Getting Started with Social Media Tools in Government

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Getting Started with Social Media Tools in Government

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APCICT **ASIAN AND PACIFIC TRAINING CENTRE FOR INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FOR DEVELOPMENT**

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ISBN: 978-89-959662-5-9 13560

Design and Layout: Scand-Media Corp., Ltd.
Printed in: Republic of Korea

Overview

The use of social media for communication, content sharing and collaboration is growing exponentially worldwide. The most popular social media tools include: Facebook, Google+, Twitter and YouTube. As of May 2013, Facebook possessed more than 1.11 billion users, Google+ had more than 500 million users, Twitter had 500 million accounts, and over 6 billion hours of video are watched each month on YouTube.

Government organizations in many countries have been using information and communication technologies to improve public service delivery and governance processes. With the growth in the use of social media tools, some government organizations have leveraged these tools to communicate and engage more closely with citizens. This trend is driven by various societal forces such as the growing complexity of problems that call for collaborative responses; the increased demand on the part of citizens for more personalized and accessible services; and the opportunities presented by the Internet and these social media tools to improve public services and increase transparency. Through social media, government organizations can inform citizens, promote their services, seek public views and feedback, and monitor satisfaction with the services they offer so as to improve their quality.

However, many government organizations are still reluctant to communicate and engage with the public through social media as it requires significant policy and governance changes, as well as specific know-how, skills and resources to plan, implement and manage social media tools.

This guide is a supplement to Module 11 of the Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders, titled “Social Media for Development,” published by the United Nations Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (UN-APCICT). Module 11 introduces the concept of social media and various applications for social and economic development. It also provides guidance in developing a social media policy, including going through the process of agreeing on why your organization wants to use social media and for what purpose, and devising social media strategies for selecting social media tools, creating content, and addressing issues such as those related to security and privacy. This supplementary guide provides practical “how-to” steps for starting up and managing social media tools and technologies. It should be used after you and your organization have finalized the social media policy and strategy. This guide will help you decide on the social media tools to use and how to plan and implement the different social media tools.

Table of Contents

Overview **3**

Objectives and Learning Outcomes **6**

Organization **7**

Chapter 1: Introduction to Social Media-Based Government **9**
- Objectives 9
- Introduction 10
  - What is social media? 10
  - What is social media-based government? 10
  - How do governments around the world use social media? 10
  - Information socialization 11
  - Mass social collaboration 11
  - Social transaction 11
  - Monitoring and measuring social media activities 12

Chapter 2: Information Socialization Through Social Media **13**
- Objectives 13
- Twitter: Inform Citizens 14
  - What is Twitter? 14
  - Twitter terminologies 14
  - Setting up Twitter for official use 16
- Facebook Pages: Network with Citizens 22
  - What is Facebook? 22
  - What are Facebook pages? 22
  - Creating a Facebook page for your organization 23
- YouTube Channel: Keep Citizens Engaged 27
  - What is YouTube? 27
  - What is a YouTube channel? 27
  - Creating a YouTube channel for your organization 28
- Blogs: Talk and Listen to Citizens 31
  - What is a blog? 31
  - Creating a blog for your organization 31

Chapter 3: Mass Collaboration through Social Media **51**
- Objectives 51
- Wiki: Collaborative Knowledge Sharing 52
  - What is a wiki? 52
  - Setting up a wiki project 52
- Google Moderator: Crowdsource your Ideas 61
  - What is Google Moderator? 61
  - Configuring Google Moderator 61
- Cloud-Based Services 68
  - What is a cloud-based service? 68
  - What is Dropbox? 68
  - Configuring Dropbox 69

Chapter 4: Monitoring and Measuring Social Media Activities 71
Objectives 71
Measuring Social Media Activities 72
What to measure and how? 72
Analytics tools 72
Installing HootSuite 72
Analytics with HootSuite 77
Creating custom reports 79
Monitoring and analysing Facebook data with HootSuite 83
Adding a Facebook stream 86
Monitoring and analysing with Google Analytics 88
Setting up a Google Analytics account 88
Inserting Google Analytics code into your blog 90
Inserting Google Analytics' code into your wiki 90
Using Google Analytics 92
Other resources 94
Other analytics tools to consider 94

Table of Figures

Figure 1. Government 2.0 Utilization Model 11
Figure 2. Uganda's Ministry of ICT Twitter Page 14
Figure 3. Facebook fan page: Bangladesh's Ministry of Information & Communication Technology 22
Figure 4. YouTube for Government 27
Figure 5. Dropbox Working Mechanism (Source: Dropbox) 68

Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The main purpose of the guide is to help governments—particularly those in developing countries—to implement a transparent, open and collaborative government using social media tools. The contents of this guide are mostly technical in nature and deal with understanding, implementing and managing social media from a government perspective. The guide is a supplement to Module 11 of the Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders, titled "Social Media for Development."

After reading this guide, you will be able to understand, configure and manage:

- ✓ Popular social media tools (e.g., blogs and micro-blogs, social network sites and content communities) to share government information;
- ✓ Collaborative social media tools (e.g., wikis, cloud-based tools and social tagging) to establish mass collaboration among different government organizations, and between government and citizens; and
- ✓ Analytical tools to monitor and measure social media activities.

Note: All the exercises in this guide are carried out in Windows 7 professional and Google Chrome browser environment.

Organization

Chapter 1 is a brief introductory chapter and aims to set the theme for the rest of the guide by introducing three concepts related to social media use in the public sector: information socialization, mass collaboration, and social transaction. In the subsequent chapters these concepts are elaborated in detail with practical examples and exercises.

Chapter 2 introduces the concept of information socialization—the use of social media as an informational and participatory channel to increase citizens' awareness and engagement. Several practical examples on understanding, configuring and managing various social media tools are provided. Topics covered include, setting up a Twitter account for official use, setting up an official Facebook page, setting up an official YouTube channel, and setting up an official blog.

Chapter 3 introduces a variety of ways to establish mass collaboration and crowdsourcing through social media channels. The chapter demonstrates different ways social media tools can be leveraged to increase mass collaborations among different government organizations, and between government and citizens. Several practical examples on understanding, configuring and managing various social media tools are provided, including setting up a wiki for collaborative projects/use, setting up cloud-based services, and setting up Google Moderator.

Chapter 4 focuses on monitoring and measuring social media activities. Several social media analytical tools are introduced to the readers. Topics covered include understanding and analysing Twitter data, understanding and analysing Facebook data, understanding and analysing blogs data, and Google Analytics.

Chapter 1: Introduction to Social Media-Based Government

Objectives

The purpose of this chapter is to set the theme for the rest of the guide by introducing social media-based government and three concepts related to it: 1) information socialization, 2) mass collaboration, and 3) social transaction. In the subsequent chapters these concepts are elaborated in detail with practical examples and exercises.

After reading this chapter you will be able to:

- ✓ Define social media-based government;
- ✓ Understand the concept of socializing government information through social media outlets;
- ✓ Understand the concept of establishing mass collaboration through social media; and
- ✓ Understand the concept of social transaction through social media.

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Introduction

What is social media?

Social media consists of a variety of tools and technologies that includes collaborative projects (e.g., Wikipedia and wiki-spaces), blogs (e.g., WordPress) and microblogs (e.g., Twitter), content communities (e.g., YouTube), social networking sites (e.g., Facebook and Cyworld), folksonomies or tagging (e.g., delicious), virtual game worlds (e.g., World of Warcraft), virtual social worlds (e.g., Second Life), and all other Internet-based platforms that facilitate the creation and exchange of user generated content (Khan, 2014). See Chapter 1 of Academy Module 11 on "Social Media for Development" for a more detailed discussion on what is social media and the different types of social media.[1]

What is social media-based government?

Social media-based government is a governance culture of transparency, openness, and collaboration facilitated by social media.

Social media-based (SMB) government (commonly known as Government 2.0) is the concept of leveraging social media to provide government services to the citizens, businesses and other government agencies. Khan[2] defined SMB government as, "a governance culture of transparency, openness, and collaboration facilitated by social media." In other words, SMB government is not just about establishing social media presence (e.g., creating a Facebook fan page or a government Twitter account), but it requires or should be complemented with a governance culture of transparency, openness and collaboration. Maio[3] defined Government 2.0 as "the use of information technology to socialize and commoditize government services, processes and data." Maio[4] further suggested that socialization of information can be achieved in three ways: 1) from government to citizen, through opening government data to the public for creating public value through aggregation; 2) from citizen to government, by incorporating user generated data/information that is relevant to the government processes; and 3) inside government, through using internal or consumer collaboration platforms for internal socialization of knowledge.

How do governments around the world use social media?

Leveraging social media tools, SMB government can provide online services at various levels, including government-to-government (e.g., government wide collaborative projects facilitated by wikis), government-to-citizen (e.g., dissemination of critical information and news through Twitter), government-to-business, and government-to-employee (e.g., using YouTube as a training medium or using Google Moderator for brainstorming). These services can be categorized mainly in three ways: information socialization, mass collaboration and social transaction depending on the existence of e-government infrastructure, Web 2.0 complexity, and citizens' engagement (see figure 1).

1 Emmanuel C. Lallana, Module 11: *Social Media for Development*, Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders, Incheon, 2014. Available from http://www.unapcict.org/academy/academy/academy-modules/english-version.

2 G. F. Khan, *The Government 2.0 Utilization Model and Implementation Scenarios*, Information Development (SSCI), DOI: 10.1177/0266666913502061, 2014, p. 8. Download Author's Version.

3 A. D. Maio, Government 2.0: Gartner Definition, Columbia: Gartner Research, 2009, p. 2.

4 Ibid.

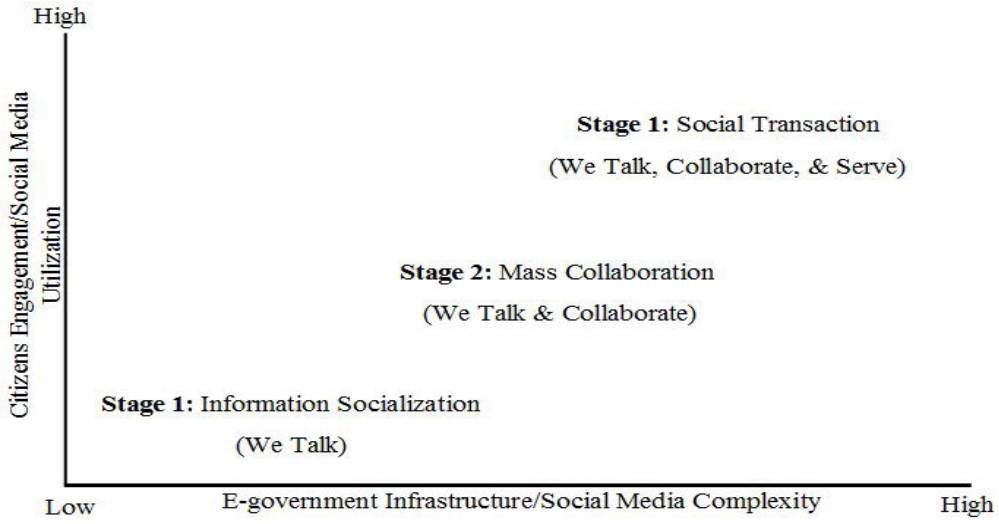

Figure 1. Government 2.0 Utilization Model

(Source: G. F. Khan, The Government 2.0 Utilization Model and Implementation Scenarios, Information Development (SSCI), DOI: 10.1177/0266666913502061, 2014)

Information socialization

Information socialization is the concept of using social media tools mostly for informational and participatory purposes. Social media is used by the public sector as an informational and participatory channel to increase citizens' awareness and enable them to monitor and participate in government activities. Socialization of government information can be achieved through establishing dedicated social media pages (e.g., Facebook fan page or Twitter account) to delivery day-to-day information or news to the citizens. Chapter 2 discusses the use of four popular social media tools (i.e., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Wordpress) to socialize government information.

Mass social collaboration

Mass social collaboration is the concept of using the collaborative power of social media to tap in the collective intelligence of the masses. Governments use social media tools to foster mass collaborations among different government organizations, and between governments, citizens and businesses at different levels. Mass social collaboration enabled through social media can be instrumental in crowdsourcing, regulation, law enforcement, and cross-agency collaborations. Chapter 3 discusses three popular social media tools (e.g., wikis, cloud-based services and Google Moderator) to establish mass collaboration.

Social transaction

Social transaction is the concept of providing tangible online services through social media channels. Currently, governments around the world hardly use social media for tangible transactions (e.g., using Facebook to provide tangible services to citizens such as renewing driver's license and paying parking tickets). However, in the future, once the trust over social media develops and technology is ready to serve the citizens, governments may consider it. Discussing social transaction over social media is beyond the scope of the guide.

Monitoring and measuring social media activities

Enabling SMB government is the easy part. Measuring and sustaining it is the real challenge. Chapter 4 focuses on monitoring and measuring social media. Several social media analytical tools are introduced to the readers coupled with practical examples. Topics covered include understanding and analysing Twitter data, understanding and analysing Facebook data, understanding and analysing blog analytics, and Google analytics.

Chapter 2: Information Socialization Through Social Media

Objectives

The purpose of this chapter is to help you leverage social media tools for the socialization of government information—using social media as an informational and participatory channel to increase citizens' awareness and engagement. Several practical examples on understanding, configuring and managing various social media tools are provided.

After reading this chapter you will be able to:

- ✓ Understand, configure and manage a Twitter account for official use;
- ✓ Understand, configure and manage an official Facebook fan page to keep citizens informed and engaged;
- ✓ Understand, configure and manage an official YouTube channel; and
- ✓ Understand, configure and manage an official blog.

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Twitter: Inform Citizens

What is Twitter?

Twitter is an online micro-blogging service that enables users to send and read short messages commonly known as “tweets.” A tweet is a text message limited to 140 characters. Governments from around the world use Twitter to keep citizens informed by disseminating news and information (see figure 2).

Twitter is a great way to keep citizens informed.

Before getting started with Twitter, we need to understand some basic terminologies related to it.

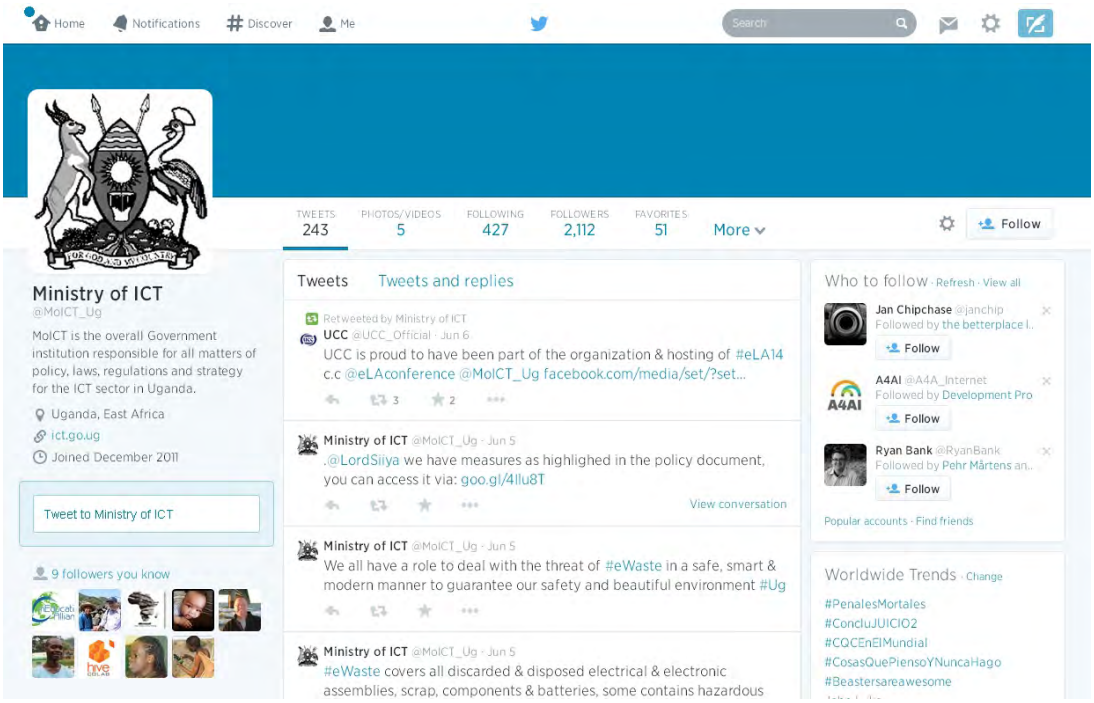
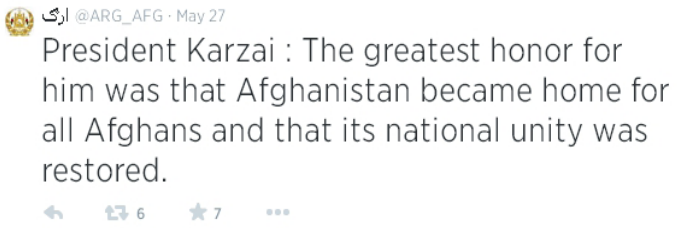


Figure 2. Uganda’s Ministry of ICT Twitter Page

Twitter terminologies

Tweet

A Tweet is a 140-character message posted via Twitter. You can also include links and pictures in a Tweet. An example of a Tweet by the Presidential Palace of Afghanistan is provided below.



Retweet (RT)

A retweet is a re-posting of someone else's Tweet or message.

Direct Messages

When you Tweet or write a message on Twitter, it is seen by everyone. However, a direct message is a personal Tweet seen only by the sender and the recipient. It can only be sent to people following you.

Following

Following are the people who you follow on Twitter. Following someone on Twitter means:

- You are subscribing to their Tweets as a follower.
- Their updates will appear in your Home tab.
- That person is able to send you direct messages.

Followers

Followers are people who follow you on Twitter. If someone follows you it means that:

- They will show up in your followers list.
- They will see your Tweets in their home timeline whenever they log in to Twitter.
- You can send them direct messages.

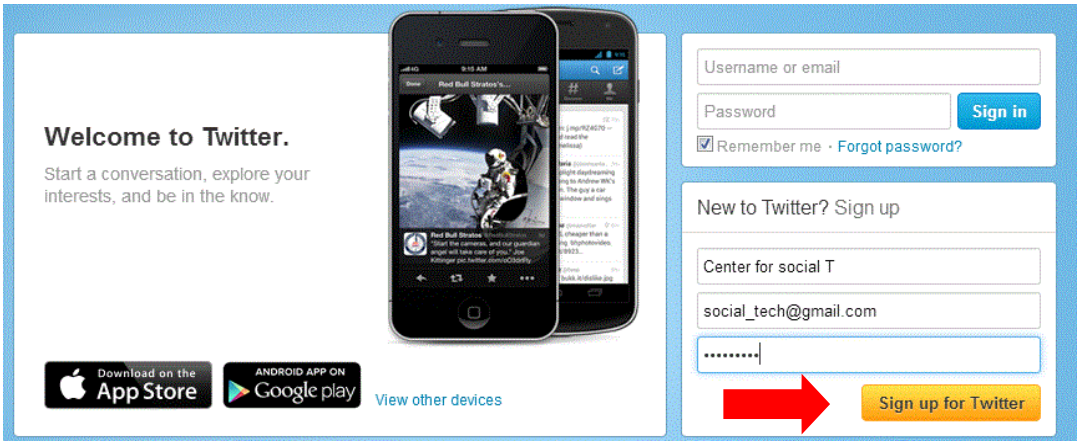
Mention

When another user includes your username preceded by the @ symbol in a Tweet, it is called a "mention." Your Mentions tab (on the Notifications page) collects Tweets that mention you by your username so you can keep track of conversations others are having with you.

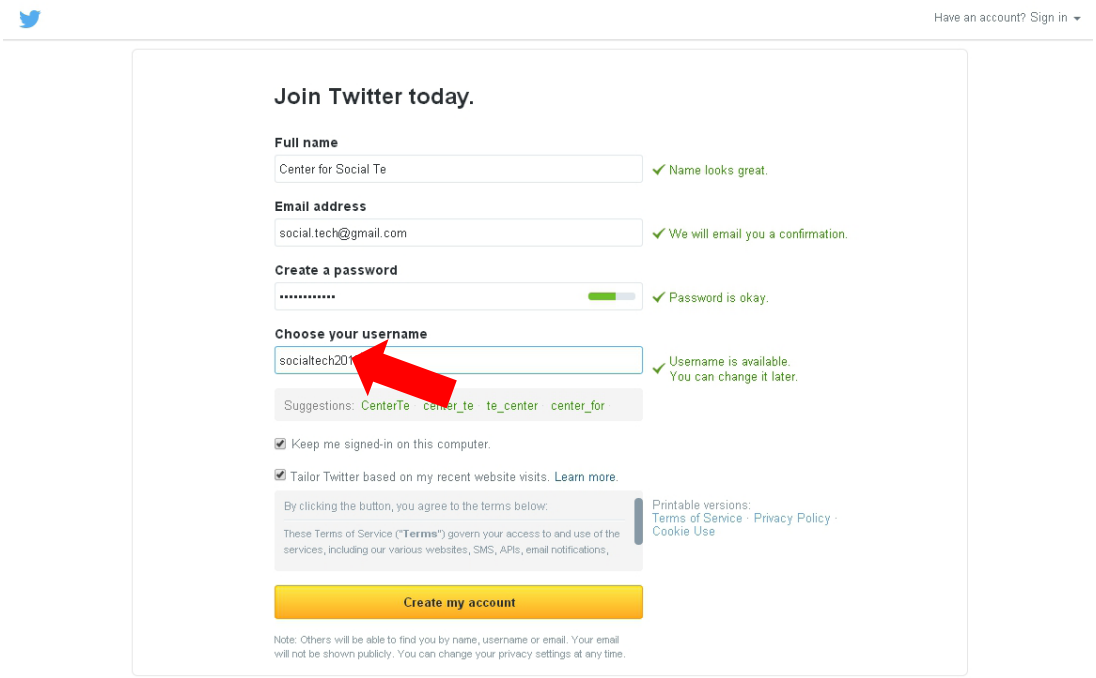
Setting up Twitter for official use

Setting up Twitter is a very simple process. Below are step-by-step guidelines to set up an official Twitter page. Alternatively, you can watch this YouTube video on how to set up a Twitter account:

Step 1: You can either go to https://twitter.com/ and click the **Sign Up** button on the bottom right (see figure below) or go directly to https://twitter.com/signup to sign up.

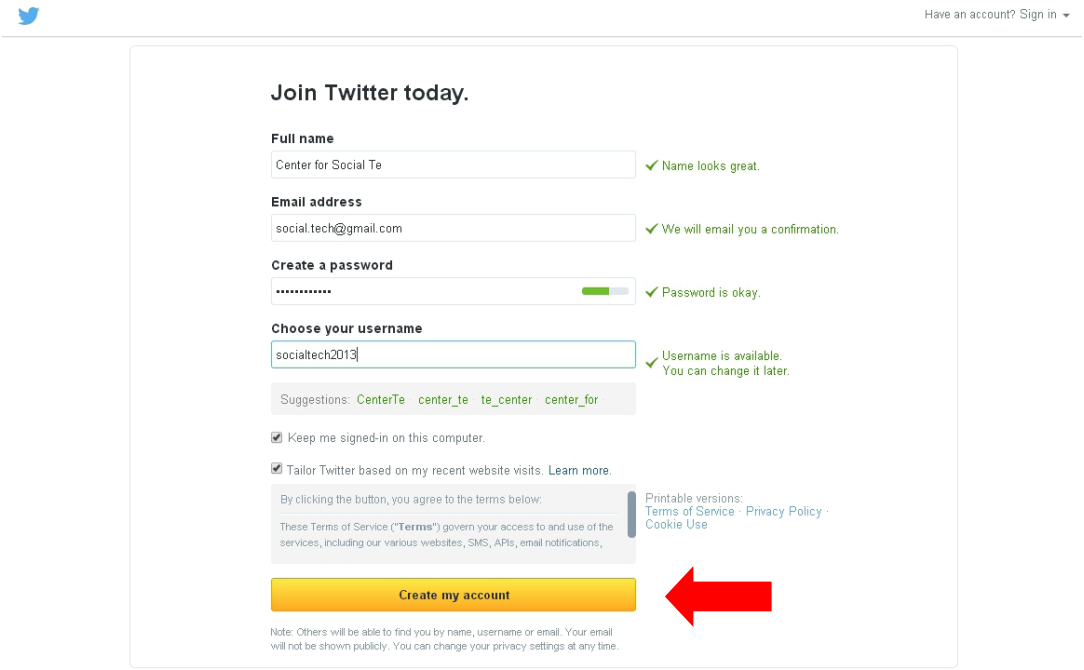


Step 2: Fill in the first field with the name of your organization and provide your organization's e-mail (this will be used to verify and activate your account) (see figure below). In the password box provide a strong password. In the last field, provide your Twitter username (i.e., Twitter handler). Be thoughtful while creating a handler, think of a name that truly sums up your organization. For example, NASA use the term NASA as the handler.

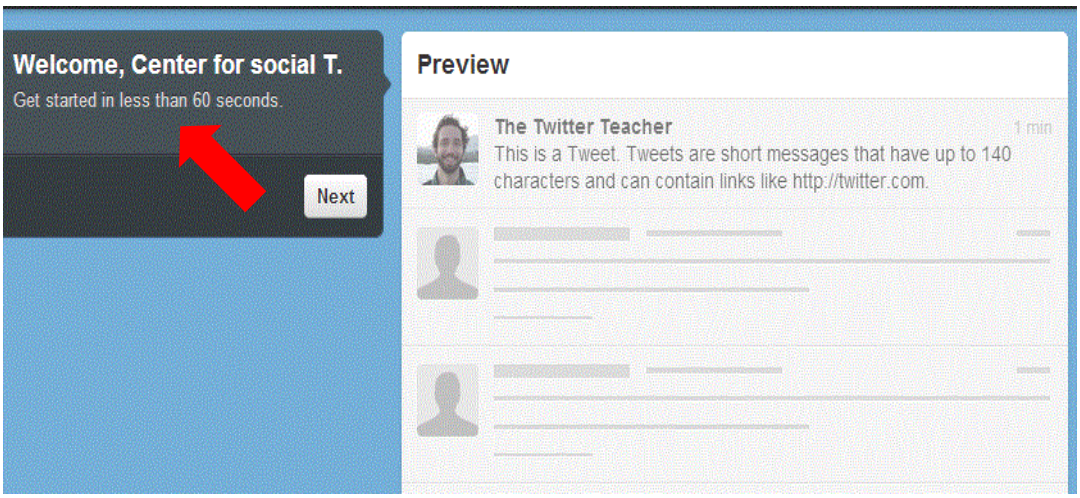


Password Tip: How to create a strong password? This link provides a helpful password guide.

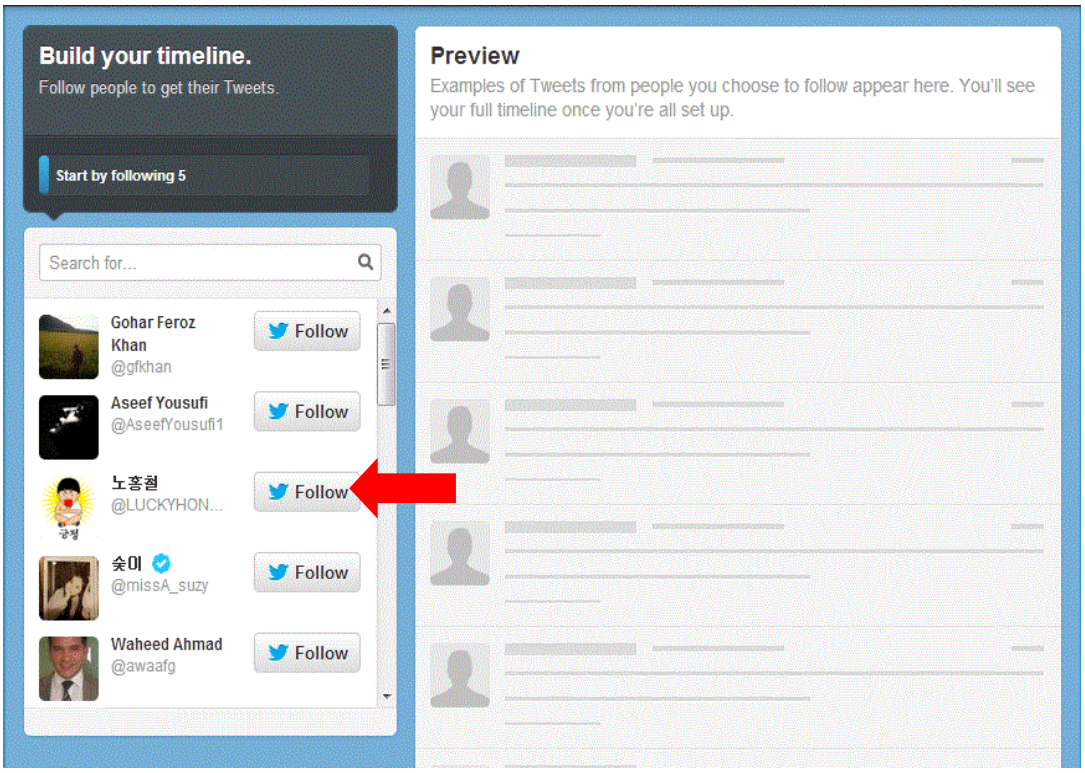
Step 3: Click **Create My Account**.



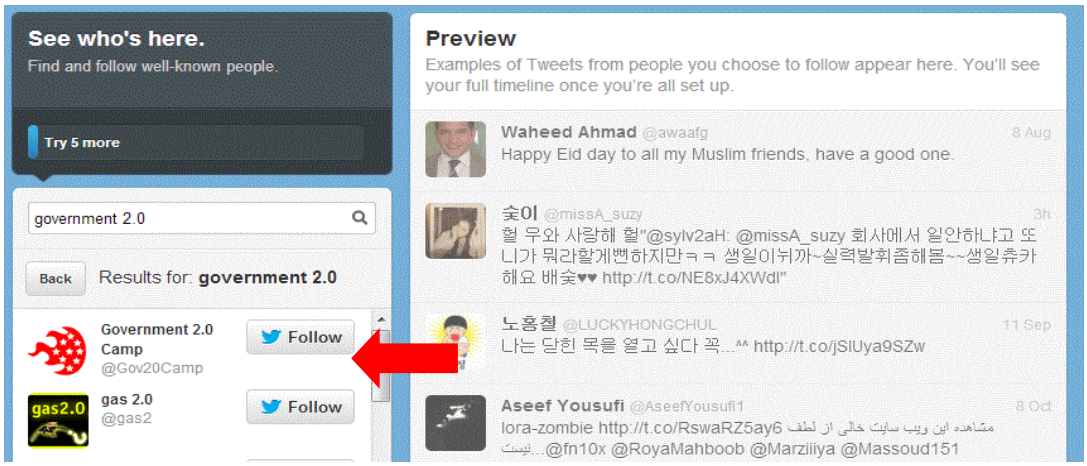
Congratulations! Your account is created now (see figure below).



