

Social Media 101

The Facebook & Twitter guide for the Dance Exchange

Alison Beth Waldman, Spring 2011

INTRODUCTION

Why Social Media?

Social networking a strong way to build and engage with an audience and keep track of what's popular and gaining momentum in the field. It's an advertising platform, reference point, and research guide all in one system.

Everybody's doing it. Really. Instead of going out and looking for information, people are now expecting information to come to them—and many are using social media as their platforms.

The beauty of social networking is that it is, well, *networking*. It's a *conversation*. Once you're connected, you can exchange information in an organized, live feed-like way. Both Facebook and Twitter provide for this exchange and make it extremely easy to expand your network by making it clear with whom both your friends and partners are connecting.

General Goals

We want to use social media not only to advertise events, activities, and people, but also to connect to the people and organizations that take interest in what we're doing.

We want to be inviting. The best social media posts are personable and relatable, but not so thought out they seem unnatural. The advantage of individuals, organizations, and companies sharing the same social networking atmosphere is we can remind our audience that there are actual, real people behind the work at the Dance Exchange who are accessible to them. We have an advantage that we associate ourselves with big names, and people get excited when they can be a part of that. In return, we want to show our audience that we know they are out there. We want to engage them by asking questions, calling out for feedback, and responding to what others are posting so they don't feel anonymous and ignored.

We want our presence on social media to mean something—not just exist because everyone else is doing it. We want to take advantage of the open, idea-sharing atmosphere that the Dance Exchange embodies and transfer it to this platform. Dance Exchange has always invited audiences to engage with what they experience, and we want social media to be another way they can do that that is comfortable and open, as they can join in a conversation with others across the world. Thus, we want to engage our audience in what's going on with Dance Exchange and invite them to think, talk, and share about their experiences with workshops, classes, publications, performances, or anything else Dance Exchange on social media.

GETTING STARTED

Before you do anything, take some time to explore Facebook and Twitter to familiarize yourself with how each works for Dance Exchange. Don't get caught up trying to understand the sidebars, options, and lingo; just observe.

Dance Exchange already has a footing in social media, so the foundation is already set. Information and updates move fast, however, so it's our goal to maintain and improve our presence as time goes on.

General outreach and maintenance

Keep up with "friending" and "following" individuals and organizations that take an interesting Dance Exchange. Use your knowledge of the company to brainstorm pages and users we can connect with. Maintaining a relationship on social media could prove useful later. Hear mumblings of a name, event, or organization floating around the office? Search for their social media presence and "friend" or "follow" if you find them. Most organizations have links to their social media pages on their websites. Both Facebook and Twitter also have search features that can help you locate users. Magazines and publications who have interviewed or featured us, venues who've hosted us, organizations we've worked with, DC/Virginia/Maryland art organizations, guest artists ... you name it, you can most likely find them.

Especially when building up presence on social media, don't hesitate to "friend" or "follow." Adding ourselves to a page's network will expose our page (and our content) to those who are connected with our new "friend."

CAUTION: Once we've built up our "friends" and "followers" base, we want to give time for our numbers to catch up with us. In general we want to maintain a 2:1 ratio of those following/friending us to those we friend or follow.

Facebook

www.facebook.com --“Liz Lerman Dance Exchange”

Getting Set Up

For a company page like Dance Exchange, you need administrative access to make edits and posts on the page. You also need a personal profile already on Facebook. Anyone who is already an administrator can add you as an administrator. You will login through your personal profile—there is no login specifically for the Dance Exchange page.

Overview: Important Features & Pages

- **Home page**—the activity of the people and organizations we “like”. What they post, comment, and share on their pages and others will show up here.
- **Wall**—this is a shared space. This is where we post content to share, and other people who “like” Dance Exchange’s page can also post a comment or other content.
- **Events** – we can create events and send invitations. Creating an event creates a separate page for the event, which we can post on our wall and others’ walls.
- **The “Like” feature** —Like our page, most company pages have a “like” option—this is how other users connect with us.



There is also a “like” option on wall posts and comments. When we “like” something, it will show that we do.

