



DECA[®] SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

CHAPTER & ASSOCIATION OFFICER EDITION

THREE USES FOR SOCIAL MEDIA

1. MEMBER ENGAGEMENT
2. BRAND AWARENESS
3. COMMUNICATION STREAMS

THREE KEYS TO CONSISTENT & SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL MEDIA

1. CREATE CONTENT
2. SHARE CONTENT
3. ENGAGE

INTRODUCTION

Social media has grown to become the dominant form of communication in today's world, especially for busy high school students.

It is more important now than ever before to establish a strong social media presence for your DECA chapter to ensure you are attracting potential members, business partners and connections that can help your chapter thrive for years to come.



But how do you create a strong social media presence?

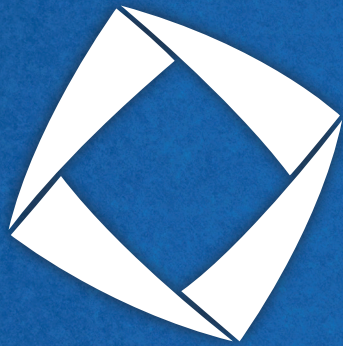
This Social Media Guidebook will serve as your go-to resource as you begin to build your social media profiles, as well as offer vital tips and suggestions as you continue grow your online presence.

Be sure to share this Guidebook with your chapter officers and use it as you plan your social media activities for the year to come.

Be sure to follow DECA on Twitter and Instagram @DECAInc for the best news, announcements, photos and more!



@jjscudderdeca



**DECA
DIRECT**

www.decadirect.org



DECA NEWS

CHAPTER RESOURCES

COMPETE

COLLEGE + CAREER ADVICE

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

PROFILES



DECA Doesn't Stop in the Summer

Check out ways you can keep doing DECA this summer, whether you're an advisor or member!



CURRENT ISSUE

DECA NEWS

MORE >>



There's Still Time to Register for DECA AMPED!

This must-attend event gives you the education, knowledge and inspiration you need to ignite your instruction at the next level.



2015 Train the Trainer Certification Course Prepares Key DECA Association Leaders for the Year Ahead

CONFERENCE NEWS

MORE >>

What to Expect at #DECAELS

2015.06.05 11:25 AM

This Summer's Gonna #beDECAepic

2015.06.04 03:04 PM

How To Make Your #DECAELS Experience EPIC

2015.06.02 02:04 PM

There's Still Time to Register for DECA AMPED!

2015.05.27 01:23 PM

ADVERTISEMENT

GONNA
BE THE
BEST APP
OF YOUR
LIFE

NOW AVAILABLE

Download on the
App Store

GET IT ON
Google Play



DECA Direct Online is the information hub for all things DECA. Here members, advisors, and parents can access and locate information pertaining to DECA such as chapter resources, college and career information, DECA news and conference updates. With DECA Direct Online, DECA offers its members and advisors timely and relevant information on a constantly updated basis.

Turn the page to find out how DECA Direct Online is the key to your social media success!

DECA NEWS

Get the latest and greatest news from DECA Inc. and find out what is happening in chapters across the country.

CHAPTER RESOURCES

Learn the best practices for chapter development, find out comprehensive learning program tips, and access teaching resources.

COMPETE

Achieve more than ever before with competitive events strategies, tools, helpful hints and more.

COLLEGE + CAREER

Prepare for a bright future with college advice, scholarship information and career resources.

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Members can get previews, live updates and reviews from DECA & Collegiate DECA's exciting conferences year-round.

PROFILES

Share DECA's rich network of individuals and meet our incredible members, alumni, advisors, and partners.

3 KEYS TO A CONSISTENT & SUCCESSFUL SOCIAL MEDIA PRESENCE

You may be surprised to discover that the secret to success when it comes to social media is really only three, easy steps!

The three keys to a consistent and successful social media presence are:

- 1. Create Content**
- 2. Share Content**
- 3. Drive Engagement**

Now, in order to achieve these three steps, you'll have to put in some time and effort to plan out your content, actively share content, and drive engagement through social media posts.

With a little planning and organization however, you can certainly achieve stellar social media success!

STEP 1: CREATE CONTENT

What's the best way to create content that promotes your chapter or association? By becoming a DECA Direct Online Social Media Correspondent! By becoming a correspondent, you will be responsible for submitting one article a month on any topic related to your chapter/association and its activities, campaigns, events and achievements.