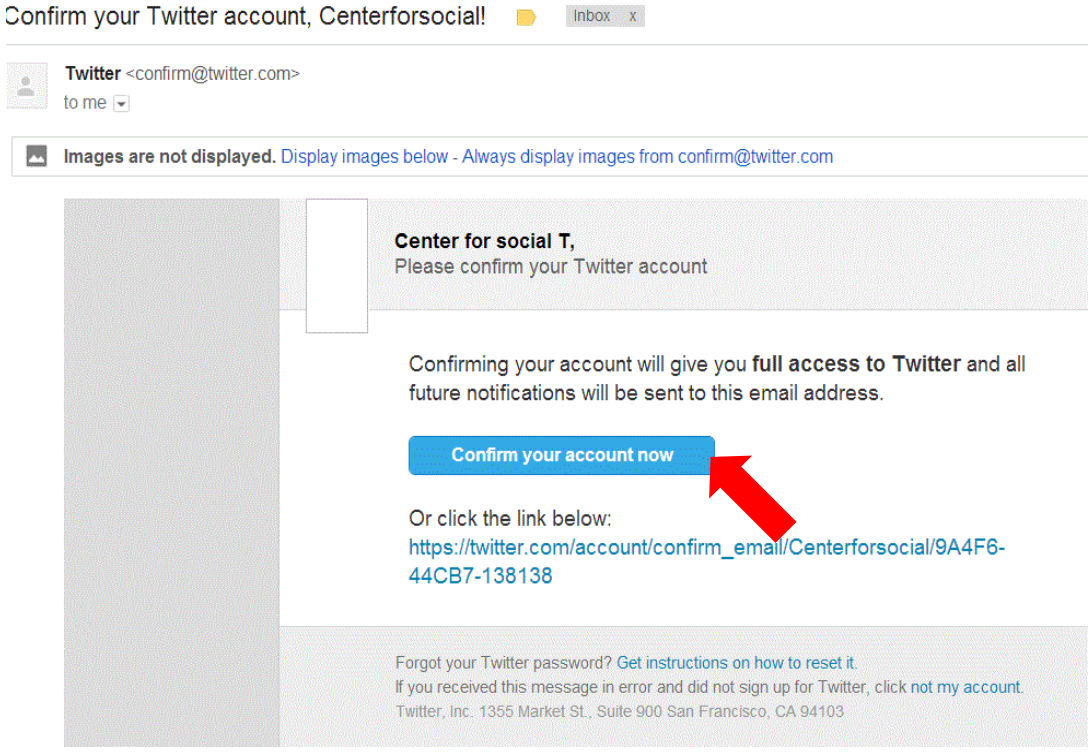
Step 4: Click the **Next** button. Twitter will present you with a list of popular people to follow (optional, you can skip it). If you choose to follow the suggested people, their Tweets will start appearing on your timeline. Click **Next** to move on to the next step.



Step 5: You will be given the option to follow people you know or search the Twitter users you are interested in using keywords such as “government 2.0” given in the figure below. Click on the **Follow** button next to the Twitter user that you and your organization would like to follow.

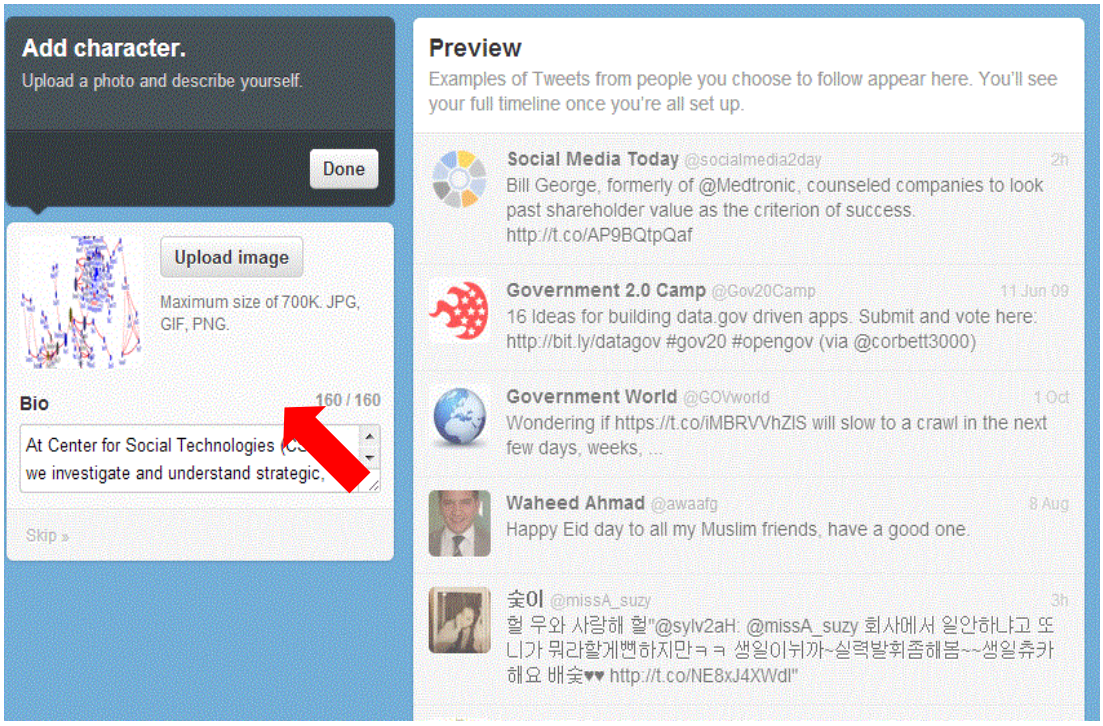


Step 6: Verify your Twitter account. At this stage your organization's Twitter account is created, but not verified yet. Open your e-mail box and click on the verification link sent by Twitter.



Step 7: Upload your profile picture. Click on the empty profile photo to upload an image (logo) of your organization.

Step 8: Write a short bio. Click on the area below your profile photo. Write a short bio about your organization in 160 characters or fewer. It is useful to write your organization's mission statement here.



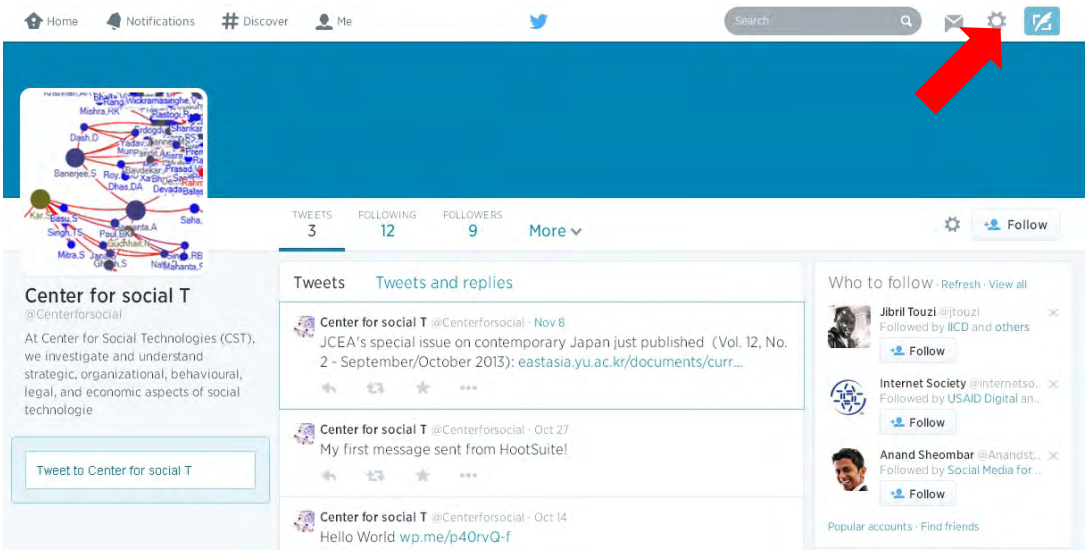
Step 9: Click on the Settings icon on the top right of your screen. From the drop down menu, click on the **Edit Profile** option. When you edit your profile, you can add more information about your organization in the following ways:

- You can change your profile picture anytime.
- You can customize your header photo.
- You can update any information regarding your organization, such as name, bio, website and location.
- Click **Save Changes** when you have finished expanding or changing your profile.

With Twitter your ultimate goal is to have a high number of followers—i.e., citizens, organizations and businesses listening to you.

Your profile page also indicates:

- The number of Tweets you have sent.
- The number of people/organizations that you follow i.e., the followings.
- The number of people/organizations that follow you i.e., the followers.



Tip: With Twitter, you want to continually increase the number of followers—i.e., citizens, organizations and business listening to you, so that the tweets that you post will spread more quickly as more people read and retweet your posts. One way to increase the number of followers is to follow a lot of people/organizations with similar interests to your organization, who in turn may follow and inspire others to follow your organization.

Facebook Pages: Network with Citizens

What is Facebook?

Facebook is an online social network service or site founded in 2004 by Mark Zuckerberg. With Facebook, registered users can create profiles, upload photos and video, send messages and keep in touch with friends, family and colleagues. As of May 2013, Facebook had more than 1.11 billion registered users. Due to this exponential growth, Facebook is becoming an important marketing and outreach channel for all sorts of organizations.

A Facebook page is a convenient and effective way to network with citizens.

What are Facebook pages?

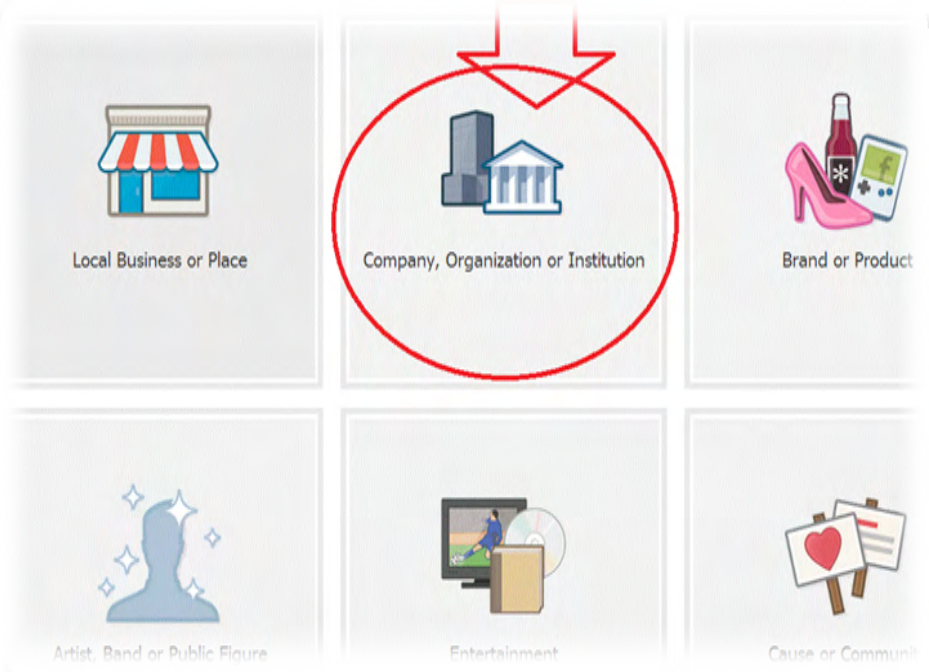
According to Facebook: “Pages are for organizations, businesses, celebrities, and bands to broadcast great information in an official, public manner to people who choose to connect with them.” A Facebook page (or fan page) is a convenient and effective way to network with citizens and keep them engaged (see figure 3).

Figure 3. Facebook fan page: Bangladesh’s Ministry of Information & Communication Technology

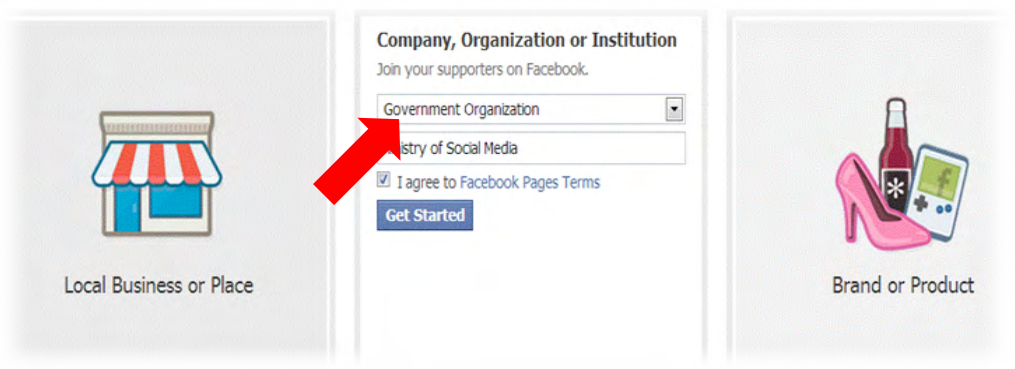
To create a Facebook page, you need to first sign up as a registered user. For this, you can use your organization’s e-mail address.

Creating a Facebook page for your organization

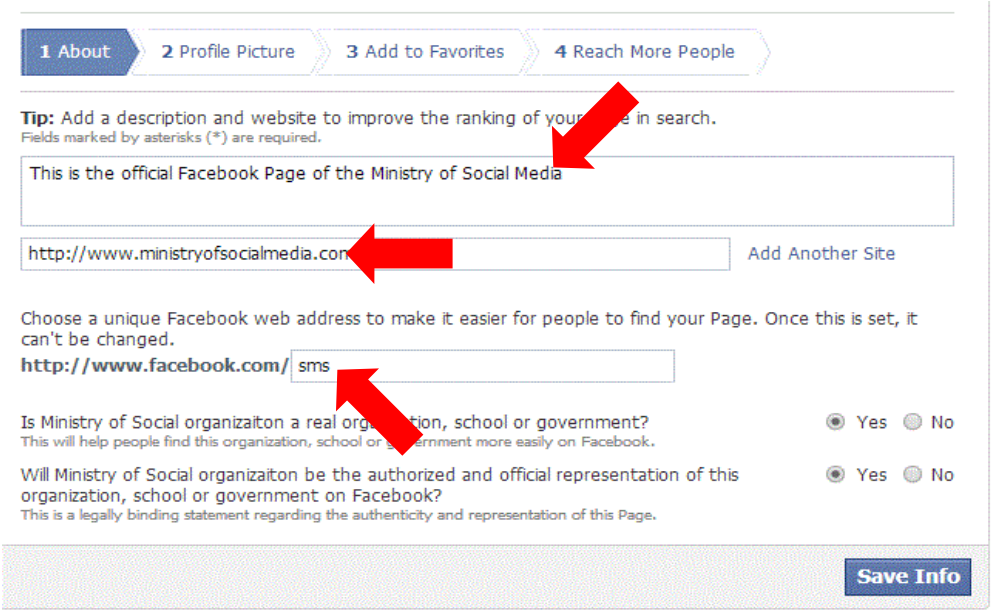
Step 1: To create a Facebook page, go to http://www.facebook.com/pages/create.php.
Step 2: Next, select the **Company, Organization or Institution** option (as shown in the figure below).



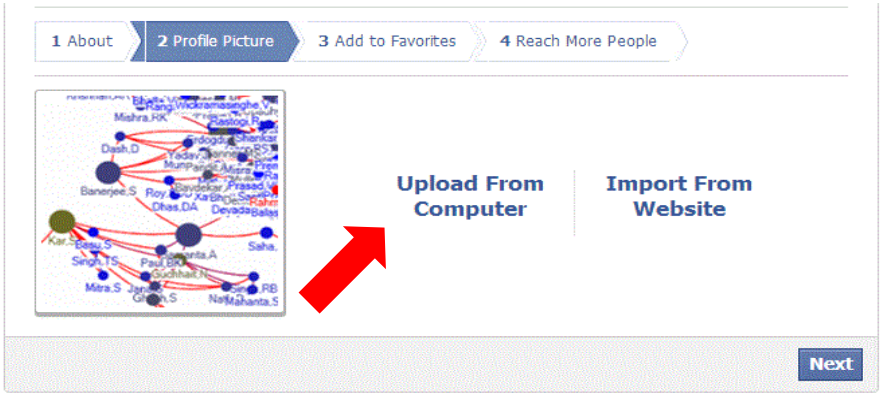
Step 3: Select the **Government Organization** option from the drop down box and write the name of your organization (e.g., Ministry of Social Media), check the **I Agree to Facebook Pages Terms**, and then click on the **Get Started** button (see figure below).



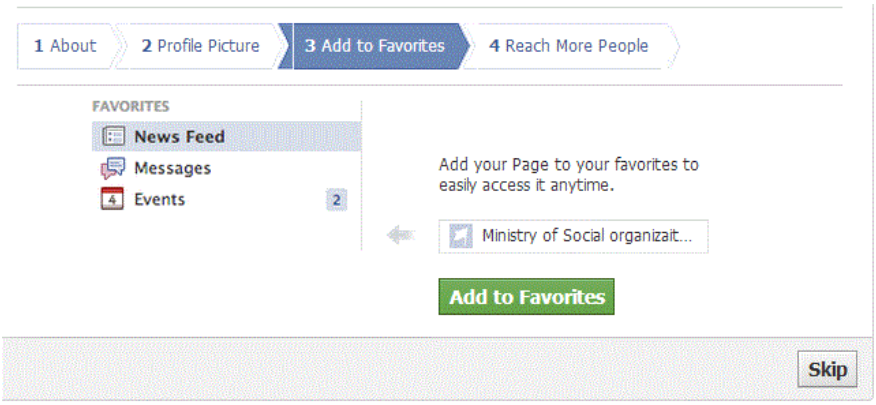
Step 4: In this step, you will provide basic information about your organization. You should include a description, a website address, and write a unique Facebook web address (this will be used by users to find you on Facebook) (see figure below). Next, click the **Save Info** button.



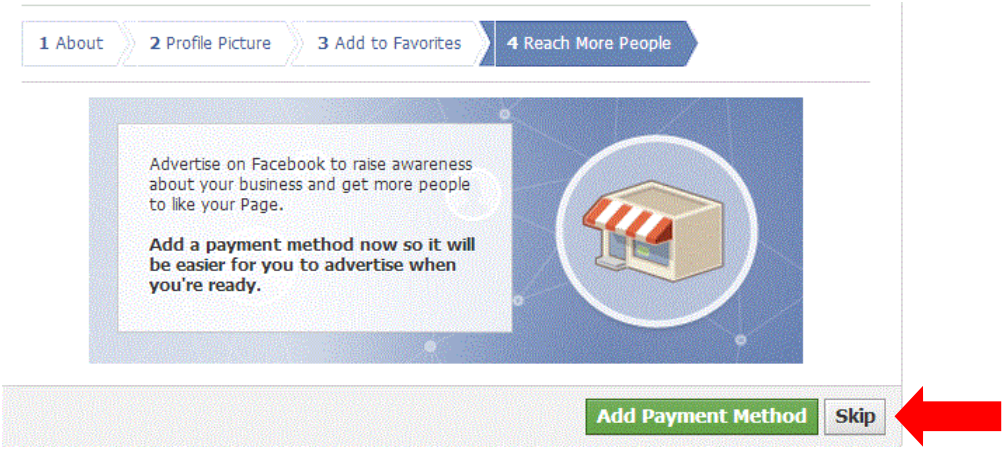
Step 5: Upload a profile picture. You can upload the photo (e.g., logo) from your computer or a website. Choose a photo/logo that will represent your organization.



Step 6: Add to Favorites. Add the page to your favorites and click **Next**.

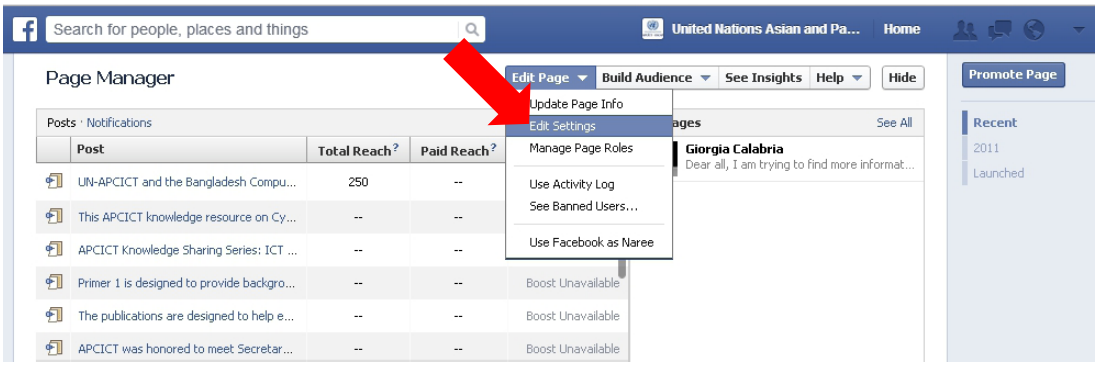


Step 7: Reach more people. You may choose to advertise your page on Facebook and select a payment method. Otherwise, click **Skip** to move on.



Step 8: Congratulations: Now your Facebook page is created. You will be brought to the **Admin Panel**. In the admin panel you can do the following.

- Edit page. With this option you can update your page, manage permissions, add administrators to your page, manage notifications, use an activity log, and see a list of banned users.
- Build audience. With this option you can invite your e-mail contacts, invite your Facebook friends, share the page, or create an advertisement for your page.



Step 9: Improving your page.[5] To improve your newly created page, you can do the following:

- First, like your page to build support.
- Post a message to give your fans more information. You can write a post in the comment box and then click on the **Post** button.
- Upload some photos of your organization. To do so click on the **Photos** button.
- Upload a cover photo that will appear at the top of your page. Click on the **Add a Cover** button on the right-hand and then click on **Upload Photo**.
- Invite your friends and fans. Here you can invite any existing friends on Facebook or important contacts from an address book to view your new Page.
- Link the page to your organization's website.

5 http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/20-ways-to-promote-your-facebook-fan-page/ provides useful suggestions on ways to promote your Facebook fan page.

YouTube Channel: Keep Citizens Engaged

What is YouTube?

YouTube is a video-sharing website on which users can upload, view and share videos. It was created in February 2005 and is owned by Google since late 2006.

What is a YouTube channel?

A YouTube channel is a public online space (or page) on YouTube. A YouTube channel allows you to upload videos, leave comments, or make playlists. Governments from around the world use YouTube channels in a variety of ways. For example, it is a great way to educate citizens by uploading training materials, awareness videos, information about your services, or distribute political information outside traditional media outlets. Khan Academy is a great example of the effective use of educational videos on YouTube. YouTube has a dedicated page for governments that provides useful tips and guidelines on using YouTube (see figure 4).

> YouTube channel is a creative way to educate citizens and keep them engaged.

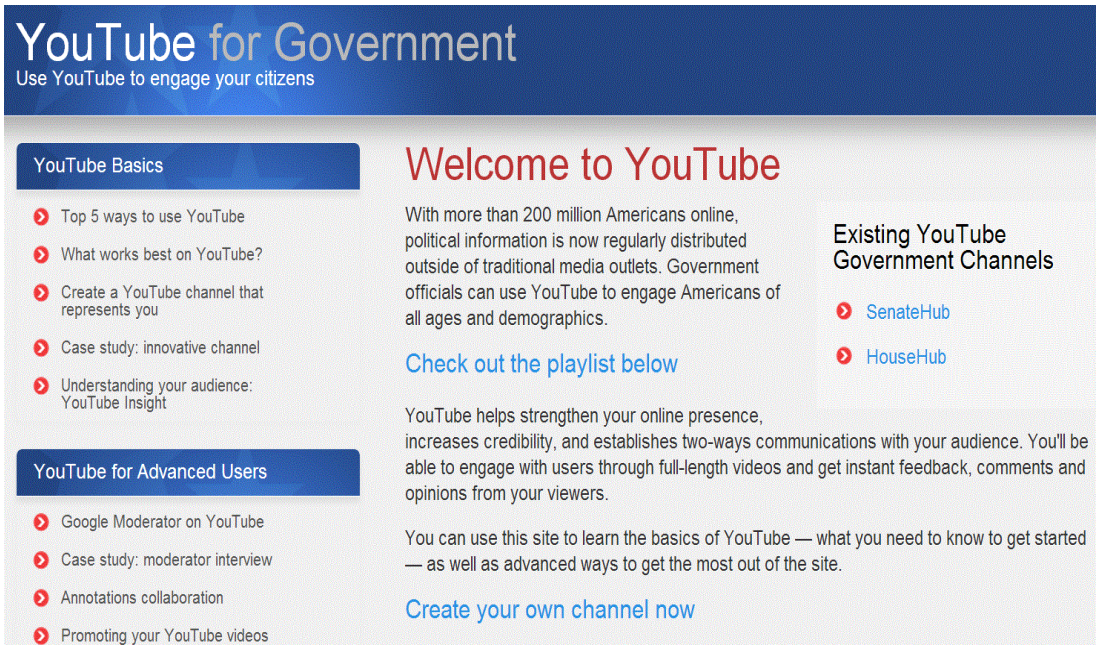
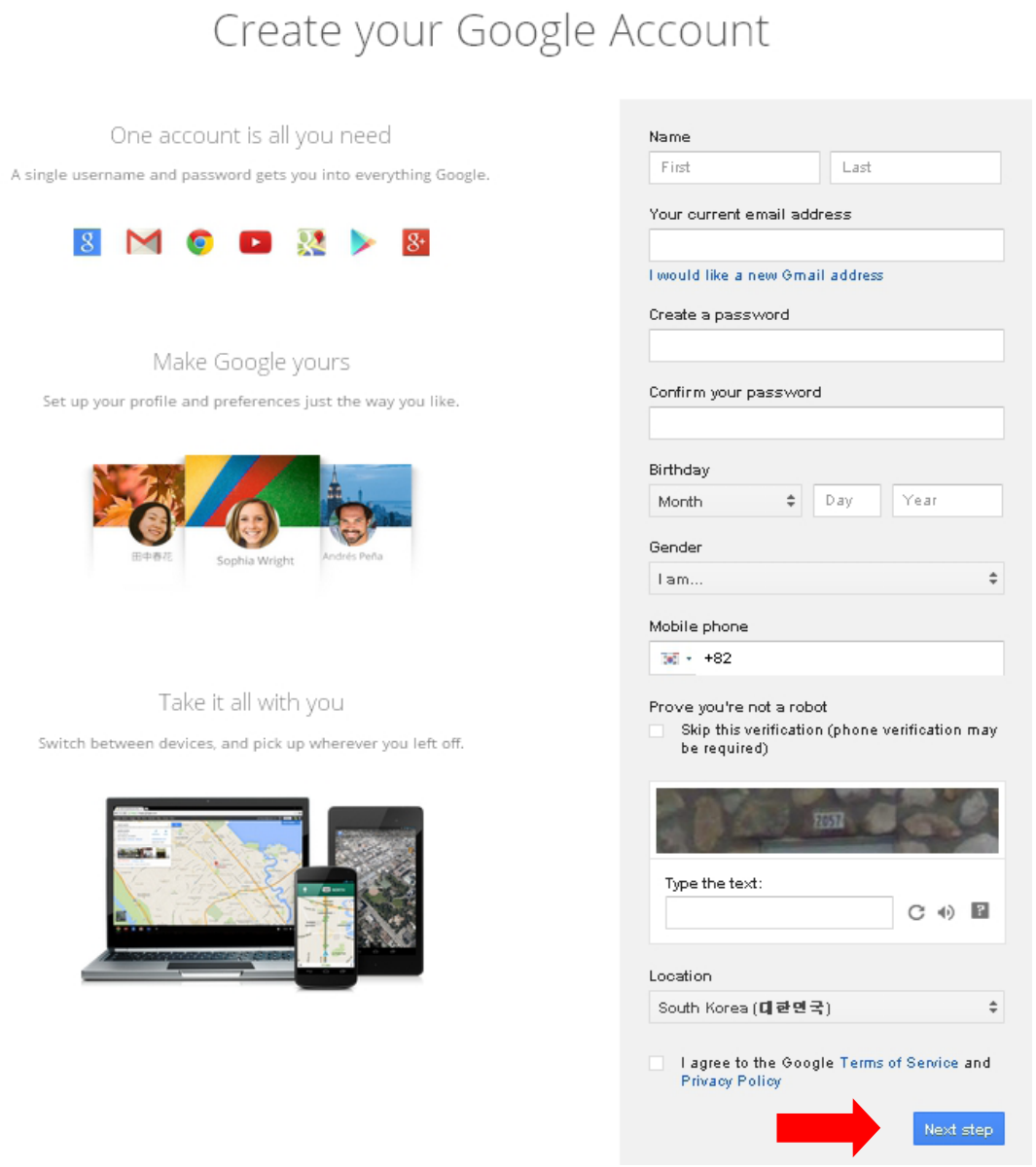


Figure 4. YouTube for Government

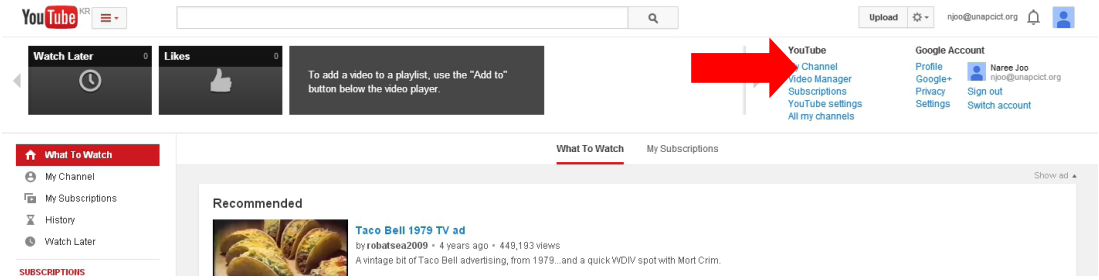
Creating a YouTube channel for your organization

Step 1: Go to http://www.youtube.com and click on the **Sign-in** button, and then click on **Create an Account**.

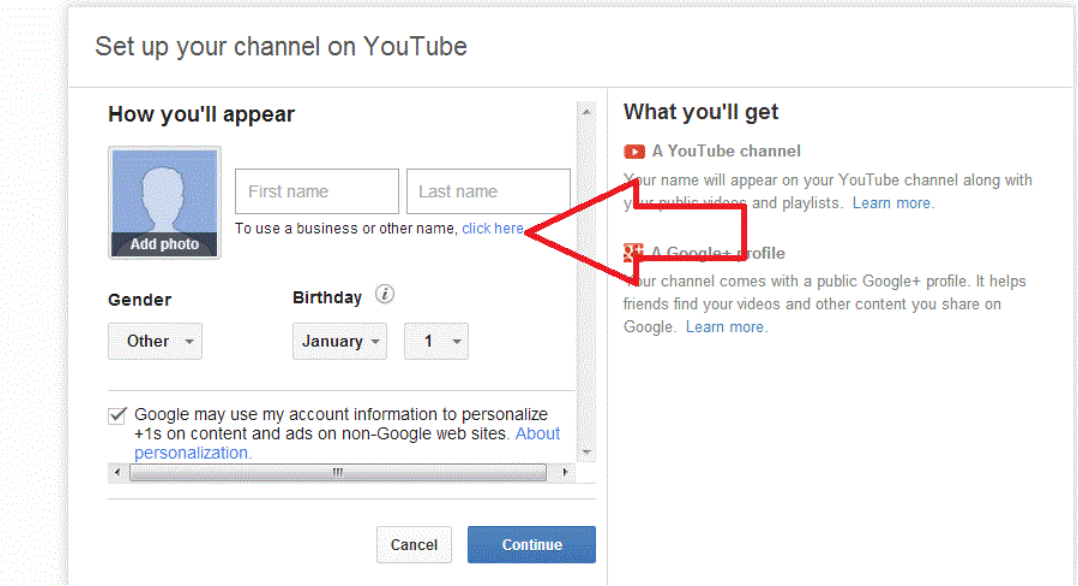
Step 2: Provide the information as requested: name, e-mail and password, etc. and then click **Next Step**. Once you click **Set Up** and all the information you provided is correct, your account will be created.



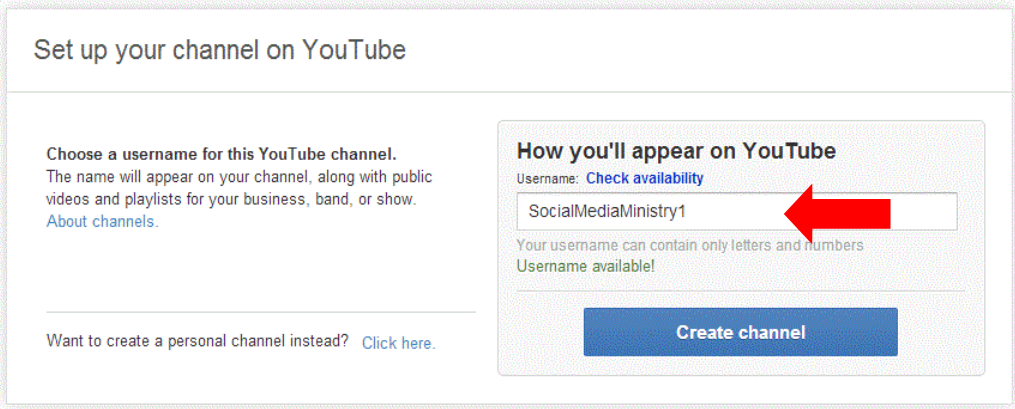
Step 3: To create a YouTube channel, click on **My Channel** located on the top right corner (see figure below) and then click **Create a Channel**.



