

Digital Content Guidelines

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Preface

Centralised QA model

The University of the Free State uses a **centralised quality assurance model** for its 12 000+ web pages.

There are approximately 200 web-content managers, **who submit their faculty or department's content for approval** by the Unit for Digital Communication in the Department of Communication and Marketing (two staff members have this responsibility; see contact details below).

Who can help me?

Check the details below to see how you can start creating digital content, which department to contact, as well as who the relevant contact person is for each area of expertise.

[For additional, context-specific help: See the [Table of Contents](#) on the next page or browse the [alphabetical index](#) at the end of the document.]

Access, Training, and Technical Requirements

ICT Services: Email Data Technology and Integration (DTI) at sdd@ufs.ac.za or call +27 51 401 2970 for applicable access to the Sitefinity Content-Management System (CMS) and subsequent training. You will need to complete an access request form and have your line manager/Website owner/Dean or HOD sign it; then deliver your hard-copy form to DTI in FGG Block F, Room 274.

Other technical queries (short URLs , in addition to those above) can be referred to DTI.

Brand Application

Communication and Marketing: Email our Brand and Reputation office at branding@ufs.ac.za or consult our *Brand Identity Guidelines* at www.ufs.ac.za/cimanual; branded templates are available on the Intranet at www.ufs.ac.za/ufsbrand (log in with your campus email and password). Documents used on the UFS website need only have a logo/descriptor on the first page. The exception to this is policies or other legal documents. Posters, invitations, and social-media posts are all subject to a different brand application, as per the Brand Identity Guidelines noted above.

Our corporate identity (CI) further includes things such as the font (Arial is our corporate font for web-based documents unless they have appeared in print before). Our CI also includes our corporate colours. Only UFS corporate colours (blue, red, grey, black) and the faculty or department's colours according to the colour codes listed in the *Corporate Identity Elements*, are allowed. This stipulation also applies to the formatting of graphs and colours used in other graphic-design elements, tables, and so forth).

Language and Style References

Communication and Marketing: The UFS *English Style Guide* (sometimes simply referred to as the Style Guide) is available at www.ufs.ac.za/style. It is not necessary to memorise this document; its purpose is to serve as a reference. The same applies to these Digital Content Guidelines, the Classifieds Guide, and the Corporate Identity Guidelines.

Please note that all faculties and departments are required to have their content professionally language edited. Not only text-based content should be proofread, but also designs, documents, and other material destined for use online. Editing should preferably be entrusted to a professional language practitioner who is familiar with the English Style Guide. Our department recommends

Elize Gouws (gouws.elize@gmail.com | +27 82 628 7613); she is a seasoned language practitioner well-versed in the Style Guide and linguistic requirements overall.

If you have any content-related questions about how to apply the principles contained in this document or the Style Guide, please do not hesitate to ask for guidance. You can contact Edzani Nephalela on +27 51 401 7204 or NephalelaEC@ufs.ac.za. Alternatively, please get in touch with Lacea Loader (Director: Communication and Marketing) on +27 51 401 2828 or loaderl@ufs.ac.za

Why do we even **NEED** a set of digital content guidelines?

Due to the high standard of quality required for web pages of the University of the Free State (UFS), faculty and departmental web managers often seek guidance on the practical application of institutional policies and documentation. Over the past five years, these FAQs have been recorded and compiled into this set of guidelines. The Digital Content Guidelines (DGC) does not take the place of other institutional policy documents but provides an easy point of reference to such documents as the Corporate Identity Guidelines and UFS *English Style Guide* to apply the principles contained therein. Examples from these documents, along with the Best-Practice Guidelines for UFS Social Media, have also been included here.

This document is designed to assist you in creating exceptional content to be used on the digital platforms and channels of the UFS. It relies heavily on the work of *Rachel Stewart¹* and her superlative *English Style Guide*, which was created especially for the UFS.

Furthermore, updated information on Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) — courtesy of UCT's GetSmarter online short course — along with many other online resources, forms the backbone of the technical detail to follow, while the work of acclaimed South African copy-editor and copywriter, Tiffany Markman, contributes to the purpose of this document.

These guidelines are intended to empower those who are required to create digestible copy and content for the university's digital platforms, but at the same time to increase the ease with which they can do so. This document is not intended to stand alone, however, as it is supported by the *Brand Identity Guidelines*, the aforementioned *English Style Guide*, and other stylistic or best-practice considerations that are dependent on the relevant platforms and channels.

Please note:

Two steps are required before content can be submitted for final approval on the UFS website: Firstly, the brand application, and secondly, the linguistic and stylistic considerations. Faculties and departments (whether academic or in support services) are required to have their text-based content **language edited** and their designs, graphs, or other visual elements **approved** by the resident Brand Manager in the Department of Communication and Marketing BEFORE submitting a page for approval through the Sitefinity CMS workflow (our content-management system) that contains these items. Pages that do not comply with this instruction will be summarily rejected.

¹ In the best traditions of web-related texts, this document makes use of hyperlinks to web addresses or URLs, as well as to other parts of this document; these links are always *underlined and formatted in this way*.

Section 1: Writing Guidelines

Tips to create engaging online content

Every word you write must capture your visitor's attention, keeping them engaged and active.

Follow these tips to help you achieve this:

- Identify your target audience before starting (writers need to relate to their readers).
- Online content is informal, interactive, dynamic, and topical.
- Write in short sentences; deliver a clear, concise message.
- Tell your reader what they can expect—then, tell them what they need to know.

Follow the five Ws and H (**What, Why, When, Where, Who, and How**). If you can, strive to also answer '**So what?**' In other words, highlight the practical value of the information for your target audience. The content must captivate the visitor and guide them to the intended outcome.

Newsworthy content is

- an overview of the sector, industry, discipline, or subjects (don't put this on your home page, though);
- a well-known, renowned, or statured speaker;
- awards, achievements, and recognition;
- course information for prospective students;
- career opportunities that emerge from specific studies;
- in line with the focus areas in the faculty or departmental communication strategy;
- new, innovative, or exclusive to the UFS or the broader community (bearing in mind the institutional, faculty, or departmental vision);
- faculty or departmental research outputs, especially practical, real-world impacts; and
- based on a relevant angle and on a remarkable topic (not merely interesting or nice to know).

Pro Tip

Do not copy directly from MS Word to Sitefinity. Instead, first copy the text to a plain-text editor such as Notepad. Then copy the text from your Notepad window to the Sitefinity content editor and apply formatting to the text there.

Recommended Word Counts

People are looking for bite-sized, digestible content on web pages for concise information about the specific product or service.

Follow the word counts below to ensure **optimum readability**:

- Page title or article headline: Max 7-10 words, can be less than 7 (e.g., *Producing written content on the web for your department*).
- Page description: 24 to 30 words (e.g., *Once you have read the guidelines and determined your source material, these steps will help you get started on producing content for the web*).
- Website news article: 250 words or less, excluding headlines/subheadings. Add a '*Read more*', if necessary; length of *Read more* should not be longer than 200 words. Articles longer than 250 words need subheadings.
- Word count for home pages: Max 150 words.
- Word count for other pages on your site: Max 250 words.

Bulleted Lists

Bullet points highlight features and options.

- They're easy to read.
- They keep the reader's attention.
- They allow for concise details.

Rules for Bulleted Lists (see [UFS English Style Guide: Bullets](#) for further guidance)

Use only one type of bullet for lists, preferably the simple black dot, to avoid making your document or page look cluttered. Remain consistent and avoid two-level lists. However, where necessary, make use of only the simplest form of bullets for your second level, once again remaining consistent.

