

Welcome to the 2026 Social and Digital Marketing EXPO Course!

This course is designed to be practical. We're going to walk away with ideas, tools, and a clear way to think about social and digital marketing for your AYSO region, whether you're starting from scratch or trying to level up what you're already doing

We'll start with understanding the foundations to why social media is important to your Region and community,
how to tell stories with purpose,
the types of content and platforms for telling these stories,
how to capture your audience's attention with hooks, value propositions, and call to action
Provide resources for creating and managing your accounts,
Tools for creating content,
And how to use a content calendar to streamline your social media initiatives

So why social media?

First, brand identity and awareness: every post helps families recognize who you are as a Region. When your logo, colors, and tone are consistent, families begin to trust what they see. Even if they don't engage with every post, they remember you, and that matters when registration opens

Second, customer experience and building trust: Parents want clear, reliable information. When they know where to look for updates, reminders, and highlights, it reduces confusion and frustration. Social media becomes part of the overall experience of being in your Region

Social media also helps us reach specific audiences: New families, returning families, volunteers, referees, they're not all looking for the same information. Social platforms allow us to speak directly to the people we want to reach and guide them toward registration or getting involved

Another big benefit is that social media is cost-effective: most Regions are working with limited budgets, and social media allows you to communicate consistently without printing costs or paid advertising

And finally, PSAs and reminders: You want your families to know exactly where to look for information, whether that's registration deadlines, weather updates, or events. When social media is used consistently, it becomes a trusted source instead of noise

Why is social media important and relevant today?

As we can see here, we are living in a digital age. Across every age group, the majority of adults are using at least one social media platform. Over 80% of people between 18 and 49, which includes most AYSO parents, are active on social media. Even in older age groups, usage is still significant.

That tells us something important: families are already there. We're not asking them to adopt a new habit, we're meeting them where they already spend time.

Another key point is 76% of users have made a decision influenced by social media. Regarding AYSO, that means decisions about registering, volunteering, returning next season, or even recommending AYSO to another family.

Social media has the power to help tell the story of AYSO and your Region with a purpose that will help your Region grow, attract new families and volunteers, and build trust and opportunities with your community.

When we talk about telling stories with purpose, what that really means is posting with intention. Every piece of content should support one of three goals:

First is retention: current families need to feel connected and confident in your Region.

Second is reaching new audiences. Social media lets us show who we are as a community, what programs we offer, and why families should join.

And third is answering the question why AYSO? Not everyone understands what makes AYSO different. Social media is a great place to educate families about our values, our history, and the Six Philosophies, in small, easy-to-digest ways.

When every post has a purpose, social media stops feeling random and starts supporting your Region's goals.

Before jumping into Social Media Platforms, what are the general content types to share?

The first content type is single, static images: these should be visually appealing and easy to consume. Single image posts work great with bold headlines and can be used for PSAs, reminders and updates.

Photo carousels are interactive and allow for multiple pictures in one post. Carousels are great for featuring events like your opening day, photos from a tournament or Saturday gamedays, and volunteering training.

Video content provides immediate gratification and is visually engaging. Short videos (10-30 seconds) perform better than 1+ minute videos, and you also can use trending songs/audios to further capture the algorithm and your audience's attention

For all of these content types, the caption can help describe the content, tell the story, and support the purpose of the post.

Don't forget to always tag AYSO. Tagging the national account will help bring more exposure, as AYSO will engage with and reshare your content, allowing your content to have increased reach. It also connects your local stories to the national AYSO brand, and gives AYSO an opportunity to highlight your Region and community.

Next we have Story content. Stories in Instagram and Facebook (or "Shorts" in YouTube) are meant to be quick and fun images or videos that are only visible for a limited time, usually 24 hours.

Stories are a perfect way to experiment with different kinds of content because, unlike your permanent curated feed of posts, Stories disappear in 24 hours.

In Instagram, Stories can exist longer than 24 hours if you manually organize them into Highlight folders on your profile

Keep in mind that Meta's algorithms suggest Stories to existing audiences

Stories also have interactive "sticker" elements. You can use the "Link" Sticker to add a website link directly to the Story.

This allows a user to engage and interact with your message immediately, which is great for mentioning and linking to your Region's available programs.

Now that we've covered the content types, where can we post them?

Instagram is a great platform for telling your Region's story visually. It's built around photos and videos, which makes it ideal for sharing real moments from games, practices, and events.

Photos are great for quick highlights, while carousel posts let you share multiple images in one post to tell a longer story.

As mentioned before, stories are temporary and disappear after 24 hours, which makes them perfect for reminders, behind-the-scenes content, and quick updates.

Reels are Instagram's video format and currently offer the most reach. These don't need to be polished — short, authentic clips tend to perform best

Overall, Instagram works best when you focus on authentic visuals and consistent storytelling.

Facebook is a great channel to keep families informed about Region news, updates, and reminders. Facebook allows for event posts and is visible to those without a Facebook account, and they can see the event description, photos, event discussion, and any additional details. The Facebook events feature is a great digital avenue for fundraising, registration announcements and promotion, and Region events.

