FUTURE OF NURSING™
Campaign for Action

Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

AARP

Getting Started with Social Media

Over the past decade, social media has emerged as an extremely influential tool for communications. It has become the rule, not the exception, when conducting outreach activities. Social networks and platforms—such as blogs, Facebook, Twitter, and video applications—give participating audiences an immediate, interactive place to discuss and share items of interest. Engaging in social media can help your Action Coalition to:

- Disseminate information and achievements to online audiences.
- Ask your stakeholders to take action.
- Connect to other organizations.
- Build grassroots efforts through local social networks.
- Keep advocates up-to-date on local and national progress.
- Solicit feedback and ideas from people or organizations in your community.

Connecting with your audience online can help you gain exposure to the communities you value most—whether they're nursing students, health care professionals, policy-makers, bloggers, or community organizations—and offer them a way to engage with your Action Coalition and the *Campaign for Action*. Through social media, you can tap into a network of individuals to advance your shared goals toward transforming health care, and you can build a community and engage friends and followers like never before.

With all the momentum behind the ever-growing world of social media, it's easy to forget a few important concepts.

Social media is just one of the tools in your communications toolkit. Used correctly, social media can help you expand the reach of your other communications efforts such as websites, press materials, newsletters, and e-blasts by distributing your messages in a fast and easily accessible way that allows for viral distribution.

Social media is a two-way street. While you may be excited to push your message out, you'll likely be searching for content to share as well as monitoring, reviewing, and responding to questions and comments from others. If you use social media only to get your messages out and ignore what others are saying, you're not embracing the purpose of social media and you may alienate your audience.

Although most social media platforms and tools are free to use, your time is not. It will take time to learn a new technology, adapt to a new way of communicating (in some cases, such as tweeting where many words are abbreviated), find ways to grow your social media presence, and engage with others on social media on a regular basis. Making the investment will be well worth the return—a robust online community to engage with and help advance your efforts!

Getting Started with Social Media
(CONTINUED)

Creating a Facebook page or a Twitter account for your Action Coalition is just one part of establishing a communications strategy and managing your social media channels. In a perfect world, you would have a robust social media strategy that aligns with the overall goals and objectives of your communications plan, which then ties into your strategic action plan. We understand that not every Action Coalition has a communications plan in place, and that's okay. Now is still a good time to learn about how to use social media and how it can benefit your Action Coalition's work. You can dip your toe in the water without fully diving in!

