Campaigns pilots: Social media guidance

Social media is a powerful campaigning tool –
just look at #BlackLivesMatter or #WomensMarch.

Social media can help you inspire people to take action, share updates, create events and achieve success. This guide is packed with ideas on how you can use social media to power your campaigns. It contains important information relating to MS Society policies and guidance which you must follow as a Campaigns Volunteer. It also includes step by step information on using social media and a checklist to follow.

Social media has the ability to build communities and enable connectivity on a scale beyond traditional methods. It can recruit campaigners from across the UK and connect similarly minded people.

Key

Top tips

Action

! Important information relating to MS Society policies or guidance

Links to resources
Full links to resources are at the end

New to social media?

See our website for social media guidelines which includes information and tips.

Contents

If you're printing this document, please note the appendices contain additional information which we thought would be useful but may not need to be printed.

1. Personal or campaign-specific page/account?

To raise awareness of your campaign, you can either set up a dedicated campaign page or account, or you can post and tweet using your personal page or account. It'd be great for you to do both if you felt comfortable.

💡 It's easier to start using a social media platform you're comfortable with.

Use your own account

The benefit of using your personal Facebook, Twitter or Instagram account is that people can identify who you are and see that you are a genuine campaigner supporting us.

! When you post any personal information, make sure you are happy for it to be made public.

It's best to include information about who you are and your association with the MS Society in your bio.

Examples:

🐦 *I'm a volunteer for the @msssocietyuk group in #Manchester. Views are my own.*

📘 *I'm a volunteer for the MS Society UK group in Manchester. Views are my own.*

📷 *I'm a volunteer for the MS Society UK group in Manchester. Views are my own.*

! When using your personal account, you're likely to share personal news and information that don't relate to your campaign and may not reflect the views of the MS Society. As such, you should add the statement 'Views are my own' at the end of your bio.

Representing the MS Society

Whether you're using your own account or creating one specifically for your campaign, you should clearly identify yourself as a volunteer for us. As such, you're representing the MS Society.

! Being a representative of the MS Society means following our Code of conduct, sharing our goals and values, using up-to-date branded materials and saying things in our tone of voice. To find out more, visit our webpage on Representing the MS Society:

Representing the MS Society

When you associate yourself and your page or account with us, you may get contacted by people affected by MS looking for help and support. If this is the case, please respond with sensitivity and care and refer the person to our Helpline by telephone on 0808 800 8000 or by email at helpline@mssociety.org.uk.

! As a Campaigner, it is not your role to give support so you should always signpost. Our Helpline staff and volunteers are trained and supported to provide a listening ear to those who need it.
It's also important you look after yourself, if you need support, please contact our Helpline.

If you don't want to make contact with the person directly, but still want to help, please contact webteam@mssociety.org.uk. Please include as much detail about the message and the person, and our Digital Team will make sure that person is looked after.

Follow us

We have a very active and engaged community online. Following us enables you to stay in touch with our news. You can share or re-tweet information and events that might be of interest to your followers.

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MSSociety
Twitter: www.twitter.com/mssocietyuk
Instagram: www.instagram.com/mssocietyuk

Create a Campaign Facebook page or Twitter account

Creating a Facebook page or Twitter account specifically about your campaign is a great way to enable your followers to keep in touch, engage with each other and share key information.

! Bear in mind that if you do start a page or profile, you need to update it regularly to keep up the momentum of your campaign.

Read our social media guidelines on how to set up a Facebook page or Twitter account.

On Facebook you can add one or two other volunteers as "Admins" to help you manage the page. You also have the option of making your page/profile private.

It's important you give some context to your followers with information about your campaign. On Twitter and Instagram, you can do so in your bio. On Facebook, use the 'About' page.

Examples:

We are a local @msssocietyuk campaign in #Manchester. We campaign locally to give people with #MS a voice #Campaignhashtag.

We are a local MS Society campaign in Manchester and we campaign locally to give people with #MS a voice.

! Make it clear that your campaign is a **local** MS Society campaign. You should describe your campaign as a 'Local MS Society campaign', followed by a clear description of the issue on which you're campaigning and what you're aiming to achieve.