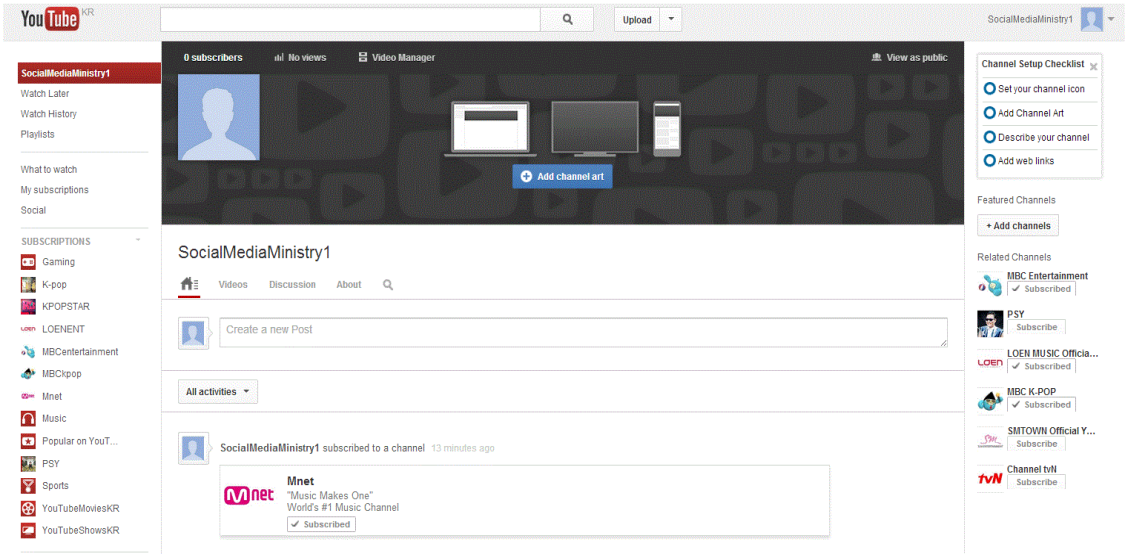
Step 4: Since you want to create an organizational channel, click on the **To Use a Business or Other Name** option, as shown in the figure below.



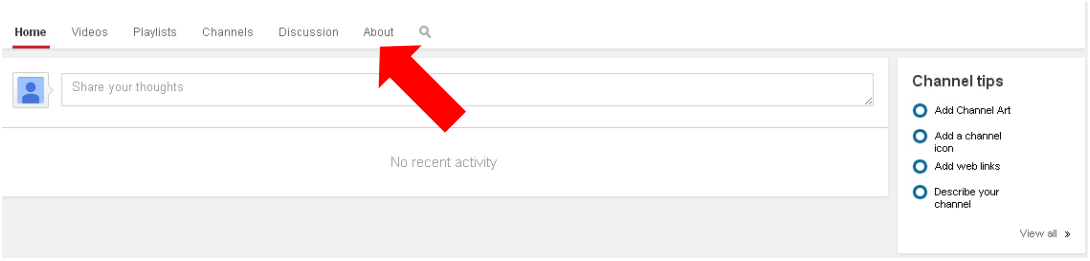
Step 5: Choose a name for your channel (e.g., Social Media Ministry 1), check its availability, and then click the **Create Channel** button.



Step 6: Congratulations! Your channel is created.



Step 7: Customize your channel. Click on the **About** button to provide some meaningful information about the channel (e.g., organization description and website).



Step 8: Other things to do:

- Add a channel icon (i.e., logo or photo).
- Configure privacy settings (found in Account Settings).
- Configure connected accounts (found in Account Settings), so that when you post something on YouTube it will automatically be posted on other social media platforms (e.g., blog).

Tips: If you want to educate with YouTube, consider the following:[6]

- Ensure that your content is engaging. YouTube not only looks at the comments, likes and shares, but also at how active people are when they watch your video and how long they watch it for. It is a crucial metric that YouTube looks at to help rank your video.
- If your education videos only include screen-capture content or slides, then you are at a higher risk of losing viewers. You need to combine a talking head along with slides and illustrations.

6 Michael Stelzner, YouTube Success: How to Create a Successful YouTube Channel, Social Media Examiner, 23 August 2013. Available from http://www.socialmediaexaminer.com/how-to-create-a-successful-youtube-channel/.

Blogs: Talk and Listen to Citizens

What is a blog?

A blog (short for web log) is a type of personal website on which an individual (or organization) posts opinions and information. The information posted on a blog can be in the form of text, images, videos and other multimedia contents. The person who keeps a blog is called a blogger, and the act of maintaining/updating a blog is called blogging. The most important feature of a blog is interactivity i.e., the ability of readers to leave comments in response to a blog post.

> The most important feature of a blog is *its interactivity i.e., the ability of readers to leave comments in response to a blog post.*

Blog pages VS. posts

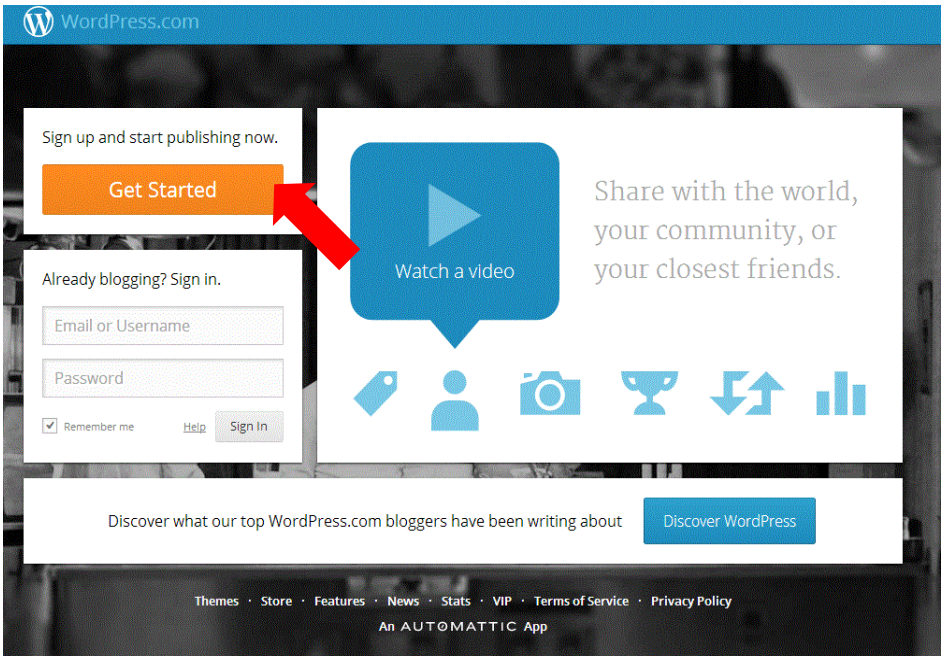
The individual entries or articles on a blog are called blog post. Posts are listed in reverse chronological order on the blog home page. Whereas, pages are static and are not listed by date. An 'About page' of a blog is the classic example. For more information visit: http://en.support.wordpress.com/post-vs-page/

Who provides blogging platforms? There are several companies that provide blog services. The most popular ones are http://www.wordpress.com and http://www.bloggers.com. This link provides a list of more than 40 free blog platforms.

This guide will provide the steps for creating a blog on WordPress. On WordPress, you can easily build and manage a professional-looking blog without any technical know-how or programming skills.

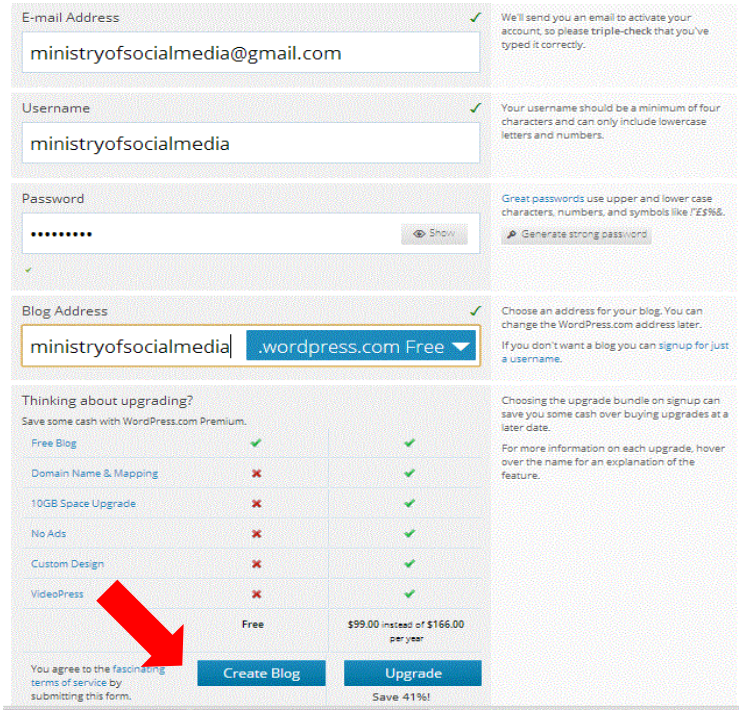
Creating a blog for your organization

Step 1: Go to http://www.wordpress.com and click on the **Get Started** button.

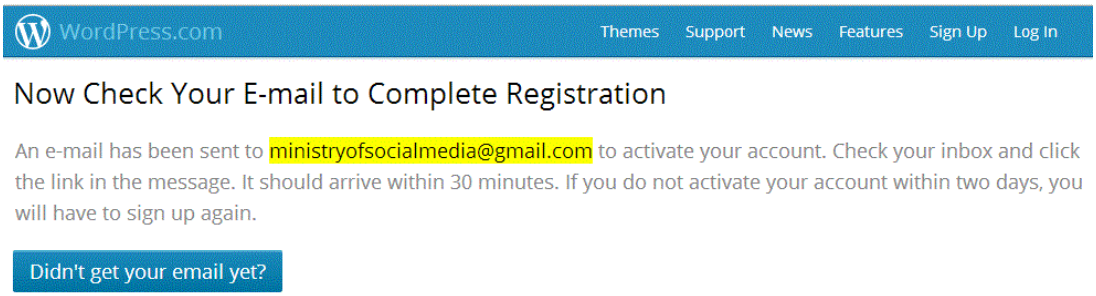


Step 2: Next, provide the requested information—organization's e-mail, username, chose a strong password, and provide a meaningful blog address, and click on the **Create Blog** button.

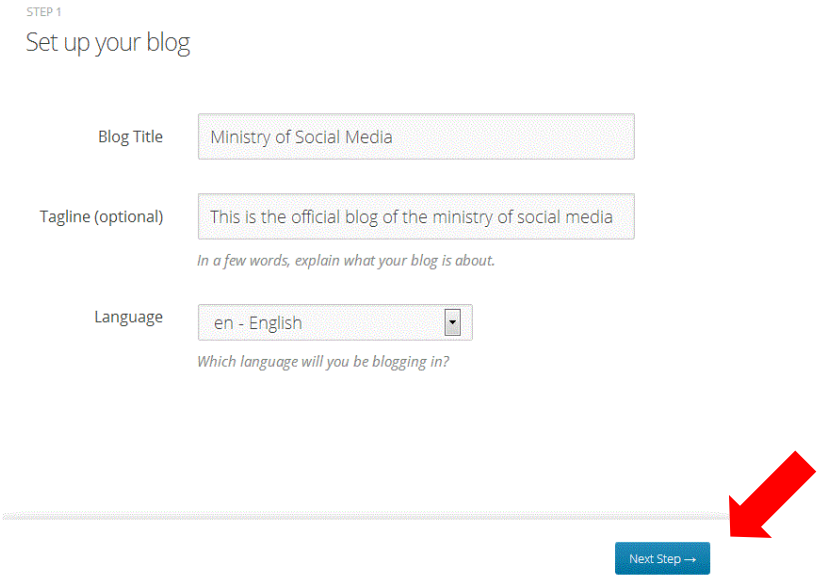
Note: If you want a custom blog address (e.g., http://www.ministryofsocialmedia.gov), you may need to buy it. In this exercise, we chose the free option i.e., http://ministryofsocialmedia.wordpress.com. However in future, you can change to a custom blog address anytime.



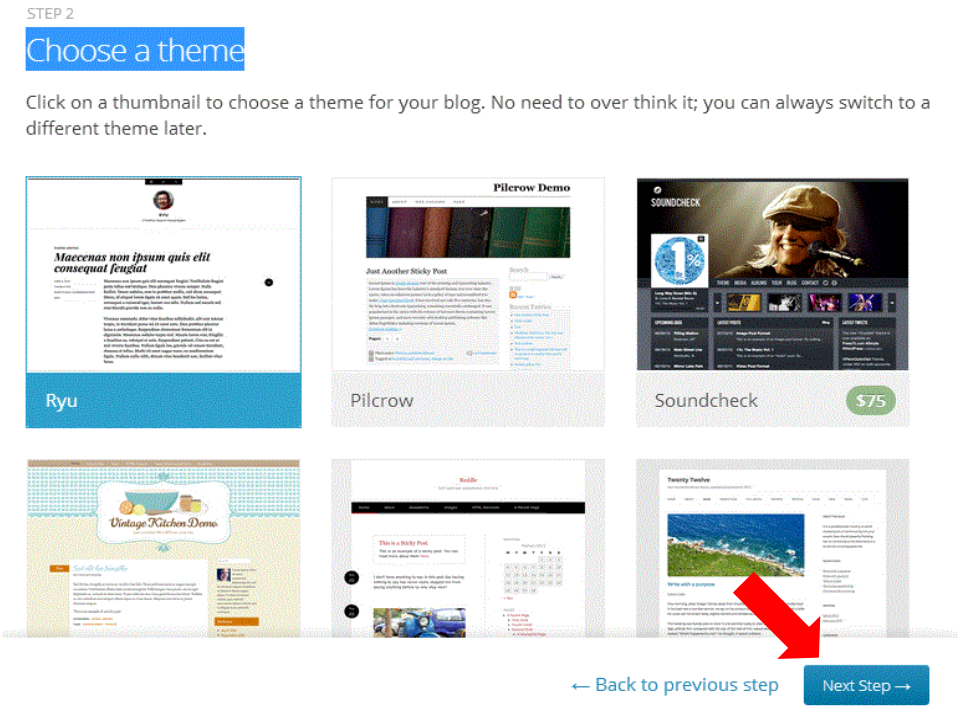
Step 3: To complete the registration process, open your e-mail and click on the activation link sent to you by WordPress.



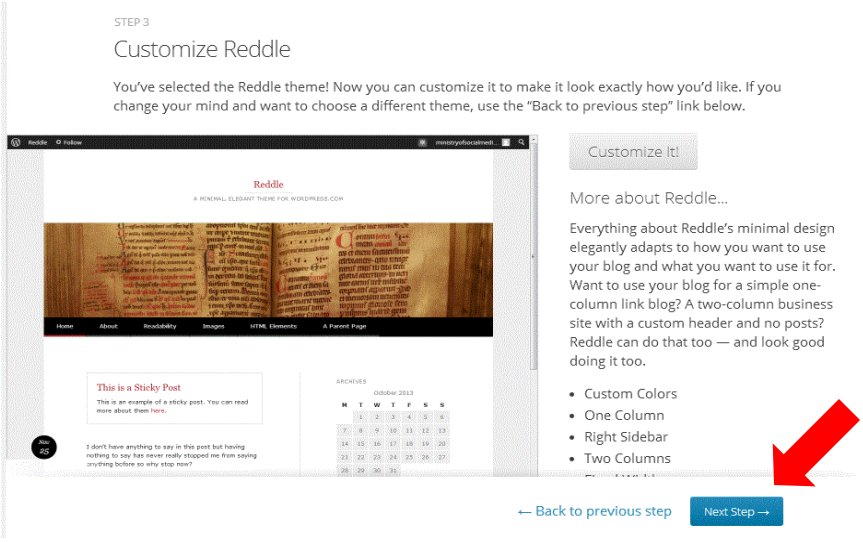
Step 4: After you click on the activation link you will be brought to the page shown in the figure below. Here, write a blog title (it will appear at the top of your blog), provide a brief description about the blog, and select a language for your blog (check if your local language is available in the dropdown box). Then click **Next Step**.



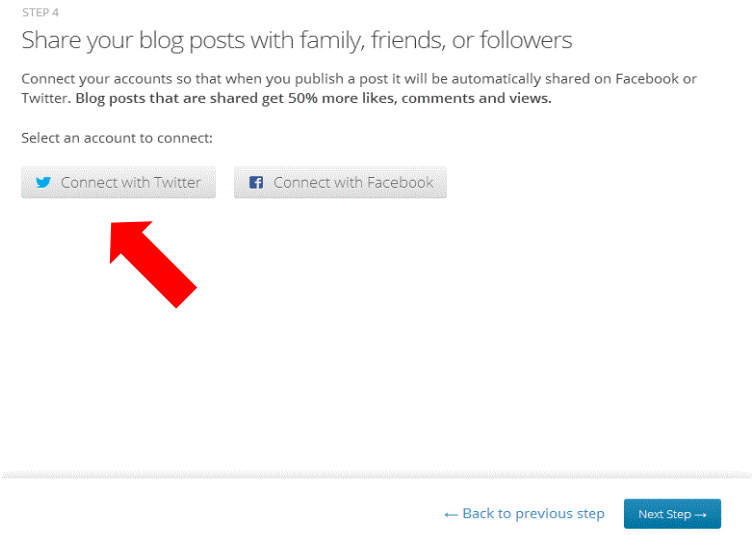
Step 5: Choose a theme for your blog from available options (you can always switch to a different theme later), and click **Next Step**.



Step 6: After you choose a theme (e.g., Reddle theme), you will be provided with an option to customize it (see figure below). At this stage click **Next Step**. We will go through the customization later on (see step 27).

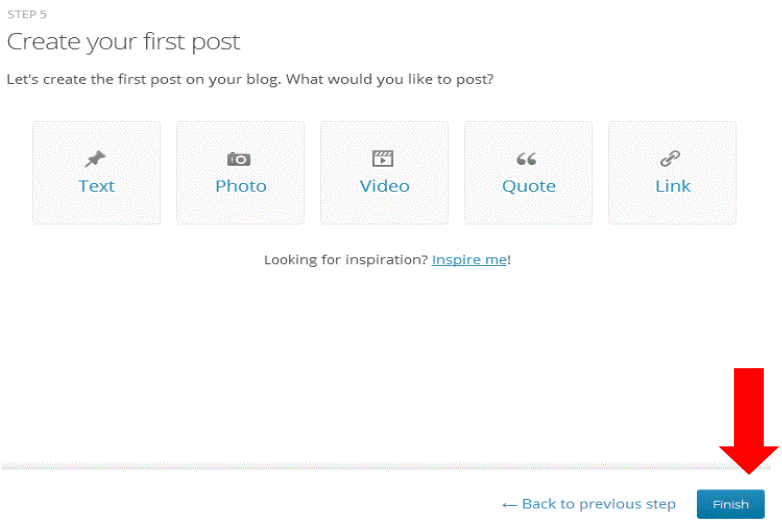


Step 7: Next, you will be provided with an opportunity to connect the blog with your organization's Twitter and Facebook pages (created earlier); so that when you publish a post, it will be automatically shared on Facebook or Twitter. It is a good practice to connect your blog with other platforms. Click on the **Connect with Twitter** button. Repeat the same step for connecting Facebook and click **Connect with Facebook**.

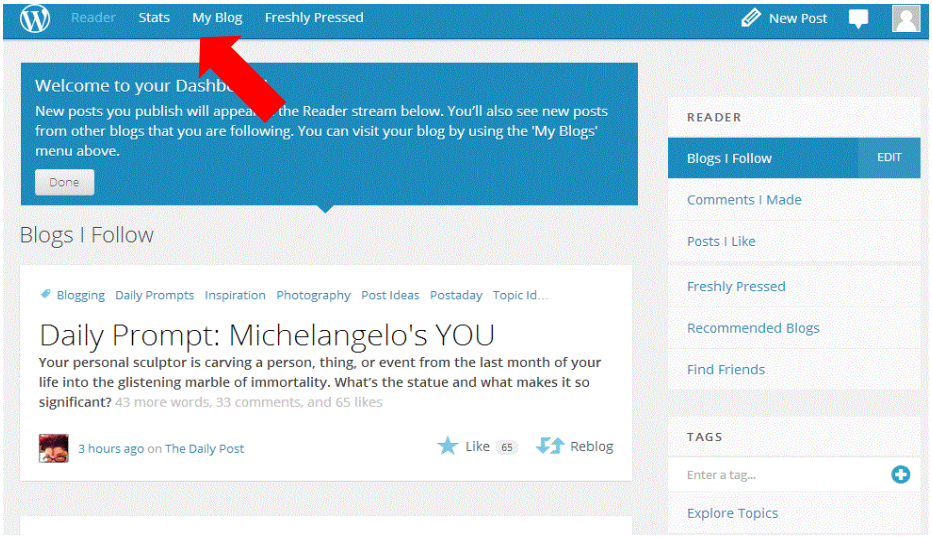


Step 8: To connect the blog to your organization's Twitter account, provide your organization's e-mail or Twitter account (handler) and password, and click on the **Authorize App** button, and once the authorization is done click **Next**.

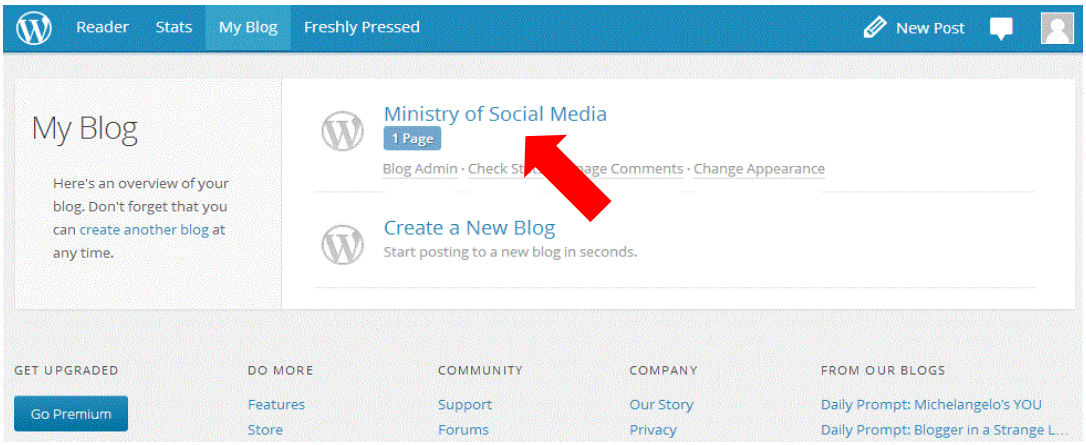
Step 9: Next, you will be given opportunity to create your first post. Before that, it is recommended that you configure the blog first, so click **Finish**.



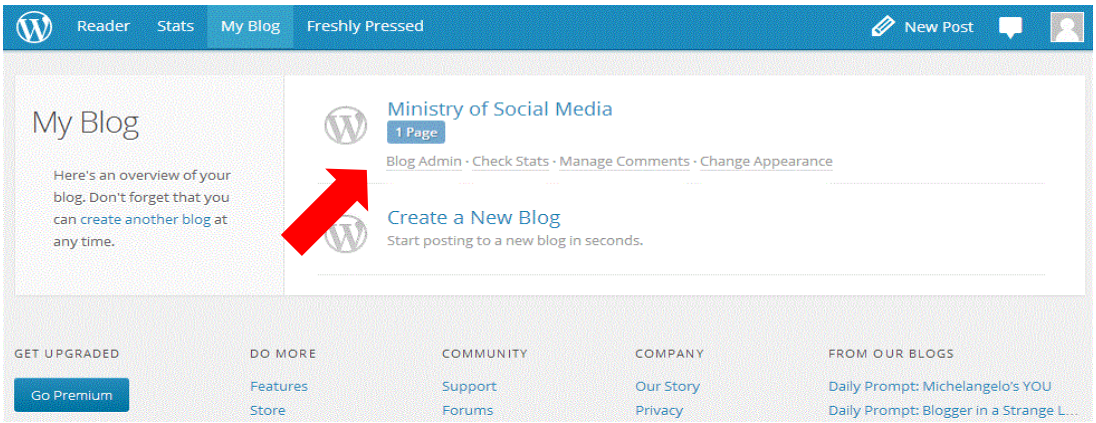
Step 10: After clicking **Finish**, you will be brought to your blog's dashboard. Here, click on the **My Blog** option.



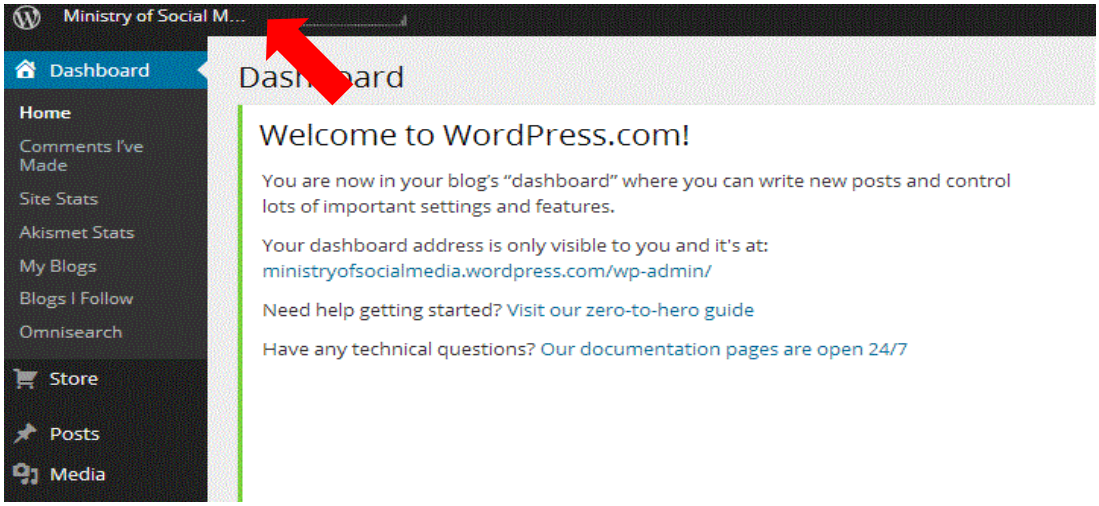
Step 11: In the My Blog menu, you will be able to see the new blog you have just created. In its current stage, your blog has only one page and needs a lot of configurations.



Step 12: To configure your blog, click on the **Blog Admin** option available below your blog name.

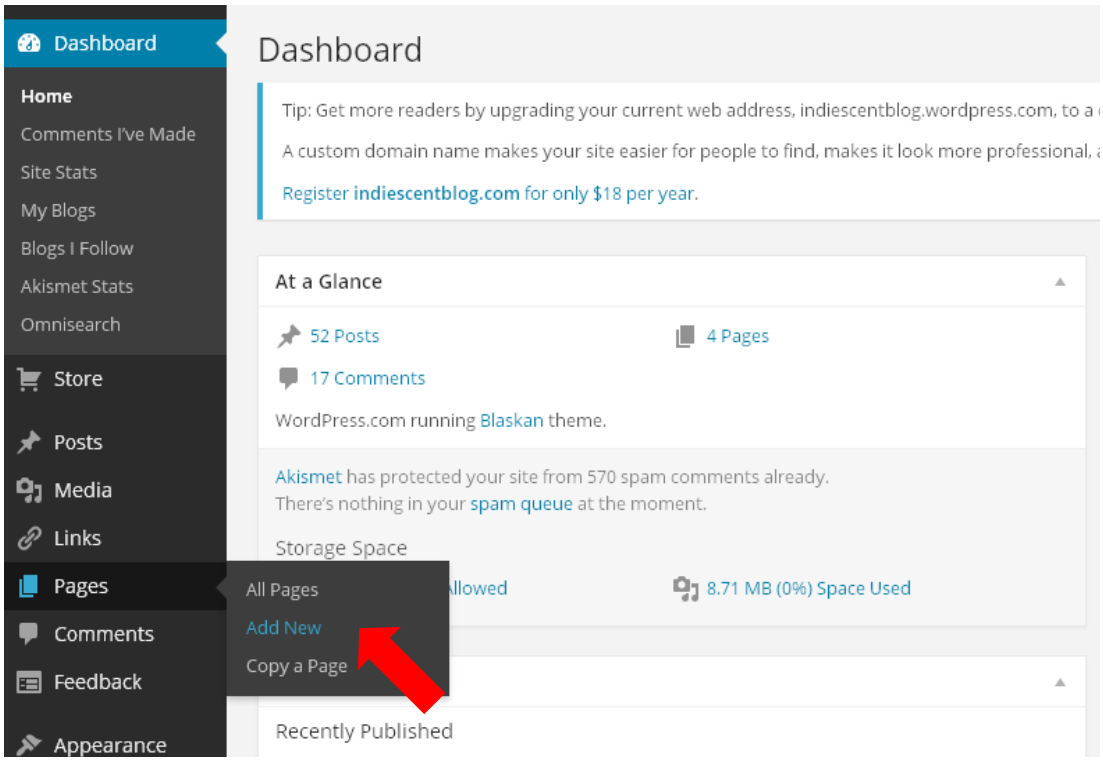


Step 13: Clicking on **Blog Admin** will bring you to the blog's dashboard (see figure below). Here you can carry out several administrative tasks e.g., creating blog pages and blog posts, and designing blog layout. To return to your blog homepage, click on the name of your blog (e.g., in this case Ministry of Social Media) on the top left corner.

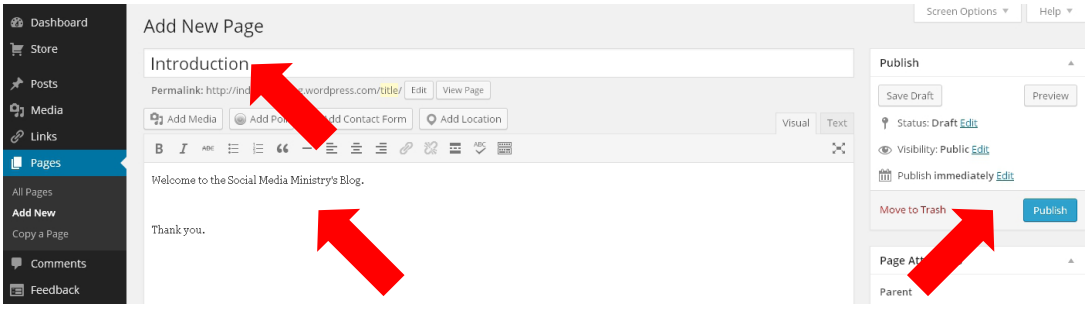


Creating blog pages

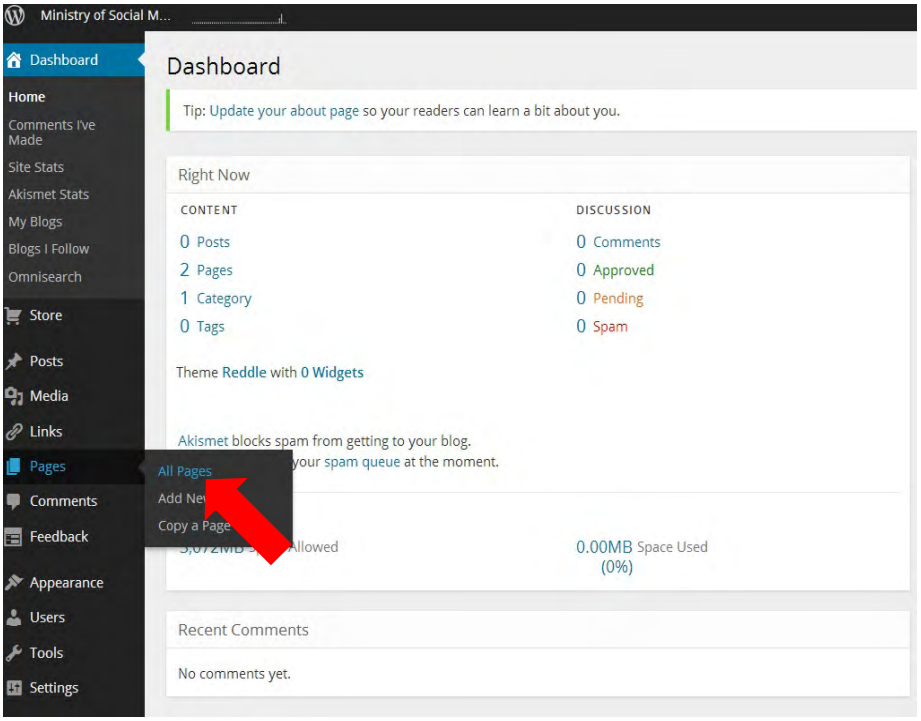
Step 14: To create your first blog page, click on the **Pages** option given at the centre left of the dashboard and then click **Add New**.



