# What's Facebook?

Facebook is a web-based, interactive network that allows users to share information and thoughts over a wide area. It makes possible a connection to those with shared interests across political, economic and geographic borders.

# How is it useful?

Facebook isn't a one-stop shop that will fulfill all your communications needs. It is simply another tool in your communications toolkit Its purpose is to "go where the eyes are" by furnishing information on websites that you know people visit. With 1 billion users and growing, it's safe to say "the eyes are on Facebook." It raises your profile in the public sphere.

# Goals

**The goals of your social media effort might look something like this:**

- Provide a venue for an exchange of ideas and to encourage communication
- Promote yourself to a variety of audiences including staff, the public, media and business community
- Demonstrate your role as a strong, clear voice representing the county
- Raise public awareness and understanding of your intentions and actions

**The content on your page should be a positive reflection of yourself or county and should answer any one or more of the following questions:**

- What is going on in my county/with me?
- What am I/are we doing to help its community and residents?
- What am I/are we doing to build awareness and understanding of the roles and responsibilities of county government?
- What innovative, interesting programs have been developed that could be promoted?
- What are our county officials doing to address the problems facing the community?

You can post videos or pictures of city events, ask questions, link back to your web page and invite residents to public events. The bottom line is your content should be interesting, informative and positive. Where possible, the content should lead to interactive communication within your Facebook page: Engagement is key! Social media is all about facilitating the conversation.

## Remember: Engagement is key!
## Social media is all about facilitating the conversation.

If you have any questions about social media or would like to learn more about getting started, applying it to your needs and using it effectively, don't hesitate to contact...

**Matthew Fellows**: New Media Manager • 202.942.4205 • mfellows@naco.org

### Join the NACo Network…

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youtube.com/NACoVideo • linkedin.com/NACoDC

# What's LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is a social networking website for organizations and people in professional occupations. Launched in 2003, it currently reports more than 175 million registered users. LinkedIn is, as TechRepublic commented, "the de facto tool for professional networking."

# How is it useful?

The utility of LinkedIn is in its ability to generate client and customer leads, and is also great for finding speakers for your various conferences and events. It accomplishes this more effectively than either Facebook or Twitter. You can see what other users are connected to and explore business, resumes and more. Employers can list jobs and search for potential candidates, job seekers can review the profile of hiring managers/organizations and discover other contacts that can introduce them. You can also find groups that are centered around your area of professional expertise to share best practices, tactics and strategies.

**How to get started?**
- First step is to create a profile, where you can follow along with their profile completion tips, which increase your visibility and credibility on the site. Be sure to include things like:
  - Current position and two previous positions
  - Education
  - Profile Summary + Photo
  - Professional specialties
  - Recommendations
- Tags, or keywords, are also key for being able to find relevant information, and for relevant information to find you. For instance, if you're a tax consultant, you'd want to incorporate that phrase throughout your profile, which raises your visibility in searches.
- Customizing your URL (for example, linkedin.com/in/yourname) also raises your visibility and relevance in search results.
- Recommendations are essential for leaving a great impression with other people and organizations with whom you have engaged. These provide higher credibility for yourself and for the person/organization you're recommending.
- Be sure to join Groups that are relevant to your occupation/professional interests—participating by answering questions or joining the group discussion is a great way to make a quick impact in the community.

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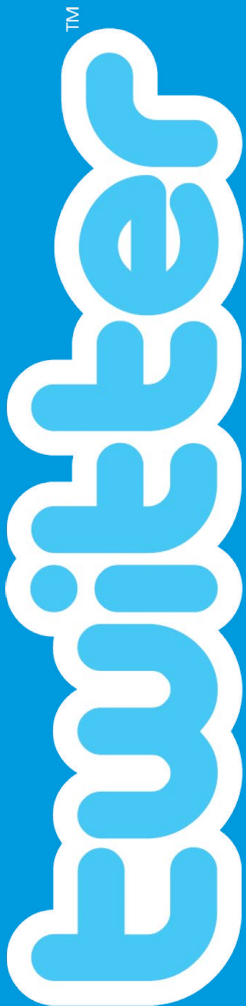
# What's Twitter?

Twitter is a web-based, rapid-fire information and opinion network made up of 140-character messages called "Tweets." Spaces and punctuation count toward this limit, so Twitter has its own kind of shorthand that you will begin to learn.

