

The social side of "social media"

Call me old-fashioned, but I would rather socialize with someone in person than over a website. How else are you going to capture their expressions, their body language and the delight on their face when they tell you about that recent PCA rally or race.

With a closer look at this fast-paced world in which we live, we see that personal contact and communication has taken on an entirely new dimension. It is also now a multi-billion dollar industry. The social side of social media has taken our connection to others into a virtual realm of photos, videos and tweets (You'll understand after reading this issue). It's a world where words and abbreviations you may never have heard before can carry meanings only those "in the know" understand.

As PCA continues to attract members of all ages and cultures, it is important for region leaders to recognize and be aware of the advantages and potential hazards that can be found in these online and instantaneous communication tools. For example, sharing is not always a good thing.

Many may remember when a "social" meant everyone would get together at the same place to get caught up on the happenings with neighbors and friends. Now being social is also measured by the number of times you check your Facebook page per day or how many people have watched your YouTube video.

While PCA members will always gather together for fun and fellowship, there is a place for social media in club and member communication. The following pages will provide an overview and some guidelines to make your region's experience with social media as positive as it can be.

Jennifer Barrows, Editor, RegionFocus
Jmbarrows@cfl.rr.com

Social Media and PCA Regions/Zones

This article is intended for all PCA management and not just those considered "tech-savvy." Contemporary world-wide web and smart-phone technology has succeeded by packaging seemingly impossible communication in user-friendly ways once unimaginable. As a result, utilizing contemporary communications avenues require very little technical skill at all. Hence their popularity, effectiveness, success and their potential for getting us into more trouble than we ever thought possible. For a better understanding of how PCA Regions and Zones can use contemporary social media to their advantage and avoid their potential for trouble, read on. And for a short, concise guide to PCA "best-practices" for social media, see the latest Region Procedures Manual (RPM).

Some of us can remember a time before television. Many of us can remember a time when using a mobile phone was very limited. Most of us can remember the pre-web world when books and newspapers were the standard sources of information. "Mail" meant envelopes, stamps and time. Like it or not, those days are over. Instant communication of information, video, photos, and personal commentary is here. Now. While some may prefer that it wasn't and some make conscious decisions to abstain from using Facebook (FB), Twitter, YouTube, or even email and internet, the rest of the world is charging ahead at great speed into the full development of their use. The question is not "What should we do about it?" but "How shall we use it to our benefit and become aware of its drawbacks and potential pitfalls?" As PCA Region leaders, it is our job to engage with our members in the most effective ways possible.

Given the newness of its existence, the question "What is social media and why do we need it?" is one with which some of us still struggle. Though Facebook came into being in 2004, YouTube in 2005 and Twitter in 2006, many of us did not hear of them until only

REGION FOCUS



management ideas for PCA regions

four or five years ago. Their constant presence has drastically changed the way we conduct personal, business, and club communications. What started as a way for individuals to keep their friends and family updated with their activities has grown to include everyone and everything from our personal experiences to corporate presences to popular revolutions overthrowing entrenched dictatorships. So to answer the question, "Social media is content created and shared by individuals and businesses on the web using freely available web-based and mobile technologies allowing users to create and post their own images, videos and text in real-time and share that content with either the entire internet or just a select group of friends."

As many users of Facebook are already aware, one of the more popular features offered is that of "groups." Groups allow FB users with common interests to participate in forums sharing photos, comments, and videos. As it turns out, FB groups are well-suited for use by PCA Regions and their members who are more socially minded and are not as interested in the tech forums such as Rennlist or Pelican Parts, etc. (though FB groups could probably be used for that purpose as well). Many PCA Regions and Zones are using social media to encourage social interaction and bring information to their members. Using this form of communication has its advantages. However, it can also bring issues that Regions should be aware

of and some they should steadfastly avoid. It is therefore important for Region officials to understand not only how social media works, but also some best practices for using it effectively to promote club activities while avoiding potentially divisive or even libelous behavior. This article explores the advantages along with the disadvantages of social media use by PCA Regions. While the world of social media is rapidly evolving with new sites popping up constantly, we will focus primarily on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.