For example:

- certificates
- degrees
 - degrees are subject to certain criteria; visit www.ufs.ac.za/graduation to learn more
- diplomas

Bulleted lists should begin directly below the introductory segment. Only use a colon to introduce a bulleted list if it is preceded by a full sentence, clause, or phrase. Such a sentence or segment will typically end with the following: OR as follows: OR similar phrases. If the introductory segment is a sentence fragment, or if the items in the list complete the fragment, don't use a punctuation mark in the introductory sentence. The grammatical form of the bullets should also agree; i.e. if the first bullet uses the '~ing' form of a verb, each subsequent bullet should follow the same format.

Sentence Length and Construction

The modern reader's attention span is much shorter in a digital environment. Therefore,

- avoid complicated sentences;
- use concise descriptions;
- deliver a clear message;
- use the active voice;
- where possible, reduce unnecessary punctuation;
 - BUT: Grammar and syntax matter! Use a spellchecker in conjunction with a reliable British dictionary or an online tool such as [the Hemingway app](#) (and don't discount the value of an experienced, professional language editor).
- use numerals in headings or headlines;
 - BUT: In body text, write numbers lower than 11 — as well as those used in a figurative sense — out in full, such as Fifth Floor, a thousand times. However, exceptions to this include Chapter 9, Table 10, and physical/street addresses (see English Style Guide: Capital letters, Words followed by a number; see also Addendum to Style Guide: Addresses).
- use italics for emphasis and **bold text for change of pace** (no more than one emphasised or formatted word per hundred words of text copy; no more than two types of emphasis per instance).

Rules for Sentences (Length, Syntax)

- Avoid italics, except when listing the title of a book or presentation; use bold text if needed for emphasis (See also [Headings](#) in this document).
- Avoid using 'etc.', but if you do, remember the full-stop at the end.
- Avoid exclamation marks(!)

British Versus American Spelling: What's the Difference?

The *UFS English Style Guide* prescribes that all text content generated for UFS communication platforms should be in British English. On Microsoft applications, this language is usually labelled **English (United Kingdom)** or **English (UK)**. Not only is this the chosen style at the UFS, but this is also the agreed-upon style for the whole of South Africa.

English spelling conventions vary somewhat from place to place. If you compare British and American English, for example, you'll find spelling differences that concern vowels, double letters, and suffixes such as -ize/-ise or -yze/-yse. Australian and New Zealand English tend to follow British spelling conventions. Canadian English follows many British spelling conventions, but has also been influenced by American spellings.

American	British	Canadian
favorite	favourite	favourite
leukemia	leukaemia	leukemia
organize	organise/organize	organize
analyze	analyse/analyze	analyze
center	centre	centre
traveled	travelled	travelled

Australian
 favourite
 leukemia/leukaemia
 organise/organize
 analyse/analyze
 centre
 travelled

Does it really matter whether you write in British English, or whether your machine defaults to American or US English? It certainly does! As a point of reference, have a look at the screenshot alongside, taken from the digital, AI-driven spelling and grammar-checker Grammarly. If you are seeing your “organise” being automatically corrected to ‘organize’ in MS Outlook, Word, or other application, go to your PC’s regional and language settings to select “English (United Kingdom)” as the default.

Active Voice

- When writing for your home page, use the active voice (Our faculty offers ...).

- Actively inject the university’s voice into the page by using ‘we’, ‘us’, or ‘our’.
- This creates better engagement, interacting with your reader at a more personal level.
- The active voice also establishes you or your faculty/department as an expert in the field.
 - E.g.: “Our department prides itself on our research, such as this article in Nature magazine.”

Avoid the awkward s/he or his/her; rather use plurals ([Addendum to Style Guide: Inclusive writing](#)). According to most modern style guides, such as the *Associated Press Style Guide* and the *Chicago Manual of Style*, the use of “they” to refer to individuals may also be considered (https://www.cjr.org/language_corner/stylebooks-single-they-ap-chicago-gender-neutral.php).

Section 2: Uploading Content in the Sitefinity CMS

Web Text and Documents

- For security reasons, only documents in .pdf (PDF) are allowed on the UFS website.
- PDFs must have the applicable university logo (faculty or departmental) centred at the top of the first page, unless the document is co-branded (see CI Elements: [Co-branding, Section 1.12, p. 24](#))
- Faculty and departmental templates can be found on the Intranet at <https://www.ufs.ac.za/ufsbrand>.
- Anchor text linking to the PDF must describe its contents, such as Faculty Research Report. Where possible, include a short sentence or two explaining what can be found in the document. See the sections [Hyperlinking](#) and [Anchor Text](#) later in this document.
 - Avoid using ‘Click here’ and similar generic terms, as they have no value for search engines.
- Use the correct corporate font: Arial for web documents, Leitura for hard-copy documents whose electronic versions are published online, Verdana for web content (this font is automatically selected in the Sitefinity CMS and should not be manually adjusted by the user).
- Only UFS corporate colours (blue, red, grey, black) in the correct colour code as provided in the CI Manual are allowed for the font; white text is also allowed, depending on the background colour.
- The above corporate colours may be paired with the campus, faculty, or support-service colour.
- All documents and textual content generated for the web must be language edited before submission (see [Appendix 4](#) for an example of material that has been formatted for web use).

Awards and Research Lists

Dates first, with a comma after; e.g. *In 2009, the department was awarded the prestigious ...*

Formatting of Contact Details

Note bold format for the abbreviation of the contact method, e.g., 'T:' for Telephone, as well as the international dialling code, and the hyperlinked email address (refer to the section [Hyperlinking](#) for more information on best practices in this regard). Although we refer to both mobile and cellular phones, we use the abbreviation 'C:' for cellphone numbers. 'F:' for 'Fax' is being phased out.

With the advent of Skype for Business, your webpage's mobile view has become increasingly important. It is now also possible to format the telephone numbers in such a way that they will be clickable/dialable from a mobile phone.

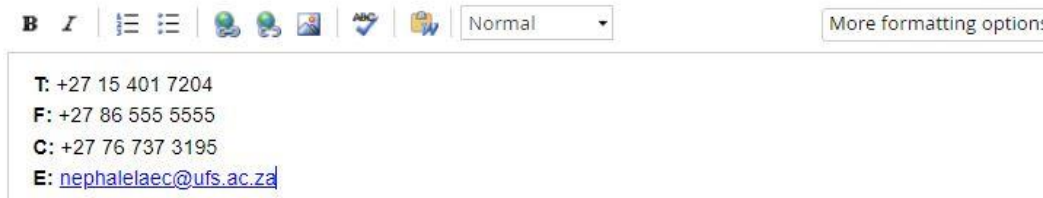


Figure 1

In Sitefinity, open the Content Editor for a content block. Start by selecting 'HTML' at the bottom of the Content Editor window, then use the HTML code `+27 51 401 7204` for your desired telephone number (adjust as needed). Once you have made this adjustment, click on 'Design' to ensure that the text displays correctly, and then save your changes. The dialable numbers will now appear as hyperlinked text on the page.



Figure 2

Formatted text will look like this:

(Please note: These numbers have been formatted to be dialable using **MS Word's native functionality**.)

T: [+27 51 401 7204](tel:+27514017204)

F: [+27 86 555 5555](tel:+27865555555)

C: [+27 76 737 3195](tel:+27767373195)

E: nephalelaec@ufs.ac.za (**NB:** UFS style for 'email' is without a hyphen)

Naming Conventions

Please note the following examples:

- Bloemfontein Campus (**NOT** Main Campus); Qwaqwa Campus (beware of the autocorrect in MS Word that automatically replaces Qwaqwa with QwaQwa); South Campus (**NOT** Vista Campus)
- Faculty of Health Sciences / Faculty of The Humanities / Faculty of Law
- Department of Psychology / School of Nursing / Department of Communication and Marketing

If written in a sentence without the department's name, use small letters

- i.e., The **department** prides itself on its high-quality research outputs.
Or, if the specific department is named:
The **Department of Psychology** prides itself on its high-quality research outputs.