2. Use hashtags on Twitter and Instagram

Why use a hashtag (#)?

- A hashtag makes a word or a sentence without a break an instant link which can be clicked on.
- Your tweets/posts will be easier to find by others and get **more engagement!**

Top tips

Before using a particular #, do a bit of research.

Check what people are saying when using it so people won't get you confused with another trend, and to ensure you are not entering inappropriate conversations.

Some hashtags sound innocent, but are used in inappropriate conversations.

Make it short and unique

If you want to create your own hashtag, make it short and unique. All you need to do is add "#" at the start.

Using a particular hashtag enables you to keep track of what people are saying.

Equally, you may want to use a popular, existing hashtag which has a following already, for example #ms.

Some # are always trending* on the same day.

You can use several hashtags in one image description on Instagram and Facebook.

Think about how you could link these hashtags with your campaign and keep using them.
Popular Examples:
#FridayFeeling
#MondayMotivation
#WednesdayWisdom
#ThursdayThoughts
#SundayMorning

When you **start** typing a word, a **popular hashtag** will come up in the field which you can then use by pressing Return.

*Trending means a lot of people are talking about the same news or issue, at the same time, using a specific hashtag in their tweets.

This results in a high number of tweets. Twitter recognises this and will display trending hashtags by geographical location, for example 'United Kingdom trends', 'Birmingham trends' and so on. It may be useful for you to see what's trending in your area and to use that hashtag as part of tweeting about the campaign.

Popular hashtags used by @mssocietyuk

#TreatMeRight for tweets about our Treat Me Right campaign

#MSEnough for tweets about our MS: Enough campaign

#MS: instead of MS, or multiple sclerosis, use #MS in tweets

#PIP or #ESA: for tweets about benefits such as PIP or ESA

Popular hashtags used by @mssocietyuk

#multiplesclerosis
#multiplesclerosisawareness
#msfighter
#mssociety
#mssocietyuk
#mslife
#ms

Create events

Do you have a meeting, workshop or similar event that you want to get people to come to? Create an event invitation on Facebook or use event hosting websites, such as Eventbrite and Meet Up, which are free to use for events that won't cost anything.

When setting up an event page on Facebook:
- you can invite people to the event
- you can share posts and images on the Event Page
- Facebook sends a reminder to attendees on the day of the event.

Mind your privacy settings. You can set the settings in a way that make the event public, only visible to your friends or by invitation only.

Include a banner image. Just like a normal Facebook page, an event page allows you to include a banner image.

It's a good idea to keep updating your events page with any news about the event. This will encourage conversations and questions, keep the content fresh and remind people that the event is coming up.

View an example of an event page created for the London Women's March in 2017.

Read the step by step guide on how to set up an Event on Facebook.

3. Use images in your tweets and posts

Images and data protection

! All content you post must meet our data protection requirements. You must obtain written consent before posting any form of personal information, such as a person's name, quotes and images.

You will find on our volunteer website a bank of images with consent forms already on file. You can use these images with confidence that they meet our data requirements.

Read our data protection requirements

Use our consent forms

You can use our social media images:

Social media images

Make sure that any text in your images is centred and large enough to be easy to read, especially on a mobile phone.

You need to use a high quality image. If your image looks a bit blurry or pixelated then it may look worse on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

Images get 5x more engagement on social media and can be a powerful campaigning tool when you have a pledge.

Promoting a pledge

A pledge is a statement that shows a commitment to your campaign ask, for example *I support employment that works.*

People can take a photo with your pledge and share it with their followers to show support.

Example:

MP Jim Fitzpatrick, the MP for Poplar and Limehouse, supported the launch of our MS: Enough Campaign.

He used our pledge *I support employment that works.*

Use our branding to show that you're part of our community and that you have our support.

! Always use our MS Society profile image:

MS profile images

Use a hashtag with your pledge, and include it in your images.

Find out more about how pledges work in our Campaigns Toolkit:

Campaigns Toolkit

Include a banner image on Facebook and Twitter

Banner images are among the very first things people see when they visit your page or account. It's crucial you use an image representative of your campaign which clearly shows what you're campaigning for.