# How is it useful?

Twitter contains information you will find valuable—Messages come from users you choose to follow and will show up on your homepage for you to read. This can be things like traffic alerts, board meeting updates, general news around your community, county, state and even nation.

Use it to find out what's going on in your community, state government, federal government and other organizations and businesses of interest to you. You can send out tweets to communicate with your residents, the local media, local businesses, county services and more.

You have a lead on the message with Twitter—make sure you are the one telling your constituents what you're doing in your county and on Capitol Hill, and how that will benefit them.

**How to get started?**
- Choose a handle (nickname, ours is 'NACoTweets') that will be easily identifiable. Some variation on your name would be best. Your followers will see this every time you send a tweet.
- Tweet important information relevant to your followers/county residents. Include links back to official pages for full information. E.g.:
  – County Commission meets tonight 6-9p, 1400 Courthouse Rd 3rd fl, public comments 815p, more info http://bit.ly/fakeURL
  – Board of Supervisors approves 2013 budget, visit www.county.co.us.gov for info
  – Annual Green Valley Park Festival this wkend! I will be @ Meet Your County booth Saturday, stop by and say hi!
- Mention another user by using their handle. They will see that you mentioned them, and chances are they will look you up. If you have similar interests, they might follow you back.
  – E.g.: Looking forward to Telco/Tech Committee mtg today @NACoTweets Legislative Conference
- Retweet (RT) messages from others that you like or think are important. The "RT" prefix indicates you are giving credit to OP (original poster). For example, if you follow @NACoTweets and think your followers would like to know what NACo has tweeted about, your tweet might look like the following:
  – RT @NACoTweets: Check out the latest version of eNews to stay current with nation's counties, http://bit.ly/fakeURL
- Use hashtags (#). Tags make it easier to follow an event in real-time. The tag **#NACoAnn** will allow anyone who clicks on it to find every other tweet in the universe that contains the same tag. Any word can be a tag so long as you place the pound (#) sign in front of it. At conferences or other public forums, you can follow what others are saying about the meeting or workshops they are attending. E.g.:
  – About to hear #mountain climber Aron Ralson speak @NACoTweets general session **#NACoAnn**
- Follow associations of interest. Chances are your county visitor's bureau, library and/or parks department is already on Twitter. And of course—follow your state association and NACo!

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**NACo** National Association of Counties

# What's Youtube?

YouTube, now owned by Google, is an extremely popular web-based platform for uploading, sharing and viewing videos. Every minute 35 hours of video are uploaded and every day more than two billion videos are viewed. Visual society indeed.

# How is it useful?

YouTube is great for sharing visually compelling content, information, news and presentations. It's also useful for training guides, where video creates more of an interactive experience versus a text document. County officials can share public meeting videos, town halls, campaign ads, highlight programs and services from the county and even bolster tourism through a video tour of the community. In addition, it's also free to sign up and upload your own videos.

# How to get started?

- The first step is to sign up for YouTube—these accounts are now linked to your Google account, so be careful if you're setting up an account for your county, you'd probably prefer to have a more official email tied to the county's YouTube account.
- After registering you'll want to customize your account—do you want to moderate comments for profanity? Disable them? You can find all the privacy and security settings you need in the drop-down menu next to your account name.
- Upload your videos: Here is where you add your content. You may want to invest in some video editing software to polish your video before sharing with the internet. Adding content is as simply as dragging-and-dropping files into the web page.
- Once you've uploaded, you can customize things like Title and Description, and you can also choose a thumbnail for your video. You can even get even more out of your channel by doing things like uploading caption files for the hearing impaired and adding annotations that will display while your video plays.
- Tags: be sure to tag your videos with as much information as you can. These keywords help raise the search visibility of your video. For example, a video featuring a newly LEED-certified county building might include tags like green building, eco-friendly, county, and LEED.
- Channels: All registered users have a 'channel' and URL (NACo's is **youtube.com/NACoVideo**). You can search for channels that you'd like to subscribe to—for instance, other counties in your state, your state association of counties, federal agencies and more.
- Share! You can greatly increase the traffic of your YouTube page by creating links to it from your other social media platforms—namely Facebook and Twitter.

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