NORTH
Dakota
Be Legendary.

Social Media
Brand Guide

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Introduction

PURPOSE

This style guide is a reference tool for how the "Be Legendary" brand can appear and act across social channels owned by the State of North Dakota. It will include visual guidelines, tone, regulations and other aspects that will help provide a consistent and engaging social strategy to better serve the citizens of North Dakota.

IMPORTANCE OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Social Media is one of the most accessible technologies to communicate and interact with the citizens of North Dakota. It is a vital tool to maintain transparency, communicate effectively and celebrate the work we do for our state. Social media provides organizations with powerful and accessible tools to increase our brand awareness, communicate with our target audiences and broaden the reach of our messaging. However the road to success on social media is incredibly diverse. Goals can vary greatly depending on your mission, who you're trying to reach and if you plan to accomplish these with an organic or paid strategy. We hope this document helps give you some guidelines to accomplish your social media goals.

SOCIAL MEDIA BEST PRACTICES

CONSISTENCY

Keeping a consistent pace is important across all accounts for maintaining a strong algorithm. How often to share will vary from platform to platform and change over time so make sure to look up the latest research on what an optimal pace should be. A good goal to start with is generally once a day across all accounts.

INTERACTION

Interacting with your audience is key for building brand awareness, trust, and a successful social strategy. Make it a priority to engage with your audience in a timely manner at least once a day and build future content and campaigns on what your audience is the most engaged with.

VISUAL IDENTITY

Profile imagery should follow the Be Legendary brand guidelines to create an easily recognizable and consistent image of the State of North Dakota. You can find these details on page 8 of this guide.

ANALYZE AND EXPERIMENT

Almost all social accounts provide you with free, in-depth analytics to better understand how your content is performing and with who. Make sure to take time to analyze these numbers to ensure you are prioritizing the metrics important to your mission and modify tactics that don't deliver the desired results.

S O C I A L   V O I C E

Like many areas of social media, the tone and length of your copy can be fluid from one piece of content to the next depending on the emotion you're trying to convey. If one piece of content is lighthearted and humorous, make sure your copy reflects those feelings. If your content is serious in nature, have your copy be more structured and professional. There is not a "one-size fits all" type of communication for social media. Below are descriptions of the Be Legendary brand voice followed by ways you can incorporate them into social.

HONEST

Our words are as authentic as our state. They instill a sense of trust and excitement without over-promising.

✅	❌
"From the badlands, to our cities, to the rugged wildlife and of course that big open sky, it's hard not to love North Dakota."	"North Dakota has everything you could possibly want in a vacation!" *This is over promising. In reality, North Dakota does not have everything anyone could possibly want. It comes off as dishonest and is easily dismissed/forgotten by readers.*

REAL

We write like we talk, using everyday language. We avoid clichés and worn-out metaphors. Our copy is conversational, approachable and human.

✅	❌
"Want to stay up-to-date on North Dakota's beautiful fall colors? Be sure to check out our Fall Foliage report!"	"The Autumn Equinox brings a multitude of gorgeous colors to our landscape. Stay informed on all changes our scenery will see on our Fall Foliage report" *Although descriptive, this text is overly wordy and unnatural. Talk like you would with a friend at dinner.*

SPIRITED

There's a zip to the rhythm of our writing; it's pleasant and engaging.

✓

"Are we surprised Devils Lake, North Dakota makes the best ice fishing spots in the world list? Nope.
Are we excited to get on the ice this year? YES, YES and YES!"

✗

"Devils Lake, North Dakota makes the best ice fishing spots in the world list."

Phrasing lacks genuine emotion that does not excite the reader.

OPTIMISTIC

We're excited about the potential of our state! We take every opportunity to share forward-thinking ideas and practical applications. We describe the future in an inspiring and energetic way with an air of possibility.

✓

"The pride North Dakotan's have in their state is undeniable...you don't have to be born here to BE here."

✗

"Come and meet North Dakota. We think you'll like it here!"

Lacking inspiration or creative wording doesn't give the impression we truly believe in our state, so the reader won't either.