See Appendix three for instructions on how to make best use of your banner image.

You can use our social media images:

Social media images

Use a pinned tweet

A pinned tweet is a tweet that will show up as the very first tweet on your Twitter timeline, directly underneath your banner image. All tweets you tweet out will be displayed underneath the pinned tweet. Once you've 'pinned' a tweet on top of your Twitter timeline, it will stay there until you change it to another tweet or remove it.

See Appendix three for instructions on pinning a tweet.

4. Start a petition

Change.org is a website that can help you to create and share your petitions easily. This gives your campaign the opportunity to reach decision makers and potential supporters.

Let our Campaigns Team know if you're starting a new petition at **campaigns@mssociety.org.uk** as we may be able to share it too to support you.

Example:

The petition Fund Fampyra for People with MS in Ireland had 3, 872 people supporting the petition.

When creating a petition, include your campaign hashtag in the name to keep track of what people are saying about it.

5. Use a scheduling tool

People are online during different times of the day so it's best to avoid several tweets or posts at once, but to spread them out throughout the day. Chances are higher that your content reaches more people.

Think about when you'd like to reach people – is it best in or outside of working hours, at a particular date or time.

A scheduling tool allows you to time posts for social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, at the exact times you decide, and will post these automatically so you don't have to worry about it.

Both Facebook and Twitter provide the option to schedule your posts or tweets. Instagram doesn't have that option yet.

See Appendix five of this guide for step-by-step instructions on scheduling.

6. Create a Twitter list

Engage with potential supporters or stakeholders with a shared interest. Share their posts, engage with their tweets, and ask them questions. This is especially effective on Twitter where people are proactive and reach out to new people and audiences.

Create a Twitter list. You can create different lists for different kinds of users. Examples: corporate supporters, other MS Society groups and local businesses.

Lists can be public or private. If your list is public, people you include in your list will get a notification, alerting them to the fact you've included them in a list. This is a way to reach out to more people and keep track of their conversations.

Example of a list from @mssocietyuk Twitter account.

7. Monitor your progress

Facebook Insights and Twitter Analytics can show you which posts audiences are engaging with and which campaign messages are working and help you prioritise future plans.

Facebook Insights

Twitter Analytics

8. Staying safe

Abuse or harassment

Abuse can happen offline and online. Popular social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram are spaces online where people interact with family, friends and the public. Unfortunately, abuse does happen in these spaces, and should be taken seriously and reported, just like abuse offline.

! If you receive an abusive or inappropriate message that is threatening, aggressive or rude, please don't engage with this person. Contact webteam@mssociety.org.uk with as much detail about the message and the account, and our Digital Team will handle the situation.

Not everyone is using their real names and it can be difficult to identify individuals involved. Useful information for the team includes:

- The user name
- Twitter @handle
- Link to the Twitter, Facebook or Instagram profile page of the individual conducting the abuse and screenshots of the abusive tweets, posts or private messages.

Safeguarding concerns

! If you spot abusive tweets, posts, or messages you must not interact with them. Instead, gather as much information as possible and report the incident to the Safeguarding Responders Group.

Email safeguarding@mssociety.org.uk using the Record of safeguarding concern and actions form.

 Record of safeguarding concern and actions form

 Information about safeguarding and related policies

Please use the same information you would for reporting abuse or harassment and include in the Record of safeguarding concern and action form.

The Safeguarding Responders Group will make a decision about what should happen next.

9. Social media quick checklist

This checklist recaps key points from this guide:

- ☐ Use a social media platform you already know

- ☐ State clearly you are a volunteer, your group and campaign

- ☐ State clearly that this is a local MS Society campaign and describe what your campaign is about

- ☐ Create a campaign hashtag and include it in banner images, tweets and posts

- ☐ Track conversations around your hashtag

- ☐ Use high-quality images, preferably in landscape format

- ☐ Check out our toolkit with images and assets

- ☐ Make sure your profile image is our MS Society UK brand logo

- ☐ Consider creating a petition online

- ☐ Helping people: always refer to the MS Society Helpline (0808 800 8000 or email helpline@mssociety.org.uk) or webteam@mssociety.org.uk

