their own groups and pages, i.e. Women of the Ice Age Trail.

**Note:** Please make sure the logo fits within the area reserved for the profile image, otherwise, the integrity of the logo design could be compromised by missing letters or other features.


**Please visit this Dropbox link to download this logo**.

## ASSIGNING ADMINS/CO-HOSTS

**Additional admins:** Please invite Brad Crary, Special Projects Coordinator and Lysianne Unruh, Communications Manager (Lysianne IATA – admin profile) to be admins on your page or in your group.

> **Why:** If your social media coordinator quits, then we have a way to assign a new person the role.

- **Co-hosts:** Please invite the Ice Age Trail Alliance Facebook page to be a co-host for your Facebook events.

  **Why:** This alerts IATA communications staff to the event and we can more easily help share it.

# Considerations When Creating a Page or Group

A chapter is welcome to have one or the other or both. The choice comes down to capacity for maintenance. In many instances, choosing to create a group versus a page is a good choice for most chapters.

## PROS AND CONS OF PAGES

**Pros: Pages**
- **Boosting Posts:** Paid advertising promotes beyond page followers.
- **Events:** Can generate excitement as people state interest and invite friends.
- **Scheduling:** Posts can be scheduled.
- **Fundraisers:** Followers can support the chapter through personal fundraising initiatives, i.e. birthday fundraisers.
- **Insights:** This feature is useful in monitoring audience engagement and popularity of posts.

**Cons: Pages**
- **Pressure to Post:** Recommend 2 to 3 times a week.
- **Need for Content:** Need to generate a social media calendar.
- **Budget:** Boosting requires funding and a line item in a chapter budget.

## WHAT A PAGE OFFERS

**Page Highlights:**
- Overview of Chapter
    - About section describes chapter
    - Chapter website
    - Chapter email
    - Phone number of primary contacts within a chapter
    - Categories: Non-Profit Organization, Hiking Trail
- Promotion: Events/Highlights of local Trail segments/Shine spotlight on local volunteers
- Ability to schedule posts
- Ability to boost events (or posts) for distribution to a larger audience
- Engagement through comments and likes
- A more formal, professional environment

**Connect with good information from Facebook's Help Center.**

# EXTRA CONSIDERATIONS WHEN SETTING UP/MANAGING A PAGE

**Tips:**
- Frequency of posts (recommend 2 to 3 times a week, minimum)
- Social Media Calendar for ready content
- Hashtags, i.e. #IceAgeTrail
- Determining what types of events/posts will you boost (if you choose to?)
- Budget for boosting events
- Creating an audience for ads

# PROS AND CONS OF GROUPS

**Pros: Groups**
- **Less Pressure to Post:** Engagement is shared by members of the group.
- **A Community**: Area enthusiasts can come together and share interests.
- Scheduling: Posts can be scheduled.
- **Photo Library:** A history of hike photos maintained.

**Cons: Groups**
- **Fragile Environment:** Members of a group can compromise purpose and congeniality by what they post and how they choose to interact with others.
- **Rules of Engagement:** Rules must be established.
- **Monitoring:** Requires adherence to guidelines and someone to routinely monitor posts and conversations.

# WHAT A GROUP OFFERS

**Group Highlights:**
- Overview of group: purpose, introduction of the chapter, chapter contact info
- Event promotion
- Posts can be scheduled
- Less pressure for frequent posting, but admin may want to offer a monthly challenge, i.e., "Post photos of the flowers you've spotted while hiking in April", "Please share fun moments from your Mother's Day hike!", etc.
- Engagement as members can share their own content, i.e. photos of hikes
- A community environment

## EXTRA CONSIDERATIONS WHEN SETTING UP/MANAGING A GROUP

**Tips:**
- Set it up as a public group so people can find it and join
- Developing group rules for behavior/interactions
- Establishing membership questions
- Monitoring for posts/comments that break group rules
- Making decisions about who will be let into the group and who will be removed and why

[Connect with good information from Facebook's Help Center](#).

## EXAMPLES OF IATA GROUP MANAGEMENT COMPONENTS

**IAT Group Rules:** (Example for chapters to use/adapt for their own groups)
1. **Be Kind and Courteous**
   We're all in this together to create a welcoming environment. Let's treat everyone with respect. Healthy debates are natural, but kindness is required.
2. **No Hate Speech or Bullying**
   Make sure everyone feels safe. Bullying of any kind isn't allowed, and degrading comments about things like race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender or identity will not be tolerated.
3. **Ice Age Trail Related Content**
   The purpose of this group is to bring together people who like to adventure, work, and play on the Ice Age Trail. Please keep content directly related to the Ice Age Trail.

**Membership Questions for IAT Group**
1. Why do you want to join the Ice Age Trail Group?
2. I agree to be a respectful member of this group. This includes no spam posts or mean-spirited commentary.
3. Invitation to view group rules.

**Tips for Admitting People into Group:**
- Did they provide a logical answer to membership questions?
- Do they have a profile photo? (IATA declines those without a photo.)
- How long have they been a member of Facebook?
- What groups have they joined and are these in line with hiking/outdoorsy interests?
- What sort of activity is on their Facebook page?

