

***DIGITAL  
AND SOCIAL  
ENGAGEMENT  
GUIDE***

Many of our audiences communicate through digital media. Engagement with our brand is driven by how users interact with these different platforms.

Use this guide to find advice, strategies, and information on image sizes and ratios — tips to craft resonating content that unifies our messaging and increases engagement.

## Social Media General Guidelines

### CAMPUSWIDE HASHTAGS

#MySmallStep = student stories

#MyGiantLeap = faculty/alumni stories

#PurdueUniversity, #Purdue,  
#BoilerUp, #Boilermakers

#TheNextGiantLeap

#PicturePurdue

Use branded profile templates.

Post and moderate daily.

Include brand photos, videos or GIFs.

Keep posts short and direct. Less is more.

Consider starting your post by asking a question to draw in your audience.

See if there's an emoji you can add.

Always tag as many accounts as possible, including related Purdue departments, clubs and organizations.

Use [bit.ly](#) to shorten URLs. From there, you can build campaign-specific links that track performance.

Add hashtags to amplify your content when applicable.

Incorporate user-generated content (UGC).

Reuse and repurpose content.

## Social Media Graphic Guidelines

Lead with a strong in-brand photo.

Keep text to a minimum.

Always use brand fonts if copy is included in graphics.

Design for accessibility. Sprout Social offers [nine guidelines](#) to make social posts more accessible, including advice on alt text.

Avoid logos/co-brands in graphics since posts are always paired with profile icons and the name of the page.

Don't forget to incorporate videos when possible.

Do not use QR codes in graphics since a significant portion of your audience views posts on mobile devices.



## Facebook Tips

### Audiences

Parents  
Alumni  
General public

### Post Frequency

Once per day

### Content

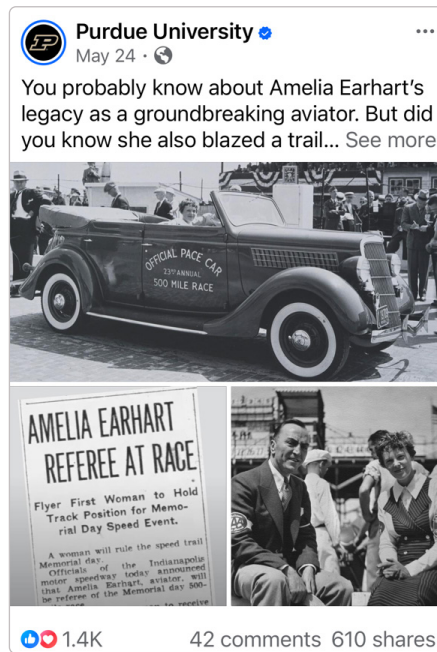
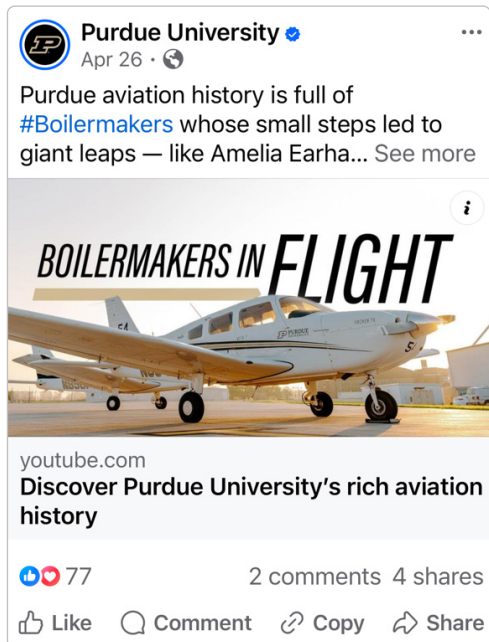
Stories about research initiatives, celebrations/ milestones, current student profiles and alumni profiles

Share both photos and videos.

### Word Count

While 63,206 characters is the maximum word count, the ideal length is 50 characters or fewer.

When a caption this short isn't possible, focus on getting the "hook" of the post within the opening part of the caption.