- Note the different usage examples:
 - Our university, our department, our faculty, our rector, the dean
Or
University of the Free State
The Dean of Education
Rector and Vice-Chancellor

Titles (no punctuation) and Honorifics

- Prof, Dr, Rev (see [UFS English Style Guide, Honorifics](#))
 - Avoid using Mr/Mrs/Ms; opt instead for **first name and surname**: e.g. *John Smith*.

Images and Designs

Photos, images, designs, and other visual elements must be relevant to the university's core business or strategic objectives, must be of good quality, and must adhere to the UFS guidelines regarding brand application, language correctness, and language style.

- All photographs must be in *.jpg* format (Note: The extension should not be in capital letters)
- Photos must be of excellent quality; not blurred, squashed, stretched, or grainy
- Photos must be resized with the height-to-width ratio locked to ensure that the quality is maintained (use a photo-editing programme such as GIMP, Microsoft Photos, or Adobe Photoshop—Photos is free; GIMP is open-source software, while Photoshop requires a license)
- Graphs and animations for the web must be legible, even on the screen of a mobile device.
 - Branding and corporate colours apply to all graphic elements, designs, as well as images

Section 3: Basic Search Engine Optimisation and Marketing (SEO and SEM)

In addition to creating skimmers instead of readers, online content and new technologies such as the increased use of smartphones, voice-activated search, and the Internet-of-Things (IOT) present ever-greater challenges when trying to provide natural-language search results for web users. People nowadays have a short attention span and require instant information that is readily available.

Think of SEO as though it were **your staff ID card**: The photo and description serve to identify you to **other people** on campus, **while electronic readers scan the RFID strip** and allow you onto the premises.

Similarly, content must always be created for the user first, then for search engines. However, bear in mind that search engines penalise overcomplicated, lengthy sentences. Users will also quickly navigate away from your site if they cannot promptly find the information they are seeking.

Follow these tips on how to make your page appealing to both humans and search-engine algorithms:

- Upload only relevant, high-quality content in the target audience's language
- Provide search engines with appropriate context as to what the website is about
 - The formula for **SEO Success** should answer the following criteria:
 - Relevant content
 - In the user's language
 - Search-engine accessible
- Only upload original content; duplication and/or plagiarism is penalised by search engines
 - Duplication is **SEO Suicide**
- Do not depend on keyword density, proximity, or placement, as these could have a counterproductive result (Google's algorithm penalises keyword stuffing or similar practices)

Title Tags

The title tag is one of the most crucial tags on any page. The title is considered as the first point of contact with a visitor. It must be customised to reflect the precise information found on each page, and it should also be unique to that webpage (to distinguish it in search-engine results). In order to improve search-engine visibility, it is vital to improve these titles.

- The title must accurately reflect what can be found on that page.

- Use title tags that are descriptive and convey a clear message.
- Where possible, headings should contain strong keywords that are consistently used, thus emphasising those keywords to search engines.

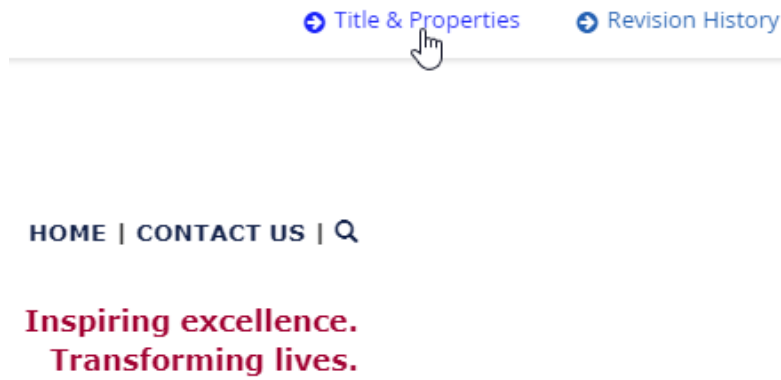


Figure 3

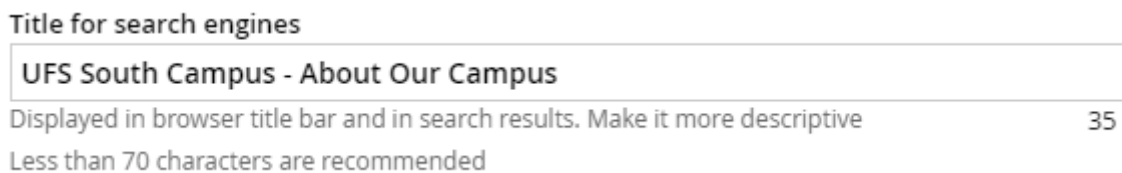


Figure 4

Repetition

When it comes to writing, the golden rules of SEO best practice are:

- Words, and especially keywords, must never be repeated in a sentence or paragraph.
- Keyword stuffing is to be strictly avoided — repeating one keyword more than three times on a three-hundred-word page will get you penalised, affecting your page's search engine ranking as well as that of the UFS.
- Google's search algorithm is very sensitive to keyword spamming and word repetition.

Keywords

Keywords are crucial but offer no value if they are not well-aligned with the content of the page.

General guidelines for compiling keywords

- Combine keywords with other variations and intersperse them; also use plurals, stemmed alternatives, and semantically related keywords (to allow for natural-language search queries).
- Use the most important keywords/phrases first and taper them off in terms of importance.
- Use commas to separate keyword phrases; try to keep the sequence of keywords in the Description and Keywords fields similar.
- Do not include keywords if they do not appear at least once (preferably twice) in the text on the page; do not repeat any phrase or keyword more than twice on a page.
- Never use ALL CAPS; rather use normal sentence case.

For example, a navigation item in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences might have the following keywords: Aliza le Roux, UFS Qwaqwa Campus, animal behaviour, foxes

Description

Dr [Alize Le Roux](#)'s animal-behaviour research

Less than 150 characters are recommended 44

Keywords

[Alize Le Roux](#), UFS Qwaqwa Campus, animal behaviour, foxes

Figure 5

For Example (for more detailed examples, see [Appendix 5: Sample Home-Page Content](#))

Let us say your service/industry is Space Tourism. Your page should contain the following elements.

Introduction: Pivotal in introducing your company, experience, and know-how in your chosen field.

Our Space Tourism Options (Heading 4)

Here you will talk in depth about your services and perhaps include a bullet-point list with

- your exact offerings;
- additional services and products;
- unique selling points.

To Infinity and Beyond (Heading 5)

The subheading concludes the 'product offering' part of the page by summarising why your readers should pick you, along with vital information on how to proceed. End this section with a **clear call to action**, encouraging the action you desire. Use the **active voice** and a strong verb (Like us on Facebook for more information; Subscribe to our Newsletter; Buy this item now).

Contact Us (Heading 6)

For a heading that is less directly related to your main heading, use **Heading 6**. List here the ways in which the reader can contact you / browse more products / interact further to maintain engagement.

Headings

Headings clarify topics and make the objective of your page transparent.

