

MINNESOTA STATE FAIR

Fair-Time Marketing and Promotion Resources for Vendors and Exhibitors

We are happy to welcome you as a vendor at the 2019 Minnesota State Fair. The State Fair's marketing & communications department exists to promote the Great Minnesota Get-Together as a whole, working closely with representatives of local television & radio stations, newspapers, magazines and more. We encourage you to promote your business or attraction using the resources we've outlined below to maximize the marketing value of your 12 days at the fair.

If you have questions, please contact the email addresses and phone numbers noted throughout this guide. We wish you a successful fair!

Fair Finder

Did you know that all licensed State Fair vendors are featured on our website? Beginning mid-August, descriptions of all exhibits and concessions are posted in the Fair Finder, which is found on mnstatefair.org (click on the "Fair Finder" tab on the website home page) and the State Fair's smartphone app. These descriptions are used by fair guests to locate specific products or services on the fairgrounds; inclusion in the Fair Finder is offered to exhibitors and concessionaires free of charge as a promotional tool. If you have suggested changes or corrections to your entry in the Fair Finder, please email sales@mnstatefair.org. Your changes will be reviewed and posted, subject to approval by the concessions & exhibits and marketing & communications departments.

Tips and Tricks from the Minnesota State Fair Marketing & Communications Department

Social Media Presence

Creating a social media presence for your company/product can be a free or low-cost and efficient way to generate buzz and community support. The Minnesota State Fair is happy to provide helpful hints when it comes to social media, but we cannot guarantee to include or tag vendors on our social media accounts. However, if there is an interesting post you'd like us to share or "like" or a story idea you think we may be interested in, please email socialmedia@mnstatefair.org for consideration. All posts from State Fair social media accounts are posted at staff's discretion.

General Social Media Tips

Keep in mind when posting about being a part of the Minnesota State Fair, you may only speak on behalf of your company or product, not the Minnesota State Fair. Also, remember that commercial space regulations prohibit you from offering discounts or coupons via social media.

Logo Usage on Social Media and Merchandise

The Minnesota State Fair name, logo and graphics are protected under U.S. trademark law. Use of the name "MINNESOTA STATE FAIR," the words "GREAT MINNESOTA GET-TOGETHER" and

the State Fair's logos, color scheme or any other aspect of the State Fair's branding, including its mascots, is forbidden without the written consent of the State Fair.

If you intend to use the Minnesota State Fair branding or logo on a social media post, you must seek approval from the marketing & communications department at logos@mnstatefair.org.

If you wish to use any of the State Fair branding on merchandise, please reach out to the sales department to begin the product review process and discuss fees and usage.

Facebook

Get started with a Facebook page at facebook.com/pages/create.php. Facebook is an excellent social media tool for building a loyal audience. It gives followers an opportunity to send you questions and direct messages through the platform. Be sure to respond to questions in a timely fashion! Post photos and stories to create general excitement for your business and your presence at the fair. It's great to use Facebook year-round to keep people informed and up-to-date. Posts with photos or video that encourage comments and sharing typically perform the best.

As of 2018, 68% of U.S. adults use a Facebook account – including 81% of those ages 18-29, 78% of those ages 30-49, 65% of those ages 50-64 and 41% of those 65+. Facebook can be especially helpful in reaching an older audience.

Feel free to tag the State Fair in your posts using [@minnesotastatefair](https://twitter.com/minnesotastatefair). If applicable, be sure to “follow” and “like” our page to receive the latest and greatest State Fair news. State Fair staff will try to “like” your fair-related posts. If the information aligns with brand strategy and messaging and staff feel it should be shared with State Fair followers, we may share your post. This means that your post will then show up on our timeline. If there is a post you think is worth sharing, consider emailing socialmedia@mnstatefair.org to let us know.

Twitter

Get started with a Twitter account at twitter.com. Twitter is a great place to post short updates, fun photos and communicate directly or broadly with potential customers. Remember, you only have 280 characters, so brevity is key. Twitter is also a helpful platform for gathering news and information by following news organizations, influencers (users with a lot of followers), etc. Twitter also has a direct messaging option, similar to Facebook. One of the best features of Twitter is hashtags. The Minnesota State Fair hashtag is [#mnstatefair](https://twitter.com/hashtag/mnstatefair), so feel free to use that hashtag in your tweets. If someone searches the hashtag, your tweet will show up!

As of 2018, 24% of U.S. adults use a Twitter account – including 40% of those ages 18-29, 27% of those ages 30-49, 19% of those ages 50-64 and 8% of those ages 65+. Twitter can be especially helpful in reaching a millennial audience.

Feel free to tag the State Fair in your tweets using [@mnstatefair](https://twitter.com/mnstatefair). Be sure to follow our account to receive the State Fair's tweets. State Fair staff will try to “favorite” your fair-related tweets. If the information aligns with brand strategy and messaging and staff feel it should be shared with State Fair followers, we may retweet your tweet. This means that your tweet will then show up on our timeline. If there is a tweet you think is worth retweeting, consider emailing socialmedia@mnstatefair.org to let us know.

