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In August 2014, at the BYU Campus Education Week, Elder David A. Bednar said, “The Lord is hastening His work, and it is no coincidence that these powerful communication innovations and inventions are occurring in the dispensation of the fulness of times. Social media channels are global tools that can personally and positively impact large numbers of individuals and families. And I believe the time has come for us as disciples of Christ to use these inspired tools appropriately and much more effectively to testify of God the Eternal Father, His plan of happiness for His children, and His Son, Jesus Christ, as the Savior of the world; to proclaim the reality of the Restoration of the gospel in the latter days; and to accomplish the Lord’s work.”

Elder Bednar then stated, “Brothers and sisters, what has been accomplished thus far in this dispensation communicating gospel messages through social media channels is a good beginning—but only a small trickle. I now extend to you the invitation to help transform the trickle into a flood. Beginning at this place on this day, I exhort you to sweep the earth with messages filled with righteousness and truth—messages that are authentic, edifying, and praiseworthy—and literally to sweep the earth as with a flood.” (“To Sweep the Earth As With A Flood,” David A. Bednar, Campus Education Week, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, Aug. 19, 2014, bit.ly/LDS098)

Watch the video “What the Apostles Say About Sharing the Gospel Online” at bit.ly/LDS01.

Social media basics

This section lists the more common social media sites. Other sites are being invented every month. Others may be more common in your country or field of interest.



Facebook

Facebook.com is one of the largest social networking sites on the Internet, with more than a billion active users worldwide. You can create a profile page and then connect it with the profile pages of your friends and family. You can share status updates, photos, videos, event invitations, and links to other websites.

When you see something inspiring on Facebook, like it, leave a comment, and share it so your friends can be inspired by it as well. If your friends like it and share it, Facebook will show it to their friends as well. As friends of your friends like it and share it, it will be shown to the friends of their friends. The reach of one post can increase exponentially.

See a list of the Church's Facebook pages at bit.ly/LDS103. In addition to the main Church account, there are accounts for various interests, such as news and family history. Church leaders occasionally post messages and photos on their Facebook pages.



Google+

Google+ (pronounced "Google Plus") is a social networking platform from Google at plus.google.com. It is similar to Facebook in that it allows you to create a personal profile and see a news feed that shows updates from your friends and other contacts.

When you see something inspiring on Google+, like it with a +1, leave a comment, and share it so your friends can be inspired by it as well. You can also add these Church pages to your circles on Google+. You could also create an LDS circle with these pages and share that circle with your friends so they can add them to their circles.

See a list of the Church's Google+ pages at bit.ly/LDS104. In addition to the main Church account, there are accounts for various interests, such as news and family history. Church leaders occasionally post messages and photos on their Google+ accounts.



Twitter

Twitter.com is a social networking and microblogging website. It lets you “tweet” (broadcast) brief messages on your profile page. Tweets contain a maximum of 140 characters and may include web links and attached photos. You can follow people you find interesting and read their Tweets.

When you read a message on Twitter that inspires you, retweet it so that people who follow you can see it as well.

See a list of the Church Twitter accounts at bit.ly/LDS105. In addition to the main Church account, there are accounts for various interests, such as news and family history. Church leaders occasionally post messages and photos on their Twitter accounts.



Pinterest

Pinterest.com is an online visual bulletin board for collecting and storing ideas. It helps you keep track of your favorite finds from around the web in one organized location. You can create different boards and “pin” items to them. You can connect with other users by following their boards to find and share new ideas.

When you see something you like on Pinterest, repin it to one of your boards so you can refer to it later and so your friends who follow your boards can see it as well.

See a list of the Church pages on Pinterest at bit.ly/LDS106. There are boards on various topics that may interest you.



Instagram

Instagram.com is a fun, fast, and simple way to share your life through photos and short videos. Take a picture, add a filter if you like, and instantly share it for all your Instagram followers to see. Instagram is a creative visual tool to help you stay connected with friends and family.

When you see something inspiring on Instagram, like it, leave a comment, and share it so your friends can be inspired by it as well.

See a list of the Church’s Instagram accounts at bit.ly/LDS107.



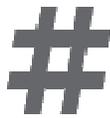
YouTube



YouTube.com is a video-sharing site where you can upload and share videos. These videos can be viewed at YouTube.com.

When you watch something inspiring on YouTube, like it, leave a comment, and share it so your friends can be inspired by it as well.

See a list of the Church's YouTube channels at bit.ly/LDS108. There are accounts for various interests, such as news and family history.



Hashtags

Many social media sites let you categorize your posts by using hashtags. Hashtags consist of a pound sign (#) followed by keywords or topics. These subject tags can be searched on sites such as Twitter, Facebook, Google+, Instagram, YouTube, Pinterest, Flickr, and Tumblr to find information about a given topic. For example, #LDS and #Mormon are common hashtags that people add to posts about the Church and #LDSconf refers to LDS General Conference.