To help you prepare, we've included a quick reference guide to familiarize you with social media tools and terminology. Although not all-inclusive, the list will help you get started. Further in this module, you'll also learn how to communicate via social media with the *Campaign* and its partners, and you'll see step-by-step guides to creating a Facebook page and Twitter account for your Action Coalition.
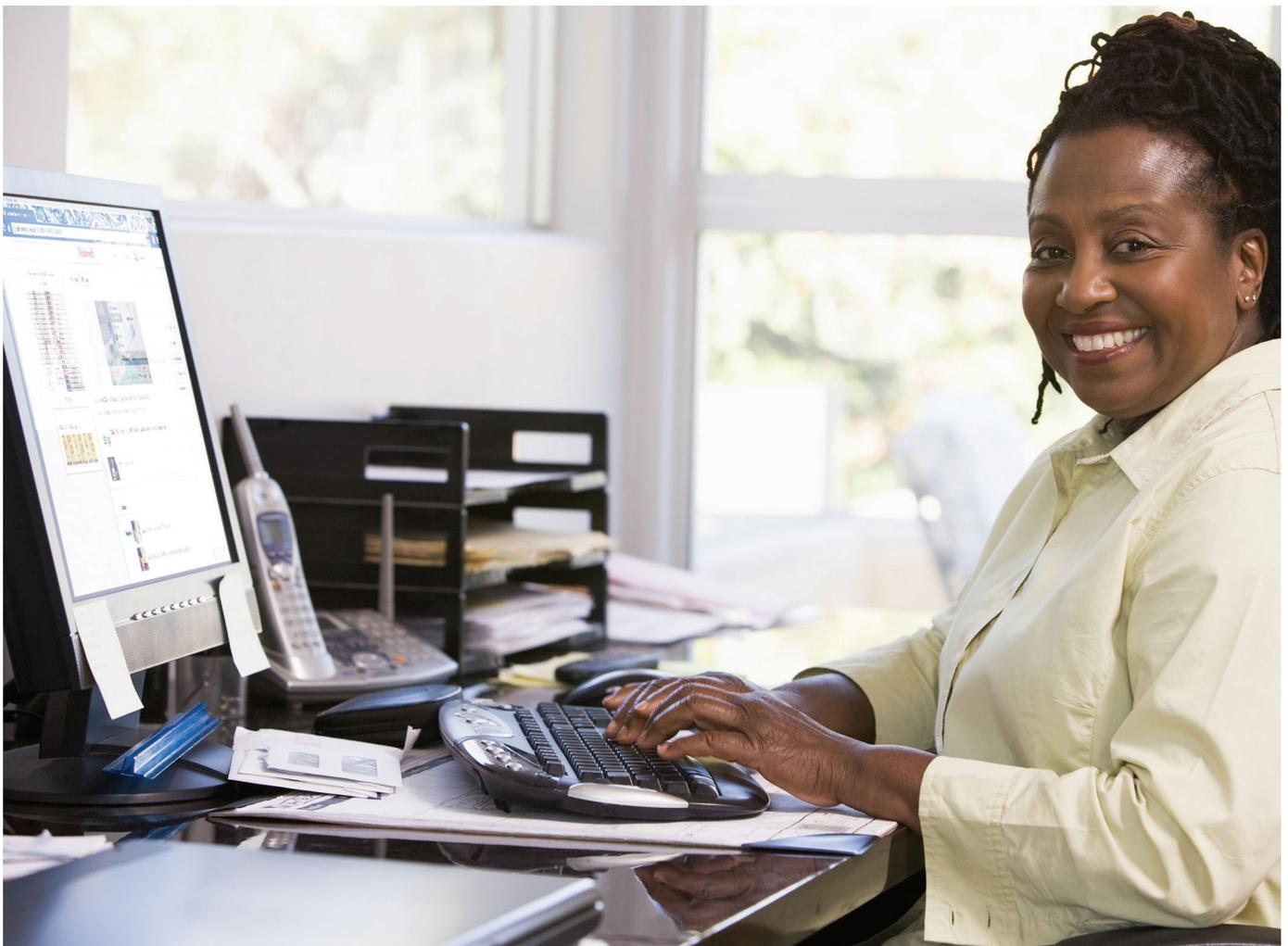
Social Media Glossary

Web 2.0—The current landscape for Internet technology and usability, which allows users to interact and exchange information over a virtual community. Examples include social networking sites like Facebook, blogs like the Huffington Post, wikis like Wikipedia, video sharing sites like YouTube, hosted services and Web applications.

Social media—Platforms or tools (often online or accessed via mobile device) that allow and encourage communication and content sharing through easily accessible Web-based publishing technologies. Social media can take many different forms, including Internet forums and blogs among others.

Social network—In computing, a Web-based platform that connects individuals, groups, organizations, and communities with one another through a variety of shared interests, ideas, and knowledge. Most social networking sites allow privacy settings to limit the amount of information that is shared with other users. Social networks include Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn among others.

Facebook—A social networking site that allows users to connect and engage with other users through profile, fan, and event pages. Participants manage a profile page to publicize interests and work/study information and have the option to update their profiles with comments, shared links, posts, and "likes." Facebook fan pages allow organizations to promote information and events and keep supporters or constituents engaged in their activities.

Twitter—A social network built around micro-blogging that allows users to post and read "tweets," text containing no more than 140 characters in length. Users can "follow" and "be followed" by other users, allowing them to repost another author's tweet and share personal tweets with individuals and organizations in their network.

LinkedIn—The leading online professional directory of individuals and companies, providing access to people, jobs, news, and updates. Professionals can send messages, posts links, add skills, give and receive individual endorsements on LinkedIn members' skills, and more. Those who are already using Twitter can set up their LinkedIn updates to appear in their Twitter feed and vice versa, so the two networks complement each other. Organizations can use a "company" page to build visibility for their brand.

Google Plus (or Google+)—A social networking service (owned and operated by Google) that has been described as an information network where people can share and follow interests rather than a purely social site such as Facebook. Unlike conventional social networks that are generally accessed through a single website, Google+ has been described by Google as a "social layer" consisting of not just a single site, but rather an overarching "layer" that covers many of its online properties. Companies can form communities, categorize content, and gain visibility using this service.