Facebook

Facebook (FB) was founded in 2004 by a group of Harvard University students (see the movie "The Social Network" for a primer) in their dorm room and has grown to over 845 million users worldwide. Users easily create personal profile pages where they post information about themselves, update their status, and post photos or videos of any kind (provided they meet community standards of decency). Because it is easy to use and provides a relatively safe on-line environment, it has become popular with individual users of all age groups (**The minimum age is 13 years old**). Though it was initially thought of as a site for tweens, teens, and tech-savvy hipsters, it has

grown to be very popular with Boomers who want to reconnect with old friends and stay connected with family members across the generations.

A registered user creates a personal profile page where they can post information about themselves, update their status, and post photos or videos to their page. Various privacy settings can be used. These settings range from letting all FB users see your page, to letting only one close friend view it. Users can connect to one another by inviting someone to be a "Friend". Friends have the ability to exchange private messages, use an IM (instant message) chat feature, post comments to their friend's "Wall" on their profile page, and share access to their photos and videos. In addition to sharing their personal musings and photos, FB users can also engage in various applications such as games (among the more popular in recent years were Farmville and Mob Wars), shared calendars, horoscopes, and many others. In addition to personal FB profile pages there are Pages and Groups. Pages allow organizations, businesses, celebrities and brands to communicate with people who choose to "Like" them. For celebrities having a fan page allows them to have a FB presence without having to personally interact with their followers. Corporations, businesses, churches, and clubs can use pages if they are looking to primarily issue content, while at the same time limit user interaction. Any

REGION FOCUS



management ideas for PCA regions

user can “Like” a Page. Once they do they will become connected with it and receive any updates which are posted. Pages are public and generally available to everyone on FB. Pages may only be created and managed by official representatives of an organization, business, etc. FB has an interface option for smart-phone users allowing its members to link their postings and messages directly to their phones so that FB can literally be on twenty-four hours a day.

Facebook “Groups” provide a variably closed space for small groups of people to communicate about shared interests. By variably, we mean that FB allows groups to control who and how many people can join a group and to what extent they will be able to contribute content to the group page. The owner/administrator of the Group can make it publicly available for anyone to join,

require administrator approval for members to join, or keep it private and allow users to join by invitation only. Like with Pages, members receive updates when any member posts in the Group. Members of a Group can participate in chats, upload photos, create events sponsored by the group, and invite all members to group events. Groups can be created and managed by anyone who has a FB account.

Because of Facebook’s ease of use and huge popularity, many PCA members already have their own personal pages and many PCA Regions have group pages. Region specific FB accounts offer a quick and direct way to pass information to region members who joined that region’s group as well as offer a public forum for fun and friendly on-line interaction. FB allows group administrators to approve another users request to join the group before they

can have access to that group’s page. This is a great way to ensure who has access to your group’s information as well as to who can post to the group’s page. Some regions only allow their own region members to be part of the group while others allow anyone to join.

In addition to region updates, photos and videos can be posted to the region’s group page. This type of media can be posted not only by the administrators, but also by anyone who has been approved to be a member of the group. Region group members can post photos and videos to share with their fellow members that show club activities, such as drives, social gatherings, autocross and drivers educations events.

One of the great strengths of Region Facebook Group pages is that they encourage and foster on-line social interaction and participation, a sense of belonging and increased club loyalty similar to the way the Regional Wednesday lunch or Sunday Breakfast might, or the autocross committee safety and training meetings, though in a virtual, tech world in which people can participate easily by using their computers and (increasingly) their smart-phones.



REGION FOCUS



management ideas for PCA regions

On the flip side of that coin, because it is a virtual community, it may also signal a commitment level that is vastly different from the actual attendance of a lunch, breakfast, or committee meeting. Those who attend socials and committee meetings are often those who will actively contribute to the well-being and future of a Region. This may be in contrast with those who simply share comments on-the-fly. And, not unlike other social groupings – real or virtual – cliques can form, wry comments can turn into animosities where divisiveness and conflict can begin. It is important for Region officials to remember that regardless of the mode of communication or interaction, people are still people and leadership is required to maintain friendliness and stability.