See a list of popular hashtags used to connect and share gospel-related content at LDSMediaTalk.com/lds-hashtags.



Blogs

A blog is a site where you publish regular entries called "posts," typically displayed with the most recent post first. The word *blog* is a truncation of the expression *web log*.

A blog is an easy way to publish uplifting gospel messages. Elder M. Russell Ballard said, "Most of you already know that if you have access to the Internet you can start a blog in minutes and begin sharing what you know to be true." ("Sharing the Gospel Using the Internet," *Ensign*, July 2008, pp. 58-63)

For step-by-step instructions on how to create, design, and promote your blog, see bit.ly/LDS201.

Tips on hastening the work online

Many people are curious about The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. There are millions of searches online every month seeking answers to gospel questions. People are asking Google rather than asking God. Perhaps you can point them in the right direction.

Because the Internet does not force the same commitment as meeting in person, it can be a safe haven for those who are questioning but are not ready to invite the missionaries into their home. If they can find answers on the Internet and have the Spirit touch their hearts, they may be more willing to accept the missionaries later.

As the Church grows, you will find more and more opportunities to have conversations with others about your beliefs. Remember that you are speaking as an individual sharing your personal perspectives. Don't give an impression that you are speaking officially for the Church.

Members play a crucial role in helping the public understand the restored gospel of Jesus Christ. Some of this understanding will come as people silently watch you live a Christian life. More understanding will come from casual conversations. And with the many communication channels available today, you will have increasing opportunities to share your light with others through posts, Tweets, blogs, and pictures.

The following are suggestions on how to share the gospel online in an effective way.

Share what inspires you.

Technology makes connecting with family and friends very convenient so feel free to share inspiring and uplifting messages with them. The Church and other sources provide countless quotes, scriptures, pictures and videos for this purpose. A quote or scripture may be just the thing your friend

101 ways to share the gospel online

This section gives 101 ideas on how you can hasten the work of salvation online. Remember that “hastening the work” includes missionary work, convert retention, activation of less-active members, temple and family history work, and teaching the gospel.

1. Set up a Facebook account and post to it.



Set up a Facebook account, establish a group of friends, and begin to share things with them.

Be creative and genuine, sharing things that matter to you. You can share things such as the following:

- Status updates. Explain what is happening in your life, such as special events and family activities. Include gospel-related events, like baptisms and ward activities, and explain why these events are meaningful to you. Even your non-member friends will appreciate hearing about these important events in your life.
- Photos. People can relate to you better when they see photos of you and your family. Share photos of family activities and include comments about what your family means to you. Post photos of your family walking to church and explain why you attend church each Sunday. Share a picture of your teenagers at a youth conference and comment about the benefits of the Church’s youth programs.
- Videos. Post links to online videos you enjoy and explain why they impress you.
- Websites. Post links to websites you find uplifting and comment about specific articles or pages.

4. Share gospel pictures and your comments about them.

Share a gospel-related picture and post a comment about the theme of the picture. For example, share a picture of Jesus Christ and mention your belief in Him as your personal Savior. Share a picture of the prophet and your testimony of continuing revelation. Share a picture of the temple and your gratitude that families can be sealed for eternity.

You can find and share pictures from the following sources:

- Images.lds.org
- Temples.lds.org
- LDSimages.org
- MormonNewsroom.org (select multimedia)

Be sure you follow the guidelines on these sites about how you can use the images.



Painting "The Resurrection and the Life" © Brent Borup. Used with permission. BrentBorupStudio.com

5. Set up a Twitter account.



You can set up an account in your own name or named after a topic. For example, I tweet both gospel topics and general topics using my personal account @RichmanLarry (see twitter.com/RichmanLarry). I also have a Twitter account for my LDSMediaTalk blog using the Twitter account @LDSMediaTalk (see twitter.com/LDSMediaTalk).

Tweeting an interesting message in 140 characters or less is a real art. Think of your Tweet as a headline. Be creative and

- Volunteering to help students from around the world practice listening to and speaking English in real-time conversations using online tools like Skype.

29. Refer friends to Mormon.org.

Mormon.org is a great place for those unfamiliar with the Church to get to know it better. It has simplified explanations of gospel principles and historical accounts about the restored Church. It also has a list of frequently asked questions. There are also videos about the Church and profiles of thousands of members of the Church.

If your friends are not yet ready to chat with the full-time missionaries in person, they can chat with them online on Mormon.org or order a free copy of the Book of Mormon or the Bible. Mormon.org is available in dozens of languages.

