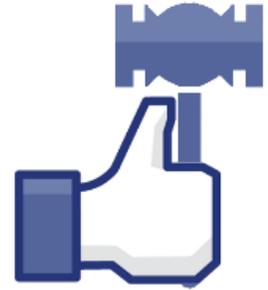


Social Media Tips for Courts: Beware of ‘Unofficial’ Facebook Pages

One Michigan district court recently noticed that someone not associated with the court had created multiple Facebook Pages without the court’s permission. On top of that, the Pages were filled with inappropriate comments and misinformation about the court.

So what is a court to do?

First of all, it important to know that without verification from someone in the court (by phone or with documentation), Pages like this are not be considered “official,” and they are labelled as such. If you happen to come across such a Page, look closely at the top: it will read “Unofficial Page” near the cover photo. Click on that label and you will see this disclaimer: “This unofficial Page was created because people on Facebook have shown interest in this place or business. It's not affiliated with or endorsed by anyone associated with [NAME OF COURT].”



Second, the court can easily claim and “take over” this kind of Page, thereby turning it into an “official” Page. (See Facebook’s Claim Unmanaged Page instructions below on how to do this.)

Once the court takes over the Page, the judge or court administrator can decide to either keep and manage the Page, or delete it entirely. (See Facebook’s Delete My Page instructions below.) Note: The Page cannot be deleted unless the court first takes it over.

If the court does keep it as an official Page, court staff would be able to delete all unwanted content, prevent others from posting content, add appropriate information, etc. In other words, the court would have complete control over the content and settings.

For more information about starting a website or social media presence for your court, use this SCAO Guide: www.courts.mi.gov/socmediaguide.

Facebook: How do I claim an unmanaged Page that exists for my business?

A Page may exist for your business even if someone from your business didn’t create it. For example, when someone checks into a place that doesn't have a Page, an unmanaged Page is created to represent the location.

If the Page is unmanaged, you'll see **Unofficial Page** below its cover photo. You can request to claim the Page and become its admin, or to merge the Page into a Page you already manage for your business. Pages that represent geographic locations can't be claimed.

To claim or merge an unmanaged Page:

1. Click **Is this your business?** below the Page's cover photo
2. Follow the on-screen instructions

Keep in mind that you may be asked to provide information to verify your relationship with the business, such a business phone number, business email or documents.

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Facebook: How do I delete my Page?

To delete your Page, you'll need to be an admin of that Page. If you're an admin:

1. Click **Settings** at the top of your Page
2. From **General**, click **Remove Page**
3. Click **Delete [Page name]** and follow the on-screen instructions

Note: If you don't see the option to delete your Page, make sure you're an admin of the Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/help/510247025775149>

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For further assistance on managing a social media presence for your court, contact Stacy Sellek in the MSC Public Information Office at selleks@courts.mi.gov or 517-373-0035.

Click the links below to follow MSC on social media!

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