

# Websites and Social Media

## Overview

"Social media is a powerful tool that is changing the way people absorb information, mobilize for advocacy, and raise awareness about issue campaigns. Research shows that more than 90% of people trust peer recommendations, but only 33% trust messages from brands and organizations. This is the power of social media, where networks are comprised of friends, family, community, and connections, which allows organizations to amplify a singular message and spread it quickly." From <http://www.pta.org/advocacy/content.cfm?ItemNumber=3892> - Where Social Media and PTA Advocacy Collide - Advocacy - National PTA

An expanded web presence can help a School PTA involve more parents, keep track of fundraisers and activities, process registration and volunteers, and receive payments.

## Social media and the PTA

<http://www.socialbrite.org/pta/>

## Social Media Marketing PowerPoint Presentation

<http://www.slideshare.net/readyssetpresent/social-media-marketing-powerpoint-presentation>

If you wish to have a separate PTA website apart from, but linked to, your school's website, try one of these web hosts other School PTAs have found effective:

Webhost	Link	Details
Google Sites / Google Groups	<a href="http://sites.google.com">http://sites.google.com</a> , <a href="http://groups.google.com">http://groups.google.com</a>	Free, build your website with sites and use groups for regular committee info and documents
Go Daddy	<a href="http://www.godaddy.com">http://www.godaddy.com</a>	Free, Website Tonight option
Weebly	<a href="http://www.weebly.com">http://www.weebly.com</a>	Free, easy to use
Parent Teach Network	<a href="http://www.webptn.com">http://www.webptn.com</a>	Not Free, Sallie Mae payment processing also separate fee
Connecting Parents	<a href="http://connectingparents.us/">http://connectingparents.us/</a>	Free, easy to use
Wix	<a href="http://www.wix.com/">http://www.wix.com/</a>	Free, easy to use
Yola	<a href="https://www.yola.com/">https://www.yola.com/</a>	Free, easy to use

## Free Website Builders

<http://www.beautifullife.info/web-design/15-best-free-website-builders/>

## Scheduling SOCIAL MEDIA posts in advance – Connect to your Social Media account

A General overview

<https://blog.dashburst.com/best-social-media-management-tools/>

<https://www.americanexpress.com/us/small-business/openforum/articles/11-free-services-for-scheduling-social-media-updates-1/>

<https://hootsuite.com/> - A wonderful scheduling tool



## Suggested Website Sections

- Most PTAs find it important to include the following pages or sections in their website:

Board/Committee Contacts	Calendar	Documents
Activities	Registration	Volunteer Sign up
Fundraisers	Sponsors	Links

### Obtaining a Domain Name

- Rather than host your PTA page on your School's website, it can be hosted separately. Although not necessary for all web hosts listed, many PTAs choose to have their own domain name/URL. Often schools choose to use their <school name> + "PTA.org" as their domain name. To check if the domain name you wish to use is available and to purchase it for a low yearly fee if it is, visit a domain vendor/host such as [GoDaddy.com](http://GoDaddy.com)

### Online Payment Processing

- School PTAs can increase funding by offering online payment processing of both checks and credit cards to allow parents and businesses to pay for PTA registration, products and events and to make donations. [For more details, visit our Paynet/SchoolPay page.](#)

### Additional Resources

- [Some additional tips for developing your School PTA website can be found at these links:](#)

<http://nevadapta.org/developing-a-program-at-your-school/>

<http://www.socialbrite.org/pta/>

<http://www.slideshare.net/SEORick/social-media-the-pta>

# Newsletters

A School newsletter is an effective means of communication between teachers, staff, the PTA and parents. The volunteer who writes a school newsletter must keep up with school events, student performances, teacher information, as well as any other items of interest to the school

Read more: [How to Write a School PTA Newsletter | eHow.com http://www.ehow.com/how\\_4491992\\_write-school-pta-newsletter.html#ixzz1vOELHly6](http://www.ehow.com/how_4491992_write-school-pta-newsletter.html#ixzz1vOELHly6)