The best part about being a correspondent is that it provides instant and FREE publicity for your chapter or association. What better way to spread the word about your awesome accomplishments than by sharing them with thousands of DECA Direct readers?

Signing up is easy and quick and before you know it, your chapter or association will be the next headline on DECA Direct.

How to Become a Correspondent

To become an official DECA Direct Online Social Media Correspondent, just visit <http://bit.ly/decaasmcsignup> to fill out an application.

It's critical that you provide a Twitter handle either for yourself or for your chapter when completing the application. Without giving DECA a way to connect with you on Twitter, you won't receive the best recognition possible when @DECAInc tweets about your articles!

After you have submitted the form, you simply just email your monthly articles to communication@deca.org, along with any photos you would like included in your story. While it is not required, you are highly encouraged to include a photo with every article you submit.

If you have any questions about the application or submission process, please don't hesitate to reach out to Janelle Scudder at janelle_scudder@deca.org.

What Should I Write About?

Chapter and association officer teams can easily keep fresh content rolling in all year long with some detailed planning early on.

The best way to organize your chapter's content for the year is to sit down as a team and put together a **content calendar**.

Creating a content calendar for your officer team is easy!

Check out the steps below:



Download the DECA content calendar at <http://bit.ly/decacontent> or use the sample content calendar on page 12 to create your own.



Starting with the middle column, write down all the activities that take place during each month related to your chapter, association, community and DECA in general. These topics will help you then brainstorm specific article ideas.



After you've filled out the entire middle column, work your way down the right-hand column. Using the topics you wrote down in the center, think of a DECA Direct article that can correspond to each activity. If you're having a big #DECAmonth celebration, then write, "How to Plan an EPIC #DECAmonth Party for Your Chapter," as a story idea in the right-hand column. If your chapter is planning on attending the DECA New York Experience in December, then a great article for that month would be a recap of your experience at #DECANYC and what you learned during the trip. Be sure to also assign stories to each officer while you are thinking of them!



After you have filled out the entire chart, share it with your officers or your entire chapter, so everyone knows what they are responsible for writing. It is also wise to assign deadlines for obtaining the content and sending it to communications@deca.org to be published online. This way, everyone knows what he or she needs to write about and when it is due (#nomoreexcuses!).

CHALLENGE:

CAN YOU CREATE A CONTENT CALENDAR FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR? ONCE YOU'VE COMPLETED YOUR CALENDAR, SHARE IT ON TWITTER AND INSTAGRAM AND BE SURE TO TAG @DECAINC IN YOUR TWEET OR POST. BE SURE TO SHARE YOUR CALENDAR WITH YOUR OFFICER TEAM OR CHAPTER TOO, OR DISPLAY IT IN YOUR CLASSROOM.

10 RULES TO REMEMBER

FOR DECA DIRECT ONLINE



BE TIMELY

Make sure your articles and topics coincide with what your audience is focusing on at that time. If you want your articles to be read, then you must make them relevant to your readers.



BE BRIEF

Your articles do not need to be more than one Word document page. Make sure you have short sentences and short paragraphs as well. This makes it easy to glance down the screen and read the page.



BE PROFESSIONAL

Your articles represent not only yourself, but the entire officer team and DECA as well. Make sure you use correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate language, and put the necessary thought and effort into your pieces.



BE YOU

Just because you need to be professional doesn't mean you have to lose your personality! Your members want to feel connected to their officer team, so make sure you add some of YOU into the article! Sharing your own stories, thoughts, opinions and even fears will help readers relate to you.



BE PROMPT

In order for DECA Direct Online to function effectively as the resource hub for all things DECA, we need a consistent cycle of new material to post. Please remember to submit your monthly articles to communications@deca.org.



BE VISUAL

If you have an image you would like to share in your article, make sure you send it with your document! If you don't have an image, but you have an idea of one that would be perfect, let us know and we can try to find the perfect picture for you. Articles with photos are the best for sharing.



BE ORGANIZED

Coordinate with your fellow officers to make sure your articles don't overlap on topics or repeat the same ideas. Your members don't want to read the same information five times, so go the extra mile and do some simple planning with your officers to differentiate your articles each month.



BE CATCHY

Generic titles do not make anyone want to read your article. Get creative and use interesting or catchy titles to capture your readers' attention! This will also help when promoting your articles on social media.