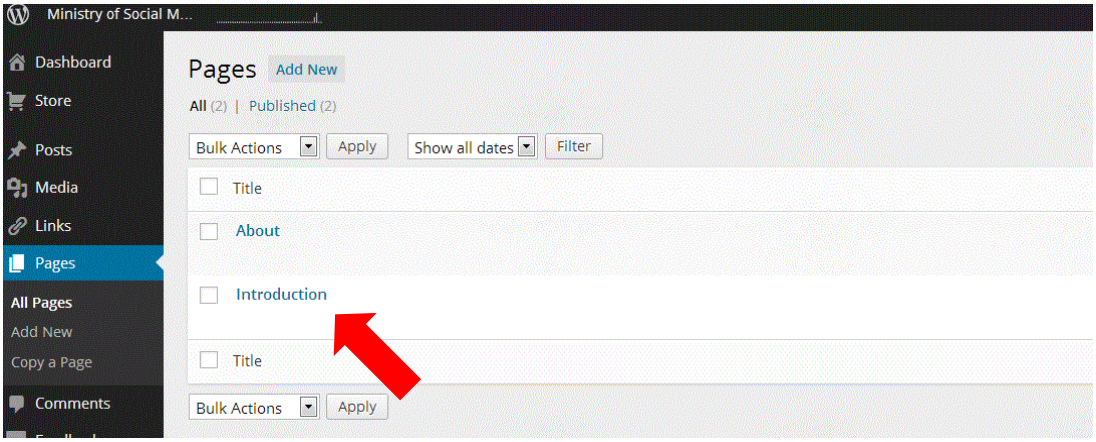
Step 15: Next, you will be brought to the **Add New Page** window. Here, provide a meaningful name (e.g., Introduction) for the new page and write some description of the page (or content that you want to include in this page) (see figure below). After you are done, click the **Publish** button available at the right middle corner (leave other options default).



Step 16: To see the new page you just created, click on **Pages** and then on the **All Pages** option available at the centre left corner of the dashboard.



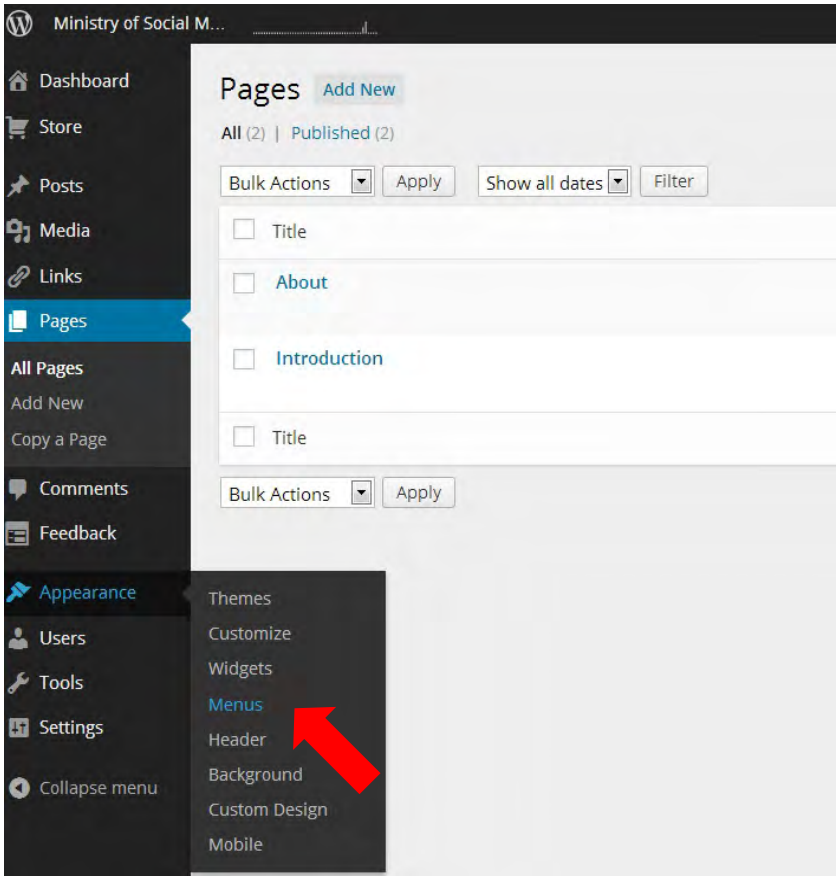
Step 17: Next, you will see the new page you have just created (i.e., Introduction).
Note: By default, WordPress creates the About page for your blog (see figure below).
Create more pages by clicking on the **Add New** option at the top left corner, next to the **Pages** option.



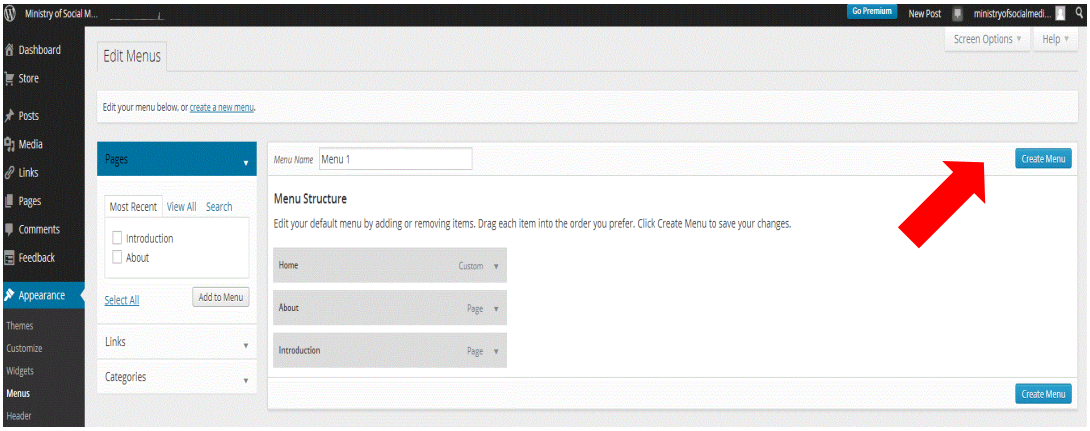
Configuring Menus

In order for your readers to find these pages easily, their titles need to appear on the navigation panel of your blog site. In this Reddle theme chosen, the navigation panel is at the top of the blog site. In other themes it may be on the left or right of the blog site.

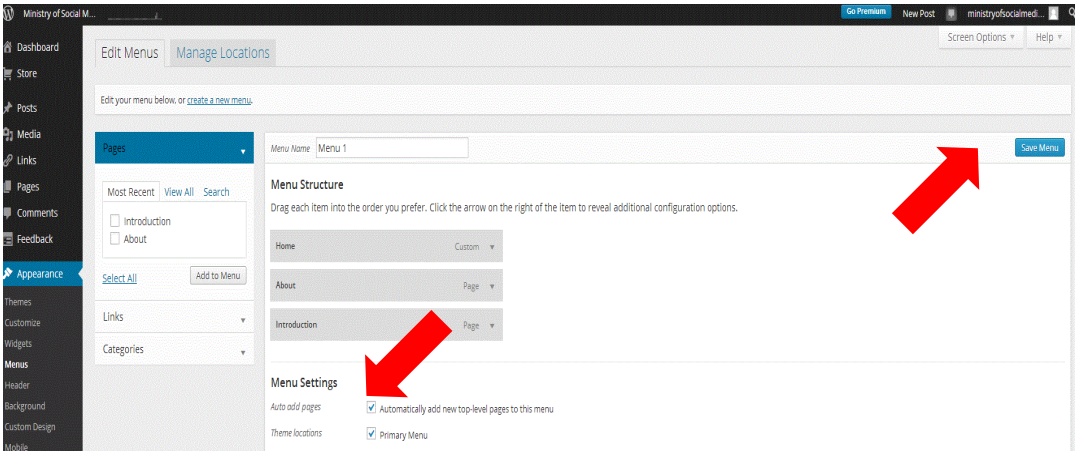
Step 18: For the page titles to appear on your blog site, you need to configure the Menu option. To do so, click on **Appearance** and then click on the **Menus** option available at the bottom left corner (see figure below).



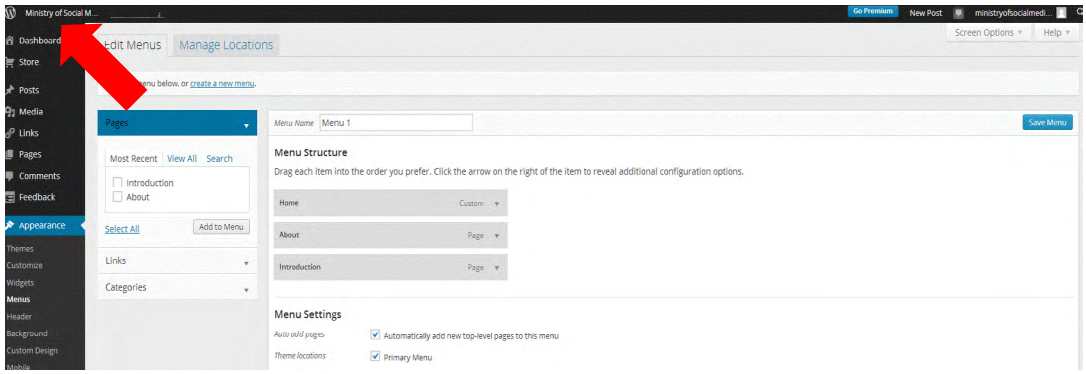
Step 19: You will see that a menu (i.e., Menu1) is available to you by default. To enable this menu, click on the Create Menu button.



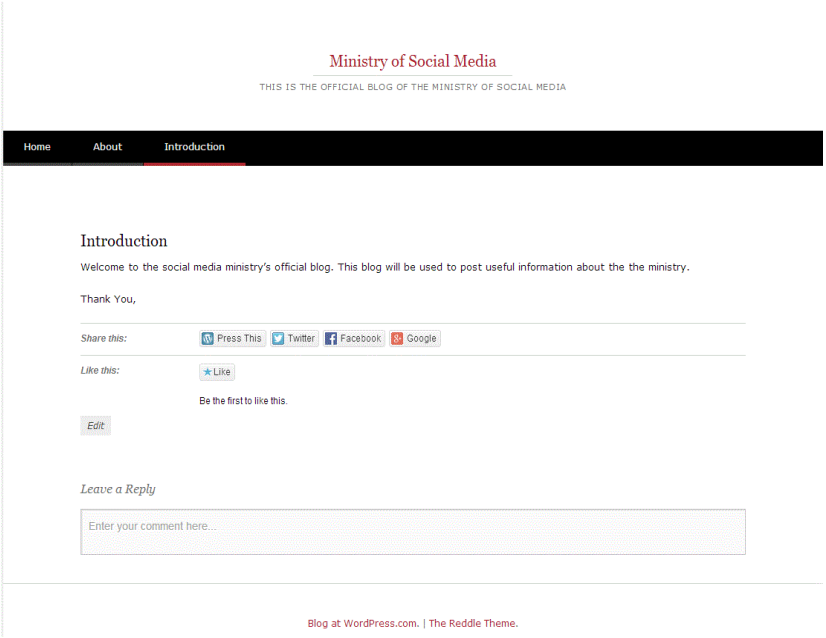
Step 20: Check the **Automatically add new top-level pages to this menu** and **Primary Menu** boxes available under the Menu Settings and then click the **Save Menu** button. After this, the title of any new pages created will be automatically added to your blog's navigation menu.



Step 21: To see your newly created blog and the menus (pages), click on the name of your blog appearing in the top left corner of the dashboard.

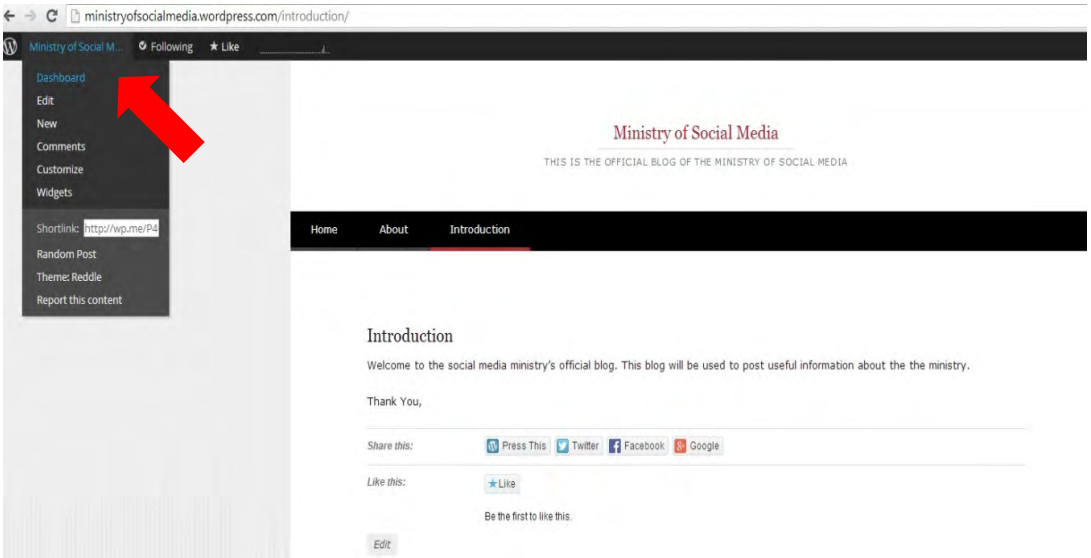


Step 22: This will bring you to your new blog (see figure below). You can see that the blog now has three menus (or page titles), one that you created (i.e., Introduction), and two created by Wordpress by default (i.e., Home and About). New blog posts will appear in the homepage and the other pages created will remain static. You can add as many pages as you want. Your blog address is: http://ministryofsocialmedia.wordpress.com/.

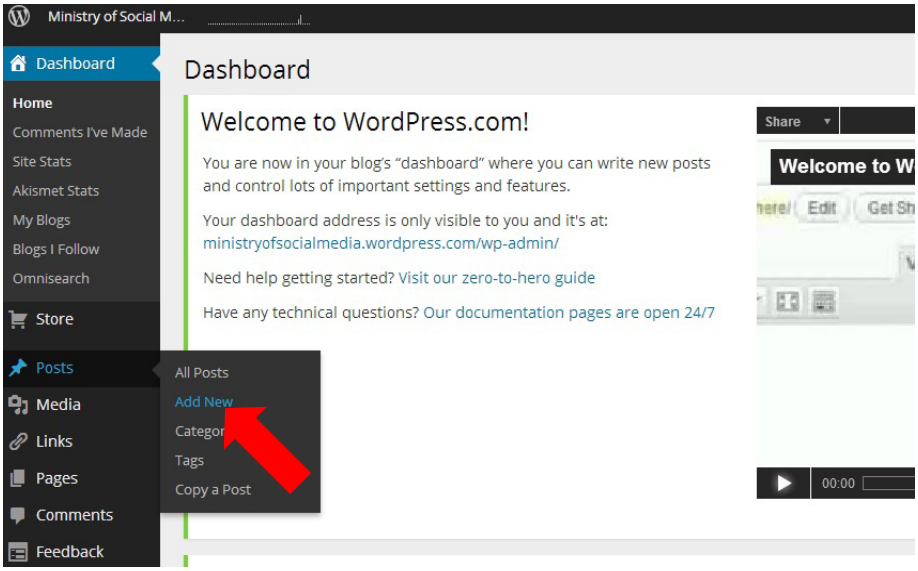


Creating blog posts

Step 23: To create a blog post, you need to go back to the dashboard. You can do this by clicking on the name of your blog appearing in the top left corner of the window and then click on **Dashboard**.

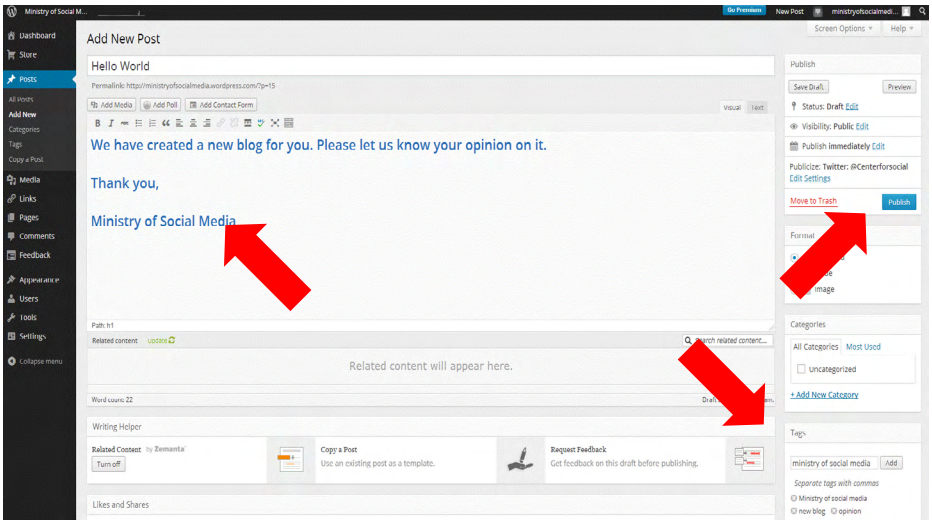


Step 24: Once in the dashboard, click on Posts and then click on the **Add New** option (see figure below).

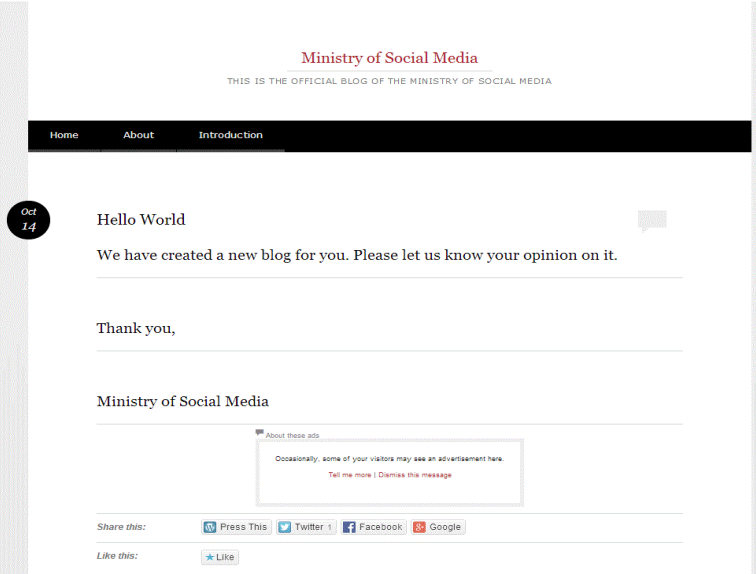


Step 25: Write a title and body of the post (see figure below). You can include multimedia (e.g., pictures and videos) by clicking on the **Add Media** button. You may also include some tags at the right bottom (they will be used for searching purpose).

On the top right, there are the options to **Save Draft** and **Preview** the post to see what it will look like to readers. Once you are satisfied with the post, click on the **Publish** button available on the right side. This will publish your post online and the post will be available over the Internet. **Note:** Once the post is published online, you will still be able to edit and make changes to the post.



Step 26: As mentioned earlier, the post will now appear on your blog's homepage.



Customizing your blog

Step 27: In its current form, your blog is in a very rough shape. To give it a more professional touch, you need to customize it. With customization, you can do the following:

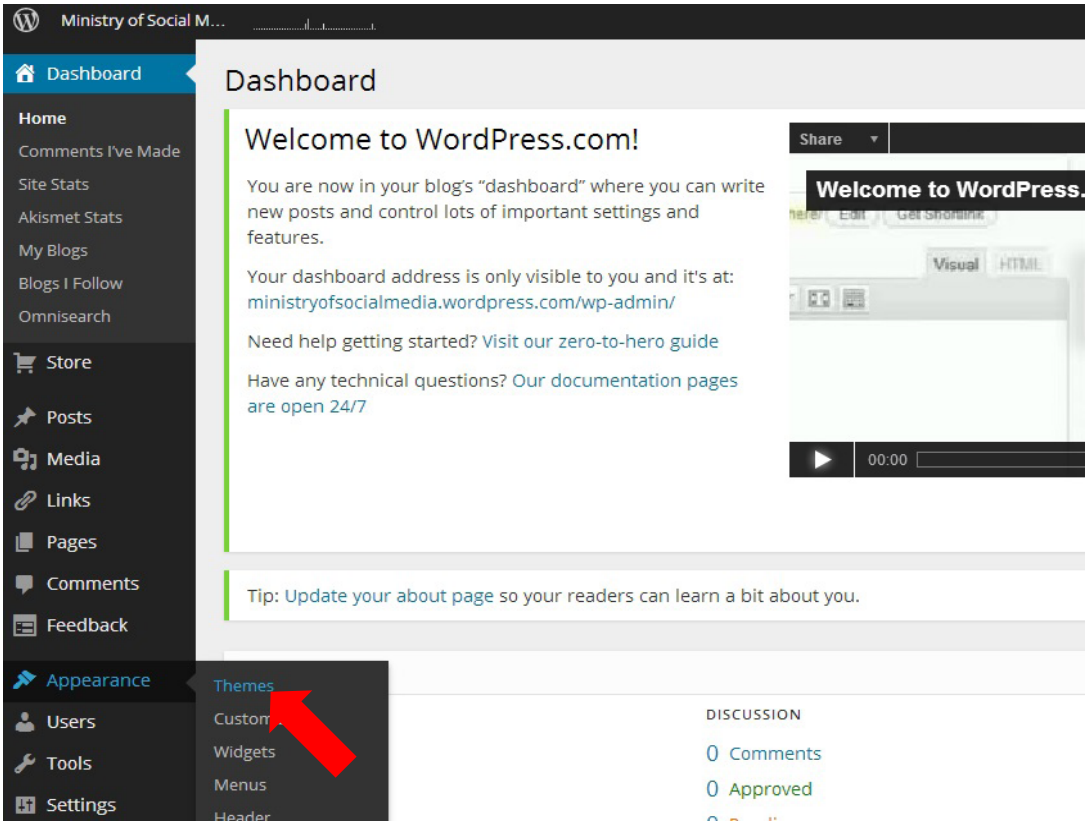
- Manage themes (overall appearances)
- Manage logo and background image
- Manage colours and fonts
- Manage widgets[7]

Managing themes

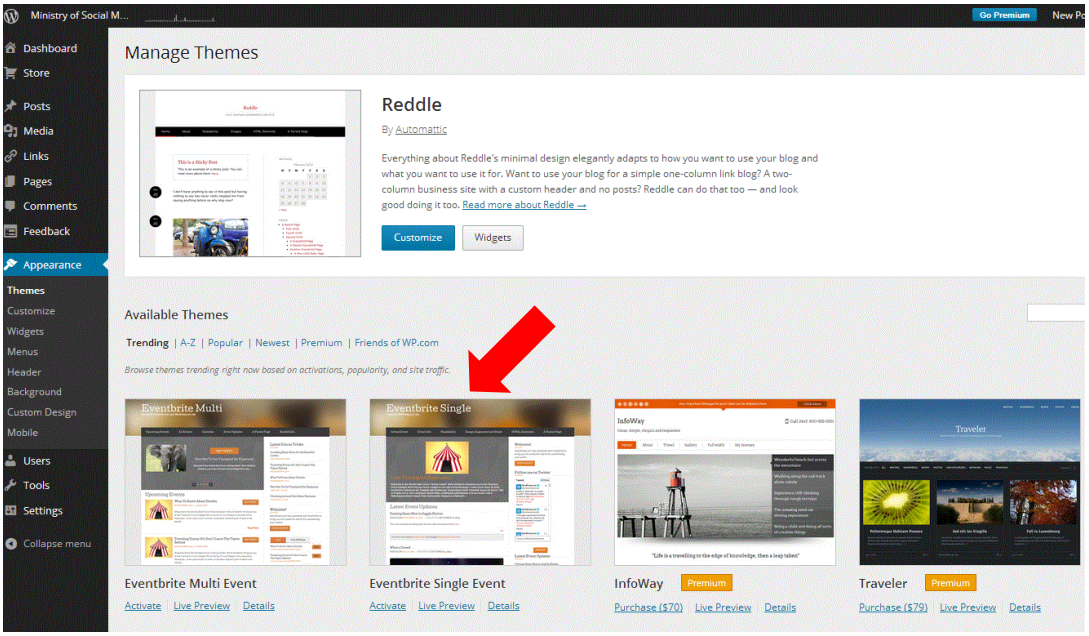
Step 28: To change themes, go to the blog's dashboard. There are two ways to go to the blog's dashboard. 1) If you are already logged-in, follow step no. 21. 2) If you are not logged-in, go to http://www.wordpress.com and login with your username and password; next, click on **My Blog** and then on **Blog Admin** (for details see steps 10 to 13). This will bring you to the blog's dashboard.

7 Widget is a small block that performs a specific function. A widget may contain some simple static content like a newsletter subscription form, introductory text and advertisement, or some dynamic content such as a list of recent tweets from your Twitter account, tag cloud and calendar. Widgets can be placed in the widgetized areas of your theme, which is mostly in the sidebar, but it can also be in other areas in your theme. The available widget areas that you have will vary from theme to theme. Most WordPress themes are widget ready and have multiple widget areas. However, themes are not required to have widget areas. If you do not see any widget areas, then it means that your theme does not support widgets.

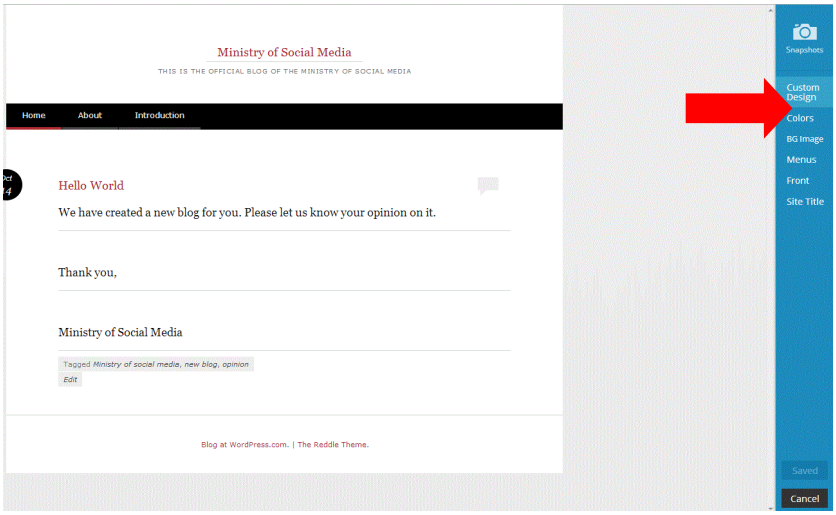
Step 29: Once in the dashboard, click on **Appearance** available at the bottom left side and then click on **Themes** available at the top of the menu (see figure below).



Step 30: In the Manage Themes window, you can see your current theme (which in this case is Reddle). You may choose a different theme from the available ones and click on the **Activate** option available below the theme. However, changing themes frequently may not be a good idea. It is recommended that you choose one theme that best represents your organization and stick to it. Also, some themes require payment.



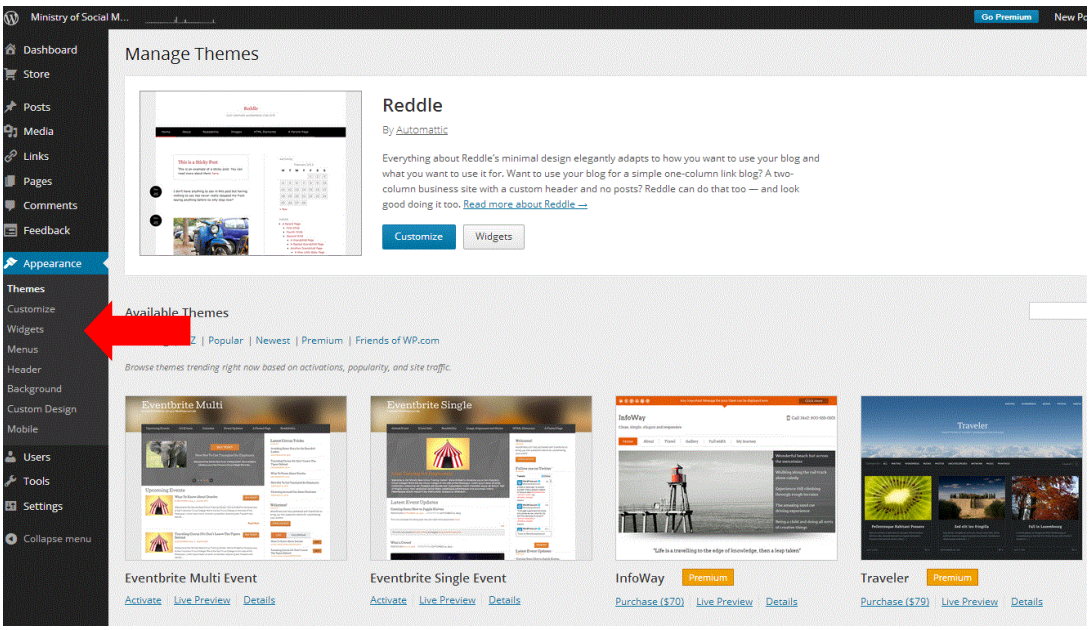
Step 31: To customize your theme, click on the **Customize** button below your chosen theme. This will bring you to the customization window as shown in the figure below.



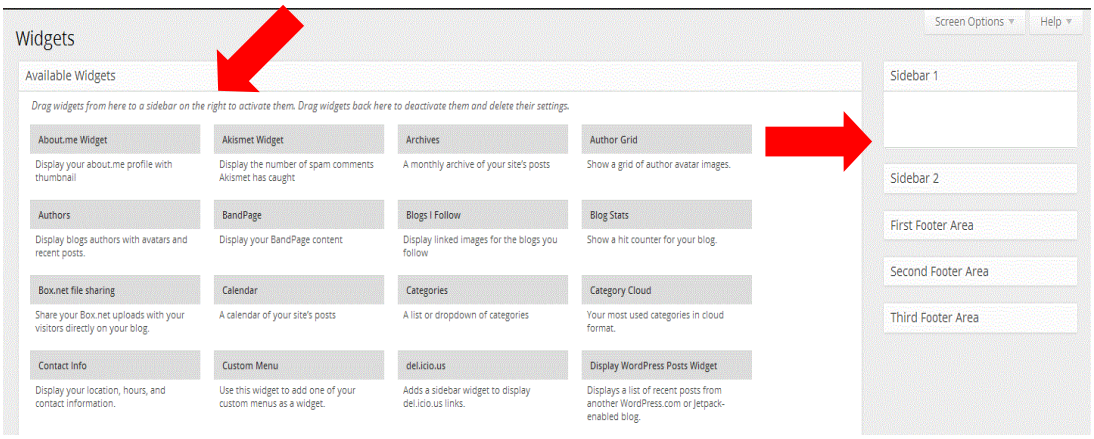
Step 32: In the customization window, you can manage colours, background (BG) image, menus, fonts, and site title. Make the necessary changes that you want and click on the **Save** button available at the bottom right corner.