Rules when using Headings

- Do not use Headings 1, 2, or 3 for content on your page. These are system-reserved headings that affect SEO
- Headings 4, 5, and 6 in Sitefinity automatically format the text in your faculty or department's colour and insert paragraph spacing before and after the heading
 - Preview your page to ensure that there is enough (not too much!) space between paragraphs and headings
- Use a single paragraph space between paragraphs
- No full-stops, colons, or semi-colons in headings, only question/exclamation marks allowed

Use Headings Correctly

- The best practice is to format the headings while uploading content to your page
- In the interactive section of the Sitefinity content editor, you will see the screen below
- Select the portion of text and apply the desired heading format
- If you select the first few words of a paragraph, Sitefinity will change the whole paragraph to the heading style; make sure that your headings are separated from the text before formatting them

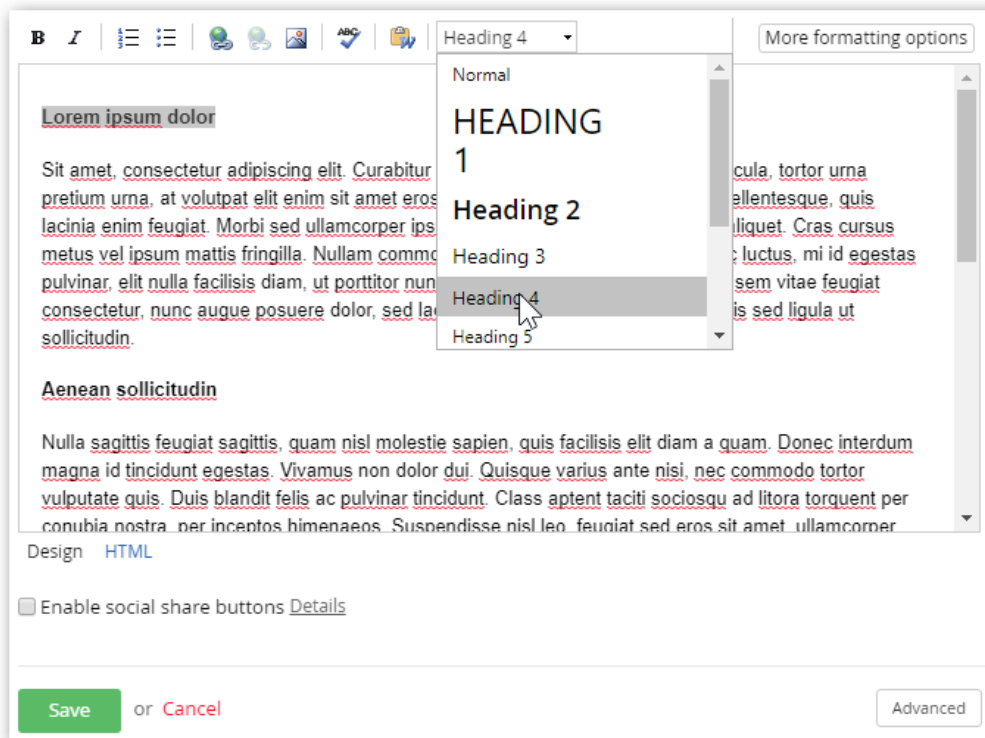


Figure 6: Changing the heading style of text in the Sitefinity editor window.

Descriptions

The description is often used on search-engine results pages (SERPs). Therefore, it plays a critical role in achieving a higher click-through rate (CTR) from these pages.

Editing Descriptions in Sitefinity

- On the same Title and Properties menu as the 'Title' tag in Sitefinity, there is an option called 'Description, Keywords'
- Limit the description to less than 150 characters



Figure 7: "Description" and "Keywords" fields in Sitefinity

- Once you have entered the information into the required field, click the 'Save Changes' button
- Sitefinity will not allow you to save your changes to the page unless these fields are completed
 - When creating a group or redirecting page, first fill in these fields, then select the tick box

Alternative Text (images)

The use of images is visually pleasing to website visitors. Unfortunately, they carry little to no weight as far as the search-engine algorithm is concerned.

Ways to improve image SEO:

- The image name carries some weight, so give some thought to it.
- Image coding makes images more search-engine friendly.
- Images on the web should have alternative and title text.
- Keywords must describe the image accurately (this data is used by search engines).
- A meaningful description of the image, while using pertinent keywords, improves accessibility.

Editing Alt Text in Sitefinity

Step 1

- Insert the alt text when uploading the image in the Sitefinity editor

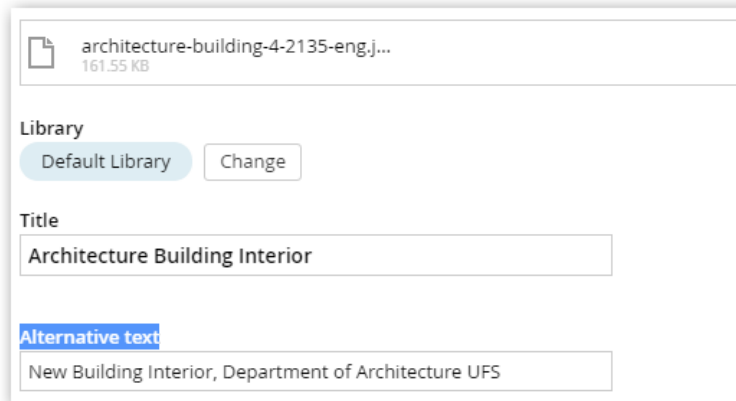


Figure 8

Step 2

- Editing an existing image
 - Open the page in Sitefinity and open the relevant content or image block
 - Right-click on the image and select 'Properties'



Figure 9

- Edit the 'Alternative text' field, click save until the editor closes; submit page for approval
- You can also access images from the home page in Sitefinity by clicking on 'Content' in the top navigation and then selecting 'Images' and clicking through to the relevant file

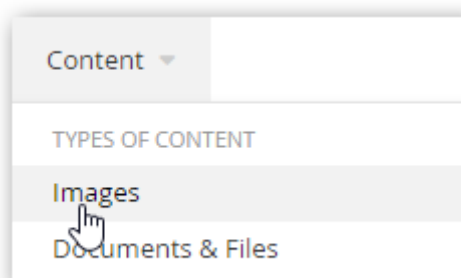


Figure 10

Step 3

- Add tags
 - Select important words that will likely be searched by web users (see examples below)
 - You can also type in the keywords, separated by a comma, and click 'Add'

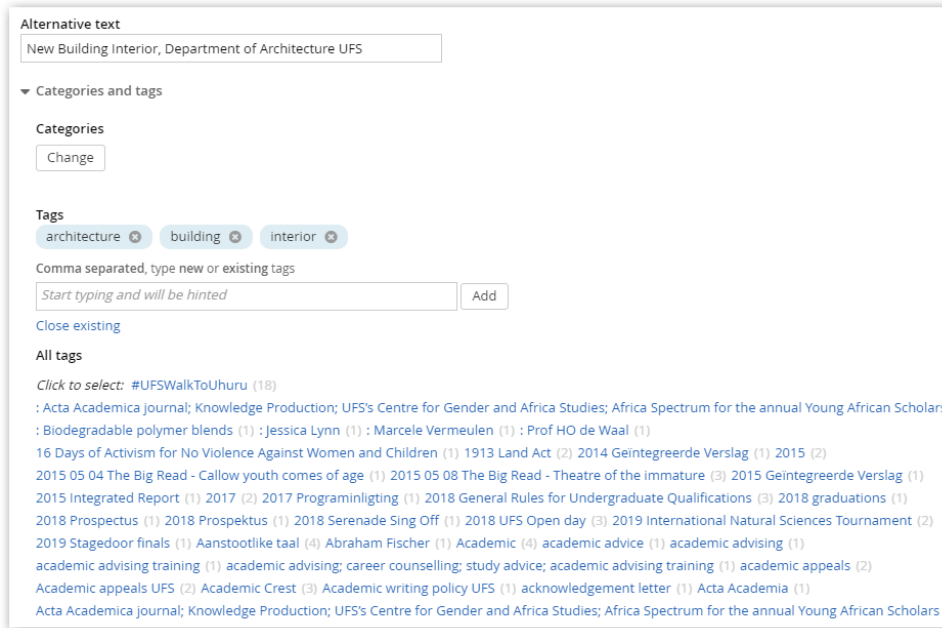


Figure 11

- Once you have entered all the above information, click 'Save Changes' and submit the page

Tags (Documents and Files)

Document Tags in Sitefinity

- Insert the alt text when uploading the files in the Sitefinity editor
 - Access documents and files from the home page in Sitefinity by clicking on 'Content' in the top navigation and then selecting 'Documents & Files'

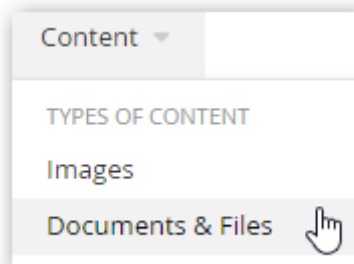


Figure 12

- Click on 'Upload documents or other files'