### Visuals

Image size: 1200 x 630 px

Facebook, LinkedIn and X all support a 1200 x 630 px size, so to save time, we suggest designing one graphic for these three channels.

To vary posts, additional options can include utilizing one 1200 x 630 px image or graphic with two 1:1s or a post with multiple 1:1 photos.

Video size: 16:9 ratio | 1280 x 720 px

Lead with an authentic Purdue photo.

Keep text minimal. Always use brand fonts.

Avoid logo/co-brands in graphic.



## Facebook Stories Tips

### Audiences

Parents  
Alumni  
General public

### Post Frequency

One to two times per day

Note: Facebook stories disappear after 24 hours.

### Content

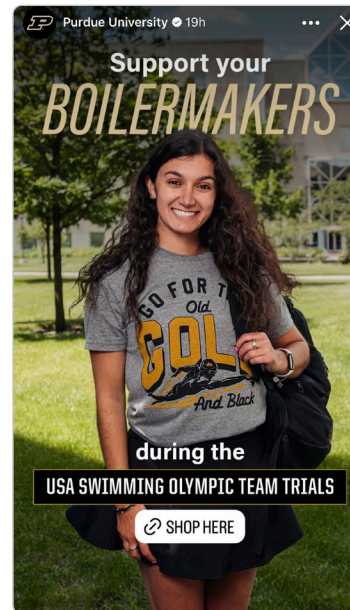
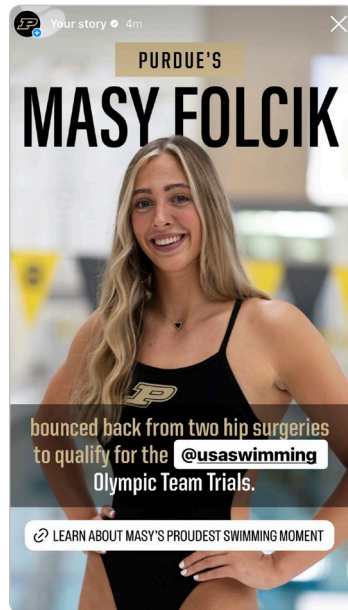
Use Facebook stories to post in-the-moment and behind-the-scenes photos and videos to supplement feed posts and to promote upcoming or current events to increase engagement.

Use links to provide more information and to drive traffic to the Purdue website.

### Word Count

0 characters

There is no place to include post copy, so ensure that your story graphic makes sense on its own.



### Visuals

Image size: 9:16 ratio | 1080 x 1920 px

Video size: 9:16 ratio | 1080 x 1920 px (Include captions if the video has dialogue/voice-over.)

Text is needed — graphics posted to your story will need more context than regular posts. Keep word count to 10 words or fewer, including the link sticker call to action if applicable. Try to be concise and catchy.

Leave space in the design for tags, stickers and auto-populating elements.

Stickers like polls, quizzes, etc., are great for engagement and audience interaction.



# Instagram Tips

## Audiences

Current students  
Prospective students  
Alumni  
General public

## Post Frequency

Once per day and at least three Instagram story elements per day

## Content

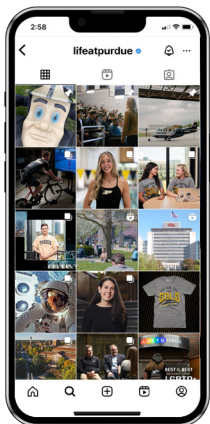
Events, student profiles, faculty profiles, student life, celebrations, milestones

Instagram should serve as a high-quality photo gallery.

Links: Use [linkinprofile.com](https://linkinprofile.com) (or another link service) so every photo can be linked from the profile URL.

## Word Count

While 2,200 characters is the maximum word count, the ideal length is 50 characters or fewer.



## Visuals

Image sizes: 1:1 ratio | 1080 x 1080 px    4:5 ratio | 1080 x 1350 px

Lead with strong photography.

Avoid text/logos on images. If text is needed, consider a carousel post (which has a maximum of 20 slides). Lead with a photo and follow with a graphic that includes text.

In carousel posts, quote graphics are a great way to highlight the strongest parts of interviews.