Facebook also offers the option of creating Event pages so that an individual or group can advertise any kind of event to their FB friends and members and accept RSVPs on who will, won't or might attend the event. It is a great way to judge event attendance and can work together with other mediums and methods of sending invitations. Region events can also be posted to the group's events calendar to keep members current with the club activities. These pages offer the ability to have members of the group RSVP to the events they wish to attend.

Obviously, Facebook offers a wide variety of benefits for a PCA Region

to get their news out to members and to provide a forum for on-line social interaction between official club events. However, there are also some cautionary details a Region will want to heed in order to keep their Facebook page working for them and not allow it to become a hindrance or a possible liability.

Here's a list of what to watch out for:

1. A FB page is not a substitute for a website and newsletter.

In most regions only a fraction of the membership are FB members. Even if they are on FB, they may not be a member of their region's FB group. Your Region or Zone website should contain information that is central to the management of your Region or Zone. That information should be accessible to all PCA members, whether they are FB members or not. If an event is a Region/Zone event it should be fully advertised in all the media used by the Region or Zone so that all members have equal access to an event. FB should only be used as a supplement to, not in place of, the National Emailer program and the region's own website and newsletter.

2. A PCA Region or Zone should have a social media policy

making clear its "best practices" for social media presence on the web. A best-practice might include that a Region/Zone draw

up an agreement with its Social Media Chair to ensure that s/he understands what the Region's/ Zone's stated goals and policies will be regarding the types of postings that will be encouraged and those that will not be tolerated on a social media page bearing the club's name and how it will deal with any posts that the Region/Zone deems harmful to the National club, Region or Zone, or any individuals. Such a policy should reflect those policies laid out in the Region Procedures Manual and the PCA's Code of Ethics. This policy also should include how for-sale and items-wanted posts are handled.

3. FB page ownership should be handled by someone within the club

who is in it for the long-haul and will provide both moderation and stability. A best-practice would be to establish a Social Media Chair who either handles club posts on social media, or oversees them in the name of the Region/Zone. The owner/administrator of the Region/Zone FB page should handle the page with the agreement and understanding that the page will be dedicated to and reflect the goals and projects of the club and not the opinions or tastes of individual members. Even some Porsche related themes may best be left off a Region/Zone page in favor

REGION FOCUS



management ideas for PCA regions

of posting them on the pages of members' individual pages.

4. The owner/administrator of the Region/Zone FB page should be made aware by club officials, including the Social Media Chair, that **its page, regardless of local ownership, still reflects on the image and understanding of other Regions and the national PCA organization itself.** A new member or visitor to the page may get a lasting impression of something they do or don't like and will link that impression to the PCA in general.
5. The "always on" presence of FB means that **postings can be made at any time by any member of the group.** Certainly it can be used to an advantage, but it can also mean libelous or off-topic posts can be made at any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and 365 days a year. It is important that the administrators check the site frequently for any inappropriate content posted by its users. Unlike the PCA National e-mailer, Region/Zone websites and newsletters, where content can be edited before it is posted or sent out, social media outlets may be more difficult to administer without constant attention.

Ensure your Region/Zone members are aware that their use of the group page is for club-related postings only,

beneficial to all members of the club regardless of age, gender, political preference, and religious choice. Therefore, the Region/Zone FB page is not the place for personal grudges against fellow members, tirades against the local dealer, political or religious polemics, etc. These posts are viewable to anyone who is a member of the group, so administrators have to be diligent and watch out for posts of this nature. Posts that contain personal, political or religious content also have to be regulated by the administrators. As a result, it is of utmost importance that administrators constantly and consistently monitor their Region/Zone FB page and immediately remove any content deemed inappropriate by club guidelines.

