

Social Media (#DARW2022)

Social media is a powerful promotional tool that can enable you to reach more people who care about your event and your profession. Social media platforms allow people to share information about events with their networks, which makes them perfect tools to generate buzz others can find and share with far more reach, power and accessibility than traditional media outlets. Don't just tell people what's going on and who is there when you post—engage your audience by telling compelling and interesting stories. Think visually, include interesting, eye-catching photos with your stories and posts, or even use video.

Facebook and Twitter are the most visible social media outlets, but others are available as well. Choose the outlets that best fit your needs, style, comfort level and audience. If you're media savvy and using multiple social networks at once, you might benefit from using a program, such as Hootsuite or Tweetdeck, which would sync multiple social media platforms to a single account and allow you to schedule and manage your posts from a centralized platform. Regardless of what social media network you're using there's no "one size fits all" approach, so here are a few tips for how to tailor your promotion of DARW to various networks:



Facebook

Many dental practices, schools, and dental assisting student organizations have created Facebook Group or fan pages for themselves, so Facebook offers multiple avenues for promoting DARW participation:

Create an Event Page: A Facebook Event page creates a centralized information hub that allows you to easily invite your friends and fans, and makes it easy for them to share event information with them. Be sure to title your event specifically for your group, for example: “[**Dental Practice**] Celebrates Dental Assistants Recognition Week 2022” or “**DARW 2022 at [Dental Assisting School]**,” and include the correct start and end dates for the event to correspond with DARW.

Promote DARW through status updates, pictures, and video taken during DARW activities on your group's wall, or even on your personal account. For example: “**Thank you [Guest Speaker] for sharing your thoughts about the importance of promoting oral hygiene at our DARW 2022 festivities at [Name of School]!**” If available, attach a tagged picture or video of the guest speaker at the event to your post.

If your practice, school, or group has plans to do something different over multiple days during DARW, be sure to post updates at least once per day with a short description of what you did to celebrate DARW that day. Don't forget to tag people, your practice and/or your group in photos, videos and status updates as needed.



Twitter

More than 300 million people are on Twitter, so it's an excellent and simple way to share information. A few rules to follow when tweeting information:

Get to the point: Twitter has a 280 character limit, so choose your words wisely and keep your tweet on point about your DARW activity or event, using keywords/terms, such as “**DARW 2022**” to make your tweets more visible in searches.

Hashtags are your friends: A hashtag is the # symbol used in tweets to label keywords and topics so they show up easily in searches (ex: #DARW2022). Rule of thumb: Don't spam hashtags! Pick what is most relevant to your event location, a unique identifying label, a local celebrity/visiting professional, and don't use more than two to three per tweet.

Making networks work for you: Twitter allows you to tag people similarly to Facebook, using the @ symbol. By mentioning people in your tweets, you can target their followers and hopefully get them to re-tweet your information about DARW.

Keep it interesting: Show people why they should care about DARW. Tweet “behind the scenes” photos of what a dental assistant does in the office or operator, or short video interviews with students and educators about what DARW means to them so followers can get a better understanding of what DARW means in the dental assisting world. If there’s a link to a news story or an article online about DARW, tweet it.

Sample tweets: “DAs treated to #DARW with pizza party and cake. Thank you @DrNameDDS. #NameofPractice.” (preferably tweeted with picture of party); “@Localpaper mentions SchoolName #DARW celebration: [weblink]”



Instagram

Instagram is a photo-focused platform, making it an ideal choice for anyone who prefers visual media for promotion and storytelling. Using Instagram, you can post images showing how Day 1 of DARW was celebrated, then Day 2, Day 3 and so forth. Post photos that give an inside look at a day in the life of a dental assistant or show people how dental assisting students spent the day volunteering at a clinic. Use keywords and phrases such as “**DARW 2022**” and “**Dental Assistants Recognition Week 2022**” to make sure your photos will show up in any searches for DARW material on Instagram.



Pinterest

Pinterest is another platform that relies heavily on visual appeal and storytelling. As with Instagram, any promotion of DARW on Pinterest will require more images than text. There are a few general rules to keep in mind when promoting DARW on this network:

Keep it visually interesting: Put up images and videos that will pique interest in DARW events: action shots from activities, video of speakers and lectures, photos of your office or operator.

Don’t let your boards get cluttered: It’s easy to let your boards get messy, so if you have several events planned for DARW, and you know you’re going to take a lot of pictures or it’s going to be a very busy week, have one board per day. This will make it easier for your followers to keep track of what you’re doing.

Use keywords and descriptions: Don’t just pin things with comments like “Yum!” or “Love this!” because it makes it harder for people to find what you’ve pinned. Those keywords are homing beacons that will direct people to your boards, so be sure to use words like “**DARW 2022**” or “**Dental Assistants Recognition Week 2022**” in your descriptions.



YouTube

Video is an excellent way to promote DARW 2022, so please take advantage of ADA’s YouTube channel. Visit www.adausa.org/publications/YouTubeGuidelines for instructions on posting to the channel.

Other social media options, such as **LinkedIn** and **Snapchat** are also available, so use the channels that will best help you meet your goals.

Websites and Blogs

Many dental practices, school programs, and dental assisting groups have websites to share information about their services and organizations, making them perfect promotional vehicles. If your practice, school, or dental assisting group has a website, why not use it to promote DARW and reach more people who care about the profession of dental assisting? If your practice’s website has a blog component, post an entry sharing how your office showed

its appreciation for dental assistants. If your dental assisting department has an online newsletter, share your stories and photos about how dental assisting students participated in DARW events this year.

Blogs also provide the opportunity to write longer, more personal pieces about what DARW might mean to you as a dental assistant. As always, make sure to use keywords, such as “**DARW 2022**” or “**Dental Assistants Recognition Week 2022**” in your blog entry title(s) to ensure your article(s) show up in online searches.