BE LISTY

The best articles are ones that break down the main points into numbered lists or easy to understand bullets. "Top 10" or "Best 5" are great ways to get your readers interested without thinking they'll have to read a drawn out article.



BE DECA

Make your articles unique to the problems that DECA chapters are facing and help members overcome their obstacles! This time next year, wouldn't it be great to see the success chapters have had from your advice and tips through DECA Direct Online?

STEP 2: SHARE CONTENT

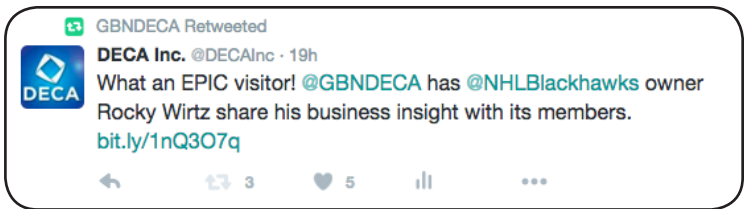
So now that your chapter or association's official correspondent is doing such a great job getting articles published every month on DECA Direct Online, the next step is to share all these awesome articles!

DECA Direct Online articles make great content to post on your chapter or association's Facebook and Twitter pages. It's as easy as RTing or sharing what the DECA accounts have already posted, or use the URL to create your own post.

Your members are doing an amazing service to your chapter or association by being an active correspondent, so make sure you recognize their hard work and show your appreciation by always reading, posting, tweeting and sharing their articles.

CHALLENGE:

POST AND TWEET EVERY ARTICLE YOUR CHAPTER CORRESPONDENT WRITES FOR THE NEXT YEAR, AND IF YOU'RE AN ASSOCIATION, POST AND TWEET ALL THE ARTICLES FROM CORRESPONDENTS IN YOUR ASSOCIATION! YOU'LL BE AMAZED AT THE SOCIAL MEDIA INTERACTION YOUR CHANNELS WILL SEE FROM THIS ACTIVITY.



If you're an association officer, you should be recognizing all the correspondents in your association and sharing ALL the articles they write! This may seem like a daunting task, but by constantly sharing your correspondents' articles, you're not only thanking them for their hard work, but also driving people to check out your social media pages.

Members will be excited to see their friends being recognized on the association's social media pages, and more inclined to share, RT and promote these posts. Start reading and sharing!



STEP 3: DRIVE ENGAGEMENT

This is definitely the hardest element to creating a strong social media presence, but the most important thing to remember is that consistency is key!

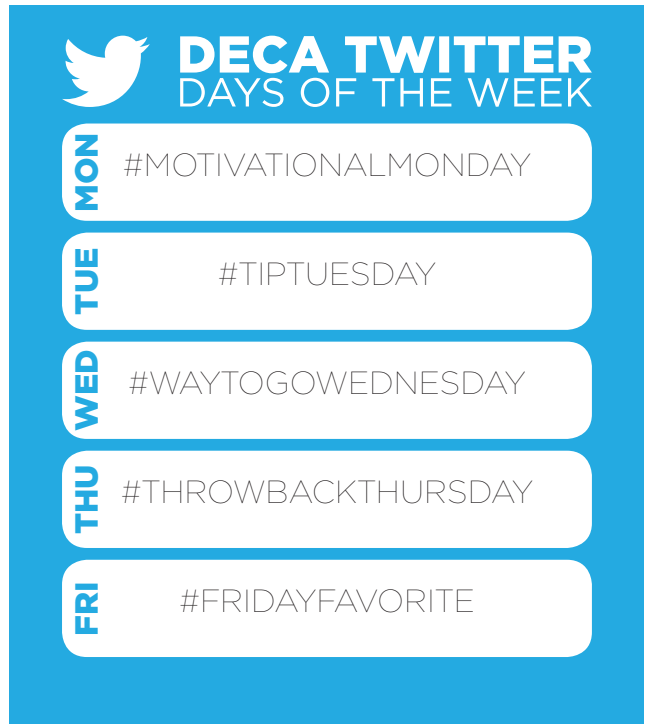
The best way to drive engagement is to first utilize DECA's Twitter Days.

Pick your favorite daily hashtag themes and encourage everyone in your chapter or association officer team to post a photo, quote or tip for that day.

Slowly but surely your persistence will pay off and soon everyone in your chapter or association will be sharing your photos and RTing your tweets.