Managing widgets

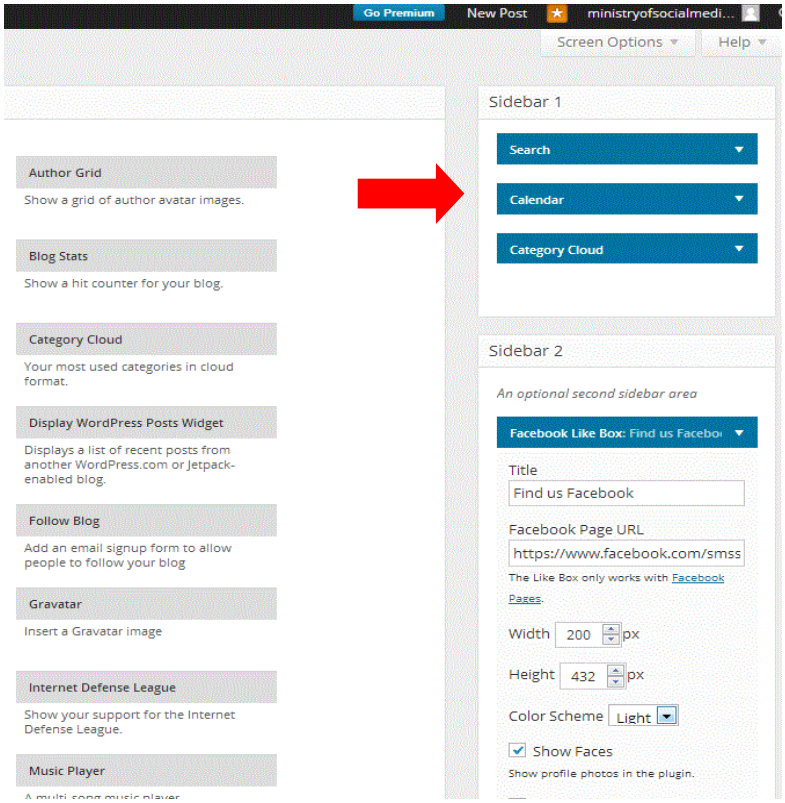
Step 33: To manage widgets, click on **Widgets** available in the Appearance menu.



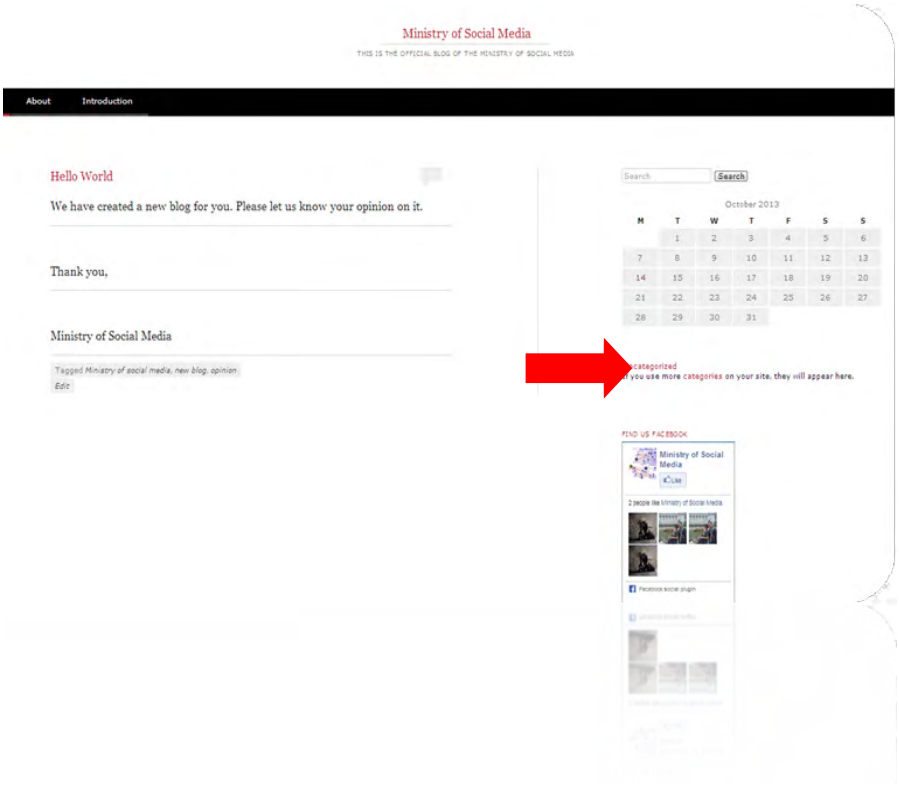
Step 34: To add the available widgets to your blog, drag and drop it in the designated areas (i.e., Sidebar 1, Sidebar 2, First Footer Area, etc.) available on the right side of the window (see figure below).



Step 35: In the example below, **Search**, **Calendar** and **Category Cloud** widgets are added to Sidebar 1. And to Sidebar 2, the **Facebook Like** widget is added. Note that some widgets, such as the Facebook Like widget requires additional information (e.g., your Facebook page link) to work properly. Remember to click the **Save** button appearing below every widget.

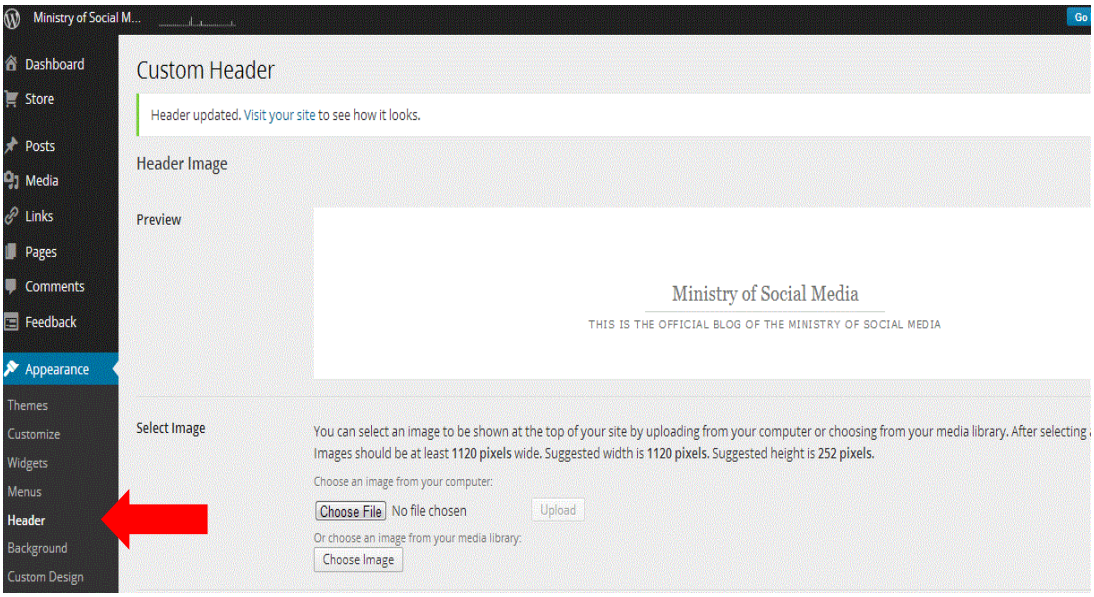


Step 36: Go to your blog and check the newly added widgets (to go to your blog, click on the name of your blog appearing in the top left corner of the dashboard). In this Reddle theme, the newly added widgets appear on the right side of the blog (see figure below).

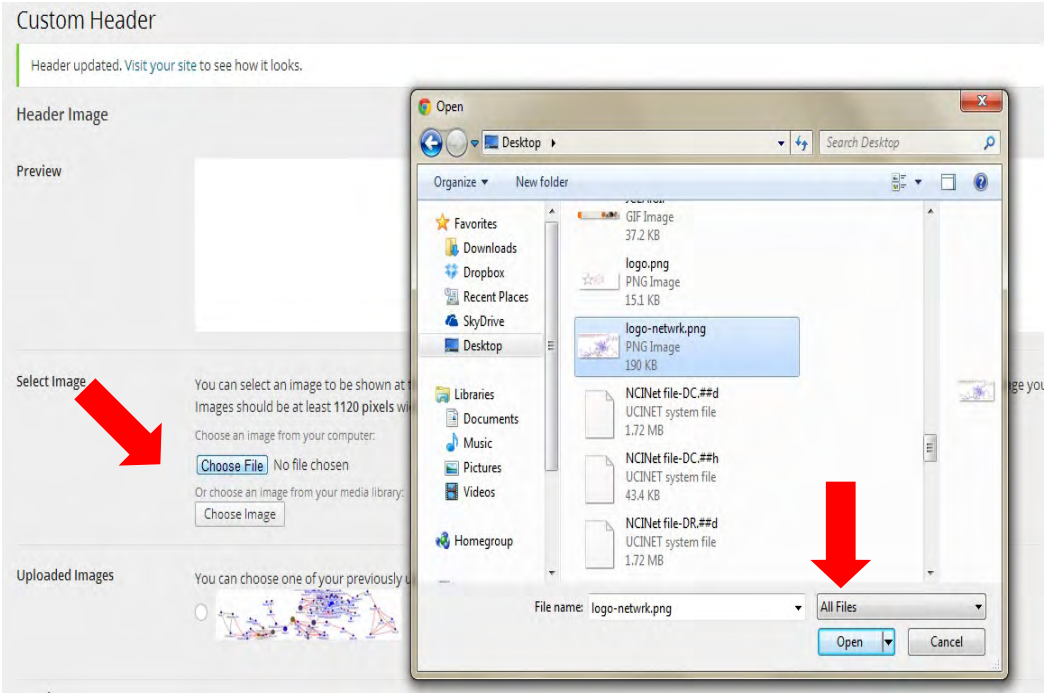


Adding a header image

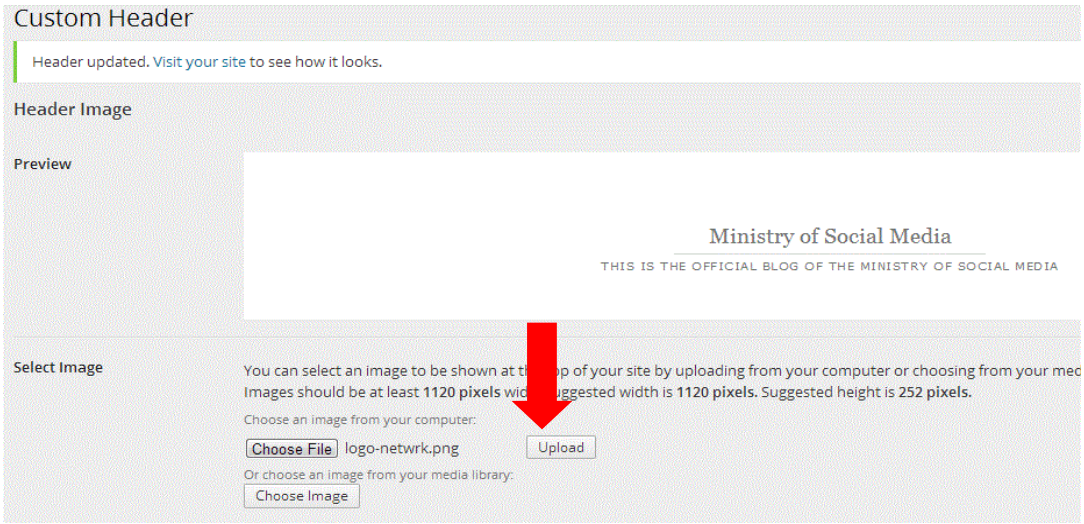
Step 37: Click on the **Header** option available in the Appearance menu. This will bring you to the Custom Header window as shown in the figure below.



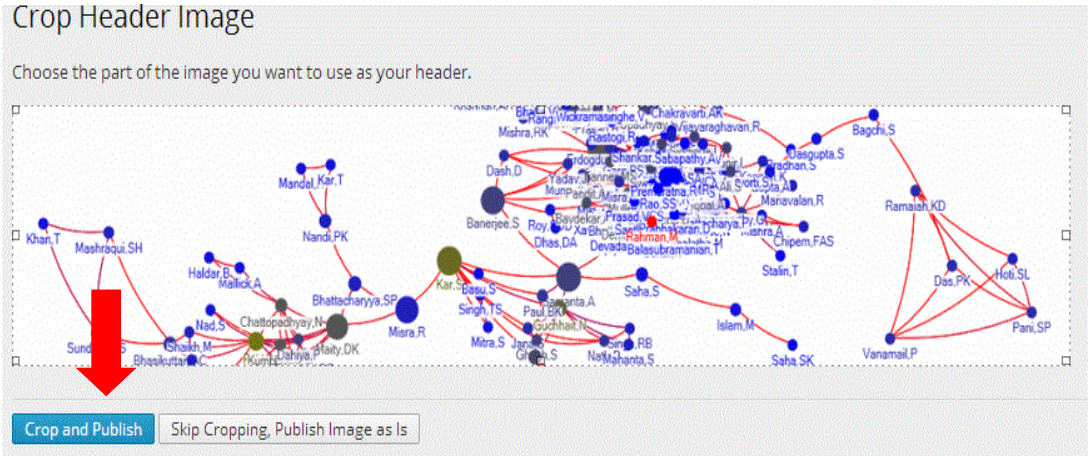
Step 38: Click on the **Choose File** button and select a picture from your computer and click **Open**.



Step 39: Next, click **Upload**.

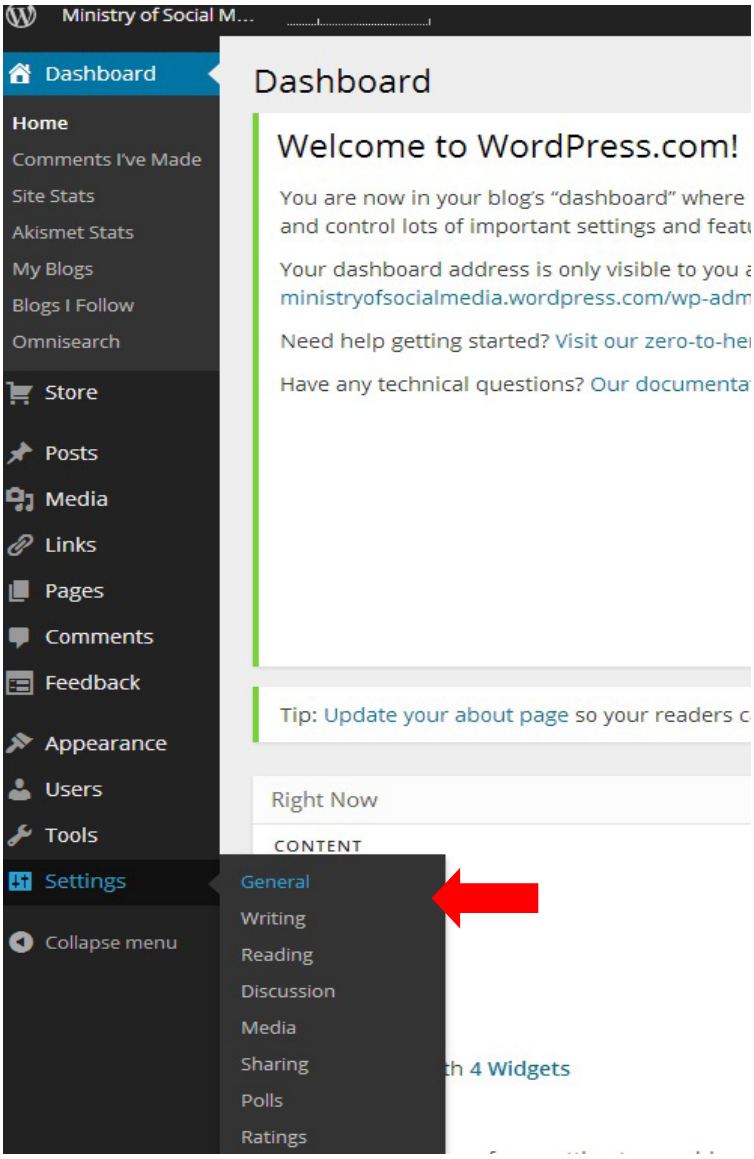


Step 40: If the picture is larger than the area click **Crop & Publish**, otherwise click on the **Skip Cropping, Publish Image As Is** option.



Step 41: Go to the blog and check the header image you just uploaded. It will appear on the top of the blog, below the name of the organization (see figure below) (to see your blog, click on the name of your blog on the top left corner of the dashboard).

Step 42: Go to the blog's dashboard and click on the **Settings** option. Here you may configure several things (e.g., general, writing, reading, discussion, media and sharing) according to your requirements.



Other resources

- 16 top tips from blogging experts for beginners
- Top tips for a successful blog
- Making your blog more visible over the Internet through SEO (Search Engine Optimization)

Chapter 3: Mass Collaboration through Social Media

Objectives

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce a variety of ways to establish mass collaboration and crowdsourcing through social media channels. The chapter demonstrates different ways social media tools can be leveraged to increase mass collaborations, particularly inter-agency collaboration.

After reading this chapter you will be able to:

- ✓ Understand, configure and manage a wiki (e.g., Google wikis);
- ✓ Understand, configure and manage cloud-based tools (e.g., Google Docs, Dropbox and SkyDrive); and
- ✓ Understand, configure and manage Google moderator.

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Wiki: Collaborative Knowledge Sharing

What is a wiki?

Wiki is a type of website created collaboratively by a community of users allowing them to add, modify or delete content. Wikis are a great way to communicate and collaboratively work on projects with other people. A good example of collaborative wiki is http://www.wikipedia.com. Wikipedia has more than 30 million articles in 287 languages written collaboratively by volunteers around the world.

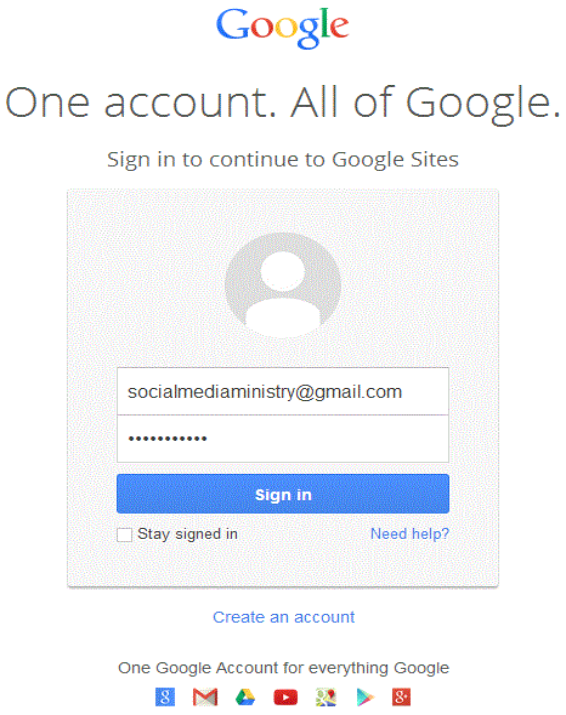
Wikis are a great way to communicate and collaboratively work on projects with other people.

However, Wikipedia is just one type of a website built on the wiki model. There are several other notable wikis. This link lists several websites that use the wiki concept/model.

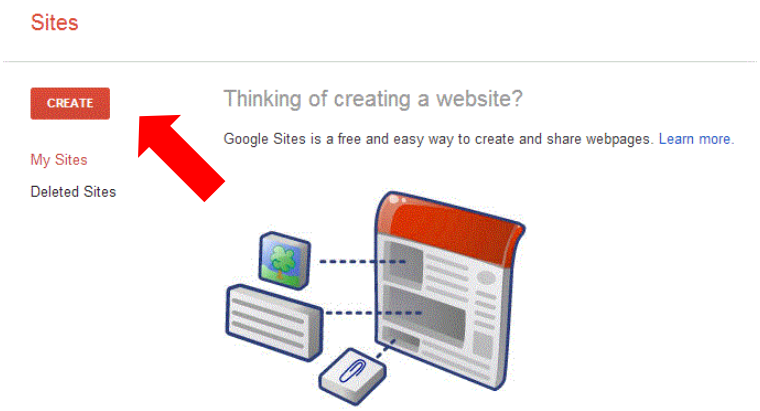
In this guide, we will create a project wiki using Google Sites.

Setting up a wiki project

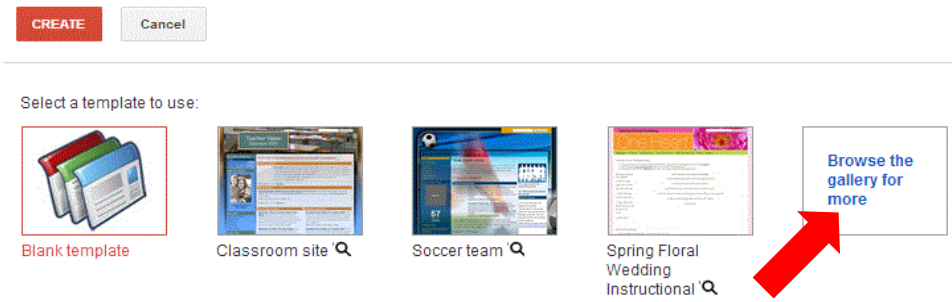
Step 1: You need to have a Google account to create a wiki with Google Sites. Go to the http://www.sites.google.com and login with your Google account.

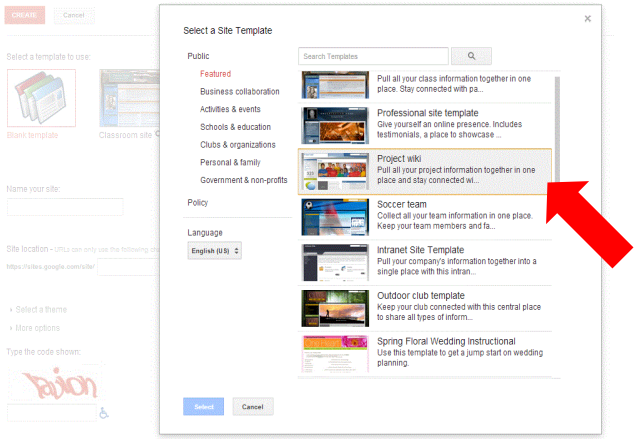


Step 2: Once you login, click on the **Create** button to start creating your own wiki.

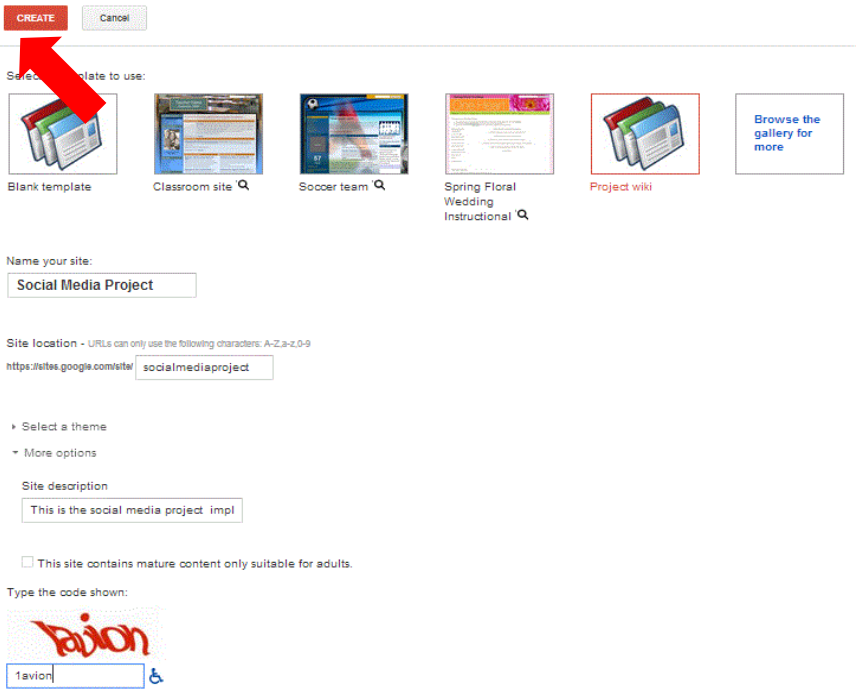


Step 3: Google Sites has different templates that you can choose from for your wiki. To start creating your wiki, select **Project Wiki** and then click **Select** (if you cannot see the Project Wiki option then click on the **Browse the gallery for more** option) as shown in the figure below.





Step 4: Specify a name that best describes the purpose of your wiki (e.g., Social Media Project) and specify the site location (web address). Then click on **More Options** and write a meaningful description for your wiki. Finally, type the security code in the box provided and click the **Create** button at the top left of the window as shown in the figure below.

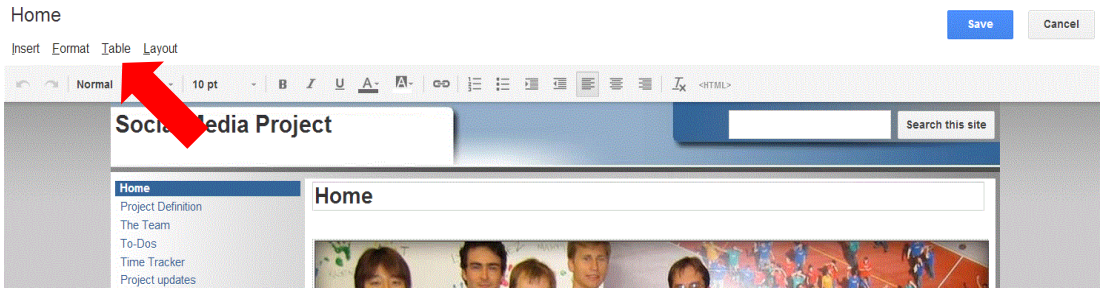


Step 5: After clicking on the **Create** button, your wiki will be created with some default settings as shown in the figure below. You can use the default wiki template and customize it for your own collaborative projects. For example, you can add a project description and information about the teams. You can also add a time tracker, publish project updates and upload related documents.

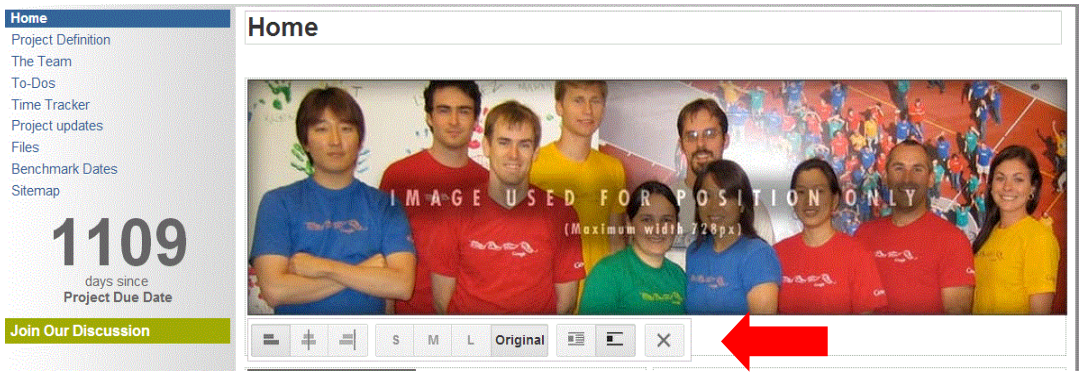
Customizing the wiki

Step 6: Start by clicking the **Edit Page** button available at the top right corner.

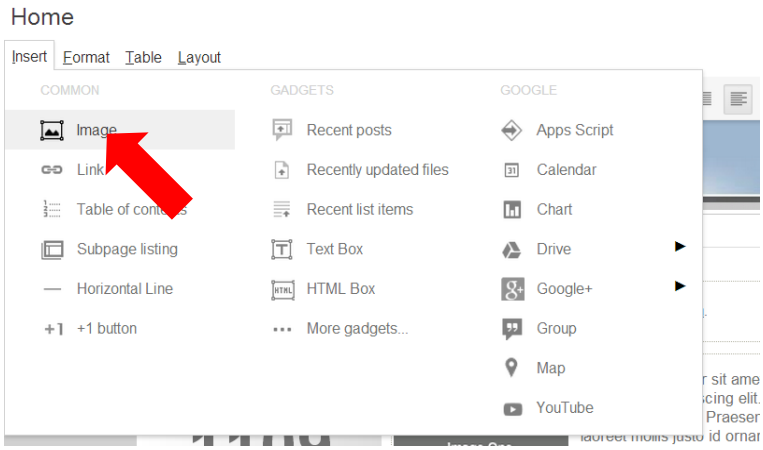
Step 7: The site editor lets you insert objects (e.g., pictures, links, table, charts, etc.) and customize the site layout, colour, fonts and theme.



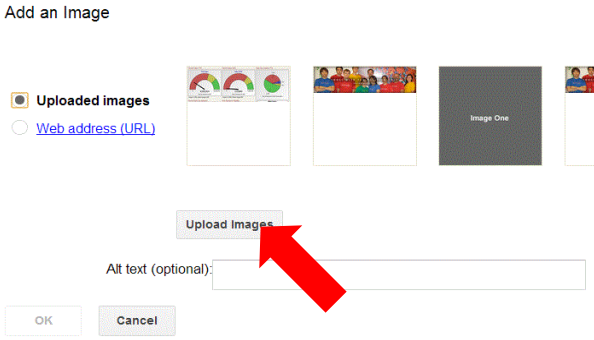
Step 8: For example, to change the header image, first remove the default image by clicking the **X** button available below the picture as shown in the figure below (**Note:** the **X** button will appear when you click on the picture).

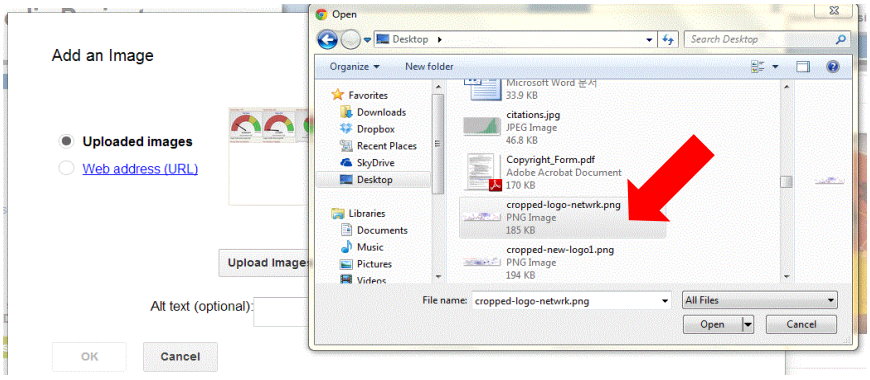


Step 9: Once the default image is deleted, click the **Insert** menu and then click on the **Image** option.

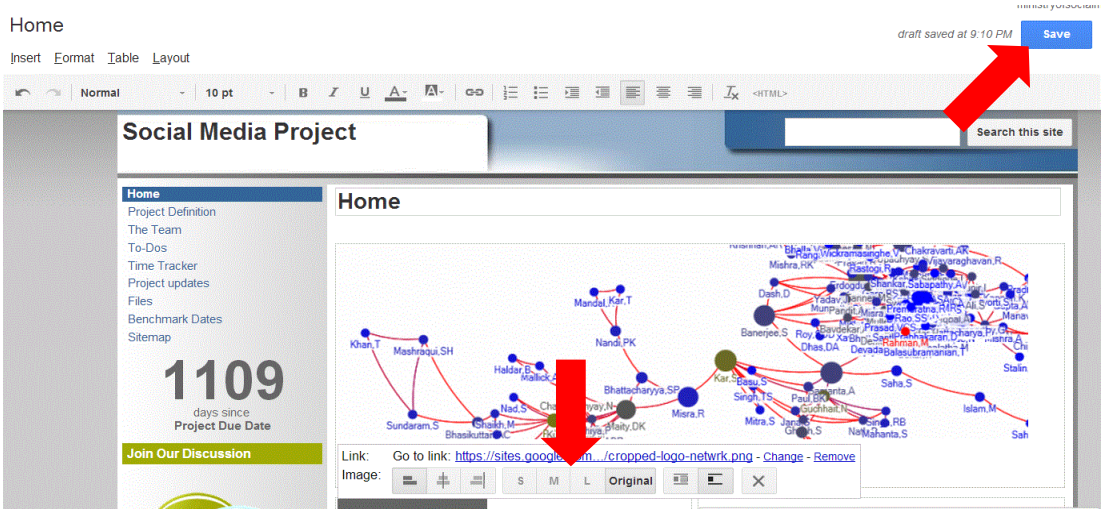


Step 10: Next, click on the **Upload Images** button, select an image from your computer, click the **Open** button, and then click **OK**.