Using Facebook

- **“Use Facebook as Liz Lerman Dance Exchange”** – this is the most important button! This will allow you to make posts and comments as ‘Liz Lerman Dance Exchange’. If you don’t press this, comments and posts will appear as under your personal profile.

- **“View Notifications”**—keeps tracks of incoming comments, likes, and fans of our page.
- **“View Insights”** – analytics of feedback and interaction on our page by the week or month.

Posting Content

- When posting links, you can paste the link right into the posting space, and it will give you the option to post a thumbnail with the link.
 - You can post multiple links in one post, but only share a thumbnail for one.
- To tag another user in our post, you can create a link to their page by typing @username.
- If you need to delete a post, hover over the top right corner of the post and click the “x” that will appear
- Remember to use “you” and ask questions to engage conversation, encourage comments and likes.

Outreach & Engagement

- Check out what others are up to on your Home page. All posts have feedback options of “liking” or leaving a comment. If we like it, “like it”, or tell them so in a comment.
- Share others’ content you think is relevant/interesting. Under each post there is a “share” option. It will give you the option to add your own text, and when you hit “share”, it will post onto Dance Exchange’s wall as posted by us “via (name of original poster)”
- Respond to interesting comments users leave on our posts.

Monitoring

- Use **Insights** to keep track what kinds of posts and events drive the most traffic and/or create conversation. Use this as a reference and learning tool of how to continue using Facebook effectively.

Twitter

www.twitter.com --@LLDanceExchange

It's easy to get overwhelmed and confused by the amount of information and lingo on Twitter. But learn your way around, and you'll be able to organize the information to your liking.

Overview: Lingo, Etiquette, and Symbols

- @Username creates a link to that user's profile, which is list of their tweets.
 - Ex: @LLDanceExchange.
- #hashtags represent categories and topics. Using a #hashtag will link your posts to that category.
 - Ex: What are your plans to celebrate National #Dance Week?
- Replies are when you reply to a user's tweet by using their @username
 - Ex: Thanks @jamesgleventhal, we're thrilled to have moved such a great audience in San Francisco.
- Retweets (RT): Used to retweet another person's tweet verbatim and credit them.
 - There is an automatic "Retweet" option if you hover over any tweet. It will link your RT to the original post with the symbol  .
 - You may also see "RT" used to retweet
 - Ex: RT @GirlScoutsHI: So excited for Priceless this Saturday feat. an office blessing, @LLDanceExchange, Maya Seotoro-Ng, plus games & prizes! Tix still avail!
 - NOTE: If there's room, you can add a response before a RT

Using Twitter

Posting

- Tweets are limited to 140 characters. Be concise.
- Don't let RT's and @replies outdo the number of original tweets we post per day
- Stay upbeat, positive, and engaging

- Use “you” and ask questions, encouraging users to reply
- Links can be shortened to 20 characters through online services.
 - <http://bitly.com/> is quick and easy to use to shorten links

Engaging

- Add an anticipatory element to keep users watching for our tweets
 - Ex: Did you know? Dance Exchange has a blog! Over the next couple weeks we'll be featuring our favorite entries here on Twitter, so stay tuned!
- Check out the Home page (top menu) to see what tweets our followers are posting. Reply & RT what you think is relevant or interesting to Dance Exchange's mission.
- Lists: You can create lists to organize who we're following on Twitter. This will help you organize information, help you filter if you want to see what group or groups are up to, and easily connect.
 - Ex: Dance Companies, Performing Arts venues, Arts Organizations, Funders, Theater Organizations, Partners, Environmental Organizations, Dance Enthusiasts, Dance Media, Local Organizations
- If you hover over a tweet, it will give you the option to Retweet or reply.
- @Mentions collects all in one place the tweets that mention @LLDanceExchange.
 - This is good to reference when you want to reply or give a shout out, or see if anyone has replied to one of our tweets.

Twitter Software

Once you've mastered the basics of Twitter, programs such TweetDeck and HootSuite let you organize your lists, tweets, and streams of information that the Dance Exchange account receives.