Another great way to drive engagement with your social media sites is to engage in DECA's hashtags campaigns. Why not get your whole chapter to commit to sharing vacation photos using #SummerofDECA or get everyone in your association using the new DECA theme in the fall.

Soon, the entire DECA community will start seeing your chapter or association's name appear in their Twitter and Instagram feeds.



Another awesome idea is to create hashtag campaigns unique to your chapter or association's activities. Don't be afraid to throw out a hashtag for a community service event, chapter trip or just for chapter meetings! People love sharing photos on social media and you could be using your members' photos to promote all the amazing things your chapter or association does on a regular basis.

CHALLENGE: CREATE 4-5 HASHTAGS UNIQUE TO YOUR CHAPTER/ASSOCIATION THAT YOU CAN USE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR. DEVELOP A CREATIVE WAY TO ANNOUNCE AND PROMOTE THESE HASHTAGS TO YOUR MEMBERS.

CONTENT CALENDAR

JAN	(Write your chapter's activities for the month here)
FEB	
MAR	
APR	
MAY	
JUN	
JUL	
AUG	
SEP	
OCT	
NOV	
DEC	

[illegible]

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR FACEBOOK

As officers, you are highly encouraged to post DECA Inc. news, articles, photos and more on your Facebook page. You are the brand ambassador for DECA Inc., as well as for your chapter and/or association. In order to take this role seriously, you must be willing to constantly promote the brand to all of your followers.

Please also share DECA Inc. Facebook posts as often as possible and encourage others to 'like' the DECA Inc. Facebook page frequently. In order to make DECA's Facebook page effective, we need a larger number of followers to receive and share our information.

It would be beneficial to also search and find DECA's corporate and business partners on Facebook and 'like' their pages. Whenever possible, tag these businesses or organizations in your posts to help promote our relationship with these constituencies to the broader DECA community.

Your Facebook page should also be branded appropriately to represent your role in DECA. Make sure your profile picture and cover photo promote DECA and its various programs or events. Having photos irrelevant to your position in DECA may confuse those who friend request you. It also gives your profile less of an authentic feel. There are many options to use when branding your page and the communications team at DECA Inc. is happy to supply you with various images to use. You can always take the images from the DECA Inc. Facebook page as well!

Lastly, you should always be searching for new ways to engage with your DECA members. Ask questions, post interesting articles related to college or careers, hype up conferences or events, and reach out to chapters or members on a personal level. In order to build DECA on social media, we need more people to recognize the brand name, and you are the best person to create this publicity!

APPROPRIATE USE

As officers, it is imperative that you have a presence on Facebook that promotes your chapter, association and DECA Inc., as well as your fellow officers. If you have decided to keep your personal Facebook page and use it for your term as an officer, you must keep this in mind constantly.

Every post you make, whether it is about DECA or your own personal life, reflects the organization and officer team.

Please be aware of what posts or photos you are tagged in as well. Privacy settings are never guaranteed to work and although you cannot control what others say or post about you, you can control how others see it.

5 FACEBOOK TIPS

FOR INCREASED ENGAGEMENT



POST AT THE RIGHT TIME

High school students (your main audience) have the most access to their phones and computers during the day and especially late at night. Try to not post very early in the morning, especially on weekends. Early evening or later at night during the week will get you the optimal amount of reach to your DECA members.



USE CALL TO ACTION

By adding statements such as, “Like if you agree,” or “Leave your answer here,” to your posts, you will encourage far more engagement with your followers than by just hoping they like or comment. Using fill-in-the-blank posts or asking questions and prompting friends for answers are great ways to engage and connect with your audience.



CREATE A CONSISTENT PRESENCE

You should at least be posting once or twice a day and at least four times a week. Too much posting might cause some followers to hide your constant activity from their newsfeed, while too little activity might make you invisible to so many other posts. The key is to be consistent and create a presence that is inviting and engaging without being overbearing.



USE PHOTOS AND LINKS

Photos and links are a great way to encourage sharing on Facebook, which is now the true test to effective follower engagement (as opposed to just collecting likes). Participate in DECA’s Twitter Days and post your own Motivational Monday photos or share links to DECA Direct Online articles for Tip Tuesday.



TRY TRACKING YOUR LINKS

To really see the impact you are making with your followers, try tracking your links using bitly (www.bitly.com). This will allow you to see how many followers clicked your links, where they are located and what time of the day they followed your link. Using this data you can determine the best ways to reach your members and engage with your audience.