**USE YOUR BEST PHOTOS TO HELP CURATE A CLEAN GRID.**



## Instagram Reels Tips

You cannot publish any videos over 90 seconds using the Reel option in-app. If you'd like to add a video longer than 90 seconds, select the "post" option in-app.

### TRENDS

Sharing your take on certain trends can be a great way to show your audience that you can be fun, current and responsive to the ebb and flow of social media culture. To avoid any copyright infringement, avoid using memes on your video (cut out visuals from a show or movie).

### TEMPLATES

Consider utilizing Instagram templates in-app. This algorithm-friendly method allows you to use a premade video where you can add and modify your own clips.

## Visuals

### VIDEO SIZE

9:16 ratio (preferred) or 1:1 ratio

16:9 ratio videos are no longer recommended on Instagram due to the black bars that appear above and below the video.

### LENGTH

90 seconds

### SAFE ZONE

Make sure to utilize the "safe zone" when creating 9:16 video. This will ensure that any text or captions are not covered up with in-app elements.

### COVER IMAGES

Cover images should be used for Instagram Reels.

Cover images can be selected from a video frame, or you can upload your image in Creator Studio. When publishing natively, you can add this from your camera gallery on your phone.

You can preview the cover image in the grid view to adjust as necessary and ensure nothing is cut off.

## Audio

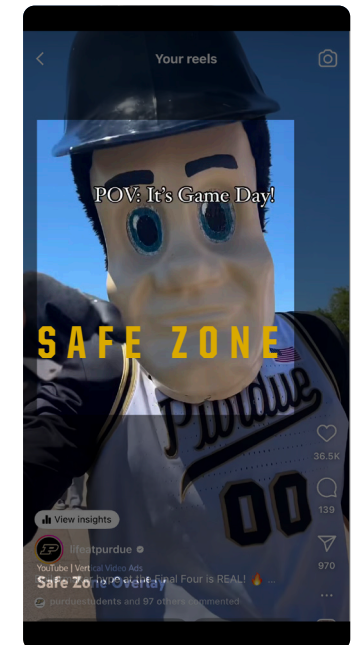
When possible, add trending audio that has under 10K uses with an original video that has 1M views. This is the sweet spot for virality and will help with boosting your own content.

## Captions

Captions need to be "burned into" the video. If this is not done prior to uploading, Instagram has a feature where you can add and edit captions in-app.

### IN-VIDEO CAPTIONS

The addition of captions and on-screen text to your Instagram Reel is important, not only for accessibility reasons but also because it allows your content to be enjoyed by those who would rather watch in silence.







## Instagram Stories Tips

### Audiences

Current students  
Prospective students  
Alumni  
General public

### Post Frequency

At least three stories per day

Note: Instagram stories disappear after 24 hours.

### Content

Events, student profiles, student life, celebrations, milestones

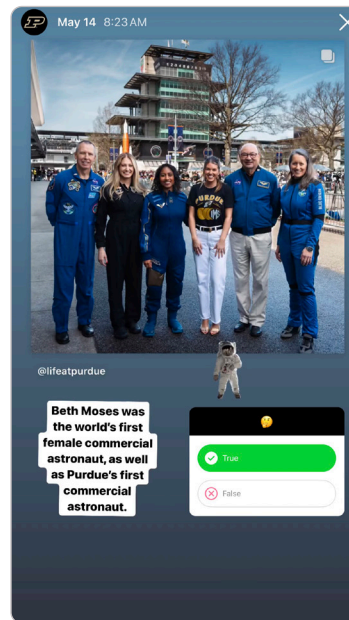
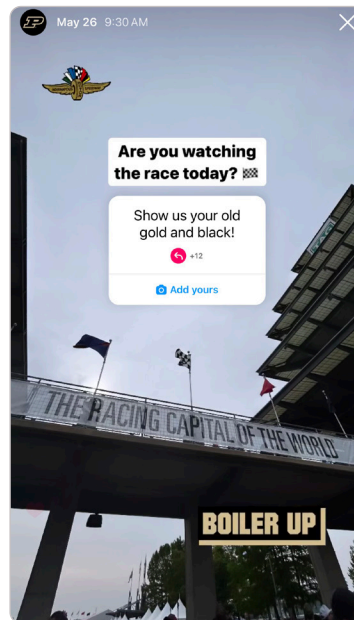
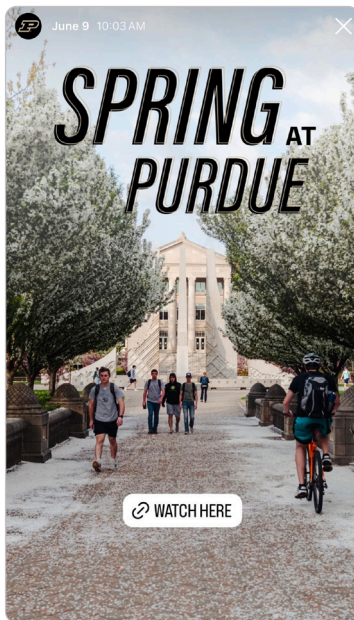
Instagram stories are a great way to promote articles and drive traffic to a website.

