



LAW ENFORCEMENT ASSOCIATIONS SOCIAL MEDIA FACT SHEET

Associations using social media

International Association of Chiefs of Police

National Sheriffs' Association

Alabama Association of Chiefs of Police

New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police

Texas Crime Prevention Association

Virginia Association of Chiefs of Police

Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs

Wisconsin Crime Prevention Practitioners Association

International Association of Chiefs of Police

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Why social media for law enforcement associations?

Just as many federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement agencies use social media to share information and interact with members of their community, a law enforcement association can do the same. An association can use social media to disseminate resources, coordinate statewide campaigns, and post training and conference information, among other activities. Social media can also provide the opportunity for members to interact with one another and share promising practices and lessons learned. Likewise, an association can use social media to highlight positive stories about member agencies and personnel.

Your association can also use social media platforms to interact with industry partners and vendors, nonmembers in your jurisdiction, other nonprofit organizations, and members of the public. Interacting with industry partners and vendors can help your association find new funding sources, event sponsors, or exhibitors at conventions and conferences. In addition, by publicizing what your association is doing and the resources your Web site has to offer, you may attract new members or new partners. Engaging the public will broaden the audience that is aware of the work you do. You can also share job announcements that members of the public may be interested in applying for.

Set an example for agencies

By using social media, your association can serve as an example for member agencies that are considering social media or looking for ways to increase their online presence. Agencies that have reservations about using social media, or have questions about using a specific platform, can see how you are using these tools and may be inspired to do the same. Agencies that are already using social media but are looking for ways to diversify their presence can turn to your social media pages for new content ideas.

Resource and information sharing

Your association can take advantage of social media to assist members who may be unable to attend trainings and conferences. By sharing links to new resources and publications, posting training videos, and highlighting key points from recent presentations, your association can disseminate important information and resources to members who are unable to attend. Your association can bring attention to new materials as they become available, acting as a clearinghouse of information that can benefit your association's membership.

Social media also provides a medium for members to interact with one another. Your association can create a closed forum to exchange ideas and discuss issues intended for law enforcement only. A chief whose agency piloted a program or a task force can post promising practices and lessons learned that other chiefs can use as a guide. For example, a chief or sheriff who is considering using Twitter or another social media platform to conduct an online town hall meeting or question and answer session, can ask members from other agencies about their experiences and thoughts.

Coordinate targeted enforcement campaigns

Social media can be an effective tool for organizing regional or statewide enforcement and education campaigns. For example, your association can post or tweet messages at the beginning of October, for crime prevention month. Association members can then share these messages through their own channels or create their own campaigns.

Enhance public relations

Social media allows law enforcement associations to be their own news outlet. The association can set the tone for their message and disseminate it unfiltered to their audience. This may be through video, images, or text.