This style guide is a go-to resource for how the “Be Legendary” brand will appear and act across all social channels within the State of North Dakota. It will include visual guidelines, tone, regulations and other aspects that will help provide a cohesive yet complimentary experience to the diverse areas of our state government.
PROPER USES/STRENGTHS OF SOCIAL PLATFORMS

**Facebook** is an all encompassing, easy to use, platform that remains to be the most widely used across all channels. It’s used to share photos, videos, general updates with followers. A very important platform for marketers overall. One of it’s strengths is advertising as it allows a much greater range of options to reach your audience with an impactful message. Almost 30% of Facebook users are age 25-34 years-old.

**Twitter** comes in close second as the most widely used social platform. It provides fast-paced, “in the moment” messaging that can be great for engaging with your audience, customer service and raising brand awareness. The use of #hashtags makes Twitter an excellent real time search engine to monitor conversations surrounding your brand and your competition. 40% of U.S. adults using Twitter are 18-29 years-old.

**Instagram** is the fastest growing platform. This channel depends much more on visuals with it’s simple “photo and caption” format. Although its weak in the website traffic department (without creating an ad), it continuously out performs all other platforms in engagement rates. Because of this, your brand is able to build a loyal following much more organically than Facebook or Twitter. 30% of Instagram users are age 25-34 years-old.

**LinkedIn** is similar to Facebook in function but serves a different goal. With content specific to professional development and relationships, LinkedIn can be very useful in building partner relationships and recruitment of employees.
OVERALL BEST PRACTICES

CONSISTENCY
Whatever pace you decide you can manage, stick to it! You want to have a consistent presence or else you will quickly be forgotten by your audience or built out of social algorithms that put your content in front of your followers.

Recommended Post Rate:
Facebook: 2-3 daily
Twitter: 3-5 daily
Instagram: 1 daily
LinkedIn: Once every other day

INTERACTION
Social Media is a two way street of communication. It’s important for you to interact with the audience that is interacting with you. Respond to questions in a timely manner, retweet positive or applicable content or just like a comment someone leaves on your post. Just make sure your audience knows you are listening and you care about them!

SOCIAL LISTENING
This is a level up from just interacting with your audience. It requires you to go deeper into the social conversations going on around your brand, your competitors or just the overall tone of trending topics. This is a vital part of understanding your audience, building strategy and avoiding mistakes/controversy. To find these conversations, try searching by location, name (not social handle) or any keywords that could apply to your brand.

AVOIDING CONTROVERSY
There is never a shortage of trolls, bots or angry/disapproving people that are just begging to ruffle feathers on social media. Here are some tips to avoid the “social hot seat.”

• Stay up-to-date on current controversial topics and make sure the content you post stays clear of them.
• Do not interact with people looking to start a fight over social media, most likely your brand will suffer the consequences even if you are in the right.
• If you share content from someone else, make sure you are confident who that person/source is.
Optimizing Your Profile

Having a complete and clear profile explaining who you are is important to helping people find you and earning their trust in the social media world.

Here are best practices to make the most of your social profile on each channel ...

@natashanicholes
FACEBOOK PROFILE OPTIMIZATION

**STEP #1 Creation Pieces**
- Choose an appropriate Facebook profile: local business, company, brand, public figure, entertainment or cause/community.
- Select a unique & easily searchable handle.
- Use an identifiable profile picture.
- Create a brand-supporting cover photo.

**STEP #2 Who You Are**
- Fill in “About” section. Use keywords that relate to your brand.
- Write your “Story” with an image to compliment it.
- Include hours, contact info, website, email, founding date and anything that can be applied to your organization.

**STEP #3 Extras**
- Include links to your other social media profiles.
- Automate a message to greet anyone who messages you directly.
- Add events to your page that are applicable to you.
- Include a “Call to Action” if applicable to your content.
- Add your comment policy or guidelines. We recommend they be shared in the “Impressum” section.

