

# Social Media Style Guide

**Produced by Jenna Charron, Kenton Dvorak, and Gretta Zellmer**



**THE CHRIST IN MEDIA INSTITUTE**

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction page .....</b>	<b>Page 2</b>
<b>Graphic design information .....</b>	<b>Page 3</b>
Logo .....	Page 3
Color and hex codes .....	Page 3
Primary, secondary and text colors .....	Page 3
<b>Photos and elements .....</b>	<b>Page 4-5</b>
Platform image size .....	Page 4
Image file .....	Page 4
Photo .....	Page 4
Elements .....	Page 5
<b>Typeface for graphic images .....</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>The name .....</b>	<b>Page 6</b>
<b>Writing copy .....</b>	<b>Page 7</b>
<b>Messaging guidelines .....</b>	<b>Page 8-9</b>
Point of view .....	Page 8
Tone and voice .....	Page 8
AP Style Guide rules to break .....	Page 8
Hashtags .....	Page 9
Emojis .....	Page 9

## **Introduction**

This document is designed to aid Christ In Media Institute (CMI) social media supervisors in creating consistent social media content and copy that is representative of the brand.

Using these guidelines helps create consistency and a more recognizable brand.

The guidelines are written for the use of the social media platforms: Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. The intent is to make the brand more recognizable to a younger audience of high school and college students who use these social media platforms.

The guidelines can also be used as a starting point for other platforms that may be used in the future as well.

## Graphic design information

### Logo

The logo has four buttons which represent the media aspect of CMI as they symbolize buttons on a VCR player or remote. Additionally, the cross in the yellow button represents the overall mission of sharing how the gospel can be spread through media.



The logo should be represented with all four colors of each button to ensure consistency. If using a blue background however, the all-white logo is acceptable.

### Color and hex codes



#B0332D #F8B6B4 #327661 #95CEB7 #DDA341 #EDDABE #205B9B #A2C1E0

### Primary color: #205B9B

- The main color to be incorporated into at least 50% of the graphics for socials is the dark blue (#205B9B).

Why this color was chosen:

- This blue will be the main color associated with the brand to ensure all of the content on the feed is eye-appealing and cohesive. It is the most prominent color on CMI's website, which helps to keep brand consistency.
- Blue is often representative of technology, which tends to be a major focus of the media channels discussed by CMI.
- According to color psychology, blue tends to be seen as a peaceful color, therefore making it appealing to all.

### Secondary colors: #A2C1E0, #EDDABE

- The light blue and tan colors should be used to complement the dark blue. These can be used in the graphics, but should not overpower the amount of blue within the post.

### Text colors: white and black

- Use high contrast when choosing a font color so posts are easy to read. White text on a darker background is easy to read. Dark blue or black works well on a lighter background.
- When using a photo, make sure the background image does not distract from the ability to read the heading.

## Photos and elements

The online software, Canva, is recommended for content creation. The following guidelines can be performed through the free version of Canva. This tool is also beneficial as it provides the user with templates and design ideas.

### Platform image size

*Image sizes cannot be altered in the free version of Canva. Therefore, be sure to use a template that is already formatted to the correct size.*

- Instagram:
  - Square Images: 1,080 x 1,080 px
    - Choose a square-sized Instagram graphic so all the information fits on the feed from the profile view.
  - Stories: 1,080 x 1,920 px
- Facebook:
  - Image Post: 1,200 x 630 px
  - Shared Link Image: 1,200 x 630 px
- Twitter:
  - Twitter Post: 1,024 x 512 px

### Image file

- Photos for all platforms should be downloaded as PNGs or JPEGs.

### Photo

When choosing a photo to include in the graphic:

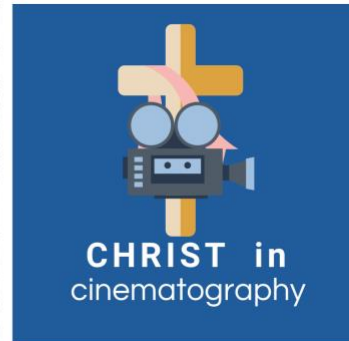
- Make sure the photo is realistic, neutral-toned and is related to the post.
  - *The editing tool Canva provides stock photos through their integration with Pixabay and Pexels. Click on “app” in the left-hand navigation bar of a Canva design. Click on either “Pixabay” or “Pexels” under the “Discover content from” header. Type in what image you are looking for.*
- If the colors in the images are not especially representative of the branded blues and tan colors, consider placing a transparent blue square over the entire image.
  - *To do this on Canva, put a square over your image. Change the color of the square to blue. Click “Transparency” on the top edit menu. Change the transparency of the blue square to about 80% depending on the image. This square will give a blue-ish tint to the image, which will make the social media feeds more consistent based on color.*
- Avoid using clipart.