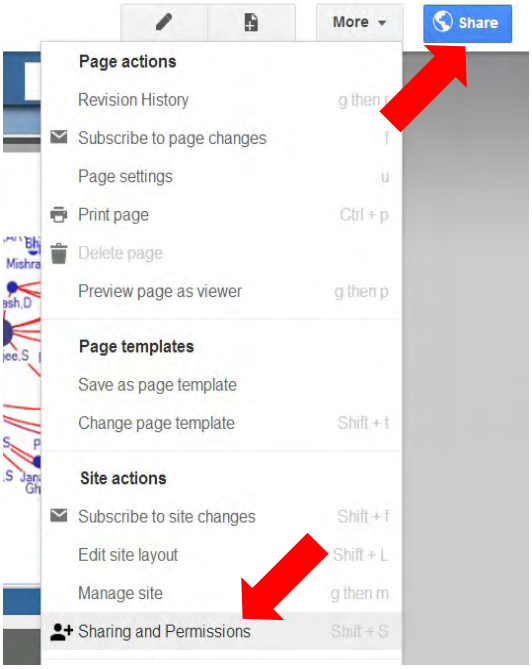


Step 11: Adjust the size of the image if necessary using the option available below the image, and then click the **Save** button.



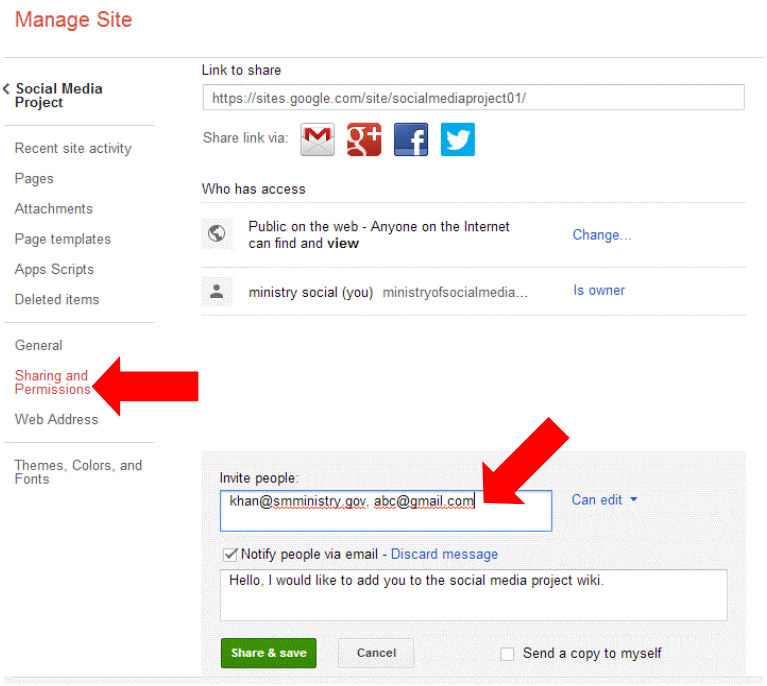
Adding collaborators

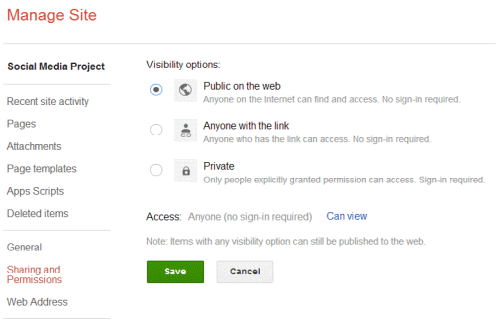
Step 12: Adding collaborators and members to the wiki is quite simple. Click on the **More** tab available at the top right corner, and then click on the **Sharing and Permissions** option from the drop down menu.



Step 13: Next, enter the e-mail address(es) of the collaborators who will contribute to the wiki. You can invite people to collaborate on your wiki by sending e-mail invitations. Also, specify the type of permission collaborators will have (e.g., can edit wiki).

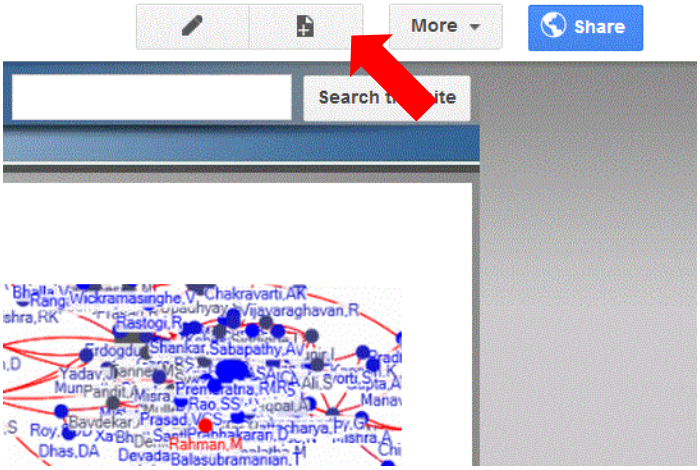
Here, you can also change the visibility of your wiki (i.e., who has access). The default option allows anyone on the Internet to find and view the wiki. If you want to keep the wiki hidden from the Internet, change the visibility to **Private**. Once you are done, click on the **Share & Save** button.



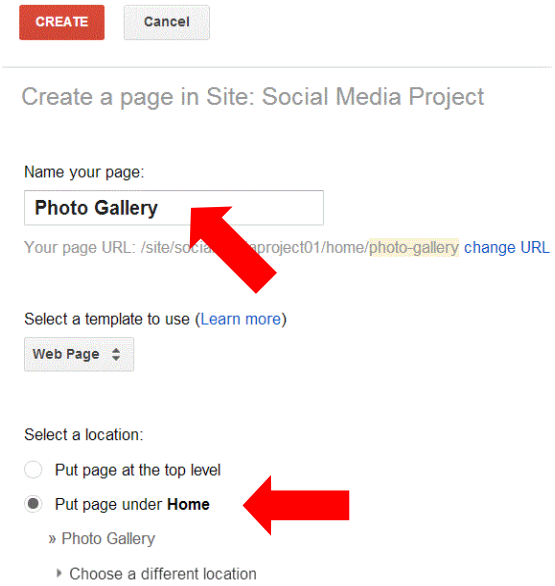


Adding a new page

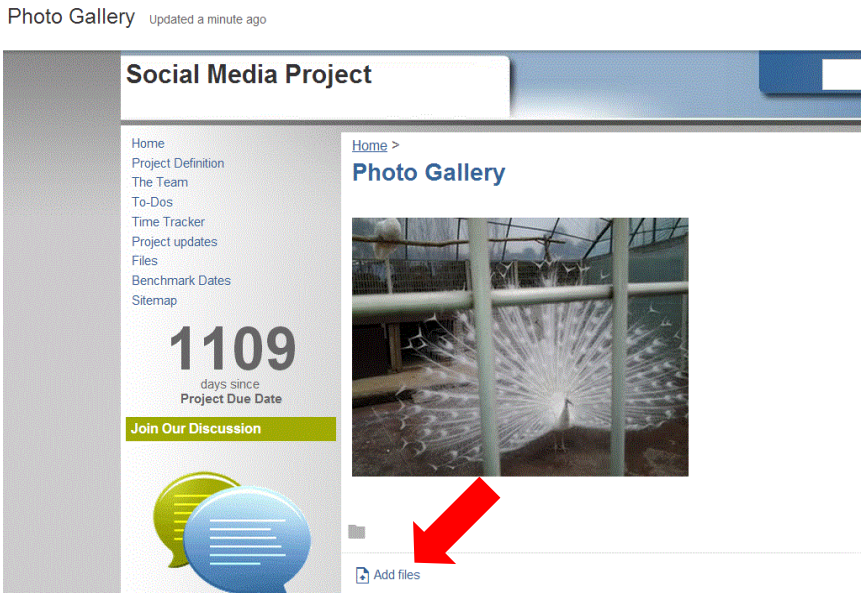
Step 14: Click on the **New Page** icon available at the top right corner of the wiki.



Step 15: Next, name your page, select a template to use (the default option is Web Page), and select a location for the page. Once you are done, click on the **Create** button.



Step 16: Now you can use the new page to add project related pictures (for help on adding pictures see steps 9 to 11).



Other things to do:

- How to insert objects like the table of contents into your page
- How to insert gadgets like Weather, Google clock, etc.
- How to insert a calendar
- How to insert your own spreadsheet
- How to add and remove pages from navigation
- How to customize your site logo
- How to post an announcement
- How to create forms

Google Moderator: Crowdsource your Ideas

What is Google Moderator?

Launched in September 2008, Google Moderator is an online crowdsourcing platform that allows you to solicit opinions, ideas and suggestions about anything that you are interested in discussing with people. It is an easy and efficient way to manage and solicit online inputs from any size of audience.

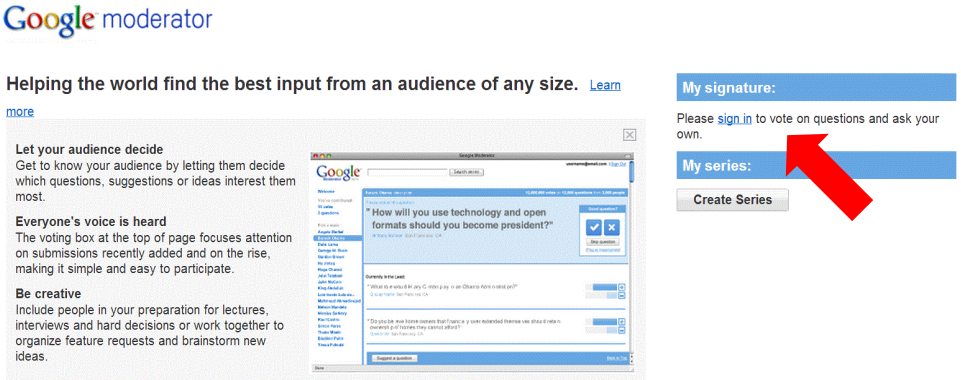
In summary, Google Moderator does the following:

> Google Moderator is an easy and efficient way to manage and solicit opinions, ideas and suggestions on an issue.

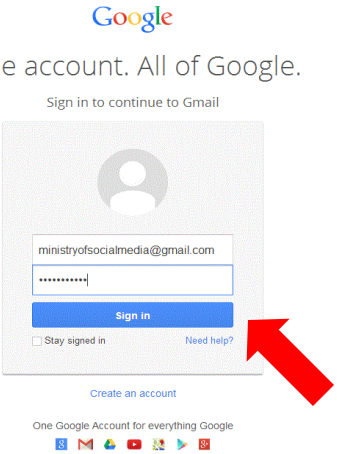
- It allows you to create a series of topics for people to submit questions, ideas and suggestions. These are called submissions.
- A series can be broken into smaller, more manageable topics of discussion called Topics. You can create one or multiple topics. For example, if you create a series on "The Use of Social Media in Government," topics could include: "Social Media Tools," "Policy and Strategy," and ''Privacy and Security."
    - Google Moderator also makes it possible to submit questions anonymously, taking away the potential fear of asking questions or providing suggestions.
- Questions on the Google Moderator page are automatically ranked based on how many positive votes they have.
- Series and topics can be shared with everyone over the Internet or only with the people you choose.

Configuring Google Moderator

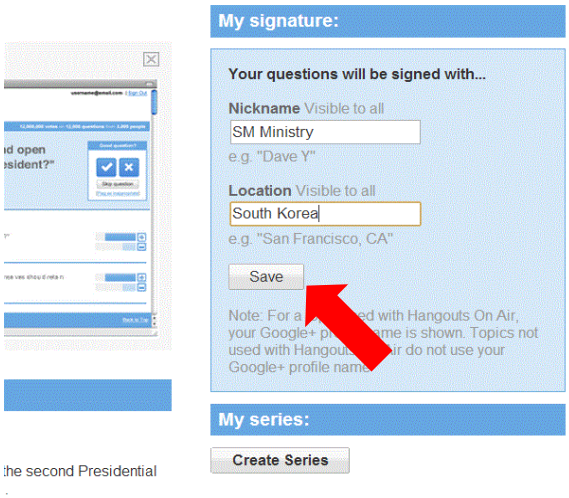
Step 1: Go to http://www.google.com/moderator/ and click on **Sign-in** (note that using Google Moderator requires a Google account).



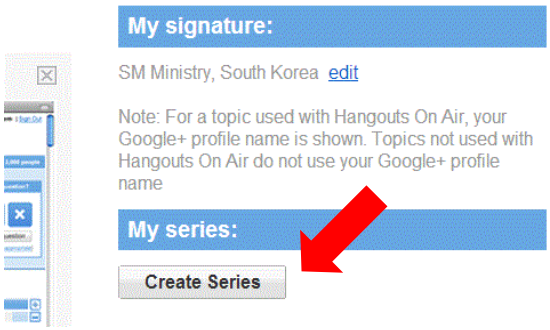
Step 2: Login with your Google account.



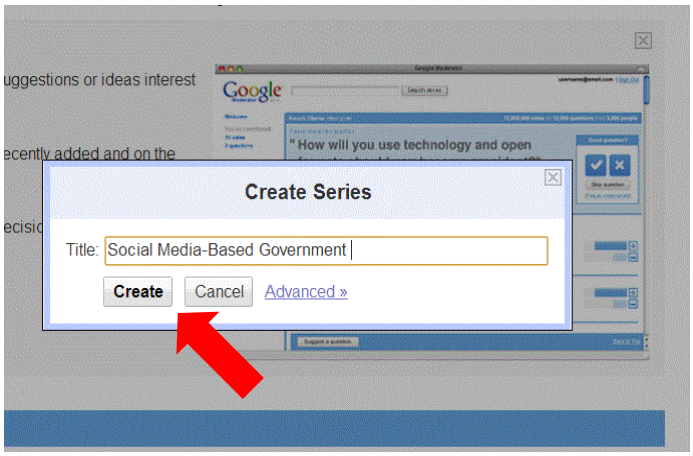
Step 3: Fill in the My Signature fields (i.e., Nickname and Location) and click **Save**. Your nickname will be visible to everyone when you create a series.



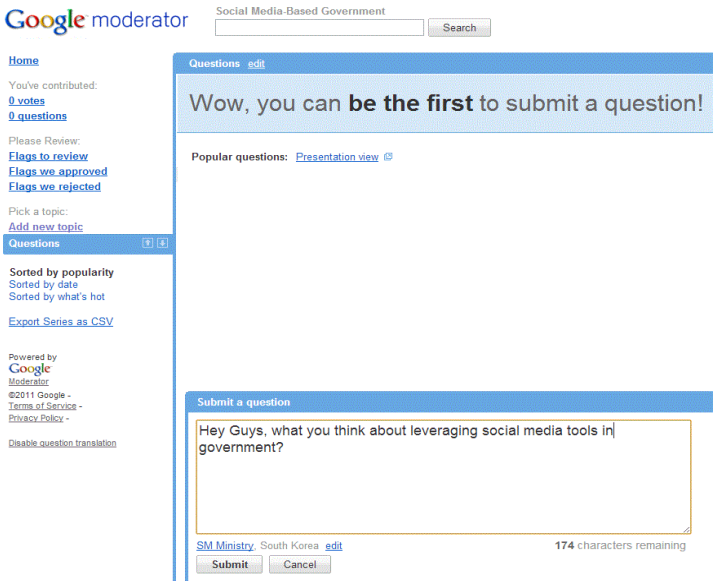
Step 4: Next, click on the **Create Series** button to start creating a series.



Step 5: Provide a title for your series and click **Create**.

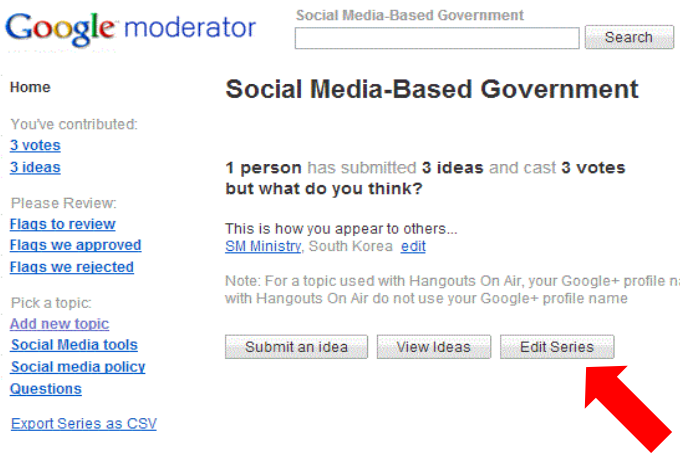


Step 6: Your series is created.



Editing the series

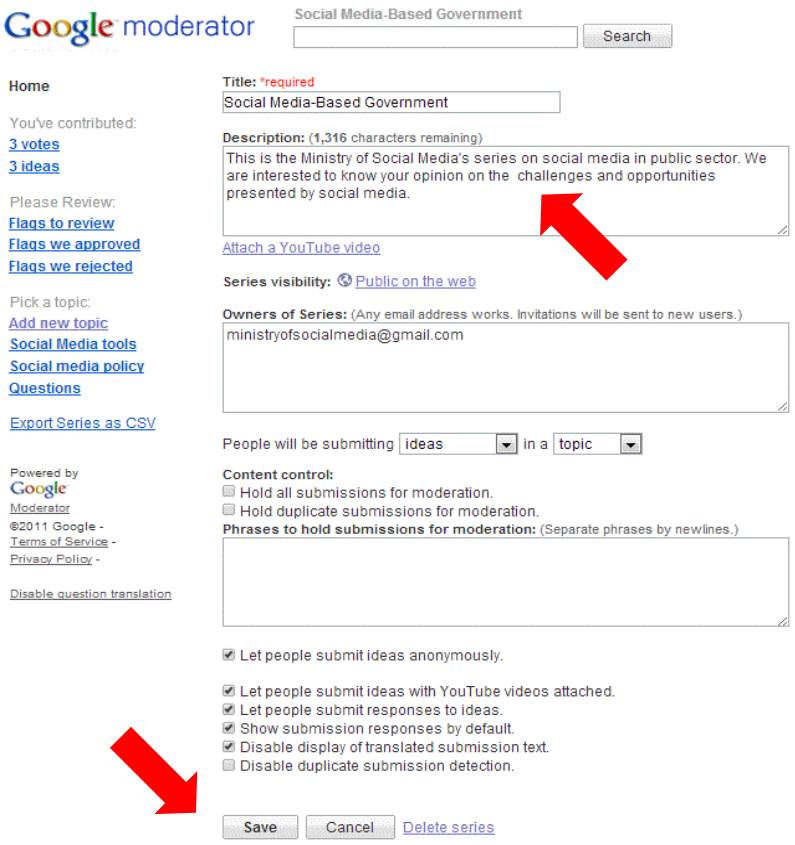
Step 7: To edit the series you just created, click on the **Home** option at the top left of the window. Then click on the **Edit Series** button.



Step 8: To edit the series you can do the following:

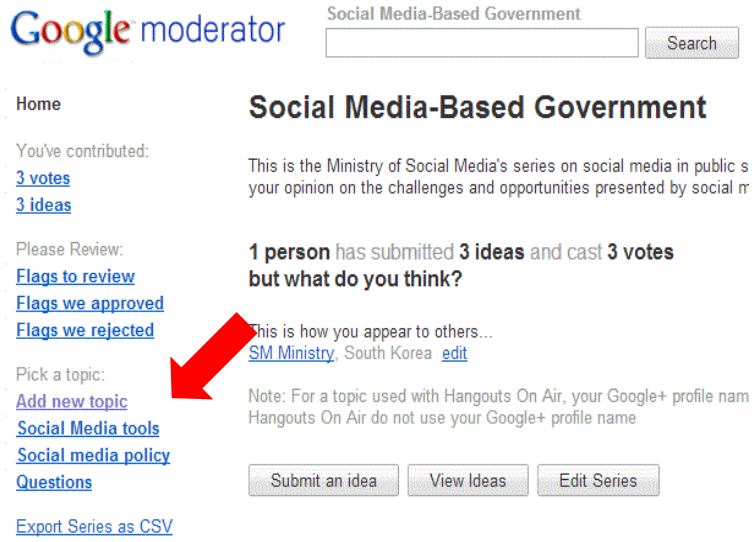
- Provide a description about your series.
- Add administrators who can also change the series name, description and topics.
- Choose whether or not the series is public on the web or accessible only to people with a link.
- Choose whether or not to allow users to make submissions anonymously.
- Choose whether or not to allow users to make submissions containing YouTube videos.
- Choose whether or not to hold all submissions for moderation before being published, etc.

Make the necessary changes and click the **Save** button.

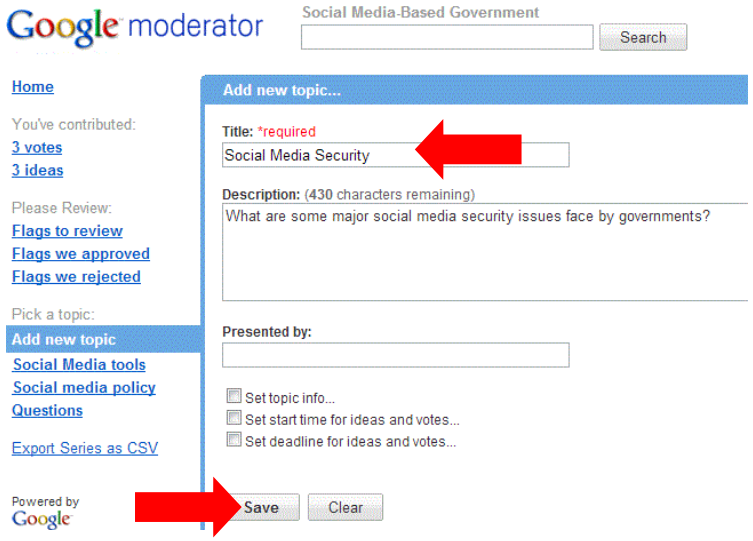


Adding a new topic

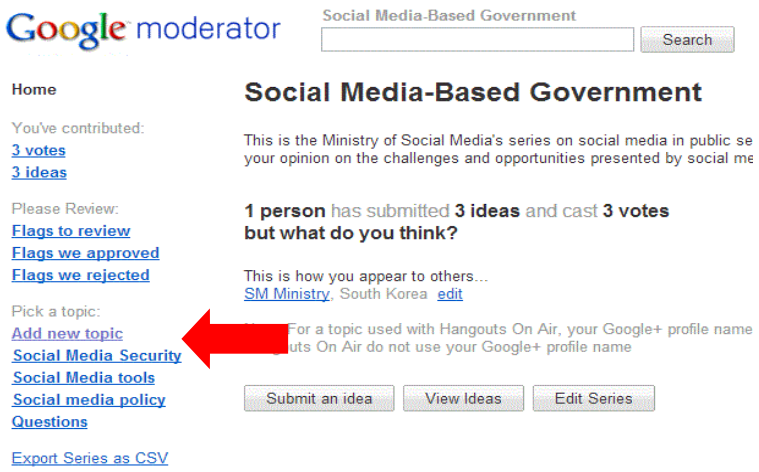
Step 9: To add a new topic to the series, click on the **Add a New Topic** option (as you can see in the figure below, two topics have been added—Social Media Tools and Social Media Policy).



Step 10: Next, provide a title for your topic and write a brief description about the topic. You can also set a start date and end date for the topic. Once, you are done, click the **Save** button.



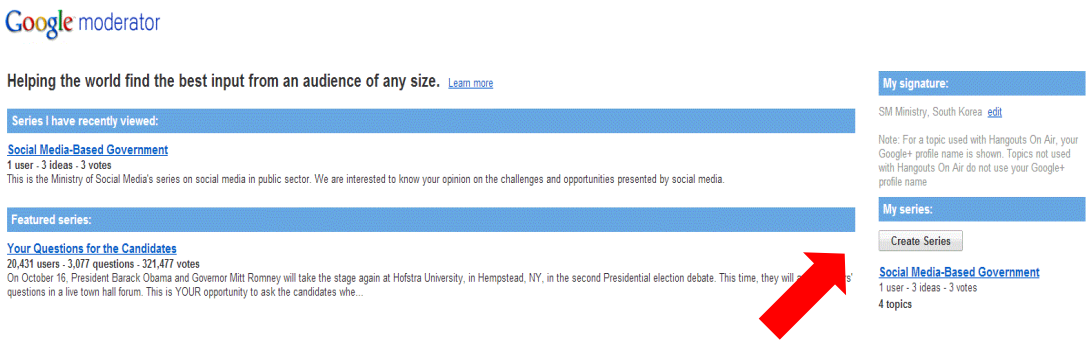
Step 11: The new topic will appear on the left side of the window under the Pick a Topic menu.



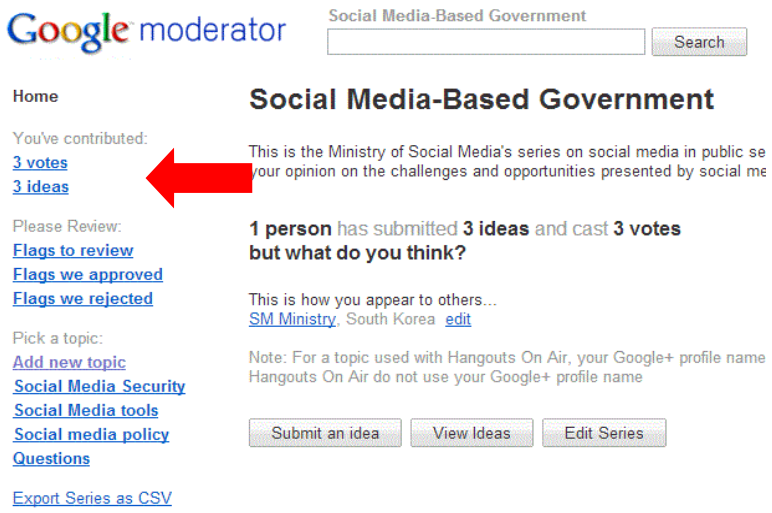
Creating another series

Step 12: To create another series, click on **My Series** available at the right corner of the window as shown in the figure below.

Step 13: Clicking on the **My Series** option will bring you to the Google Moderator's main page (see figure below). Here you can see the series you have created earlier (i.e., Social Media-Based Government). To create a new series, click on the **Create Series** button and follow steps 4 to 6 above.



Step 14: Once you share the series with people (i.e., send a link to the people through e-mail), you can see the comments made and votes casted.



Other resources:

- How moderator works
- Google Moderator best practices
- Google Moderator on your organization's website
- Google Moderator FAQs

Cloud-Based Services

What is a cloud-based service?

A cloud-based service or cloud computing is the concept of using the Internet servers to store, manage and process data and applications (e.g., software, documents, audio, video and multimedia), rather than a local personal computer. See this video for more information on cloud computing. Some of the important features of cloud computing are scalability (expand or shrink services as business needs change) and accessibility (anywhere and anytime access).

Cloud-based services can be instrumental in collaborative projects that require transferring, accessing and sharing files with users.

In this guide, we will configure and use Dropbox— a cloud-based service used to store, manage and process documents. Other services similar to Dropbox are SkyDrive (provided by Microsoft), and Google Drive.

What is Dropbox?

Dropbox is a free cloud-based file (e.g., photos, documents and videos) storage service that lets you access and share your files from anywhere and anytime. It can be instrumental in collaborative projects that require transferring, accessing and sharing files with users.

How Dropbox works?

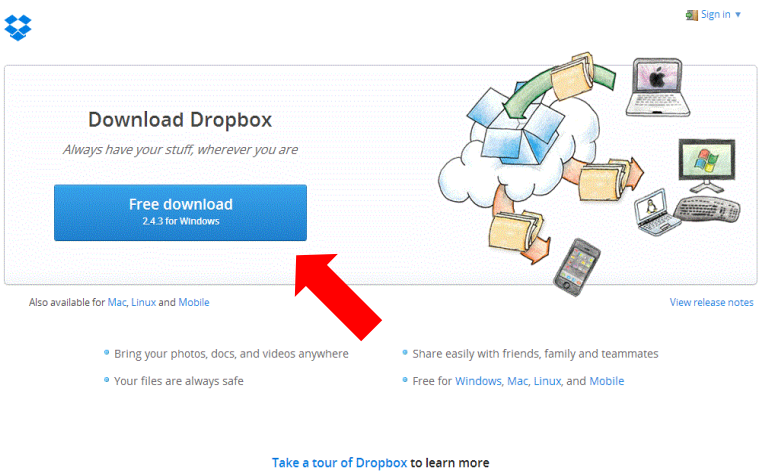
Once you install Dropbox on your computer, it creates a new folder on your computer called **Dropbox**. Your Dropbox folder works just like any other folder on your hard drive, except everything in your Dropbox folder automatically syncs to the web and to any other computer and devices with Dropbox installed.

Figure 5. Dropbox Working Mechanism (Source: Dropbox)

Configuring Dropbox

To get the most out of Dropbox, you need to install it on all of your computers and mobile devices. In this guide, we will install the standard Dropbox version with 2 GB free space. However, if you are interested in the paid business version, go to https://www.dropbox.com/business. The business version provides more space and security for a paid subscription.

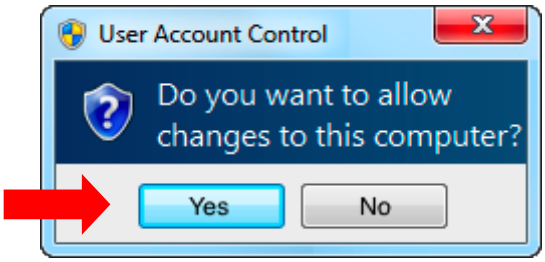
Step 1: Go to https://www.dropbox.com/install and click on the **Free Download** button.



Step 2: Click on the **Dropbox.exe** file that just downloaded in the bottom left corner of your browser window.

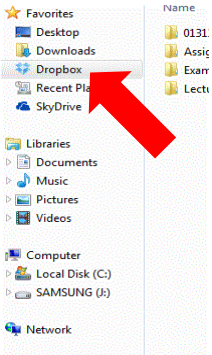
Step 3: Click on the **Run** button to get the installation process started.

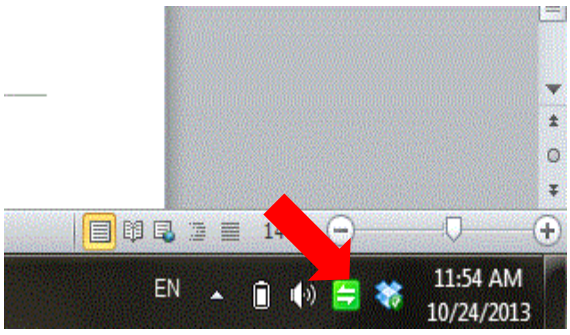
Step 4: Click **Yes** to accept the User Account Control settings dialog.



Step 5: Next, click on the **Install** button and follow the instructions to get Dropbox set up on your computer.

Step 6: Once the installation is complete, a Dropbox icon will appear.





Other resources:

- How do I add files to my Dropbox?
- How do I sync files between computers?
- How do I share folders with other people?
- How do I undelete or recover old versions of files?
- How do I upgrade to the latest version of the Dropbox application?

Chapter 4: Monitoring and Measuring Social Media Activities

Objectives

The purpose of this chapter is to provide tools and techniques for monitoring and measuring social media activities. Several social media analytical tools are introduced to the readers coupled with practical examples.

After reading this chapter you will be able to:

- ✓ Understand and analyse Twitter data;
- ✓ Understand and analyse Facebook data;
- ✓ Understand and analyse blogs data; and
- ✓ Understand and use Google Analytics.

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Measuring Social Media Activities

What to measure and how?

One of the greatest benefits of social media is that it gives you the ability to track and analyse the growth of your community on social media sites, and the activities and behaviour of the people using the sites. For example, you can find out how many people are visiting your blog, or liked your Facebook status update; what your followers talk about, and who your key influencers are. The continuous monitoring, capture and analysis of social media data can become valuable information for decision-making. Social media analytics enables you to improve your social media engagement and make good decisions by incorporating social media data into your governance.

The continuous monitoring, capture and analysis of social media data can become valuable information for decision-making.

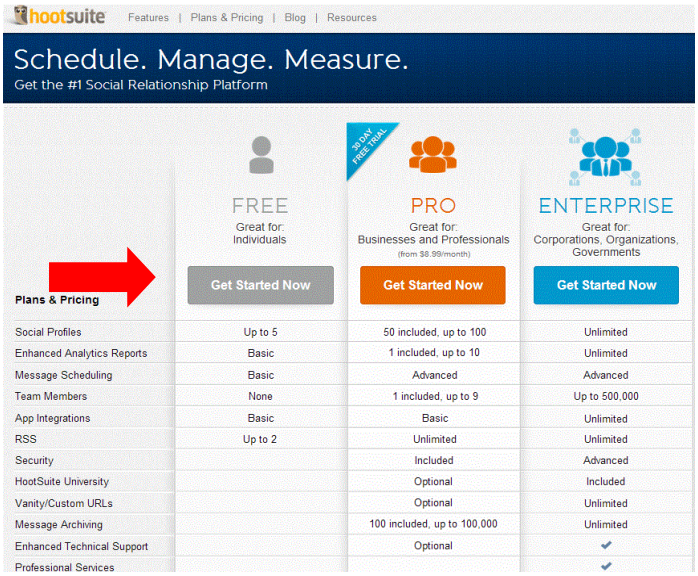
Analytics tools

A variety of social media analytics tools are available. However, some tools are free and others are subscription based. For example this link provides a list of 50 top tools for social media monitoring, analytics and management.