Instead of assuming who your audience is on each platform, Meta business suite shows you who is actually engaging with your content. You can see age ranges, locations, and when people are most active. When you understand your audience, you can post more intentionally: choosing the right content, posting at better times, and focusing your energy where it has the most impact

LinkedIn is a business and employment-focused social media platform. A great way to build trust with potential sponsors, leads, and volunteers is to post regularly on LinkedIn about your Region's work and efforts.

When posting on social media, it is important that a Region's content is directed to and only communicates with the parents and guardians.

Social media is ever changing and since this presentation was built AYSO is actually on Tiktok, as that's where our next generation of parents are and will be active. However, with the current demographics still being younger, we advise against using Tiktok and Snapchat as channels.

Next, we will discuss how to capture your audience's attention and encourage engagement.

With so much content and distractions out there it is very difficult to stop users from scrolling and capture their attention.

Every strong post should include three things: a hook, a value proposition, and a call to action.

Let's start with the hook.

A hook is what stops someone from scrolling. It's the very first thing they notice, and it determines whether they keep watching or move on. Hooks can show up in a few ways: in the caption, as text on a photo or video, or even through audio in a video

One simple option is using a trending song or audio, as long as it's family-friendly and appropriate for AYSO. You don't need to use every trend, just ones that fit your message and audience

When you're writing a text hook, focus on a few key elements: keep it relevant, avoid jargon, match the tone of your audience, and be authentic. A good hook should tease what's coming next and create just enough curiosity

A great example of a relatable hook is asking a question. For example, a short video of players being interviewed with the caption, 'What's your favorite AYSO moment?' That simple question invites engagement and draws people into the story

Strong hooks don't need to be complicated, they just need to feel real and relatable

After you grab attention with a hook, the next question families are asking is, Why should I choose AYSO? That's your value proposition - it explains what makes AYSO different from other soccer programs and why it's the right fit for their family

Keep it clear and simple, helping parents should understand right away

You can focus on differentiation by highlighting what sets AYSO apart, like community, player development, trained volunteers, and the six philosophies

Make it relevant by speaking to what families care about: safety, positive coaching, and fun

And build credibility with real examples or testimonials that show AYSO delivers on its promise

When your value proposition is strong, families don't just see your posts, they understand the value of your program

The call to action will help guide families toward a next step whether that's registering with your Region, learning more about the programs offered, or taking advantage of an early-bird deal. You can share your content as a story to allow users to take direct action with the link feature

Content that is local to your Region tends to perform better as it feels more authentic, relatable, and engaging. But how can you produce more content?

User generated content is a great way to increase and maintain your flow of organic content. You can request families and volunteers to tag your Region when posting content. Families tend

to enjoy seeing their pictures and content posted to activities they're involved in, just make sure to attain photo releases.

Whether you're setting up your social media channels or managing them between multiple volunteers, AYSO has resources to help!

Scan the QR code for more information, tutorials, and instructions for creating and managing your accounts.

Next we will review the tools for creating intriguing content like text posts and videos

The good news is that Regions don't have to figure this out on their own. AYSO is constantly expanding the tools and resources available to help make content creation easier.

For video editing, there are several free options depending on your comfort level

For graphic design, and also now video editing, Canva is a great option for Regions to create branded posts without design experience.

Scan the QR code to view which tools are offered for free with basic to advanced capabilities.

Next we will be covering a tool on the rise - Artificial intelligence

When utilizing a tool like ChatGBPT, we want to make sure we are using AI for brainstorming or caption ideas, not for generating fake images or videos.

Always prompt with AYSO context and review the tone for authenticity.

Keeping a consistent posting schedule can be daunting but learning how to utilize a content calendar can help streamline your social media efforts.

A social media calendar is a strategic, detailed plan of upcoming posts organized by date and time. This can help save time, develop a consistent posting schedule, plan for registration, and repurpose successful content.

Within a content calendar, building out content categories is a great way to prioritize your Region's goals.

You can create a content calendar in a spreadsheet app like Google Sheets or Microsoft Excel,...

...or you can use a project management tool like Meta Business Suite, Monday.com, or ClickUp to visualize your calendar in various ways.

Viewing your calendar by content pillars helps to spark ideas and see content in creatively different ways. This preview is using ClickUp and allows you to categorize ideas under content pillars -brand awareness, inspire, and volunteer recruitment are shown - with columns to identify audience profile, social platform, content type and theme, and due date. A content calendar helps Regions stay consistent, organized, and intentional, without posting more.

Each platform has different engagements that will need to be managed, but how can you keep track of it all?

SOCi is a centralized dashboard for search visibility, social media, and reputation management where you can link top social media and reputation networks for your business, plus manage all aspects all in one place, with one login. Scan the QR code to start the onboarding process or visit the SOCi wiki page to learn more about the platform and features.

Thank you for attending the Social and Digital Marketing EXPO course and don't forget to tag AYSO on social media!