

# Promoting your cricket club

March 2012

## Why promote your cricket club?

Promoting your cricket club to your members and local community is a great way to help you raise awareness and support for all your activities – from playing and volunteering, to NatWest CricketForce and Fundraiser events.

This summer, with a great new prize up for grabs through NatWest's Biggest Little Cricket Club competition, there's even more of a reason to engage with people to help secure their votes and boost your chances of winning.

There are many ways to promote your club, some of which we cover here, but there are also many good sources of information online for sports organisations which can help in the long term.

## How to promote your project

Raising awareness of your club and their involvement in NatWest's Biggest Little Cricket Club initiative can be done in many ways, several of which you can use for promoting other events and activities in the future to keep your club's name alive in the local community throughout the season and beyond.

Here we have given an outline of some initial places to start your campaign including your local press and social media tools.

## Websites

Your website is the window to your cricket club. If you already have a website set up, it's key to keep it fresh and updated with your latest news – giving visitors confidence that you are an active organisation. A good way to do this is to add a 'News' or 'online diary' section to your site which can be easily updated without the need for costly technical support. It could also be helpful to update your homepage with your latest news post, or promote your blog, so as many people as possible see this.

Websites can, however, be costly to set up and maintain, so if you don't already have a website, have no fear – there are plenty of other ways to promote your project and get a wide-reaching audience online. If you do want to set up a website there are several free sites that are very easy to use – just make sure you have some content to start with. This should include some basic information about your cricket club such as where your club is located, what league you play in, some information about your sides, and fixtures. Information on any fundraising activities and events should also be put on your website along with the roles and jobs your club needs support with and a club contact name and number/email address. This way, it's easy for anyone to get in contact if they feel they are able to help. Another key point is to engage your visitors with some exciting and people-based content so they can remember your club and understand how it could be interesting to them. You could tell stories about the success of players at your clubs or up-and-coming talent. Don't forget – people love pictures so make sure your website or blog is very visual to keep people interested and ensure they remember your site.

Blogs are a great way to keep people up-to-date with what you are doing without overwhelming them on the other social sites. Here you can post information, as and when you need to. This is a great way to provide more in-depth information about what you are doing with your project, such as an overview of recent matches or fundraising activities.

# Here is a brief selection of easy-to-use blogs to get you started:

[www.wikihow.com/Start-a-Blog](http://www.wikihow.com/Start-a-Blog)  
[www.blogger.com](http://www.blogger.com)  
[www.wordpress.com](http://www.wordpress.com)  
[www.tumblr.com](http://www.tumblr.com)

## Checklist for websites

- Keep your website simple – make information easy to find
- Ensure content is kept up-to-date
- Promote your website wherever possible
- Include your club's details – address, email and phone number – on the site

## Social Media

Social media is the thing everyone is talking about, especially when it comes to small and local cricket clubs. Social media is fast becoming the easiest and cheapest way to promote and advertise brands and people alike.

As social media covers a multitude of different areas, we have tried here to explain how some of the best known channels work and suggest good ways to use them to promote your cricket club.

Social media is the use of web-based technologies to communicate and share content with each other. Although the term social media covers many different sites, here we are going to focus on Twitter, Facebook, YouTube and blogs. Each of these platforms is different and they should be used in different ways for maximum effect and promotion.

Don't forget – for any content you use, remember to check that you are authorised to use it, or if it is your own video/photos, that people who appear in it are happy for you to use them in your social media channels.

# Twitter

Twitter is a micro-blogging site. This means that instead of writing a long note, each post is limited to 140 characters, so you have to be concise and to the point with what you want to say. The aim of Twitter is to follow people with the same interests as you and chat with them. So the more people you follow the more comments you see posted and the more you can engage with. Twitter is great for networking, asking for information or help and also picking up useful tidbits of information from like-minded people with similar interests. The only problem is that the shelf life of your tweets is short, meaning your tweet may not be visible for long. But this does depend on how many people your followers follow.

Twitter is all about the here and now and quick, rapid engagement. Here are our top dos and don'ts:

## Do:

- Post regular tweets with engaging content. You don't have to post all day, every day but a couple a day is good. It's about quality not quantity.
- Be yourself. This is a great place to show a personable side to your cricket club. People will be more likely to engage with you if your tweets are written in a friendly style rather than corporate PR speak.
- Engage people. This is a great space to talk to people you don't know and get them to engage with your cricket club. Try to comment on people's posts first rather than going straight in with a sales pitch, once you develop a rapport with someone it will be easier to ask them for help.
- Remind people what you are talking about. A hashtag is a way of categorising tweets, and makes it easier for people to find your messages, as anyone who searches for the hashtag you use will see your Tweet. Using a hashtag - eg. #BLCC - is a good way to label your tweet as people will know that it relates to NatWest's Biggest Little Cricket Club.
- Listen to what people are saying and respond to that. Twitter isn't a channel to just post things out and expect people to react to it. It's a two way street of communication.
- Twitter's Retweet feature helps you and others quickly share a tweet. To let more people know about your cricket club you could try asking prominent figures and cricketers on Twitter for re-tweets (RT), so your message is shared with their followers. This doesn't always work though so try being creative in your requests. E.g. you could ask a professional cricketer who started their career at your club for a RT.