Use links to provide more information.

### Word Count

0 characters

There is no place to include post copy, so ensure that your story graphic makes sense on its own.



### Visuals

Image size: 9:16 ratio | 1080 x 1920 px

Video size: 9:16 ratio | 1080 x 1920 px

Text is needed — graphics posted to your story will need more context than regular posts. Keep word count to 10 words or fewer, including the link sticker call to action if applicable. Try to be concise and catchy.

Leave space in the design for tags, stickers and auto-populating elements.

Stickers like polls, quizzes, etc., are great for engagement and audience interaction.



## X Tips

### Audiences

Students  
Alumni  
General public

### Post Frequency

Six to 10 times per day

### Content

Post and repost about campus events, research initiatives and fun facts about Purdue.

### Word Count

With a standard account, the max character count is 280 characters. Know that a link on X will always be 23 characters, so account for that.

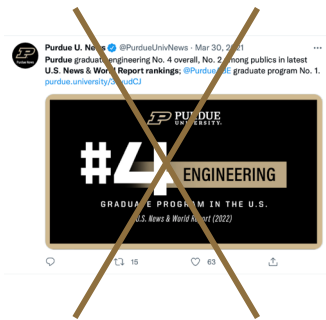


### Visuals

Image size: 1200 x 630 px

*X, LinkedIn and Facebook all support a 1200 x 630 px size, so to save time, we suggest designing one graphic for these three channels.*

Video size: 16:9 ratio | 1280 x 720 px



Link previews now include only the article title — keep in mind when writing copy that the user doesn't have that additional context.

### TIP

Graphics on X have rounded corners, so borders around graphics do not work well.



## LinkedIn Tips

### Audiences

- Students
- Recent graduates (job seekers)
- Alumni (recruiters looking for recent graduates)
- Business professionals

### Post Frequency

One to two times per day

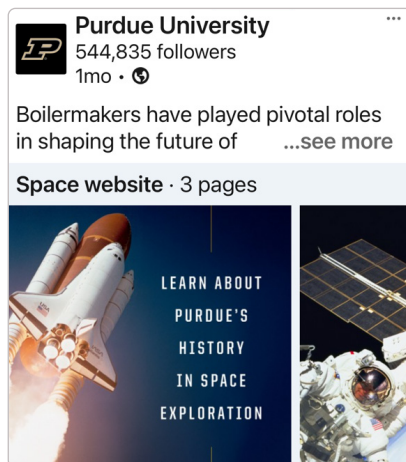
### Content

Innovation — partnerships, research, student profiles, alumni profiles and professor profiles

### Word Count

While 3,000 characters is the maximum word count, posts truncate after 25 words.

If a longer post is needed, consider encouraging users to expand the post to read more.



### Visuals

Image size: 1200 x 630 px

*X, LinkedIn and Facebook all support a 1200 x 630 px size, so to save time, we suggest designing one graphic for these three channels.*

Video size: 16:9 ratio | 1280 x 720 px

While links do generate a link preview image, LinkedIn has moved toward making these previews smaller. To stand out in feeds, include another visual instead.

A great option for a LinkedIn post is the document PDF (carousel) feature. This is great for engagement and allows users to easily click through multiple images.