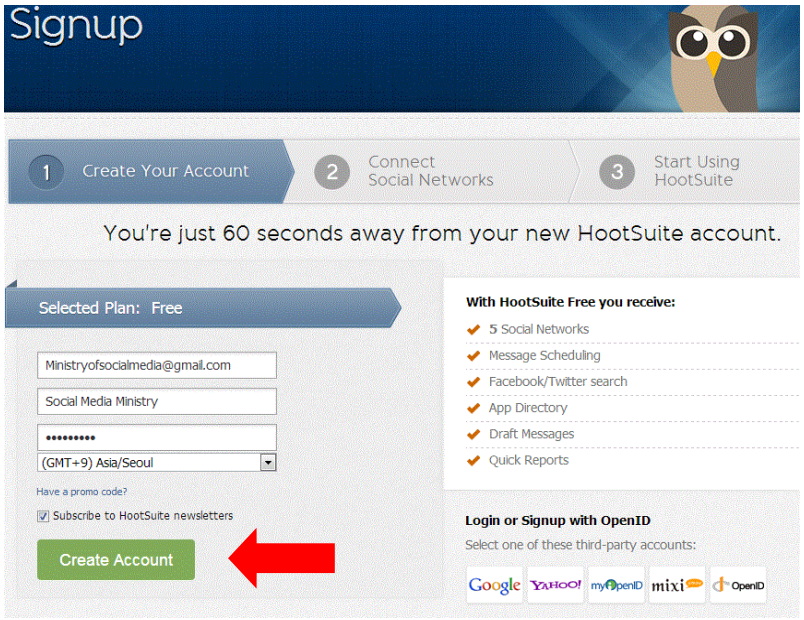
In this guide, we will use HootSuite for analytics purposes. HootSuite is an easy to use online platform that enables you to manage your accounts across the most popular social networks. The free version supports up to five profiles and has limited analytics information. If you want to get more detailed reports you will need to upgrade to the paid programme.

Installing HootSuite

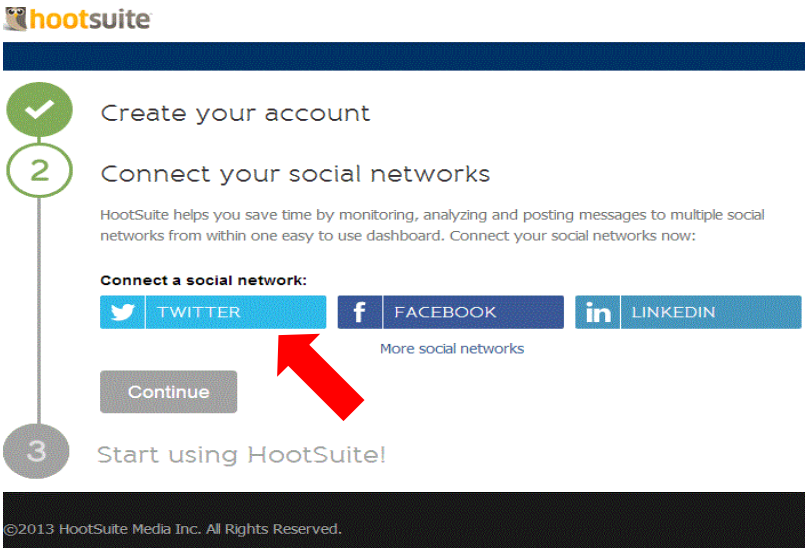
Step 1: To start using the free version, go to http://signup.hootsuite.com/plans-cc/ and click on the **Get Started Now** button available under the free version.



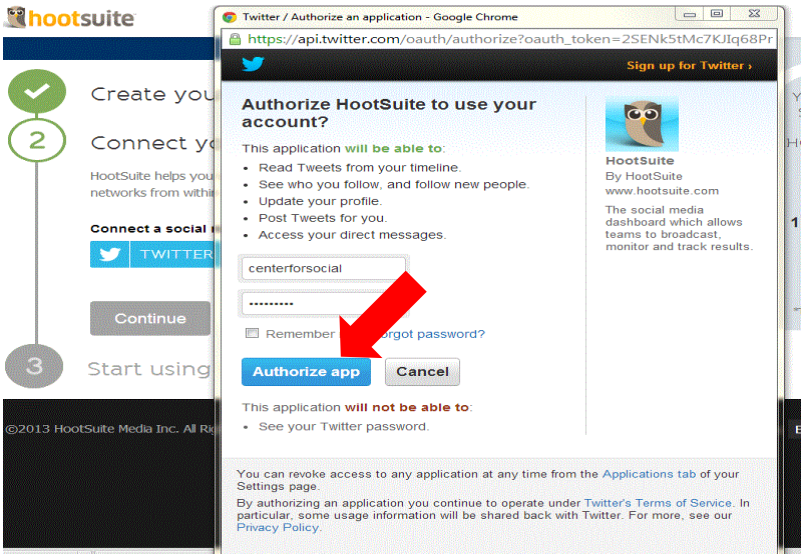
Step 2: Next, provide your e-mail address and name, and choose a strong password, and then click on the **Create Account** button.



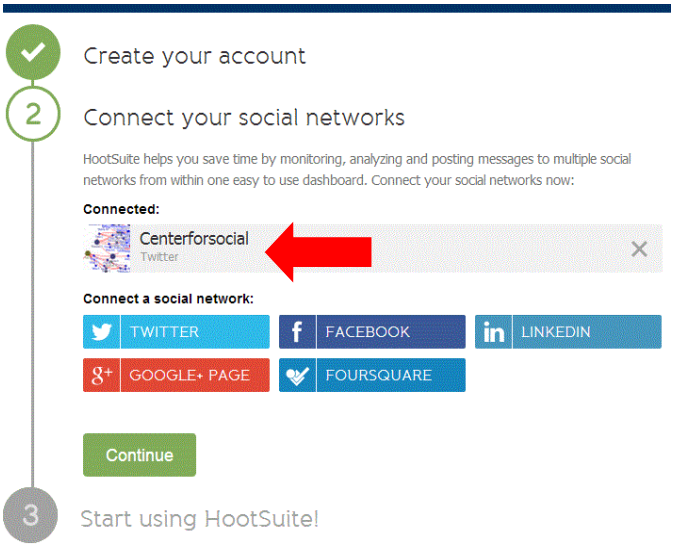
Step 3: Next, click on the **Twitter** button available under the Connect Your Social Network section. Note that you can choose several social media accounts to manage using HootSuite. Here, we will only configure Twitter.



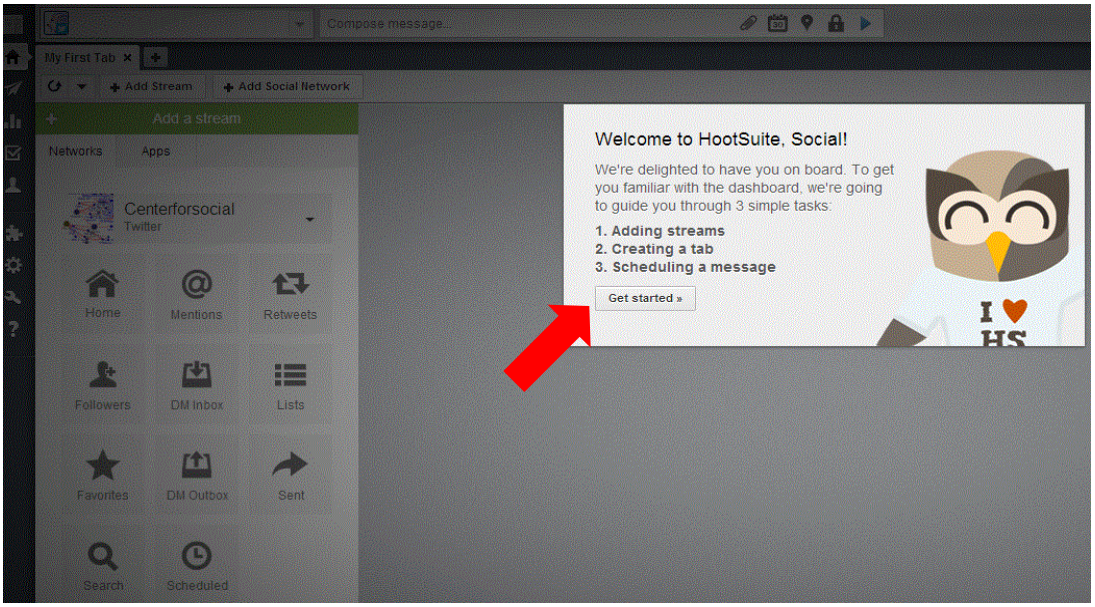
Step 4: Next, a popup window will open asking you to authorize HootSuite to access your Twitter account. Here, provide your Twitter username (or e-mail) and password and then click on the **Authorize App** button.



Step 5: After authorization, your Twitter account will appear in the Connected accounts. Next, click the **Continue** button.

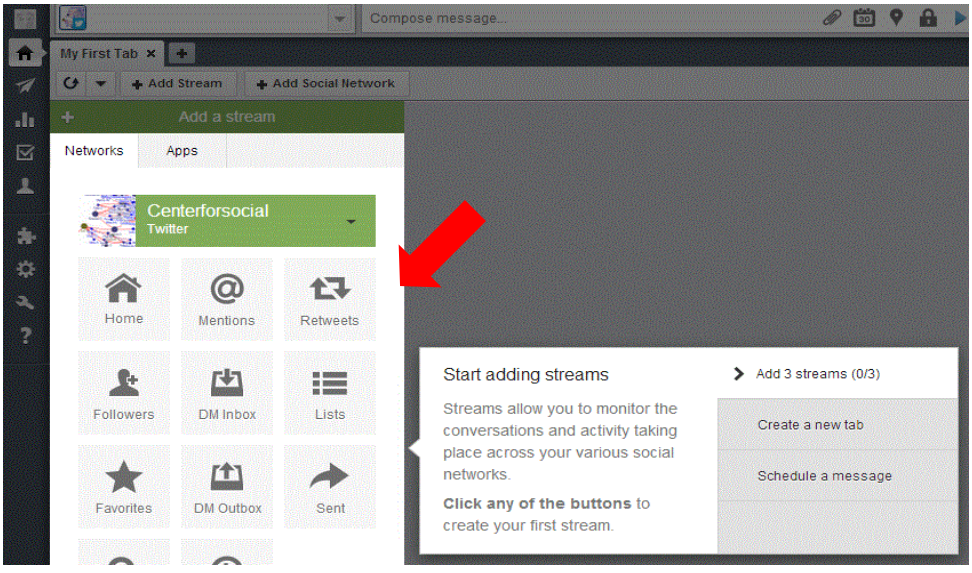


Step 6: Click on the **Get Started** button to complete the three simple steps (i.e., adding streams, creating a tab, and scheduling a message) suggested by HootSuite.

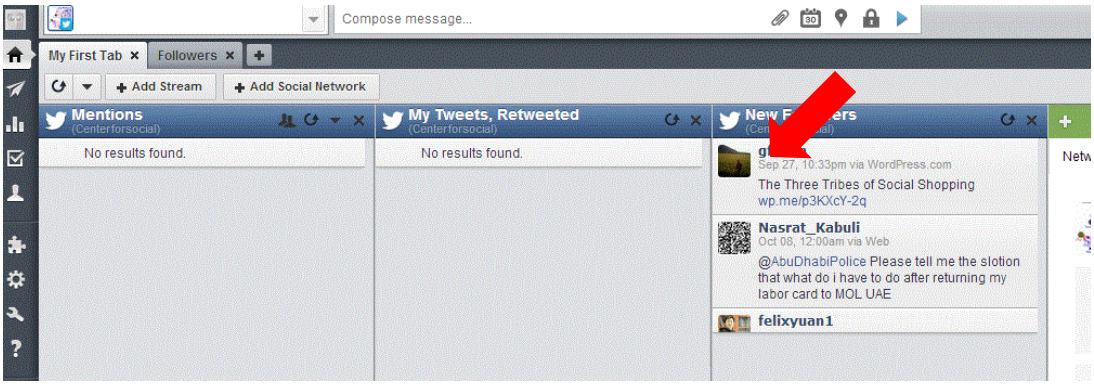


Adding streams

Step 7: To monitor the conversation and activities over Twitter, you need to add streams. To do so, click on all the streams you are interested to monitor (e.g., Followers, Tweets, Mentions, Retweets).

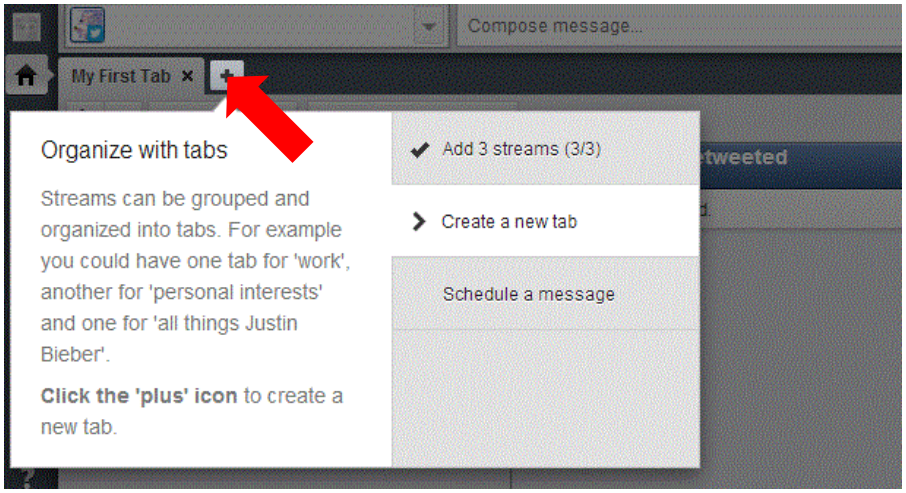


Step 8: Streams will start appearing on your Hootsuite.

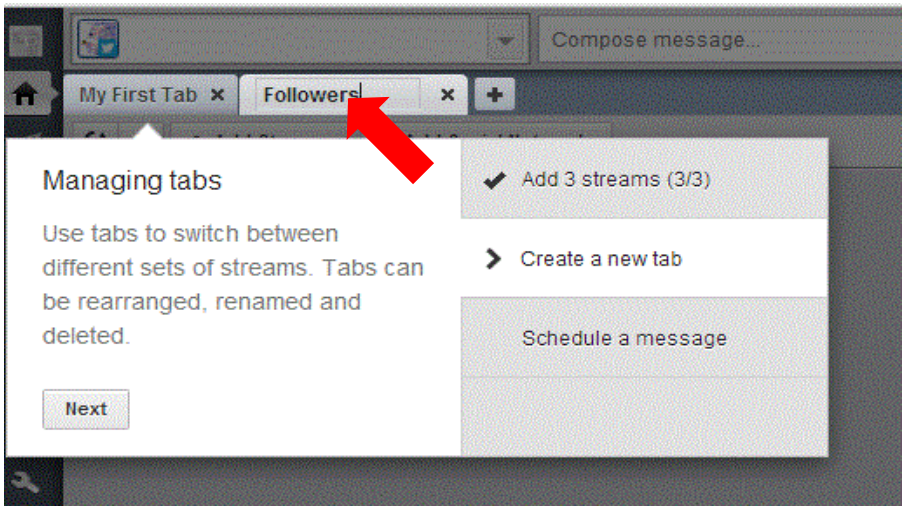


Creating a tab

Step 9*:* Tabs are used to group streams-based interest or similarity. To add a tab, click on the **+** icon as shown in the figure below.

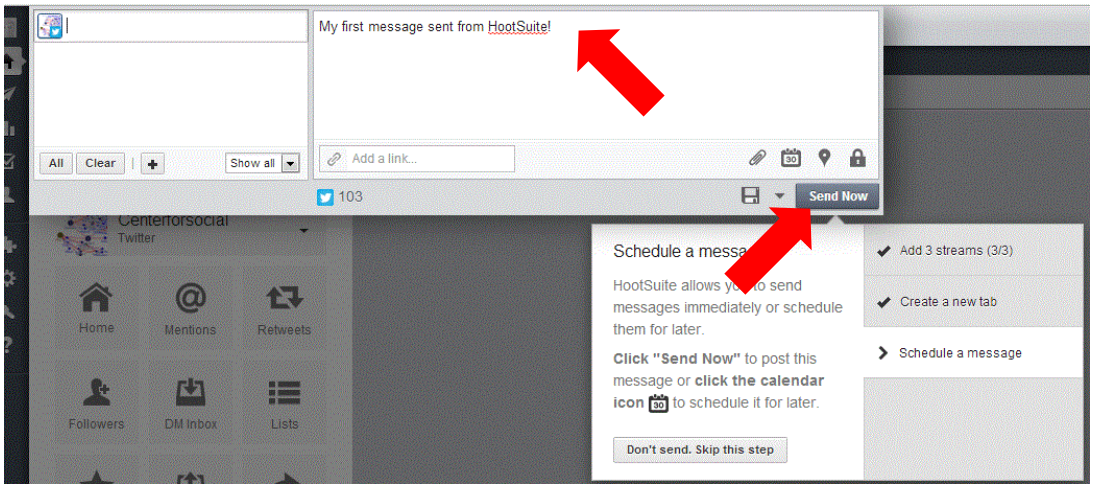


Step 10: Name the new tab (e.g., Followers) and click **Next**.



Scheduling a message

Step 11: With HootSuite you can post a message to several social media platforms (e.g., Twitter and Facebook) either instantly or for later. To write a message, click to select the social profile(s) that will post your message (in this case Twitter). Click **Compose Message**, and then type message. After writing the message either click the **Send Now** button or click the **Calendar** icon to schedule it for later. This step will complete the initial configuration of HootSuite.

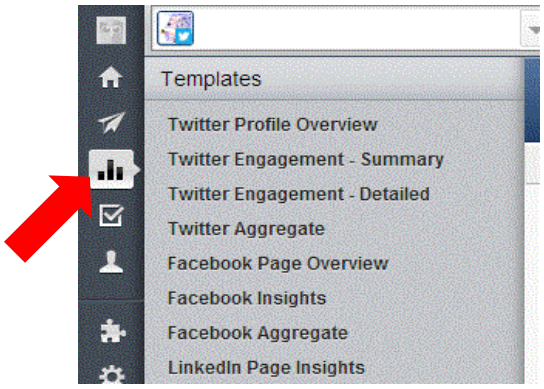


Analytics with HootSuite

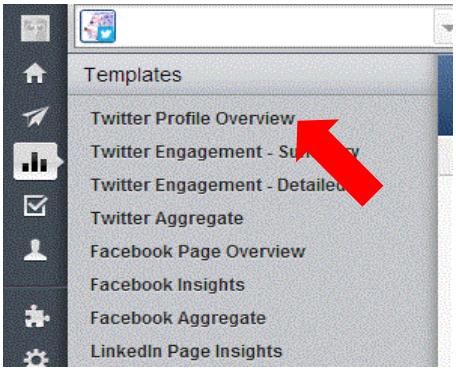
HootSuite provides two ways to generate analytics reports, 1) using pre-made templates, and 2) creating custom-made analytics reports. Note that the free version has limited analytics and you will be able to use only a limited number of templates.

To use HootSuite's pre-made templates, go through the following steps:

Step 1: Click the **bar graph** (Analytics) icon on the left-aligned launch menu (see figure below).

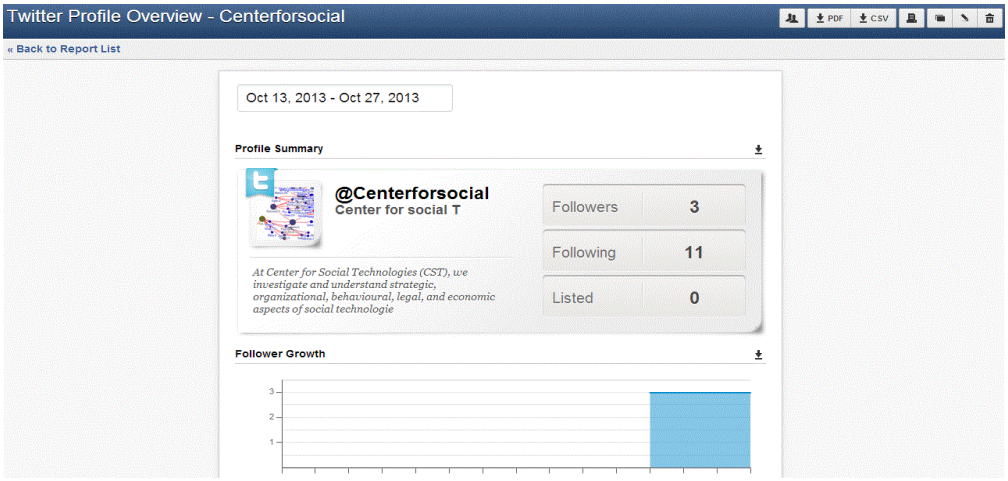


Step 2: You can choose from several report templates available. For example, click on the **Twitter Profile Overview** template.

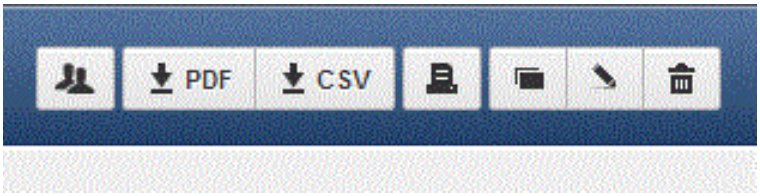


Step 3: Next, click on the **Create Report** button. Note that if you have multiple social media accounts configured, you may choose them from the dropdown list.

Step 4: Next, the report will be generated as shown in the figure below.

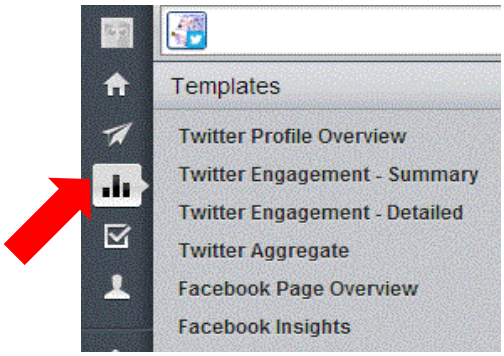


Step 5: A report can be printed, saved as PDF or CSV, shared with others, etc. by using the tool bar available at the top right corner of the report.

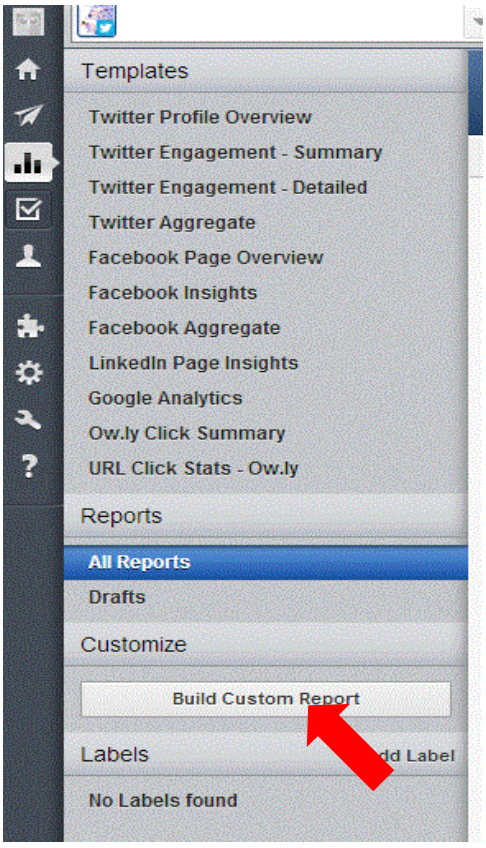


Creating custom reports

Step 1: Click the **bar graph** (Analytics) icon on the left-aligned launch menu.

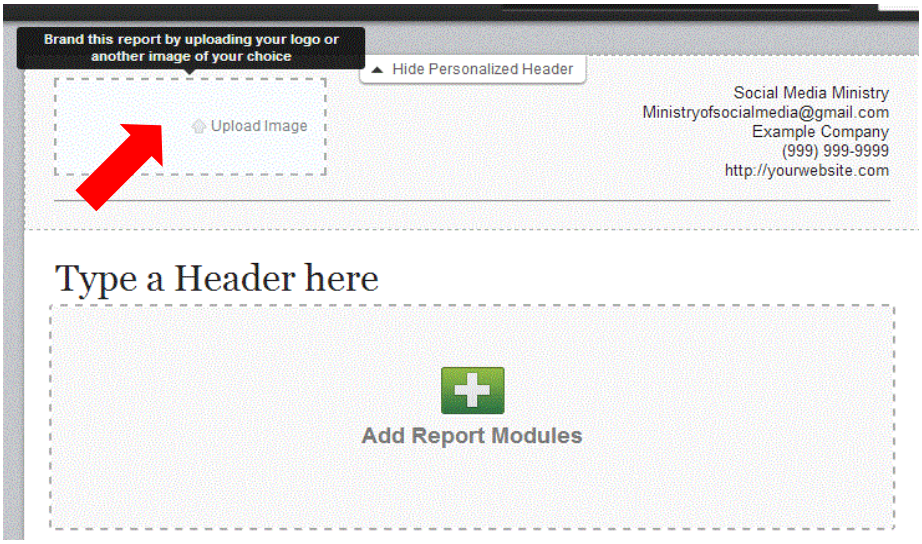


Step 2: Click **Build Custom Report**.



Step 3: Click **Custom Report**.

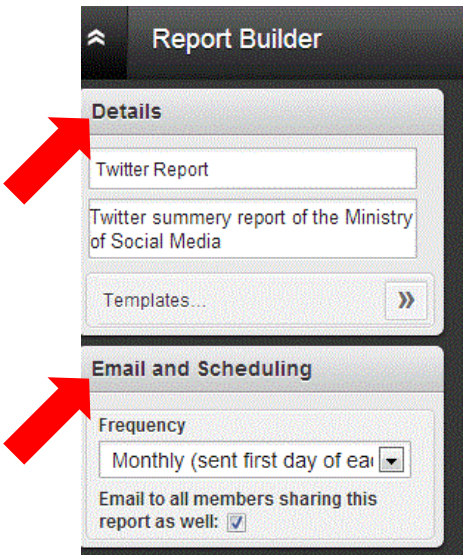
Step 4: Clicking on **Custom Report** will bring you to the custom report page.



Step 5: Next, click **Upload Image** to upload your logo or an image to brand the report. This is done by locating the image file on your computer, and then click **Open**. You can also edit the details of your organization and type of header in the report.

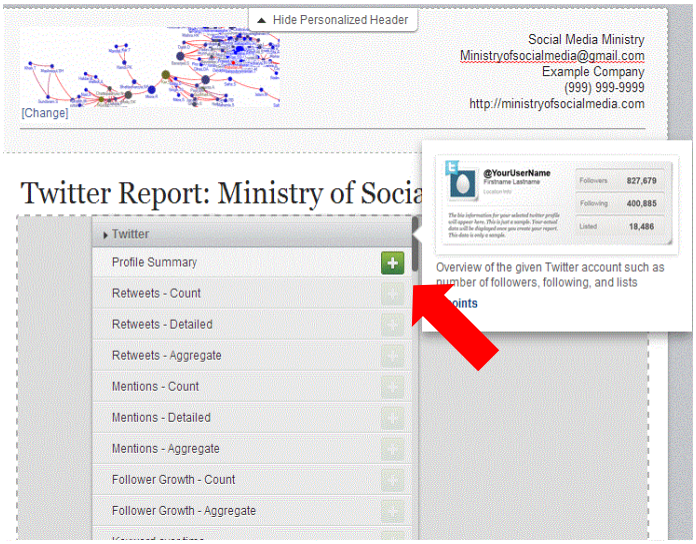
Step 6: Under **Details** in the top left corner, type the title of your report and a brief description. And under **Email and Scheduling**, click the drop-down menu and select the frequency of distribution.

Tip: You can set the programme to send the report every month (or on the frequency you set) to members by checking the box as shown in the image below.



Step 7: Next, click on **Add Report Modules** and then click to select module, adding it to your report. Modules with ENT and PRO are only available to enterprise users.

Note: Modules added to your report can be removed by clicking **Remove** in the top right corner of the module on the report.



Step 8: Complete the information requested by that module to achieve the best results. This may involve typing a title and/or keywords, selecting a social network profile, and so forth, and then click **Done**.

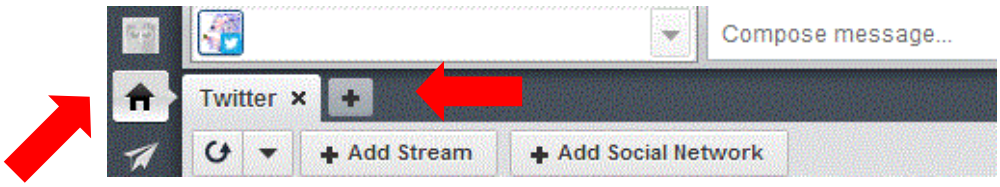
Step 9: Click on the **Create Report** button available at the top right of the page. Alternatively, you can click **Save as Draft**.

Other things to do:

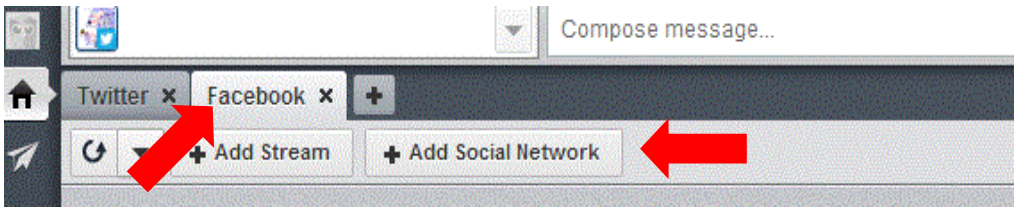
- Sharing Analytics reports with others
- Un-sharing Analytics reports
- Duplicating Analytics reports

Monitoring and analysing Facebook data with HootSuite

Step 1: First, you need to add a new tab for the Facebook network. To do so click the **Home** (Streams) icon on the left-aligned launch menu, and then click on the **+** icon.

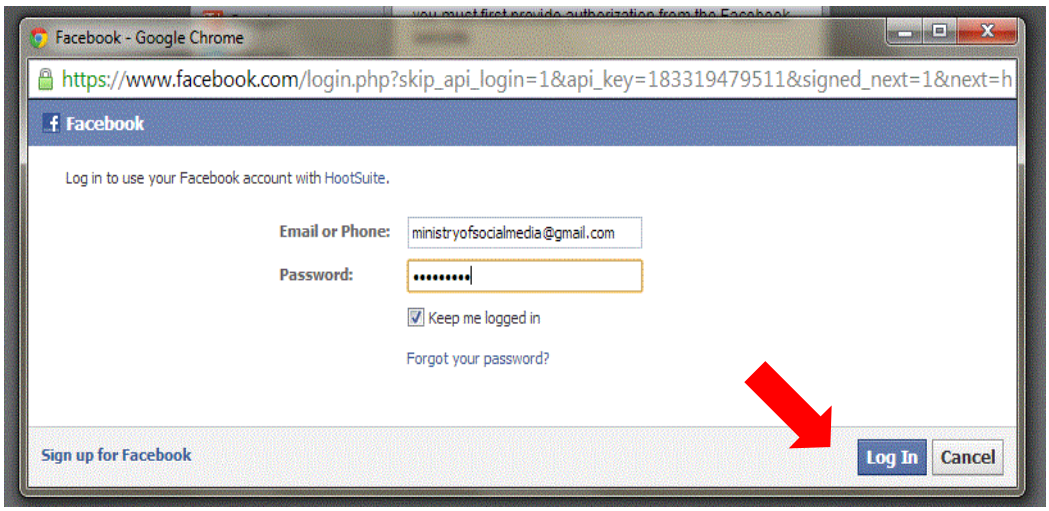


Step 2: Name the new tab (e.g.,Facebook).

