



Factsheet 1: **Social media**

Social media has an undeniably huge reach, with the power to connect with most audiences, including disabled people. For example, Facebook has more than 1.8 billion monthly active users, which makes it the world's most popular social media network. But to reach disabled people it's vital to make sure that communications from your social media channels are accessible and inclusive.

It's worth remembering that traditional media channels are often favoured by older audiences. However, do not presume all disabled or older people do not use social media. So it's best not to rely on social media for all your communication and have the age guidelines to hand. Your audience is as diverse as the channels they use!

Planning: Create an inclusive communications policy

The best way to reach more disabled people through accessible social media is to develop an inclusive communications policy that clearly sets out your commitment to inclusion. You should consider:

- Who do you want to reach with accessible social media?
- What social media channels do they use?
- What are their access requirements?
- Anticipate the needs of different audiences

For more information about how to develop your policy see our **Inclusive Communications Guide** available on our website.



Social media: Accessibility settings and best practice

Social media channels are a great way to reach more disabled people to promote your sports organisation. For each channel you should look at accessibility settings and accessibility best practice tips. Here's an overview of the most popular social media channels at the moment.



Twitter

Twitter is a great way to communicate short, timely pieces of information to a mass audience. But the use or over-use of hashtags and abbreviations can make some tweets very difficult to understand. You will get a great response if people can actually read and follow your tweets. Make any calls to action clear and if you are providing links to websites, ensure the content is accessible or that there are alternative formats available. Also, go to the settings on all your devices and turn on alternative text for images. When you tweet a hyperlink, indicate whether it leads to [AUDIO], [PIC], or [VIDEO]. Put mentions and hashtags at the end of your tweets. Capitalise the first letter of each word in a hashtag (known as camel case) and avoid using acronyms in tweets.



Facebook

For sport organisations Facebook is a fantastic way of creating a more informal space to share ideas, information and increase participation. The site has improved its own accessibility and inclusion over recent years. You need to be mindful of posting rich content such as videos or PDFs. Ensure these are accessible and that any links to external information are also accessible. Sometimes if there are long chains of user comments on posts they can be difficult to follow. Your site moderator should keep that in mind and intervene where necessary. Also, avoid using acronyms in your posts. You should include descriptive text when you post a photo and add captions to videos by adding a caption file, or using YouTube's captioning services for Facebook videos. Finally, like Facebook's Accessibility page www.facebook.com/accessibility and follow **@fbaccess** on Twitter for updates on new accessibility features.



Instagram

Instagram is a photo-sharing application and service that allows users to share pictures and videos either publicly or privately. Ultimately, it's probably the best social media channel for sports organisations to share visual content. Users can apply various digital filters to their images, and add hashtags to their posts to link their photos up to other content on Instagram featuring the same subject or overall topic. Use the post description area to explain your images and videos.





Snapchat

Snapchat is an image messaging and multimedia mobile application. One of the principal concepts of Snapchat is that pictures and messages are only available for a short time before they are deleted. Snapchat's users are primarily millennials, so it's great for reaching a younger audience. Plan out your snap stories to make sure they will make sense for all users. Use the larger text option for captions and make sure there is good contrast between the background and the captions.

For more information about accessibility settings and best practice see this

[blog post from Accessible U.](#)

Advertising on social media

Advertising on social media is a great way of reaching disabled people. You can use a mix of boosted posts and targeted display adverts, both of which can provide an extremely cost-effective way of increasing your audience. Just remember to use accessible language, alt tags for images and to send advert traffic to landing pages that are inclusive and accessible.

For more information about advertising on social media see this [blog post for Rival IQ.](#)

Make accessible content for sharing on social media

All the content you share on social media should be accessible. This includes making sure all images have alt tags, videos have subtitles, documents are accessible (e.g. accessible PDFs), use plain English and only direct to content on accessible websites. You will probably need external help with some content (e.g. Easy read, Braille). Many organisations choose to use social media to promote their activities. Be mindful of adding attachments like posters or entry forms as some people will not be able to access this information. To improve this, include a link to the information (on an accessible website page) within the body of your tweet or post, or add the key elements of the poster.





Key points

- Create an inclusive communications policy
- Understand different social media platforms
- Take advantage of social media advertising
- Use each social media platform's accessibility settings and best practice tips
- Create accessible content for sharing on social media

Resources and further information

We have produced many resources to support you to improve your communication and engagement. Recognised by the Excellence in Diversity Awards, our **Inclusive Communications Guide** can provide you with further advice on how to reach more disabled people through accessible social media. Available on Activity Alliance website.



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This document is available in Word format. Please contact us if you need support. Activity Alliance is the operating name for the English Federation of Disability Sport. Registered Charity no. 1075180

