Appendix J: Media Policy

Spartan Robotics Team Handbook 2026-2027
FRC- Teams 971 & 9584
Mountain View High School

Purpose and Scope

This appendix explains how Spartan Robotics shares photos and videos, inside the team and with the public. It applies to all of Spartan Robotics: Team 971 and Team 9584. It applies to students, mentors, and parents.

All team members consent to team photography and video at sign-up. There is no opt-out. For consent and student-created content, see Appendix B: Youth Protection Policies, section 6 (Photography and Video).

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1. Roles and Responsibilities

1.1 Structure

- **Student media lead:** Manages the team's public channels (Facebook/Instagram, YouTube, and the Photo Archive). Selects and copies photos into the team-managed Google Photos albums.
- **Mentor in charge of media:** Supervises the student media lead. This is typically the entrepreneurship mentor. Approves exceptions for posting on personal accounts (see section 6). Reviews unlisted YouTube videos once a year (see section 4.3).
- **Adult review:** An adult reviews every public post before it is published.
- **Appointed student leadership:** Approves exceptions to the media blackout. Gives guidance on new blackout periods (see section 7).

2. Summary Table

Media type	Slack (note 1)	Facebook/ Instagram	YouTube	Photo Archive, linked on team website (note 2)
Communicating current robot condition or issue	✓			
Informal "real time" sharing of team activities	✓			
Fun stuff shared within the team	✓			
Announcements for immediate public consumption		✓		
Promotions for immediate public consumption		✓		
Fun stuff for immediate public consumption		✓		
Spartan Series workshop videos			✓	
Robot Reveal videos			✓	
Video archive of the team's history			✓	
Photo Archive (curated set of photos)				✓
Video of each competition match (note 3)	✓			

Notes:

1. The choice of Slack channel depends on the media content and the purpose for sharing.
2. Includes some legacy photo albums with photos for the FIRST organization.
3. Viewed only by the drive team. Exception: videos shared in a private Slack channel to help analyze robot issues.

3. Types of Media

3.1 Internal Media (Slack)

- **Robot condition or issue:** Photos and videos that show the current state of the robot or a problem.
- **Informal real-time sharing:** Photos and videos of team activities. Not intended for the public. Typically shared within 48 hours, not days or weeks later.
- **Fun stuff within the team:** Content meant for team members only.
- **Competition match videos:** Recorded for every match. The video follows our robot around the field. The main use is a private post-match review by the drive team. Sometimes shared in a private Slack channel to help debug a robot issue.

3.2 Public Social Media (Facebook/Instagram)

- **Announcements:** For example, "Come see us at event XYZ."
- **Promotions:** For example, "Our thanks to sponsor or team XYZ for …"
- **Fun stuff:** For example, a video that shows a team activity or a robot feature.

3.3 YouTube

The YouTube channel has a large subscriber and viewer base, built over many seasons. To protect the team's brand, we are selective about what we publish there.

- **Robot Reveal videos:** Published each season (see section 7).
- **Spartan Series workshop videos.**
- **Season summary videos:** A curated set of short clips and photos. It is a very small part of all media from a season, arranged to tell the story of the full season. These videos are part of the team's long-term archive. They also show what students and mentors experienced and learned in Spartan Robotics.
- **Legacy: best competition match videos (2009–2019):** These are among the most-watched videos on the channel. Team 971 used them to promote FRC and the team, before FIRST offered good-quality live streams and video coverage. In early streams, it was hard to tell which robot on the field was 971. These videos remain on the channel.
- **Special case: unlisted videos:** These videos are not visible to the public, so they do not affect the channel's brand. Example: short video loops for a monitor at outreach events. The mentor in charge of media reviews them once a year, in the off-season after the season ends. Videos no longer in use are deleted. This keeps the channel easy to manage.

3.4 Photo Archive

The Photo Archive is public and linked from the team website. It tells the team's story with a limited number of photos from each season, across many seasons. Building it takes careful review and selection.

- **Content:** A curated set of photos from each season. It covers activities, people, and robots in as few photos as possible. It holds about 5% of the photos taken each season.
- **Albums:** Photos are grouped by topic. The target is 5 albums per season.
- **Not for:** Photos that only team members will understand or enjoy. Goofy, unflattering, or potentially embarrassing photos.
- **Quality:** Images must look good at 200% zoom on a 27" monitor. Each crop must show a clear subject on any screen, from a 4" phone to a projector. Exceptions are made when no higher-quality image is available.
- **Legacy: FIRST event photos:** Before 2025, FIRST California had no place for event photographers to post photos. Team 971 volunteered to host some event photos and albums with public links. These albums remain in the archive.

4. Submitting Photos and Videos

Students, mentors, and parents can share their photos and videos in two ways:

- Post them in the team's Slack media channel.
- Create a Google Photos album and share it with the team.

The student media lead copies relevant photos into the team-managed Google Photos album(s).

5. Personal Accounts and Team Channels

- **Team channels first.** All team media is shared through team channels.
- **No speaking for the team.** No one may post messages or material that appear to be on behalf of the team. This includes posts on personal accounts. This rule applies at all times, not only during a blackout period.
- **Reposting is allowed.** Anyone may repost official team posts.
- **Exceptions.** A student with a valid reason may ask to post team activity on a personal account. The mentor in charge of media must approve the request first.
- **Permission from people shown.** The mentor in charge of media decides whether the people shown must give permission first. Context matters. See also Appendix B, section 6.
- **No unofficial channels.** Students and mentors may not set up or maintain social media, forums, or other channels that can be associated with the team. All team channels are under team management and responsibility.

6. Media Blackout Period

Spartan Robotics has a tradition of surprising and inspiring the FRC community. Each robot is first shown in a reveal video, followed by its first live appearance at a competition.

- **Start:** The blackout begins on kickoff day each season.
- **What is covered:** No sharing of design information outside current team members and their immediate family. This includes, but is not limited to, media of strategy, prototyping, design, assembly, and testing.
- **End:** The blackout ends for each robot when that robot attends its first public event. Teams 971 and 9584 may end their blackout at different times.
- **Exceptions:** Sharing specific media with another team or the public requires review and approval by appointed student leadership in advance. The decision is made in a formal meeting or in the student leadership Slack channel.
- **Later redesigns:** After a robot's first public appearance, redesign work may fall under a new blackout period. Appointed student leadership will give guidance to the team.

7. Other Teams' Robots and Designs

We respect other teams' work, just as we protect our own during the blackout period.

- **No sharing.** No one may share photos or videos of another team's robot or design. This applies outside the team and inside the team, including on Slack.
- **Exception.** Material that the other team has distributed publicly may be shared.
- **Private practices.** This rule applies to joint practices and other private or closed sessions, before a team has revealed its robot.
- **Your responsibility.** The person who takes a photo or video is responsible for checking it. For example, a video of our robot on the practice field may also show another team's robot.
- **Personal use only.** You may use that material right away for troubleshooting or review. It must never leave your device.
- **Delete or scrub.** Delete the material as soon as you are done with it, and no later than the end of the practice. Or scrub it, for example by cropping it so only our robot shows.

9. Violations

Violations of this policy are handled under Appendix C: Code of Conduct & Disciplinary Procedures, Disciplinary Procedures section.

This appendix was last updated: October 2026
Next scheduled review: April 2027

For the most current version of this appendix and all team policies, visit the Spartan Robotics team website or contact team leadership.

Spartan Robotics
Mountain View High School
FRC Teams 971 & 9584
https://spartanrobotics.org/governance