SOCIAL COPY

BEST PRACTICES WHEN POSTING

Every piece of content should be created with a specific audience in mind. Posts should generally include the following:

- A strong lead that sparks curiosity and engages specific audiences. For example:
  - Did you know? or #DYK?
  - Want to learn more about...?
  - Interested in...?
- A strong visual that captures attention and stops the scroll.
- Spacing between sentences, as appropriate, to increase readability.
- A call-to-action (i.e. visit a site, complete a form, share a picture, use a hashtag, etc.)
- An optimized story headline and image for link previews on owned content. Remove the URL if the link preview displays.
- Account mentions and hashtags.
- Tag other applicable pages as necessary.
- Emojis, if appropriate.
- Video post tags, if applicable.
- Alt text and image descriptions, if possible.
- If needed, include a link or a webcard so your audience has a place to learn more or complete a call to action.

BEST PRACTICES WHEN RESPONDING

Here are some tips for responding to social media comments:

- Respond in a positive tone.
- Respond back or "like" comments in a timely manner.
- Be sincere in your response.
- Thank them for their time.
- Personalize your message.
- Apologize sincerely.
- Message users privately to discuss grievances.
- Appreciate their feedback.
- Provide follow-up to a problem in a timely manner.
- Don't delete their comments.
- Do not engage with accounts that appear fake or "spammy".

SOCIAL VISUALS

Visuals are incredibly important when building effective social content. Almost every piece of content should include them to represent your primary message, catch your audience's attention and optimize your algorithm. There are multiple formatting options to choose from that differ from one platform to the next. Here are some best practices to keep in mind to maintain brand quality.

PHOTOGRAPHY

- Use clear, high-quality photos that pertain to your copy.
- Prioritize vertically formatted visuals.

Refer to the full brand guide for visual examples. To obtain photography, please reference the resources below:

- North Dakota Government Owned Assets
    - State Media Library - www.medialibrary.nd.gov
- Subscription
    - Adobe Stock - part of the Creative Suite license
- Free
    - Pexels - www.pexels.com
    - Pixabay - www.pixabay.com

GRAPHICS

- Refer to the ND Legendary Brand Style Guide for guidance on graphics.

VIDEO

- Vertically formatted video tends to perform best within the algorithms. Try to prioritize this.
- Make sure your videos are of high-quality, easy to understand and maintain brand personality and voice.
- Optimal video length can depend on many factors. Test different video lengths with your audience to see what performs best.

BRAND GUIDELINES FOR PROFILE IMAGERY

There are dozens of agencies within the state of North Dakota who have a social presence. It's important for these profiles to remain consistent with the brand, but are given some creative freedoms to maintain agency identity.
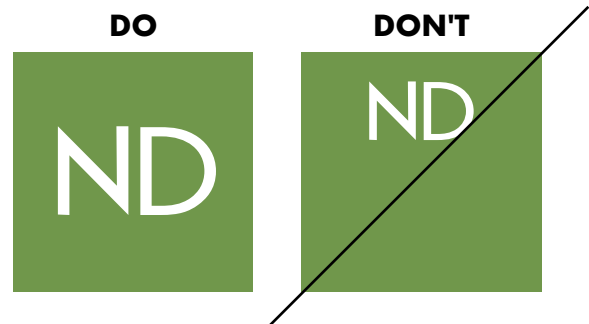
SIMPLE ND
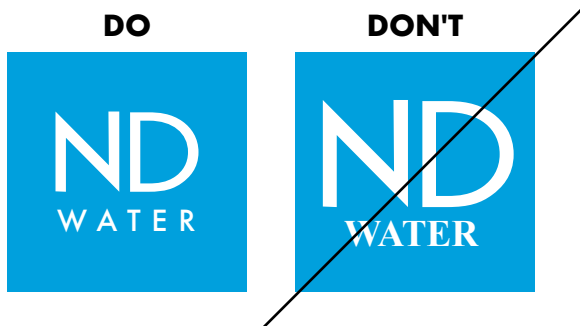ND is large and centered, but leaves a buffer of space even when cropped for profile image.

DO **DON'T**
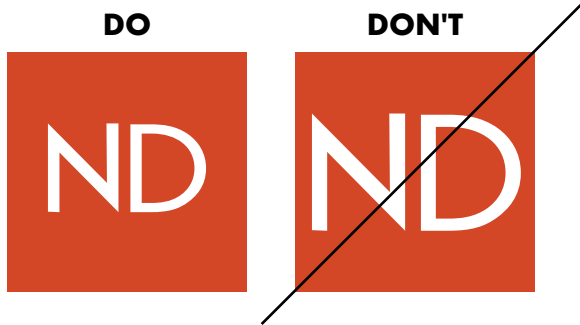
ND WITH GRAPHICS
ND is the dominate feature, taking up more than half the available space. Supporting graphics are balanced and all elements are centered.

