

Social Media Ads: Best Practices

Cheat Sheet

Requirements, Tips, and Specifications

This document will help you design your social media ads to be successful and reach the largest audience using our audience and followers. We cannot guarantee that we will be able to reach every one of our followers, since that is under the control of each of the social media platforms. We will do our best to reach as many of the people in our homeschool-focused audience as possible.

Ad Submission Options and How Ads Are Checked

Pre-Posting Check Options:

Basic Submission Option

Submit no later than two weeks before your scheduled posting date.

When you submit your ads two weeks before the scheduled posting date, our team will check your ad components (graphics and copy) for basic compliance and run the ads on the scheduled date.

Free Professional Review Option

Submit no later than thirty (30) days before your scheduled posting date.

When you submit ad components thirty days before the scheduled posting date, we will run your ad through a series of checks to optimize the components for maximum reach on our platforms. Please submit components for each platform your ad will be running on.

This free professional review includes checking the written text and offering you a rewritten version that targets our audience, more likely giving you better results. We will also review the graphics and offer suggestions to improve the design. The copy and image suggestions will be returned to you one week after you submit them to your rep, and you will have one week to decide to make changes to your existing components, use the suggested rewritten copy, or leave the components as-is.

How Social Media Platforms Check Ads

Step 1: A bot (computer program) analyzes ad graphics and text. If the bot passes an ad, it will start running.

Step 2: If the bot flags an ad for violating a policy, we have the option to review and make edits and resubmit. At that stage, a person reviews the resubmission and either passes or rejects the ad.

Stage 3: Sometimes an ad will pass a bot but be flagged by viewers who complain about an ad violating one of the guidelines. Then an ad is pulled from the social media platform and rejected. At that point, we can edit the ad and resubmit.

General Guidelines

1. Text and graphics should describe or show the promoted product or service or its use.
2. Graphics should have as little text as possible. Best performing graphics are photographs that grab your attention and relate to the product or service.
3. All ads must target adults (18 and over), even if the products are used by their children.
4. We must have the client's tag for the Facebook-branded content tool before we can schedule ads.

Additional Guidance Here:

Facebook: <https://business.facebook.com/policies/>

Instagram: <https://help.instagram.com/477434105621119/>

Pinterest: <https://policy.pinterest.com/en/advertising-guidelines>

X (Twitter): <https://business.x.com/en/help/ads-policies>

Checklist

❑ Do Not Refer to Personal Attributes

Ads must not contain content that asserts or implies personal attributes. This includes direct or indirect assertions or implications about a person's race, ethnic origin, religion, beliefs, age, sexual orientation or practices, gender identity, disability, medical condition (including physical or mental health), financial status, membership in a trade union, criminal record, or name.

Don't Use:

- Text referencing or alluding to personal attributes or characteristics of the targeted group or individual.
Example: "Are you a homeschooling family?" (Instead use, "Find resources for homeschooling families!")
- The word "other" to reference a personal characteristic.
Example: "Meet other homeschoolers" (Instead use, "Meet homeschoolers online now!" or "Looking for homeschoolers near you?")

Note: Be especially careful in wording around special needs and Christianity. When our ads and posts are flagged for violating personal attributes rules, these are the two areas our ads most often fail.

❑ Use Proper Grammar

Ads must not contain profanity or bad grammar or punctuation. Symbols, numbers, and letters must be used properly without the intention of circumventing the ad review process or other enforcement systems.

Use correct grammar and punctuation in the text you use for your ad, and do not use all capital letters on words in your ad's text.

Examples to Avoid:

- Misused capitalization, like using all capital letters in your ad's text.
- Do not include punctuation in hashtags.

❑ **Make Sure Your Landing Page Is a Functional Website**

Ads must not direct people to non-functioning landing pages. This includes landing page content that interferes with a person's ability to navigate away from the page.

Examples:

- Error pages or sites that are under construction
- Landing pages that are PDF or JPEG files
- Landing pages that do not match the product or service promoted in the ad
- Directing people to a closed or secret Facebook group
- Sending people to www.facebook.com

❑ **Branded Content Requirement for Facebook**

Ads promoting branded content must tag the featured third-party product, brand, or business partner using the branded content tool. Branded content within ads is defined as a creator or publisher's content that features or is influenced by a business partner for an exchange of value. When promoting branded content integrations, advertisers **must** use the branded content tool. (Please learn more [here](#) on how to tag the featured third-party product, brand, or business partner.)