All in all, a PCA Region/Zone FB page should serve its namesake entity for the enjoyment of all its members or those who may simply happen upon it with Porsche-related and PCA-related content for the betterment of the club while also working to avoid potentially embarrassing or libelous materials which could cause the club trouble, division, or legal action.



Twitter

Twitter is another large social network site that has over 300 million users.

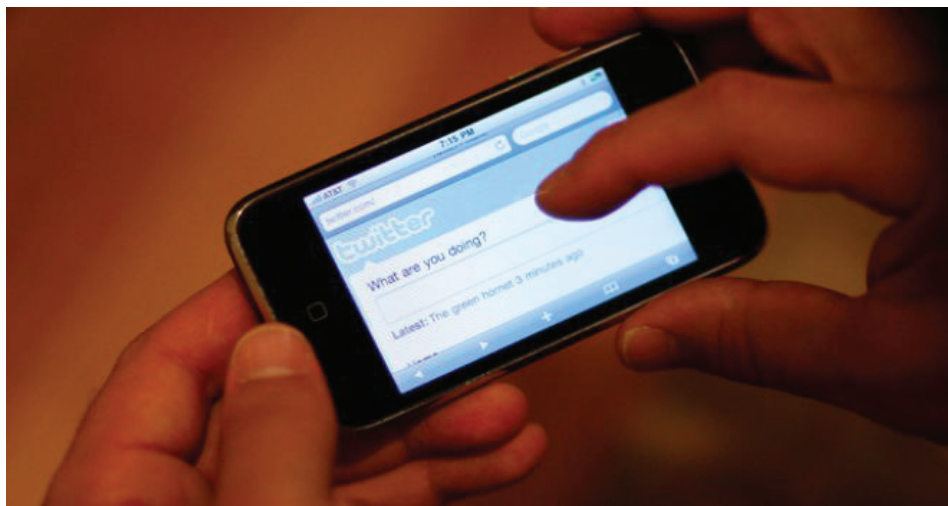
Created by programmer Jack Dorsey and launched in 2006, it's designed primarily for interpersonal communication using the new generation of smart-phones. Twitter allows users to post updates called "tweets" to their "followers" using 140 characters or less. The idea is that smart-phone users are often on-the-run and don't have time to type or read full web-pages or long comments. For many of us who are more classically trained in the use of sentences and paragraphs, Twitter may seem ridiculously abbreviated. However, it has revolutionized the way people, companies, and even governments communicate with each other and to their "followers."

Users may also include photos and links to websites in their "tweets". In addition to "tweeting", a user can also subscribe to another users "tweets", this is called "following". When "following" other users, you will receive their "tweets" in real time when they are posted. All "tweets" will appear on the website or mobile app in a "timeline" which is organized chronologically. A user can follow the "tweets" of a friend or family member, a celebrity, a news organization, a business or organization. Other users can follow you, and they will receive what you "tweet" in their timeline. Users have the ability to respond to "tweets", similar to replying to an email. They also can "re-tweet" what someone has "tweeted", similar to forwarding an email.

REGION FOCUS



management ideas for PCA regions



Twitter is a much simpler site than FB to use and administer. The owner of the account is the only one who can post a “tweet”, photos or videos. This makes it extremely easy to control the content that is “tweeted”. Twitter users can follow anyone they like without having to be approved by the administrator. To prevent unwanted individuals from following a region’s “tweet”, the administrator has the ability to block users, thus not allowing them to see their “tweets”. This means that a Region/Zone Social Media Chair could set up an account and limit it to those who are club members and honored guests (such as club officials from other Regions, Zones, the PCA National organization, or sponsors).

