



**BNI ALBERTA SOUTH | COMMUNICATIONS
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BNI® Social Media and Web Content Guidelines

(Date of Last Revision: October 16, 2014 / BNI HQ Public Relations Department) **This printed version is a temporary modified version of the guidelines changed to include the correct/current BNI brand guidelines. Modified for presentation by and for the BNI Alberta South Summit.**

Social Media and the internet can be powerfully effective tools for marketing, relationship building, and more. Naturally, many BNI regions and chapters have created social media pages (Facebook, Twitter, blogs, etc.) and/or websites to create greater visibility online, attract potential new members, and engage in online networking.

BNI believes that these tools can significantly foster the growth of our organization but if we do not ensure that we leverage this new media appropriately, it can instead yield a negative impact and even serious legal repercussions. BNI as an organization must be extremely careful of how our intellectual property (trademarks, including: name, logo, brand image, slogans, and copyrighted materials) is used online. If we are careless, we risk damaging the BNI brand as well as losing our credibility as a professional, ethical organization—credibility which we have spent more than two decades building.

ALWAYS BE SURE TO FOLLOW THE MOST CURRENT BRANDING STANDARDS GUIDE

Guidelines for National, Regional, and Chapter Social Media Pages and Web Pages Representing BNI®:

- ❖ Always adhere to the guidelines outlined above for use of the BNI Brand and Trademarks online.
- ❖ All Facebook, Twitter, and other social media pages representing BNI should simply use the official BNI logo as their profile picture—specifically, the version of the logo that is formatted for social media.
- ❖ Chapter-specific or regionally-specific artwork must not be created or used anywhere online or elsewhere. Only use the official BNI logo, colors, and font—do not attempt to represent a BNI chapter or region using any other artwork, colors, or visual look .

Brief Explanation:

- The goal of BNI's brand image is to have ONE universally recognized, unmistakable visual look that will benefit all members of the BNI network at every level. Regions/chapters should never create an individual identity or "brand" through the creation of regional/chapter logos or artwork which will differentiate them from BNI and dilute the strength of BNI's official global brand.
- The creation of regional or chapter-specific logos and/or artwork will not only weaken the impact of the global brand, it will do a great disservice to the BNI members in that region or chapter. Creation of unapproved logos/artwork confuses potential new members who do not recognize the unofficial image as part of BNI and, therefore, have doubts and questions about whether or not the region/chapter is officially a part of **"THE" BNI organization** with a history of nearly three decades of professionalism, solid credibility, and ethical standards.

Who Is Authorized to Speak on Behalf of BNI®?

- ❖ No one other than BNI's officers at BNI Headquarters and BNI's Public Relations Supervisor is authorized to speak on behalf of the entire organization.
- ❖ BNI National Offices across the globe are 100% authorized to speak on behalf of the entire BNI region which their individual National Office oversees.
- ❖ People involved in BNI should certainly speak about BNI and, when doing so, communications about BNI should adhere to the guidelines set forth below:
- ❖ Only speak within your area of expertise. Whether you are a BNI member, Director, or employee, you should only discuss BNI in a manner that is based upon and relevant to your experience and expertise within your role.
- ❖ If you do not have experience or expertise regarding any given BNI-related subject, you should completely refrain from discussing it.
- ❖ No matter what your role, you should never state anything pertaining to BNI as fact if it has not been previously and publicly stated by your region's National Office or BNI Headquarters as true and factual.
- ❖ Do not make references to BNI which contradict the positions taken by your BNI National Office or BNI Headquarters.