Instagram—An online photo-sharing and social networking service that enables its users to take pictures, apply digital filters to them, and share them on a variety of social networking services, such as media sites including Facebook or Twitter.

Pinterest—A virtual bulletin board for saving and sharing Web pages of interest. Pinterest allows users to create and display boards of interests, creating an identity through links, pictures, words, and ideas. Nonprofits and other organizations can use Pinterest to tell their story using images that link to relevant content.

Social Media Glossary (CONTINUED)

Podcast—A channel through which digital audio and video files can be broadcast over the Internet and downloaded to a mobile device or personal computer. Podcasts can be standalone files or part of a series; subscribers often learn of a new podcast through an RSS feed.

Blog—A Web-based log that allows individuals to share items of interest publicly. Blogs can have a neutral tone or provide commentary on recent news. They can be created in an open or closed platform, allowing the author to control who can view information. Blogs also often allow for comments from readers, engendering a conversation among a variety of individuals. A few examples include the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) Human Capital Blog, the *New York Times* Well blog, and the *American Journal of Nursing's* Off the Charts blog.

RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds—A way to stream information, including news, music, video, and events, from one website to another. This Web feed format allows users to subscribe to a variety of online content sources and have the information organized with other content into one combined feed. RSS feeds are used to publish real-time information to subscribers. All modern Web browsers include the ability to access RSS feeds.

Discussion forum—A website similar to a message board that allows users to discuss topics and ideas with several users. Discussion forums can be private or public, allowing users to view a conversation and engage in it if they wish. The *Campaign for Action* Online Community is a good example of a discussion forum, where Action Coalitions and *Campaign* staff can post discussion topics in addition to resources.

Social Media Snapshots

Facebook

Below is a screenshot of the Future of Nursing: *Campaign for Action* Facebook page. The bar at the top includes access to people, messages, notifications, account settings, and a search bar to find other Facebook accounts.

The large image is called a "cover photo." The smaller box to the left is for a profile picture or other image (such as a logo) can go. The space underneath includes links to photos, links to Facebook users who "like" the organization, and links to the welcome page and a listing of events.

Below that, the screen is separated into two columns. The column on right shows what other people have posted to the Facebook page; the column on left includes space to write and upload a post and shows the organization's posts.

Social Media Snapshots (CONTINUED)

Twitter

Below is a screenshot of what you'll see when you log in to a Twitter account. You can see tweets from people @FutureofNursing follows on the right side under "Tweets." The top box on left shows how many times @FutureofNursing has tweeted, how many individuals @FutureofNursing follows, and how many people are following the account. Twitter also suggests users to follow and items that are "trending" in real time.

Across the top bar, you can access various settings, view and update your profile, search for individuals or subjects, and compose a tweet.

Social Media Snapshots (CONTINUED)

Pinterest

Below is a screenshot of what you'll see when log in to a Pinterest account. The main image in the middle of the page is a "pin." When you click on the image, you are taken to a website for related information. Above the image, you have options to "like" the pin or "repin" it to your own bulletin board. The larger bulletin board on left ("Passion for elder care,") is where the account holder houses that pin and other, related pins. In the far right column, you can see options to share the pin via other social media channels, including Twitter and Facebook.

Social Media Snapshots (CONTINUED)

LinkedIn

Below is what you'll see when you log in to a LinkedIn account. Across the top, you can access your profile, connections/contacts, and professional groups you're a part of, for example. You can search for companies to find their pages. Below is the company page for the Visiting Nurse Service of New York, which someone can follow by clicking the yellow "Follow" button at the top right. Following allows you to see more updates and posts from the group.

How to Create a Facebook Organization Page

Creating a Facebook page for your Action Coalition is an easy and cost-effective way to create an online presence, promote your cause, publicize events, and engage a broad audience. As you build "fans" for your page, these people can become conduits who can help spread the word about your coalition and the specific nursing workforce issues you are addressing.

To create a Facebook organization page, follow the steps below:

1. Have an official representative of your Action Coalition log in to his or her personal Facebook account* to create the page.

2. *If you do not have a personal Facebook account, see step 3.

3. Once logged in, go to http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php to begin creating your page.

4. If you do not have an existing personal account, you can create a personal page by providing an email and password to obtain administrative authority. We recommend storing this login information somewhere safe so you can remember how to access Facebook or allow another coalition member or staff support to log in.

