

# #Oscars Ready

## Social Media Guidance for Brands and Advertisers

The 2024 awards season has been filled with snubs, influencers on the carpet, groundbreaking wins and acceptance speeches that have echoed throughout Hollywood. While some awards shows are stricter than others about brand participation in social media, it's another winning year for all brands tuning in to the 96th Academy Awards on March 10th.

Brands can tag the Academy's accounts (@TheAcademy on X/Twitter and Instagram and @Oscars on TikTok) or use the official hashtag (#Oscars) in their social posts and they do not need to be an official sponsor to do so.

As we have **previously advised**, it's important to be prepared and stay out of the spotlight for a social media faux pas. Be sure to follow the "Do's" and "Don'ts" guidance below to avoid copyright, right of publicity and trademark issues.

## Do's

- For brands, a good rule of thumb is to avoid using another brand's trademark in posts and as a hashtag. But this year, the Academy continues to make an exception and is allowing brands to reference its social accounts and use its "Oscars" trademark in hashtags: So a brand can refer to @TheAcademy on Twitter and Instagram, @Oscars on TikTok, YouTube.com/Oscars on YouTube, and #Oscars across platforms.
- The Academy is also allowing brands to share content posted to the official Academy accounts. But think twice before sharing any content that shows talent or other individuals (e.g., photographs of celebrities or folks attending the awards) or elements that could otherwise be subject to IP protection (e.g., music, film snippets or artwork). Posting images of celebrities without consent poses a particularly high risk and may violate a celebrity's right of publicity and/or falsely suggest that the celebrity endorses the brand, and the use of film snippets or music may violate copyright laws. So this allowance by the Academy is not one many brands will be able to take advantage of.
- Name particular films, rather than people, in your posts. For example, "Congratulations to Oppenheimer for winning Best Picture" is acceptable, but using the name of the Oppenheimer director is probably not, from a right of publicity perspective. So it's advisable not to post "Congratulations to Christopher Nolan for winning Best Director."
- Referencing an awards show category is ok. For example, "Can't wait to see who will win Best Actress, Best Director, or Best Original Song" is acceptable, but specifically calling out the winner of these awards presents a risk.
- Brands should like this one: Be prepared for your Oscars-related posts to be shared on the Academy's social accounts. The Academy has said it may share posts tagging the Oscars with its followers.



**Don'ts**

- Do not mash up a brand name with the Oscars in one hashtag, e.g. #OscarsYourBrand, #YourBrandGoesToTheOscars. (But using #YourBrand and #Oscars in the same social media post is OK, as long as you're not creating a false association between your brand and the Oscars.)
- Do not use the names of any actors, actresses, directors, or anyone associated with the awards show unless you have permission. Note that even using the first names of actors or musicians may raise intellectual property issues (e.g., Leo, Brad, Taylor, George).
- Do not use the Oscars' name or hashtag in a way that implies an affiliation, endorsement or sponsorship of your brand, e.g. #OscarsxYourBrand, #OscarsLovesYourBrand.
- Do not identify your brand as an "Official Oscars" provider of goods or services, unless cleared with the ABC Ad Sales team.
- Do not create any images, including memes, using the Oscars' trademarks, unless approved by the Oscars' Marketing Team prior to distribution.

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**For More Information**

Please contact the attorneys listed below or the Davis+Gilbert attorney with whom you have regular contact.

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