Note: Make all of these aspects as consistent as possible across all social channels.
## TWITTER PROFILE OPTIMIZATION

<table>
<thead>
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<tr>
<td>• Create a unique &amp; easily searchable handle.</td>
<td>• Write a bio that includes keywords and your hashtag.</td>
<td>• Create a pinned tweet to sit at the top of your profile at all times.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Use an identifiable profile picture.</td>
<td>• Add your location.</td>
<td>• Make sure your Twitter messages are open so people can reach you.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Brand-supporting header photo.</td>
<td>• Add a link to your website.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Develop personal hashtag to promote conversations around brand.</td>
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<td>• Choose a “Business” Instagram profile.</td>
<td>• Write a bio to include keywords and your hashtag.</td>
<td>• Create Instagram stories to promote and tell your brand story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Select a unique &amp; easily searchable handle.</td>
<td>• Add your location.</td>
<td>• Watermark all original content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use an identifiable profile picture.</td>
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### LINKEDIN PROFILE OPTIMIZATION

#### STEP #1 Creation Pieces
- Choose a “Company Page” profile.
- Create an identifiable profile picture.
- Use brand-supporting header photo.

#### STEP #2 Who You Are
- You have 2,000 characters to describe your company and why potential followers should care. Use keywords that relate to your brand.
- Add your location.
- Add a link to your website.

#### STEP #3 Extras
- Include links to your other social media profiles and share content from others.
- Add company page followers – connections are key on this platform.

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*Note: Make all of these aspects as consistent as possible across all social channels.*
“A brand voice is the purposeful and consistent tone of your communications and writing style.”

Characteristics of the “Be Legendary” brand voice:

**HONEST** - Our words are as authentic as our state. They instill a sense of trust and excitement without overpromising.

**REAL** – We write like we talk, using everyday language. We avoid clichés and worn-out metaphors. Our copy is conversational, approachable and human.

**SPIRITED** – There’s a zip to the rhythm of our writing; it’s pleasant and engaging.

**OPTIMISTIC** – We’re excited about the potential of our state! We take every opportunity to share forward-thinking ideas and practical applications. We describe the future in an inspiring and energetic way with an air of possibility.

@50statesby30
<table>
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<th>BRAND VOICE EXAMPLES ON SOCIAL MEDIA</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>DO</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>“From the badlands, to our cities, to the rugged wildlife and of course that big open sky, it’s hard not to love North Dakota.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Want to stay up-to-date on North Dakota’s beautiful fall colors? Be sure to check out our Fall Foliage report!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“Are we surprised Devils Lake, North Dakota makes the best ice fishing spots in the world list? Nope. Are we excited to get on the ice this year? YES, YES and YES!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>“The pride North Dakotan’s have in their state is undeniable...you don’t have to be born here to BE here.”</td>
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Imagery is just as important as tone of voice when maintaining a consistent and strong brand image. This will help build a following and increase engagement.

Here are the ways you can optimize imagery on your profiles.
IDENTIFIABLE PROFILE PHOTOS

The ND should be the most identifiable feature within the favicon, being centered and taking up more than half the available space. As with the logo, a minimum clearance must be maintained between the ND and other graphical elements. Keep in mind, most social platforms crop the profile image to a circle.

Simple ND
ND is large and centered, but leaves a buffer of space even when cropped for profile image. ND png image available upon request.

ND with graphics
ND is the dominant feature, taking up more than half the available space. Supporting graphics are balanced and all elements are centered.

ND with graphics and text
ND is still the dominant feature, taking up more than half the available space. All elements have a buffer of space and are centered.
IDENTIFIABLE PROFILE PHOTOS

There are dozens of agencies within the state of North Dakota who have a social presence. It’s important for these profiles to remain consistent with the brand, but are given some creative freedoms to maintain agency identity.

**Simple ND**
A background from the color pallet can be used to represent any agency within the state of North Dakota.

**ND with Agency Name**
Adding an agency name identifies your agency while embracing the brand.

**ND with faded background badge**
Background graphic allows an agency to incorporate their badge as an identifier.

**ND with complimentary graphics**
Alternative to a background graphic that can identify you in a creative way with consistent branding.
IDENTIFIABLE PROFILE PHOTOS – EXAMPLES OF USE
IMAGE OPTIMIZATION (PICTURES)

Twitter
Profile image: 200x200
Banner image: 1500x500
In-stream photo: 506x253

Twitter
Profile image: 200x200
Banner image: 1500x500
In-stream photo: 506x253
IMAGE OPTIMIZATION (PIXELS)
IMAGE OPTIMIZATION (PIXELS)

Linkedin - Company Page
Company page profile image: 110x110
Company page banner: 646x220

Linkedin - Company Page
Company page profile image: 110x110
Company page banner: 646x220
IMAGE OPTIMIZATION (PIXELS)
Imagery is vital to producing quality content on a page. Studies show posts with visuals receive 94% more engagements than those without.