DO **DON'T**

ND WITH AGENCY NAME
ND is still the dominate feature, taking up more than half the available space. All elements have a buffer of space and are centered.
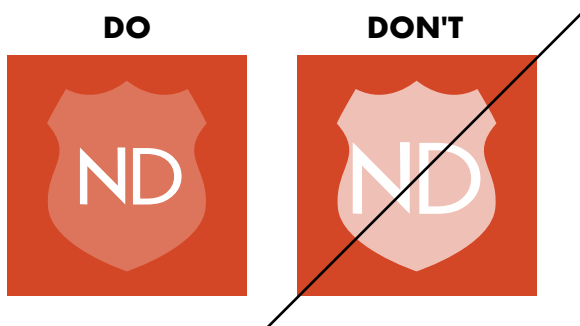
DO **DON'T**

ND WITH GRAPHICS AND TEXT
ND is still the dominate feature, taking up more than half the available space. All elements have a buffer of space and are centered.
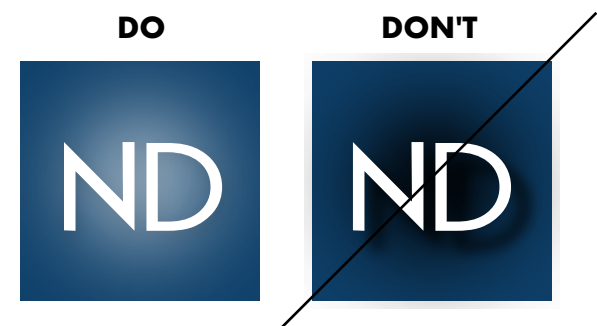
DO **DON'T**
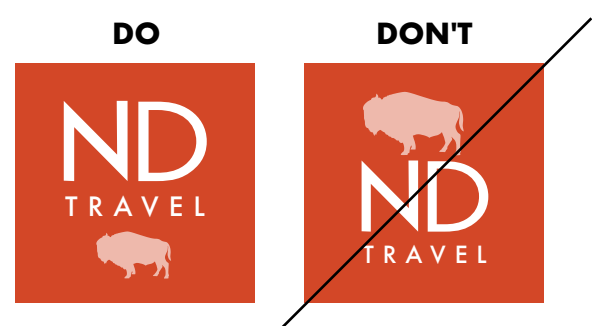
ND WITH BACKGROUND BADGE
Background graphics allow an agency to incorporate their badge as an identifier.

DO **DON'T**

ND WITH GRADIENT BACKGROUND
ND is large and centered and has a subtle background fade. Adding a slight shadow to ND is acceptable.

DO **DON'T**

SOCIAL MEDIA IMAGE SIZES

Social media image sizes seem to change constantly. Some of these content sizes are not mandatory. Different platforms can automatically adjust creative to an acceptable size. Look up official guidelines for each platform to understand what you can do and keep up with changes.

	FACEBOOK	INSTAGRAM	X (TWITTER)	LINKEDIN
Profile photo	180 x 180	110 x 110 (square image, displayed round)	400 x 400	300 x 300
Cover Image	820 x 310 or 640 x 360 **Event cover:** 1920 x1080	No cover photo	1500 x 500	1536 x 768
Image Post	**Square:** 1200 x 1200 **Landscape:** 1200 x 630 **Portrait:** 1080 x 1350	**Square:** 1080 x 1080 **Landscape:** 1080 x 566 **Portrait:** 1080 x 1350	**Square:** N/A **Landscape:** 1600 x 900 **Portrait:** N/A	**Square:** N/A **Landscape:** 1200 x 627 **Portrait:** 627 x 1200
Video Post	1280 x 720	1080 x 1920	1280 x 720	1920 x 1920
Stories	1080 x 1920	1080 x 1920	1080 x 1920	1080 x 1920

Need More Help?

These guidelines don't cover every scenario,
so let's figure it out together.

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