How can 140 characters provide meaningful communication, you might wonder? Getting the point across with a short and to-the-point statement can have incredible power. Think about everything your 8th grade English teacher taught you about editing and

take it to the nth degree. Cut out all the chaff: whatever lengthy explanations or story addendums you might add in normal conversation, a written story or on a blog - even the punctuation and the grammar - and you have a “tweet”. It is short, simple, and to the point. And, did I mention short? What we used to call “sound bites” have been refined to incredibly powerful statements which either cut to the core or are full of meaning. However, as anyone who has read through Bartlett’s Quotations with a discerning eye (and ear) – and has had to suffer through the endless chatter of TV’s talking heads – can tell you, thinking that you’ve come up with an incredibly witty and powerful statement in a few short words and actually doing it are two VERY different things. Entire careers can be built or destroyed by contemporary celebrities for their talent – or lack of it – for being effective with their Twitter accounts. And every day we hear about those who were careless or callous in what they issued as a “tweet”.

Be careful. It is a fact that ill-thought short statements can provide worlds of meaning that were not intended.

Still, Twitter can be a very powerful tool. Many businesses use it to provide last-minute news about a product or sale. Some mobile businesses use it to let their customers know where they will be and when. The social revolution which brought about the Arab Spring of 2011 credited Twitter as a way that revolutionaries could alert their cohorts to the movement of government troops at a moment’s notice. With over 300 million (and growing) users, Twitter is generating multiples of that number of “tweets” every single day. Even non-celebrities and car clubs are starting to discover ways in which short communication bursts can be used to their benefit.

Although Twitter’s potential for car clubs such as PCA Regions is not yet as fully developed as that of FB, there are positive uses for it by those who are savvy to its ways. For a PCA Region or Zone, Twitter can be utilized for:

1. Issuing reminders for events or election balloting deadlines.
2. Alerting members about changes to the Region/Zone website or issuance of the latest edition of the Newsletter.
3. Announcing new items or sales in the Goody Store.
4. Getting members to help out on membership drives.

REGION FOCUS



management ideas for PCA regions

5. Generate member interaction and participation with quizzes and contests.
6. Asking for needed volunteers.
7. Soliciting ideas from club members about potential club events or club direction.

Effective Region/Zone use of Twitter will depend on a few key factors.

1. **Getting enough of the Region/Zone's members to start using Twitter** by setting up their own individual accounts and becoming "followers" of the organization.
2. **Recruiting a Social Media Chair who is active with and savvy to the uses of Twitter** and is willing to maintain it on a regular and constant basis. It may sound easy to make a few "tweets" now and then, but being an effective Social Media Chair will take as much dedication as a club newsletter editor or webmaster, with as much responsibility for preserving the club's reputation.
3. **Availability and timeliness on the part of the club "tweeter":** the effectiveness of a "tweet" depends on it being issued exactly when it is needed. Whereas a newsletter editor has the luxury of setting deadlines a month or two ahead of an event or the publishing of a story, and the webmaster can work with deadlines of a week or a few days, the "tweeter" may need to work with notices of only a few hours or even

minutes and still provide effective and safe communication.

4. **Having the Social Media Chair filter the pertinent follower comments** back to club leadership so that it is useful for the management of the Region/Zone. It is one thing to have someone volunteer because they like to issue statements. It is another to be able to use the tool for effective listening and translation back to management.

A few things to watch out for:

1. Users who follow your regions "tweets" have the ability to reply to your "tweet", or mention your Region/Zone in one of their "tweets" and the administrator has no control over what is written. These "re-tweets" and mentions may not go to those users who are following your region; they only go to the users who are following the person who posted the "re-tweet". Unless they are also following the individual who posted the "re-tweet" or mention.
2. Therefore, it is important that the administrator constantly monitor any "re-tweet" of their posts or mentions of the club. This can have the same effect as the elementary school game in which the teacher whispers a secret in the ear of one student and it is passed around the room until out comes an entirely different statement or intention

from the first original. Be careful what your Region/Zone "tweets".

Be conscious of the ways in which it could morph before the "tweet" is sent.

3. Similar to FB, it is important to keep your "tweets", photos and videos in good taste and strictly relevant to club activity. Region/Zone "tweets" should not contain any political, religious, or personal beliefs. Photos and videos should not display any bad behavior, reckless or illegal activities.



