

How to use media effectively (and legally) to gain more members for your group

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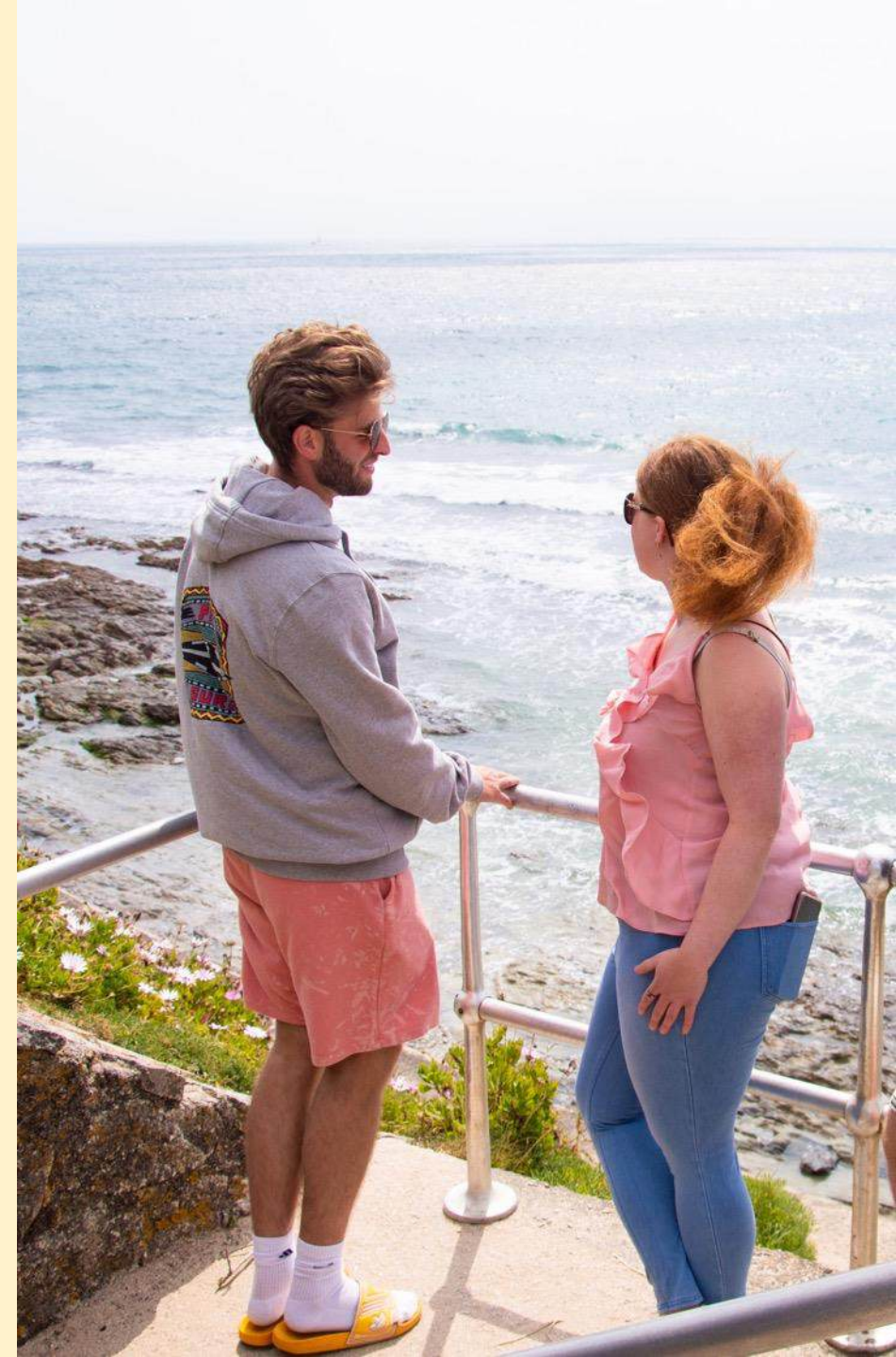


In this session...

- Who can help you with marketing questions?
- The legal and governance stuff (boring but really important)
- External requests
- Accessibility best practice
- How to use The SU's platforms to promote your group
- Online/media wellbeing
- Final thoughts

Who can help?

- You can ask any of the staff team for help, everyone has good ideas and will approach with a different angle.
- The Engagement team has the Communications focus - we have experience of marketing and creative industries.
- If we don't know, we can connect with other SUs to understand what they do.



The legal and governance stuff

- The SU is an educational charity and has a responsibility to uphold freedom of speech and consider ALL members of the union in decisions.
- Your group is part of The SU, therefore everything you write, say or do (if it's on social media in particular!) is part of The SU's reputation.
- The SU's reputation is linked to each University's reputation – if uni staff see your behaviour, they will contact us and we will have to explain your actions. Please don't make us have to do this.