## YouTube Tips

### Audiences

Current students  
Prospective students  
Parents  
Alumni

### Post Frequency

Two to three times per week

YouTube Shorts can be published every day. Look in the Audience Analytics section to see the best publish time.

### Content

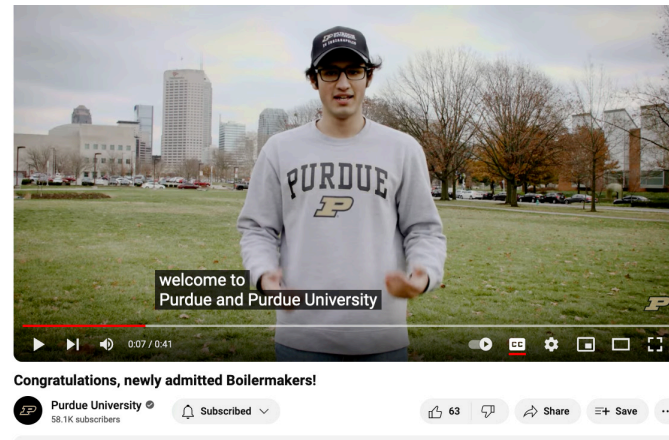
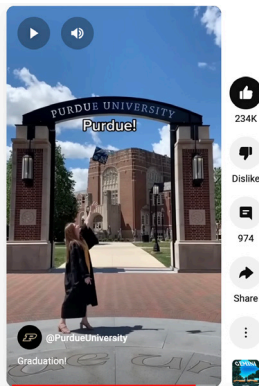
Share stories about Boilermakers. Videos should align with one or more of the content pillars: athletics, education, research and experience.

**PLAYLISTS:** If the video is tied to one of our core themes (such as Boilermaker Experience) or topic categories (such as Purdue University in Indianapolis), add it to the corresponding playlist(s).

### Word Count

**TITLE:** 100 characters or fewer; try to keep the title between 20-70 characters and include Purdue in the title if relevant.

**DESCRIPTION:** 5,000 characters; at the end of the description, create a separate line with three hashtags that will appear below the title once posted.



### Visuals

Video: 16:9 (1280 x 720 px) for normal videos

YouTube Shorts are 59 seconds or fewer and have a ratio of 9:16 (1080 x 1920 px).

By default, videos can be up to 15 minutes long. However, verified accounts like the Purdue University official channel can upload videos longer than 15 minutes.

YouTube allows you to provide your own closed captioning for accessibility in your videos. Add a transcription for each video.

Keep titles concise so copy is clear in the YouTube Shorts feed.

YouTube Shorts do not have thumbnails. A frame from the video will automatically be selected.

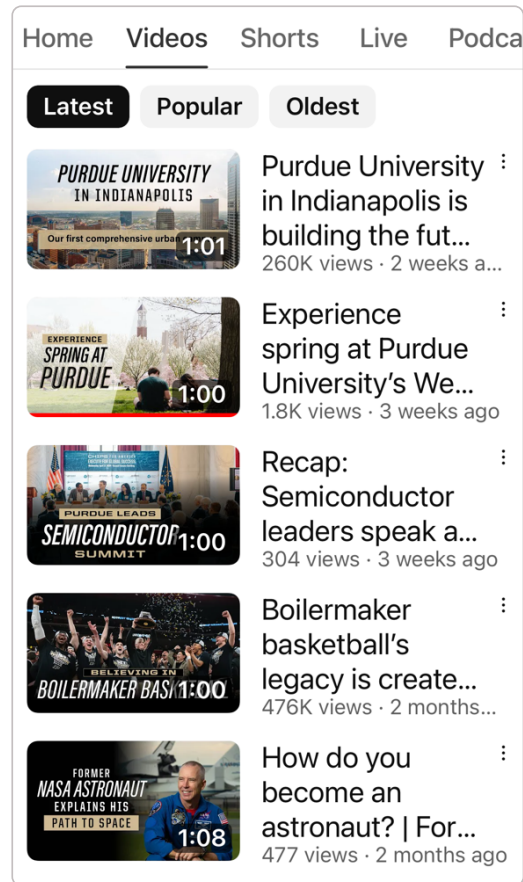
#### TIP

Set the video as “not for kids” so content doesn’t appear next to kids’ content.