5. You will be asked to select your type of organization. We recommend selecting "Company, Organization, or Institution." Then you will see a drop-down list with organization options. Facebook has already established a category for Health/Medical/Pharmaceuticals, so we suggest using that designation. In the "Name" box, type in the name of your Action Coalition, agree to the Facebook terms, and then click "Get Started

6. Once the page is created, upload a profile picture that is unique to your organization and uses branding consistent with your website and other materials. This could be your Action Coalition logo.

7. Fill in the "About" tab with the organization's mission, goals, and other information that you want community members, stakeholders, and potential stakeholders to see.

8. Fill in the "Facebook Web Address" tab with a unique Facebook Web address. Facebook will already have a suggestion waiting.

9. Skip "Enable Ads" tab.

10. "Status Update" section of your page to share new information, coalition updates, upcoming events, new partnership announcements, and pictures. Keep these status updates brief, and when possible link to a resource or in-depth news item on your Action Coalition website or on Web pages of the Campaign for Action and RWJF.

11. Update your Facebook page at least twice weekly. Remember that social media networks are constantly being updated, so you have to stay current to stay relevant.

12. Create a photo album, if desired, with pictures from past events if available; keep a camera on hand at future events to create and update your photo albums.

13. Use the "Search" tool within Facebook to find like-minded organizations and individuals. You may want to start by searching your Action Coalition partners, other state Action Coalitions, local health experts, the Center to Champion Nursing in America, and RWJF. You can "like" fan pages and "friend" organizations that you want to be affiliated with.

14. Interact with other users by commenting and "liking" relevant posts; respond to comments and "likes" when received.

How to Create a Twitter Organization Page

Twitter is a social networking site that provides users with the ability to share information in 140 characters or less. You can use your Twitter account to post news about your Action Coalition, information about upcoming events, or updates on the nursing world. The brief, micro-blog format and ease of mobile posting allow you to post and follow up-to-the-minute news. Maintaining a Twitter account will help you to:

- Listen to what key stakeholders are saying about nursing issues and the work of your Action Coalition.

- Promote your work within and connect to a wider audience.

- Monitor a variety of topics simultaneously that are of interest to your Action Coalition.

- Expand the reach of your work via your followers' networks and beyond.

- Participate in discussions involving the nursing community.

- Build a community of advocates of nurses and non-nurses interested in your work.

To create a Twitter organization page, follow the steps below:

1. To start, visit https://www.twitter.com/ to sign up.

2. Think about what you want to call your Twitter account or "handle." Remember that social media is another way to reinforce your Action Coalition's name and brand. Consider using your state abbreviation and the campaign acronym in your handle name. Keep in mind that shorter is better when it comes to your handle—it's easier to remember and uses fewer characters, making it easier for others to retweet you.

3. Once you have decided on a handle name, enter it in along with an email address and a desired password. Then click "Create my Account."

4. Follow the Twitter prompt; to build your timeline, you must begin to follow people.

5. To set up your profile information, upload an image for your picture and a quick bio. You can use a photo or upload your Action Coalition's logo if you have one. An image is a must; followers tend to view accounts with images as more credible.

6. Under the "ME" tab, you can update information specific to your coalition, including:

7. Update location with your organization's geographic info.

8. Update "Web" with your actual website URL.

9. Update bio with a brief description of your Action Coalition in no more than 160 characters (including spaces).

10. Make sure to click "Save" before moving on to the next step.

11. Now that your profile is complete, it's time to tweet! A tweet is a message of no more than 140 characters that briefly tells your followers about a piece of news or item of interest. Just as with Facebook, we recommend tweeting relatively frequently about news, initiatives, successes, and other important bits of information.

12. You should also use what is called a hashtag (#) to feature key words. Hashtags allow you to search easily for tweets that specifically deal with that topic, and it helps individuals who do not follow you to find your tweets. For example, the Future of Nursing Twitter account uses the hashtag #futureRN when tweeting about items related to the Institute of Medicine report or *Campaign for Action*. This allows us to see who else on Twitter is talking about the report. We encourage you to also use the #futureRN hashtag in your tweets.

13. To find other users in the fields (health care, education, etc.) in which you wish to engage, you can search for those organizations directly in twitter, or you can peruse their websites for mention of a twitter account. If you want to subscribe to their twitter and read their tweets, click "follow." All tweets from that organization will now appear on your home feed.