The legal and governance stuff

- Be careful what you share online – you could put yourself at serious risk.
- You have agreed to the code of conduct, which includes online behaviour too.
- This includes emails, blogs, social media, websites, everything! If it is on a screen, someone could take a screenshot and share.
- Defamation.
- Freedom of Speech.
- Being mindful of what you share online could help your career and showcase to potential employers the positive contributions you make to our uni community.



The legal and governance stuff

- GDPR is used when we talk about data protection.
- Data is your image, your name, your phone number, your course, your address, your uni work...
- If your data is shared without your permission, it is a data breach and it is illegal.
- If you don't realise that your data is being shared without your permission, it is still illegal for your data to be shared.
- Ways to mitigate data breaches are to avoid keeping data out in the open – a huge reason we recommend that you collect potential members' data through interest lists through the website, not through excel spreadsheets or paper lists.



The legal and governance stuff

Example 1: You're working in the library on a seating plan for a society event.

You have a list of every ticket holders' name, phone number and dietary requirement on an excel spreadsheet. Nobody can see your computer screen.

When a friend comes over to ask a question you close your laptop, which locks your screen.

Is this a data breach?



The legal and governance stuff

Example 2: You want new students to sign up to taster sessions during Welcome Week.

You create an event on The SU website and then link an online excel spreadsheet for interested people to write their name, contact details and accessibility requirements. Everyone who uses the spreadsheet will see this information.

It is not clear to new students that everyone who accesses the spreadsheet will see this information

Is this a data breach?



Media requests and coverage

- Sometimes media channels reach out (BBC Radio Cornwall, ITV News) to cover topics on their shows. As volunteers, you are not best placed to speak on behalf of The SU – this should always be sabbatical officers as elected (and paid!) representatives of our entire student population.
- Please email our team comms@thesu.org.uk so that we can contact the journalist and chat with you about whether the offer fulfils the aims that you're trying to achieve or could put you in a tricky position.
- If you are trying to gain media coverage, please come and talk to us. Usually, media outlets want to cover topics that are of **broad public interest or things that they deem newsworthy.**



Accessibility: good practice

- Accessibility is a huge area in communications.
- Good practice is to ask your members if they have access needs and how they would like you to meet them. This is the bare minimum.
- To create accessible comms for non-members, research what different groups of people might need.
- Colour and design are important in how people engage with your work.



Accessibility: good practice

- Using a darker colour on a lighter background makes it easier to read.
- Left-aligning text makes it easier to read for people with dyslexia.
- Put the most important information at the top of the web page or social media caption.
- Including as much information as possible helps autistic people and people with anxiety to know what to expect from your event or group. It can help disabled people access your event if they know the space works for them.
- If you are printing, make sure the text is clear and readable when posters are printed at the size you need.



Accessibility: good practice

- Accessibility is everyone's responsibility.
- We will share links to resources that can help you with accessible communications.
- Accessibility is always changing and updating so if you find any helpful information and resources, please share them with us too.



The SU's platforms: Web

- The SU website is built for students' unions and is one of the most popular platforms for SU's around the world.
- You can list your events, sell tickets, write and share your own news articles, and contact all your members by email.
- We create content from the What's On page so if your event isn't on there or has very minimal information, we can't promote what you're doing.



The SU's platforms: Web

- Check your group's page on the website to make sure the information is up-to-date. This is where most of our new students will go looking for the groups they want to join.
- Make sure the committee members are correct.
- If there are any problems, please email the Communities team.



The SU's platforms: Web

- We use our blog to share information in our SU newsletters and university newsletters – it's a great way to promote your group and any successful activities.
- If you'd like to submit something, please contact us on comms@thesu.org.uk.
- You could consider approaching student media – Surf Radio and Falmouth Anchor.



The SU's platforms: Social

- Instagram, Facebook, X, LinkedIn.
- Tag us in your posts and we will share them!
- Please email us your photos and any quotes or thoughts from members – comms@thesu.org.uk
- The more content you can give us the better.
- Open to collaborative posts on Instagram and getting more student leaders on video to help students see who is leading their sports and socs.

Online and media wellbeing

- Having an active presence online can be amazing but puts you at risk of experiencing abuse, both from other students and from strangers.
- Protecting yourself is the most important thing when you experience abuse online.
- Block and delete.
- Get support from wellbeing.
- Chat to us about what we can do to support you.

Final thoughts

- Look after people's data to avoid legal issues.
- Ask questions!
- Use The SU website.
- If there are any problems or you have ideas to improve any of our platforms, come speak to us.
- We are here to support you so let us know when that goes well and what could be different.



Any questions?

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www.thesu.org.uk

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