Add chapters, end screens and info cards when possible.



## YouTube Thumbnail Tips



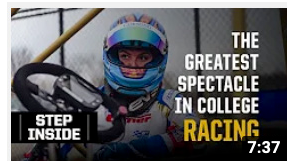
## Visuals

Design your thumbnail to be legible in small formats. Use large, readable fonts. Don't forget about proper color contrast for accessibility compliance.

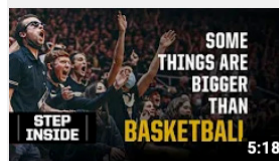
Your thumbnail should provide insight for viewers into what your video is about.

Leave room in the thumbnail design for populated elements like the time stamp, play button, etc.

Ensure the thumbnail is both high resolution and eye-catching.



**STEP INSIDE: Purdue Grand Prix Foundation**  
46K views · 4 months ago  
CC



**STEP INSIDE: Paint Crew**  
33K views · 6 months ago  
CC

If your video is part of a series of videos or a campaign, consider using a thumbnail template.

For example, the "Step Inside" series on the Purdue YouTube channel uses a similar thumbnail layout for each of the episodes in the series.

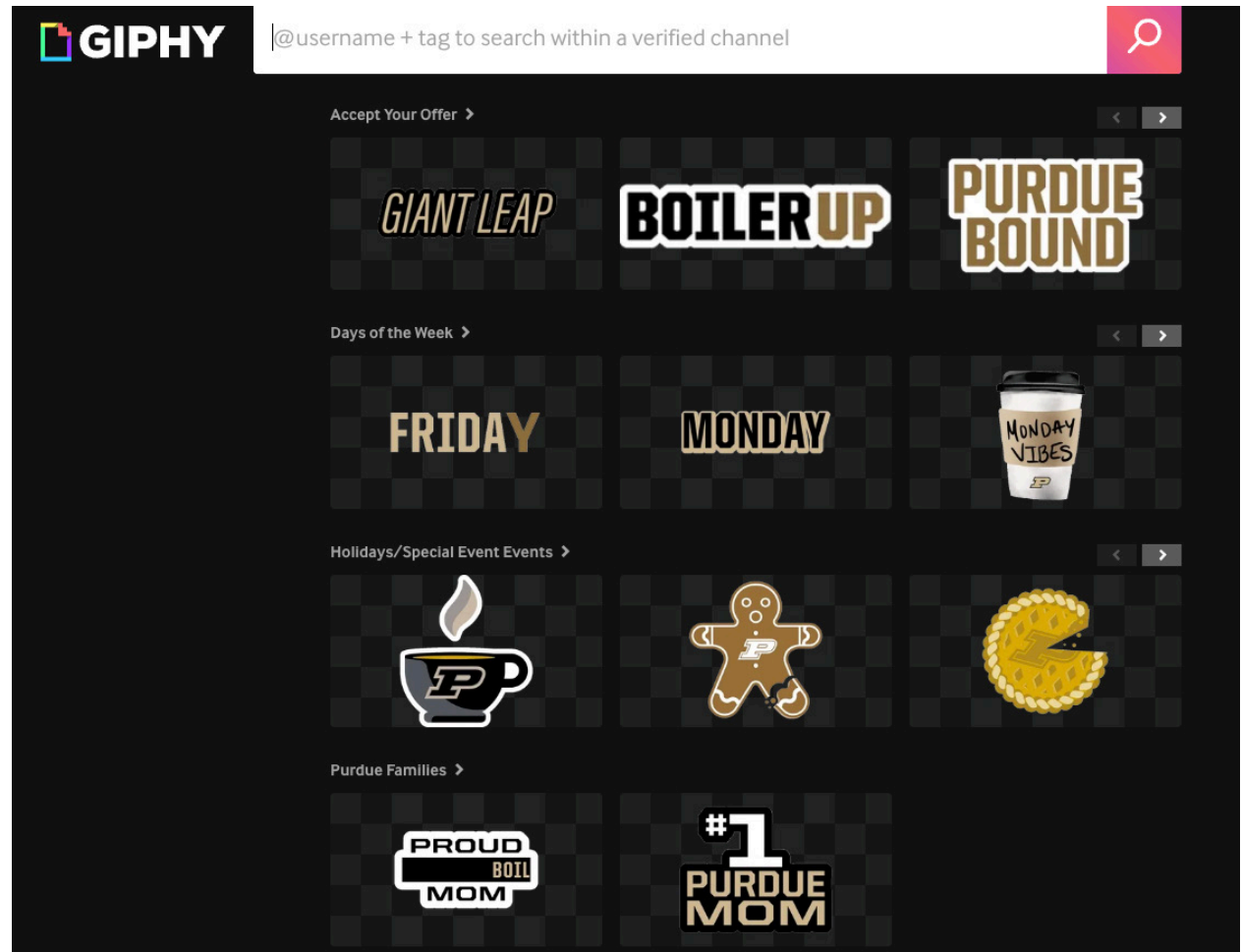
**TIP**  
Consider the elements of a YouTube video outside of the video itself, including the title, description and thumbnail.