14. To better understand how to use specific Twitter functions, remember the following:

   - Use the "@" mention function to tweet back and forth with other users.
   - Use the "retweet" function to post another user's tweet on your account.
   - Use the "list" function to create and organize followers into lists or groups by category.

15. Be sure to promote your Twitter handle in your email signature, on your business card, on your Action Coalition's website, and in *Campaign* materials. When it comes to gaining followers and growing your network, promotion is key!

Tips to Get Started

Pick one or two platforms to start with (and see how they're being used).

With a multitude of platforms to choose from, selecting which social media channels you'll use might feel overwhelming. A good way to start is to select no more than one or two platforms—perhaps Facebook and LinkedIn—and find out if the people you'd want to reach are using those platforms. You can find this out by visiting websites and reviewing promotional materials to search for icons and links directly to social media channels. Unless people are using a private or protected account, you can directly access their Facebook page and/or Twitter feed. You can see how often they post messages (several times a day? daily? weekly? rarely?) and whom they interact with (organizations similar to your Action Coalition? local policymakers? members of the media?) to get a better sense of how they're using the platform.

A simple way to inform your decision on which platform(s) to start using is to consider how you (or the person who will be in charge of social media for your Action Coalition) will use the platform. What kinds of posts will you share? With a limited character count, Twitter might be a good way to share quick news bites and provide facts and stats. If you want to engage audiences in conversations and have more discussions on nursing issues, share lots of photos or videos, perhaps Facebook might work best. Keep in mind that with a limited character count and other nuances specific to the platform, Twitter generally has a steeper learning curve than Facebook. Many find Facebook more straightforward and easier to manage and maintain, especially if they're brand new to using social media.

Regardless of where you start, there's no right or wrong way to select a platform or to engage with others—understanding how you'll use social media will help you make an informed decision.

Listen to the chatter.

Listening and observing how others interact through social media can be a great way to get started. You can get a sense of what people and organizations are saying, doing and promoting by searching for certain topics and finding the conversation stream. On Twitter, you can search by using a hashtag (#), which allows you to easily search for tweets that deal with a specific topic. Try a hashtag such as #nursing or #futureRN (the hashtag for the Institute of Medicine's *Future of Nursing* report) to see what people are saying about these topics and who is doing the talking.

If you already have a Facebook account (even a personal one), you can search for Facebook pages related to nurses and nursing issues. Keep in mind that you'll want to keep your personal account separate from a professional account so don't rush to "like" something from your personal account or to join a conversation until you have decided whether to use your personal account or create a professional one.

Consider time and staffing.

Although social media is meant to be a quick and informal way of communicating, managing a social media presence is more involved than many think. It takes time to build your social media presence, cultivate "likes" and followers, and plan your short- and long-term messages. Even without a fully developed strategy, you can determine a process for posting and responding on social media.

Tips to Get Started (CONTINUED)

Many organizations have a full-time position dedicated to managing social media. Given staffing and resources, that may not be realistic for your Action Coalition. If that's the case, it's even more important to think through your process and strategy so you can plan ahead and aren't scrambling to think of each tweet or post. If staff capacity is limited, you might want to consider bringing on an unpaid college intern or recent graduate from a communications or journalism program to help you get started. You or another staff member will need to provide oversight to that intern to be sure each post accurately presents your Action Coalition's brand and messaging. You also could develop a social media policy or guidelines for use to avoid undesirable situations. By doing a simple online search, you'll be able to find various organizations' social media policies, which you can adapt for your needs.

Explore!