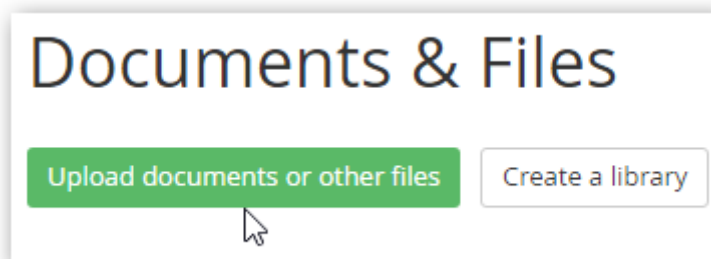


Figure 13

- Upload a document or drag and drop it into the Sitefinity window

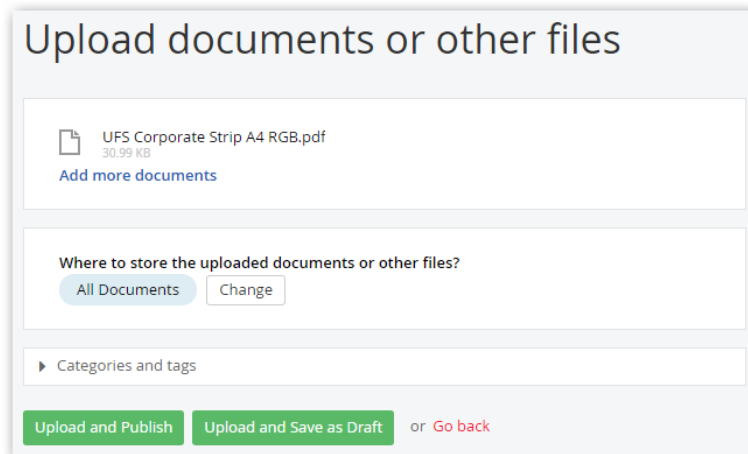


Figure 14

- Click on the 'Change' button to select the applicable Sitefinity library in which to upload the document



Figure 15

- To add tags, expand the 'Categories and tabs' section by clicking on the arrow

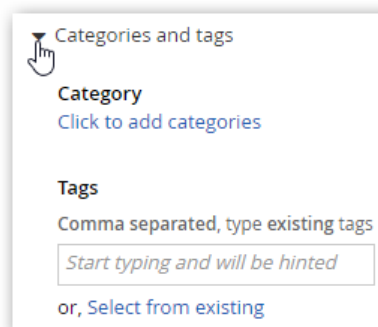
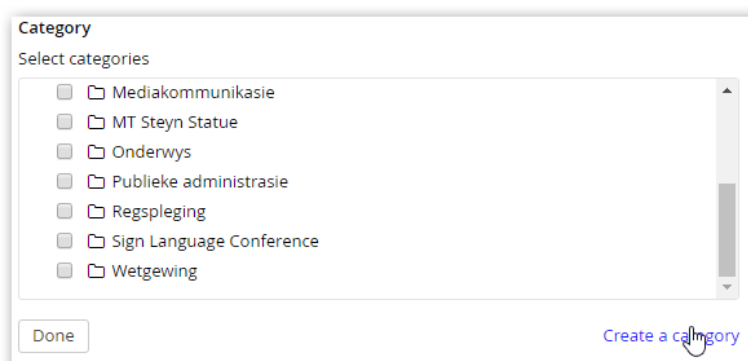


Figure 16

- Select an appropriate category
 - If a category is not available yet, click on 'Create a category'



- Add tags
 - Select from existing important words that will likely be searched by web users
 - When selecting popular tags, be careful that there are no spelling errors
 - You can also type in the keywords, separated by a comma, and click 'Add'
 - Click on 'Upload and Publish' or select the 'Upload and Save as Draft' button

Hyperlinking

What is hyperlinking? What are some considerations when you hyperlink anchor text?

Hyperlinking refers to an interactive link from a piece of text on a website or in a document to another part of the internet (either your own website or an external site) or to a specific document.

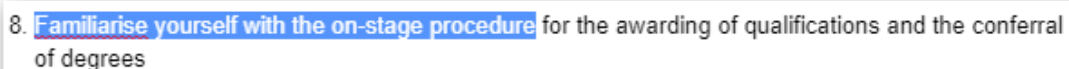
Anchor Text (Links)

The phrase 'anchor text' refers to the words on which your site visitor will click to access a document, image, or linked webpage, whether internal or external. **'Click here' has zero search-engine value.** Rather use important keywords or phrases as the anchor text, which will make it easier for search-engine crawlers to read the text and index the document accordingly. In turn, this makes it easier to find your document.

Anchor text should not be in the form of a sentence and should include a maximum of four or five words. The more words used in anchor text, the more diluted the importance attributed to them. Sitemfinity gives you three options when inserting a link: Link to: Web address, Page from this site, or *Email*.

Editing Anchor Text

- First, highlight all the text that you want to use as the anchor text



8. Familiarise yourself with the on-stage procedure for the awarding of qualifications and the conferral of degrees

Figure 17

- Next, click the Hyperlink Manager button (symbolised by a short length of chain and a globe) for the URL address, or click the Document Manager button (symbolised by a document with a red paperclip) to upload or select a document
 - Note: As a security precaution, only PDFs are allowed as web documents



Figure 18: The Hyperlink and Document Managers

- Complete the fields in the window that opens, selecting one of the radio buttons at the top

Link to: Web address Page from this site Email

Web address

 Example: http://weather.com

Text to display

 Example: Weather forecast

▼ More options

Tooltip (appears when the cursor is pointed to the link)

CSS class

Open this link in a new window

or

Figure 19

- Expand the heading 'More options' to be able to complete the 'Tooltip' field and have the link open in a new tab or window. Remember: Adding a good, descriptive tooltip also ensures better SEO
- Click the 'Insert the link' button; the selected text will now be underlined
- Click the 'Save button', then click on 'Save as Draft' at the top of the page to save the webpage, and continue editing the page
- Once you have finished updating the page, save your work and click the 'Send for Approval' button

Web character limits

The following limits apply:

- Spotlight heading: 70 characters with spaces
- Latest News: 65 characters with spaces
- Latest News teaser: 90 characters with spaces
- KovsieLife Latest News: 60 characters with spaces
- KovsieLife teaser: 75 characters with spaces

Section 4: Digital Brand Application

Consult the UFS Corporate Identity Elements and campus or faculty-specific brand guidelines at <https://www.ufs.ac.za/cimanual> for more information.

Web resources

Web documents

All documents uploaded as a resource on the UFS website

- must be in PDF (for security reasons);
- must be in Arial font, with a recommended font size of 12 points;
- must have a UFS logo or letterhead centred at the top of the first page, which must not be distorted in any way; logos and templates can be downloaded from <https://www.ufs.ac.za/ufsbrand/>;
- must contain only corporate font colours (including the faculty colour) — this includes graphics; and
- must be professionally language edited before submission (consult <https://www.ufs.ac.za/style/>).

Branding and logos for application on social media

- In all cases where social-media icons are used with the UFS brand, regardless of whether it is a faculty, division, or other unit of the institution, the hyperlinked URLs are always that of the institution
- Single-colour application: The various social-media icons have been reproduced as one-colour flat artwork for use on all printed material. These icons form part of the address line and should appear in the same colour and size



Figure 20: Three single-colour options

- In the case of online and web applications, the social-media icons can be used in full colour on white. In this case, no addresses are added, and the icon is a hyperlinked URL



Figure 21: Social-media icons on white background

- Cover and profile photos are elements unique to the Facebook environment. The sizes are predetermined and set by Facebook. Note, however, that the use of high-quality images is required in order to ensure the best quality of the end product.

