**SocialMedia.org Unofficial Unconference Hosting Guide 2021**

Thanks for your interest in hosting an Unofficial Unconference! We're grateful for your support of the community. Below are all the details of hosting options and requirements.

If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact us at members@socialmedia.org or 512-651-4800. We’re happy to help.

**As a host, you will:**

* Host an Unofficial Unconference on <<DATE>> (see recommended agendas below)
* Arrange space
* Provide a simple breakfast or lunch
* Invite local leaders at big brands to join you (please -- brands only, no vendors)

**We will:**

* Send a list of members and not-yet-members in your area and sample invitations you can use to invite them

**Recommended agenda:**

This is our recommended agenda, but you are welcome to add variations (for example, adding a tour, swapping out the Show & Tell talks for another round of unconferences, or starting and ending at different times).

**Morning option:**

* 8:30 - 9:00 -- Breakfast
* 9:00 - 9:20 -- Welcome
* 9:20 - 9:50 -- Show & Tell Round 1
* 9:50 - 10:00 -- Break
* 10:00 - 10:30 -- Show & Tell Round 2
* 10:30 - 10:40 -- Break
* 10:40 - 10:50 -- Unconference Introduction
* 10:50 - 11:20 -- Unconference Round 1
* 11:20 - 11:30 – Break
* 11:30 - 12:00 -- Unconference Round 2

**Afternoon option:**

* 12:30 - 1:00 -- Lunch
* 1:00 - 1:20 -- Welcome
* 1:20 - 1:50 -- Show & Tell Round 1
* 1:50 - 2:00 -- Break
* 2:00 - 2:30 -- Show & Tell Round 2
* 2:30 - 2:40 -- Break
* 2:40 - 2:50 -- Unconference Introduction
* 2:50 - 3:20 -- Unconference Round 1
* 3:20 - 3:30 -- Break
* 3:30 - 4:00 -- Unconference Round 2

**FAQ**

**Q: What other supplies do we need to provide?**

A: We recommend:

* Easels for the four corners of the room, with pads and markers
* Extra tape or push pins for unconference topic ideas
* Three 24x36 picture frames for the unconference posters (or you can just tape them to the wall)
* A table for the unconference boards, idea pads, and pens
* A prominent clock
* Chocolate

**Q: What food should we get?**

A: Eating together is fun, but it also warms people up for great conversation -- so we think it’s important to make sure there’s breakfast or lunch before the meeting. It’s hard to get people talking if they walk in cold to a discussion.

**Q: How do conversations work?**

A: These are the conversation formats we recommend choosing from (see the recommended agendas for timing details). We’ll send sample scripts for you. Here are the options:

* **Unconference discussions**: Attendees suggest topics in real time by writing them on cards, sticking them on the wall, and voting for their favorites. Just before discussions start, the topics with the most votes are put on the agenda, which is divided into rounds of breakout groups. We recommend one breakout group for every 15 people attending.
* **Show & Tell talk**: A casual, 20-minute talk led by an attendee who walks us through a portion of their social media program. They’re stories about something they tried, a challenge they faced, what went well, what didn’t work, and what they hope to do next. (These are not included in our recommended agendas, but you’re welcome to incorporate them.)

**Q: What about confidentiality?**

A: Because it’s an unofficial meeting, we won’t be monitoring for confidentiality -- but we’ll send the rules and encourage it to be a theme of the event.

**Q: Who should we invite?**

A: Anyone in your community who wants to talk about social media at big companies -- it can be members and non-members. We recommend all the members within driving distance, plus other people who aren’t members yet. We strongly advise you avoid vendors, consultants, small businesses, and agencies because the conversations get much weaker.

**Q: Is this an official event?**

A: No, this is not an official meeting and is not run by SocialMedia.org. It’s not covered by our confidentiality rules, and it won’t be moderated by our staff.

**Q: What’s the role of SocialMedia.org?**

A: It’s sort of like this whole FAQ -- lots of advice and support on how to run it, but we won’t be sending staff. It’s your meeting to host, and you’re welcome to customize it to what works best for you.

**Q: How much space do I need?**

A: We recommend a room large enough for 25-50 people in a theater-seating setup, with space for four small-group huddles (can be corners of the room or some small groups could move to a nearby room if space is limited).

**Q: What A/V do I need?**

A: You only need a projector or TV if you’re going to have people do presentations -- otherwise there’s no tech needed.

**Q: Why do people host?**

A: Hosting a meeting is a great way to connect with your community, to experience incredible conversations, and to show you and your organization’s leadership in the space. It’s also fun, and a great way to give back.

**Q: Has anyone hosted one of these before?**

A: Yes! Members in Minneapolis, San Francisco, Atlanta, and Nashville all hosted unofficial meetings in the past.