5 TWITTER TIPS

FOR INCREASED ENGAGEMENT



USE HASHTAGS

The best way to engage with your followers is through hashtags! Use current trending hashtags, Twitter Days hashtags or even just #deca to encourage conversation and engagement. There are also industry related hashtags that will broaden your audience from just DECA members to the marketing/business community.



COMPLETE YOUR PROFILE

This is the easiest way to make your profile better and yet it is the one most people never do! Select a profile picture, customize your profile background and header photo and fill in your bio. This will help people recognize your account as authentic and increase your ability to gain followers.



WATCH YOUR CHARACTER LIMIT

No one likes missing half a tweet because it got cut off. Make sure you check that you are under the 140-character limit before you tweet! Adding photos also uses up character space, so attach your image first before you type your tweet. People are less likely to share a tweet that is incomplete or doesn't make sense.



USE PHOTOS AND LINKS

People are more likely to retweet photos or links than just statements, so always try to add a picture or URL to your tweet. You can use www.bitly.com to track the success of your links and see when and where people clicked on them.



USE CALL TO ACTION

Just like Facebook, people are more likely to engage with you if you ask them to! Statements like "RT if you" or "Favorite if you" will get you more engagement than you realize. You can even create polls or contents by combining the two like, "RT if you love @DECAInc and favorite if you really love @VirginiaDECA."

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR TWITTER

You are encouraged to share both your own tweets on your personal account as well as retweet and promote tweets from the @DECAInc Twitter account. The best way to gain followers, promote the organization and increase engagement is by reaching a broad audience. With your help, DECA can reach more people than imaginable!

You should also be mindful of tagging @DECAInc whenever applicable to increase brand recognition and awareness. If you are talking about a DECA corporate or business partner, do a quick search on Twitter and find their handle so you can also tag them. Twitter's ability to connect with entire entities through one easy tweet is the most valuable aspect of the network. Take advantage of this opportunity and get the DECA name out there to companies and brands that may find the organization beneficial or interesting.

Lastly, make sure you are using the appropriate hashtags that correspond with your tweets. Use them in your Twitter Days tweets, as well as for conferences and events. Even in everyday tweets, you can try to incorporate popular or trending hashtags to increase your engagement and followers from across the country.

APPROPRIATE USE

As with Facebook, the way you present yourself on Twitter is a direct reflection of DECA Inc. and your officer team. Make sure you show maturity, professionalism and sound-thought when tweeting or retweeting from your DECA account.

Although you can make your profile private, it might be beneficial to leave it public, as people are less inclined to follow someone if they have to wait for pending approval. Please make sure your tweets are appropriate, DECA related and free of spelling errors. Once again, you are representing the entire organization every time you hit "tweet."

You should also strongly consider branding your Twitter page with DECA images so that members recognize it is an authentic account. Simply by making your profile and header photo DECA related, the professionalism of your page increases dramatically.

Your "About" section should also contain relevant and important information to your role as a DECA officer or members. For example, you should make your bio:

2016-2017 @VirginiaDECA Association Officer for @DECAInc
Your Location
www.deca.org

6 STEPS TO PERFORMING A DECA SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIT

In anything, from school to sports and even DECA, it's hard to decide what you need to work on if you don't have a good idea of where you're falling short. That's why performing an audit is a great way to determine your strengths and weaknesses in a certain area.

Your chapter or association's social media pages are so important for many reasons! Whether your profiles are used to inform members, attract business partners, connect with your community or deliver announcements, it's crucial that you understand how well your profiles are performing in order to properly carry out your social media goals.

Below are six steps to help your chapter or association perform a social media audit and find out exactly what you need to work on to create a strong and thriving online presence.



CREATE YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIT SPREADSHEET

The DECA Social Media Audit Spreadsheet on page 22 will help you organize your social media profiles and give you a clear picture of how your profiles are performing!

Feel free to use the page in this guide, create your own, or go to <http://bit.ly/decasocialaudit> to download a printable worksheet to get started.

CHALLENGE: AFTER YOU COMPLETE YOUR DECA SOCIAL MEDIA AUDIT, CHECK OUT SOME SUCCESSFUL COMPANIES ON TWITTER OR INSTAGRAM AND SEE HOW THEIR SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS STACK UP TO YOURS.