YouTube

Who could have ever predicted that still and video cameras would become so cheap and easy to use and so small that virtually everyone would have access to them? (Maybe mention that every cell and smart phone can now take photos and shoot video.) Or, the ease of creating and posting your own videos and sharing them with your friends... for free?! Or, that such technology would have dramatic effects on commercial television and the news-media?

Technically not a social medium in the function of the first two we've discussed (in that it's not text based), YouTube is social in that it is a sharing site that has

REGION FOCUS



management ideas for PCA regions

opened whole new opportunities for sharing experiences, reliving nostalgic moments in traditional media, and the development of web-series videos by small-scale film-makers. It's important enough and powerful enough that many corporate entities and commercial artists are now producing works just for YouTube. And, good or not, all of that technology is available in a user friendly package to the entire world.

YouTube was built by three former PayPal employees and went live in 2005. YouTube allows users to upload movie clips, TV clips, and music videos, as well as amateur content such as video blogging and user generated original short length videos. YouTube is an incredibly easy way to instantly upload any family, personal, corporate, church, government or club related event for the entire world to see literally minutes after the event has happened. No waiting for developing costs or time-consuming expensive editing software. We now have instant video, from almost anywhere, anytime.

Although YouTube is more of a video sharing website, it does offer some aspects of social networking of which regions can take advantage. Additionally it integrates fully into FB and websites, making it easy to share YouTube videos with your FB friends and on Region/Zone websites. Depending on what settings your club chooses, YouTube allows users to post short, user created videos to their own YouTube channel. Other users on YouTube can subscribe to a



region's channel and stay updated with that region's video uploads. One of the advantages to YouTube is administrators can allow or not allow user posted comments to videos that are uploaded. If the administrator allows comments to be posted, they must monitor the site often and remove any inappropriate user comments.

PCA National has a YouTube channel. The channel name is PCAHQ. Regions/ Zones may also contact PCA National headquarters for video equipment recommendations to get started for less than \$300.

Regions can use videos posted to YouTube to:

1. **Promote the club** and its activities to new members. Videos of region events such as drives, drivers' education, or autocross can show members what the events are like.
2. **As a teaching tool** with how-to videos for working on their car, or an in car video of a particular track so those who have never

been there before can familiarize themselves with the layout. It is important to remember that any videos that are posted should not show any bad, reckless or illegal activities. How-to videos need to be screened for accuracy and come with a disclaimer, as the region does not want to be liable for damage or injury that may occur from a user not following the instructions in the video correctly.

3. **Display promotional videos** for upcoming events or for preserving the memory of special Region/Zone events such as signature events, anniversary parties or historical displays.
4. **Increase membership interest** by depicting a fun, safe atmosphere attractive to new members.

Some Regions with skilled members are creating highly professional videos as promos or wrap-ups for their events. Rather than just sharing "stuff that happened" a Region/Zone with a

REGION FOCUS



management ideas for PCA regions

talented video person or committee could create a great promo that shows what it does and why it is fun to be a member.

Here is a list of what to be vigilant about:

1. Several things should be edited for content and for appropriateness. Although we have all watched “on the fly” moments on YouTube, a Region/Zone will want to think more carefully about what kinds of scenes, atmospheres, and actions it depicts from its own channel and the messages they send.
2. Respect for member privacy. While it is true that many members do not mind and may even like having their photos in newsletters, there is something about video and film that makes people shy and less friendly to being shown in videos.
3. Be sure to edit out possible injurious, embarrassing, or libelous moments. Any comments and/or video can

be used as evidence in a court of law, including damage to vehicle, property or person and distasteful or inappropriate comments or language or other situations that could bring your Region/Zone into disrepute.

If a Region/Zone chooses to host their own YouTube channel, it’s important to post only videos that show the region and its activities in a positive light. Not allowing comments on videos that are posted will save the administrator a lot of time and headache not having to monitor all the user generated comments. But if your Region/Zone chooses to open their videos to outside viewers, there should be an administrator who can delete distasteful comments.