*We **cannot** place an ad for a client without branded content integration.*

❑ **Cause-based Advertising Is Not Allowed on X (formerly Twitter)**

X (formerly Twitter) restricts the promotion of and requires advertiser certification for ads that educate, raise awareness, and/or call for people to take action in connection with civic engagement, economic growth, environmental stewardship, or social equity causes.

❑ **You Must Own Rights to Images You Use**

Remember to post authentic content, and don't post anything you copied or collected from the internet that you don't have the right to post.

Ad Tips and Specifications

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/business/ads-guide/image/facebook-feed/traffic>

For general ideas and to browse well-performing ads, see this link: <https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/>.

Images

Tips:

- Ad images with little or no text are preferred.
- For product images, do not use close-up or zoomed-in images of logos. Your image must show the entire product. Sometimes, if you are promoting a book or a magazine, your ad image will show more than 20% text. This may qualify your ad for an exception.
- If you need to include text in your image, try using fewer words and/or reducing the font size of your text. Keep in mind that if your text is too small, it may be difficult to read.
- Make sure most of the text you use is in the body text instead of directly on the ad's image.
- Avoid spreading text all over the image.
- All numbers and watermarks are considered text.

Specs:

- File type: PNG or JPEG
- Optimal Image Size: While Facebook recommends different image sizes, 1080 x 1080 pixels is recommended as that will fit the majority of the ad placements.. Images not the recommended size may appear blurry.
- Images that consist of more than 20% text may experience reduced delivery. For more information visit: <https://www.facebook.com/business/help/980593475366490>.

Text

Tips:

- Use clear headlines and descriptions that resonate with the needs your audience is attempting to fill when browsing Facebook.
- Not all text submitted in each of the categories (headline, link description, primary text) will show up in every ad placement.

Specs:

- Recommendations
- Headline: 27 characters (over 27 characters may be allowed but may be truncated)
- Link Description: 27 characters
- Primary Text: Up to 125 characters (anything over 50 characters may be truncated)

Instagram: <https://www.facebook.com/business/help/877053729032543?id=1997185213680277s>

Images

Tips:

- Make your brand the focal point of the image. Use clear, straightforward images.
- Use images that are concept-driven. Let your image explain the concept of your ad and your product.

Specs:

- File type: JPEG, PNG, BMP, and non-animated GIFs.
- File size: Up to 30 MB
- Recommended: 1080 x 1080 pixels
- Minimum Resolution: 600 x 500 pixels
- Maximum Resolution: 1936 x 1936 pixels
- Aspect ratio: Use a 1:1 aspect ratio

Text

Tips:

- Please do not include URLs in your Instagram text. These URLs in your Instagram ad's text will not be clickable (hyperlinked). However, a sponsored ad on Instagram provides a "Learn more" call to action. Please submit the URL you would like to be linked to your ad.
- Focus on the first two rows of text since they are the only ones displayed without clicking on the post.

Specs:

- Headline: 40 characters
- Primary Text: Up to 125 characters is recommended. (Up to 2,200 characters are allowed.)

Pinterest: <https://business.pinterest.com/en/Pinterest-product-specs>

Images

Tips:

- Make your brand the focal point of the image. Avoid abstract or general images.
- Put your company logo on every image, but display it subtly. Avoid placing in the bottom right corner of the image so it won't get covered over by Pinterest product icons.
- Add a text overlay onto your image to help it stand out. Keep this text short and not too small for readability on mobile devices.

Specs:

- File type: PNG or JPEG
- Max file size: 20 MB
- Aspect ratio: Use a 2:3 aspect ratio, or 1000 x 1500 pixels to avoid having the image cut off.

Text

Tips:

- Use clear titles and descriptions so that your Pin will get picked up in searches.