## Instructions

- Choose a template for the newsletter. MS Word has simple newsletter templates. For longer or more complex newsletters, MS Publisher has a large variety. See Resources below for more template options.
- Know your budget. The PTA usually has a budget specifically for the school newsletter. If your budget is very small, find out if the school will allow copies to be made on their copier (and who is expected to provide the paper).
- Decide how often to print the newsletter. Some schools need only a quarterly newsletter reporting information regarding report card release and after school activities. Others find a bi-monthly or monthly newsletter to be useful.
- Personalize the template you choose for the school. Include a catchy name, the issue and volume number and the date. The volume number will change with each school year, but the issue number will change with each new issue of the newsletter (for example, the newsletter's first issue in its second school year will be Volume 2, Issue 1).
- Use clip art and color. People's eyes are drawn to pictures and colors. Try to find clip art for at least one article per page. Microsoft's website provides downloadable clip art for users (see Resources below).
- Send out emails or fliers to staff, teachers and parents to let them know when the newsletters will be distributed and when they need to submit articles for the newsletter. You need a deadline that gives you enough time to do the newsletter's layout, have the newsletter edited, and have the newsletter copied and distributed. Unless the newsletter is complicated, a week should be sufficient time.
- Ask for help. You should not expect to write every article yourself, but instead should consider yourself the newsletter designer and editor. You are in charge of collecting articles, putting them in the newsletter template in a readable design, and making the newsletter interesting. Ask volunteers for help with editing for grammatical mistakes and with distribution.

## Tips & Warnings

- Keep your newsletter up-to-date and send it out on time. If parents feel that the newsletter only contains "old news" with out-of-date information, they will not read it.
- Keep your newsletters entertaining. Make a section for the students with word games or activities. Include pictures from school functions or a teacher interview. The more interactive the newsletter, the more likely parents will read it.
- If printing in color is too expensive for the budget you are given, consider uploading the newsletter to a school website in color, then printing in black and white.
- If you choose to upload the newsletter to a school website, remember that the information may be searchable by the public. Many parents do not want student information available online.

# Promoting your PTA/PTSA



- **Plan your attack.** Define who your best prospects are, and then determine the best way to reach them. Be as specific as possible. Will you find them on Twitter or Facebook?
- **If you don't have a website, get one set up.** If you can't afford to have someone custom-design your website, put your site up using one of the companies that provide templates and tools that make it easy to create a basic website.
- **Newsletters.** Monthly newsletters show how what you are doing and the good things you do.
- **Set your PTA/PTSA on LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter.** Social Media is the way to go now! Be sure it includes a good description, keywords and a link to your website.
- **Attend meetings of groups on base,** Have business cards and/or trifold in a pocket where they are easily reachable. Don't forget to ask what the people you speak with do, and to really listen to them.
- **Join these groups that attract your targeted audience.** If the group has a website and publishes a list members/friends on the site, make sure your name and website link get added. Once it is added double check to be sure your contact information is correct and your website link isn't broken.
- **Become actively involved in 2 or 3 of these groups.** That will give you more opportunity to meet possible prospects. But remember: opportunists are quickly spotted for what they are, and get little business. While you won't want to become involved in many organizations that require a lot of your time in, you can --and should-- make real contributions to all of them by offering useful ideas and helping with projects when possible.
- **Get together with other PTA/PTSA's who serve the same area.** Make arrangements to work together to raise funds. Network with them. Let them know you are available to work together.
- **Offer to be a speaker.** Base activities and private organizations often need speakers for meetings. You'll benefit from the name recognition, contacts and publicity.
- **Have PTA/PTSA's letters, flyers and other pertinent information printed and ready to go.** Use the front office of your school to display the information.
- **Send out letters to everyone.** Be sure to describe your PTA/PTSA. Follow up periodically with postcard mailings.
- **Run a contest.** Contests always bring in more people and generate excitement in your organization.
- **Publicize your publicity.** Whenever you do get publicity, get permission from the publisher to reprint the article containing the publicity. Make photocopies and mail the copies out.
- **Find out what National PTA programs are out there.** There are many opportunities for grants and program ideas on the website. <http://www.pta.org/index.cfm>