# Creating Content

## CONTENT PLANNING: BUILDING A SOCIAL MEDIA CALENDAR

**Considerations:**
- **Volunteer Events**
  - Share details and registration link for upcoming event opportunities (add photo related to event)
    - Share event announcements and recaps to the "Ice Age Trail" Facebook group
  - Post event recaps, accomplishments, and photos of events that take place
- **Trail Community Events**
  - Share details and links for events taking place in nearby Trail Communities
  - Tag the Trail Community Chamber of Commerce and/or Tourism Organization
- **Chapter Volunteer Spotlights**
  - Photo, description, and quotes from a chapter volunteer
  - Could be styled as a Q+A with the volunteer:
    - What is your favorite volunteering activity? What is the most rewarding aspect of volunteering? What is your favorite IAT segment?
- **National Day Calendar**
  - National Day Calendar is a hub to search for any upcoming days of celebration
  - Example:   May 1 is #MayDay
    - "May Day ushers in a traditional celebration of flowers and spring. In many ancient calendars, May 1st welcomed the first day of summer."
    - A Facebook post for this event could feature spring flowers on a nearby Ice Age Trail segment, a reference to May Day, and the best nearby segments to look for spring/early summer wildflowers.

## SELECTING PHOTOS

**Considerations:**
- o Preferably high-quality images (at least 1,000 KB or 1 MB)
- o Photos are often too large to share via email
  - ▪ File applications that preserve photo quality
    - ● [Dropbox](#)
    - ● [Google Drive](#)
    - ● (Chapter Dropbox/Google Drive account?)
  - ▪ Request chapter volunteers and members to share photos using a file sharing application
  - ▪ Be sure to add photo credit (name of photographer) to the post

## HASHTAGS

**Best Practices:**
- o Add hashtags to your post to boost their visibility
- o Etiquette for hashtags
  - ▪ Placing (most or all) hashtags at the bottom of the post to improve readability
  - ▪ Commonly used hashtags by the Ice Age Trail Alliance:
    - ● #IceAgeTrail #MyHappyPlace #Land4All #TravelWisconsin #OutWiGo #FindYourPark #FindYourTrail #OptOutside #HowWiHelp #LandTrust #ExploreWisconsin #GetOutside
    - ● Additional hashtags are added according to the topic of the post
    - ● Example: a post about Arbor Day would include the hashtags #ArborDay or #ArborDay2021 and/or #PlantATree within the post
- o **Why:** Hashtags are a way for social media users to search for related content. For example, by clicking on the hashtag #IceAgeTrail, Facebook users will be able to locate other posts that have the hashtag #IceAgeTrail

**Tagging Partners/Organizations/Businesses related to your post:**
- o @name of facebook page
- o Example:  @Ice Age Trail Alliance
- o **Why:** Tagging alerts the tagged organization that you've shared content related to them. They will have the opportunity to share the post with their audience and increase the exposure of the post.
- ● **Share to other groups!**

- o Immediately share your post to established Ice Age Trail Facebook groups to increase the exposure of your post.
- o Active groups:
  - ▪ [Ice Age Trail](#) (managed by IATA)
  - ▪ [Thousand Miler Wannabes](#)
  - ▪ [Women on the Ice Age Trail](#)
- o **Note:** you must be a part of the group to be able to share a post to it.

## FORMATTING EXAMPLES

- o Event announcement example: [Reconnect 2021 Schedule](#), [Trailtessa Snowshoe Hike](#)
- o Event Recap/Highlight example: [Mammoth Hike Challenge 2020 Photo Album](#)
- o Volunteer Spotlight example: [Chippewa Moraine Chapter - Vicki Christianson](#)
- o "National Day Calendar" example: [National Walking Day](#)
- o #FunFactFriday/WI history, ecology, astronomy examples: [WI Indigenous/Tribal Recognition](#), [Wisconsin Wetlands](#), [Tallgrass Prairie Article](#), [Winter Solstice/Great Conjunction](#)

# Sharing Content from Other Pages

- **Local Partner Organizations**
  - Ice Age Trail Alliance
  - Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
  - Travel Wisconsin
- **Wisconsin-based Organizations**
  - Discover Wisconsin
  - Aldo Leopold Foundation
  - Wisconsin Breeding Bird Atlas
  - Groundswell Conservancy
  - The Nature Conservancy in Wisconsin
- **National Organizations**
  - American Hiking Society
  - Partnership for the National Trails System
  - Land Trust Alliance
  - Backpacker Magazine
- **Additional Facebook page sources:**
  - Local/National News Outlets
  - WI Universities
  - Trail Community Chambers of Commerce and Tourism Organizations
  - Local Nature Centers

# Assistance from IATA Communications Staff

- One-On-One training/brainstorming with Alliance Communications staff regarding social media. (Please ask us! We're excited to schedule time with you.)

- Boosting chapter events (a budget established with chapter and chapter invoiced). This is especially relevant for chapters who only have groups. Chapters with pages may boost their own content.

- Assistance in brainstorming social media calendar.

- Making consistency updates (as long as IATA staff is an admin).

- Acquiring social media coordinators from the VSII (and training for the SMC to orient them to best practices, etc.

- GOAL: develop "stock" images for each chapter. Sized for FB, Instagram, Events Calendar, banner images for their webpage, etc.
    - Scenery
    - Hiking
    - Volunteering

- GOAL: Seasonal evergreen posts that chapters can plug and chug.