*Examples:*

This:



Not This:



### Elements

- Consider designing posts with clean and straight lines.
  - Using lines is encouraged as it can draw a viewer's eyes towards information listed on the post. It also creates a professional and timeless design.
- Keep the words straight. Do not rotate them away from 0°.
- The alignment should change between posts to make each post look somewhat unique.
- When writing larger bodies of text, consider using left alignment. Avoid having more than 20 words per image.
- Experiment with font boldness, size, letter capitalization, italicizing and kerning as a way to make posts look unique yet branded.

*Examples:*



## Typefaces for graphic images

### Typefaces

The free Canva typefaces acceptable for all posts, stories and reels are:



- For a majority of the titles and headers of the posts use Araboto.
- For subtitles and small details use Questrial.

### Style options

- Fonts must be at least a 20-point font size for graphic images.
- Writing plain text, italicized words or all capitalized letters is permitted. Do not use shadow letters or other text effects.

## The name

### Image text

Please note that when writing CMI's name in a social media post:

- Include it as the primary logo which already has the full name written in all capitalized letters.
- If it is necessary to write it out instead of using the logo, follow the guidelines for the "Caption text" below:

### Caption text

Please note that when writing CMI's name in a social media caption:

- Only write "Christ In Media". Do not include "Institute" as it takes up too many characters in the caption. Avoid writing the word "the" before the name, unless necessary for context.
- Capitalize the first letter of every word.
  - The "C" in the word "Christ", the "I" in the word "In" and the "M" in the word "Media" should all be capitalized.

## Writing copy

### Caption copy

When choosing what to include in the caption of a post, be sure to consider including at least one of the following items:

- Hook
  - Including a thought-provoking question, something that sparks conversation, a story or including numbers in a caption can spark interest and cause the reader to want to learn more.
  - Example for a carousel post: “You won’t believe the last fact!”
  
- Call to Action
  - A Call to Action is a part of writing that tells the reader the next step they should complete. This can help promote engagement among an audience.
  - Example: “Click the link in our bio to learn more!”

### Word and character limits

If there is an engaging or important message in the caption that viewers need to see, put it “above the fold” where people will see it while scrolling without having to click “more” to see the rest of the truncated caption. Character limits that will be shown are listed below:

- Instagram:
  - Characters before truncation: 125
- Facebook:
  - Characters before truncation: 80
- Twitter:
  - Total character limit: 280

### Caption copy formatting

When writing captions for all platforms, consider to:

- Break up large bodies of text. It is okay to only have one or a few sentences in each block paragraph.
- Add line breaks between paragraphs by double entering after the last sentence in a paragraph.



## Messaging guidelines

### Point of view

The goal is to be conversational and personable when writing captions and responding to comments. Therefore, one should use both a first person and second person point of view when writing. When writing pronouns, consider to:

- Refer to CMI in the first person, such as “we”.
- Refer to followers as “you”.
- Refer to other people that are not CMI’s audience or followers as “she”, “he” or “they”.
- Use second person pronouns such as “you” twice as much as first person pronouns such as “me”.

### Tone and voice

Digital content will follow Associated Press (AP) Style Guide principles. Additionally, CMI will adhere to the following specific principles to maintain brand image and credibility:

- Use an engaging writing style as the audience may not have a deep knowledge of the subject. (AP Style Guide)
- Provide context and background information where necessary to help readers understand complex theological or technological concepts and practices.
- Use descriptive language to paint a vivid picture of events, places and people.
- Use a conversational tone that is intelligent, but easily understood.
- Use clear simple words. Omit unnecessary words.
- Use a respectful and reverent tone when referring to God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and other biblical figures.
- Maintain a balanced tone when reporting on religious news and events.
- Avoid using language that could be perceived as disrespectful or derogatory towards any particular religious group or belief system.

### AP Style Guide rules to break

It is permissible to break certain grammar rules to create a casual conversational tone that would resonate with the target audience. This is a list of rules one should consider breaking within reason:

- Writing one sentence paragraphs is allowed.
- Ending sentences with prepositions is allowed.
- Using common contractions is allowed.
  - Do not use “ain’t” or “y’all”.
  - Do not use triple contractions such as “shouldn’t’ve” or “wouldn’t’ve”.

**Hashtags**

Hashtags can be a useful avenue to gain exposure. However, when using them, consider to:

- Use hashtags that are relevant to the posted content.
- Maintain the use of four or less hashtags per post.
- Use #ChristInMedia for every post to maintain a hashtag's presence.
- Use the #ChristInMedia as the last hashtag.
- Insert hashtags at the end of post content.
- Organize hashtags from left being most relevant to right being least relevant.

**Emojis**

CMI will not use emojis in order to create timeless content in an environment of ever changing trendy emojis.