

Ford Amphitheatre

Social Media Tips & Best Practices

TWITTER

While some people are not as active on Twitter as others, when used properly, there are benefits that can really be useful for performing artists.

Widgets

- To keep fans, both old and new, engaged and updated on your group's latest news, Twitter makes it very easy to create and embed a widget on your website (and blog & FaceBook profile).
- Instead of constantly asking your web designer to make simple updates when it relates to things like Upcoming Shows, Latest News, etc... embedding a Twitter widget allows one to make these updates themselves, without any knowledge of HTML or computer programming.
- When you go to www.Twitter.com and scroll to the bottom, there is a link called "Goodies." It takes you to a page that lets you choose "Widgets."
- Twitter then takes you through a step-by-step process to create your personalized widget.
- It ends with the HTML code that you simply copy and paste to add a widget to your site (also can be added to your FaceBook page).

We encourage all Ford Theatres partners to tweet about their shows. This is great opportunity for you to promote your event right on the Ford homepage and to share any developments or behind-the-scenes information that may be interesting to Web visitors as you gear up to your show at the Ford.

- **For those interested in being involved, please follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com.fordtheatres**
- **To have your tweets show up on our Twitter feed, include the following hashtag at the end of your message: #fordla**
- **When mentioning the Ford to use: @fordtheatres**

FACEBOOK

Increase the effectiveness of your Facebook Page Status Updates!

- **All status updates aren't created equal.** Facebook uses an algorithm based on the level of engagement a story/update receives.
- This means that all status updates are not seen by all fans. **Updates that receive a lot of "Likes" or "Comments" will be exposed to a much higher % of your fans in their Top News stream.**
- **There will be a much higher likelihood that your fans will actually see your post if it is engaging than an update that gets few 'likes' or 'comments.'**
- **Ask Fans to "Like" your Update.** For example, instead of simply saying: "We're excited to announce the release of our Summer tour schedule," say something like: "We're excited to announce the release of our Summer tour schedule. Click the 'Like' button if you like where we're headed."
- **Encourage Comments by asking Yes/No questions.** For example, you'll get far more responses to the question, "Tell us what you think of our new costume designs" if you ask it this way: "Do you like our new costume designs – yes or no?"

Increase the visibility of your posts on FaceBook.

FaceBook adopted a concept just a little while ago that allows you to link to friends when mentioning them in a post.

As a result of “linking” a friend when mentioning them, your post now also shows up on that friend’s wall. So, in addition to all of your friends viewing your latest post, now it will also be seen by friends of any of your friends that you “linked” in the message.

Here is how it works:

1. Login to you FaceBook account.
2. Start typing a message to post an update on your wall.
3. Choose a friend that you are going to mention in this post.
4. Before typing their name, type the @ symbol.
5. After the @ symbol, begin typing the letters of your friend’s name to mention in the post.
6. A drop down list should appear, listing your friends.
7. Choose the correct person. Notice how that person’s name now has a link in your post.
8. Finish your message and post your status update.

More Tips on Facebook can be found here:

6 Clever Tricks to Double the Effectiveness of Your Fan Page Status Updates!

YOUTUBE

In addition to sharing footage of live performances, we’ve found that capturing video from rehearsals is a great way to interact online. One of our Ford Summer 2010 Partners, L.A. Contemporary Dance Company, does this very well. Take a look at an example of a short clip that gives their fans a “Behind-the-Scenes” look and interview:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pkZ_38onJUY

TICKET GIVE-AWAYS

Increase the size of your fan base by utilizing interactive promotions:

- **50% of online users like to enter a Sweepstakes or a Contest at least once per month.**
- Business that offer contests have twice as many social network fans than those that do not.
- Get more Facebook fans, Twitter followers, newsletter signups, email addresses.
- An application that works well with Facebook and Twitter is called **Wildfire App**.
- Visit <http://wildfireapp.com> and explore the many different kinds of promotion types that you can operate through your Facebook page, Twitter profile, or Web site (includes sweepstakes, Contests, coupons, group deal, product giveaways, favorite picks and trivia).
- Participants never have to leave Facebook to enter the contest.
- **It also allows the option for participants to SHARE the CONTEST to their entire network of Friends, thus exposing you to a wider audience.**

URL SHORTNER - www.bit.ly

- Since Twitter only allows users 140 characters maximum when posting messages, it helps to "shorten" long URL links
- www.Bit.ly is a site we like to use to keep track of the links we post. Here is a way you can use it to promote your night at The Ford:
 1. Visit www.bit.ly
 2. Copy the URL of your event listing on www.FordTheatres.org
 3. Paste the long URL in the field at www.bit.ly that says "Enter Your Long Link Here to Get Started"
 4. A shortened version of the long URL will show up
 5. Copy that new link and post it online through your Facebook and Twitter accounts
 6. Register with www.bit.ly (it is free), then you can access detailed information and statistics on the sites that you have "shortened."

SOCIALMENTION.COM

- SocialMention.com is a social media search and analysis platform that aggregates user generated content from across the universe into a single stream of information.
- The site offers a free service that allows you to easily track and measure what people are saying about you, your company, a new product or any topic across the web's social media landscape in real-time.
- SocialMention monitors 100+ social media properties directly including: Twitter, Facebook, FriendFeed, YouTube, Digg, Google etc.
- It takes very little time to visit www.socialmedia.com and input your group/company/ensemble's name.
- Notice the interesting stats that it returns, including categories like: Strength, Sentiment, Passion, & Reach.