Instagram

Get started with an Instagram account by downloading the free app from a smartphone. Instagram is a platform to share beautiful, compelling photos. This is a great place to share your food and product photos. Hashtags are also used on Instagram. Our hashtags on Instagram are #mnstatefair and #msfphotos.

As of 2018, 35% of U.S. adults use an Instagram account, but that number is rapidly increasing. 64% of those ages 18-29, 40% of those ages 30-49, 21% of those ages 50-64 and 10% of those ages 65+ use an Instagram account. Millennials are particularly active on Instagram.

Feel free to tag the State Fair in your posts using @mnstatefair. Be sure to follow our account to receive State Fair Instagram posts. State Fair staff will try to “like” your fair-related posts. If the information aligns with brand strategy and messaging and staff feel it should be shared with State Fair followers, we may share your post. This means that your post will then show up on our timeline. If there is a post you think is worth sharing, consider emailing socialmedia@mnstatefair.org to give us a heads-up.

Snapchat, LinkedIn, Google My Business, etc.

There are many viable and useful social media platforms and tools available for your use. We suggest looking into which platforms make the most sense for your business. If you have specific questions, please reach out to socialmedia@mnstatefair.org.

Offer a Special (Approved) Deal

Deals, drawings and giveaways are opportunities for you to offer approved promotions that drive traffic to your business. PLEASE NOTE: Promotions not approved by the concessions & exhibits department are prohibited. Approved promotions are listed in the Fair Finder at mnstatefair.org and on the smartphone app and in the printed Deals, Drawings & Giveaways Guide, which is distributed free at all information booths. Deals, Drawings & Giveaways Guide participants will receive a special sign to display in their booth. You may offer special deals on the following days: Thrifty Thursday (Aug. 22), Seniors Days (Aug. 26 and 29), Kids Days (Aug. 26 and Sept. 2), Military Appreciation Day (Aug. 27) and Last Chance Day (Sept. 2). Freebies and items for \$1 or less are also listed in the Deals, Drawings & Giveaways Guide. The sign-up form will be mailed to vendors in their license packet, and must be submitted to the concessions & exhibits department by **June 21, 2019**. For more information, contact the concessions & exhibits department at 651-288-4456.

Generate Story Ideas

If you have a unique story idea related to your business or product, we would be happy to share it with our media contacts, provided it suits their needs and has one or more of the following news values: timeliness, significance, uniqueness, newness or human interest. Please send your ideas, as well as contact information to share with the media, via email to media@mnstatefair.org. You are welcome to share your ideas directly with the media anytime as well. If you would like to receive a list of local media, please email media@mnstatefair.org.

Create a News Release

News releases alert media to special news, important information and other newsworthy information. This may be an option for vendors who have an important story to share. Examples include: Celebrating 50 years at the Minnesota State Fair; offering a brand-new product; human

interest story about an employee; etc. If you need a sample news release to help you format yours, please email media@mnstatefair.org.

If you would like assistance distributing your news release, submit it to the marketing & communications department by **Friday, Aug. 9**, at media@mnstatefair.org. We will distribute news releases electronically as a packet to our local media contacts. PLEASE NOTE: Commercial space regulations prohibit you from distributing printed materials outside of your approved booth space during the 12 days of the fair.

Things to Keep in Mind

- The marketing & communications department will announce new foods in June and new exhibits & attractions in July. If you have something new for 2019 and would like it to be considered for these announcements, please contact the concessions & exhibits department at 651-288-4456 to obtain appropriate product/service approval and to coordinate and confirm deadlines.
- The marketing & communications department cannot guarantee news media or social media coverage of any product, business, exhibit or attraction.
- As a vendor/exhibitor, you may only speak on behalf of your business, attraction or exhibit. You may NOT speak or post on social media on behalf of the Minnesota State Fair. Never speculate on or repeat rumors. If representatives of the media question you about anything other than your business or product, immediately direct them to the marketing & communications department at 651-288-4321 or media@mnstatefair.org.
- Unapproved promotional materials may not be distributed on the fairgrounds during the State Fair. The concessions & exhibits department may be reached at 651-288-4456 for approval prior to the start of the fair.
- The Minnesota State Fair name, logo and graphics are protected under U.S. trademark law. Use of the name "MINNESOTA STATE FAIR," the words "GREAT MINNESOTA GET-TOGETHER" and the State Fair's logos, color scheme or any other aspect of the State Fair's branding, including its mascots, is forbidden without the written consent of the State Fair. If you intend to use the Minnesota State Fair branding or logo on a social media post, you must seek approval from the marketing & communications department at logos@mnstatefair.org. If you wish to use any of the State Fair branding on merchandise, please reach out to the sales department to begin the product review process and discuss fees and usage.