- ☐ Stay safe. Don't respond to aggressive message. Report them

- ☐ Any issues? Contact webteam@mssociety.org.uk

- ☐ Last but not least, follow us:
  Facebook: www.facebook.com/MSSociety/
  Twitter: www.twitter.com/mssocietyuk
  Instagram: www.instagram.com/mssocietyuk

Appendix one: Useful links

Consent forms	volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/consent-form
Campaigns Toolkit	volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/node/133
Creating a petition on Change.org	www.change.org
Data protection requirements	volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/ data-protection-basics
Facebook Insights	facebook.com/help/search/?q=insights
Facebook step-by-step guide on creating a page	facebook.com/business/learn/set-up-facebook-page
Facebook step-by-step guide on creating an event page	facebook.com/help/210413455658361?help ref=about_content
MS: Enough campaign	mssociety.org.uk/ms-enough
MS Society profile images	volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/profile-images
MS Society social media guidelines	volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/social-media
MS Society social media images	volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/social-media-images
Treat Me Right campaign	mssociety.org.uk/treatmeright
Record of safeguarding concern and actions	volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/resources/1210
Representing the MS Society	volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/representing-ms-society
Safeguarding information and policies	volunteers.mssociety.org.uk/safeguarding
Social Media specs for images	sproutsocial.com/insights/social-media-image-sizes-guide
Twitter Analytics	business.twitter.com/en/analytics.html
Twitter guide on how to create a profile	business.twitter.com/en/basics/create-a-twitter-business-profile.html

Appendix two: Including banner images

Banner images on Facebook

The official name for Facebook's banner is a 'cover photo'.
Optimal specs for the cover photo: 820 x 312px

This is an example of the banner image on the official MS Society UK Facebook page:
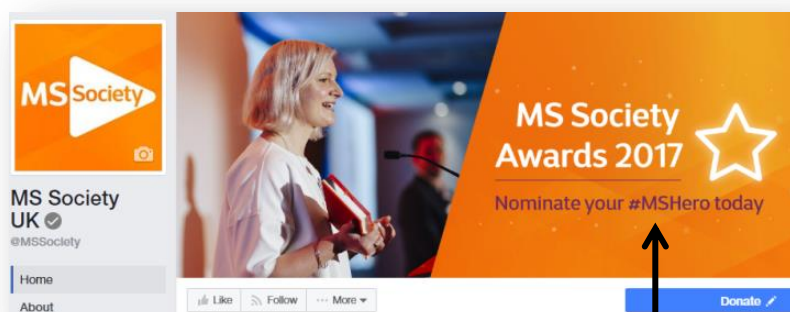
Include your campaign hashtag in your banner image.

This is the same banner on a mobile phone:

On mobile phones, the right and left hand sides of the header are cut off.

Any important text or imagery should therefore be in the centre of the header.

Get some attention with your cover photo

When you upload a cover image Facebook automatically generates a post in your page's timeline.

You can add a description at the same time.

MS Society UK updated their cover photo.
Published by Anthony Ngaithe [?] · January 4 · ⊙

Nominations for the MS Awards 2017 are open! Do you know someone living with MS, who has done something amazing? Or a loving carer, who is always there? Fundraisers, carers, people with MS… We want to celebrate all the people who make a difference in the MS community. Who's your #MSHero? Nominate them today: http://mssoc.uk/2iuWmPD

MS Society Awards 2017
Nominate your #MSHero today

If you have an external website, include a link to it.

By adding a description to your cover image, you can give people who follow your page some context and keep them up to date with what's happening with your campaign.

If you've created a website for your campaign, it's a good idea to include the link to your campaign website in your description.

When you right click on your cover image, you will be given the option to add a description.

! Make it clear that your campaign is a **local** MS Society campaign. You should describe your campaign as a 'Local MS Society campaign', followed by a clear description of the issue on which you're campaigning and what you're aiming to achieve.

The link to your website should not be on the banner image itself.

Links on banner images are not 'clickable'; they don't take you to external websites. Instead, it will only open your image in a separate window.

This is why it's better to add the link on your description.

Banner images on Twitter

The official name for Twitter's banner is a 'header'.