General BNI® Guidelines for Social Media and Web Content:

- ❖ Be mindful that what you publish will be publicly accessible for a long time and possibly permanently—take care to understand the terms of service for each site on which you are posting.
- ❖ Identify yourself truthfully—state your name and what your role is within the BNI organization (Director, member, Leadership Team representative, employee for a BNI regional or national office, etc.).
- ❖ Only discuss BNI or BNI-related matters that are appropriate for your level of experience/involvement within the organization and make it clear that you are speaking for yourself and from your relevant experience within your role—not on behalf of the entire BNI organization.
- ❖ Always respect copyright, trademark, and privacy laws. You should not quote more than short excerpts of someone else’s work (and be sure to give appropriate credit) and it is good general blogging practice to link to others’ work. Keep in mind that laws will vary in different parts of the world.
- ❖ Do not disclose confidential information or discuss sensitive matters publicly.
- ❖ Be sure to always follow your profession’s ethics.
- ❖ Respect your audience and all those in BNI’s worldwide network of members, Directors, and employees. Remember that BNI is a global organization and those in our network reflect a diverse set of customs, values, and points of view.
- ❖ Keep your focus on subjects that are BNI-business related. Do not use ethnic slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in any conduct that would not be acceptable within your BNI chapter or regional/National Office workplace. Do not discuss any political or religious views online.
- ❖ Do not post photos of anyone without their permission or publish parts of non-public conversations without permission.
- ❖ Do not pick fights. Be honest, sincere, and polite. Always be the first to correct any mistakes you make. If you choose to modify content that was previously posted, such as editing a blog post, make it clear that you have done so.
- ❖ Completely refrain from commenting on rumors. Do not deny or affirm them. Do not speculate about them or spark them by participating in “what if”-type conversations.
- ❖ Try to add value. Provide worthwhile information and perspective.
- ❖ If you have any confusion or doubt about whether you are authorized to publish something online, refrain from doing so and seek advice from your local BNI Director Consultant/ Ambassador

ARM* Response - How to Respond to Negative Comments & Complaints People Post Online

The following **ARM*** Response is provided for your information when dealing with responses to negative comments & complaints people post online. **BEFORE** posting any response, contact your local Director for guidance.

- A: Acknowledge the complaint/pain**
- R: Respond politely**
- M: Make it right.**

We want to be able to address and diffuse complaints as soon as possible, in order to keep all issues at a minimum, and perhaps alleviate any permanent damage.

The focus is to get the issue off of Social Media and into a conversation.

A: Acknowledge the complaint, once: Acknowledging a complaint does not in any way mean you are agreeing with it. It means you are showing care and concern for the person, and are working toward a solution. Therefore, when you acknowledge the criticism with the gravity it deserves, the person sees you are actively striving to assist their situation's reasonable outcome, and they will respond in a positive manner.

R: Respond Politely: when you treat someone with courtesy and respect, they will generally respond with a similar demeanor. It is imperative to treat others with the utmost respect and sincerity, including during a disagreement or complaint. (*people are reading, and nearly everything posted on the internet has a level of permanency).

M: Make it right: Just as a fire needs oxygen to burn, a heated discussion will continue to flame and destroy. The only way to stop a fire is to eliminate the "oxygen" in their online tirade.

Don't show frustration. The first natural inclination is to become defensive. Consider the situation. When emotions are involved, nothing productive can be accomplished. Take a breath, look at the situation objectively, and realize that it's not personal. Ask yourself "What is the outcome I want?"

Because networking is built on personal relationships, it must be regarded as such. Therefore, **EVERYTHING** must be done to assure the system is fully understood, and every possible opportunity to implement it appropriately is taken.

"Diplomacy is the art of letting someone else have your way"

Social Media Best Practices

- Set aside 20 minutes to post, at least weekly
- Assign a photographer to take pictures at your weekly meeting.
- Prepare content. This may be done in advance.
- Link, link, link to members' pages, members' websites, BNI Events.
- Use hashtags
 - #BNINowMoreThanEver
 - #BNIAlbertaSouth
 - #BNICanada
 - #BNI(chaptername)
 - #Giversgain
 - #networking
- Encourage members to create a Facebook business page
- Remind members to like, share and comment
- You can share from Instagram to Facebook but not vice versa
- Doing a Facebook Live post once a month will increase member visibility and give members an opportunity to learn to do Facebook Live. Thirty seconds is the perfect length. Coach members as to what to say.
- Be consistent
- Post at least weekly
- Like, share and comment