Regions/Zones should have a policy in effect for the use of still and video cameras at club events. The policy should make clear that distributing photos or videos of club events that depict dangerous, distasteful, or libelous

activity is highly discouraged. It is worth noting that with the ever-presence of personal cameras and the ease of displaying photos and videos, Region/Zone members need to be on their best behavior at all times. Discouraging club members from displaying embarrassing posts is a good idea, but it’s impossible to expect complete enforcement or full compliance.

Create a Region/Zone Social Media Policy and Board-level Social Media Chair Position

Given the pervasiveness and the growth of the use of social-media as tools of communication, it is advisable for Regions/Zones to adopt a specific set of guidelines and procedures for the use of social-media. Factors to be considered are:

1. Ownership of social media accounts: a Facebook, Twitter, YouTube (or other) account in a Region/Zone’s name should be held by an approved member of the board, NOT just a member who has a passing interest of the club.
2. Regions/Zones should name a Social Media Chairperson who is directly accountable to the Region/



REGION FOCUS



management ideas for PCA regions

Zone board for all content, whether that person is the administrator of those accounts or is the overseer of separate administrators. This position will be held at the same level as the Webmaster and Newsletter Editor and will make reports to the board at the same frequency as those positions.

3. Region/Zone-named social media accounts will specifically operated for the benefit and mutual entertainment of all club members/supporters/sponsors, etc.
4. Region/Zone-named social media accounts will work in concert with other club media outlets such as the website and newsletter.
5. Region/Zone-named social-media outlets will carry the moniker "Official (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc) page of the (Region/Zone name)" so as not to be confused with those pages owned and operated by members with passing interest. Those pages which are not official should carry explicit labeling as "non-official" or "unauthorized."

Regions/Zones should be prepared for avenues of recourse toward members who post using inappropriate language, photos, or videos. Such recourse could range from verbal admonition to revoking membership in PCA to working with PCA Legal for possible cease and desist actions toward non-official social media outlets which take the name of a Region/Zone.

Regions/Zones should carefully consider their choice for Social Media Chair. Although the responsibility could be assigned to a Region/Zone's current newsletter editor or webmaster, given the level of commitment for each of those positions and the potential for growth within the world of social media, it is recommended to have a dedicated Social Media Chair who works in concert with the newsletter editor or webmaster. Of course that will depend on the size of the Region/Zone, its volunteer base, and its level of activity.

A Region/Zone Social Media Chair should be someone who:

1. Respects the image of the Club on National, Zone, and Region levels and is working to further enhance that image to its members, supporters, and sponsors.
2. Is willing to promote, adhere to and enforce club policy on the Region/Zone social media outlets.
3. Is willing to edit their own and other members' opinions on the Region/Zone social media outlets.
4. Is willing to work with the Newsletter Editor and Webmaster to integrate social media with the traditional club media for a better all-around experience for club members.
5. Is responsible for creating, administrating as well as moderating the Region/Zone social media sites consistently and in a timely fashion,

OR, if the Social Media Chair is overseeing separate administrators for the different outlets, will be listed as a co-administrator on each account.

6. Is someone who is savvy to and is actively engaged in the world of social media (or is willing to become savvy).

Lastly, since social media sites are constantly updating and improving their features, reach, and power, a Region/Zone's Social Media Chair needs to be continually learning and staying current with trends and applications in social media to take full advantage of new features as they evolve.

Integrating Social Media

Region/Zone social media sites should be used in conjunction with their newsletter and website and not as a replacement for those communication outlets. Effective integration will provide greater interest and impact in all areas of club communication. A club website that has the newsletter as a pdf, YouTube videos of upcoming or past events, a link to Facebook and/or Twitter pages provides more interactivity for club members, keeps them looking at the site longer and gathers more interest.

If newsletters are on-line as pdfs, it's possible to activate url's to link directly to club websites, e-mail addresses, sponsors web-sites, and the social

REGION FOCUS



management ideas for PCA regions

media outlets in use, adding an even more dynamic experience to the online newsletter experience.