Specs:

- Must include title: Up to 100 characters. (Only first 40 characters may be visible.)
- Must provide a URL.
- Description: Up to 500 characters. Descriptions will not show on home feed or search feed. Descriptions are used by their algorithm to determine relevance and delivery. Use a keyword-rich description to help get the Pin in front of the right audience. The first 50–60 characters are most likely to show up in people's feeds, so put your most important info first.

X (formerly Twitter): <https://business.x.com/en/help/ads-policies/ads-content-policies/quality-policy>,
<https://business.x.com/en/help/campaign-setup/creative-ad-specifications-old>

Images

Tips:

- Avoid images that are gimmicky, misleading, excessively cropped, or which are otherwise of low editorial quality.

Specs:

- Image width/height with Aspect Ratio: 800 x 418 pixels for 1.91:1 aspect ratio, 800 x 800 pixels for 1:1 aspect ratio (max 3mb) will be better optimized for when users click to expand images.
- Image file size: 5 MB.
- File types: PNG, JPEG, or GIF. (GIFs uploaded will render as a static image.)

Video

Specs:

- Video Ratio: 16:9 and 1:1
- File size: Maximum 1 GB (For optimal performance, we strongly recommend keeping files under 30 MB.)
- File types: MP4 or MOV
- Recommended Time: 15 seconds or less
- Maximum Time: 2 minutes, 20 seconds

Text

Tips:

- Use clear descriptions so that your post is easily readable and includes a call to action.

Specs:

- Up to 280 characters, including hyperlinks and tags.
- Headlines of up to 70 characters are required for an X ad.
- Excessive use of capitalization, punctuation, or symbols is prohibited.
- The destination URL's primary purpose cannot be advertising; it should contain quality, original content and be directly relevant to what is being advertised in the ad copy.
- Hashtags and emojis are not allowed in X advertising.

YouTube videos (not ads):

Recommended sizes:

426 x 240 pixels (240p)	Minimum YouTube video size (good for viewing on a slow internet connection)
640 x 360 pixels (360p)	Best for YouTube videos that need to be embedded on websites
854 x 480 pixels (480p)	Standard definition of YouTube video size
1280 x 720 pixels (720p)	Preferred YouTube HD video size when viewing videos on mobile data or a slow internet connection
1920 by 1080 pixels (1080p)	Standard HD video size and the best option for viewing
2560 x 1440 pixels (1440p)	2K video quality YouTube video size
3840 x 2160 pixels (2160p)	4K video quality YouTube video size

Specs:

- Title: 3–5 words (up to 50 characters)
- Description: up to 5000 characters
- Minimum size: 426 x 240 pixels
- Maximum size: 3840 x 2160 pixels
- Supported aspect ratios: 16:9 and 4:3 (If your video is not in the recommended 16:9 aspect ratio, YouTube may add padding for optimal viewing.)
- Recommended specs:
- MP4 (**MP4 is the best format for YouTube.**)
- Maximum file size: 128GB
- Maximum length: 2 minutes long

Banned Words for Facebook Ads (Also Applicable to Other Platforms)

For deals and giveaways, do not use:

- FREE
- FREEBIE

- GIVEAWAY
- DEAL
- WIN
- ENTER
- CONTEST

Avoid clickbait terms:

- LIKE US
- LIKE THIS
- COMMENT
- SHARE
- JOIN OUR
- SIGN UP
- TAG A FRIEND
- CLICK HERE
- SAVE THIS
- SUBSCRIBE

Avoid salesly terms:

- SALE
- % OFF
- ORDER
- DISCOUNT
- COUPON
- SELL
- BUY (OR BUY NOW)
- MARKED DOWN

Sales terms words to avoid:

- TODAY ONLY
- ENDING SOON
- WHILE SUPPLIES LAST
- LIMITED TIME
- ONLY X DAYS LEFT
- DOORS CLOSE

Disclosures words to avoid:

- #AD
- #SPONSORED
- #SPON
- SPONSORED
- AD
- AFFILIATE
- AFF OR #AFF
- COMMISSION

Examples of other words to avoid:

- BULIMIA
- PROTESTANT
- FIBROMYALGIA
- ISLAMIC
- ANXIETY
- WEIGHT LOSS
- ADD/ADHD
- DEBT-RELIEF