

veryone knows the saying: "A picture is worth a thousand words." But thanks to the power of social media websites and apps, the right picture also can be worth numerous "thumbs-ups" and "wow faces" on Facebook, or hearts on Twitter and Instagram.

"The right photo can capture a special moment or tell a compelling story," NALC President Fredric Rolando said. "Using social media tools can let others see what NALC members are doing as activists, as volunteers

and as members of the communities we live in."

Pick your pics

Before you take a picture to post online, take a moment to make sure it says what you want it to say. That extra second or two before you hit the button can mean the difference between an average photo and a great one. In fact, go ahead and take several, then choose the one you like the best.

This is also your chance to play "director." In a movie, the actors rarely

look right at the

camera because

they're playing

roles in the story

you're watching,

and it's that effect

that draws you in.

The same goes for

photos. Individual

might work just

fine for the walls

of your branch

hall or for your

your photos so

mantle at home,

but for your online

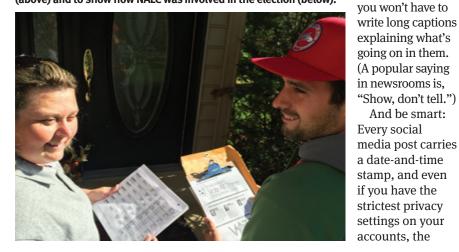
audience, compose

And be smart:

and group portraits



Images from the Philadelphia Branch 157 social media account, including photos to increase interest in NALC's 2014 convention (above) and to show how NALC was involved in the election (below).



things you post online-photos, comments, stories-still have the potential for making their way to the public web for literally *all* the world to see.

Tell your story

For NALC Legislative and Political Organizer Ed Morgan, picking a theme was an effective way for him to tell a story and generate interest in his hometown of Philadelphia, the site of NALC's 69th Biennial Convention in 2014.

That year, Morgan was the keeper of Philadelphia Branch 157's social media accounts. In the weeks leading up to that summer's national convention, Morgan enlisted the help of some of his fellow branch members and took pictures of them holding up NALCspecific signs in front of the city's various landmarks-all tied together with the theme: #WeAreReady. Posting the pictures—at a rate of about one per day-helped give the account's followers a sampling of what the city had to offer, and it added an extra level of excitement to the coming convention. Many of Morgan's posts had numerous likes, shares and retweets.

Facebook, with more than 1 billion subscribers, is the social media giant. Here, you can easily post hundreds of pictures at a time; it's essentially replaced the vacation slide shows from a generation ago.

But with Facebook you can make a great case for the "less is more" principle. Think about it: When was the last time you sat and scrolled through dozens (or hundreds) of photos, many of which were minor variations of others? It's good practice to go through and pick the best photos of your branch get-togethers or volunteer work before you upload them to Facebook.

Did the people in the photos have a good time at your branch's picnic? Did



they work hard collecting food for our annual Stamp Out Hunger[®] Food Drive? Then upload pictures that show it—as opposed to posting generic pictures of groups simply standing around and posing for a photo. Put yourself in your audience's shoes and ask yourself whether you would find each picture interesting and "like"-worthy.

That's an approach NALC takes to picture-posting on its Facebook account (facebook.com/nalc.national). We try to provide our followers with compelling action shots-not just who was at a given occasion, but what they were doing there. It's great if a bunch of people showed up for your activist event; it's even greater if you post pictures of them actually making phone calls or knocking on doors. If you want people to know you're working hard to support our charitable and activist efforts, you can easily prove it by posting pictures on Facebook that demonstrate it. A little forethought could turn your social media presence into a useful recruitment tool for when you're looking for volunteers for future events.

NALC also runs separate Facebook pages dedicated to the Food Drive (facebook.com/StampOutHunger) and to our work with the Muscular Dystrophy Association (facebook.com/ DeliverTheCure).

Scrolling, scrolling

Twitter's reach is smaller, but its users tend to be quite passionate about the platform. It's especially loved by members of Congress, as it provides an easy way for them to get word out about what's on their minds (within Twitter's 140-character limit), and it's also a convenient medium for lawmakers to find out what people are saying and thinking about the legislative and political news of the day. Twitter is also

National Association of Letter Carriers



Liked -S Follow

More -Share

Vou

National Association of Letter Carriers November 16 at 6:30pm - 🔊

Retired letter carrier John Adams Jr. still remembers nearly every detail of his mail route-and of his training during World War II as a Tuskegee Airman, the first U.S. military unit to allow African-American pilots to fly airplanes in combat. https://goo.gl/Yrxx24

National Association of Letter Carriers @nalc.national

Home Posts Photos About Videos Likes Twitter Events



Comment A Share

heavily used by the news media; its short, headline-news format provides a near-perfect go-to medium for instant feedback and reactions to the news. Just about every news program on TV—whether the subject is hard news, entertainment, sports or weather-uses Twitter to showcase interesting photos to help illustrate their stories. (NALC is on Twitter: @nalc_national.)

While selfies also are quite popular on Twitter, they're perhaps even more so on Instagram, where NALC members often share photos of their work as volunteers as well as activists-marching in Labor Day parades, taking part in bowlathons for the Muscular Dystrophy Association, and so on. If you're planning to take a selfie, don't be afraid to

ask members of your family or branch to step into it with you.

Instagram also is a good medium for showing off some of our achievements. such as the awarding of Million Mile plaques or longtime membership pins, or the haul collected in our

Above: A sample post from the NALC Facebook account

Below: An image posted on Instagram

annual Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive. A quick scan of NALC's account (lettercarriers) reveals a wide variety of pictures and situations, and it illustrates the real creativity of our members.

Social media can be a bit less formal of a medium than an official website, so it's not just OK to have a little fun with it-it's encouraged. Remember to keep things positive in your Facebook, Twitter and Instagram posts, and you can help build significant goodwill for the representative, administrative, training, charitable and other work that NALC members and officers do all vear round. PR