Further in this guide you'll see specific steps for setting up a Facebook page and Twitter account. There are also plenty of tutorials available online, and new social media tools become available on a regular basis. If you're not sure how to do something with social media, chances are you can find out just by typing your question into a search engine. You also can ask a fellow Action Coalition or your grantee liaison for resources or assistance. Social media isn't going away, so now's as good a time as any to give it a try!
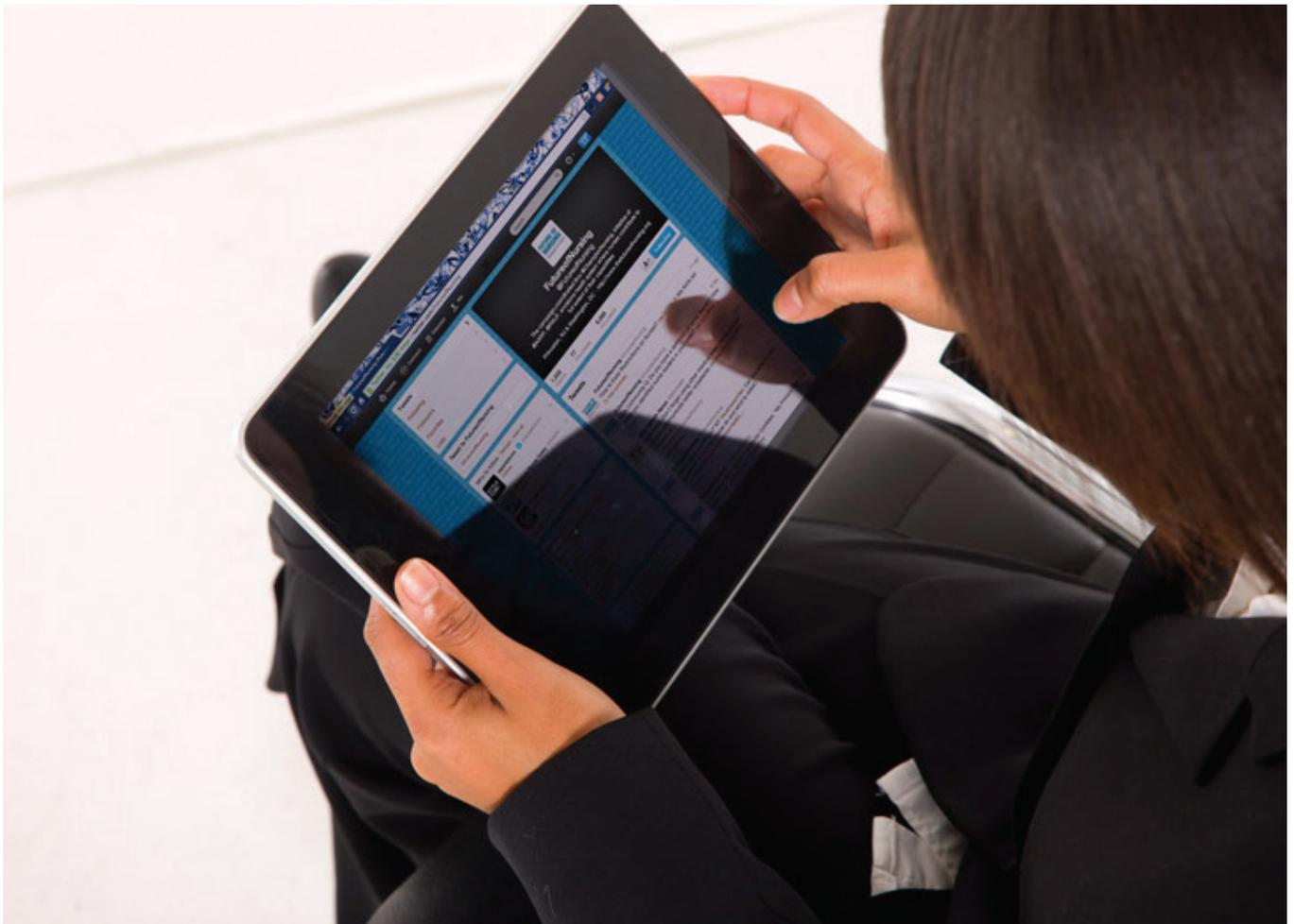
Social Media Platforms

The Campaign for Action and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation each have a social media presence. We encourage Action Coalitions to connect with these social networks and engage with us online. The chart below outlines the goals of each organizational presence and how each is utilized.

Additionally, the *Campaign for Action* website (www.campaignforaction.org/community) has a robust online community, promoting active discussion and information-sharing to bring all members of the *Campaign* together. We urge Action Coalitions to promote the online community to their members and join the conversation.

	Campaign for Action	Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: Initiative on the Future of Nursing
Purpose	Provides the voice for *Campaign* activities, engagement, and assistance to expand the *Campaign's* community and reach.	Shares information and promotes engagement with RWJF's continued support of the research agenda set forth by the IOM report and implementation of the recommendations through all of RWJF's nursing initiatives.
Platforms	Twitter: @Campaign4Action Facebook: www.facebook.com/campaignforaction	Twitter: @FutureofNursing Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/futureofnursing