30. Set up your own Mormon.org profile.

You can create your own profile on Mormon.org where you can share your stories and testimony. This lets visitors to Mormon.org learn more about Latter-day Saints who come from diverse backgrounds but share a deep commitment to Jesus Christ and to each other.



Hi I'm Larry Richman

I'm a Mormon.



About Me

I work with social media and online product marketing. I've also been a professional for nearly 30 years. But, at heart, I consider myself a writer. I've authored over a do have written a blog post nearly every day since 2006. See LDSMediaTalk.com and RichmanRamblings.blogspot.com. I also run a website with ideas about how to save your money. See: RichmanTalkAboutSavvyMormon.com

Go to Mormon.org/create to get started. After you create a profile, it will be reviewed before it appears online. Once approved, you can promote your profile by doing the following:

- Share a link to your profile with your friends by email or by posting it on your social media pages and your blog.

63. Share an infographic about the Church.

An infographic is a graphic visual representation of information or data that makes it easy to understand. The Church has produced many infographics that you can use to share interesting information about the Church.

You can find libraries of infographics at the following places:

- MormonNewsroom.org/article/infographics
- LDSMediaTalk.com/?s=infographic

64. Invite friends to watch general conference.



General conference may be one of the best ways to introduce your friends to the Church. There are many easy ways to invite your friends to watch conference. If you are not comfortable inviting them to your home or to your meetinghouse to watch it, tell them about all the ways they can watch it in their home on TV, radio, the Internet, mobile apps, and social media. (See conference.lds.org for more details.)

The following are easy ways you can invite your friends (member and nonmember alike) to participate in general conference:

- Use the general conference events on Facebook and Google+ to invite your friends to watch the conference.
- Find the infographic about general conference on the About page at conference.lds.org. Share it on Facebook,

75. Share your testimony of Jesus Christ this Christmas.

Christmas

Christmas can be a great time of year to share with others your testimony of Jesus Christ as your personal Savior and Redeemer.

You may want to share some of the following with your friends during the Christmas season:

- Mormon.org/Christmas (stories, music, and ecards).
- JesusChrist.lds.org (the Church's website about Jesus Christ).
- BibleVideos.org (The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos and ecards).
- Christmas.lds.org (stories, ideas, videos, and resources you can share).
- Bit.ly/LDS209 (Christmas ecards from the Mormon Channel).

Each year, in the weeks leading up to Christmas, LDSMediaTalk.com shares ideas and resources that you can share with others. See LDSMediaTalk.com/tag/christmas.

76. Watch Bible videos with your family and your friends.

The Church has produced a series of videos titled *The Life of Jesus Christ Bible Videos* at BibleVideos.org. These videos portray the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

Use these videos to teach your family about the teachings of Jesus.

There is also an interactive Bible Videos mobile app you can use to watch the videos, see photo slideshows, explore biblical environments, and discover interesting facts about biblical accounts.

81. Post mission and wedding photos on photo sharing sites.

Share photos from your mission, your wedding, or a family activity. Post them on large photo sharing sites such as flickr.com, shutterfly.com, photobucket.com, or imgur.com where they may be seen by thousands of people.



Along with the photos, comment about why you served a mission, why you got married in the temple, or why you spend time with your family.

Share everyday photos and events that show how you live your life as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

82. Use LDS.org and the Gospel Library mobile app to study and share.

Hastening the work includes learning and teaching the gospel. The libraries on LDS.org and the Gospel Library mobile app provide great tools to help you and your family study the scriptures, general conference, manuals, videos, handbooks, and other Church materials in many languages.

On LDS.org and the mobile app, you can search, bookmark, link, highlight, and make notes. You can even write journal entries. Whether you enter the notes on your computer, tablet, or smartphone, they are synced across all your devices.

LDS.org and the app let you share what you learn by email, text, Tweet, or post to Facebook.

The Gospel Library mobile app works on tablets and smartphones. After you download the content with an Internet connection, you can study it offline by reading text, listening to

96. Volunteer at LDSTech.

Join a project group online at tech.lds.org to help design, build, and test software applications for the Church. The Church can use your skills in programming, interaction design, database engineering, usability testing, or project management.

97. Invite others to a church activity.

When talking with your friends online, mention to them when your ward has an activity and invite them to come.

Whether your friends attend or not, post pictures after the activity so that they and others can see what happened. When they see what happens at LDS events, they may feel more comfortable coming to the next one.

98. Invite people to attend a Sunday meeting.

Invite your friends to come to a Mormon worship service. Explain that Latter-day Saints love visitors and hope that others will join us.

Since people may have concerns, explain in your own words what happens during our Sunday meetings. You can also refer them to the page Mormon.org/worship that explains what to expect at Sunday meetings.