Section 5: Best-practice Guidelines for UFS Social Media

Social media refers to the means of interaction among people who create, curate, share, and/or exchange information and ideas within virtual communities and networks.

Social networks and other online media are great tools for engagement and two-way communication, but given the nature of this two-way, real-time communication, significant risks are linked to inappropriate use. Information can travel across the globe in seconds, making the transfer of text, photos, and videos more fluid to an increasingly interconnected web of people.

The purpose of these guidelines is to assist you in creating a great presence on social media. The guidelines set out below will enable you to create a strong foundation on which to build. Before you get started, we ask that you familiarise yourself with these guidelines.

The UFS and Social Media

The University of the Free State (UFS) recognises the importance and benefits of communicating through social media. Social media is a powerful vehicle through which the UFS communicates relevant news to our community, listens to voices and perceptions of the UFS, connects with our audience online, and builds goodwill.

a. How the UFS is Using Social Media

As an institution, the UFS has been eager to adopt social media. These tools not only enable the university to share with the world what is happening on all three of our campuses, but more importantly, it allows us to hear directly and immediately from students, faculty, staff, parents, fans, and friends about what is important to them. This ‘conversation’ is what makes social media so different from traditional forms of institutional communication.

The primary, official social-media presences of the UFS are:

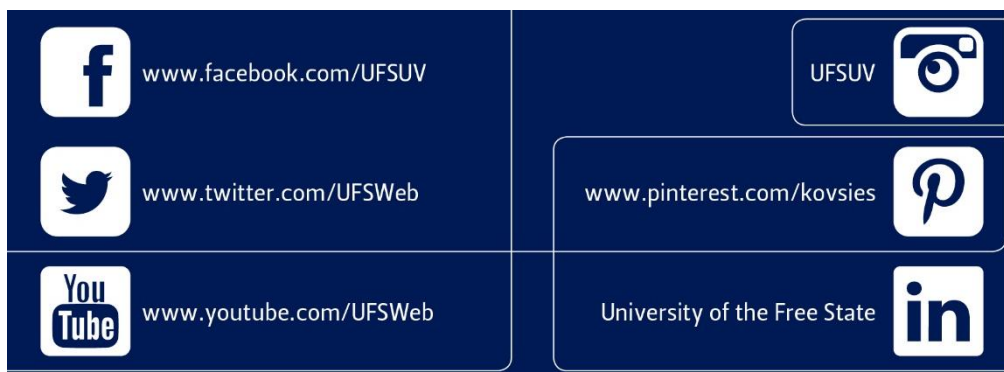


Figure 22

Tell us about your social-media account so that we can include it in our directory. The UFS has a broad audience who keeps in touch with us via social media. Let us know what you are doing, so we can help expand your reach by sharing it with these individuals; make sure that we are aware of the news and developments you are sharing with your audiences. We can all learn from each other, and it is easy to slip into a vacuum when you work on your own.

It is also important that the Social Media Officer from the Department of Communication and Marketing is made admin or provided access to Departmental Facebook pages so that access to these pages is not lost.

Important things to note when opening a social media account for a department/association/etc.:

- A generic email address needs to be used for the account (NB: Do not use a staff member email. Use a generic UFS email e.g., socialmedia@ufs.ac.za / kovsiesport@ufs.ac.za). If you do not have a generic email address, contact ICT services to establish one for you.

- Login details need to be accessible to at least two other people apart from the page manager. Another person (a permanent staff member) in the Department so that access to the account isn't lost or it does not end up being a ghost account on social media
- Please enable two factor authentication for the security of the account
- Please ensure that branded material runs through the right channels before publishing it. Graphic designs should go to Martie Nortje in DCM's branding office should be contacted at branding@ufs.ac.za.

b. Institutional overview

The UFS Department of Communication and Marketing manages and administers the university's institutional social-networking accounts and official profiles.

Staff and students outside this department who are responsible for administering social-networking accounts in the name of the UFS, should make themselves known to the Communication and Marketing office. This helps to ensure consistent messages and practices and allows the office to provide you with additional information and resources.

The primary contact at Communication and Marketing is +27 51 401 9543 or mogotsim@ufs.ac.za

The UFS reserves the right to monitor its institutional entities online, including affiliated Facebook pages, Twitter feeds, other social media profiles, official blogs, and comment boards associated with the UFS. The university also reserves the right to monitor activities that inhibit safe and constructive conversation. Such activities may include hateful or threatening remarks; excessive posting or 'spamming'; 'cyberbullying'; or the use of language that violates university policies. The Communication and Marketing office reserves the right to remove inappropriate posts, and to ban or block disruptive users.

'Spamming' is defined as "sending irrelevant or inappropriate messages on the internet to a large number of recipients."

'Cyberbullying' is defined as "using social networking or other internet sites for the purpose of exhibiting, distributing, posting, or communicating matter in any form (text, image, audio, or video) that intimidates, harasses, or is otherwise intended to harm, insult, or humiliate another, or that disrupts or prevents a safe educational or working environment."

c. CONSIDERING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR YOUR FACULTY/DEPARTMENT/CENTRE?

Before creating any official social-media account for your faculty/department/centre at the UFS, you must fill in and submit the ['Social-media Account Request' form](#). If necessary, the Communication and Marketing office will meet with you to discuss communication strategies and needs specific to your environment. After your request for a new account is approved, you will meet with the Communication and Marketing office to discuss content and social-media policies at the university, as well as strategy, goals, and best practices.

All official social-media accounts at the UFS, together with the name and contact information of the account manager and backup manager, must be registered with the Communication and Marketing office. You may only post on behalf of the UFS or its affiliates in an official capacity if you have been explicitly authorised to do so. You may only create an account in the name of a recognised UFS entity if you are authorised to represent that entity.

Social-media platforms are typically easy and free, but a successful social-media strategy requires research, clearly outlined goals and objectives, smart tactics, and dedicated effort. If you think that participation in social media can help your department, consider these questions first.

What would you like to accomplish?

If you want to promote an event or share news about your faculty/department/centre, submitting content for consideration on the existing social-media sites of the UFS might be a better choice

for you. Social-media outposts, such as those on Facebook and Twitter, require daily maintenance as well as a desire to engage with others.

Who is your audience?

Researching the type of people that you would like to have a conversation with, will help determine which platforms are best for you, and the kind of content you should share with that audience.

Do you have what it takes?

Success with social media not only requires time and strategy, but also an outgoing personality, enjoyment in providing useful information, knowledge to make connections, and a thick skin. You will also have to monitor your platforms daily. The accounts cannot be shut down during holidays or over weekends.

How is this in the best interest of the UFS?

Any activity on behalf of the UFS on social media should align directly and measurably with the UFS strategic plan, mission, and vision, as well as the Institutional Transformation Plan (ITP).

Best Practices for a Successful Social-Media Presence

The following best-practice guide can clarify how to best utilise social media in order to further the UFS mission and enhance and protect personal and professional reputations when participating in social media. Everyone who maintains UFS social-media sites should also refer to the UFS Social Media Policy. The suggestions and best practices outlined here can help you use these channels effectively and protect your personal and professional reputation while following university guidelines.

a. Be respectful

Anything you post in your role as a UFS ambassador reflects on the institution. Be professional and respectful at all times. Do not engage in arguments or extensive debates with naysayers online.

b. Be transparent

Make it clear that you are blogging/tweeting/Facebooking, etc., in your own department's capacity, not on behalf of the UFS. One of the great benefits of social media is that the individuals who maintain social-media sites are personalising large and complex institutions such as the UFS.

c. Listen ATTENTIVELY

Listen to online conversations on your preferred tools— whether blogs, Twitter, Facebook, or any other medium— to maintain a clear and current understanding of what is relevant and of interest to your community/target audience.

d. Be active

Social-media presences require diligent and regular care. If you do not have the time or resources to check in on these sites for at least a few minutes each day and to post fresh content several times a week, you should reconsider using social media at this time. Your site is only as interesting as your last post— if that post is several months old, visitors will consider it outdated.

e. Be PROMPT

One of the great benefits of social media is the ability to share information with a global audience almost instantly. Be prepared to move quickly with relevant information on your site in response to new developments, trends, announcements, or emergencies.

