

Introduction to Social Media

The following information is offered to provide basic background on the new and exciting social media phenomena. Words like Facebook, website, Twitter, Pinterest, YouTube, and Skype may seem quite intimidating and strange to some of you. It's your choice if you want to take advantage of some or all of these communication systems. If you don't, you're missing out on an incredible opportunity to publicize volkssporting in general and your club activities. And understand, if you are attempting to recruit younger members, social media is where most of them go to get their daily dose of information.

During research, we found a useful and free instructional website that includes social media tutorials, gcflearnfree.org. References to this site appear throughout this primer.

FACEBOOK

The world's most popular social networking website allows you to connect and share online. It has more than six billion users worldwide. AVA national headquarters hosts a group Facebook page that many of our clubs and volkssporters take advantage of in promoting club events and following up with success stories and great action photos. Discussions on issues of concern and sharing of ideas also can be found.

Before you can visit the AVA page, you must first establish your individual Facebook account. If you join Facebook, you decide how you want to use its different features. Some individuals prefer to connect with just a few people while sharing very little about themselves. Others like to connect with as many people as possible sharing their information openly and publicly. You can discover what works best for you.

For tutorial information on Facebook, visit [gcflearnfree.org/Facebook 101](http://gcflearnfree.org/Facebook_101). For information on joining the AVA Facebook experience, go to the file in this folder titled AVA Facebook Instructions.

WEBSITE (ava.org)

- Maintaining an organizational website is non-negotiable. Your club should have one! They are not that hard to create and will provide a platform for your club to provide information on your club history, upcoming events, and overall promotion of volkssporting. The following addresses will allow you to visit the top three websites as judged in this year's AVA National Publicity Contest. Hopefully you will get some ideas on what a club site should include.
- Northern Virginia Volksmarchers (scenicroutes.us/nvv); North Star Trail Travelers (nstt.org) and UpState PathFinders (upstatepathfinders.com). Other club website addresses are listed at ava.org, [Clubs](#).

If you don't find anyone in your club who has created a site, you might check out this website weebly.com. This design service is free for a basic setup. You pay a minimal fee with more complicated setups. There are many website building companies available on the internet. Just Google "website building companies." There are numerous listings. Take your time. Ask others for recommendations.

YOUTUBE

A video sharing website on which viewers can upload, share and view videos. An individual can discover, watch and share originally created videos. Provides a forum for people to connect, inform and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators and advertisers. If you've heard of something going "viral," this is where it happens.

Use of YouTube is exploding. To give you some perspective into the enormous use of this website, here are some statistics: 60 hours of video uploaded every minute with over four billion videos viewed daily. YouTube mobile gets 400 million views daily and received over one trillion views in 2012. For additional information, visit YouTube.com.

TWITTER

A micro-blogging network of real-time posts that are limited to 140 characters or less. Visit gcflernfree.org/Twitter 101.

PINTEREST

One of fastest growing social networking websites today, Pinterest is all about collecting and sharing things you find on other websites. Most other social networks focus on personal sharing and status updates. Visit gcflernfree.org/Pinterest 101.

SKYPE

A software that allows you to instant message and make voice and video calls to fellow Skype users on the internet for free. Visit gcflernfree.org/Skype.