EVALUATE EACH OF YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILES

For each of your social media profiles, use the 10-point scale below to determine your profile's strength. Each item has a point value assigned to it. If you can answer **YES** to the question below for your social media profile, give yourself the appropriate number of points. If you answer **NO** to the question, do not add or deduct any points, but move on to the next question. Total your points at the end, and check your results.

- Does your social media profile name clearly indicate your school/chapter name and include DECA? (1 point)
- Is your profile photo a registered DECA logo that adheres to DECA's branding guidelines? (1 point)
- Does your bio clearly explain who you are, where your school/chapter is located and/or DECA's mission statement? (1 point)
- Is there a link to either your chapter's website, your DECA association's website, or deca.org in your profile and/or description? (1 point)
- Have you posted at least once this month? (1 point)
- Have you posted at least once this week? (2 points)
- Have you posted more than once today? (3 points)

If you scored....

1-3 points – Your social media profiles are weak and need more work.

4-6 points – Your social media profiles are moderately strong, but some areas still need work.

7-10 points – Your social media profiles are strong! Keep up the good work!

Seeing which questions you answered yes or no to is a good way to determine where your social media profiles need work. If you have a well-branded profile, but haven't posted in three weeks, you probably need to work on content more than branding. If you are posting daily, but are missing a profile photo and your profile name doesn't include DECA, you may want to focus on properly branding your pages to increase the authenticity of your profiles.



DO YOUR PROFILES CONTAIN THE DECA BRAND

It's important that when visitors come to your social media profiles, they get a clear indication that you are part of the DECA brand. Whether it's an official chapter logo (email communications@deca.org to get one for your chapter), using a DECA cover photo or header image, or adding a DECA background, branding your profile is an important step to validating your online presence.

Don't be afraid to use images that the official DECA Inc. social media accounts have shared, or if you're looking for something in particular to add to your profiles, ask @jjscudderdeca on Twitter for help!



CENTRALIZE OWNERSHIP OF YOUR PROFILES

So one of your DECA officers creates all your social media accounts, keeps them updated and branded appropriately, and gains a large follower base. Then, he or she graduates, and the incoming officer team cannot get ahold of the previous owner for the password information. All the effort to create an awesome social media presence is now down the drain, and the new officer team has to start from scratch.

Does this story sound familiar? It happens to so many DECA chapters and associations, but can easily be avoided!

First, it's wise to create a master list of all your social media accounts with all your usernames and passwords. Save this list in a safe place, like in an officer team Google Drive or with your chapter/association advisor. The incoming officer team should then have access to the list once their term begins and old officers should be removed. If any changes are made to usernames or passwords, or when a new social media profile is created, this master list should be updated.



CREATE A STREAMLINE POSTING PROCESS

Now that you have a better understanding of your social media profiles' strengths and weaknesses, it's a good idea to put in place some guidelines to either maintain or strengthen your pages. Has one person been responsible for posting content on all your pages? Is everyone collaborating on content that can be posted? Who is in charge of scheduling posts for the upcoming week or month?

Determine with your officer team and advisor which individuals should be responsible for what tasks and on what profiles. If one person is passionate about all forms of social media, perhaps they are best suited to take on the responsibility for maintain all your profiles. If one person loves Twitter and another is all about Instagram, maybe it's best to divide and conquer!

Additionally, it's a good idea for chapter or association officer teams to meet monthly and determine what announcements can be scheduled ahead of time, leaving room of course for the occasional live tweet or post. This way, your social media pages will be filled with timely reminders for the entire month and you won't have to panic when you realize no one has posted anything in two weeks.



START POSTING, TWEETING & SHARING!

After your complete this DECA Social Media Audit, you should feel more confident about where your social media pages stand! Understanding the areas you need to improve upon and focus more time on will give your chapter or association a clear set of goals for the upcoming DECA year.

Additionally, creating a streamlined process for gathering and storing account information, as well as determining a process for posting content, sets your profiles up for continued success!

DECA SOCIA MEDIA AUDIT WORKSHEET

10 POINT EVALUATION

Profile	Total Points	Areas of Strength	Areas of Weakness

PROFILE BRANDING

Profile	DECA Logo as Profile Picture	DECA Website Links on Profile	DECA Branded Photos on Profile?

OWNERSHIP

Profile	Username	Password	Creator

STREAMLINE POSTING PROCESS

STEP 1	STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4



facebook.com/decainc



twitter.com/decainc



instagram.com/decainc



pinterest.com/decainc



youtube.com/decainc



linkd.in/decainc