Remember, everything you do online can and will live forever.

Think before you post. Remember that anything you share on social media, even within a closed network, is not private. It will be shared, stored, and spread globally. Don't post anything online that you would feel uncomfortable seeing on the front page of the newspaper.

f. Comment

Social media is not only about sharing your news and successes, but also information that is of interest to your readers and viewers. When commenting as part of your role, be sure to indicate who you are and your affiliation with the UFS. If you see a post that you think requires, or would benefit from an official UFS response, please take a screenshot and email it to mogotsim@ufs.ac.za and loaderl@ufs.ac.za

g. Accept and monitor comments

A social-media site without comments is not very social. Be prepared to accept, and respond to, comments. To protect your site, moderate all comments before posting them. Understand that not all comments will be positive. Respond to negative comments professionally and by providing any additional information that may help resolve the issue. Acknowledge the negative post/comment and pursue it further offline. Inbox or Direct Message the person to ask for more information and contact details. Post a disclaimer on your site stating that you reserve the right to remove inappropriate comments (See an example of the UFS Facebook house rules on <https://www.facebook.com/UFSUV/app/453767214687729>) Remove any comments containing vulgar language, those that attack a specific group or individual, and those that are obviously spam.

h. Separate personal from professional

Balancing your professional and personal social-media presences can be difficult, particularly if you are a user in both areas. Content that is appropriate and of interest to your personal friends is most probably not appropriate or of interest to your department's followers. Keep these two presences as separate as possible by restricting content about your personal life to your personal page.

i. Promote your accounts

If you tweet but no one reads it, the question is: Did you really tweet at all? Make it easy for people to find you on social media.

j. Evaluation and Reporting

Based on the plan you have outlined, schedule regular evaluations of the success of your efforts by answering the questions that follow below. Set out your timeline. Be ready to recast your content and strategy. It is fine to fail on some things. This is not a project. It is an ongoing effort.

k. Defining and Measuring Success

What do you hope to gain? How will you know when you have achieved it? Do you want increased traffic on your website? More energetic give-and-take with prospective students? Do you want to reach out to new colleagues on campus or around the world? Define success, how you will measure it, and the tools you need to measure it, such as Google Analytics (<http://www.google.com/analytics>) or Facebook Insights (Go to your Facebook Page, click on [More > Insights](#); the URL will look something like https://www.facebook.com/your_page_name/insights/?referrer=page_insights_tab_button). Using this information, you can make necessary changes to your content strategy in order to encourage more engagement.

Best Practices for Specific Social-Media Platforms

Follow the guidelines below when creating pages on social-media networks. If you do not see the network where you would like to create a page, contact the Communication and Marketing office. Please also read this section in conjunction with the UFS Brand Guidelines (which can be found at <https://www.ufs.ac.za/cimanual>).

a. Facebook

There are three major types of accounts on Facebook: pages, groups, and profiles. Profiles are designed for individuals, so we recommend that you use either a page or a group to maintain a Facebook presence. **Most departments** at the UFS will probably find that *pages* are the better fit, although a group would make more sense in some cases. See [*Facebook Tips: What's the Difference between a Facebook Page and Group?*](#) for more information.

If you are unsure whether a page or a group is the better option for your organisation, feel free to contact the Communication and Marketing office; we will be happy to discuss it with you.

The images for all UFS Facebook pages should maintain a consistent graphic identity. Logos should be used in compliance with the [*UFS Brand Guidelines*](#) mentioned above.

Managers of UFS Facebook pages must be able to check on the page at least once a day and should have sufficient content to post at least once a week.

FACEBOOK GUIDELINES

- Remember that each time you post content on a Facebook page as the administrator, your post will show up in the news feed of all the people who have 'liked' the page. To reach the maximum audience, always post official UFS business as the administrator. Do not 'like' your own posts.
- Do not share your Facebook login credentials with others. If you want someone to be able to administer a Facebook page, ask them to 'like' the Facebook page first, and make them an editor or admin via the Facebook page's settings.
- Check your page in the morning, at midday, and before leaving work.
- Watch out for advertisers posting on your page as fans or through comments. Delete these posts as spam. If your page is overwhelmed with spam, people will stop visiting and 'unlike' your page.
- Do not create a personal profile for a university department, organisation, or office. Profiles are designed for individuals only and creating a "personal account for anything other than an individual person" is a violation of [*Facebook's Terms of Service*](#). Facebook warns that violators risk "permanently losing access to the account and all of its content."
- Pay attention to your Insights. Facebook Insights offers a lot of information on the people who like your page and what they are interested in. Your job is to understand what the insights mean, and to use them to create posts that will engage your fans, encourage interaction, and attract new likes.
- Let your fans speak. People may sometimes comment on a post or post something critical or negative on your page's wall. Correcting a mistake, apologising, and offering to do better in future, or providing information about the event in question, is often the best way to let the poster know that you have heard them. Unless the post is profane, obscene, harassing, or threatening, it is best to not delete it. People may also post something very positive on your page—you can allow these posts on your main timeline to draw extra attention to it. Be sure to acknowledge or thank the person for the positive comment.

d. CREATING A FACEBOOK PAGE

1. Make sure you have a strategy and a plan for ensuring consistent quality content, active monitoring, and response.
2. Check with the Communication and Marketing office for guidance to ensure consistency of visual and editorial content between UFS presences.
3. Visit www.facebook.com/pages/create.php.
4. Select the type of organisation you are affiliated with. For university departments and programmes, consider 'Education' in the drop-down menu for 'Company, Organisation, or Institution'.
5. Enter the name of your fan page. You cannot change this later without deleting and re-creating the page.
 1. Choosing a name:
 - Be sure to include 'UFS'.
 - Be concise but informative. Do not only use acronyms—community members may not be familiar with them.
6. Upload a profile picture for your page. This should be square—at least 180 pixels wide and 180 pixels tall. See logos for profile pictures, cover photos and others in the [UFS Brand Guidelines](#).
7. Upload a cover image for your fan page. This should be a horizontally oriented (landscape) image, 815 pixels wide by 315 pixels tall. See the [UFS Brand Guidelines](#).

TWITTER

The Communication and Marketing office maintains the official UFS Twitter account @UFSweb. Twitter accounts may be created by departments for posting information about the department. Before creating your account, contact the Communication and Marketing office to discuss naming conventions. If you create a departmental Twitter page, you must use a UFS email account for the admin account login.

a. The following are common terms related to Twitter activities:

- **Direct Message or DM:** A private Twitter message sent between people who follow each other.
- **Follow:** A way of subscribing to receive Twitter updates. A user can 'follow' another individual or organisation by clicking the 'Follow' button on the person's or organisation's page.
- **Follower:** A Twitter user who subscribes to follow another user.
- **# or Hashtags:** A way to categorise tweets around a particular topic.
- **Mentions/@ Reply:** A Twitter update that contains @username anywhere in the body of the Tweet. [**Pro tip:** When starting a tweet in which you mention someone, use a full-stop first, e.g. [@VC Petersen](#)]
- **Retweet or RT:** Sharing another user's tweets with followers, usually by using the phrase 'RT @username' or 'Retweet @username'.
- **Tweet:** An individual Twitter post.

Twitter encourages frequent updates, engagement, and retweeting content. Account managers at the UFS must be able to login to the account at least once per day, post often, and respond with some immediacy.

e. Creating a Twitter account

Twitter is a platform for concise discussion and interaction. Share information about your department or programme, but also share information from other sources and engage with followers by asking questions or responding to their tweets. All updates on Twitter are made in 280 characters or less.