If you have a Twitter account dedicated to your campaign, include a banner image relevant to your campaign for people to make an immediate connection with it.

If you're using a dedicated campaign hashtag, remember to include it in the banner as you'll be able to keep track of what people are saying about your campaign.

! In your header, make it clear that your campaign is a **local** MS Society campaign. You should describe your campaign as a 'Local MS Society campaign', followed by a clear description of the issue on which you're campaigning and what you're aiming to achieve.

If you use a photo editor, please note that optimal specs for headers are: 1500 x 500px

Appendix three: Pinning a tweet

The header on Twitter is not 'clickable', which means you shouldn't include a link in the image, just like Facebook.

If you have a campaign website, using a 'pinned tweet' underneath the image will ensure people can explore your website outside of Twitter.

Step 1: Tweet out a link to your campaign website.

Make sure the tweet includes a relevant image and your campaign hashtag for people to make an immediate connection with your campaign:

Step 2: Click on the arrow at the top right hand side, and choose 'pin to your profile page'.

Your tweet will be 'pinned' on top of your Twitter timeline. When people visit your Twitter account, they'll see the header image, and then right underneath your pinned tweet:

Appendix four: Formatting images

Image formatting on Facebook

Landscape format is best for sharing links as Facebook will automatically put anything with a link in a box format.

Images and photos can be shared in portrait or landscape.

If you use a photo editor please note that optimal specs for sharing a link are: 1200 x 627px

If you use a photo editor please note that optimal specs for sharing photos are: 1,200 x 900px

Image formatting on Twitter

It's best to use landscape format to ensure images are displayed fully on mobile phones.

This is an example of an image shared on Twitter:

If you use a photo editor please note that optimal specs for sharing images on Twitter are: 1024 x 512px

On mobile phones, the top and the bottom of the photo are cut off.
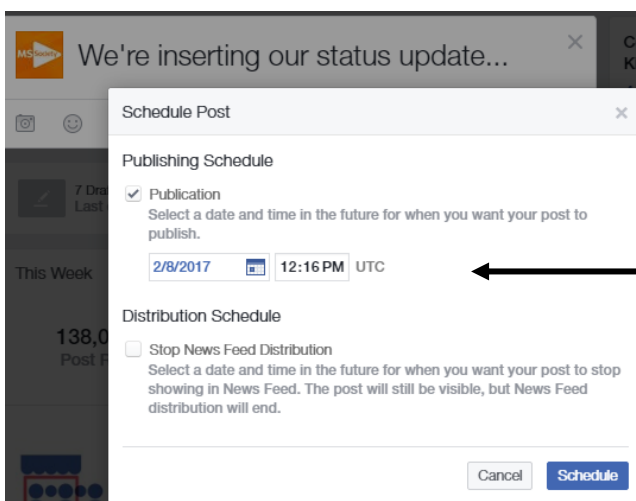
Appendix five: Scheduling

Scheduling on Facebook

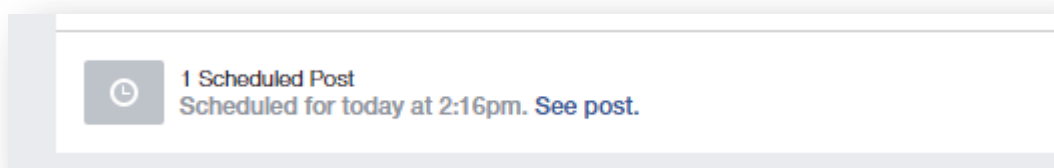**Step 1:** Insert your status update.
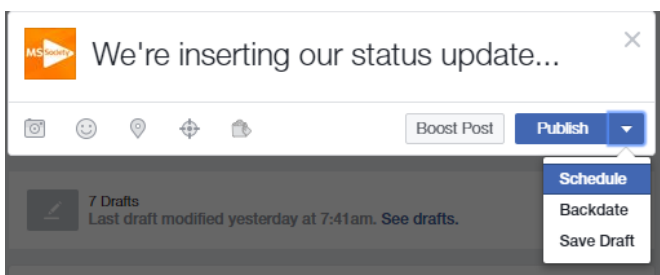
Step 2: Click on the Publish drop down menu.