## Giphy

Giphy can be used to add GIFs and looping animations to Instagram and Facebook stories.

GIFs and stickers can accompany any campaign, especially when you are looking for audience engagement and excitement. We have added a database of Purdue-themed GIFs that can be used to bring motion to posts.

Visit [giphy.com/PurdueUniversity](https://giphy.com/PurdueUniversity) to see the options, or use the GIF search tool on your platform to search "Purdue."



### CONTACT

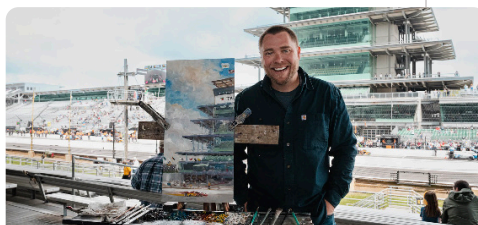
Purdue Brand Studio has a verified Giphy account. Julie Sadler ([jsadler@purdue.edu](mailto:jsadler@purdue.edu)) can assist in creating and uploading GIFs.

## Sharing Links From The Persistent Pursuit and the Purdue Newsroom on Social Media

When sharing content from The Persistent Pursuit, the following will automatically populate from the webpage: hero image, title of page and short description of page.

This feature reduces the need to build graphics and adds copy on your post. Be aware of this when planning post copy and graphics.

The **open graph (OG) image/social image** is the thumbnail automatically created from the story's hero image. The social image can be used by search engines and social networks. For universal support, the preferred size is 1200x630.



STORIES.PURDUE.EDU  
**Indy 500 artist moved by deep connections he observes at racetrack - The Persistent**

Facebook preview



Indy 500 artist moved by deep connections he observes at racetrack  
 stories.purdue.edu

LinkedIn preview

The screenshot shows the top of the article page. At the top left is the Purdue University logo and 'The Persistent Pursuit' title. Below that is a navigation bar with 'Home', 'Stories', 'Topics', 'Podcast', and 'About'. On the right is a 'SUBSCRIBE TO NEWSLETTER' button. The main content area has a large hero image of Justin Vining painting at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Below the image is a short description: 'Purdue alumnus Justin Vining specializes in painting live at big events like the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, where he has worked each year since 2018. (Purdue University photo/Greta Bell)'. Below that is the date 'MAY 20, 2024' and the author 'DAVID CHING', followed by social sharing icons. The article title is 'Alumni artist Justin Vining believes the bonds people build during the month of May tie into the meaning of life'. Below the title is another short description: 'Artist Justin Vining wasn't exactly a racing fanatic when he first sought an opportunity to paint at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway during the month of May.'