1. Make sure you have a strategy in place with clearly defined goals, and a plan for ensuring consistent, quality content as well as active monitoring and response.

- Try to make a list of who you will be following, such as other UFS accounts, accounts for other programmes, people related to your field, and individuals who are tweeting about keywords relevant to your academic, research, or professional interests.
 - Remember to read, retweet, and respond. The goal is not just to share content, but to engage in online conversations.
2. Check in with the Communication and Marketing office for guidance to ensure consistency in the visual and editorial content between UFS presences.
 3. Visit <https://twitter.com> and click 'Sign up for Twitter'.
 4. Where it asks to enter 'Name', give the name of your department or programme.
 1. Choose a username—this will be your Twitter identity for tweeting content and will identify you when responding to tweets. The username should include your department or programme name and should also include your UFS affiliation. Twitter restricts the length of usernames to 15 characters.
 1. Examples: '@UFS' '@UFSAlumni' '@DUBulldogs'
 2. If you have a Facebook account for your department or programme, try to make that name and your Twitter username the same or as close to it as possible.
 5. A generic email account to which multiple users will have access should rather be used than a personal email address.
 6. Fill out the 'settings' information. For your one-line bio, describe your department or programme briefly, and include a link to your website and Facebook page, where appropriate.
 7. For your profile picture and cover photo, the Communication and Marketing office can help you select a high-resolution photo or logo that is customised for your department. This will be aligned with all visual UFS social-media representations. On Twitter, your profile picture's file size should be no more than 700 kB. Please see the [UFS Brand Guidelines](#) for the latest sizes of these images.

YOUTUBE/VIMEO

YouTube and Vimeo are video-hosting/-sharing platforms that showcase a variety of user-generated content. Videos can be shared on other social sites or taken from the platforms and embedded directly on a user's blog or website.

- Don't use copyrighted material. If your video is set to music, you must use royalty-free music and sound effects. To use a copyrighted piece, you must contact the owner of the copyright. Most often the owner or publisher will be listed on sheet music or a CD label.
- Include 'UFS' in your file names. Including the word 'UFS' in the naming of your raw video file will help enhance your Search Engine Optimisation (SEO).
- Make your content accessible. Captioning technology has progressed to the point where it is affordable and straightforward to implement. Some platforms even cater for automatic captioning.
- Format: All videos must be uploaded in MP4 or WMV format.
- Branding: Make use of the logos identified for Facebook in the [UFS Brand Guidelines](#).
- If you would like to post a video on YouTube, contact Barend Nagel on NagelBJ@ufs.ac.za

LINKEDIN

The official LinkedIn page can be found at <https://www.linkedin.com/school/u-f-s/>. The Communication and Marketing office maintains a LinkedIn presence, and is considered the primary presence for the university on LinkedIn. If you would like to create a LinkedIn group page, please contact the Communication and Marketing office.

BLOGS

No student or staff member may write a blog on behalf of the UFS without permission from their field's department head and/or the Communication and Marketing office. Departments that employ students to write blogs should review the content before posting them online. The department will be held accountable for the content of student blogs. Contact the Communication and Marketing office for information on the visual identity of blogs. Managers of blogs should be able to check on the blog at least once a day and should have sufficient content to post consistently.

Sitefinity CMS also has a blog widget. Contact ICT Services at SDD@ufs.ac.za for the necessary access.

PINTEREST

The university's official Pinterest presence is located at <http://pinterest.com/kovsies>. The Communication and Marketing office maintains this page. University departments should not create separate Pinterest accounts. The sharing of appropriate photos (from personal accounts) is encouraged, using 'University of the Free State' in the description.

INSTAGRAM

Instagram is a free photo and video-sharing app that allows users to apply digital filters, frames, and special effects to their photos before sharing them on a variety of social-networking sites, most frequently on Twitter and Facebook.

- Use hashtags. Like Twitter, Instagram uses tags. Tagging your photos means that more people can see them, as they may be searching that tag. But be careful: too many tags can be overkill.
- Interact with others. Interact with others by liking and commenting on relevant photos.

Presence and Maintenance

- Social-media accounts at the UFS must be logged into at least once per day to monitor and respond to posts, comments, mentions, etc.
- Be present and responsive, and you will gain credibility and value. If you are using social media, people will engage with you and expect a response— from prospective students asking about deadlines, to parents enquiring about events. Establishing a social-media channel and then deserting or not checking it regularly will reflect poorly on the university.
- Pro Tip: Facebook allows for multiple administrators on a page. However, each administrator must have their own personal Facebook account.
- The frequency of updates depends on the channel and how much content you have. Use an editorial calendar to schedule content creation (and subsequent publication) more efficiently. Don't hoard content and then post it all at once. However, here are some general guidelines:
 - On Twitter, users are accustomed to frequent updates. Even if you do not have sufficient content to post multiple times each day, you should login to check mentions and direct messages at least a few times each day.
 - People expect less frequent posts from pages on Facebook. Login at least once a day to check the page. However, posting content three to five times a week is reasonable.

Community-building

- Be polite and accessible, keeping in mind all the guidelines offered here. Having a personality and a voice will help you build your audience.
- Once you have established your social-media presence, cross-promote on your various channels, both online and offline.
- Do not judge your success solely by numbers. While it is tempting to use views, fans, or followers as a measure to assess your engagement in social media, it is not the ideal measurement.

- Success with building community via social media is not an end result. It is a process.

Best Practices for Crisis Management

When in crisis mode, work first to understand the level of severity, identify potential risks, and react accordingly. Acknowledge that you have received the negative comment/post, and then take it offline. Inbox/DM the person to ask for more information and contact details. Notify the Communication and Marketing office so that they can assist you with the correct response. Work through the crisis by listening intently, showing empathy, transparency, and a willingness to correct whatever wrong has been done.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Sample request form for training in and access to Sitefinity

Data Technology and Integration Access Request Form	
Instructions:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Only authorised persons will be granted access to UFS sites and systems.2. Users who are being granted access may not sign the letter.3. DTI is authorised to assign the requested access.4. Return the signed hard copy to ICT Services, Block F, Room 274.	
Requested Item	RITM00XXXXX
System Name	
System URL	

Staff Members

Name	Personnel Number	UFS Username	Profile

Approval by System Owner/ Line Manager

Name and Surname			
Email		Signature	
Department		Date	

OFFICE USE ONLY

Received by		Date	
Granted by		Date	

Data Technology and Integration Request form

Instructions:

1. Please provide a comprehensive description of the requirements in the request summary.
2. Provide examples and supporting documents to illustrate your requirements.
3. Return the **signed hard copy** to: ICT Services, Block F, Room 274,

Requested Item	RITM00XXXXX	Email	
Requestor Name		Phone	
Signature		Department	
System Name			
System URL			

Request Summary

Approval by System Owner/ Line Manager

Name and Surname			
Email		Signature	
Department		Date	

OFFICE USE ONLY

Received by		Date	
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Appendix 2: Request form for a Facebook Page or other UFS social-media account

Please complete this form and email it to mogotsim@ufs.ac.za

Name and surname: _____

Contact details: _____

Name of department/office/faculty: _____

What is your main purpose in creating this social-media community?

Who is your intended audience?

Tick the box next to the platform you prefer to add:

Facebook

Twitter

LinkedIn

YouTube

Blog

Other: _____

Primary site manager/administrators: _____

Name: _____

Email: _____

Secondary site manager/administrators (backup)

Name: _____

Email: _____

How often will you post?

How will you monitor comments, response rate, and successes?

Please include the same information for other sites for which you are requesting a new account.

APPENDIX 3: SIZE/QUALITY REQUIREMENTS FOR AUDIO, VIDEO, AND IMAGE FILES

To be added soon.

APPENDIX 4: EXAMPLE OF BRANDED DOCUMENT TEMPLATE

See UFS Intranet.

APPENDIX 5: SAMPLE HOME-PAGE CONTENT

References

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