Step 3: Select 'Schedule'.

Step 4: Select a date and time.
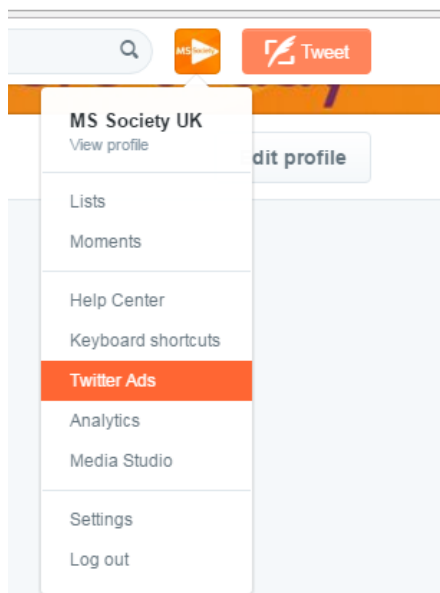
Step 5: Schedule.

Step 6: To find your scheduled post, just click on the box underneath the status update box.
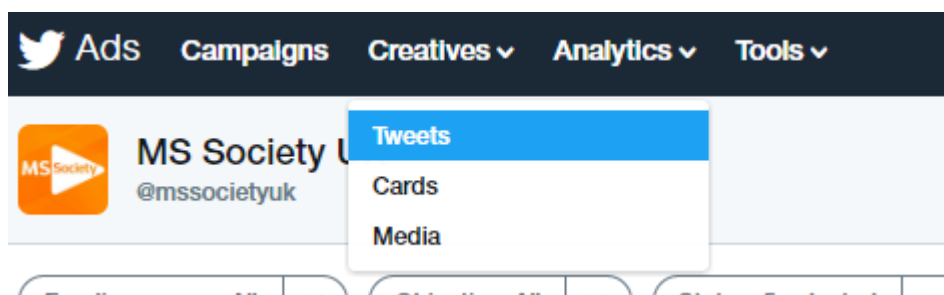

You can edit your post after you scheduled it, change the time or delete it completely.

Scheduling on Twitter:

Step 1: When logged in, click on your profile image on top of the page and select 'Twitter Ads'.
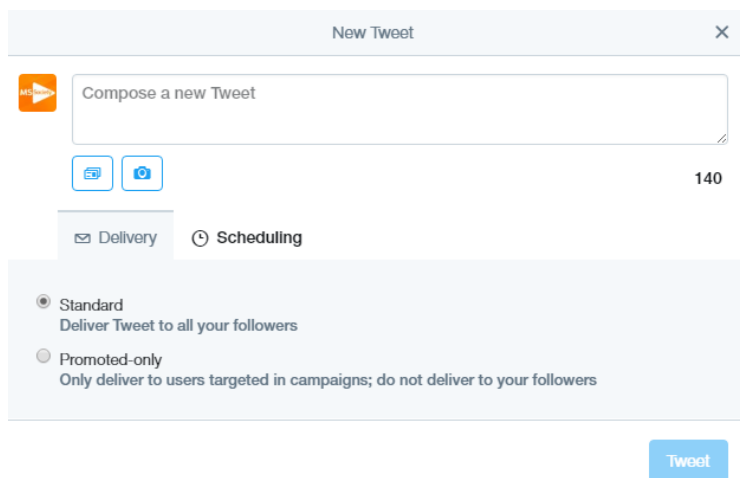

Step 2: Navigate to 'Creatives' and select 'tweets'.

Step 3: Click on the 'New Tweet' button on the top right hand side of the page.

Step 4: Insert your tweet, add images and schedule a time:

Make sure you select 'Standard' for your tweet to be visible to all your followers. Please note: selecting 'Promoted-only' as it applies to tweets that are promoted at a cost and are visible only to those audiences targeted in adverts. Please speak to your local staff contact if you'd like to take this forward.

Avoid scheduling tweets/posts that are asking a question, or where your aim is to get many replies. That's because you'd want to be online when replies are coming in, to make sure you're responding to everyone quickly.

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