



American Graduate: Let's Make It Happen Social Media Best Practices

Making the best of your American Graduate efforts includes creating a social media strategy.

How do I post in 140 characters? What makes a Facebook post? If you have these worries, below are some general best practices and ideas to help you as you go about using social media to promote your station's American Graduate work but please feel free to reach out to [Aja Williams](#) if you have other questions and concerns.

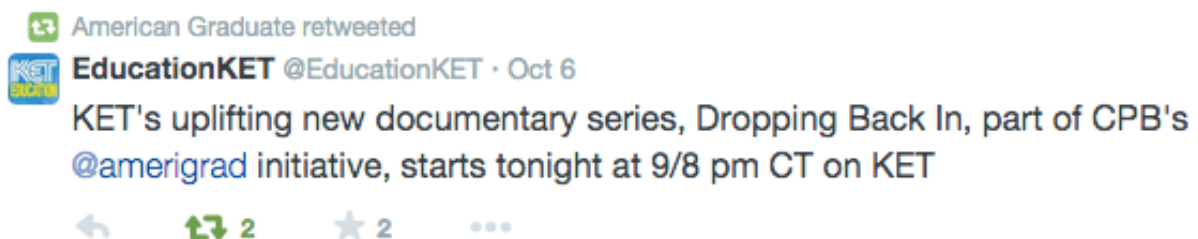
- **Use what you have.** If you're considering whether to establish a Twitter handle or Facebook page dedicated solely to American Graduate, use what your station already has. Most stations have an existing Facebook and/or Twitter feed with an established audience. Stations should leverage this audience to share news and information about American Graduate rather than creating a stand-alone American Graduate Facebook page or Twitter feed. Promote the latest content with links daily, as possible, and use your local American Graduate hashtags too.
- **Like. Friend. Follow.** If you haven't already done so, start following [@AmeriGrad](#) on Twitter and "like" [American Graduate](#) on Facebook. Encourage your station's staff to do the same. We will use these channels to share and re-tweet relevant content from partner organizations, media and especially American Graduate stations. Stations are encouraged to post about their own activities as well as those in other American Graduate cities, which will all be aggregated on the national feeds. Also follow your local partners and civic leaders to retweet their posts that are relevant to American Graduate. In case you're missing a lot of great content in the social mediasphere, we'll post some great content suggestions via Basecamp and have a calendar set up for similar suggestions. Again, if you have questions, contact [Aja Williams](#).
- **Maximize the reach of your posts by tagging.** When posting on a social media network, please be sure to tag American Graduate:
 - *On Twitter* - [@AmeriGrad](#)
 - *On Facebook* - [@American Graduate](#)
 - *For either one* – Make sure to tag other AG stations, community partners, organizations or individuals who are working in on improving youth outcomes.

This will ensure your updates appear on the national American Graduate feeds and will help increase the reach of your message to a broader audience. On Twitter, be sure to use

appropriate hash tags to help events (#NETA2014) and themes (#dropout) related to American Graduate, as well as the overall initiative (#amgrad) trend in popularity. Be sure to tag American Graduate and include other American Graduate stations, community partners, or other organizations or individuals who are working to improve youth outcomes when relevant. This approach acknowledges the great work of others in your community and raises awareness of the issue. Also tag them and post (when you can) on their wall or feed so that they can share with their networks. When you get a “follow” from an individual or organization be sure to respond with a “Thanks for the follow” on Twitter.

- **Post What?** So the magic question is what do you actually need to put on your social media feeds? The latest content that you have that’s American Graduate related, see what @AmeriGrad and @American Graduate is posting as well as other stations. Also don’t be afraid to post local education stories that are covered by your local outlets or national outlets. When you do post, try to post with a link that leads back to your website or the American Graduate national website. Also, especially on Facebook, try to use a photo with posts to try and increase how many see and want to click it. For other posting thoughts, see Engagement Strategy.
 - **Twitter** – On Twitter, make sure you’re retweeting, which can help with your website’s engagement. Favorite tweets that you think are well done, informative or just downright cool.
 - **Facebook** – Share posts from the national American Graduate page, other partner organizations or other stations that can be used on your page. Make sure to add something to the post when you share it.

EXAMPLES





American Graduate
September 27

Questions about Dropout Prevention & Re-engagement topics discussed on #AmGrad Day? A rep from Gateway to College will respond to comments right here from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m. ET

★ ASK THE EXPERT ★
CHAT LIVE WITH GATEWAY TO COLLEGE
NATIONAL NETWORK REP...
**DROPOUT PREVENTION &
RE-ENGAGEMENT**
SOUND OFF IN THE COMMENTS!
Facebook.com/AmericanGraduate

AMERICAN GRADUATE DAY
SEPTEMBER 27, 2014
AMERICANGRADUATE.ORG • #AMGRAD

GATEWAY to COLLEGE

Like · Comment · Share

16 Shares

29 people like this.