## Don't:

- Spam people. No one likes it when someone comes along and forces information in your face. Just writing messages to people asking them to vote for you in Biggest Little Cricket Club or help out at a fundraising event if you haven't previously engaged them is a waste of time.
- Use link or URL shorteners. Try to keep full webpage URLs to your website wherever possible. People are more likely to click on links when they can see where they are going to be taken - e.g. natwest.com/cricket
- Re-tweet (RT) inappropriate comments. Re-tweeting posts shows people what you value and more importantly reflects what your cricket club is all about. Re-tweet positive stories or posts from people, or posts that your followers will find interesting.
- Tweet for the sake of tweeting. Remember it's quality not quantity - think about whether someone would follow you based on that one tweet. If they wouldn't don't tweet it.
- Make things up.

Twitter help is also a useful source of information and troubleshooting: <http://support.twitter.com>

# Facebook

Facebook is a hugely popular social networking site where you can keep in touch with friends or colleagues, create pages for your cricket club and join conversations and other communities that have similar interests. As setting up a Facebook page is relatively easy and template based, many small organisations and clubs and societies use this instead of having a website. It's also easy to find other cricket clubs, supporters and local organisations to share information with. You can also update your page as often as you like, therefore keeping a record of all the information posted.

**[www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)**

Posting on Facebook is different to posting on Twitter because of the different way people use the environment. Posts on Facebook will stay on your page for everyone to see, which makes it easier for discussions to happen.

Here are our top three Facebook dos and don'ts:

## Do:

- Post photos, team selections, results, links, and videos to start conversations. Questions are most likely to start discussions or conversations, so try phrasing posts to engage people. Use these posts to direct people to other content you have, like YouTube and your blog.
- Interact with other pages. Find other cricket pages on Facebook as this is a good way to start getting your name out into the online community.
- Link people to the NatWest's Biggest Little Cricket Club page. This is where they are able to vote for your club.
- Get friends to spread your message. Similar to a twitter RT, Facebook allows you to 'Share' content. If you see a comment or article that you like you can share it and it will appear on your page and in your friends News Feed. Like-wise, if you post something interesting your friends can share it on their pages, allowing you to reach a wider audience.

## Don't:

- Spam people's walls and pages. This is similar to the Twitter section. People won't respond positively if all you do is post things on walls to try and get people to vote and asking for help. Like Twitter, engage with people first so they know a bit about your club and why you want to win and then posting links to them will work much better.
- Ignore comments or likes on your wall or posts. People are going out of their way to show that they appreciate what you are posting. If they ask questions try to answer them. If they like comments, thank them for liking. If you don't, you run the risk of people not commenting on your posts anymore.
- Constantly update your status. As status updates have a longer shelf life than tweets, there is no need to constantly update your status or post things. Too much posting will annoy people and they will probably 'unlike' your page. Lunchtimes and evenings are the best times to post updates as these are when more people are likely to be on Facebook; otherwise your posts might get lost in their news feed.

Facebook help is also useful for learning how the social networking site works: **[www.facebook.com/help](http://www.facebook.com/help)**

# YouTube

YouTube is a video sharing site that displays a wide variety of user-generated video content - including movie clips, TV clips, and music videos - as well as amateur content such as video blogging and short original videos. Having a YouTube page makes it easier to share your videos on Facebook and Twitter as you can share the link rather than having to upload the video on each social media site. It's also a great way of having all your videos in one place so if a user finds one interesting they can easily view more.

**[www.youtube.com](http://www.youtube.com)**

YouTube is extremely useful when you want to share video content. You can upload an unlimited number of videos and it has the ability for people to comment on them. Once your video is uploaded to YouTube you can use Twitter and Facebook to promote your videos. Having video content is a great way for people to find out about your club as well as any NatWest CricketForce projects you're looking to run or fundraising events you're holding soon or have held in the past.

Making video content doesn't have to involve expensive cameras and equipment or hours of editing and post production. Most mobile phones now have good quality cameras and video recording capability; so why not use your phone to record, download free editing software and have a go at making something? Or you could even do it all in one take! Then just upload it to YouTube and share it with your supporters.

Some dos and don'ts for YouTube:

## Do:

- Add tags to videos. Tags help users find your video when they search the site. When users type keywords related to your tags, your video will appear in their search results. Add as many relevant tags to your video as you can so that it will be found more easily.
- Create lots of videos. As mentioned previously, they don't have to be perfect masterpieces and they don't have to be long. Several two minute videos may be more interesting and engaging than one eight minute video. You can video blog about what is going on at your local club, and show the clubs development.