Social Media Content Suggestions

1. Weekly announcement of the top open specialties/professions the chapter is looking for.
2. New chapter members welcome message.
3. Congratulations to renewing members.
4. The upcoming 10 minute presenter and what kind of connections should be invited, because they will benefit from the presentation.
5. Testimonials
6. Post a thank you to visitors who attended meetings.
7. One point you learn and want to share following a BBI (One-to-One) with another member.
8. Thank you for referrals and business done.
9. Special events info (You may want to add them as an event first, and then include a link in status updates - frequently prior to the event.) Consult Events Coordinator.
10. Training events (You may want to add them as an event first, and then include a link in status updates - frequently prior to the event.)
11. Member accomplishments and awards (i.e., community or association awards.)
12. Open seats (example: We have 21 business professionals who are looking for a CPA we can send referrals to (or other applicable specialty/profession). If you know of a CPA in the [city] area, please invite them to visit one of our weekly meetings at [location, day, and time].) If you are not sure which specialties/professions you should be targeting, please check with your chapter President or Director for help.
13. Achievements in number of referrals by the chapter for the month, quarter or year and/or achievements by members for the month, quarter or year. (Examples: Our chapter passed x number of referrals during the three previous months! OR Thanks to chapter member John Doe for giving x number of referrals last month. He was our Top Referrer!)
14. Dollar amount of business generated from referrals by the chapter or by a member. (Examples: Our chapter generated \$x in business last year. If you would like help growing your business, come visit our group on [date, time, and location]. OR Chapter member John Doe helped give \$ worth of business to other members last year. Thanks, John for your outstanding participation!)

Social Media Best Practices

15. On a monthly basis announce how much a seat is worth in your chapter
16. Chapter director visits.
17. Links to educational articles. (Visit bniuniversity.com for podcasts and lessons, links to SuccessNet magazine and Dr. Misner's blog and podcasts.)
18. Anything that provides valuable information or celebrates success.
19. Weekly BNI Podcast announcement & link
20. Bi-Weekly <http://businessnetworking.com/> articles from Ivan Misner
21. Become a Hub, by listing
 professional networking events in your region
 member fundraising efforts, family day, etc.

Monthly Post Planning

Posts for April:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

Week 3: _____

Week 4: _____

Posts for May:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

Week 3: _____

Week 4: _____

Week 5: _____

Posts for June:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

Week 3: _____

Week 4: _____

Week 5: _____

Posts for July:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

Week 3: _____

Week 4: _____

Monthly Post Planning

Posts for August:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

Week 3: _____

Week 4: _____

Posts for September:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

Week 3: _____

Week 4: _____

Posts for October:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

Week 3: _____

Week 4: _____

Week 5: _____

Posts for November:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

Week 3: _____

Week 4: _____

Week 5: _____

Monthly Post Planning

Posts for December:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

Week 3: _____

Posts for January:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

Week 3: _____

Week 4: _____

Week 5: _____

Posts for February:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

Week 3: _____

Week 4: _____

Posts for March:

Week 1: _____

Week 2: _____

Week 3: _____

Week 4: _____

Week 5: _____

CHAPTER FACEBOOK CHECKLIST**Weekly**

- CheckIn to your Page at the start of the meeting or earlier
- Promote upcoming Feature Speakers
- Promote member's events to the Page
- All chapter celebrations
- Awards and achievements (noteable networker)
- Promote feature speakers for this week
 - Take 3 photos and post immediately
- Scan written testimonials and submit directly online

Monthly

- Feature New (Approved) members to an Album
- Acknowledge Renewing Members
- Profile members in rotation

Immediately

- Change Admin rights to the group when necessary,
such as the changing of roles

Other

- Post photos of Visitor Days

To add or remove members to manage the page please contact your DC with a link to the member's Facebook Profile, after the member has Liked the page.