ICAS Social Media Strategy

This document has been created to define the ICAS approach to using social media by setting goals and objectives for strategic use of these channels.

What are the benefits of using social media for ICAS?

- Social media will support activity on our core channel – the new ICAS website – through promotion of content and calls to action.
- ICAS will extend its reach and engagement with key audiences (e.g. students, members, partners) through social media.
- Social media will support the brand strategy and help to raise the profile of ICAS.
- Social listening allows ICAS to know what is being said about us, positive, negative or neutral and enable us to respond accordingly.
- ICAS will generate leads through social media networks.
- Social media will help ICAS attract more members and students.
- Social media will allow ICAS to build relationships with followers 24/7.
- Social media will help ICAS rank higher on Google and other search engines.

Which social channels should ICAS be using?

In order to maximise the impact of ICAS’ social media presence, we will focus on Twitter, LinkedIn and Instagram as our channels of choice.

We have significant audiences already on Twitter and LinkedIn and will gain opportunities for engagement, particularly with students and younger members, through more visual content on Instagram. This does not mean other social channels cannot be used at the discretion of the Marketing team e.g. Facebook and YouTube.

Benefits of these social channels

Using these three social channels will allow ICAS to cover the diverse range of our target audiences (members, students, stakeholders etc.) by interacting with them on their channels of choice.

- The ICAS LinkedIn Group (exclusive to members only) enables ICAS to directly engage with our members and these members with one another. Partner content will be removed from the group and positioned in relevant subsections of the ICAS company page.
- Twitter will allow for greater exposure of ICAS’ content to members, students, businesses and the general public. This, and our activity on LinkedIn, enables us to develop our network online.
- Instagram will enable ICAS to engage with the younger generation of students and CAs who are active on this network.

Note: The key to success on these channels is the creation of high quality content and the Editorial Policy and Content Strategy for the new ICAS website sit at the heart of this.
Who manages these channels?

The ICAS Editorial Team will be responsible for the day-to-day control of ICAS’ social channels (governed by the ICAS Editorial Steering Group for strategic direction). This will allow the Editorial team to provide support to all departments and social champions to promote their content via these channels, whilst protecting the reputation of ICAS on social media.

Goals and Objectives

Aligning ICAS’ social objectives

Vague, imprecise objectives like “get more followers” aren’t easily measured or meaningful (100 engaged fans are better than 1,000 who aren’t). The Editorial Team will apply SMARTER methodology (Specific Measurable Attainable Relevant Timely Enjoyable Re-Evaluate) to measure effectiveness on ICAS social channels.

Goal: Increase social referrals to ICAS.com by 100% by end of 2015

The goal of using social media should be to increase exposure of ICAS’ website content e.g. news, events and courses. In 2014 ICAS had 9,880 referrals from social networks. With a strong strategy in place there is no reason why this cannot be doubled to 20,000 by the end of 2015.

How can this be achieved?

1. Apply a structured approach to social media by embedding social media best practice across ICAS.

   Identify social media champions trained and active in each division helping to create social posts two times a week. These champions will be supported by best practice/how to guides from the Editorial Team. Potential social champions will include members of the Technical, Member Engagement, Education and the Marketing teams.

2. Merging ICAS’ three Twitter channels into single channel

   To ensure a consistent voice across channels, posts for myCAcareer and ICASoffers will now be included within the main ICASaccounting Twitter feed with the aim of slowly phasing out these legacy channels. myCAcareer and ICASoffers are scheduled to close at the end of July.

3. Creating socially shareable content (boost engagement).

   Create two to three pieces of shareable content such as infographics and videos per month and promote this (managed and approved by the Editorial Team). At present across all of ICAS’ social channels we have 1.4% engagement rate. Making sure content is shareable should help to maintain this rate as more people start to see our content.
4. **Build an online network of CAs**

Create a weekly discussion based on ICAS’ Editorial content, which sparks conversations between followers. Aim for a minimum of five comments from followers on each topic.

Key to this will be encouraging members to start to engage with ICAS by building their trust. We will emphasise the exclusive and secure nature of our social channels, particularly LinkedIn, by providing a new and managed approach to partner content to.

5. **Establish ICAS as a thought leader (reputation management)**

ICAS as a brand will create a conversation with our key stakeholders but also that our internal influencers from the executive to other leaders in the business and experts support and drive that conversation. This will include supporting our digital champions and subject matter specialists in their engagement activity on a day-to-day basis, at member engagement events, and ICAS/partner conferences.

6. **Real time feedback**

Monitor what is being said about ICAS on a daily/weekly basis and feed back to the Editorial Steering Group and weekly Editorial Group to help inform ICAS’ content strategy. The Editorial Team and social champions will also make use of relevant hashtags and social influencers to increase the reach of ICAS’ social content.

7. **Membership support**

Explore how ICAS can support the membership and international communities in social media. This includes best practice in line with ICAS’ social media principles and tone of voice guidelines. This activity will be led by the Editorial Team.