## Don't:

- Mis-tag your videos. This is frustrating for people who stumble upon your video when they are looking for something else. It will annoy them and they may leave negative comments, which won't look great to people who will be actively looking for your kind of video.
- Post a half-finished video. We mentioned that videos don't have to be cinema quality but they do have to be finished - there is no point in putting up a half-finished video as it isn't a good impression to give.

## Checklist for social media

- Think carefully about which, if any, of the social media channels you want to use before you start.
- Do some investigation - find out how cricket clubs are using social media and learn from what they are doing.
- Prepare your basic information and pictures before you start - these should include contact details, club information, plus details of recent activities and, of course, some images
- Plan out what you are going to do with your social media channel for the coming six weeks so you aren't stuck for anything to write
- Before you post anything make sure you proof-read what you have written to sense check it and ensure there are no spelling mistakes

## Maintenance

Setting up social media accounts is quick, easy and free; however they do require time and maintenance if you are to get the most out of them. Blogs need to be regularly updated so they have fresh content that people will want to come back and read. This is the same with Twitter and Facebook - you don't have to tweet or post updates all the time but a Twitter or Facebook account that hasn't been updated for several weeks looks bare and uninspiring. The key to social media channels is definitely to keep them updated to show your visitors that you are an active and interesting cricket club. Why not try and plan out any updates you want to make for the coming month, centring these around matches, NatWest's Biggest Little Cricket Club, NatWest CricketForce and your own events so you are never stuck for updates?

## Other useful sources of information on social media

### Twitter

[www.support.twitter.com/](http://www.support.twitter.com/)

### About Facebook pages

[www.facebook.com/help/?faq=155275634539412&ref\\_query=club+](http://www.facebook.com/help/?faq=155275634539412&ref_query=club+)

### YouTube Creative Video inspiration

[www.youtube.com/t/creators\\_corner](http://www.youtube.com/t/creators_corner)

### YouTube help

[www.support.google.com/youtube/?hl=en-G](http://www.support.google.com/youtube/?hl=en-G)

## Local projects need local promotion

Your cricket club forms part of your local community, so let your local area know what's going on at the club and they're more likely to get involved. Through social media you can make them aware that you're entered in NatWest's Biggest Little Cricket Club and encourage them to vote for you, and let them know your plans for NatWest CricketForce and NatWest CricketForce Fundraiser to gain extra volunteers and support.

We have outlined below a few groups that are in every local community that you could contact to promote your club and obtain their support too.

## Your friends are your supporters

People you already know, friends, family and colleagues, are your most certain source of support. Think about where you go every day – work, school, and your own favourite places – and talk to people there to see if they'll let you put up posters or hand out flyers to promote your cricket club. With social media and your local area it's all about the power of numbers. Every time you tell a friend about your club and NatWest's Biggest Little Cricket Club, ask them to tell a friend too, and so on. It's all about exponential growth which you can do in person or online.

## Local Newspapers

Local newspapers are always looking to promote local stories – not only does it bring a sense of community to their readers, but it also means that people who want to get involved or could benefit find out. Use the internet to look up their phone number and give them a call to chat about the work you're planning to complete at your club and they might be willing to publish an article and raise awareness to get you closer to winning NatWest's Biggest Little Cricket Club.

If they are on Facebook or Twitter join them there too so they can keep up-to-date with your activities. Local newspapers are great ways to increase the awareness of your club in the local area, reaching those people that are most likely to be interested.

## Local Radio

Local radio is very similar to local newspapers and, again, they will be keen on promoting local news so it's worth getting in touch with them directly.

Finally, don't try and do everything. Fundraising and promoting your club can take a lot of time and energy, so focus your attention on a few small things and do those really well, ensuring you have enough time to make them a success.

## Other information

**NatWest Cricket Club** – For information on NatWest’s Biggest Little Cricket Club and NatWest Cricket Force  
[www.natwest.com/cricket](http://www.natwest.com/cricket)

**Register for NatWest CricketForce**

[www.ecb.co.uk/development/facilities-funding/self-build-and-self-help/natwest-cricketforce/](http://www.ecb.co.uk/development/facilities-funding/self-build-and-self-help/natwest-cricketforce/)

**NatWest Cricket Twitter**

[www.twitter.rs/NatWest\\_cricket](http://www.twitter.rs/NatWest_cricket)

NatWest’s Biggest Little Cricket Club hashtag: #BLCC

NatWest CricketForce 2012 hashtag: #NWCF12

**NatWest Cricket Facebook**

[www.facebook.com/natwestcricket](http://www.facebook.com/natwestcricket)

**NatWest Cricket YouTube**

[www.youtube.com/user/NatWestCricketClub/featured](http://www.youtube.com/user/NatWestCricketClub/featured)

We have provided links to other websites or resources that are not part of natwest.com, for you to access at your sole discretion. We are not responsible for the availability of such external sites or resources and the content within those websites sites may change.