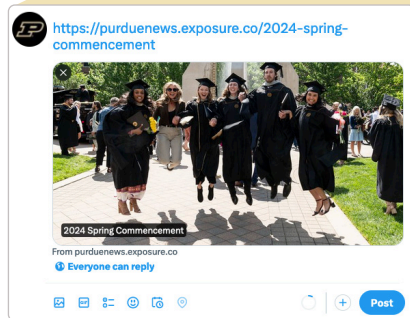
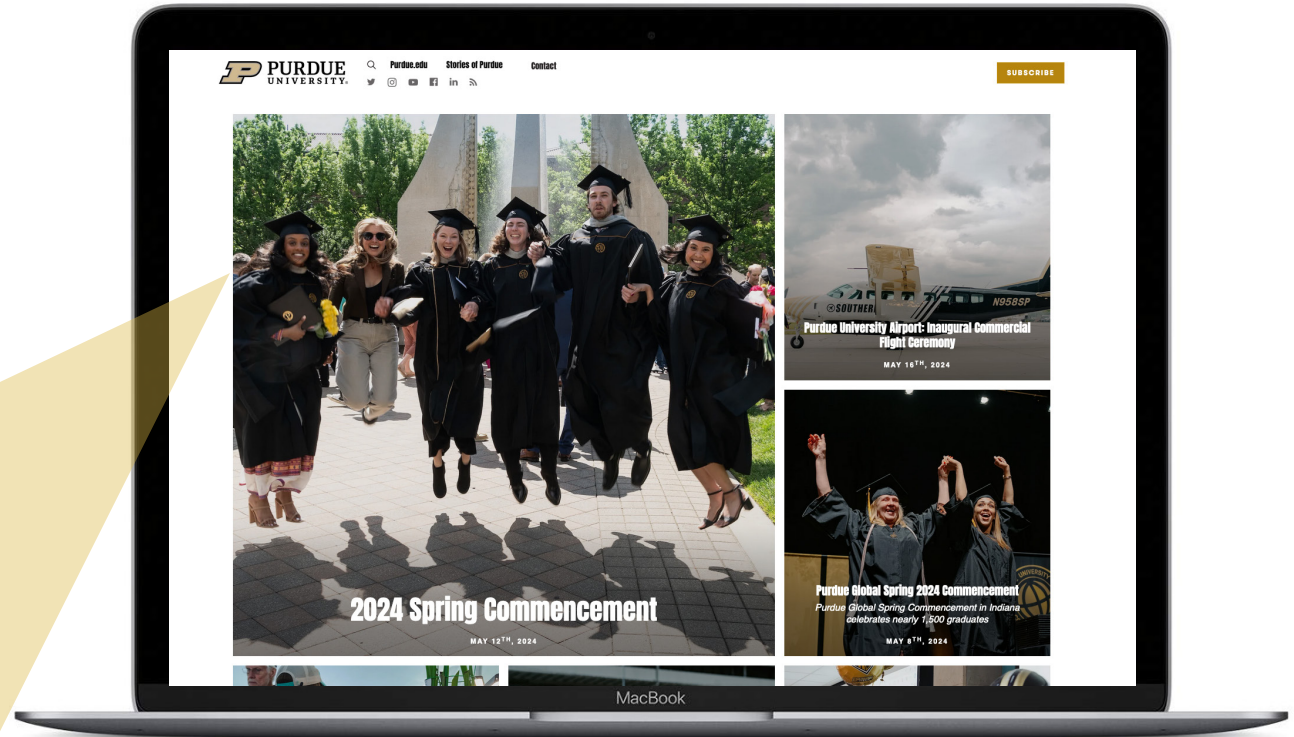
*Utilize this feature as often as possible. These preview elements give viewers a sample of what they can expect on your site. Clicking the preview leads to the linked page.*

*Remember that LinkedIn has moved toward making these previews smaller. To stand out in feeds, include another visual instead.*

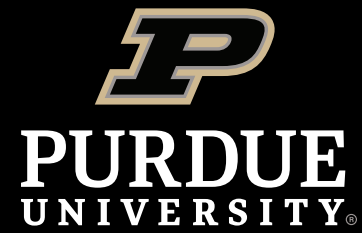
## Exposure Galleries

When sharing an exposure gallery on Facebook, X and LinkedIn, the first image in the gallery is what will populate on the platform.

Visit [Purdue Exposure Galleries](https://purdueews.exposure.co) to see more and subscribe to notifications when new galleries are added.







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