**High Quality Photo**
Use high quality images that strongly represent the brand. Of course, these aren’t always available but that doesn’t mean they’re out of your reach. Cell phone cameras are now taking quality pictures that work perfectly for social media.

**Video**
On average, videos receive a 20% higher engagement rate than content with a photo. They may require more time to create but phone apps and simplistic video editing software make it easier. Typically video can get away with being “messier” as it provides an organic and genuine feel to the content.

**User-Generated Content (UGC)**
You can even play off of other users’ content. With the right permissions (such as using your hashtag, or simply asking to use it), UGC can be an authentic way to tell your story as it is straight from someone who experienced it. Similar to “word-of-mouth” marketing, but for the social world. Just remember to give credit within your posts!

Tip: If you’re struggling to find content with good imagery, try building content around the imagery you already own.
FORMAT OF POSTS - FACEBOOK

POSTING DIRECTLY: As the most used, diverse platform, Facebook posts can be short and sweet, or longer in-depth writing, whatever best suits your content. Over arching best-practices include strong imagery, links to websites and keeping your type at a moderate length.

Recommended hashtags: 1-2

Properly tag partners.

Insert website link at the end of the post to not distract from your writing (not always necessary).

Use high-performing and appropriate hashtags. Remember to include your partners hashtags! Hashtags should be put at the end of the post.

Tip: Across all platforms, ask your audience to answer a question or share their opinion about something. It’s a great way to engage with your audience and get your content in front of more people.
SHARING OTHER CONTENT: When sharing another page’s content on Facebook, remember to add your own comment with the original post. That way content will not be duplicative and maintain your brand identity while supporting a partner.
POSTING DIRECTLY: With a limit of 280 characters, Twitter asks for “crisp and clever” content. Use strong imagery to get users to stop scrolling through the 5 million other tweets put out daily. 

**Recommended hashtags:** 1-2

Applicable hashtags at the end of the post.

Properly tag partners.

Link to website at the end of the post (not always necessary).
SHARING OTHER CONTENT: Best practices for sharing on Twitter are flexible. You can retweet directly with no content and keep original imagery or retweet with a comment that allows you to add context but could possibly hide imagery. Experiment with both techniques to see what your audience tends to interact with the most.

**RETWEET**

**RETWEET WITH COMMENT**
FORMAT OF POSTS - INSTAGRAM

POSTING DIRECTLY: People want to see beautiful pictures on Instagram, not read text. Keep text simple and complimentary to your imagery. Instagram does not allow you to link to websites in the post. 
Recommended hashtags: 2-6

Tag partners within the photo.

Applicable hashtags, including partners' hashtags.
SHARING OTHER CONTENT: Sharing content is very simple on Instagram. Avoid regram apps and instead screen grab photos and give credit within the post by using their tagline and tagging them in the photo.

Tag photographer in the photo.

Tag photographer’s handle in the photo.
FORMAT OF POSTS - LINKEDIN

POSTING DIRECTLY: Deemed as the largest social network for professionals and colleagues. LinkedIn manages your professional social connections and content to like-minded individuals. Over arching best-practices include audience-specific content, strong imagery and employee sharing and engagement. Recommended hashtags: 1-3

Properly tag partners.

Use high-performing and appropriate hashtags. Remember to include your partners hashtags! Hashtags should be a part of the content rather than at the end of the post on LinkedIn.

Tip: LinkedIn is a professional social network, so feel free to post content with a career angle.
Social Media is constantly evolving and continues to be a valuable way to tell your story. We hope that this guide has inspired you to join us on this journey and share the many ways to “Be Legendary” in North Dakota!
QUESTIONS?
REACH OUT TO US AT
MARKETINGND@ND.GOV

FOLLOW US!

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@NORTHDAKOTALEGENDARY
@NORTHDAKOTA
@EXPERIENCENORTHDAKOTA