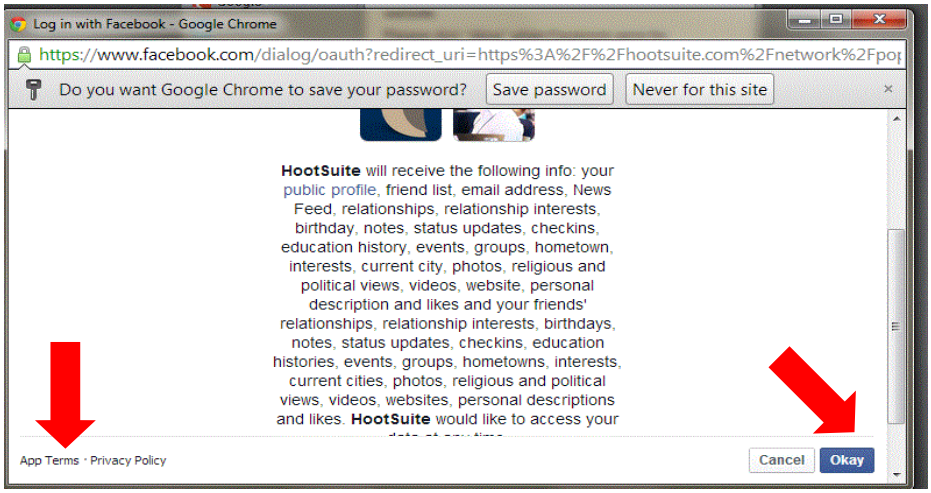


Step 3: Click on the **Add Social Network** button, select **Facebook** from the list, and click on the **Connect with Facebook** button.

Step 4: Type your Facebook e-mail (or mobile phone number) and password, and then click **Log In**.

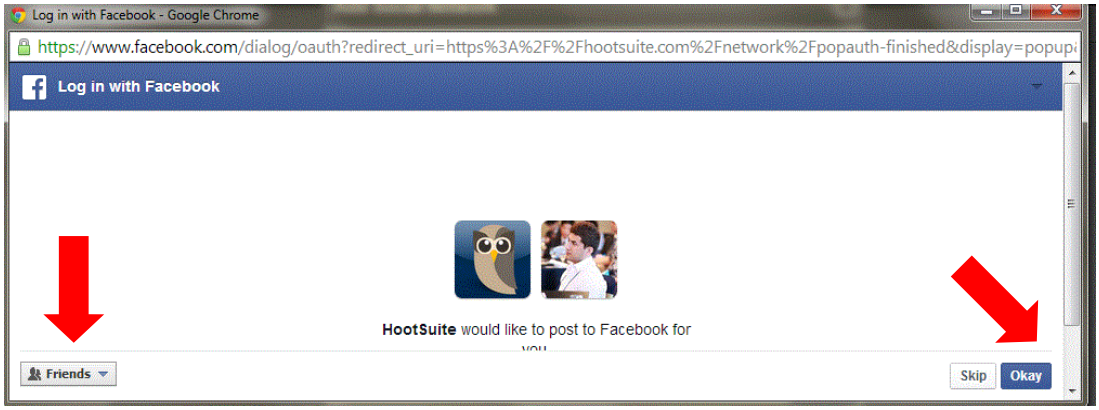


Step 5: Next, read HootSuite's access to your Facebook account message; click to read **App Terms and Privacy Policy** in the bottom left corner, and then click **Okay**.



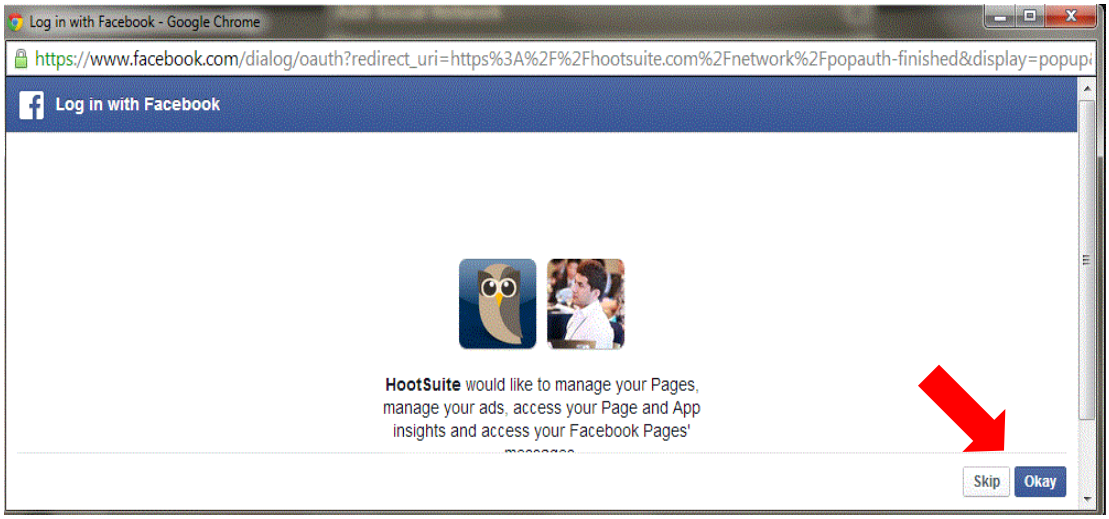
Step 6: Read posting permission note, click to select who can see the content you post to Facebook from HootSuite and then click **Okay**.

Note: Clicking **Skip** will prevent you from being able to post to Facebook from HootSuite.

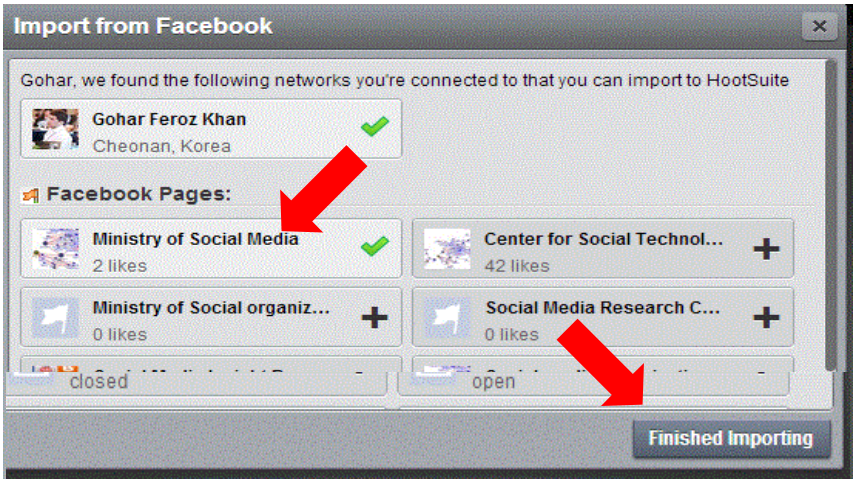


Step 7: Read Page permission note, and then click **Okay**.

Note: Clicking **Skip** will prevent you from being able to manage your Facebook pages from HootSuite.

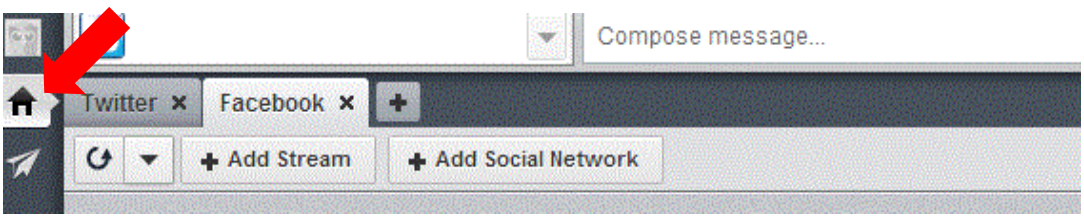


Step 8: Click to select the timeline, pages and groups to import. A check mark indicates that the content will be imported; and a plus icon indicates the content will not be imported. When done, click **Finished Importing**.

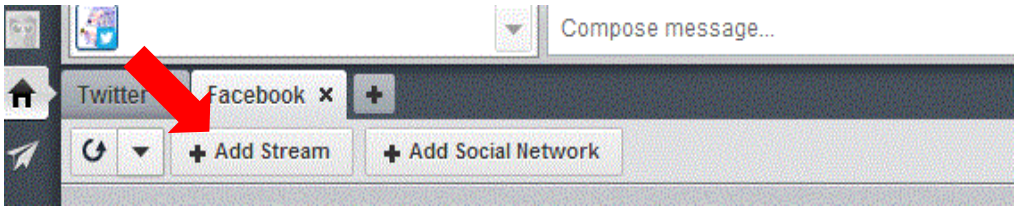


Adding a Facebook stream

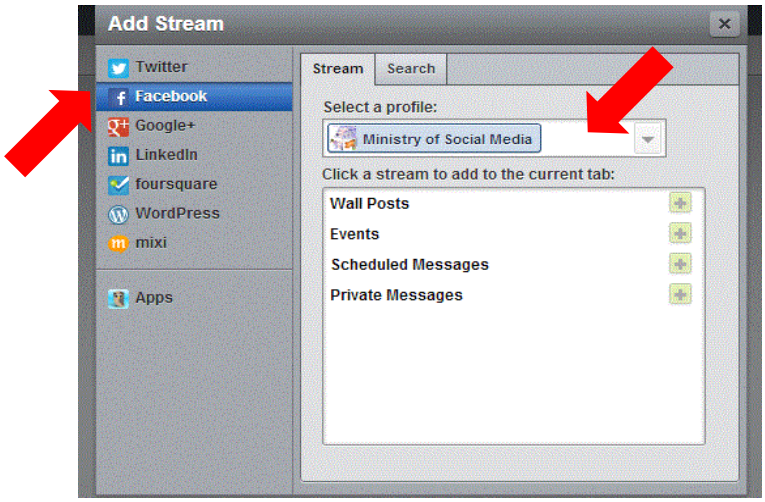
Step 1: Click the **Home** (Streams) icon on the left-aligned launch menu. And then click the tab hosting your Facebook content.



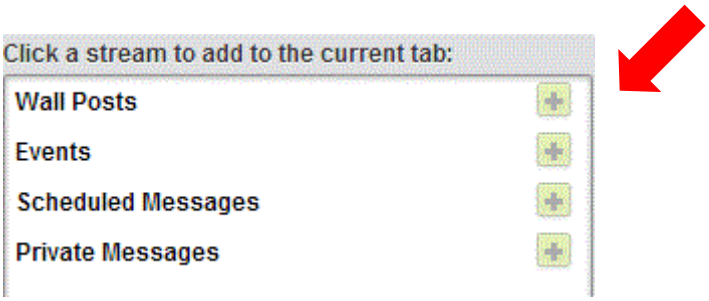
Step 2: Next, click **Add Stream**.



Step 3: Select **Facebook** and then select a profile to stream content from (in this case, Ministry of Social Media).



Step 4: Click the **+** button across from the stream to add. This process can be repeated for multiple Facebook streams.



Other resources

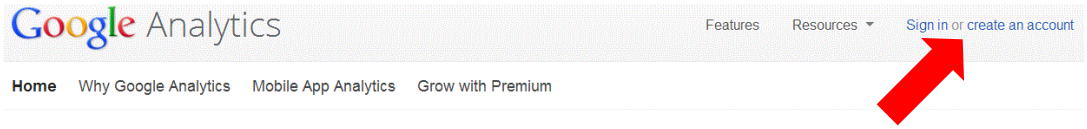
- Best social media analytics tools: 8 of the best to use

Monitoring and analysing with Google Analytics

Google Analytics is a great tool for analysing traffic on your blog/wiki/website. With it you can see who is visiting your site, what they are looking for, how they are getting there, how long they are staying there, etc.

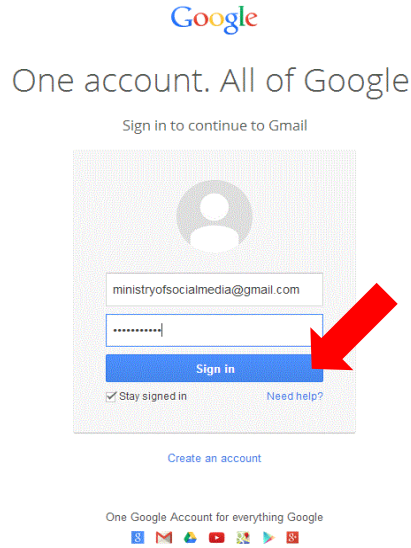
Setting up a Google Analytics account

Step 1: Go to the Google Analytics website (http://www.google.com/analytics/).



Step 2: Click the **Sign In** button available at the top right corner of the page to continue. Next, provide your Google's account login and password and click the Sign in button.

Note: If you do not have a Google account, click on **Create an Account** available at the right-top of the sign-in page. This will take you to a page where you can sign up for a Google account.



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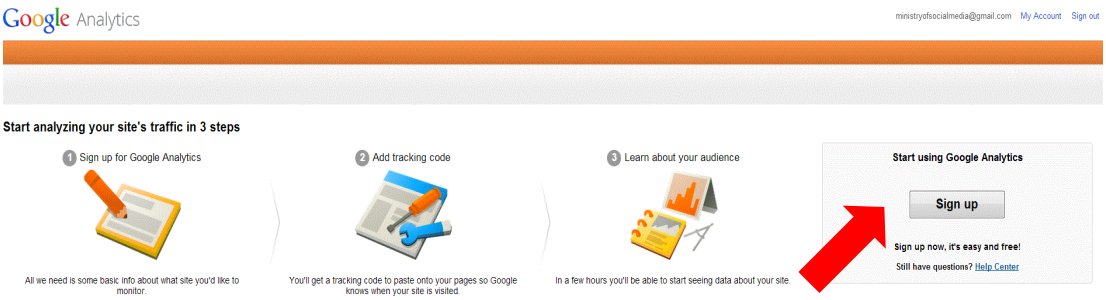
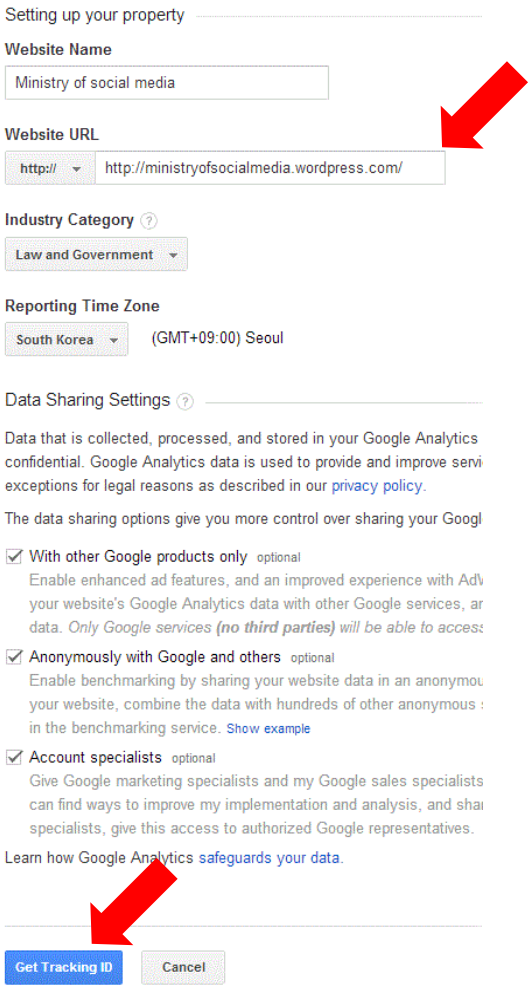
Step 3: Clicking on the **Sign In** button will bring you to the Google Analytics login page. Here, click on the **Sign Up** button to get started.



Step 4: Provide the following information:

- Name of your blog/wiki/website (If you will be tracking multiple sites, this is especially important);
- The URL of the blog/wiki/website you wish to analyse;
- Select your industry category;
- Select your time zone; and
- Check the data sharing options.

Once you are done, click on the **Get Tracking ID** button.



Step 5: Next, read the Google Analytics terms of service. If you agree with them, click the **I Accept** button.

.

Step 6: Google will provide you with a block of code and a Tracking ID. Copy this because you will need to insert it into your blog/wiki/website.

This is your tracking code. Copy and paste it into the code of every page you want to track.

```
<script>
  (function(i,s,o,g,r,a,m){i['GoogleAnalyticsObject']=r;i[r]=i[r]||function(){
  (i[r].q=i[r].q||[]).push(arguments)},i[r].l=1*new Date();a=s.createElement(o),
  m=s.getElementsByTagName(o)[0];a.async=1;a.src=g;m.parentNode.insertBefore(a,m)
  })(window,document,'script','//www.google-analytics.com/analytics.js','ga');

  ga('creat[redacted]'wordpress.com');
  ga('send', 'pageview');

</script>
```

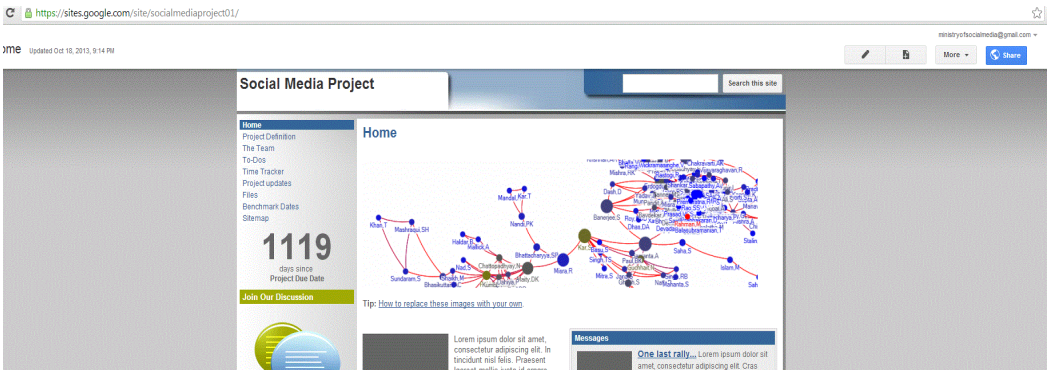
Inserting Google Analytics code into your blog

Unfortunately, at the time of writing this guide, Google Analytics cannot be used with http://www.wordpress.com, but it can be used with http://www.wordpress.org. For help on how to add Google Analytics to your wordpress.org blog see this link.

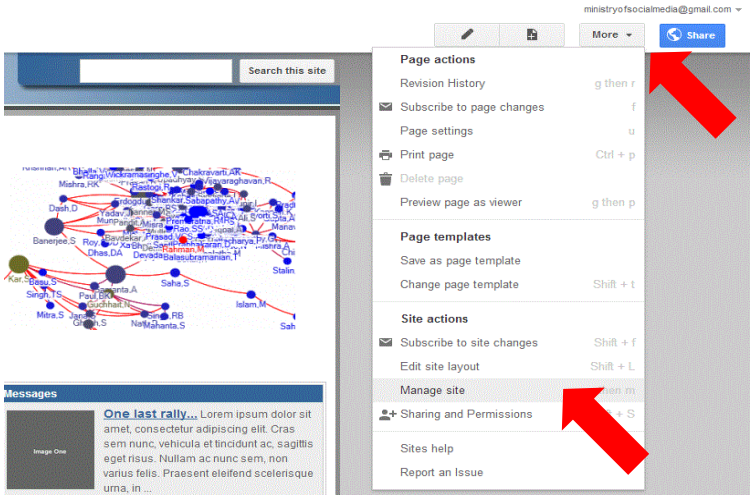
Inserting Google Analytics' code into your wiki

In this guide, we will configure the wiki we created earlier for tracking by Google Analytics.

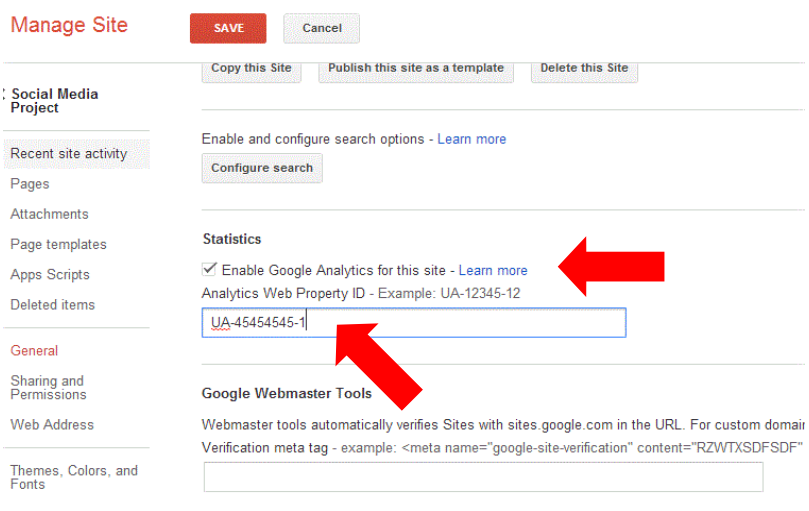
Step 1: Go to the wiki that you created earlier (i.e., https://sites.google.com/site/socialmediaproject01) and login with your e-mail and password.



Step 2: On your wiki, click the **More** drop-down menu and select **Manage Site**.



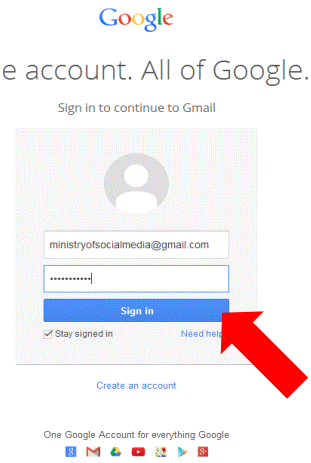
Step 3: Under the Manage Site section, click on **General**. Next, check the box **Enable Google Analytics for this site** under the Statistics section, and then enter your **Analytics Tracking ID** generated earlier in the associated box. When done, click the **Save** button.



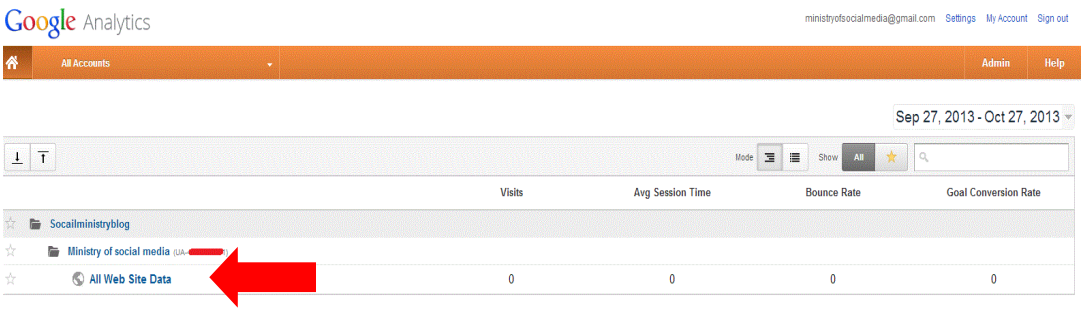
Note: It may take up to 24 hours for Analytics to start working. To check if your site is being tracked, sign in to Google Analytics, go to your profile screen and look at the website profile tracking status message next to the site.

Using Google Analytics

Step 1: Log in to Google Analytics.

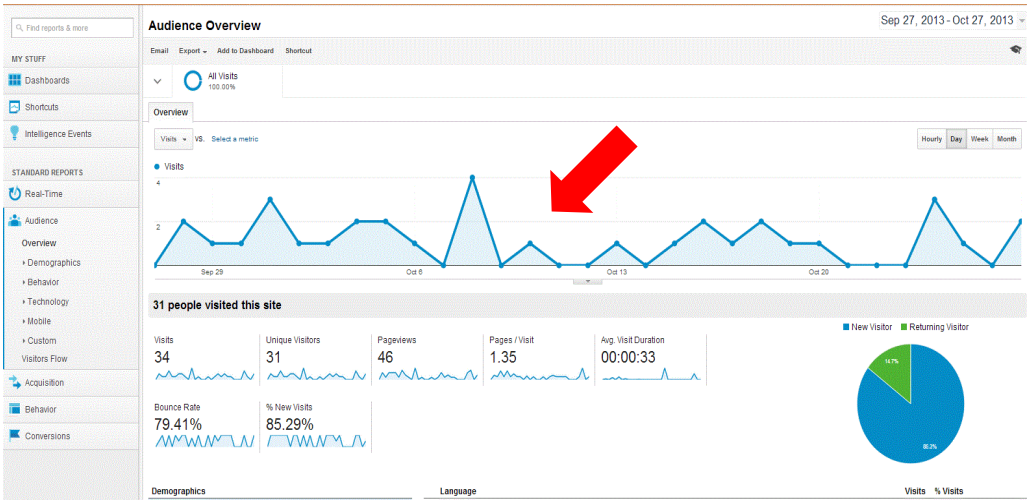


Step 2: Clicking on the **All Web Site Data** will bring you to the Google Analytics dashboard.

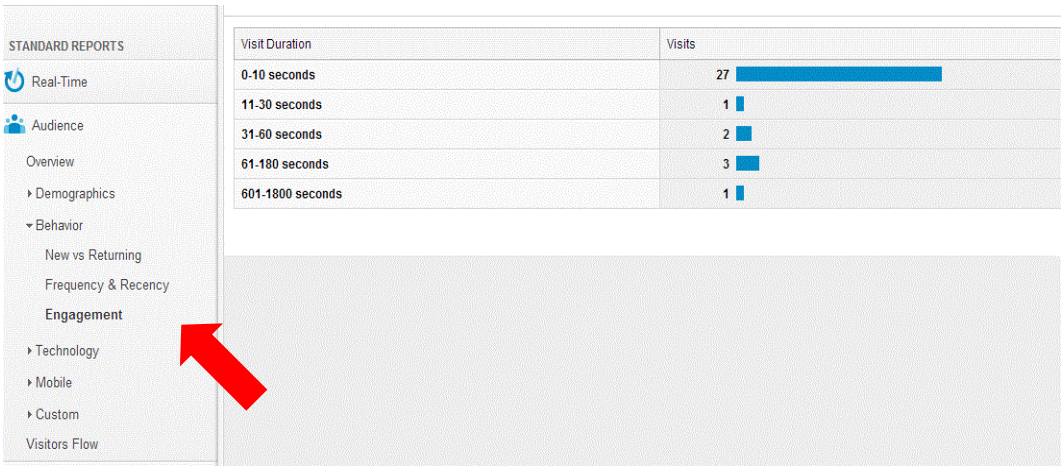


Step 3: Google Analytics provides the following important statistics related to your blog/wiki/ website.

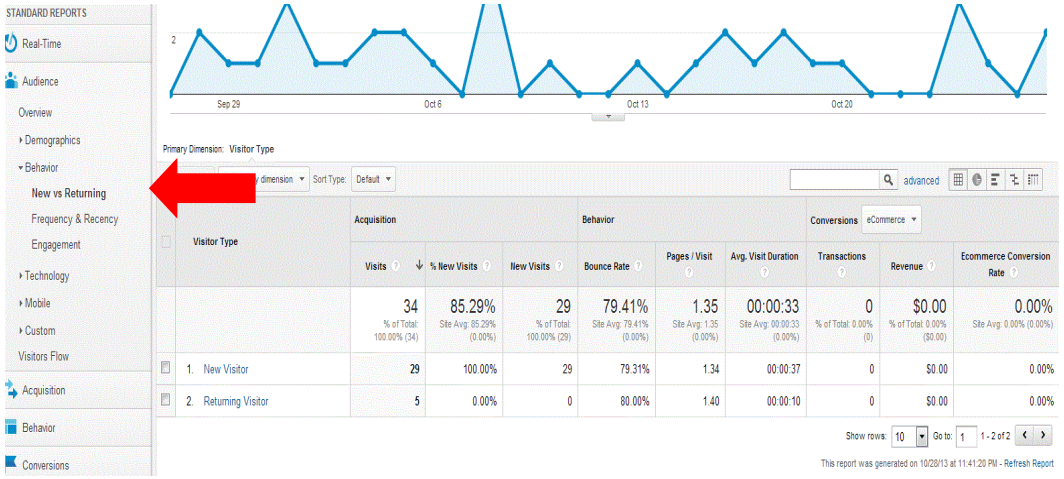
- **Site traffic**: At the top of the page is a chart that gives a visual representation of your site traffic over the past hour, day, week or month.



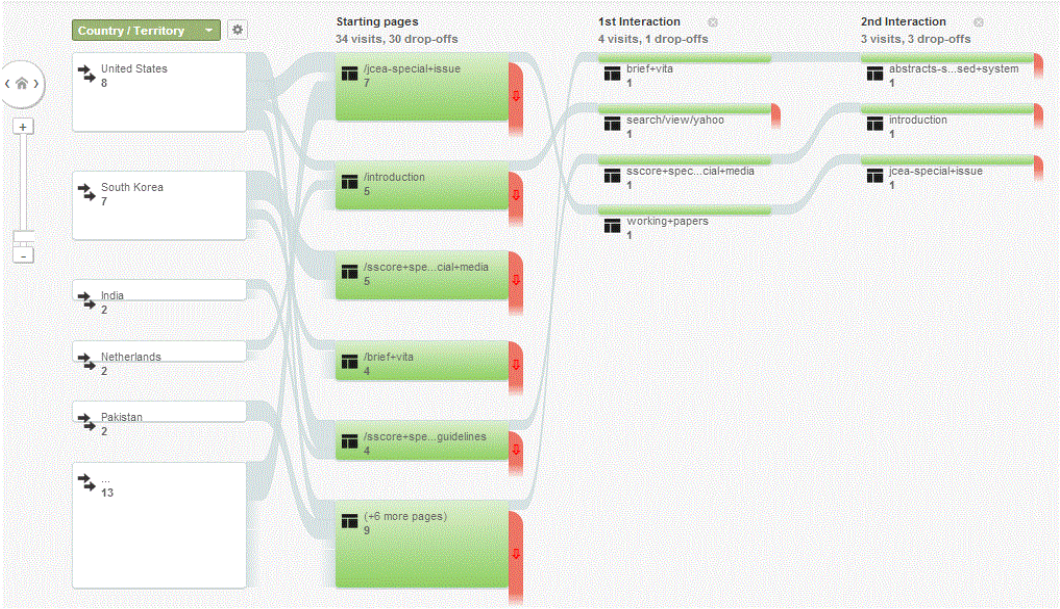
- **Engagement:** It shows how long a person is on your website. The statistics be accessed by clicking on **Standard reports -> Audience -> Behavior -> Engagement.**



- **New vs. returning visitor:** This information can be accessed by clicking at **Standard reports -> Audience -> Behavior -> New vs Returning**.



- **Visits** tells you how many visits there were to your page.
- **New visitor** shows the percentage of first-ever site users.
- **Returning visitor** shows the percentage of users that have visited the site more than once.
- **Average pages per visit** shows the number of pages, on average, users viewed in a single visit.
- **Average visit duration** shows how much time visitors are spending on your site.
- **Bounce rate** shows the percentage of single-page visits or visits in which the person left your website from the entrance (landing) page.
- **Visitor flow** lets you analyse the path the users takes when they land on your site. It can be accessed by going to **Audience -> Visitor flow** (see figure below).



Other resources

- How to use Google Analytics for beginners
- Understanding Google Analytics: A simple guide to advanced terms

Other analytics tools to consider

Google Alerts is a content detection and notification service that automatically notifies users when new content over the Internet (e.g., social media, web, blogs, video and/or discussion groups) matches a set of search terms based on user queries. Users are alerted through e-mail. Find out about how to use Google Alerts.

Social Mention is similar to Google Alerts, but it only focuses on social media sites, and you can choose to focus on particular areas, such as blogs. With Social Mention you can monitor for the appearance of particular keywords and it will give you information on related users, hashtags and more.

TweetBeep is like Google Alerts for Twitter. Choose some keywords and receive daily search results via e-mail.

Facebook Insights helps Facebook page owners understand and analyse trends within user growth and demographics.

Klout measures your influence across a range of social media channels based on how many people interact with your posts. Klout Score measure influence on a scale from 1-100 number showing how influential you are.

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Published under Programme supported by Korea-ESCAP Cooperation Fund (KECF)