Similarly, a Facebook page which offers links to photo galleries or videos on the Region/Zone website and makes mention of stories in the newsletter will be of more interest and solicit more commentary than simply issuing a few bland statements on club happenings.

Using Twitter to inform people about the most recent newsletter publication or website update or as a reminder for a social event can provide a sense of on-line community if done well.

Keeping Core Values

Regions/Zones using social media must be careful that it does not become a platform for political, religious or personal beliefs or attacks. One of the reasons our club is the largest single-marque car club in the world and is so effective in its mission is that it respects diversity of background and opinion by not adapting or even offering forum for any particular ideological position. It's a car-club and provides a great escape from the daily grind and increasingly acrimonious dialogue in the other arenas of life. It is a place where we can all agree on at least one thing - that we love Porsches.

Similarly, any negative comments about a region, PCA National, or any of its members need to be moderated accordingly, along with any profane or



inappropriate language. It is important that administrators do not allow negative discussions amongst members to escalate, or get directly involved in those types of discussions. Rather they should delete those discussions as soon as possible, and make the member involved aware of the region's policy on that type of behavior. Regions/Zones must be diligent in moderating their sites, pages, videos and "tweets" for this type of content. With smart-phones all having a camera and the ability to record video, users can upload content to the web any time or any place.

Other Social Media

This article has attempted to outline the benefits and challenges offered by the "big three" social media forums

currently in use. However, there are other "lesser" social media outlets in use. Considering that most of us remember times without cell phones, internet, smart-phones, and the current batch of social media giants, it's quite likely that other ones are emerging even as this article is being written. Even now, other social media forums and tools are in use on LinkedIn, Pinterest, Google+, Path, Flickr, MySpace, and more.

And that's not even bothering to mention the commentary and interaction found in common Porsche themed sites such as Rennlist, Pelican Parts or the upcoming PCA Forums. Nonetheless, the cautions are the same across the board. Be careful what you say, post, or depict so as not to cause yourself, your friends, or your club distress and possible legal action.

REGION FOCUS



management ideas for PCA regions

Branding

As with the more traditional forms of PCA communication, be considerate of branding issues. If it is a public forum, it is likely at some point a PCNA or other corporate counsel will be looking at the site or language for unapproved use of branding badges, logos, or other materials. Though common sense rules still allow for discussion of our favorite brand and depiction of its form in photos, videos, literature, song, and other forms of expression, be sure that any Region/Zone social media outlets do not use branding marks not approved by PCA in any official capacities on your sites. As with the traditional media, adhere to all the kinds of rules, procedures, and regulations regarding Porsche, PCA, or other brands that could result in legal activity or might imply endorsement of a particular brand, etc.

Membership Participation

Given that you have already read through the various advantages, possible problems, statements of best-practice and more in this article, keep in mind that the current wave of social media are great tools to engage your members in a contemporary manner that is already in use by many of your members. Also consider that you may have a few members who are already quite good at its use and may be willing to get involved as Region/Zone volunteers. Some of them may even be from the younger demographic that we are looking toward as future club leadership. As an added bonus, getting your members involved in the implementation of social media may actually add to your volunteer and participation rates your other activities.

In addition, PCA National will be bringing on board a full-time social media coordinator in 2013.

Conclusion

Social media is a great way for regions to stay in touch with its members and offer up to the minute information about the club's activities. If used wisely it makes an excellent supplement to a region's newsletter and website. As with Region/Zone Newsletters and Websites, the proper use of Social Media can be a highly fruitful activity increasing membership, interest, participation, and retention.

Authors:

Sean Cridland, Zone 9 Representative

Aaron Ambrosino, Zone 11 Representative



P O R S C H E C L U B O F A M E R I C A

NATIONAL OFFICE

Porsche Club of America
9689 Gerwig Lane, Unit 4C/D
Columbia, MD 21046



© Copyright 2012 Porsche Club of America
All Rights Reserved

FIRST CLASS MAIL