View 43 more comments



Edsel Shejen When will a minimum 100% proficiency, as required by ESEA-NCLB, be enforced with technical support, funding and legal action?
September 27 at 4:23pm · Like



Nimrod Christ "EDUCATION is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Nelson Mandela, papa #Madiba, #NelsonMandelaDay Everyday!!! #Media
September 27 at 5:05pm · Like



Write a comment...





American Graduate shared a link.
Yesterday

A report released Tuesday by the research branch of the nonprofit National Student Clearinghouse, which examined data from more than 3.5 million high school graduates, found that poverty remains a more important indicator of whether a student will go to college than high school demographics or location.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/10/14/poverty-college-enrollment_n_5978646.html



Poverty The Strongest Factor In Whether High School Graduates Go To College

www.huffingtonpost.com

Students from high-poverty public schools are less likely to attend college than those from wealthier ones, regardless of whether they're from urban, suburban or rural areas. A report released Tuesday by the research branch of the nonprofit Nation...

- **Post early. Post often.** On Facebook, the rule of thumb is to try to post hourly, if possible, so that it shows in followers' feeds at a higher rate. Try not to post at the top of the hour to avoid a high post time, but do it at an irregular time such as 11:20 or 3:45. On Twitter, post as much as you like. As soon as you're aware of an American Graduate event or news, please share via social media and continue talking about it on Facebook or Twitter, providing new details as they emerge. If you're hosting an event that lends itself to a social element, make sure you create a hashtag that everyone could follow during that time in addition to #amgrad.
- **Create a calendar.** Create a content pipeline that outlines upcoming American Graduate activities and events. This will enable you to think ahead about how you want to promote the event on social media, as well as to prepare for any "holes" or breaks that you'll need to fill. You can always use the National Content pipeline in Basecamp to help with scheduling needs, too.
- **Engage in the way that works for you.** We understand that some stations might not have the staff to devote to solely social media, but it is important to talk about your American Graduate activities on social media. If you are new to social media, start slowly and work your way up to posting more often and creating a following. Make sure you post your latest content, event and activities daily to your social media networks as well as share the latest news. Check Basecamp

to see if there are fellow stations that have produced something that would resonate with your followers as well as check national's social feed. If you plan to ask a question to followers, be careful to monitor the feed for reactions as well as anything that might need follow-up. Plus, don't forget to "like" comments, favorite/retweet those comments that resonate highly. Also, use tweets or posts from national producers for your local broadcast of local content. Again, reach out to [Aja Williams](#) if you need guidance and suggestions with other strategies.

Here are some more tips to help with using social media to your advantage:

- **Use Hootsuite, Tweetdeck or another social media curator to make life simple:** Hootsuite allows you to schedule tweets as well as more easily monitor interactions and newsfeed.
- **Get others involved!** Have those in other departments help send tweets throughout the week. Get interns to tweet during events so that you're able to retweet them as well as drive social conversation.

Engage

- The point of social media is to engage our audience through steady dialogue online. Therefore, it's important to monitor your social media efforts daily.
- Each day, check out what local media organizations, partners or the national American Graduate post or tweet to see what you could use on your own social media. Also, schedule and space out posts if you don't have someone dedicated to posting/tweeting daily. BUT be careful. The point of social media, again, is to engage, so be sure that you respond to questions, retweet good things or favorite/like so that it's not stagnant the entire day. For example, following an AG screening, ask people to use their phone to post reaction to a film.

User Generated Content (UGC)

- Encourage your followers to submit photos/videos that support our work. For example, during graduation season, ask viewers, partners and students to post/share their graduation photos. Therefore, working in coordination with AG, line up opportunities to post about these on your social networks.

EXAMPLES

For Twitter

- We want to see your #graduate! Tweet @AmeriGrad to show them off. (Include Photo Example)
- Do you have a volunteer contributing to the lives of youth daily? Recognize them as a #AmGradChampion and tweet their story to @AmeriGrad!

For Facebook

Do you have a coach who is going above and beyond to make sure students' grades and life is on track? Have a volunteer who is making a huge difference in the lives of youth? Recognize them as an American Graduate champion and tell us their story here: <http://bit.ly/1xvRpE6>. You could see their story on the national @American Graduate website.

Are you celebrating a new high school #graduate? We want to see them. Post a photo on our page or in the comments below and tell us why you're proud of them. They could be a part of our national photo gallery on the @American Graduate website.